

Symmetric and Asymmetric Passives*

Ellen Woolford
University of Massachusetts
woolford@linguist.umass.edu

abstract

Double object constructions manifest three different passive patterns. In Kinyarwanda, Norwegian and Swedish, either object can passivize (symmetric passive), while in English, Fula and Chicheŵa, only one object can passivize (asymmetric passive). However, there are two types of asymmetric passives. In the English type, the accusative object with the highest thematic role must passivize and transitive impersonal passives are impossible, regardless of whether the language allows intransitive impersonal passives. In the Chicheŵa type, only the object associated with the Case assigning morpheme adjacent to the passive morpheme can passivize.

It is proposed here that there are two different mechanisms that can deprive an NP of Case in the passive, and the morphological structure of the passive verb determines which of the three passive patterns these mechanisms will produce. The passive morpheme can absorb a Case (cf. Baker (1988b), but only from an accessible Case assigner. A rule of Case Theory, called ACCUSATIVE CASE BLOCKING (ACB), blocks a passive verb from assigning structural Case to its thematically highest accusative object, but only if the passive morpheme attaches early so that the agent is suppressed when ACB applies. ACB is shown to be responsible for the effects attributed to Burzio's (1986) generalization and for the fact that verbs cannot assign accusative Case to their subjects.

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0. INTRODUCTION

It is well known from work such as Gary and Keenan (1977), Marantz (1984, 1990), Baker (1988a, 1988b), Bresnan and Moshi (1990), and Hoffman (1991) that multiple object constructions do not all behave alike in the passive. In some, any one of the NPs can passivize (the symmetric passive pattern) while in others, only one of the NPs can passivize (the asymmetric pattern).¹ However, asymmetric passives do not constitute a uniform type. There are at least two types of asymmetric passive patterns, which can be characterized by the following descriptive generalizations: In the type of asymmetric passive found in languages like English, German, Latin, Fula, Swahili, and HiBena, the accusative object with the highest thematic role passivizes and no transitive impersonal passives are possible. In the type of asymmetric passive found in languages like Chicheŵa and Kinyarwanda, only the object assigned Case by the morpheme adjacent to the passive morpheme can passivize.

The most common approach to the problem of symmetric and asymmetric passives is to postulate some property that an NP must have in order to passivize (e.g. structural Case, the grammatical relation 'object', a particular feature, or a particular syntactic position). NPs that cannot passivize are said to lack this crucial property. This paper takes a different approach, under which the properties of the NPs in double object constructions with asymmetric passives are no different than those in constructions with symmetric passives. Instead, the differences among these three passive patterns are attributed to differences in the morphological structure of the passive verbs, which, in turn, determine the effect of two different mechanisms that can deny an object accusative Case in the passive.²

The first mechanism is the passive morpheme's ability to absorb a Case (as in Baker (1988b)). However, I argue that Case assigning morphemes are only accessible to the passive morpheme if they are no further away than the adjacent level of morphological structure. When the Case(s) assigned by the verb root are not accessible to the passive morpheme, the result is a Chicheŵa type asymmetric passive.

The second mechanism is a rule of Case Theory, called ACCUSATIVE CASE BLOCKING (ACB), that blocks all verb roots from assigning structural Case to their thematically highest argument that could otherwise receive structural Case (i.e. excluding suppressed arguments, arguments marked to get lexical Case or to be realized as PPs). ACB is responsible for the effects attributed to Burzio's (1986) generalization and for the fact that verbs cannot assign structural accusative Case to their subjects. ACB blocks a passive

¹The notion of 'the NP that passivizes' is used here to refer to the NP that undergoes a Case change, whether or not that NP undergoes NP Movement. In some languages, the object that loses accusative case in the passive can remain in the VP, getting case in some alternate manner, while some other constituent (e.g. a lexical dative or a locative) fronts to the empty subject position. In such a situation, only the object that changes Case will be described here as 'passivizing'.

²The basic insight that the difference between symmetric and asymmetric passives has to do with morphological structure can be found in Marantz (1984, 1990).

verb from assigning accusative Case to its thematically highest object only when the passive morpheme attaches at the root level, so that the agent is suppressed when ACB applies. This produces an English-type asymmetric passive.

The paper is organized as follows. Simple double object constructions, without an (overt) applicative morpheme, are dealt with in section 1.³ These constructions may have a symmetric passive or an English-type asymmetric passive. Section 1.1 demonstrates that symmetric passives work essentially as in Baker (1988b), where passive verbs have the same Case assigning abilities as active verbs and what drives NP Movement is the passive morpheme's ability to absorb a Case. Section 1.2 lays out the generalizations that hold of English type asymmetric passives and shows how Accusative Case Blocking accounts for these generalizations.

Section 2 deals with multiple object constructions that require an overt applicative morpheme. Symmetric and English-type asymmetric passives work essentially the same in constructions with applicative morphemes as in constructions without applicative morphemes because the applicative morpheme attaches at the root level. In Chicheŵa-type asymmetric passives, the applicative morpheme attaches higher and blocks the passive morpheme from absorbing any Case except that of the applicative morpheme.

Section 3 shows how ACB replaces Burzio's generalization for unaccusative constructions, with and without applicative morphemes, and how ACB correctly predicts that unaccusative constructions are always asymmetric. Section 4 is a discussion of the theoretical status of ACB. Section 5 argues that the problem of symmetric and asymmetric passives is independent of the difference between what Bresnan and Moshi (1990) call symmetrical and asymmetrical object languages. Section six is the conclusion.

1. CONSTRUCTIONS WITHOUT APPLICATIVE MORPHEMES

This section focuses on verbs that can take two objects without the assistance of an (overt) applicative morpheme.⁴ Such constructions may have either symmetric or asymmetric passives. Symmetric passives are discussed in section 1.1 and asymmetric passives in section 1.2, along with a detailed proposal for what drives NP Movement in each type. Impersonal passives are discussed in section 1.3.

1.1. SYMMETRIC PASSIVES

Languages such as Kinyarwanda and Norwegian allow double object constructions without an applicative morpheme and these constructions have symmetric passives:

³An applicative morpheme allows a verb to take an additional object. If an applicative morpheme is added to a transitive verb, for example, the result is a ditransitive verb.

⁴I assume that the verbs discussed in this section have no applicative morpheme, but if some or all of these verbs actually do have a non-overt applicative morpheme, these constructions will work like the applicative constructions in section 2.

- (1) Kinyarwanda (Kimenyi (1980, p. 127))
- a. Umugabo y-a-haa-ye umugóre igitabo.
 man he-pst-give-asp woman book
 'The man gave the woman the book.'
- b. Igitabo cy-a-haa-w-e umugóre n'ûmugabo.
 book it-pst-give-pass-asp woman by man
 'The book was given to the woman by the man.'
- c. Umugóre y-a-haa-w-e igitabo n'ûmugabo.
 woman she-pst-give-pass-asp book by man
 'The woman was given the book by the man.'
- (2) Norwegian (Åfarli (1987 (44), (5)))
- a. Jon gav Marit ei klokke.
 'John gave Mary a watch.'
- b. Jon vart gitt ei klokke.
 'John was given a watch.'
- c. Ei klokke vart gitt Jon.
 'A watch was given Jon.'

Baker's (1988b) account of what drives NP Movement in these constructions works well and will be adopted here.⁵ In the active version of the Kinyarwanda example in (1a), the verb assigns structural accusative Case to both of its NP objects:⁶

- (3) give woman book
- Case
- Case

In the passive, the verb retains the capacity to assign structural Case to both of its objects.⁷ However, the passive morpheme can absorb one of these Cases. In (1b), the passive morpheme absorbs the Case that would have gone to 'woman'. Thus 'woman' receives no Case and is forced to undergo NP Movement to get Case. The second NP, 'book', gets structural accusative Case from the passive verb, just as it would in an active construction:

⁵Baker (1988b) discusses symmetric passives in Kinyarwanda and Åfarli (1987; 1989a,b) applies Baker's approach to symmetric passives in Norwegian.

⁶Strict adjacency is not required for structural case assignment in multiple object constructions like these (Baker (1988b, p. 174)).

⁷Baker, Johnson, and Roberts (1989) suggest that the reason that passive verbs retain the ability to assign structural case, contra Burzio (1986), is that passive verbs assign an external theta role. A modification of this idea is adopted in section 1.2.

(4) give+passive woman book

Case

In (1c), the passive morpheme has absorbed the Case meant for the second NP, 'book'. Thus 'book' is forced to move while 'woman' remains in place, getting structural Case from the passive verb:

(5) give+passive woman book

Case

The overt Case marking on pronouns in Norwegian supports Baker's view that the passive verb assigns structural accusative Case to the object that remains in the VP (cf. Hestvik (1986)). When the pronoun moves to the subject position, it surfaces with nominative Case, as in (6a), but when it remains in object position, it has accusative Case, as in (6b):

(6) Norwegian (Hestvik (1986 (6)))

a. Han ble gitt en gave.

'He was given a present.'

b. En gave ble gitt ham.

'A present was given him.'

The same Case alternation is observed in Swedish, which also has a symmetric passive:

(7) Swedish (Falk (1990, p. 55))

a. Han erbjöds ett nytt jobb.

he offered-passive a new job

'He was offered a new job.'

b. Ett nytt jobb erbjöds honom.

a new job offered-passive him

'A new job was offered him.'

In Baker's (1988b) view, a reduction of Case assigning abilities is not an inherent part of the passive (cf. Sobin (1985)), contra Chomsky (1981)). Not only do passive verb retain the Case assigning abilities of active verbs, but in some languages, the passive morpheme need not absorb a Case at all. In Norwegian and Swedish the passive morpheme only optionally absorbs a Case and both objects can remain in the VP at S-Structure, receiving the same Cases they would in an active construction (Hestvik (1986), Åfarli (1987, 1989b)):

(8) Norwegian (Hestvik (1986 (6a)))

Det ble gitt ham ei gave.

'There was given him a present.'

(9) Swedish (Falk (1990, p. 55))

Det erbjöds honom ett nytt jobb.

there offered-passive him a new job

'There was offered him a new job.'

For some speakers, English has a symmetric passive.⁸ Such speakers find both passive versions in (10) grammatical:

- (10)a. He was given a watch.
b. A watch was given him.

The English symmetric passive works just like the one in Norwegian, except that in English, the passive morpheme obligatorily absorbs a Case. Because of this difference, impersonal passives like (8) in Norwegian are ungrammatical in English, even for speakers who accept both versions of the passive in (10):⁹

- (11) *There was given him a watch.

1.2. ASYMMETRIC PASSIVES

In asymmetric passives, only one of the NPs in any multiple object construction can passivize. Although there are two different types of asymmetric passives, only the English-type occurs in constructions without an (overt) applicative morpheme:

- (12) I sent Pat a letter.
(13)a. Pat was sent a letter.
b. *A letter was sent Pat.

