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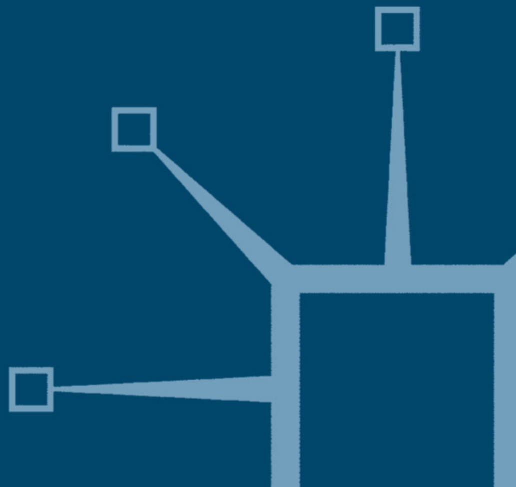
Junichi Toyota



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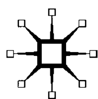

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In loving memory of
my grandmother, Mitsue Saito,
my aunt Yoko Saito and
my uncle, Tatsuo Saito

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* * *

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Abbreviations

ABS	absolutive
ACC	accusative
AD	adversative
ANTIP	antipassive
ART	article
CAUS	causative
CONJ	conjunction
DAT	dative
DEC	declarative
DIR	direct
DM	declarative marker
FOC	focus
FUT	future
GEN	genitive
IMPERS	impersonal
INAN	inanimate
IND	indicative
INSTR	instrumental
INTR	intransitive
INV	inverse
MASC	masculine
ME	Middle English
MOD	modality
NEG	negative
NOM	nominative
OBJ	object
OBL	oblique
OE	Old English
PAR	partitive
PART	participle
PASS	passive
PST	past
PDE	Present-day English
PFV	perfective
PERF	perfect
PIE	Proto-Indo-European
PL	plural
PRS	present
REFL	reflexive
REL	relative pronoun
SG	singular
SUBJ	subjunctive
TOP	topic
TR	transitive
VN	verbal noun
1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
*	ungrammatical
?	semantically anomalous
#	contextually inappropriate

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction: a general view on the passive voice and its description

The subject matter of this book is the semantic and pragmatic analysis of the English passive voice in diachronic perspective. The passive voice has received much attention over the past several decades. Grammatical voice itself is complex and there are a number of properties yet to be analysed. A large number of previous publications are dedicated to issues of grammatical voice *per se* (e.g. Siewierska 1984; Keenan 1985; Kemmer 1993; Geniušienė 1987; Kleiman 1991; just to name a few) or to the interrelationship within the voice systems, sometime known as the voice continuum (e.g. Croft 1994, 2001: 283–319; Givón 1990: 563–644; Palmer 1994: 142–75; Shibatani 1985, 1998), which reveal that the active, passive and middle voices are somehow related to each other and that there are certain patterns among them, as we will examine in detail in Chapter 3.

The system of grammatical voice has been presented in the grammar books of numerous languages and it is safe to say that it is almost always mentioned in some way. However, what is treated as the passive may vary from book to book. This means that the actual languages are described according to a scholar's own discipline, belief, intuition, etc. Thus, there is a danger of misinterpreting the data. There certainly was, and there remains to a certain degree, a trend of having an anglocentric view of the description of grammar in modern linguistics. The grammar of various languages was described on the basis of constructions in English alone. The passive is a good example of such cases: in some languages, a periphrastic construction similar to 'copula + main verb in past participle', based on its surface structure, is blindly named passive

and if there is no matching construction, the passive meaning is often rendered by alternative constructions, such as indefinite pronouns. The English structure has unconsciously been influencing the description of other languages (Andersen 1990: 142ff.).

Constructions and their properties vary from language to language. So the property of the passive in one language is different from that in another. This causes various problems for the learner of a foreign language (see, for example, Fredriksson 2001 for Swedish and English passive constructions and Swan and Smith 1987 for various languages in comparison with English) or in the area of translation (Filipović 2002 lists some cases of different interpretation in Serbo-Croatian and English motion verbs and particles). These problematic features are all synchronic matters and once they are considered diachronically, a translation from earlier languages, say Old English or Old Japanese, to Present-day English or Japanese, may create various challenges for translators, although the languages are basically English or Japanese of some sort. By looking at a construction in various languages, its grammatical properties become clearer. There are a number of historical works on the English passive which are predominantly syntax-oriented. However, there is little work on the passive in the area which emphasises the interaction with other similar 'passive-like' constructions, both syntactically and semantically (except for some previous work such as Givón and Yang 1994, Haegeman 1985, Toyota 2007, for the relationship between *get*-passive and reflexive-causative). Also, in previous work, the definition of passive is rather unchallenged, i.e. the construction 'auxiliary *be* and past participle' is considered to be either a verbal or adjectival passive and *get*+past participle is automatically taken as a type of passive. As a result, some very interesting interactions of the voice system in English may be overlooked, especially at the diachronic level.

1.2 Various approaches to the voice system

The passive voice is often associated with its active counterpart because of the syntactic correspondence between the subject and the object, i.e. the active object corresponds to the passive subject, the active subject to the oblique agent phrase in the passive. Thus, a boundary between the active and the passive is often assumed. This syntactic property seems to override differences in terms of semantics and pragmatics in the passive, such as topicality change and impersonalisation. This syntax-based

analysis has an enormous influence on the grammatical approaches illustrated below, and both traditional and modern approaches assume this influence from the syntactic relationship.

Broadly speaking, traditional approaches to the passive are purely descriptive, while modern approaches can be usefully divided into three major types (for present purposes): structural, relational and functional. The first two may jointly be called formal approaches. The characteristic of these approaches is the use of a fully explicit device to reveal the internal grammatical system. In addition, they take full advantage of mathematical or logical methods for analysis. They also generally posit a strict distinction between syntax and semantics. Within these formal approaches, accounts have varied between more syntactic and more lexical views of the passive. Functional approaches are distinguished by their concern for explanations of the influence from context and various attempts to unify pragmatics and semantics with syntax. This division can be schematised in Figure 1.1.

In addition, there are some semantic and pragmatic approaches (among others, Shibatani 1985; Givón 1983, 1994; Foley and Van Valin 1984), which normally involve dealing with a large amount of natural occurring data.

What is common among all approaches is the assumption of a categorical boundary, such as NOUN, VERB, ADJECTIVE, etc. These distinctions are normally made according to syntactic behaviour. A similar distinction can be applied to the voice system, i.e. ACTIVE, PASSIVE and

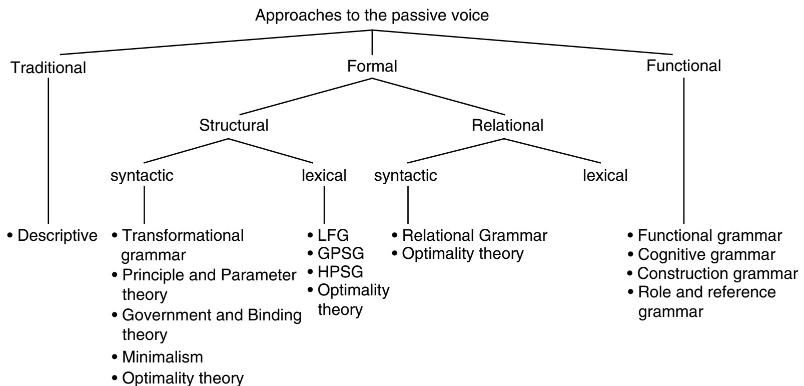

Figure 1.1 Various approaches to the passive voice

MIDDLE are rigidly distinguished, although, we may note, less so in functional approaches, where some fuzzy boundaries are often observed.

1.3 Aim of the study

The general objective of this book is to improve our understanding of the voice continuum in English, focusing especially on the passive voice. I analyse the significance of the category PASSIVE within grammatical voice and how this category changes over time. I include those 'passive-like' constructions (syntactically similar constructions) and other non-passive constructions which produce the same reading or effect as the passive (semantically and pragmatically similar constructions). In addition I compare changes in the passive and in those related constructions. As we will see, there are numerous cases where there is no clear division among different types of constructions. Thus my view is that the voice system is best treated as an example of gradience, where the three different voice types are treated in a network or continuum of semantic characteristics.

The main aim is to reveal the conceptual development of the English passive and describe its historical changes. It is not intended to explore the various grammatical voice constructions in a particular grammatical framework, as this is basically a descriptive work, although it is strongly biased towards the functional approaches shown in Figure 1.1 above. Thus, some of the treatments used in these approaches will be shown on various occasions. This study mainly focuses on the analysis of the English voice system, which has been rather unchallenged for purposes of description. However, I often look at the English voice system from the typological point of view, which leads to an unconventional set of definitions.

1.4 Method

A variety of data sources will be employed for the analysis: corpora are used for statistical analysis (see 1.4.2 below). It should be noted that some examples were collected manually, since certain constructions or phrases may happen not to appear in corpora. Also, a limited amount of typological data, for example, from other Indo-European languages (henceforth IE languages), are incorporated in order to highlight a particular construction or its change in English. On the diachronic level, I sometimes refer to some reconstructed ancient languages such as

Proto-Indo-European (henceforth PIE). Several points necessary for the analysis are described below.

1.4.1 Diachronic classification of the English language

There are various conventional divisions of the English language into time periods. The following broad division is generally agreed upon among scholars and therefore widely used: Old English (OE) (700–1100), Middle English (ME) (1100–1500), Modern English (ModE) (1500–present), and Present-day English (PDE). However, this is sometimes broken down into finer divisions which divide ME into Early Middle English (eME) (1100–1350) and Late Middle English (lME) (1350–1500), and ModE into Early Modern English (eModE) (1500–1700) and Late Modern English (lModE) (1700–present). This classification can be schematised in Figure 1.2. In the present work, both broad and finer divisions are adopted and applied according to the importance of the specificity of the period.

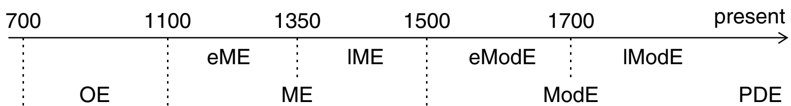

Figure 1.2 Diachronic classification of periods in the English language

1.4.2 Data

A linguistic study ideally involves analysis of both spoken and written data. The crucial aspect in historical work is that access to spoken data is unavailable. Therefore, we have to bear in mind the effect of its absence. Fortunately there are several electronic databases for English data from OE to PDE. The advantage of such databases is that the registers are well mixed, making the result more representative. For this study I have drawn on the corpora listed in Table 1.1 (on page 6).

In addition, HC usefully divides each period so that it includes even finer periods (finer than the distinction shown in Figure 1.2 above), as shown in the Table 1.2 (details taken from Kytö 1996: 233–48). When the data taken from HC are mentioned, we refer to the finer period. So for example, when an example is taken from the OE text *Beowulf*, it is indicated as (HC OE3 cobeowulf).

Since dialectal difference is not of interest here, British English alone will be analysed. The electronic database is useful for statistical purposes, but when it comes to analysing a particular verb phrase or construction,

Table 1.1 Size of corpora used in the study[1]

Corpus	Period	Size in words
• Helsinki (HC)	OE (700–1150)	413,300
	ME (1150–1500)	608,570
	eModE (1500–1710)	551,000
• ARCHER	lModE (1710–1960)	606,634
• London-Lund (LL)	PDE (spoken)	623,784
• Lancaster-Oslo/ Bergen (LOB)	PDE (written)	1,214,752

Table 1.2 Further period distinctions in HC

General distinction	Finer distinction	Periods
OE	OE1	–850
	OE2	850–950
	OE3	950–1050
	OE4	1050–1150
ME	ME1	1150–1250
	ME2	1250–1350
	ME3	1350–1420
	ME4	1420–1500
eModE	E1	1500–1570
	E2	1570–1640
	E3	1640–1710

it may not contain a useful example. Thus, these electronic data are combined with some secondary sources: Visser (1963–73), Denison (1993), Mustanoja (1960), Mitchell (1985), the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*), the *Middle English Dictionary* (MED) and *The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records* (*ASPR*).