I will argue that English-type asymmetric passive constructions have two properties that the correct analysis must account for. First, we can reliably predict which object will passivize. Only the accusative object with the highest thematic role can passivize.¹⁰ Second, such constructions never allow transitive or ditransitive impersonal passives, regardless of whether they allow intransitive impersonal passives.

Let us first consider the evidence for the first claim. In the

⁸E.g. Jespersen (1927, p. 279) gives both 'A reward was offered the man.' and 'The man was offered a reward.' as equally possible. I would like to thank Juli Carter for judgments on this dialect.

⁹Although the passive morpheme's need for case is not necessary to drive NP Movement in asymmetric passives in English (see section 1.2 below), the passive morpheme must obligatorily absorb a Case in English asymmetric passives, if Baker (1988b) is correct that the passive morpheme's need for Case accounts for the lack of impersonal passives in English.

¹⁰The idea that the thematic hierarchy can determine which NP passivizes is not new (see, e.g. Hawkinson and Hyman (1974), Kiparsky (1988)). The thematic hierarchy used here is as follows:

(i) agent > benefactive > goal > theme > instrument/locative
The placement of benefactives and goals above themes follows Jackendoff (1972) and Bresnan and Kanerva (1989). Evidence for placing instruments and locatives below themes will be discussed in section 2.

example above in (13), there are two accusative objects with the theta roles of goal and theme. The goal is higher on the thematic hierarchy and only the goal can passivize. In constructions involving a benefactive and a theme, the benefactive is the higher role and only the benefactive can passivize:¹¹

(14) They built the hurricane victims new houses.

(15)a. The hurricane victims were built new houses.

b. *New houses were built the hurricane victims.

Swahili has the same type of asymmetric passive and the Swahili data show that what determines which NP can passivize is not the surface word order. Although either the goal or the theme NP can occur adjacent to the verb, as in (16a,b), only the goal can passivize, as shown in (16c,d):

(16) Swahili (Vitale (1981, p. 130-131))

a. Halima alimpa Fatuma zawadi.
Halima she-pst-her-give Fatuma gift
'Halima gave Fatuma a gift.'

b. Halima alimpa zawadi Fatuma.
Halima she-pst-her-give gift Fatuma
'Halima gave Fatuma a gift.'

c. Fatuma alipewa zawadi na Halima.
Fatuma she-pst-give-pass gift by Halima
'Fatuma was given a gift by Halima.'

d. *Zawadi ilipewa Fatuma na Halima.
gift it-pst-give-pass Fatuma by Halima
'A gift was given Fatuma by Halima.'

German also has an English-type asymmetric passive. Although German has only a few verbs that take two accusative objects, these constructions behave like English double object constructions in the passive. In the example below, only the goal, 'the boy', can become nominative in the passive. The theme, 'the song', cannot:¹²

¹¹For some speakers, the double object benefactive construction cannot passivize at all (see Langendoen, Kalish-Landon and Dore (1976)). Such speakers accept only the passive of the NP PP version of this construction. A similar dialect split occurs with the German double accusative construction discussed below. I have no explanation for why certain constructions have no grammatical passive. The claim here is only that if a construction has a grammatical English-type asymmetric passive, then one can predict which object passivizes in that construction.

¹²Some speakers do not accept any passive version of the double accusative construction (Czepluch (1988, p. 83)).

- (17) German (Czepluch (1988 (8)))
- a. Sie haben den Jungen das Lied gelehrt.
they have the boy-acc the song-acc taught
'They have taught the boy the song.'
 - b. *dann ist den Jungen das Lied gelehrt worden
then is the boy-acc the song-nom taught been
'then the song was taught the boy'
 - c. ?dann ist der Junge das Lied gelehrt worden
then is the boy-nom the song-acc taught been
'then the boy was taught the song'

If one considered only English data, one might hypothesize that only one of the objects gets structural Case (cf. Burzio (1986)) and that, because of Case adjacency, that object must be adjacent to the main verb. Since the passive morpheme can only absorb structural Case (Baker (1988b)), this hypothesis would correctly predict which object passivizes in English, but it would make exactly the wrong prediction for German, where the main verb is final. It would predict that only the second object could passivize, as in the ungrammatical (17b), and not the first object, as in the grammatical version in (17c).

Thematic roles are irrelevant if only one accusative object is present. It is well-known that only objects with structural Case can passivize, in the sense of changing Case (e.g. den Besten (1981)). If the object with the higher thematic role has lexical Case and the object with the lower thematic role has structural Case, only the object with structural Case can passivize. We see this in the German example below where the object with the higher theta role, the goal, has lexical dative Case. Only the accusative theme can become nominative in the passive:¹³

¹³German has another type of passive, called the kriegen passive or recipient passive (Haider (1984, 1985)), in which it appears that a goal, beneficiary, or possessor passivizes instead of the theme.

- (i) Er kriegt ein Buch geschenkt.
he got a book sent
'He had a book sent (to him).'
- (ii) Er kriegt die Gläser gewaschen.
he got a glass washed
'He had a glass washed (for him).'
- (iii) Er bekommt ein Bein amputiert.
he got a leg amputated
'He had (his) leg amputated.'

However, Haider (1984, 1985) argues that there is no goal, beneficiary, or possessor in the lower clause that passivizes in these constructions. Instead, they probably have an analysis similar to that of English constructions like (iv).

- (iv) Pat had [three applications_i accepted t_i].

In this construction, the lower, passive verb has only one object, 'three applications'. This object is not assigned Case by the passive verb and has to move to a position where it can get Case from the upper verb, have. The subject of have, Pat, was never present in the lower clause. If the German recipient passives work the same way, there is no dative object in the lower clause in the D-Structures of

- (18) German (Wilkinson (1983 (2)))
- a. Das Mädchen schenkte dem Jungen ein Buch.
the girl/NOM gave the boy/DAT a book/ACC
'The girl gave they boy a book.'
 - b. Ein Buch wurde dem Jungen von dem Mädchen geschenkt.
a book/NOM was the boy/Dat by the girl given
'A book was given to the boy by the girl.'
 - c. *Der Junge wurde von dem Mädchen ein Buch geschenkt.
the boy/NOM was by the girl a book/ACC given
'The boy was given a book by the girl.'

German data also illustrate the second property of English-type asymmetric passives that is not characteristic of symmetric passives. German allows impersonal passives, but only when there is no accusative object, as in (19).¹⁴ If there is an accusative object present, the impersonal passive is ungrammatical (Comrie (1977), den Besten (1981)), as shown in (20):

- (19) German (Siewierska (1984, p. 97))
- a. Wir tanzten gestern.
we:nom dance-past:1pl yesterday
'We danced yesterday.'
 - b. Es wurde gestern von uns getanzt.
it became yesterday by us dance:p.part
'There was dancing by us yesterday.'
- (20) German (Siewierska (1984, p. 96))
- a. Er tötete den Löwen.
he:nom kill-past:3s the:acc lion-acc
'He killed the lion.'
 - b. *Es wurde den Löwen getötet.
it became the:acc lion:acc kill:p.part
('The lion was killed'). (lit: 'It was killed the lion.')
 - c. Der Löwe wurde von ihm getötet.
the:nom lion:nom became by him kill:p.part
'The lion was killed by him.'

This contrasts with the behavior of languages with symmetric passives, which, if they allow impersonal passives at all, allow them in transitive and ditransitive constructions as well as in intransitive ones. We saw above that Norwegian and Swedish allow ditransitive impersonal passives, in examples (8) and (9), as expected under the assumption that the passive morpheme only

(i) through (iii). The accusative object of the lower clause is not assigned accusative Case by the lower verb in the passive, but instead of becoming nominative, it is assigned accusative case by the upper verb.

¹⁴An impersonal passive is one in which no object has undergone a Case change.

optionally absorbs a Case in these languages.

Another language that illustrates this correlation between an English-type asymmetric passive and the impossibility of transitive impersonal passives is Latin. As in German, goals are generally marked with lexical dative Case, but there are a few double accusative constructions. As in German, the goal, not the theme, becomes nominative in the passive of such constructions.¹⁵

- (21) a. Rogo Petrum sententiam.
ask Peter-acc opinion-acc
'I ask Peter (his) opinion.'
- b. Petrus rogatur sententiam
Peter-nom ask-passive opinion-acc
'Peter is asked (his) opinion.'
- c. *Sententia rogatur Petrum
opinion ask-passive Peter-acc

Like German, Latin allows impersonal passives of intransitive constructions, as in (22), but transitive constructions allow only a personal passive, where the accusative object must become nominative, as in (23) (Comrie (1977)):

- (22) Latin (Comrie (1977, p. 53-54))
- a. Milites acriter pugnauerunt.
soldiers fiercely fought
'The soldiers fought fiercely.'
- b. Acriter (a militibus) pugnatum est.
fiercely by soldiers fought is
'There was fierce fighting (by the soldiers).'
- (23) a. Alexander Dareum vicit.
Alexander(nom) Darius(acc) conquered
'Alexander conquered Darius.'
- b. Dareus ab Alexandro victus est.
Darius(nom) by Alexander conquered is
'Darius was conquered by Alexander.'

This linkage between the English-type asymmetric passive pattern and the impossibility of transitive impersonal passives is predicted by the account proposed below.

1.2.1. ACCUSATIVE CASE BLOCKING AND BURZIO'S GENERALIZATION

I will argue that Burzio (1986) is right in concluding, from the parallel behavior of NP Movement in unaccusatives and passives, that

¹⁵Cf. Cicero, *Oratio de Domo Sua* 16:
Rogatus sum sententiam.

I was asked my opinion.' (Woodcock (1959, p. 11))
I would like to thank Phil Baldi for calling these Latin examples to my attention.

one mechanism is responsible for the lack of accusative Case assignment in both constructions. In fact, this parallelism between unaccusatives and passives is much stronger than the range of facts discussed in Burzio (1986) indicate, although it holds only with respect to English-type asymmetric passives. In section 3, we will see that double object unaccusative constructions do not divide into symmetric and asymmetric types. Instead, they are always asymmetric with respect to which NP is denied accusative Case. In addition, the equivalent of a transitive impersonal passive is impossible in an unaccusative construction.

Nevertheless, I will argue that Burzio's (1986) hypothesis that unaccusative and passive verbs cannot assign structural accusative Case at all is too strong. Although these verbs cannot assign structural accusative Case to the unaccusative or passive subject, they can assign structural accusative Case to a second NP argument. Unaccusative and passive verbs are really no different from verbs with external subjects: no verb can assign structural accusative Case to its subject (highest argument).