1.5 Organisation of the Study

This book starts with the analysis of *be*-passive, then moves on to different constructions, such as *get*-passive, *This TV needs fixing* construction, the use of indefinite pronouns, etc. Chapter 2 focuses on the overview of the passive voice, including a taxonomic system of the passive, both form and function, in addition to the aspectual issues concerning the English *be*-passive. I will deal with the development of the perfective aspect in relation to the passive, as well as some specific forms, such as

progressive passive and perfective passive, which are considered important indicators of grammaticalisation. This chapter also introduces the general history of the English passive.

Chapter 3 deals with detailed morphosemantic and syntactic analysis of each component of the English *be*-passive, i.e. auxiliary and past participle. The auxiliary is analysed in an historical context implying gradience, and the past participle is dissected into small parts, such as the prefix *ge*-, the suffix *-ed*, specific participles including stative verbs, prepositional phrases, etc. Then the relationship between the auxiliary and past participle is analysed from functional perspectives, which supplement various characteristics discussed earlier in this chapter.

Chapter 4 introduces various functional aspects of the passive voice. Various basic functions, such as topicality change or impersonalisation, are explored, but at the same time, some marginal cases which violate the basic functional characteristics. The gradient nature of functions will also be highlighted in this chapter. Chapter 5 focuses on the historical changes in the functions of the English passive. In particular, I discuss word order change, which is crucial in the formation of the passive functionally. This chapter also introduces the notion of voice continuum, which will be crucial in later chapters.

Chapters 6–8 analyse various passive constructions in English. Chapter 6 is dedicated to the analysis of the *get*-passive. I analyse its semantic characteristics first and based on this, I argue for a certain type of historical development. In Chapter 7 we are concerned with constructions which have an undergoer subject without the overt marking as passive. Constructions analysed here show the voice continuum with other grammatical voice systems. This chapter also contains the analysis of constructions related to modality. Chapter 8 is about constructions without overt passive marking, but which share the same meanings produced by the canonical passive. This chapter contains analysis of inversion and the use of indefinite pronouns.

2
Be-passive: Overview and Aspectual Change

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I introduce background required for explaining the history of the English *be*-passive construction, in addition to general terminology and classification of the passive in English. I also analyse aspectual change in English, focusing particularly on the perfective aspect. Some specific constructions relating to the aspectual development are discussed, i.e. the progressive passive and the perfective passive. As we will see in due course, these constructions can be considered important indicators of the grammaticalisation.

2.2 Overview: what is passive?

The term 'passive voice' in English is most commonly associated with the construction *be* + past participle. Also, the passive is supposed to have an active counterpart, which forms the active–passive alternation, i.e. 'the passive has a corresponding active the subject of which does not function as the passive subject' (Siewierska 1984: 256, cf. also Section 5.5.1). This characteristic can be schematised in Figure 2.1, where the active object NP_2 becomes the passive subject. However, as we will shortly see in the subsequent sections in this and the following chapters, there seems to be an undefined boundary surrounding the passive in English, both morphosyntactically and morphosemantically. This problem can be made much clearer once it is viewed from diachronic perspectives: questions such as 'Where did the English passive come from?' can be raised. The formation of the passive involves various constructions and functions. There are, in addition, various non-passive constructions

Active				Passive			
NP_1	- VP (ACTIVE) -	NP_2	=	NP_2	-	VP (PASSIVE) -	(NP_1)
SUBJ		OBJ		SUBJ			OBL

Figure 2.1 Schematic representation of active–passive alternation

which have the same functions as the passive. Such functionally competing constructions can make the definition of the passive somewhat difficult. I deal with such cases in detail in Section 5.5, but in this section identify some basic issues relating to the definition of the English passive.

The passive voice in general is mainly concerned with **orientation** (cf. Comrie 1976a, 1981; DeLancey 1982; Haspelmath 1994). It is about a relationship between arguments in which an action is directed towards one argument. Let us take an example of adjectives from Haspelmath (1994: 153). The English adjectives *dreadful* and *apprehensive* both refer to fear, involving an experiencer (who experiences the fear) and a source (an immediate cause of the fear). What characterises the orientation of each adjective emerges when they modify a noun, i.e. *dreadful* only modifies a noun which is a source (as in *a dreadful murder*), while *apprehensive* only modifies a noun which is an experiencer (as in *an apprehensive apprentice*).

This relationship can be applied to the passive voice system. In this case, we are dealing with **actor** and **undergoer** (cf. Foley and Van Valin 1984, 1985, Van Valin and La Polla 1997). In other words, we are concerned with the presence of an outer cause (actor), whether volitional or not, and its recipient or causee (undergoer). One of the advantages of adopting these terms is that they are more fundamental than the more commonly used agent–patient distinction, as such different thematic roles can be assigned to actor and undergoer in different languages. In Van Valin and La Polla (1997), the idea of instigator and recipient of action is further applied to the thematic role hierarchy, and the applicability of thematic role is considered to be an *ad hoc* process which varies from language to language. Thus, they assume that the thematic role assignment to actor and undergoer is better considered in a hierarchical scale, which works as shown in Figure 2.2: there are two entities, actor and undergoer, placed on both ends of the scale. On the actor's side, agent is most likely the thematic role, and on the undergoer's side, patient. As both actor and undergoer are shifted towards the centre, they both can be given different thematic roles, but the likelihood of different roles is indicated in the hierarchy. The merit of this schema is that it

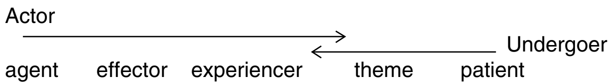

Figure 2.2 Hierarchical thematic role assignment of actor–undergoer (from Van Valin and La Polla 1997: 146)

allows for much easier distinguishing of the constructions. Thus, we can accommodate various thematic role assignment systems more comfortably regardless of the language. For example, the passive is commonly considered to involve agent (actor) and patient (undergoer), but there are cases in which different thematic roles are involved: the experiencer can occupy the actor slot and the theme, the undergoer, as in *That vehicle* (theme) *was seen by many people* (experiencer). This **causer–causee relationship** (or **force–dynamic alternation**) becomes crucial especially in discussing voice alternation such as from active to passive, since different types of voice systems have different realisation of causer or causee as the grammatical subject, i.e. the active has causer subject, the passive, causee subject and in the case of the middle, causer and causee are both realised as subject. This is reflected in a number of studies, such as Croft (1991, 1994), Talmy (1988) and Shibatani (1998), where their schemata are based on the causer–causee relationship.

In addition, such a relationship can be considered to represent a high degree of **transitivity**, in the more traditional and conventional sense of transferring an action or event from one entity to another (see Section 4.2.4 for a more detailed semantic-based approach to transitivity). So in terms of thematic roles, the combination agent and patient indicates the transitivity most expressively. This seems to be reflected in various previous studies, where the passive participants are commonly described as agent and patient, not actor and undergoer. So the hierarchical scale shown in Figure 2.2 allows us to use it as a measurement of transitivity, i.e. when two participants in the passive occupy opposite ends of the scale, such a clause becomes more transitive. Later (in Sections 3.3.4 and 4.2.4.1 to 4.2.4.3) we will see some cases in English, where only the inner parts of the scale are involved in the passive arguments. It is important to note here that the term transitivity is normally used very loosely in linguistic theory, and at least two types can be identified. Semantic transitivity is concerned with the transfer of action or event from one entity (actor) to another (undergoer). Syntactic transitivity is solely concerned with whether the direct object is present (transitive) or absent (intransitive). Alternatively,

transitivity can be viewed as a continuum, as proposed in Lakoff (1977) or Hopper and Thompson (1980). Kittilä (2002: 23) accurately points out this correlation of the passive and transitivity:

> Passivization makes it in many (but not all) cases possible to separate transitive clauses from less transitive ones, since ... only clauses conceived of as somehow transitive are to be passivized in many languages. The acceptability of passivization correlates to some extent with transitivity: the more transitive a clause is, the more readily it can be passivised

See also Lehmann (1991: 224ff) and Rice (1987b) for a similar argument. So once the clause is interpreted as the passive, it needs not only the recipient of an outer cause, i.e. undergoer, but also the presence of an outer cause, i.e. actor (whether it is overtly expressed or not).[1] In addition, when a lexical verb is transitive, such as a verb of creation or destruction (cf. Kozinsky 1980; Testelec 1998), passivisation is more easily achieved.

The discussion of transitivity we have seen so far is a semantic-based one. However, we also often encounter a more syntactic-based definition of transitivity, which is normally concerned with the number of arguments, i.e. an intransitive construction is a monovalent or one-participant construction and a transitive construction is a divalent/trivalent or two-/three-participant construction. As we have seen in Figure 2.2 above (and we will also see in some more detail in Section 4.2.4) transitivity can be expressed as a scalar quantity which is difficult to express in syntactic terms. In the rest of this work, transitivity specifically means the semantic-based definition, and syntactic transitivity is expressed in terms of monovalent, divalent or trivalent constructions.

The English passive expresses the actor in oblique case, normally headed by the preposition *by*. It is claimed that the actor in PDE is overtly expressed in only about 20–30 per cent of occurrences (Jespersen 1924: 168; Svartvik 1966: 141; Givón 1979: 57–64; Huddleston 1984: 441; Dixon 1991: 278). The preposition *by* makes it less obvious that this is the outer cause, since *by* itself does not obviously indicate SOURCE, as do other prepositions such as *from* or *of*.[2] Some instances of *by*-actor phrase do not express outer cause at all, as has been noticed by some scholars. Svartvik (1966: 105), for example, points out the ambiguity between outer and non-outer cause of the *by*-phrase in *Oil will be replaced by coal*, for example. He terms such use of a *by*-phrase **janus-agent**, which he

defines as 'constituents which permit two different active clause transformations according to whether they are interpreted as agents [i.e. actor] or adjuncts [i.e. non-actor]'. This is a case of the arguments involving only the inner parts of the scale in Figure 2.2. For the historical development of the actor phrase, see examples (9) to (14) in Section 2.3.1 and previous studies cited there.

Now, let us look at some examples of the passive. The *be* + past participle construction is often called **periphrastic passive**, since it involves the use of an auxiliary verb and a main verb in the past participle. The main morphosyntactic characteristic is the **valency-reducing operation** and undergoer-orientation. Thus, the passive has one argument less than its active counterpart, and the subject of the clause is always the recipient of action, i.e. is the undergoer. However, there are superficially identical constructions with slightly different semantic features, particularly those features related to the tense–aspect system. In Figure 2.3, the orientation of the English passive, *be* + past participle construction and its related constructions, are shown. In the **verbal passive** construction *The house was ransacked by gang members*, the subject of the clause, the undergoer, has undergone some change through the event, while in the **resultative** construction *The house is surrounded by the forest*, the clause expresses

a. Verbal passive, e.g. *The house was ransacked by gang members.*

house ← gang members
(subject) (oblique)

b. Adjectival passive, e.g. *He was surprised at the noise.*

he ← noise
(subject) (oblique)

c. Resultative passive, e.g. *The house is surrounded by the forest.*

house ↔ forest
(subject) (oblique)

d. Active voice (stative), e.g. *Everybody understands the point.*

everybody ↔ point
(subject) (object)

e. Active voice (dynamic), e.g. *Gang members ransacked the house.*

gang members → house
(subject) (object)

Figure 2.3 Orientation of the periphrastic passive and related constructions in English

a state with regard to the subject, and there is no causer–causee relationship. The main difference between them is two-fold: one is aspect, i.e. verbal passive is dynamic, resultative is stative, and the other is orientation, i.e. the verbal passive is undergoer-oriented, while with the resultative, no orientation is involved. In other words, the causer–causee relationship is present in verbal passive, but absent in resultative. However, the English passive generally has an intermediate type between the verbal and the resultative, which is **adjectival passive**. The difference is that the adjectival passive is stative, like the resultative, but it still preserves undergoer-orientation, i.e. a causer–causee relationship exists in the adjectival passive. Thus an example like *He was surprised at the noise* is stative, but the subject is affected by the event, i.e. the undergoer orientation and the whole clause expresses the subject's resulting state from the event. We may note that the adjectival passive involves a state created by some outer cause and this type of stativity is known as the **secondary state**, as opposed to the **natural state** (Nedjalkov and Jaxontov 1988: 4), which is the case with the resultative, i.e. without any outer cause.