Specifically, I propose that what produces the effects attributed to Burzio's generalization is a universal rule of Case Theory, called here ACCUSATIVE CASE BLOCKING (ACB):

(24) ACCUSATIVE CASE BLOCKING

No verb root can assign structural accusative Case to the highest unmarked argument in its argument structure.¹⁶

Marked arguments are arguments marked to get lexical Case, arguments realized as PPs, and suppressed arguments.¹⁷ It is assumed here that verbs have the capacity to assign accusative Case to each of their unmarked arguments, but that ACB blocks Case assignment to the highest of these.

Accusative Case Blocking (ACB) produces an English-type asymmetric passive if the agent is suppressed in the argument structure associated with the verb root. This is demonstrated with examples in section 1.2.2. In section 1.3, it is proposed that the reason that ACB does not interfere with the ability of symmetric passive verbs to assign accusative Case in the VP is that the agent is not suppressed in the argument structure of verb roots of this type. ACB treats symmetric passive verbs like it treats active verbs

¹⁶For passives, the thematic hierarchy is sufficient to determine which argument is highest, but see the discussion of unaccusatives in section 3.

¹⁷ACB has elements in common with the Case principle of Yip Maling and Jackendoff (1987) (YMJ). Both ignore arguments marked for lexical Case in the process of selecting the highest argument that is eligible for structural Case. The Case principle of YMJ assigns nominative Case to the highest unmarked NP in surface structure, whereas ACB marks the highest unmarked argument in the verb's argument structure as ineligible to receive structural accusative Case from that verb.

with external subjects. Such verbs cannot assign structural accusative Case to an agent subject, even if the verb governs that subject.¹⁸

1.2.2. HOW ACB PRODUCES ENGLISH-TYPE ASYMMETRIC PASSIVES

In active constructions such as (25), Case is assigned in the same way in the dialect with an asymmetric passive as in the dialect with a symmetric passive. The verb assigns structural accusative Case to both objects.

(25) They gave Pat the money.

For speakers of the asymmetric passive dialect, the agent is suppressed in the passive when ACB applies. (A suppressed argument will be marked with the symbol \emptyset , as in Grimshaw (1990)):

(26) give+passive < A, G, T >
 |
 \emptyset

The highest unmarked argument from the point of view of ACB is thus the goal. ACB blocks the passive verb from assigning structural accusative Case to the NP to which the goal role is assigned, forcing that NP to move to get Case. Nothing interferes with the passive verb's ability to assign structural accusative Case to the theme:¹⁹

(27) Pat_i was given t_i the money.

Double accusative constructions in German, (17), and Latin, (21), work the same way. Because these languages have morphologically overt Case marking, we can see that the second object remains accusative in the passive, as expected if the passive verb retains the ability to assign structural accusative Case to all but its highest argument.

Now let us consider what happens in the variant of give where the goal is realized as a PP:

¹⁸In the approach proposed in Chomsky (1992), where the notion of government is eliminated and Case is assigned (checked) only in a Spec-head relation with AGR, the Case feature that is checked by Agr₀ (accusative) is still provided by the verb, which must raise to Agr₀ by LF. If the subject moved to AGR₀ for Case checking, ACB would prevent the verb from providing the accusative Case feature that would license the subject there. Thus adding ACB to the theory removes the need to constrain NP Movement to prevent the subject from ending up in AGR₀.

¹⁹As noted above, the fact that English does not allow impersonal passives indicates that the passive morpheme must absorb a Case in English. If ACB denied Case to one object while the passive morpheme absorbed the Case of the other object, neither object could get case in the VP and (since only one NP can move to get case) the Case Filter would be violated. Instead, the passive morpheme must absorb the Case that ACB prevents the verb from assigning in syntax.

(28)a. They gave the money to the Pat.

b. The money_i was given t_i to Pat.

(29) give+passive < A, G, T >
 | |
 ∅ PP

In the passive, the goal does not qualify as the highest argument because it is marked to be realized as a PP. The theme is thus the highest unmarked argument, by default, and ACB prevents the verb from assigning it structural accusative Case. German examples such as (18) work the same way, except that ACB ignores the goal for a different reason--because the goal is marked to get lexical Case.

German and Latin allow intransitive impersonal passives, as we saw above in (19) and (22). This indicates, following (Baker (1988b)), that the passive morpheme does not have to absorb a Case in German or Latin. But transitive impersonal passives are not possible in German and Latin (see (20) and (23)) because of ACB. Whenever there is even one unmarked object present, ACB will block accusative Case assignment to one object, producing a personal passive. Transitive impersonal passives are only possible when ACB does not interfere with the passive verb's ability to assign Case in the VP, as in symmetric passives.²⁰

Now let us turn to constructions with CP objects. Chomsky (1986, p. 140-141) discusses the contrast in the behavior of verbs with a CP complement that do not have an external subject, e.g. seem, and verbs with a CP complement that have an external subject, e.g. believe. He concludes that verbs like believe Case mark their CP complements, but that verbs like seem do not.²¹ Chomsky's conclusion is based on the fact that believe allows its complement to be replaced by a Wh trace, but seem does not, and the fact that believe is and ECM (Exceptional

²⁰To account for the lack of transitive impersonal passives in German, Baker (1988b) suggests that, in addition to languages like English, where the passive morpheme requires case, and languages like Norwegian, where the passive morpheme absorbs case optionally, there is a third type of language where the passive morpheme needs Case only if Case is available. The addition of ACB to the theory allows us to eliminate this third option and to capture the correlation between the type of passive a language has (symmetric vs. asymmetric) and the types of impersonal passives it may allow.

²¹Levin and Massam (1985) also argue that some CPs get case and some do not, on the basis of data from Niuean.

Case Marking) verb, but seem is not:²²

- (30) a. John believed that he had won.
 b. What did John believe t?
 c. John believes [Bill to be intelligent].
 d. It is believed that Bill is intelligent.
- (31) a. It seems that he had won.
 b. *What does it seem t?
 c. *It seems [Bill to be intelligent].
 d. Bill seems [e to be intelligent].
 e. *It is seemed that Bill is intelligent.

Chomsky argues that the fact that believe assigns Case to its CP complement, but seem does not, follows from a generalized version of Burzio's generalization: "A verb with a complement assigns Case if and only if it θ -marks its subject." (Chomsky (1986, p. 141)). However, we do not need Burzio's generalization to account for the difference in the Case assigning abilities of believe versus seem if we have ACB. ACB prevents seem from assigning structural accusative Case to its CP complement, because that complement is the highest unmarked argument in seem's argument structure:

(32) seem < T >

ACB does not interfere with believe's ability to assign structural Case to its CP complement, because that complement is not the highest unmarked argument:

(33) believe < A, T >

Unlike Burzio's generalization, ACB also correctly predicts that the CP complement is assigned accusative Case in passive examples such as (34), but not in examples such as (35).

- (34) a. John was told that he had won.
 b. What was John told t?

²²The conclusion that verbs can assign case to CP complements removes one criticism (e.g. Anward (1989)) of Baker's (1988b) claim that the passive morpheme must absorb a Case in English. If verbs like believe had no case to assign, there would be no case for the passive morpheme to absorb. The fact that seem cannot passivize is expected if the passive morpheme must absorb a Case in English, but seem has no Case to assign. However, the inability of seem to passivize can be accounted for independently by the fact that only verbs with agent subjects passivize in English (Grimshaw (1990)).

- (35) a. It is believed that he had won.
 b. *What is it believed t?
 c. *It is believed [Bill to be intelligent].
 d. Bill is believed [e to be intelligent].

In (34), the verb has an unmarked goal object in addition to the CP theme. Because the goal is higher than the theme, ACB blocks accusative Case assignment to the goal in the passive, but does not interfere with the verb's ability to assign accusative Case to the theme.

- (36) tell+passive < A, G, T >
 |
 ∅

But in (35), the CP theme is the only object and thus ACB prevents it from getting accusative Case in the passive.

- (37) believe+passive < A, T >
 |
 ∅

Burzio's generalization does not extend to these examples because it ties the ability to assign accusative Case to the presence of an external subject.

1.3. EARLY AND LATE ATTACHMENT OF THE PASSIVE MORPHEME

It is clear from the behavior of symmetric passives discussed in section 1.1 that Accusative Case Blocking does not interfere with the symmetric passive verb's ability to assign Case in the VP. Symmetric passive verbs can assign structural accusative Case to both objects, in contrast to asymmetric passive verbs, where ACB prevents accusative Case assignment to the highest object. To account for this difference, one cannot simply say that ACB applies in some languages but not others because, as we will see in section 3, ACB does apply to unaccusative constructions even in languages with symmetric passives. One could propose a parameter such that ACB applies to passive constructions in certain languages, but not in others, but it would be preferable if we could link the effect of ACB on passive verbs to some property of the verbs themselves.

The intuitive idea pursued here is that ACB actually does apply to all verbs, including symmetric passive verbs. The reason that ACB does not interfere with the symmetric passive verb's ability to assign Case in the VP is because the agent is not suppressed until after ACB applies. The unsuppressed agent qualifies as the highest unmarked argument and ACB only blocks the verb from assigning

accusative Case to that agent.²³

I will assume that the agent is suppressed when the passive morpheme is attached. Thus ACB will produce the correct result if the passive morpheme is attached before ACB applies in English-type asymmetric passives, only after ACB applies in symmetric passives. As for when ACB applies, I claim (for reasons that will become clearer in section 2) that ACB applies only to argument structures of verb roots. ACB will produce an English-type asymmetric passive if the passive morpheme is attached at the root level (forming a complex root), but a symmetric passive if the passive morpheme is attached at the next higher level of morphological structure:

(38) English-type asymmetric passives: [Vroot+passive morpheme]

(39) symmetric passives: [[Vroot] passive morpheme]

At the root level, which is the only relevant level for ACB, the symmetric passive is indistinguishable from an active verb, whereas the English-type asymmetric passive has a passive verb root.

(40) symmetric root: [Vroot] < A, T >

(41) English-type asymmetric root:
 [Vroot+passive morpheme] < A, T >
 |
 ∅

The idea that the only difference between symmetric and asymmetric passives is a bracketing difference in the morphological structure (which may not be obvious to a language learner) could explain why it is possible for some speakers of English to have an asymmetric passive while others have a symmetric passive, why dialects of Chicheŵa vary in the same way (Baker (1988b)), and why some speakers of languages with symmetric passives like Norwegian prefer the asymmetric version of the passive (Hestvik (1986)). Thus, while we would like to see independent evidence for these proposed bracketing differences, such evidence may not be easy to find. At the moment, the motivation for the account of symmetric and asymmetric passives proposed in this paper is only its ability to account for exactly the range of types of passives that occur. We have seen how the two bracketing possibilities in (38) and (39) produce the two types of passives that occur in constructions without an applicative morpheme. In the next section, we will see that there are three bracketing possibilities when an applicative morpheme is involved, producing three types of passives.

²³The idea that the agent is not yet suppressed when ACB applies is a modification of Baker, Johnson, and Robert's (1989) idea that Burzio's generalization does not affect passives because they assign an external theta role.

2. CONSTRUCTIONS INVOLVING APPLICATIVE MORPHEMES

Of the three types of passives that constructions with an applicative morphemes may have, two are the same as those found in languages without applicative morphemes: symmetric and English-type asymmetric.²⁴ The third is the Chicheŵa-type asymmetric passive

Section 2.1 establishes that there are two different types of asymmetric passives and section 2.2 gives the details of the proposed account of these two types. Section 2.3 deals with symmetric passives and includes an account of why symmetric passives in Kinyarwanda become asymmetric when a certain applicative morpheme is added. Section 2.4 shows that the generalizations concerning impersonal passives discussed in section 1 also hold for applicative constructions.

2.1. TWO TYPES OF ASYMMETRIC PASSIVES

If we examine only double object constructions that consist of a benefactive or goal and a theme, the asymmetric passives of Fula, HiBena, and Chicheŵa appear to be identical to each other and to English. Only the benefactive or goal can passivize, and not the theme.

(42) Fula (Sylla (1979, p. 238-4))

- a. Takko def-an-ii sukaab'e b'e gertogal.
Takko cook-Ben-Tns children Det chicken
'Takko cooked a chicken for the children.'
- b. Sukaab'e b'e ndef-an-aama gertogal.
children Det cook-Ben-Tns/Passive chicken
'The children had a chicken cooked for them.'
- c. *Gertogal def-an-aama sukaab'e b'e.
chicken cook-Ben-Tns/Passive children Det
'The chicken was cooked for the children.'

(43) HiBena (Hodges and Stucky (1979 (4a), (6)))

- a. Umugosi i-hwandih-ila umudala ibaluwa.
man ag-write-app woman letters
'The man is writing the woman letters.'
- b. Umudala a-hwandih-ilil-we ibaluwa n-umugosi.
woman ag-write-app/T-pass letters by-man
'The woman was written letters by the man.'
- c. *Ibaluwa dza-hwandih-ilil-we umudala n-umugosi.
letters ag-write-app/T-pass woman by-man
'Letters were written the woman by the man.'

²⁴The term 'applicative morpheme' will be used here as a cover term for any morpheme that increases the number of objects a verb takes. In languages that have more than one type of applicative morpheme, this morpheme is often glossed in examples by the thematic role of the added argument, e.g. INST (instrument), or BEN (benefactive), instead of just APPL (applicative).

- (44) Chicheŵa (Alsina and Mchombo (1989 (3a), (7)))
- a. Chitsîru chi-na-gúl-ír-a atsíkāna mphâtso.
7-fool 7S-PST-buy-AP-FV 2-girls 9-gift
'The fool bought a gift for the girls.'
 - b. Atsíkāna a-na-gúl-ír-idw-á mphâtso (ndí chitsîru).
2-girls 2S-PST-buy-AP-PAS-FV 9-gift by 7-fool
'The girls were bought a gift (by the fool).'
 - c. *Mphâtso i-na-gúl-ír-idw-á átsíkāna (ndí chitsîru).
9-gift 9S-PST-buy-AP-PAS-FV 2-girls by 7-fool
'A gift was bought the girls (by the fool).'

In contrast, when we examine double object examples with a theme and an instrument, we find that the behavior of Fula and HiBena is the opposite of Chicheŵa. Only the theme can passivize in HiBena and Fula, as shown in (45) and (46), whereas only the instrument can passivize in Chicheŵa, as in (47):²⁵

- (45) HiBena (Hodges and Stucky (1979 (11b), (12)))
- a. Umugosi a-vind-iye iliduma ibunduhi mu-musitu.
man ag-hunt-inst/T leopard gun in-forest
'The man hunted the leopard with the gun in the forest.'
 - b. Iliduma lya-vind-ilil-we ibunduhi mu-musitu n-umugosi.
leopard ag-hunt-inst/T-pass gun in-forest by-man
'The leopard was hunted with a gun in the forest by the man.'
 - c. *Ibunduhi dza-vind-ilil-we iliduma mu-musitu n-umugosi.
gun ag-hunt-inst/T-pass leopard in-forest by-man
- (46) Fula (Sylla (1979, p. 286-287))
- a. Aali tay'-r-ii lekki jammberere.
Aali cut-Inst-Tns tree axe
'Aali cut a tree with an axe.'

²⁵There is no problem passivizing an instrument in Fula or HiBena when no theme is present. In the following Fula example, the instrumental applicative morpheme has been added to an intransitive verb 'dance' and the instrumental NP can passivize.

- (i) Fula (Sylla (1979, p. 289))
- a. Mi am-r-ii pade.
I dance-Inst-Tns shoes
'I danced with shoes.'
 - b. Pad'e ngam-r-aama.
shoes dance-Inst-Tns/Passive
'Shoes were danced with.'

Similarly, the theme can passivize in Chicheŵa when no instrument is present.

b. Lekki tay'-r-aama jammberere.
 tree cut-Inst-Tns/Passive axe
 'A tree was cut by using an axe.'

c. *Jammberere tay'-r-aama lekki.
 axe cut-Inst-Tns/Passive tree
 'A tree was cut by using an axe.'

(47) Chicheŵa (Alsina and Mchombo (1989 (4), (8)))

a. Anyāni a-ku-phwāny-ír-a mwāla dēngu.
 2-baboons 2S-PR-break-AP-FV 3-stone 5-basket
 'The baboons are breaking the basket with a stone.'

b. Mwāla u-ku-phwāny-ír-idw-á dēngu (ndí anyāni).
 3-stone 3S-PR-break-AP-PAS-FV 5-basket by 2-baboons
 'The stone is being used (by the baboons) to break the basket.'

c. *Dēngu li-ku-phwāny-ír-idw-á mwāla (ndí anyāni).
 5-basket 5S-PR-break-AP-PAS-FV 3-stone by 2-baboons

The descriptive generalization that accounts for Chicheŵa is that when an applicative morpheme is present, only the NP argument that is associated with it can passivize: In benefactive applicative constructions, only the benefactive can passivize, as in (44), and in instrumental applicative constructions, only the instrument can passivize, as in (47).²⁶

In contrast, Fula and HiBena have an English-type asymmetric passive, where only the NP object with the highest thematic role can passivize. In constructions involving a benefactive or a goal and a theme, the benefactive or goal, which is higher than the theme, is the NP that can passivize. In constructions with a theme and an instrument, the theme passivizes because it is higher than the instrument (Hawkinson and Hyman (1974), Duranti (1979), and Givón (1984)).²⁷

The view that themes are higher than instruments on the thematic hierarchy is supported by the word order facts of Fula. In Fula, the order of double objects is rigid and obeys the thematic hierarchy assumed in this paper. A benefactive NP must precede a theme NP, but

²⁶Locative applicative constructions are a superficial counterexample to this generalization since they have what looks like a symmetric passive. This construction will be discussed below.

²⁷Fillmore (1968) places the instrument above the theme on the basis of sentences like 'The hammer broke the window'. Givón (1984) argues that in such constructions, hammer is not construed as an instrument. The fact that the instrument appears in the subject position in this construction does not constitute evidence that instruments are higher than themes on the thematic hierarchy, if the proper analysis of these constructions parallels Grimshaw's (1990) account of the frighten-class psych-verb construction, discussed in section 3.

a theme NP must precede an instrumental NP, as in the example below:

- (48) Fula (Sylla (1979, p. 286))
- a. Aali tay'-r-ii lekki jammberere.
 Aali cut-Inst-Tns tree axe
 'Aali cut a tree with an axe.'
- b. *Aali tay'-r-ii jammberere lekki .
 Aali cut-Inst-Tns axe tree
 'Aali cut a tree with an axe.'

Apart from the thematic hierarchy, no other ordering principle produces the correct result here. One cannot appeal to a principle that would always place the applied NP first (or last) because the applied NP appears first in examples involving a benefactive and a theme, but last in examples involving a theme and an instrument. While one might appeal to an animacy hierarchy in the case of a benefactive and a theme, both of the NPs in (48) are inanimate.

Let us now turn to the proposed account of the two types of passives.

2.2. ROOT AND NON-ROOT APPLICATIVES

In section 1, the fact that there are two types of passives in constructions without applicatives was linked to the idea that the passive morpheme can be attached at the root level, forming a complex root, or above the root, adding a new level of morphological structure. Here, the fact that there are three types of passives in constructions with applicative morphemes is linked to the idea that applicative morphemes have the same two attachment options. If the applicative morpheme and the passive morpheme both attach at the root level, an English-type asymmetric passive is formed. If the applicative morpheme attaches at the root level, but the passive morpheme does not, a symmetric passive is formed:

English-type asymmetric passive: [Vroot+applicative+passive]

Symmetric passive: [[Vroot+applicative] passive]

If neither the applicative nor the passive morpheme attaches at the root level, the result is a Chicheŵa-type asymmetric passive:²⁸

Chicheŵa-type asymmetric passive: [[[Vroot] applicative] passive]

²⁸The fourth logical possibility, where the passive morpheme attaches at the root level but the applicative morpheme does not, cannot occur when the passive morpheme attaches after the applicative morpheme. Nothing in the theory presented here prohibits that morpheme order, but, to my knowledge, the only kind of applicative that ever attaches after the passive morpheme is a locative applicative. In Kinyarwanda, the locative applicative need not attach to the verbal complex at all or, if it does, it cliticizes to the end of the verb. This paper will not attempt to account for the behavior of these constructions.

This section will demonstrate how the properties of the two types of asymmetric passives follow from these morphological structures.