In this Section, a definition of the passive has been given that is used throughout this work. Contrary to the common assumption of active–passive counterparts and a valency-reducing operation, we make use of an actor–undergoer distinction instead of agent–patient and divide the periphrastic construction into three, i.e. verbal passive, adjectival passive and resultative.

There is another grammatical characteristic which is often referred to. The *be* + past participle constructions both synchronically and historically involve various different types. For example, at the synchronic level, three different types were identified. At the historical level, variations of impersonal passive will be seen in (12) to (17) in Section 4.2.4.2. Such diversity may be best captured in terms of **gradience**.[3] This term, in this work, refers to either overlapping or gradient membership of a word class or grammatical categories, or overlaps in their interpretation of a single word or phrase. The benefit of gradience is that it allows us to accommodate the intermediate or 'grey-area' instances or the overlapping of two or more different elements of the grammar in the analysis, as well as to identify prototypical or 'black and white' instances of grammar. This type of analysis turns out to be quite useful in historical analysis, since language change is a gradual process and there are various instances which do not fit in a particular word class or a grammatical category which are defined on synchronic grammatical features. So at the synchronic level, a particular word, phrase or clause can be classified

as belonging to a certain type of word class or category. In the case of the *be* + past participle construction, what we have seen so far is relatively easily dealt with without recourse to gradience, i.e. the distinction among passive, resultative or adjectival passive can be made without leaving serious doubts, since the definition is based on the PDE passive. However, in some cases emerging from the analysis, especially historically, it is difficult to identify the type of grammatical item of elements involved in the construction, say auxiliary *be* or past participle of main verb, as we will see from Section 4.2.4 onward.

I also identify **morphosyntactic gradience** and **morphosemantic or functional gradience**. As their names suggest, the former deals with syntactic behaviour, while the latter includes gradience based on the semantic features or functions of language. As for the passive, there are various constructions without formal marking of the passive, but which have similar functions.[4] These are considered as a case of functional gradience. This distinction proves to be useful in dealing with various constructions discussed under the term 'passive' in the literature. It is often the case that a construction without overt marking as passive but with the same meaning or function as the passive is considered to be a passive. Beyond the scope of English, there are a number of languages that have no passive, and the function is carried by other constructions. For example, Miskitsu (Misumalpan) does not have an overtly-marked passive construction, but uses a personal noun *upla* 'person' as an indefinite pronoun in the same function as the passive, i.e. impersonalisation. This type of interaction of form and function leads us to the notion of **passive diathesis** (same orientation without overt grammatical marking of the passive) and **quasi-passive** (same function with different orientation), which will be analysed in detail in Chapter 7 and Chapter 8, respectively.

Previous work using the term 'gradience', such as Denison (2001), seem to be mainly concerned with morphosyntactic phenomena, but what the term signifies in this book covers a wider range of grammatical phenomena, especially including morphosemantic phenomena. The gradience has been a cause of headache for some linguists. In some extreme cases, it has been completely ignored and only prototypes are considered as objects of analysis. There has been a strong trend that every linguistic phenomenon should be dealt with in a black-and-white manner, thereby eliminating any grey area. However, the concept of gradience, either whole or partial, can be found in some previous work, such as Hopper (1991), who claims that language change involves a transitional stage (what he calls **layering**), which creates a state of what we

call gradience. Other scholars making a similar argument include Givón (1984), Hopper and Thompson (1980, 1984), Huddleston (1984), Bybee (1985), Quirk *et al.* (1985), Langacker (1987), Lichtenberk (1991), Heine (1993), Harris and Campbell (1995), and Croft (2001). More recently, Aarts (1998, 2000) and Denison (2001) analyse gradience in English both synchronically and diachronically. Similarly, Givón (1979: 235) claims that 'in each instance, a *crazy* synchronic state of the grammar [= gradience] has arisen via diachronic changes that are highly *natural* and presumably motivated independently by various communicative factors' [emphasis original]. This indicates that the concept of gradience itself is not totally new in linguistic study, but it has not yet received its deserved emphasis. Gradience, as we will see in the rest of this work, will turn out to be a significant concept especially in diachronic study. We also introduce a voice continuum later in Section 5.5, and from there on, various kinds of gradience involving quasi-passive and passive diathesis are more systematically compared. Without allowing for gradience, such an approach would not be possible.

In this section, we have seen the various constructions which can fit under the category passive from a diachronic perspective. What we have seen serves as a mere background knowledge for the rest of this work, as there are a number of details that need further analysis, for example, the characteristics of auxiliary *be* in relation to the tense–aspect system, quality of past participle, the combination of auxiliary and past participle in gradience, etc.

2.3 Aspectual issues

One of the main changes in the development of the *be*-passive is an aspectual change. In the following three subsections, it is analysed in relation to the auxiliary *be*. For the sake of fuller explanation, non-passive constructions like the perfective construction, which all contribute to the formation of the PDE *be*-passive are also incorporated. First there is an illustration of the general aspectual change observed in the data, and then an analysis of change in the perfective constructions and other syntactic constructions, which enables us to understand the general change better.

2.3.1 General aspectual change in the passive

The English passive may seem an ambiguous category, since it is similar to three different, yet somewhat related, constructions. Its status can be clarified once its diachrony has been analysed. The origin of the

English passive is considered to be a stative-adjectival construction (see, for example, Givón 1990: 600–2; Estival 1986, 1989), or more precisely, a perfective construction. As we will see in Section 2.3.2, the change in the perfective construction, i.e. from *be*-perfect to *have*-perfect, and the orientation associated with it, from undergoer-orientation to actor-orientation, plays an important role in the formation of PDE passive.

Our data consists of examples containing the construction *be* (*beon*/*wesan* 'be' and *weorðan* 'become' in OE and ME)+past participle extracted from the corpus. The total number of examples for each period is shown in Table 2.1. The selection is based solely on the overt construction and disregards whether they are verbal passive, resultative or adjectival passive. However, past participles of monovalent verbs are excluded due to the lack of valency-decreasing operation created by passivisation. Also, a morphological passive *hatan* 'be called' in OE and ME is not included in this data, since we are focusing on the periphrastic construction. In some instances, we can observe coordinated auxiliary deletion, as in *The birthday cake was brought in to the living room,_ cut into pieces and_ distributed among the children*. The auxiliary *was* is supposed to be repeated in front of past participles *cut* and *distributed* (as indicated by_), but it is deleted. In such a case, we count the number of past participles (therefore in this example, there are three occurrences of the passive) and produce the overall number.

Our main aim in analysing the data is to disambiguate stative constructions from dynamic ones, and to examine the frequency and the internal semantic and pragmatic characteristics of each type. The overall result is shown in Table 2.2. One may find the transition from OE to ME rather striking: more than 20 per cent difference can be observed. Such sudden change may make the result appear to be unreliable, but the gradual shift in change can be found once the finer distinctions in OE and ME are used. Recall that the HC usefully divides each period into four, as shown in Table 1.2. Once our data are divided according to this finer distinction, we can observe some gradual change. Notice the paucity of data in OE1. This period is represented by two documents only, i.e. codocu1 (210 words) and conorthu (40 words). Thus, the number of examples from this period is not statistically so significant in the analysis. Also, there are

Table 2.1 Number of examples in the corpus, by period

	OE	**ME**	**eModE**	**lModE**	**PDE**
Number of examples	1155	1529	3418	9188	10872

Table 2.2 Aspectual change in the English passive

	OE	**ME**	**eModE**	**lModE**	**PDE**
Dynamic	395 (34.2%)	1033 (67.5%)	2485 (72.7%)	7121 (77.5%)	8632 (79.4%)
Stative	661 (57.2%)	368 (24.1%)	701 (20.5%)	1406 (15.3%)	1762 (16.2%)
Ambiguous	99 (8.6%)	128 (8.4%)	232 (6.8%)	661 (7.2%)	478 (4.4%)
Total	1155 (100%)	1529 (100%)	3418 (100%)	9188 (100%)	10872 (100%)

Table 2.3 Aspectual change during OE

	OE1	**OE2**	**OE3**	**OE4**
Dynamic	0 (0%)	43 (23.3%)	157 (32.1%)	195 (40.7%)
Stative	2 (100%)	122 (65.9%)	293 (59.9%)	244 (50.9%)
Ambiguous	0 (0%)	20 (10.8%)	39 (8.0%)	40 (8.4%)
Total	2 (100%)	185 (100%)	489 (100%)	479 (100%)

Table 2.4 Aspectual change during ME

	ME1	**ME2**	**ME3**	**ME4**
Dynamic	154 (50.5%)	213 (60.5%)	335 (75.3%)	331 (77.5%)
Stative	125 (41.0%)	103 (29.3%)	76 (17.1%)	64 (15.0%)
Ambiguous	26 (8.5%)	36 (10.2%)	34 (7.6%)	32 (7.5%)
Total	305 (100%)	352 (100%)	445 (100%)	427 (100%)

some examples in OE2, but the number is much smaller in comparison with OE3 and OE4. Nevertheless, the frequency within each period is analysed. Table 2.3 shows that the passive is definitely stative earlier on in the OE period, and the dynamic construction steadily increases over time. By OE4, the difference between dynamic and stative constructions is not as great as in previous periods. As for ME, the beginning of this period, i.e. ME1, seems to still have some characteristics of OE, since the construction is not as frequently dynamic as ME3 or ME4. The Table 2.4, however, shows that the dynamic construction became extremely common from ME2. There is a slight increase in dynamic construction from ME2 to ME3, but the frequency seems to be more or less steady thereafter. So from the tables, it is fair to claim that aspectual change had been going on throughout OE and even up to ME1, and from ME2 onwards aspectual differentiation became similar to that in PDE. So the periods around 1250–1420 (i.e. ME2 and ME3) seem to be important as far as aspectual change in the passive is concerned.

The tests used to achieve the results shown in Tables 2.2–2.4 are summarised in the Appendix, along with the criteria for judging stativity. In this way, we can gain an objective result and keep ambiguity to a minimum. There are many unclear examples, and I leave some as ambiguous, whereas others can be relatively easily judged to be either stative or dynamic. Historically speaking, there are some grammatical signs which can possibly allow us to distinguish a stative construction from a dynamic one. Let us first look at a couple of such instances, starting from the choice of auxiliary, the prefix *ge-* and the actor phrase and as we go along, introduce the complex nature involved in such signs.

The auxiliary in OE and ME can be considered a grammatical sign to a certain extent: *be* in the PDE passive is a descendant of OE *beon* 'be' and *wesan* 'be'.[5] Up to ME, these two auxiliaries are often considered in comparison to *weorðan* 'become', which died out by the end of the ME period.[6] There have been some arguments over the difference in usage among these auxiliaries, especially over aspectual matters. Some scholars (among others, Klaeber 1923, Frary 1966, Timmer 1934 – cited in Mitchell 1985: 324–5; Strang 1970, Vezzosi 1999) claim that there are distinctions made by the choice of the auxiliary, i.e. *beon* 'be' and *wesan* 'be' give a stative reading and *weorðan* 'become' a dynamic reading. For instance, as Strang (1970: 351) notes, the PDE clause *He was wounded* could be expressed in the following two ways in OE: 'from having been unharmed, he came to be a casualty' (*wearð* 'became' as auxiliary, i.e. verbal passive) or 'he was in a wounded condition' (*wæs* 'was' as auxiliary, i.e. adjectival passive or resultative). She (*ibid*: 351) even claims that had *wearðan* 'become' survived, this could have led to the emergence of a verbal passive. On the other hand, scholars such as Mitchell (1985), Quirk and Wrenn (1957), Sweet (1882, cited in Mitchell 1985) argue that this stative/dynamic distinction did not exist, and *beon* 'be', *wesan* 'be' could denote both a dynamic and a stative reading. Thus, Mitchell (1985: 332) and Quirk and Wrenn (1957: 80–1) say that according to different writers, the auxiliaries are interchangeable, regardless of their aspect. In addition, it is documented (Visser 1963–73: §1918; Mitchell 1985: §755; Kilpiö 1989: 61–2) that the passive with *weorðan* 'become' often expresses a future connotation as in example (2) below. In addition, Visser (1963–73: §1916) lists various instances in OE where *beon* 'be', *wesan* 'be' and *weorðan* 'become' are interchangeable. Traugott (1992: 199) considers this matter a tendency, i.e. *beon*/*wesan* 'be' expresses stative aspect and *weorðan* 'become' dynamic, but she does not rule out exceptions. It is interesting to note that some scholars point out a difference between two auxiliaries which are believed to have a

stative reading, i.e. *beon* 'be' and *wesan* 'be'. As noted in Frary (1966: 10–11), since Jost (1909) the difference between them is considered to lie in abstractness, i.e. *beon* 'be' for an abstract reading, *wesan* 'be' for a concrete reading.[7] Prior to this time, it was thought that *beon* 'be' denoted futurity and supplemented *wesan* 'be' (Frary 1966: 10–11). In our data, earlier examples involving *weorðan* 'become' are all dynamic. Some are shown below in examples (1)–(3). See also examples (4), (5) and (10).