The account of English-type asymmetric passives in Fula and HiBena is essentially the same as the account of English-type passives in section 1. When an applicative morpheme attaches at the root level, a complex root is formed that behaves just like a simple root in a language without applicatives. If the passive morpheme also attaches at the root level, the agent is suppressed in the argument structure associated with the root level and ACB denies structural accusative Case to the next highest unmarked argument. The result is the pattern observed in Fula and HiBena, where themes cannot passivize when they are paired with higher arguments such as benefactives or goals, but themes do passivize when they are paired with a lower argument such as an instrument.:

(49) < A, B, T >

|
∅

(50) < A, G, T >

|
∅

(51) < A, T, I >

|
∅

ACB does not drive NP Movement in Chicheŵa-type asymmetric passives because, as in symmetric passives, the passive morpheme is not attached at the root level. Thus the agent is not suppressed in the root level argument structure to which ACB applies and ACB blocks the assignment of structural accusative Case to the agent, leaving the verb's ability to assign accusative Case to its objects intact. Instead, what drives NP Movement in Chicheŵa-type asymmetric passives is the same thing that drives NP Movement in symmetric passives--the passive morpheme's ability to absorb a Case (cf. Baker (1988a)). What produces the difference between Chicheŵa-type asymmetric passives and symmetric passives is the additional level of morphological structure that the non-root applicative adds between the passive morpheme and the verb root. The passive morpheme can only absorb Case from a morpheme no further away than the adjacent level of structure, thus in the morphological structure in (52), the passive morpheme can only absorb Case from the adjacent applicative morpheme:²⁹

(52) [[[Vroot] applicative] passive]

This is why Chicheŵa-type passives allow only the NP associated with the applicative morpheme to passivize when an applicative morpheme is present. When no applicative morpheme is present, the passive

²⁹The Case(s) associated with the root can nevertheless be assigned to arguments outside of the verbal complex, for reasons made clear in section 4.

morpheme is adjacent to the root and can absorb Case from it:³⁰

(53) [[Vroot] passive]

It may be possible to predict which languages will have Chicheŵa-type asymmetric passives, based on whether or not the language allows simple verb roots to be ditransitive. Languages like Fula allow a range of verbs like 'give', 'show', and 'write' to take two objects without the assistance of an applicative morpheme (Sylla (1979)). Thus Fula allows simple verb roots to be ditransitive. But Chicheŵa does not. The verb 'hand', which can be ditransitive in English ('They handed Pat a crowbar.') allows only a single object in Chicheŵa without an applicative morpheme, but with the addition of the applicative morpheme, it takes two NP objects:

(54) Chicheŵa (Baker (1988b, p. 14))

- a. Mbidzi zi-na-perek-a mpiringidzo kwa mtsikana.
zebras SP-PAST-hand-ASP crowbar to girl
'The zebras handed the crowbar to the girl.'
- b. Mbidzi zi-na-perek-er-a mtsikana mpiringidzo.
zebras SP-PAST-hand-APPL-ASP girl crowbar
'The zebras handed the girl the crowbar.'

Only one verb, 'give', can take two objects without an overt applicative morpheme, at least in Mchombo's dialect of Chicheŵa (Baker (1988b)) and Baker argues that there is a non-overt applicative morpheme involved when 'give' appears to be ditransitive.³¹ If a language prohibits ditransitive roots, then it

³⁰The basic idea that the difference in the behavior of instrumental applicatives in Fula and Chicheŵa is related to whether the applicative attaches at an earlier or later level of morphological structure appears in Marantz (1984, 1990). In Marantz (1984), the level at which the applicative morpheme attaches (merges) affects the grammatical relations of the two object NPs. In Marantz (1990), it affects the syntactic structure.

³¹Baker's view that there is a non-overt applicative involved when the verb 'give' takes two objects in Chicheŵa is supported by the fact that this construction has an asymmetric passive:

(i) Chicheŵa (Baker (1988b, p. 282))

- a. Mbuzi zi-na-pats-idw-a nsima ndi ngombe.
goats SP-PAST-give-PASS-ASP cornmush by cows
'The goats were given cornmush by the cows.'
- b. *Nsima i-na-pats-idw-a mbuzi ndi ngombe.
cornmush SP-PAST-give-PASS-ASP goats by cows
'Cornmush was given the goats by the cows.'

If there were no applicative morpheme in this example, the passive morpheme would be adjacent to the root and thus both Cases of the root would be accessible to it. We would thus expect this construction to have a symmetric passive. In contrast, if the Chicheŵa prohibition against ditransitive verb roots holds without exception, then the verb in (i) must contain a non-overt applicative morpheme, as Baker (1988b) argues, and the additional level of morphological structure associated with that non-root applicative

will be impossible for an applicative morpheme to attach at the root level if the complex root that is created is ditransitive. Thus there is a reason that the applicative morpheme in the ditransitive Chicheŵa constructions discussed above does not attach at the root level, in contrast to what occurs in Fula and HiBena.

One question remains concerning Chicheŵa passives. Why do locative applicative constructions have what looks like a symmetric passive? In the example below, either the locative, 'sand', or the theme, 'mats' can move to the subject position in the passive:

- (55) Chicheŵa (Alsina and Mchombo (1990 (19a)))
 Alēnje a-ku-lúk-ír-a pa-mchēnga míkêka.
 2-hunters 2S-PR-weave-AP-FV 16-3-sand 4-mats
 'The hunters are weaving mats on the beach.'
- (56) Chicheŵa (Alsina and Mchombo (1990 (21)))
 a. Pa-mchēnga pa-ku-lúk-ír-idw-á míkêka.
 16-3-sand 16S-PR-weave-AP-PAS-FV 4-mats
 'The beach is being woven mats on.'
 b. Mikêka i-ku-lúk-ír-idw-á pá-mchēnga.
 4-mats 4S-PR-weave-AP-PAS-FV 16-3-sand
 'The mats are being woven on the beach.'

The behavior of locative applicative constructions is probably related to the fact that the locative NP carries its own Case marker, in contrast to benefactive or instrumental NPs. The noun, 'sand', in the above examples has an additional preposition-like gender class marker, '16', attached outside the usual noun gender class marker, '3'. This fact suggests that the locative does not require Case from an outside Case assigner. If the applicative morpheme does not assign Case it can attach at the root level without creating a ditransitive root. This eliminates the additional level of morphological structure associated with the non-root applicative in (52) and the root becomes accessible to the passive morpheme, as in (57):

- (57) [[Vroot+locative applicative] passive]

The passive morpheme can thus absorb the Case assigned by the root, forcing the theme to move, as in (56b).

The variant in (56b), where the locative is in the subject position, may be produced in one of two ways. If the applicative morpheme assigns Case here, the applicative morpheme would be unable to attach at the root level. (56b) would thus have the same structure as the other Chicheŵa applicative constructions discussed above, where only the Case of the adjacent applicative is accessible to the passive morpheme. Alternatively, if the locative applicative never assigns Case, (56b) could be derived from (56a) by locative inversion, paralleling examples like (58), where a PP fronts while the NP object remains in the VP:

will block the passive morpheme from absorbing any Case but that supplied by the applicative, just as in the examples with overt applicatives discussed above.

- (58) Chicheŵa (Bresnan and Kanerva (1989 (54a)))
 Kw-á mfûmu ku-na-pérék-edw-á mphâtso.
 17-ASC 9chief 17SB-REC PST-give-PASS-IND 10gift
 'To the chief were given gifts.'

2.3. SYMMETRIC AND ASYMMETRIC PASSIVES IN KINYARWANDA

Kinyarwanda has a symmetric passive in benefactive applicative constructions, as in (60), and in instrumental applicative constructions, as in (61):

- (59) Kinyarwanda (Kimenyi (1980, p. 65))
 Umugóre a-rá-hé-er-a umugabo ímbwa ibíryo.
 woman she-pres-give-appl-asp man dog food
 'The woman is giving food to the dog for the man.'
- (60) a. Umugabo a-rá-hé-er-w-a ímbwa ibíryo n'ûmugóre.
 man he-pres-give-appl-pass-asp dog food by woman
 'The man is given food for the dog by the woman.'
- b. Ímbwa i-rá-hé-er-w-a umugabo ibíryo n'ûmugóre.
 dog it-pres-give-appl-pass-asp man food by woman
 'The dog is given food for the man by the woman.'
- c. Ibíryo bi-rá-hé-er-w-a umugabo ímbwa n'ûmugóre.
 food it-pres-give-appl-pass-asp man dog by woman
 'The food is given to the dog for the man by the woman.'
- (61) Kimenyi (1980, pgs. 81-83)
- a. Umugabo a-ra-andik-iish-a íbárúwa íkárámu.
 man he-pres-write-instr-asp letter pen
 'The man is writing a letter with the pen.'
- b. Íbárúwa i-ra-andik-iish-w-a íkárámu n'ûmugabo.
 letter it-pres-write-instr-pass-asp pen by man
 'The letter is being written with a pen by the man.'
- c. Íkárámu i-ra-andik-iish-w-a íbárúwa n'ûmugabo.
 pen it-pres-write-instr-pass-asp letter by man
 'The pen is used to write a letter by the man.'

If the passive verbs in these constructions have the morphological structure in (62), where the applicative morpheme is attached at the root level but the passive morpheme is not, we expect this symmetric pattern:

- (62) [[Vroot+applicative] passive]

Just as in the symmetric passives without (overt) applicative morphemes discussed in section one, the passive morpheme is located at the level of morphological structure adjacent to the root level. As a result, all of the Case assigning morphemes at the root level are accessible to the passive morpheme, which can absorb any one of these Cases. Because the passive morpheme is not attached at the root level, the agent is not suppressed when ACB applies and thus ACB does not interfere with Case assignment in the VP.

While Kinyarwanda is often used as an example of a language with a symmetric passive, some applicative constructions in Kinyarwanda have an asymmetric passive. One example is the alienable possessor construction. If an alienable possessor is added to a construction with a symmetric passive, such as (61), the resulting construction has an asymmetric passive, as shown in (63) (Kimenyi (1980)). Only the NP associated with the alienable possessor applicative morpheme can undergo NP Movement in the passive, as shown in (63b). Neither the theme nor the instrument can passivize in the construction in (63), despite the fact that either one can in the construction in (61):³²

(63) Kinyarwanda (Kimenyi (1980, p. 110-111))

- a. Umuhuûngu y-a-andik-iish-ir-ije umukoôbwa íbárúwa íkárámu.
 boy he-pst-write-instr-appl-asp girl letter pen
 'The boy wrote the letter with the girl's pen.'
- b. Umukoôbwa y-a-andik-iish-ir-ij-w-e íkárámu íbárúwa
 girl she-pst-write-instr-appl-asp-pass-asp pen letter
 'The girl had her pen used by the boy to write a letter.'
 n'ûmuhuûngu.
 by boy
- c. *Íbárúwa y-a-andik-iish-ir-ij-w-e umukoôbwa íkárámu
 letter it-pst-write-instr-appl-asp-pass-asp girl pen
 'The letter was written with the girl's pen by the boy.'
 n'ûmuhuûngu.
 by boy
- d. *Íkárámu y-a-andik-iish-ir-ij-w-e umukoôbwa íbárúwa
 boy he-pst-write-instr-appl-asp-pass-asp girl letter
 'The pen of the girl was used to write a letter by the boy.'
 n'ûmuhuûngu.
 by boy

The account proposed above for Chicheŵa asymmetric passives also accounts for the construction in (63), if the applicative morpheme associated with the alienable possessor cannot be added at the root

³²The fact that (63) has an asymmetric passive is not related to the presence of three NP objects or two overt applicative morphemes. The benefactive example in (59) has three NPs and it is has a symmetrical passive, whereas alienable possession constructions with two NP objects and only one applicative morpheme are asymmetric (see Kimenyi (1980, p. 103)).

level:³³ A level of morphological structure between the passive morpheme and the root makes the Cases at the root level inaccessible to the passive morpheme.

(64) [[Vroot+INST] applicative] passive]

Only the adjacent applicative morpheme is accessible, producing the observed result that only the alienable possessor NP can passivize. We thus see how it is possible for different constructions in the same language to manifest different patterns in the passive.