(1) *oft him gebyreð ðæt hie* ***weorðað*** *bereafod ðara*
often them happens that they are deprived the

giefa ðe him God for monigra monna ðingum
gifts that them God for many men's sakes

geaf, næs for hiera anra
gave not.at.all for their own
'often it befalls them that they are deprived of the gifts that God gave them for many men's sakes, not just their own.' (HC OE2 cocura)

(2) *and behyddon þæt heafod . . . þæt hit bebyrged ne* ***wurde***
and hid the head so that it buried not were
'and hid the head so that it would not be buried.' (HC OE3 coaelive)

(3) *Þatt streon þatt wass Allmahhtiȝ Godd, . . .*
that offspring that was Almighty God

& lac to ***wurrþenn*** *offredd her*
and sacrifice to become offered here

O rodetreowwess allterr
on cross's altar
'that offspring that was Almighty God . . . and a sacrifice to be offered here on the altar of the cross.' (HC ME1 cmorm)

However, the frequency of *weorðan* 'become' is quite low in comparison with its 'be' counterpart, as shown in Table 2.5. The examples with *weorðan* 'become' are clear cases, but they do not have a big influence on the overall result. Clauses with auxiliaries *beon*/*wesan* 'be' can be interpreted as either dynamic or stative; therefore these auxiliaries are not useful in making a clear decision.

Another case involves the prefix *ge*-. We will see the characteristics of this prefix in more detail in Section 3.3.2.1, but for the present purpose

it suffices to say that it often signals perfective aspect, once attached to the past participle. The frequency of this prefix is much higher than the auxiliary *weorðan* 'become', and as shown in Table 2.6, clauses with this prefix were in fact more frequent than those without during OE.

Table 2.5 Frequency of *weorðan* 'become' in OE and ME

	OE	ME
beon/wesan 'be'	1097 (95.0%)	1485 (97.1%)
weorðan 'become'	58 (5.0%)	44 (2.9%)
Total	1155 (100%)	1529 (100%)

Table 2.6 Frequency of *weorðan* 'become' with and without the prefix *ge-*, in OE and ME

	OE	ME
with *ge-*	693 (60.0%)	434 (28.4%)
without *ge-*	462 (40.0%)	1095 (71.6%)
Total	1155 (100%)	1529 (100%)

It may, at first sight, appear to be a useful tool in deciding the aspectual difference, since OE has a much higher frequency of stative construction (Table 2.2) and the presence of this prefix seems to be correlated with a stative reading. However, this assumption turns out to be false. We have seen above that the auxiliary *weorðan* 'become' clearly indicates dynamic aspect in a clause. However, consider examples (4) and (5):

(4) *We lacnodon Babylon, & hio ðeah ne* ***wearð*** ***gehæled***
we treated Babylon and it yet not became healed
'We treated Babylon, and yet it did not get healed.' (HC OE2 cocura)

(5) *Ðurh þese* ***manne*** *Iesu Crist, þe was of Adames*
through this man Jesus Christ that was of Adam's
kenne, ***warþ*** *se ierþe* ***i****blesced*
kin became the Earth blessed
'The Earth was blessed by this man, Jesus Christ, who is Adam's kin.' (HC ME1 cmvices1)

These examples contain two possible grammatical signs, i.e. the auxiliary and the prefix. In each case, the influence from the auxiliary is greater than that from the prefix and the overall interpretation of the clause is dynamic despite the presence of the prefix. So as far as we can see, these grammatical signs cannot be straightforwardly used in deciding the aspect. To make matters more confusing, most examples in our data are with *beon/wesan* 'be', not *weorðan* 'become' (Table 2.5). *Beon/wesan* 'be' can appear in both stative and dynamic constructions, and accordingly, the prefix *ge-* may be more functional with them, rather than with *weorðan* 'become'. However, the prefix can appear again in the dynamic construction even with *beon/ wesan* 'be', as exemplified in (6) to (8). So judging from the evidence we have seen so far, there does not seem to be a clearly decisive sign for the overall aspectual difference.

(6) *þæt eallum folcum* ***sy*** ***ge****demed beforan ðe*
that all people be judged before thee
'that all the people be judged before you.' (HC OE3 coparips)

(7) *He þonkede him & heo* ***wes*** ***i****cleopet forð*
he thanked him and she was called forth
'He thanked him and she was called forth.' (HC ME1 cmjulia)

(8) *Whanne þat* ***was*** ***i-****ended he ȝalde up þe*
when that was ended he yielded up the
laste breeþ wiþ a wel greet swetnesse of
last breath with a well great sweetness of
smyl, and so he ***was*** ***i-****buried þere;*
smile and so he was buried there
'when that was ended, he gave his last breath with a great sweetness of smile and so he was buried there.' (HC ME3 cmpolych)

Apart from these two signs, we can also consider the actor phrase. An actor phrase, when expressing agentivity, can be a clear sign that a clause is dynamic, but since its frequency is low (as indicated in Section 2.2, about 20–30 per cent of occurrences in PDE), it is not often useful as a test. However, a special feature of this sign is that it corroborates the gradience of verbal passive. Until around the 16th century, the choice of preposition was not settled, as in the case of *by* in PDE, although there was a preference for either *from* or *of* (Peitsara 1992; Toyota 2003a). For

earlier instances of various prepositions, see Visser (1963–73: §§1987–2000), as well as Kilpiö (1989: 136–9) and Mitchell (1985: 336–48) for OE, and Mustanoja (1960: 374–5, 422) and Moessner (1989: 151–3) for ME. So the following examples from OE involve various prepositions and all are treated equally as actor phrases (see also (27), (29) and (31) for other examples from different periods from our data):[8]

(9) *Sum man wæs asend* ***fram*** *Gode sylfum*
certain man was sent from God self
'A certain man was sent by God himself' (*ÆCHom* 1. 37)

(10) *Hu on Egyptum wurdon on anre niht*
how in Egypt were in one night
L monna ofslagen ***from*** *hiora agnum sunum*
fifty men slain by their own sons
'How fifty men were slain by their own sons in one night in Egypt.' (*Or Head* 64.8)

(11) *Valens wæs gelæred* ***from*** *anum Arrianiscan biscepe*
Valens was taught by an Arian bishop
Eudoxius wæs haten
Eudoxius was called
'Valens was taught by an Arian bishop called Eudoxius.' (*Or* 6 33.288.13)

(12) *. . . and* ***þurh*** *eow me bið gehalgod manegra*
and by you to me is hallowed of many
oþre clennysse
other purity
' . . . and the purity of many is hallowed for me by you.' (*ÆLS* [Julien and Balissa] 16)

(13) *Þær wæron gehælede* ***þurh*** *ða halgan*
there were healed: NOM.PL.MASC through the blessed
femnan fela adlige menn
woman many sick men: NOM.PL.MASC
'Many sick men were healed there by the blessed woman.' (*ÆLS* I 20.113)

(14) . . . *swa* *eac* *he* *forgeaf* *þæt* *fulluht* *Iohanne,*
thus and he gave that baptism John

and *wæs* *eft* *gefullod* ***æt*** *Iohanne*
and was again baptised at John
'and then he gave John the baptism, and in return was baptised by John' (*ÆCHom* ii. 48.1)

These examples all involve an agent, i.e. an actor with high agentivity. As shown in the Appendix, agentivity indicates that the clause is more dynamic. So these cases are verbal passives. However, consider the differences: (9) has *wesan* 'be' as auxiliary, with no inflection in the clause nor the prefix *ge*-; (10) is similar in terms of past participle, but the auxiliary is *weorðan* 'become'; (11) to (14) all involve *beon*/*wesan* 'be' as auxiliary, but the past participles all have the prefix *ge*-. None of these examples except for (13), show inflection on the past participle (for details of inflection on the past participle, see Section 3.4). Analysing these constructions from the perspectives of PDE, (9) is the closest construction to the PDE passive. However, it is clear that the verbal passive was achieved by constructions varying in a number of ways. The differences are summarised in Table 2.7. Considering that 'from' and 'of' were previously normal as actor markers, the first three instances are more prototypical of the verbal passive in OE, but there are various differences in other details of construction. To make the distinction more complicated, (11) shares other signs with (12) and (14), in which other prepositions are used. In spite of differences, all these constructions are verbal passives. However, statistically, occurrences like these are not as frequent as stative ones, as indicated by Table 2.2. Therefore, the OE *be* + past participle construction is predominantly similar to the resultative or adjectival passive. The verbal passive was not frequent in OE, although it existed; it started dominating the construction from ME, when historical

Table 2.7 Summary of various grammatical signs in relation to actor phrase

Example	**Auxiliary**	**Prefix**	**Inflection**	**Preposition**
(9)	*beon*/*wesan* 'be'	absent	absent	*from*
(10)	*weorðan* 'become'	absent	absent	*from*
(11)	*beon*/*wesan* 'be'	present	absent	*from*
(12)	*beon*/*wesan* 'be'	present	absent	*through*
(13)	*beon*/*wesan* 'be'	present	present	*through*
(14)	*beon*/*wesan* 'be'	present	absent	*at*

grammatical signs became more uniform, i.e. auxiliary *be*, no inflection or prefix on the past participle, and the preposition *by*.[9] Such variable grammatical patterns given in Table 2.2 (and Table 2.3 and Table 2.4 for details of changes in OE and ME, respectively) show the gradience of the verbal passive, demonstrating the earlier, emerging stage of verbal passive. Once divergence disappears after ME, the degree of gradience decreases.

In most cases we have seen so far, we need to analyse examples based on the tests shown in the Appendix. Below, I demonstrate how some of the ambiguous cases are handled. Examples analysed contain auxiliaries *beon/wesan* 'be', not *weorðan* 'become'. The most decisive criterion is the orientation and the presence of the outer cause. If the subject is the actor and there is no extra outer cause apart from the subject, the instance is straightforwardly adjectival. Notice by contrast that (17) from PDE contains a *by*-phrase, but one that does not indicate outer cause.

(15) *Thyse Wordes* ***ben conteyned*** *in the xxiiij. chapytre of*
These words are contained in the 24 chapter of
Luke.
Luke
'these words are contained in Luke, chapter 24.' (HC ME4 cmfitzja)

(16) *and anone he saw he was in*
and soon he saw he was in
a wylde mounteyne whych ***was closed*** *with*
a wide mountain which was enclosed with
the se nyghe all aboute, that he
the sea nearly all about that he
myght se no londe aboute hym
might see no land about him
'and soon he realised that he was in a wide mountain which was enclosed by the sea nearly all around, so that he might see no land around him.' (HC ME4 cmmalory)

(17) *Both ureters* ***were surrounded*** *by the fibrous tissue forming the anterior wall of the abdominal haematomata, the pelves of the kidneys being slightly dilated.* (LOB J17 169–172)

However, the distinction between verbal passive and resultative is problematic, since these constructions both have undergoer-orientation.

Among the tests shown in the Appendix, probably the most helpful one is (ii), the presence of adverbs. For example, *still* often indicates the resultative, while *deliberately* or *conscientiously* help us to consider the clause as verbal passive due to the agentivity they can imply. A durative adverbial such as *for two hours, all day*, implies more stativity. Thus, finding these adverbs in a passive clause helps us to identify the aspect with certainty. Unfortunately, however, this is not of much practical use, as only a handful of such adverbials can be found. The following examples from PDE are some of the rare cases found in our data:

(18) *His nerves* ***are still*** *very much* ***shaken****. Perhaps it will be better to let him have his own way.* (ARCHER 1871lewis.d6 1:1)

(19) *However, he****is still persuaded*** *that he is in the right and still dreads the consequences.* (ARCHER 1716Ryder.J2 1:1)

(20) *And Mr. Coward* ***is still obsessed*** *by the immensely important fact that other people do not dress exactly as he does.* (LOB A 19 23–24)

Occurrence in progressive aspect, another straightforward test which identifies dynamic aspect, follows suit and does not occur frequently in the data. This is also due to its chronology, i.e. the progressive passive appeared in the 18th century, as we will see in more detail in Section 2.3.3.1. and progressive aspect is therefore not often applicable to historical data prior to the 18th century.

(21) *I understand she said that the unexpected honours and attentions which* ***are being showered*** *on Mr Heath are meant to demonstrate China's displeasure at Mr Wilson's attempt to renegotiate the terms of Britain's entry to the Common Market* (LL 6 3 70 8020 1 1 a 11 – 6 3 70 8070 1 1 a 11)

(22) *and all the time we* ***are being tempted*** *to satisfy ourselves to make ourselves feel important to do the things that we want to do* (LL 12 1c 10 7900 1 1 a 11 3 – 12 1c 10 7940 1 1 a 11 3)

This leaves us with little choice, and in most cases we need to use paraphrase with verbs like *start, finish, force* and pseudo-cleft.[10] *Start* and *finish*, are concerned with ingressive and egressive aspect, respectively. When the clause is purely stative, they are not likely to appear with the beginning (ingressive) or ending (egressive) of an event. Thus, when a passive clause can be paraphrased with *start* or *finish*, as in *The house*

started being demolished or *The house finished being demolished*, this occurrence is considered dynamic. However, some resultative may appear with the ingressive aspect, i.e. the beginning of a state, as in *I started being interested in linguistics*. In such cases, the addition of adverbials such as *still* to the unparaphrased clause helps us to identify whether it is stative: *I am still interested in linguistics* (resultative), but **The house is still demolished* (verbal passive). The verb *force* helps us to identify agentivity. Like the adverbials *deliberately* or *conscientiously* noted above, agentivity cannot appear with verbs expressing state. For example, the verb *know* is inherently stative, and phrases using *deliberately*, *conscientiously* or *force* with such inherently stative verbs are ungrammatical, e.g. **He deliberately knows the answer*, **The teacher forced the student to know the answer*. Thus, a passive that can appear with *force* is dynamic, and one that cannot is stative: *He forced the house to be demolished*, but **He forced me to be surprised at the noise*. Yet another paraphrase involves a pseudo-cleft. The subordinate clause in the *wh*-clause can reflect the stativity of the verb in the *wh*-clause. So when the passive is dynamic, it can be used in the pseudo-cleft construction, *What S do is* ~ . Thus, *What he did was (to) be criticised by his enemies*, but **What he did was (to) be surprised at the noise*. However, this only works when the passive subject, i.e. undergoer, is a human animate.

These tests can resolve some ambiguous examples as stative or dynamic. However, there are others whose aspect is difficult to determine. Let us examine some actual examples. Consider first an example of determinable case (23). In this example, the main concerns are durativity and egressive aspect. Thus, tests ii and iii in the Appendix can be most useful. For example, the act of burying is not ongoing, and we can insert the verb *finish*: *He finished being buried*. This will prove egressive aspect. As for durativity, unacceptable insertion of durative adverbials, as in ** He was buried for three hours*, rules it out. The adverb *still*, as in *He was still buried*, is acceptable out of context, but (23) is concerned with the act of burial, not the resulting state of burial, and the use of *still* is not appropriate to this case. Thus this example is treated as a verbal passive.

(23) *with a litel cofre ... her housbond . . . , **was beried** in þe ground*
with a little coffer her husband was buried in the ground
'with a little coffer her husband was buried in the ground.' (HC ME3 cmdocu3)

In spite of these tests, there are some examples that still remain ambiguous. As shown in Tables 2.2–2.4, some such ambiguous cases

are left as they are. For instance, consider example (24). Such an instance can be interpreted in three different ways: as *be*-perfect with *se hælend* 'the Saviour' as actor; as resultative, assuming the presence of an outer cause and stativity; as verbal passive, assuming that there is an outer cause and the clause is dynamic. Earlier examples are structurally harder to decide, mainly because the *be*-perfect was still common. Verbal passive and earlier *be*-perfect are discussed in detail in Section 2.3.2, but it suffices for the moment to say that the earlier *be*-perfect is believed to have developed into the verbal passive. In addition, the nature of the verb phrase also makes the decision harder, since a verb 'raise up' could refer to spirituality, as also implied by *sigebearn godes* 'God's victorious son'. Such elements do not exclude the possibility of a *be*-perfect, since it is possible for the Saviour to raise himself up, but the fact that the main verb *ahebban* 'raise' tends to be divalent may eliminate it. This would still leave two possible choices.

(24) *Ne* *meahte* *hire* *Iudas . . .* *sweotole* *gecyþan*
nor could her Judas clearly make.known
be *ðam* *sigebeame,* *on* *hwylcne* *se*
about the victory.tree on which the
hælend ***ahafen*** ***wære***, *sigebearn* *gode,*
saviour raised.up were victory.son God.GEN
'Nor could Judas tell her clearly about the victorious tree, [tell her] on which [tree] the Saviour was raised up, victorious Son of God.' (HC OE3 cocynew)

As for the specific case of ambiguity between passive and perfective construction, consider example (25). The ambiguity in this example is complex, since if it is interpreted as a verbal passive, the clause is dynamic, but if it is perfective, the clause expresses stativity. So the decision is not simply about what type of construction it is, but also about whether the clause is stative or dynamic. The ambiguity arises, because the main verb *awendan* 'turn', unlike *ahebban* 'raise' in (24), can appear as both a monovalent and divalent verb (Mitchell 1985: §735). Rather than commit to a black-and-white classification of such examples as (24) and (25) I leave them classified as ambiguous.

(25) . . . *þa* *Dænescan* . . . ***wurdon*** ***awende*** *to* *þære* *meste* *untriwðe*
. . . the Danes were turned to the greatest treachery
'The Danes were turned to the greatest treachery.' (verbal passive)
'The Danes had turned to the greatest treachery.' (*be*-perfect) (HC OE4 cochroe4)

Table 2.2 indicates that the *be* + past participle construction in OE was more stative and gained in dynamicity during ME. This also supports our earlier claim that the origin of the PDE passive is a stative-adjectival construction. Looking at Table 2.2 alone, the change from OE to ME would seen to be a sudden one, but once OE and ME are divided into finer divisions, (Tables 2.3 and 2.4), we can observe the gradual change. Such stativity does not exclude the possibility of dynamic constructions in OE. So even in OE we can find instances of what we term verbal passive. The aspectual reading is derived from the mixture of syntactic or semantic behaviour, and it is not simple to give a hard and fast rule for the distinction. However, there are some grammatical signs which help us to distinguish one aspect from another. We will see in Chapter 3 the details of each grammatical sign, such as the choice of auxiliary between *beon*/*wesan* 'be' and *weorðan* 'become', the presence/absence of the prefix *ge*- (Section 3.8.2.1) and inflection on the past participle (cf. Section 3.4).

In spite of some ambiguous cases, we can decide in most cases whether an example is stative or dynamic. Examples of clearer instances, according to the three types of constructions we identified in Section 2.2, are given below. According to the aspectual difference, verbal passive is the only dynamic construction and adjectival passive and resultative are stative.

2.3.1.1 Verbal passive

The subject of the clause is the undergoer and most examples do not express the actor overtly, but there are some instances where it is expressed, as in (27) *thauctorite* 'authority', (29) *one horse*, and (31) *the personifying drive*. These examples illustrate the variety of animacy. The choice of main verb varies, and some of them can express the agentivity more explicitly, as in *intend* (30). All the instances are dynamic, except for the instances with perception verbs, which are troublesome.

We deal with such sets of verbs in detail later in Section 3.3.4. Needless to say, examples (21) to (23) earlier in this section also belong to this type.

(26) *Ic secge eow to soþan þæt sib*
I say to you in truth that peace
is forgifen *Godes gelaðunge*
is given God.GEN congregation
'I say to you truly that peace is granted to God's congregation.' (HC OE3 coaelive)

(27) *And more ov~ that it* ***be***
and more over that it is
inacted *and* ***stablisshed*** *by thauctorite aforsaid*
enacted and established by authority previously said
from hensforth that no butte or buttes
from henceforth that no cask or casks
of Malmeseys in vessell or in
of Malmeseys in vessel or in
vessels that shal ***be brought*** *in*
vessels that shall be brought in
to this your seid realme shall
to this your said realm shall
be sold *above iiij l~i. sterling.*
be sold above four.pounds sterling
'and moreover, it is enacted and established by authority from henceforth that no cask nor casks of Malmeseys that will be brought in your realm in vessel or in vessels shall be sold above four pounds sterling. (HC ME4 cmlaw)

(28) *It is a fond conceit of many, that have either not attained, or by their own negligence have utterly lost the use of the Latine Tongue, to think it altogether unnecessary for such children to learn it, as* ***are intended*** *for Trades, or to be kept as drudges at home, or employed about husbandry.* (HC E3 ceeduc 3b)

(29) *the Countrymen use a sort of Sledge, in imitation of a Cart, which* ***is*** *generally* ***drawn*** *by one horse, and carryes but a small weight.* (ARCHER 1705Taylor.J2 1:1)

(30) *Mother is gone to stay at Aunt Carter's, who is exceedingly depressed with the death of W. Hustler. It* ***is intended*** *to bring the remains to Ulverstone.* (ARCHER 1827Whitwell. J5 1:1)

(31) *This tendency****is reinforced*** *by the personifying drive in Schiller himself, and runs counter to that important systematic idea which is emerging, that conceptual activity is somehow implicit or submerged in aesthetic experience, without however belonging to the fabric of that experience as it appears in consciousness.* (LOB J53 180-165)

2.3.1.2 Adjectival passive

The subject is the actor, but the degree of volitionality is quite low and the outer cause is totally absent. Some verb phrases may look like an idiomatic phrase, e.g. *be accustomed to* (34). See also earlier examples (15) to (17).

(32) *forþon ic* ***eom gesett*** *betweonen þisum folce,*
since I am set between these folks
swa swa sceap betweonon wulfum and ic
just like sheep between wolves and I
eam befangan *eal swa spearwe on nette . . .*
am enclosed completely like sparrow in net
'since I am trapped between these people just like a sheep between wolves and I am completely enclosed like a sparrow in a net . . . '
(HC OE4 comarga)

(33) *So þat he ful aslepe: & vnywar*
so that he fell asleep and unaware
also, & neþoȝte noȝt on þe passioun:
also and not thought not on the passion
as he ***was iwoned*** *to do.*
as he was accustomed to do
'He fell asleep and also unaware and did not think about the Passion, as he was accustomed to doing.' (HC ME 2 cmseleg)

(34) *What made this vast difference but that one* ***was accustomd*** *to have what he cald or cried for, the other to goe without it.* (HC E3 ceeduc3a)

(35) *It* ***is situated*** *in a deep valley, with a rapid river and some small iron works close to it;* (ARCHER 1827Marchioness. J5 1:1)

(36) *The lock* ***is situated*** *about three miles from Henley-on-Thames in Oxfordshire.* (LOB E27 9–10)

2.3.1.3 Resultative

Instances of this type are all stative, although some kind of actor is detectable in them. For example, the participle phrase *dyspleased with me* 'displeased with me' in (39) may indicate that *with me* has an agentive actor, but in this case, one without high volitionality. In this sense, the examples may be considered verbal passives, but the difference is that they are stative in this type. See also earlier examples (18) to (20).