2.4. IMPERSONAL PASSIVES

We saw in section 1 that there is a connection between the type of passive a language has and the type of impersonal passives that language allows. Languages with symmetric passives allow all types of impersonal passives (intransitive, transitive and ditransitive), if they allow impersonal passives at all. Languages with English-type asymmetric passives never allow transitive or ditransitive impersonal passives, regardless of whether they allow intransitive ones.

This correlation also holds of applicative constructions. We saw above in (61) that instrumental applicative constructions in Kinyarwanda have a symmetric passive. We see in (65) below that this construction allows a ditransitive impersonal passive. That is, both NP arguments remain in the VP, while the subject position is filled with a PP:³⁴

(65) Kinyarwanda (Kimenyi (1980, p. 106))

- a. Úmwáalímu y-a-andik-iish-ije imibáre íngwa ku kíbááho.
 teacher he-pst-write-instr-asp math chalk on blackboard
 'The teacher wrote with chalk math on the blackboard.'
- b. Ku kíbáaho ha-ra-andik-iish-w-a imibáre íngwa
 on blackboard it-pres-write-instr-pass-asp math chalk
 n'úmwáalímu.
 by teacher
 'Math is being written on the blackboard with chalk
 by the teacher.'

The grammaticality of (65b) is expected if, as argued above, the passive

³³The inability of the alienable possessor applicative morpheme to attach at the root level could be the result of a subcategorization-like feature determining the level of morphological structure at which morphemes can attach (cf. Marantz (1984, p. 232)). However, an NLLT reviewer points out that both the benefactive applicative and the alienable possessor applicative have the same form, ir, and that "this homophony is maintained across a rather wide range of Bantu languages". If both irs are the same morpheme, then, the reviewer suggests, it would be better to derive the difference in behavior from the difference in the thematic roles. I predict that we will find that only certain thematic roles can occur in root level argument structures and alienable possessor is not one of them.

³⁴The example in (b) was kindly provided by Alexandre Kimenyi.

morpheme does not need to absorb a Case in Kinyarwanda and ACB does not interfere with the passive verb's ability to assign Case in the VP.

In contrast, HiBena, which was shown above to have an English-type asymmetric passive, allows intransitive impersonal passives, as in (66), but not ditransitive ones, as in (67):

(66) HiBena (Hodges and Stucky (1979 (2)))

a. umusehe a-bahile mu-nyumba.
old-man ag-remain in-house
'The old man remained in the house.'

b. mu-nyumba mwa-bahil-we n-umusehe
in-house ag-remain-pass by-old-man
'In the house was remained by the old man.'

(67) Hodges and Stucky (1979 (7c))

*mu-hijiji mwa-nyamul-ilil-we umusehe ihidoto n-umudala
in-village ag-carry-app/T-pass old-man basket by-woman
'In the village was carried (for) the old man the basket by
the woman.'

The fact that intransitive impersonal passives are grammatical indicates that the passive morpheme does not require Case in HiBena, just as in Kinyarwanda. The ungrammaticality of (67) is expected if, as argued above, ACB blocks accusative Case assignment to the highest NP object present. The benefactive argument, 'the old man', cannot get accusative Case from the passive verb in this example and if it does not move to the Spec of IP to get nominative Case, the example is ruled out by the Case Filter.³⁵

³⁵HiBena allows what initially looks like a transitive impersonal passive, where the object present remains in the VP in the passive while a locative fronts, as in (i).

(i) HiBena (Hodges and Stucky (1979 (7b)))

Mu-nyumba mwa-bah-ilil-we avana n-umusehe.
in-house ag-remain-app/T-pass children by-old-man

'In the house was remained (for) the children by the old man.'

However, there is reason to believe that this is not an impersonal passive construction, but rather a personal passive construction in which an NP is denied accusative Case but has the option of remaining in the VP, getting nominative or partitive Case, as in Italian examples like (ii), discussed in Burzio (1986) and Belletti (1988):

(ii) Italian (Belletti (1988 (18a)))

É stato messo un libro sul tavolo.
has been put a book on the table

'A book has been put on the table.'

Chicheŵa allows constructions like (i), even though Chicheŵa does not allow impersonal passives (Bresnan and Kanerva (1989) and Baker (1988, p. 342)).

(iii) Chicheŵa (Bresnan and Kanerva (1989 (54a)))

Kw-á mfûmu ku-na-pérék-edw-á mphâtso.
17-ASC 9chief 17SB-REC PST-give-PASS-IND 10gift

'To the chief were given gifts.'

In Chicheŵa and Italian, just as in HiBena, NP Movement is obligatory in ditransitive passive and unaccusative constructions (Hodges and

3. UNACCUSATIVES

This section deals with NP Movement in unaccusative constructions. Section 3.1 demonstrates how Accusative Case Blocking drives NP Movement in unaccusatives and thereby replaces Burzio's (1986) generalization. ACB correctly predicts which NP undergoes NP Movement in unaccusatives with two NP arguments, if it is formulated to use Grimshaw's (1990) aspectual hierarchy to determine which argument qualifies as the highest, when the arguments are differentially ranked by that hierarchy. Section 3.2 shows that ACB predicts the fact that unaccusatives are always asymmetric. Section 3.3 deals with applicative unaccusatives.

3.1. NP MOVEMENT IN UNACCUSATIVES

For unaccusative constructions with one NP argument, the effect of ACB and Burzio's generalization (BG) is the same. The single NP argument of an unaccusative verb is, by default, its highest NP argument and ACB prevents the unaccusative verb from assigning structural accusative Case to that NP:

Belletti and Rizzi (1988) argue that psych verbs of the 'worry' class are unaccusatives with two NP arguments in the VP at D-Structure. They note that these constructions are asymmetric. In the example below, the theme, 'a problem' obligatorily undergoes NP Movement while the experiencer, 'Gianni', cannot:³⁶

- (68)a. Hypothesized D-Structure (ungrammatical at S-Structure)
preoccupa un problema Gianni.
worries a problem Gianni
- b. Un problema_i preoccupa Gianni.
A problem worries Gianni
'A problem worries Gianni.'
- c. *Gianni_i preoccupa un problema.
Gianni worries a problem
'A problem worries Gianni.'

Belletti and Rizzi assume that the second NP has inherent Case in such constructions because BG prohibits unaccusative verbs from assigning structural Case at all. They note, however, that the type of inherent Case that the second NP gets must be accusative because it can be replaced by an accusative clitic:³⁷

Stucky (1979), Bresnan and Kanerva (1989), Belletti and Rizzi (1988) and Woolford (1989).)

³⁶The example in (68), kindly provided by Alessandro Zucchi, is similar to one discussed by Belletti and Rizzi, but their definite theme has been replaced by an indefinite one to control for the requirement that unaccusative subjects left in postverbal position must be indefinite (see Belletti (1988)).

³⁷See Grimshaw (1990, 21) for arguments that the difference between the fear and frighten classes of psych verbs is systematic and "not the result of an arbitrary lexical specification".

- (69) (Belletti and Rizzi (1988 (98b)))
 Questo preoccupa Gianni.
 this worries Gianni
 'This worries Gianni.'
- (70) (Belletti and Rizzi (1988 (97)))
 Questo lo preoccupa.
 this him worries
 'This worries him.'

If ACB is to replace BG, it must deprive the theme of Case in (68), while allowing the experiencer to receive structural accusative Case from the verb, removing the need to postulate inherent Case. However, if ACB uses the thematic hierarchy to determine the highest argument, it makes exactly the wrong prediction about which NP moves in these constructions. Experiencers are higher than themes on the thematic hierarchy and we would expect (68c) to be grammatical instead of (68b).

There are two possible solutions to this problem. If the argument that Belletti and Rizzi consider to be a theme actually has some other thematic role which is higher than an experiencer on the thematic hierarchy, then ACB would make the correct prediction. However, Grimshaw (1990) argues that a preferable solution involves what she calls the aspectual hierarchy, a hierarchy that encodes event structure. The aspectual hierarchy ranks an argument that causes an event higher than an argument which does not. In the psych verb construction in (68), the aspectual hierarchy ranks the theme higher than the experiencer because the theme is the cause of the event. Thus, ACB will make the correct predictions for the psych verb construction in (68) if the aspectual hierarchy determines which argument is highest when that hierarchy differentially ranks the arguments. (In passive constructions, the cause of the event is suppressed and the aspectual hierarchy ranks the remaining arguments equally.)³⁸

3.2 WHY UNACCUSATIVES ARE ALWAYS ASYMMETRIC

An interesting fact about unaccusative constructions is that they do not divide into two types, paralleling passives. Unaccusatives are always asymmetric. The Italian psych verb construction discussed above allows no choice of which NP will undergo NP Movement and neither do the Norwegian unaccusative constructions below, even though Norwegian has a symmetric passive, as we saw in section 1.1 (Hestvik (1986)):

³⁸Contra Belletti and Rizzi (1988), Grimshaw (1990) argues that the unaccusative subject of the frighten class of psych verbs is base generated in subject position. If so, ACB would not drive NP Movement in this construction, but it would still need to be formulated correctly so as not to deprive the experiencer of Case.

Note that the notion of highest argument that is relevant for ACB differs from Grimshaw's (1990) notion of the most prominent argument. Grimshaw argues that the experiencer is the most prominent argument in the frighten class of psych verb constructions, even though the theme occupies the external subject position.

- (71) Norwegian (Hestvik (1986, (28)))
- a. Det hendte ham noe rart.
there happened him something strange
'Something strange happened to him.'
 - b. Noe rart hendte ham.
something strange happened him
'Something strange happened to him.'
 - c. *Han hendte noe rart.
He happened something strange
- (72) (Åfarli (1989a, p. 181))
- a. Ein tanke slo meg.
a thought struck me
'A thought struck me.'
 - b. *Eg slo ein tanke.
I struck a thought
(ungrammatical with the meaning in (a))

Similar data can be found in Swedish and English (e.g. Anward (1989)).

The fact that unaccusative constructions are asymmetric is expected under the approach proposed here. ACB will always deny structural accusative Case to the unaccusative subject. The conditions that produce a symmetric passive cannot occur in an unaccusative construction. In symmetric passives, what drives NP Movement is the passive morpheme's ability to absorb a Case; but in unaccusatives, there is no passive morpheme to absorb Case. In symmetric passives, ACB does not interfere with Case assignment in the VP because there is an unsuppressed agent that qualifies as the highest argument; in unaccusatives, there is no agent, so ACB always denies accusative Case to the highest internal argument.³⁹

3.3. UNACCUSATIVES WITH APPLICATIVES MORPHEMES

Unaccusative verbs can take an applicative morpheme, as in the Chicheŵa instrumental applicative and locative applicative examples below:

- (73) Chicheŵa (Baker (1988a (49)))
- Msangalatsi a-ku-yend-er-a ndodo.
entertainer SP-PRES-walk-APPL-ASP stick.
'The entertainer is walking with a stick.'

³⁹ACB prevents 'something strange' from being assigned accusative Case, even in (71a) where it occurs in sentence final position. If the Spec of IP is empty in (71a), one might wonder why the other object cannot move there. This would not be possible if there is a chain between the expletive in the Spec of IP and 'something strange'. Even if there is no such chain, Case assignment would have to be optional in the language in order for the other NP to move and leave a Caseless trace.

- (74) Chicheŵa (Bresnan and Moshi (1990 (80a))
 Mbûzi y-a-gw-er-a m-chi-tsîme.
 9goat 9SB-PERF-fall-APPL-IND 18-7-well
 'The goat has fallen into the well.'

However, adding a benefactive applicative often produces an ungrammatical result:⁴⁰

- (75) Chicheŵa (Baker (1988a (43)))
 *Mkango u-ku-yend-er-a anyani.
 lion SP-PRES-walk-APPL-ASP baboons
 'The lion is walking for the baboons.'

Machobane (1989) discusses similar facts in Sesotho and argues that the following descriptive generalization captures these facts: the argument added by an applicative morpheme cannot be higher than the highest argument of the verb it is added to. Machobane accounts for this generalization by proposing that there is a rule that designates the thematically highest argument in any verb's argument structure as the external argument. This rule applies both before, and after, the applicative argument is added. Consider an example in which a benefactive applicative is added to a verb root with a theme argument. Before the applicative is added, Machobane's rule designates the theme as the external argument, as in (76b). (The external argument is underlined.) After the applicative morpheme is added, Machobane's rule reapplies, now designating the benefactive as the external argument:

- (76)a. Vroot: < T >
 b. Vroot: < T >
 c. Vroot+appl < B, T >
 d. Vroot+appl < B, T >

The result is that the verb ends up with two external arguments and such verbs are disallowed in Machobane's approach. This is the result whenever the applicative argument is higher than the original argument. When the applicative argument is lower, the result is grammatical because the same argument is designated as the external argument in both applications of Machobane's rule:

- (77)a. Vroot: < T >
 b. Vroot: < T >
 c. Vroot+appl < T, I >
 d. Vroot+appl < T, I >

Machobane's approach correctly predicts that the passive version of examples like (78) are grammatical, even though the active version is not. The reason is that when one argument is suppressed, the verb is

⁴⁰Baker (1988a) notes that (75) is grammatical with the meaning 'The lion is walking in place of the baboons.' but it cannot have the usual range of meanings associated with the benefactive applicative, such as 'The lion is walking to please the baboons.'

left with only one external argument:⁴¹

- (78) Sesotho (Machobane (1989. p. 82))
- a. *Monna a-sho-ets-e Lineo.
man AGR-die-Appl Lineo
'The husband has dies on Lineo.'
 - b. Lineo o-sho-ets-o-e ke-monna.
Lineo AGR-die-APPL-PASS by-husband
'Lineo has been bereaved of the husband.'

Machobane's account translates easily into the approach proposed here if Machobane's rule is replaced by Accusative Case Blocking. It has already been stated that ACB applies to the argument structure of all verb roots, regardless of whether these are simple verb roots or complex verb roots formed by the addition of a root-level applicative. If ACB can apply to a the argument structure of a simple root and then reapply to the argument structure that results when a root level applicative is added and if ACB leaves a record of its earlier application that survives the formation of a complex root, then ACB will do the work of Machobane's rule.

In (79b), ACB marks the theme as ineligible to receive its structural Case. Once the applicative is added in (79c), forming a complex verb root, ACB applies again. If a benefactive argument is added, it becomes the new highest argument and ACB marks it ineligible to receive accusative Case, as in (79d). The sentence projected from (79d) would be ungrammatical because it would have two NPs that get no accusative Case, but only one place to move to get nominative Case (Spec of IP). The NP that can't move to the Spec of IP to get Case violates the Case Filter:

⁴¹Note that the theme, not the benefactive, is suppressed when this construction passivizes, even though the benefactive is higher on the thematic hierarchy. This suggests that the common assumption that the thematically highest argument is suppressed in passives is wrong. Given that in many languages, only agents can be suppressed in the passive (cf. Grimshaw (1990)), it may be that only agents and themes can be suppressed in Sesotho. Another possibility is that applicative arguments can never be suppressed in the passive. Machobane insures that the theme is suppressed in (78) by ordering the passive between steps (76c) and (76d), before the benefactive has been designated as an external argument, but it is not clear what ensures this ordering.

- (79) a. Vroot: < T >
 b. Vroot: < T >
 ↑
 ACB
 c. [Vroot+appl] < B, T > (addition of applicative)
 ↑
 ACB
 d. [Vroot+appl] < B, T >
 ↑ ↑
 ACB ACB

Passivization suppresses one argument, leaving the other to move to the Spec of IP to get Case. Thus passive examples do not violate the Case Filter.

The addition of an applicative argument that is lower than the theme, such as an instrument, does not result in a Case Filter violation because the same argument is highest both before and after the applicative morpheme is attached:⁴²

- (80) a. Vroot: < T >
 b. Vroot: < T >
 ↑
 ACB
 c. [Vroot+appl] < T, I > (addition of applicative)
 ↑
 ACB
 d. [Vroot+appl] < T, I > (by vacuous reapplication of
 ↑ Accusative Case Blocking)
 ACB

In these examples, it has been assumed that the applicative morpheme is added at the root level. If the applicative were not added at the root level, ACB would not reapply after the addition of the applicative morpheme because ACB only applies to argument structures associated with the root level. If there are languages where applicatives are added to unaccusative roots, but not at the root level, we would not expect Machobane's generalization to hold of such languages. That is, such languages should allow a benefactive applicative to attach to an unaccusative verb. One might think that Chicheŵa should be such a language, given that the applicative morpheme cannot attach at the root level in the transitive constructions discussed in section 2. However, adding an applicative morpheme to an intransitive root produces only a transitive root, not a ditransitive root. Thus it should be possible to add applicative morphemes at the

⁴²ACB would need to be formulated to ignore any mark left by a previous application of ACB or else the theme would be viewed as a marked argument in (80d) and ACB would select the instrument as the highest unmarked argument.

root level in Chicheŵa. However, in order to rule out an alternate derivation of examples like (75) in which the applicative morpheme is not added at the root level, the theory would need to force applicative morphemes to attach at the root level, if possible.

4. THE THEORETICAL STATUS OF ACCUSATIVE CASE BLOCKING

Accusative Case Blocking was introduced in this paper as a universal rule of Case Theory that applies to argument structures. However, all of the examples discussed in this paper are from languages with nominative-accusative Case systems and the question arises of whether ACB applies in languages with ergative-absolutive Case systems. The answer to this question depends on whether absolutive Case corresponds to accusative Case or to nominative Case. If intransitive subjects in ergative-absolutive languages get structural accusative Case from the verb, then ACB must not block the verb from assigning structural accusative Case to its highest argument in such languages. On the other hand, if absolutive Case corresponds to nominative Case, ACB is compatible with ergative-absolutive systems. Intransitive constructions would have nominative (=absolutive) subjects. The fact that transitive constructions with ergative subjects have nominative (=absolutive) objects would be predicted by ACB if ergative is a lexical Case. As in constructions with dative subjects and nominative objects (see Yip, Maling, and Jackendoff (1987)), ACB would ignore the lexically cased subject and mark the object as ineligible to get structural accusative Case from the verb. The object would then have to surface in a position in which it could be assigned nominative (=absolutive) Case or the result would violate the Case Filter.

A second question that arises with respect to the theoretical status of ACB is what assumptions about word formation is it consistent with. If word formation is done entirely in syntax, a conflict arises between the standard view of Chomsky (1981), that all arguments projected at D-structure are preserved throughout the derivation, and the assumption made here that agents are not suppressed in passives until the passive morpheme is attached to the verbal complex. At D-structure, the verb root would assign an agent role, but this role would be suppressed at some point in the syntactic derivation, contrary to the requirements of the Projection Principle/Theta Criterion.⁴³ However, this problem may not arise under Chomsky's (1992) approach which eliminates D-structure and the Projection Principle.

ACB is consistent with any approach in which all word formation occurs before words are inserted into syntactic structures, as well as with any approach wherein the verb stem (the root plus applicative and passive morphemes (cf. Myers (1987)) is formed in the lexicon, but higher nodes such as tense and agreement are assembled in syntax. Under either view, the verb (or verb stem) would assign Case and theta roles to NPs outside the verb, on the basis of information in the argument structure associated with the fully assembled verb (or verb stem). Regardless of whether the agent is suppressed at the root level or later, it would be suppressed in the verbal unit that does theta assignment and no conflict with the Theta Criterion/Projection Principle would arise.

⁴³This conflict was pointed out to me by Hagit Borer.

Another possible division of the task of word formation between the lexicon and syntax would be to claim that verb roots are assembled in the lexicon, while higher levels of morphological structure are assembled in syntax. This would allow us to capture the fact that ACB only applies at the root level by classifying ACB as a lexical rule. However, to avoid the conflict with the Theta Criterion/Projection Principle discussed above, agents would have to be suppressed at D-Structure in English-type asymmetric passives, but not suppressed at all in other types of passives. (The unsuppressed agent would be assigned to the passive morpheme, as in Baker, Johnson, and Roberts (1989)). We would then expect to find differences correlating with whether or not the passive assigns an external theta role, but the passive agent does not appear to have greater binding powers in a symmetric passive language like Norwegian than it does in English.⁴⁴

5. OTHER SYMMETRIC/ASYMMETRIC PHENOMENA

Most previous approaches to the problem of symmetric and asymmetric passives assume that the type of passive a language has is not an independent variable, but covaries with other phenomena such as the behavior of object markers.⁴⁵ This section demonstrates that the behavior of passives is independent of such phenomena and requires an independent treatment.

5.1. SYMMETRICAL AND ASYMMETRICAL OBJECT LANGUAGES

Bresnan and Moshi (1990) consider the fact that Chicheŵa allows only one object to passivize, while Kichaga allows either object to passivize, to be one of a series of typological differences characteristic of asymmetrical versus symmetrical object languages.⁴⁶ Because of this, a casual reader might get the impression that asymmetrical object languages always have asymmetric passives and symmetrical object languages always have symmetric passives. If this were true, then the account of these types of passives would be expected to follow from the account of asymmetrical and symmetrical object languages and it would not be legitimate to treat passives as an independent problem. However, Bresnan and Moshi make it clear that the crucial difference between asymmetrical and symmetrical object languages is not whether there is a

⁴⁴If the passive morpheme were assigned the agent role in Norwegian, we would expect it to be able to bind a reflexive in a passive construction like (i) where nothing moves out of the VP and the passive morpheme c-commands the reflexive. But (i) is ungrammatical, according to Hestvik (personal communication).