(37) *& he his feorh generede & þeah he*
and he his life saved and yet he
wæs *oft* ***gewundad***
was often wounded
'and he saved his life, although he was often wounded.' (HC OE2 cochroa2)

(38) *He mas þan vowes, and cryes on Crist, For,*
he confuses then vows and cries on Christ for
he ***es afered*** *þat he sal be peryst;*
he is terrified that he shal be perished
'he is confused then vows and cries on Christ, for he is terrified that he shall perish.' (HC ME3 cmprick)

(39) *therefore, fayre lady,* ***be*** *nat* ***dyspleased*** *with*
therefore fair lady be not displeased with
me, for I ***am*** *full sore* ***agreved***
me for I am full sore grieved
for your grevaunce.
for your grievance
'therefore, fair lady, do not be displeased with me, for I am sorely grieved for your grievance.' (HC ME4 cmmalory)

(40) *You say well Sir, Good reason that the Colon of a Gentleman As you* ***were*** *lately* ***pleas'd*** *to terme your worship Sir, Should be fulfill'd with answerable food, To sharpen Blood, delight Health, and tickle Nature, Were you directed hither to this Street Sir?* (HC E2 ceplay2b)

(41) *And whereas very many Persons* ***are detained*** *in Prison although they are altogether unable to make any Satisfaction to their Creditors* (HC E3 celaw3)

(42) *and in addition they* [*sc.* the Channels] ***are charged*** *with powder to explode by galvanised wire should the Ships come over them.* (ARCHER 1853HALL.J6 1:1)

(43) *If that's what happened to Christ Himself, the priest***is***not* ***surprised*** *it should also happen to him.* (LOB D16 175–177)

2.3.2 Development of perfective constructions

It has been repeatedly said in this work that the PDE passive is derived from the earlier adjectival–perfective construction. The influence of the change in perfective constructions on the passive has not been studied in detail in English, although some of the previous studies, e.g. Davis (1986), deal with such issues in the wider perspectives of Germanic or IE languages. As we will shortly see, the earlier form of English perfective construction looked quite similar to the passive and it is plausible to think that the development of the perfective construction had some impact on the formation of the passive. In this section, I will analyse the choice of auxiliary in the perfective construction in relation to the passive.

The choice of auxiliary for the periphrastic perfective construction was not a clear-cut matter for certain lexical verbs in OE and maybe in ME. It was rather like a transitional period as *habban* 'have' became more popular as the perfective auxiliary, replacing *beon* or *wesan* 'be'. Denison (1993: 352) notes that '[m]any intransitive [monovalent] verbs were conjugated always or sometimes with [*be*] rather than [*have*], but exclusive reliance on [*be*] became increasingly rare as the [*have*] perfect was generalised'. Mitchell (1985: § 722) also claims that 'transitive [divalent] verbs are used with *habban* throughout the OE period', and Visser (1963–73: §§ 2001–3) considers that the *have*-perfect spread from transitive to intransitive verbs in the order shown in Table 2.8.

Be-perfect can often still be found in eModE, and it was not until the 19th century that *have*-perfect finally overtook *be*-perfect (Denison 1993: 359). Thus, the occurrence of examples like (44) is considered the very final stage of *be* as a perfective auxiliary. Main verbs appearing in the *be*-perfect are in general **mutative verbs** (verbs signifying a change of state and/or verbs of motion: the term was first introduced by Kern 1912:

Table 2.8 Emergence of monovalent verbs in the *have* perfect, based on Visser (1963–73: §§ 2001–3)

Period	Valency type of verbs
From earliest OE	Transitive verb
From 1000	Transitive verb without object expressed
From 1100	Intransitive verb

18) and we can account for such a state from the animacy of the subject. In earlier periods, the subject of the *have*-perfect tends to be human, or if not, an animate entity, while that of the *be*-perfect is an inanimate entity. When human entities are expressed with the *be*-perfect of non-mutative verbs, they are often put in the dative case, not nominative, as we will see later in examples (50) to (52). Mutative verbs are, on the other hand, used with human subjects, which allows the *be*-perfect to be expressed with a human subject. In order to understand the development in English more comprehensively, we need to go back further in time to analyse the origin of the perfective construction.

(44) *As it cleared away he looked again for the soldiers, but they* ***were vanished.*** (1849 Ch. Brontë, *Shirley* i.22.12)

Since the perfective aspect is concerned with present state resulting from previous events/action, and regardless of the type of verb, it was initially (as early as PIE) expressed with undergoer-orientation and **verbal adjective** (referring simply to the state of nouns it modifies) (Brugmann 1897–1916: II 651; Williams 1906: 106; Paul 1905: 162; Greenberg 2000: 182–6). By the last stage of PIE or well into its ancient daughter languages, a **verbal participle** (referring to the resulting state of the subject) had been created and was often used with copula verbs (Brugmann 1897–1916: II 649, III 134–5; Benveniste 1950: 27, 1966: 159; Szemerenyi 1980: 297; Davis 1986: 24). Even with a verbal participle, the whole clause was still undergoer-oriented.

However, a clear exception is the mutative verbs: from earlier periods they normally have human entities as subject, and the emergence of the verbal participle with mutative verbs was the first instance of actor-orientation in perfective aspect. However, non-mutation verbs could not achieve actor-orientation in perfective aspect until a lexical verb describing a possession, i.e. 'have', developed, although the etymology of 'have' in various IE languages is not clear (Meyer 1915: 224–7; Hamp 1954;

Markey 1986: 8; Davis 1986: 114–15, 134). Prior to 'have', possession was expressed periphrastically with a copula, something similar to the Latin example in (45). The invention of 'have' allowed perfective aspect to be expressed with actor-orientation. Bally (1926: 68) considers this tendency in terms of what he calls the personal sphere, i.e. 'have' is more human-oriented, and 'be' inanimate-oriented. In relation to this tendency, Van Ginneken (1929: 85) considers that *be* denotes the passive state, and *have*, the active state. The perfect with both *be* and *have* denotes the same aspect, only differing in the subject's animacy. We can explain a relationship between mutative verbs and *be*-perfect along the same lines: mutative verbs require nouns which are in general capable of acting on their own, often involving high agentivity. Thus, there was no need for such verbs to be expressed with *have*, which emerged to make the perfective clause more actor-oriented.[11]

(45) Latin
mihi *domus* *est*
I.DAT house.NOM is
'I have a house' (lit. 'to me a house is')

'Have' emerged and readily invaded the domain of the perfective auxiliary. Although there is some mystery as to the historical linkage between them, the semantic characteristics of 'have' and 'be' seem somewhat similar to each other. Benveniste (1960: 121) considers that 'have' is a variant of 'be', as far as possession is concerned, or 'have' is a pseudo-transitive [divalent], being transitive [divalent] in form, but intransitive [monovalent] in meaning. Markey (1986: 8) considers English *have*, including *take* and *give*, a type of deictic verb in a loose sense, since these verbs can describe the motion of object towards or away from the speaker. In his view, these three verbs can be compared to the motion verbs *come* and *go* including *be*, as illustrated in Figure 2.4. Notice the difference in these two sets of verbs: the set including *have* indicates motion of a direct object, the other set including *be*, motion of the subject. Figure 2.4 also indicates that there is no motion involved in either *have*

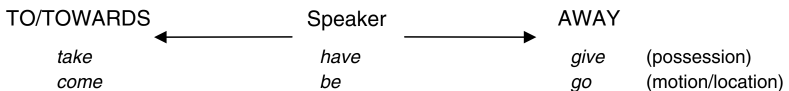

Figure 2.4 Deictic relationship among *take*, *have* and *give* (Markey 1986: 8)

or *is*, i.e. the stative. In historical terms, Vendryes (1937: 92) goes further to claim that 'have' in various daughter languages of PIE was developed to express perfect aspect, since this verb is well-suited to the expression of completed action, perhaps mainly due to its stative nature. It seems plausible that 'have' is a type of copula (such as quasi-copula), expressing possession.

By now, it is clear that the *be*-perfect existed from earlier languages, while the *have*-perfect came into existence later. In discussing the emergence of 'have'-perfect in Germanic languages in general, there is a developmental path on which various scholars seem to agree. Lockwood (1968: 114–16) explains this in three stages. In the first stage, 'have' preserved possessive meaning, and the past participle is used as an adjective, which modifies the direct object of 'have'. In the second stage, the participle began to modify the subject, not the direct object. In the third stage, the participle lost inflection and started to behave like a main verb. Where scholars differ is in their views on whether there was influence of a foreign language, namely Latin, in the development of, say, Germanic languages, or not. Scholars like Meillet (1949: 129–30) consider that there was indeed influence from Vulgar Latin, based on the surface similarities between Latin and Germanic languages such as Old High German. Other scholars, for example Kern (1912: 8), Ekbo (1943: 68), Ropelman (1953: 78) and Davis (1986: 108–10) consider that the development originated within the Germanic languages. Ekbo (1943: 135), for example, claims that 'have' used with a participle had already been firmly established in Germanic spoken in the Northern part of Europe, such as the oldest Old West Norse, and in OE. If it is a Latin influence, we would, as claimed in Davis (1986: 110), expect to see the gradual development from the southern dialect of Old High German to a more northern dialect like Old Norse. However, this does not seem to have happened.[12] In my view, the development seems to have been independent in various daughter languages of PIE, and there must have been a functional motivation relating to the realisation of the actor as the subject.

The shift from one auxiliary to another in English is relatively straightforward, although there was a considerable duration of overlap between these auxiliaries, considering the emergence of *have*-perfect in OE and the presence of the *be*-perfect in the 19th century. The change from one construction to another was not so straightforward in other IE languages. Such a change commonly involves an intermediate stage. Interestingly, the newer construction uses the lexical verb 'have', but at the intermediate stage the construction seems to be a mixture of

periphrastic (as in Latin example (45)) and lexical possessive construction, i.e. there is a period when 'have' + past participle and NP (dative) 'is' + past participle both existed (see Allen 1964 and Benveniste 1952 for a similar view). Such a stage also indicates that the category POSSESSION is somehow important in the development of perfective aspect. It is commonly considered that Gothic is the last Germanic language to have a periphrastic possessive construction: see example (46). However, there are some odd instances even in OE, as in (47). Several more examples are listed in van Gelderen (2000: 224–5), but (47) is the only pure case of periphrastic possession.

(46) Gothic (Davis 1986: 136)

jah	*ni*	*was*	*im*	*barne*
and	not	was	they.DAT	children

'they had no children.' (lit. and to them was none of children') (Luke 1,7)

(47) Old English

Him	*wœs*	*bam*	*samod . . .*	*lond*
they.DAT	was	both.DAT	together	land

'Together they possessed land.' (*Beo* 2196–7)

According to Davis (1986: 84), a construction as in (46) above was relatively uncommon even in Gothic, which also explains its oddity in OE. This rarity also implies that intermediate constructions such as (48) and (49) are rare too, although sporadic cases can be found as late as Old High German.

(48) Gothic

iþ	*marei*	*winda*	*mikilamma*	*waiandin*	*urraisida*	*was*
and	sea	wind.DAT	great	blowing	raised	was

'and the sea was raised by a great blowing wind' (John 6,18)

(49) Old High German

In	*zorften*	*teilen*	*sint*	*mir*	*geuallen*	*diu*	*landmezseil*
in	beautiful	parts	were	I.DAT	fell	rods	measuring

'The measuring rods fell to me in beautiful parts.' (*Notker* II 41, 27)

Similarly in English, there are some instances of this intermediate stage found in the earlier English language.

(50) *and him wæs geðuht þæt seo cæppe hine atuge*
and he.DAT was seemed that the cap him pulled
of ðam streame
from the stream
'and it seems to him that the cap pulled him out of the stream.' (*ÆCHom* II 11.95.107)

(51) *Ne biþ us geborgen*
NEG is us.DAT save.PST.PART
'we shall not be saved.' (lit. to us is not saved) (Ælfric, *Hom*. (Thorpe) i, 56, 18)

(52) *dryhten . . . ne ʒeniderð hine þonne biþ doemed*
lord NEG humiliate he.ACC when is judged
him
him.DAT
'The Lord will not humiliate him when he is judged.' (lit. 'when is judged to him') (*Junius Ps*. 36, 33)

These examples may appear to be syntactically passive;[13] accordingly one should not wonder why some scholars in earlier research interpreted them as passive in meaning. For example, Mitchell (1985: §1965) considers instances like (50) to be impersonal passive, but each occurrence has an actor-orientation (i.e. NP in dative) and we cannot assume some outer cause. Judging from the presence of similar constructions in other languages, these examples may better be considered as a perfective construction. In addition, the passivisation of so-called impersonal verbs can be used as evidence for the status of the earlier *be* as a perfective auxiliary. As suggested in Denison (1990: 116–18), the impersonal verbs do not undergo passivisation. There are examples which contain a certain construction, i.e. auxiliary *be* + impersonal verb in past participle, as shown in (53).[14]

(53) *Ic nat . . . for hwi eow Romanum*
I not.know why you Roman.DAT.PL
sindon þa œrran gewin swa wel
are those earlier conflicts. NOM so well
gelicad & swa lustsumlice . . . to
pleased and so enjoyable to
gehieranne
hear
'I don't know why those earlier conflicts are so pleasing and so enjoyable for you Romans . . . to hear' (*Or* 65.25)

The difference between (50)–(52) and (53) is that there is no alternation in valency or argument structure in (53), i.e. the case marking in (53) shows no difference from its form without 'be', i.e. outer cause in nominative and experiencer in dative, as shown in (54). The passive is commonly known to involve valency alternation, and such change cannot be observed in (53). So instances like (53) also indicate that 'be' was used for the perfective auxiliary earlier.