(i) *Det vart sent seg selv en katalog.
 there was sent REFL a catalog
 'There was sent himself a catalog.'

⁴⁵The term 'object marker' is the standard term in the literature on Bantu languages for an object clitic or agreement morpheme inside the verbal complex.

⁴⁶In an asymmetrical object language, only one of the two objects in a double object construction can passivize, become an object marker, be an unspecified object or become a reciprocal. In symmetrical object languages, both objects can.

choice of which NP passivizes (or manifests other object properties such as becoming an object marker, an unspecified object, or a reciprocal). Instead, an asymmetrical object language is one in which only one NP at a time can manifest object properties while symmetrical object languages allow both objects in a double object construction to manifest object properties at once. In fact, asymmetrical object languages can have either a symmetric or an asymmetric passive, and the same is true of symmetrical object languages.

Chicheŵa is an example of an asymmetrical object language with an asymmetric passive (Bresnan and Moshi (1990)), while Kitharaka is an example of an asymmetrical object language with a symmetric passive (Harford (to appear)). Harford classifies Kitharaka as an asymmetrical object language because it never allows both objects to manifest object properties at once. For example, it is impossible for one NP to passivize while the other becomes an object marker, as shown in (81). Nevertheless, Kitharaka has a symmetric passive, as shown in (82):

- (81) Kitharaka (Harford (to appear ((7) and (8))))
- a. *Mw-íkí ná-á-rá-í-túm-íír-w-é né-ékúú.
 1-bride foc-SM1-past-OM10-sew-past/appl-pass-FV by-2/woman
 'The bride had them sewn for her by the women.'
- b. *Ngúó ní-í-rá-mú-túm-íír-w-é né-ékúú.
 10/clothes foc-SM10-past-OM1-sew-past/appl-pass-FV by-2/woman
 'The clothes were sewn for her by the women.'
- (82) Kitharaka (Harford (to appear ((1) and (2))))
- a. Mw-íkí ná-á-rá-túm-íír-w-é ngúò
 1-bride foc-SM1-past-sew-past/appl-pass-FV 10/clothes
 né-ékúú.
 by-2/women
 'The bride had clothes sewn for her by the women.'
- b. Ngúó ní-í-rá-túm-íír-w-é mw-íkì
 10/clothes foc-SM10-past-sew-past/appl-pass-FV 1-bride
 né-ékúú.
 by-2/women
 'The clothes were sewn for the bride by the women.'

Symmetrical object languages like Kinyarwanda and Kichaga have symmetric passives (Bresnan and Moshi (1990)), but Bresnan and Moshi (1990) note that there are such languages "in which asymmetries occur with subclasses of objects" (p. 147). As we saw above, Kinyarwanda has an asymmetric passive in alienable possessor constructions (cf. Keach and Rochemont (1992)).

Given that asymmetrical and symmetrical object languages can have either type of passive, it is clear that an account of passives is needed that is independent of any parameter that distinguishes asymmetrical and symmetrical object languages.

5.2. PASSIVIZATION AND OBJECT MARKERS

Most previous approaches to the problem of symmetric and asymmetric passives assume that if an NP can passivize, it can be realized as an object marker, and vice versa. Such approaches account for both of these abilities simultaneously by postulating one property that an NP must have before it can passivize or become an object marker. For Gary and Keenan (1977), this property is the grammatical relation, 'object'. For Baker (1988a), this property is structural Case.

But these two properties do not always covary. In Chicheŵa, for example, either NP can be realized as an object marker in instrumental applicative constructions, as shown in (83), but only one of these NPs can passivize, as shown in (84):⁴⁷

(83) Chicheŵa (Alsina and Mchombo (1989 (6)))

a. Anyāni a-ku-ú-phwány-ir-á dēngu.
2-baboons 2S-PR-3O-break-AP-FV 5-basket
'The baboons are breaking the basket with it.'

b. Anyāni a-ku-lí-phwány-ir-á mwāla.
2-baboons 2S-PR-5O-break-AP-FV 3-stone
'The baboons are breaking it with the stone.'

(84) (Alsina and Mchombo (1989 (8)))

a. Mwāla u-ku-phwány-ír-idw-á dēngu (ndí anyāni).
3-stone 3S-PR-break-AP-PAS-FV 5-basket by 2-baboons
'The stone is being used (by the baboons) to break the basket.'

b. *Dēngu li-ku-phwány-ír-idw-á mwāla (ndí anyāni).
5-basket 5S-PR-break-AP-PAS-FV 3-stone by 2-baboons

We saw in section 2 that only the NP associated with the applicative morpheme can passivize in Chicheŵa, but a very different generalization describes the behavior of object markers in Chicheŵa: only the NP adjacent to the verb can become an object marker (cf. Baker (1988a)). When the word order is fixed, as in benefactive applicative constructions, only the benefactive NP, which is adjacent to the verb, can become an object marker (see Baker (1988b p. 266-267). But when the word order is free, as in instrumental and locative applicative constructions, either argument can be realized as an object marker (see Baker (1988b, p. 301) and Alsina and Mchombo (1989 (46))).

A more extreme difference in the behavior of object markers and passives is found in Runyambo (Rugemalira (to appear)). Runyambo allows three NPs to be realized as object markers at once:

⁴⁷The difference in the behavior of benefactive and instrumental applicative constructions in Chicheŵa is noted in Baker (1988a) and Bresnan and Moshi (1990). Alsina and Mchombo (1989) propose a special default to prevent their approach from predicting that either object can passivize in instrumental applicatives in Chicheŵa.

- (85) Runyambo (Rugemalira (to appear (8)))
 a-ka-ga-mu-m-pé-er-a.
 she-PAST-it-him-me-give-APP-FV
 'She gave it to him for me.'

Yet, Runyambo has an asymmetric passive. In the benefactive applicative construction below, only the benefactive NP can passivize:^{48,49}

- (86) Runyambo (Rugemalira (to appear (7)))
- a. omuseija a-ka-reet-er-á omwááná ebiráatwa.
 man he-PAST-bring-APP-FV child shoes
 'A man brought shoes for a child.'
- b. omwááná (ebiráátwa) a-ka-bi-reet-er-w-á omuséija.
 child (shoes) she-PAST-them-bring-APP-PAS-FV man
 'The child was brought them by a man.'
- c. *ebiráátwá (omwáána) bi-ka-mu-reet-er-w-á omuséija.
 shoes (child) they-PAST-her-bring-APP-PAS-FV man
 'Shoes were brought for her by a man.'

In Kinyarwanda, the correlation between the ability of an NP to become an object marker and its ability to passivize is extremely strong (see Kimenyi (1980)). However, any approach that predicts that any NP with a certain property can become an object marker or passivize in Kinyarwanda encounters the following problem. In a double object construction such as (87), where either NP can passivize, as in (88), and both NPs can become object markers, as in (89a), one would expect the second NP to be able to passivize while the first is realized as an object marker. But this expectation is wrong. It is impossible for the higher NP to become an object marker while the lower NP passivizes, as in (89c), although the opposite combination is possible, as in (89b):

- (87) Kinyarwanda (Kimenyi (1980, p. 127))
 Umugabo y-a-haa-ye umugóre igitabo.
 man he-pst-give-asp woman book
 'The man gave the woman the book.'
- (88)a. Igitabo cy-a-haa-w-e umugóre n'ûmugabo.
 book it-pst-give-pass-asp woman by man
 'The book was given to the woman by the man.'

⁴⁸In contrast to most previous approaches, for which such data would be problematic, Bresnan and Moshi's (1990) account predicts the existence of such a language, because it allows languages the option of having a looser requirement for object markers than for passives.

⁴⁹The Runyambo passive is unusual. The passive agent NP appears in the VP at S-Structure, as in Haya (Duranti and Byarushengo (1977)), but while Haya allows the second object to remain in the VP, Runyambo requires it to be realized as an object marker (Rugemalira (to appear)). Because of this, the Runyambo passive may be asymmetric for the same reason as the Kinyarwanda example in (89) discussed below.

- b. Umugóre y-a-haa-w-e igitabo n'ûmugabo.
 woman she-pst-give-pass-asp book by man
 'The woman was given the book by the man.'

(89) Kinyarwanda (Kimenyi (1980, p. 132))

- a. Umugabo y-a-kí-mu-haa-ye.
 man he-pst-it-him-give-asp
 'The man gave it to him.'
- b. Y-a-gi-haa-w-e n'ûmugabo.
 he-pst-it-give-pass-asp by man
 'He was given it by the man.'
- c. *Cy-a-mu-haa-w-e n'ûmugabo.
 it-pst-him-give-pass-asp by man
 'It was given to him by the man.'

The ungrammaticality of (89c) shows that, even for Kinyarwanda, no single property determines both the ability of an NP to passivize and to be realized as an object marker.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The model of symmetric and asymmetric passives presented here draws on Baker (1988a,b), Marantz (1984, 1990), and Burzio (1986). In this model, there are not one, but two independent mechanisms that can drive NP Movement in passives: (1) the passive morpheme's ability to absorb a Case and (2) a rule of Case Theory called Accusative Case Blocking that replaces Burzio's generalization. ACB captures the intuition that no verb can assign structural accusative Case to its subject, regardless of whether that subject is internal or external.

The effect that these two mechanisms have on a particular construction is determined by the morphological structure of the passive verb. The passive morpheme can absorb Case only from an accessible Case assigning morpheme--one at the same or an adjacent level of morphological structure. In symmetric passives, all Case assigning morphemes are accessible to the passive morpheme, but in Chicheŵa-type asymmetric passives, an additional level of morphological structure blocks the passive morpheme from absorbing any Case except that of the adjacent morpheme. In Kinyarwanda, a symmetric passive can be turned into a Chicheŵa-type asymmetric passive with the addition of an applicative morpheme that adds another level of structure between the passive morpheme and the root.

Morphological structure also determines the effect that Accusative Case Blocking has on a passive verb. ACB applies only to the argument structure associated with the root level of morphological structure. If the passive morpheme is attached at the root level, the agent is suppressed when ACB applies and the highest unmarked argument in the VP is denied accusative Case, producing an English-type asymmetric passive. In languages where the passive morpheme attaches later than the root level, ACB does not drive NP Movement in passives because the agent is not yet suppressed when ACB applies.

For unaccusatives with two NP arguments, ACB eliminates the necessity of stipulating inherent Case for the argument that remains in the VP and accounts for the fact that unaccusative constructions are always asymmetric, rather than dividing into symmetric and asymmetric types as passives do.

The problem of symmetric and asymmetric passives is treated apart from the problem of symmetric and asymmetric object languages because asymmetric object languages may have either symmetric or asymmetric passives and the same is true of symmetric object languages.

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Department of Linguistics
 University of Massachusetts
 Amherst, Massachusetts 01003
 woolford@linguist.umass.edu