(54) *hu him se sige gelicade*
how he.DAT the victory.NOM pleased
'how the victory had pleased him.' (*Or* 84.32)

The similarity of the *be*-perfect construction and the passive has indeed been noticed and the emergence of the verbal passive is believed by some scholars to have caused the shift: the frequent occurrence of non-mutative verbs in the environment *be* + past participle and the emergence of *be*-passive created a heavy functional load on *be*. *Have* was earlier less loaded and its sporadic occurrence with the past participle became a refuge for the overloaded *be* and created a shift (Mustanoja 1960: 501; Traugott 1972: 145 and others). Other lines of argument include the neutralisation of *is* and *has* in the clitic *'s* (see, for example, Visser 1963–73: §1898). Brinton (1988: §3.1.3) considers that the change of auxiliary started well before OE, following a metonymic shift in *have*, from 'hold' to 'have' (but without semantic bleaching). Traugott's (1992: 191–3) analysis involves a reanalysis of verb clusters: in her view, constructions like *we habbaþgeweorc* ['stronghold'] *geworht* ['built'] 'we have built the stronghold' was interpreted earlier as the subject having the object modified by the adjective (most likely semantically passive), i.e. *we habbaþ* [*geweorc geworht*] 'we have the stronghold

in-a-state-of-builtness', but it was later reanalysed as *we* [*habbaþ*] *geweorc* [*geworht*] 'we have built the stronghold.' She suspects that this happened first with the neuter accusative object, since it carries no inflection (see Table 2.7).

Considering that actor-oriented possession is an important factor in change, as we have argued earlier in this section, the concept of change expressed in Traugott's reanalysis of verb clusters captures it very well. The concept of perfective might have been expressed in a sense of possession of the object affected by the event, which was later reanalysed as a verb cluster. Judging from the cases in other IE languages shown earlier in this section, we can comprehend why the English perfective construction involves *be* earlier than *have*, i.e. the development of *have*-perfect was much later than OE and the *be*-counterpart is a construction common before OE. In this sense, the analysis made by Brinton seems to capture the whole sequence of change from the IE perspective. However, her claim stresses the metonymic shift in *have*, from 'hold' to 'have'. The verb 'have' in some IE languages is said to have been developed from verbs meaning 'hold' (Gamkrelidze and Ivanov 1995: 250–1). However, *have* in English is considered to be related to *heave*, according to various etymological dictionaries (see, for example, Onions 1966). The *OED* does not provide many details of earlier etymological information.[15] Thus, although we are inclined to follow Brinton's line of argument on the etymology of *have*, especially from the IE perspective, this point has to remain unanswered and further work on the etymology needs to be done.

Functional overload of one item, as argued in Mustanoja (1960: 501), Traugott (1972: 145) and others, is often cited as a cause for historical change. However, this leaves some questions: up to what degree can one grammatical item be loaded? Prepositions such as *at*, *in*, *on*, for example, can denote many different meanings. Other items, say *be* for the sake of our argument, seem to show a higher degree of loadedness as the language develops. *Be* is used more frequently as a grammatical marker in the progressive, perfect or passive, on top of its use as a copula. If *have* emerged as a perfective marker due to the overloadedness of *be*, then how come *be* gains its use as a progressive marker or verbal passive marker later? Functional overload may explain the particular case of the perfective marker, but not the whole distinction of *be* as a grammatical marker.

In my view, the analysis related to overloadedness of *be* seems highly questionable. The reanalysis of verb clusters involving *have* or the metonymic shift in *have* from 'hold' to 'have' seem plausible and may

explain why *have* started to invade the tense–aspect domain. However, while rating these two approaches highly, I am yet inclined to involve another line of argument. The change can be attributed to a change of orientation, where an earlier undergoer-orientation with *be* became more actor-oriented with *have*. As for the choice of *have*, it can be attributed to its copula-like nature, which made involvement in the tense–aspect system possible. Thus, it is possible to claim that the frequency of *have* as a perfective auxiliary increased due to its own actor-undergoer orientation, independently of any overloadedness of *be*.

Our argument so far may imply that IE languages are likely to develop from 'be'-perfect to 'have' -perfect. However, perfectives in modern IE languages are not so uniformly constructed. Isačenko (1974: 44) claims that 'it is by no means unjustified to polarize modern IE languages into ***have*-languages** (henceforth H-languages) and ***be*-languages** (henceforth B-languages). The former include English, German, Dutch, and other Germanic languages, French, and the other Romance languages, Czech, Slovak, and Serbo-Croatian as well as Lithuanian. The latter include Finnish, Estonian, Hungarian and Russian, as well as Latvian. Polish, Ukrainian, and Belarusian seem to be in a state of transition from B-languages to H-languages.'[16,17] Orr (1989) adds the Goidelic branch of Celtic languages to the B-languages. In Isačenko's view, H- and B-languages have the four mutually exclusive characteristics shown in (55) and (56).

(55) H-languages

(i) A transitive verb 'have' to express simple possession, e.g., English *I have a book*, Spanish *Tengo un libro* 'I have a book'.

(ii) Use of 'have' to form periphrastic past tenses, normally perfect in meaning, e.g. English *I have read the book*, French *J'ai lu le livre* 'I have read the book'.

(iii) The development of various semantic relationships in certain verbs, particularly 'own' and 'belong to', e.g. English *I own property in Dublin*, German *Das Buch gehört mir* 'The book belongs to me', etc.

(iv) A well developed system of modal verbs, 'can', 'must', etc., e.g. German *können* 'be able to', *müssen* 'have to', etc.

(56) B-languages

(i) Possession is expressed by prepositional phrase, e.g.

Irish: *Tá leabhar agam*
is book at.me
'I have a book.'

(ii) Periphrastic past tenses are not formed with 'have'.

(iii) Functional equivalent of 'own' and 'belong', as in H-languages, cannot be found in B-languages, i.e. examples like 'I own this property' and 'This property belongs to me' cannot be realised with verbs in B-languages, e.g. Russian *vladet'* 'own' and *prinadležat'* 'belong' do not function in the same way as English *own* and *belong to*, respectively (see Isačenko 1974: 64–5).

(iv) Modal verbs in H-languages are expressed with indeclinable form or adjectival construction, often with the logical subject in dative, e.g.

Russian:	*Mne*	*nel'zja*	*kurit'*
	to me	is forbidden	smoke
	'I may not smoke.'		
Hungarian:	*Nekem*	*muszáj*	*dolgozni*
	to me	is necessary	work
	'I must work.'		

Isačenko's analysis is synchronic and does not refer to the historical aspects of IE languages. However, his distinction reflects the development of several languages and clearly shows that B-languages still preserve an earlier 'be'-perfect. In addition, in terms of the construction, the earlier periphrastic perfective construction with copula seems to be a direct ancestor of the passive in modern IE languages. Dryer (1982: 55) claims 'the use of copula plus an adjective in passive clause is rare outside Indo-European. In most languages, the passive is formed by adding a passive suffix to the verb', and Haspelmath (1990: 29) expresses the same view. Their claim seems to be applicable to Isačenko's H-languages, not B-languages. As English belongs in the H-languages, possession-related constructions may well have influenced the very origin of the English passive, i.e. the development of *have* and its invasion of the tense–aspect domain contributed to turning the earlier *be*-perfect into the *be*-passive. I will deal with the difference between the periphrastic and morphological passive from diachronic perspectives later in Section 5.3.1 along with further arguments.

2.3.3 Syntactic environments

In addition to the characteristics discussed in the two preceding sections, there are some syntactic clues which highlight the development of a passive auxiliary. Various scholars discuss the combination of 'progressive and passive' and '*have*-perfect and passive'. What these two syntactic environments indicate is whether the cluster of '*be* + past participle of

main verb' is being treated as verbal or adjectival, since *be* as a progressive auxiliary or *have* as a perfective auxiliary clearly mean that they normally appear with other verbs, which are considered the main verbs. Consider, for example, the progressive aspect in *He is writing short stories*. It is a common practice to consider that *is* is an auxiliary and *writing*, a main verb in the present participle. In this way, if the passive phrase can replace the slot occupied by the present participle, such as *being written* in *Short stories are being written by him*, then such a passive phrase is considered to possess verbal characteristics. The same goes for the perfective passive phrase, i.e. if the '*be* + past participle' cluster can replace the past participle in the active perfective phrase, such clusters are considered a verbal phrase, not an adjectival. So the cluster in PDE *The novel has been completed by the author* is considered verbal. In addition, such instances can indicate that the passive phrase is no longer considered perfective. Thus, the earlier passive could express the perfective aspect without the perfective auxiliary, as in *The novel is completed by the author* up to eModE. Below, we look at the integration of these two syntactic environments into the passive from an historical perspective.

2.3.3.1 Progressive passive

Progressive passive is considered among scholars to have appeared around the 18th century (see Mossé 1938: §§ 263–4, Visser 1963–73: §2158). One of the earlier examples is shown in (57) to (59). Before the emergence of such constructions, simple progressive constructions with undergoer-orientation, as in *This TV needs fixing* or *This book is printing* were often used as alternatives. For this construction, see Sections 7.2.1 and 7.4. It suffices to say for the moment that these constructions were more popular in earlier English and the emergence of the progressive passive is often considered to have caused them to become obsolete. Both Mossé and Visser claim that the progressive passive was at first stigmatised, especially in print: thus an example like (58) is found in a private, jokey letter.

(57) *I have received the speech and address of the House of Lords: probably, that of the House of common* ***was being debated*** *when he post went out.* (1772 Mrs. Harris, in *Ser. Lett. 1st Earl Malmesbury* I.264 (8 Dec.))

(58) *like a fellow whose uttermost upper grinder* ***is being torn out*** *by the roots by a mutton-fisted barber.* (1795 Southey, *Life & Correspondence* I 249.24 (9 Oct.))

(59) *The extortionate profiteering that* ***is being practised*** *by the tradesmen in the public market.* (1814 *Guernsey Star & Gaz.* In New Age (1919) 21 Aug. 278/2 (*s.v. OED profiteering* vbl.sb.))

The earlier examples found in the corpora are taken from the mid-19th century, and earlier examples from the corpora are given in (60) and (61). This shows some gaps in the chronology in our data. The number of examples found in each period is shown in Table 2.9. The ModE period is divided into eModE and lModE in order to illustrate the emergence of this construction more clearly.

(60) *He was seated on a match-tub — the skeleton swinging near his head — at the foot of the table, in readiness to grasp the limb, as when a plank* ***is being severed*** *by a carpenter and his apprentice.* (ARCHER 1850melv.f5)

(61) *Seventh day. Ä Pulse 120. Appetite bad, thirst great. Urine without sediment. Pain much worse both in legs and arms. Hot fomentations* ***are being applied*** *to them.* (ARCHER 1864wats.m6)

As indicated earlier in Section 2.3.1 and in the Appendix, the progressive aspect does not appear in the stative construction. So it is natural to consider that the emergence of *be*-passive in the progressive aspect is only possible when the main verb is grammaticalised as a verb phrase, not an adjectival one, expressing the dynamic aspect. Such a verbal phrase in this case is the verbal cluster '*be* + past participle' and the emergence of progressive passive can be considered an indication of grammaticalisation of *be*-passive as a more verbal, rather than an adjectival construction. Judging from the aspectual changes shown in Table 2.2,

Table 2.9 Number of examples of progressive passive from the corpus

	OE	ME	eModE	lModE	PDE
Number of examples	0	0	0	34	148
Examples per 100,000 words	0	0	0	5.6	11.9

it is indeed understandable that the emergence of the progressive passive is reasonably late, i.e. lModE, since it was around ME that the verbal passive in general became dynamic.

2.3.3.2 Perfective passive

In Section 2.3.2, we saw that the perfective construction was earlier formed with *have* as well as *be*, and there were periods when the two auxiliaries existed side by side, with *have* edging its way towards domination of the whole paradigm of perfective auxiliary. Such a development allowed the verbal cluster '*be* + past participle' to appear in the *have*-perfect. Scholars differ about the earlier date of an example containing perfective passive: Visser (1963–73: § 2161) claims it was OE, as in (62), while Mitchell (1985: § 753) thinks it was ME. Mitchell considers that example (62) contains infinitival *beon* 'be' and dismisses Visser's example. More examples from Visser are, in fact, found after eME. So considering this fact, we can assume that from eME or at least from lME onwards, perfective passive became frequent. The results from the corpora seem to support this, with the earliest example found in the data from the mid twelfth century (64), but it became frequent in the eModE period, as shown in Table 2.10. Other earlier instances of perfective passive from the corpora are shown in examples (65) to (67).

Table 2.10 Number of examples of perfective passive from the corpus

	OE	ME	eModE	lModE	PDE
Number of examples	0	2	68	885	2373
Examples per 100,000 words	0	0.3	12.3	145.9	221.0

(62) *Ic* ***hæbbe*** *on* *fulluhte* ***beon*** ***gefullod***
I have in baptism been baptised
'I have been baptised in baptism.' (*LK* (WSCp) 12.50)

(63) *&* *forr ðatt* *Crist* *ær* ***haffde*** ***ben*** ***Fullhtnedd***
and because Christ earlier had been baptised
att *teȝȝre* *maȝȝstre*
by their master
'and because Christ had been earlier baptised by their master.' (c1180 *Orm.* 18232)

(64) *. . . as hit* ***hað been vsed*** *duely in suche cas afore þis tyme*. (HC ME3 cmoffic3)

(65) *. . . a chalenge comenly called Riens Deyns le garde* ***hath been admytted*** *for a good chalenge, . . .* (HC ME4 cmlaw)

(66) *. . . as other fynes and amerciament for any other matter or cause within the saide Citie* ***hathe been used*** *and* ***accustomed***. (HC E1 celaw1)

(67) *. . . , but you haue no cause to complaine, for you* ***haue been suffered*** *to talke at your pleasure*. (HC E1 cetri1)

Like the progressive passive, the perfective passive can be a good indicator of the grammaticalisation of '*be* + past participle', as opposed to Denison (1993: 422–3) who questions the usefulness of the perfective passive. It is important to note that the interpretation of *have* + *be* + past participle as *have* + *be*-adjectival phrase, not as *have* + *be*-passive, can still be possible. As far as the divalent or trivalent verbs are concerned, with which the verbal passive is associated, by checking whether the grammatical subject is an actor or undergoer, it is possible to distinguish clearly *be*-passive (undergoer-subject) from *be*-perfect (actor-subject). So the use of perfective passive can be considered as important an indicator as progressive passive. In addition, as we will see below, the date of appearance of *have*-perfect is during ME and chronologically, *have* + *be*-passive can be useful, too.

2.3.3.3 Aspectual construction as signs of grammaticalisation

Figure 2.5 summarises the chronology of these two constructions in relation to the *be*- and *have*-perfect. The dotted line means that the form may be found, but its frequency is low. It is obvious that the *have*-perfect was formed first, and the perfective passive is better considered to have been formed sometime during ME, becoming more firmly established in eModE.

Considering the existence of both *be* and *have* as perfective auxiliaries even from OE: it was possible in early English that all main verbs were put into the perfective with *be*, as in *I am done with my work*, except for *be* itself, which formed the perfective only with *have*, as in PDE *I have been in London* but not **I am been in London*. This, and the discussion above on

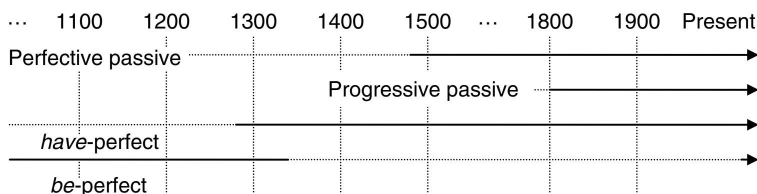

Figure 2.5 Chronology of progressive and perfective passive

perfective passive suggest it is less convincing that the grammaticalisation of *be* used in the passive occurred prior to ME. Denison (1993: 426) notes that the '[m]ain verb [*be*] has never formed a perfect with auxiliary [*be*], but rather – since very late [OE] – always with [*have*]. A syntagm consisting of grammaticalised passive [*be*] + past participle, on the other hand, would arguably have been a mutative intransitive, precisely the sort of syntagm liable to form its perfect with [*be*]; . . . So perhaps passive [*be*] was still an ungrammaticalised main verb. By the time it was grammaticalised, perfect [*be*] was obsolete.' But as we have mentioned earlier, the periphrastic construction started as a perfective construction, and in earlier English, a perfective passive construction like PDE *My life has been ruined* used to be expressed without the perfective marker, i.e. *My life is ruined*. One such instance from OE is shown in (68). Notice the absence of a perfective auxiliary. See Visser (1963–73: §1909) for further examples.

(68) *Ða him ða ðæt sæd broht wæs, . . .*
when him then the seed brought was
'When the seed had been brought to him, . . . ' (*Bede* 4 29.366.30)

Some scholars, for example, Rydén and Brorström (1987: 24) and Denison (1998: 183–4) notice that there is some syntactic overlapping in these two constructions (in our term, this is another case of gradience), and that such an overlap lasted until the 19th century (Denison 1998: 183–4). Consider the later instance shown in (69). However, the 19th century as the date of the disappearance of the overlap has to be questioned. This is the period in which the *be*-perfect along with mutative verbs disappeared, although it is still possible to find ambiguous examples between *be*-perfect and *be*-passive in PDE. The passive in general does not express the actor overtly, making the interpretation even more difficult in some cases. Consider the example in (70).

(69) *Our hopes* **are** *again* **revived** *of seeing the Viceroy of Mexico.* (1797 Nelson, *Letters*, ed. Naish (1958) 190 p., 328 (30 Jun.))

(70) *I was knocked out, but I bear Rossi no ill-will. The fight* **is finished**. (LOB N23 96–97)

If these instances are to be considered a *be*-perfect, then an actor is not implied, and the verbal phrase only refers to the current state of the subject. If it is resultative, however, then it implies an actor and so would tend to express resulting state more than action. Any claim as to which type of construction an example like (70) belongs to would be arbitrary. We identified three different constructions in what appears to be the *be*-passive. Example (70) indicates that there is an intermediate stage even in PDE. Although the *be*-perfect more or less disappeared around the early part of 19th the century, ambiguous cases like (70) remain in the language to this day. Nevertheless, the development of the overt marking of a perfective aspect on the passive is one of the crucial signs of grammaticalisation of the passive auxiliary, since earlier *be* seems to be considered both a passive and perfective auxiliary. By appearing in the *have*-perfect, the verbal cluster '*be* + past participle' is considered more like a verbal than an adjectival, phrase.

Among various impacts the grammaticalisation of *have*-perfect made, the shift of orientation is the most significant one for the development of the *be*-passive. Without the introduction of *have*, the periphrastic construction was always undergoer-oriented, possibly forming a split-ergative system based on the tense–aspect. Split ergativity is a grammatical pattern in which ergativity is manifested in some classes of sentences but not in others. In languages that belong to this type of construction, ergativity is commonly found in a clause with a particular subject (e.g. inanimate or non-pronominal, etc.), with particular combination of NPs (e.g. inanimate subject and animate object, etc.), or with particular tense–aspect (normally in past tense or perfective aspect). For details of conditions and various examples, see Dixon (1994: 70–110). Orr (1984: 41) notes that split ergativity based on the tense–aspect 'should be correlated with the absence of a verb ['have'], or to put it positively, with the presence of dative-subject or locative-subject constructions.' Some branches of Indo-European languages, namely Celtic and Indo-Aryan languages, have this system. So constructions like (71) from Irish are still often considered the passive (Nolan 2006), largely due to the anglocentric view of grammatical description (Toyota 2004), but (71) should be considered as a resultative, not the passive. In Indo-Aryan languages,

the periphrastic construction similar to (71) was considered the passive up to the late 1980s, but this has proven to be wrong (p.c. John Payne). There is an attempt to classify the South Slavic languages (e.g. Serbian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Slovenian, Macedonian and Croatian) as having the same system. See Toyota and Mustafović (2006) for a discussion.

(71) Irish
Tá *mac léinn* *seo* *molta* *againn*
is student this praised at.us
'We have praised this student.'

In relation to the general change of the stative–dynamic distinction shown in Table 2.2, the *be*-perfect and *have*-perfect do not seem to interact much with the passive at first sight, since the major change of the stative–dynamic aspect happened roughly during ME and the changes observed in Figure 2.5 are either in ME or ModE. However, the emergence of these two constructions can be considered a gradual change in the grammaticalisation of the passive. The very first stage is the emergence of the *have*-perfect, which took over from *be* the role of perfect auxiliary. It is plausible to think that this reduced the association of *be* with perfective aspect. This plausibility is reinforced by the emergence of the perfective passive, i.e. *have* is required even in the alleged earlier passive to form the perfective aspect. Denison (1998: 184) states on this point that the 'use of the sequence [*have*] + *been* + [past] participle can make clear that a participle is to be regarded as verbal'. The emergence of verbal characteristics in the past participle coincides with the change in stative–dynamic distinction as shown in Table 2.2 above, and the majority of the passive examples in the corpora after ME are no longer stative. In addition, the emergence of the progressive passive is only possible after the shift of aspect from stative to dynamic. As mentioned earlier, the progressive aspect always indicates that the clause is dynamic, and while the periphrastic clause was stative, this aspect was not compatible.

The perfective passive also indicates that the orientation has changed and the passive requires the undergoer subject. As we will see in more detail later in Sections 7.2.1 and 7.4, undergoer-orientation without overt marking of the passive existed earlier, but such a construction was replaced by the progressive passive except for certain verbs. We have argued so far that the origin of the passive expressed the perfective aspect, not the passive *per se*, and the emergence of progressive passive, in our view, is an important indicator of the general change of the passive. The passive in general, as well as its auxiliary, was reanalysed during ME,

as indicated by the stative–dynamic aspectual change, i.e. the passive became more verbal after ME. If it is still stative, its appearance in the progressive construction is highly unlikely (see Appendix). Suppose that in the light of the aspectual change, the verbal passive was established during ME. It is difficult to provide a definitive clue for the change, since superficially, there is not much difference between the construction prior to and post-ME, except for the losses of *weorðan* 'become' or the participle prefix *ge*- or inflection, some of which events will be discussed later in Sections 3.2 and 3.3.2.

Various changes concerning ME which we have mentioned above, such as the loss of inflection, could have been significant if the adjective had retained inflection and only the deverbalised past participle had lost it. However, the reality is that both kinds disappeared from the language around the same period, so this cannot be a decisive indicator in our argument. Instead, analysis of the perfective passive and the progressive passive can enrich the result in Table 2.2 and indicate that the change of the stative–dynamic aspect is not a mere accident of data.

2.4 Summary

In this chapter, we have examined general characteristics of the passive and various aspectual issues concerning the *be*-passive. We first analysed some basic features of the passive, such as the relationship between thematic role and actor-undergoer, transitivity, valency alternating operation, etc. We established three basic types in the construction '*be* + past participle', i.e. verbal passive (dynamic construction with undergoer-orientation), adjectival passive (stative construction with actor-orientation) and resultative (stative construction with undergoer-orientation). Then we studied a number of aspect-related features in the *be*-passive and found that the earlier construction was more adjectival than verbal and had a stative reading more frequently, and that from ME onwards, the construction became more dynamic. Overall, we claimed that the earlier periphrastic construction was a perfective construction, which described the resulting state from the undergoer's perspective. By the intervention of the *have*-perfect, the perfective construction started expressing the resulting state with actor-orientation. This allowed the construction with *be* to develop into the passive. Among various constructions, the progressive passive and the perfective passive can be regarded as important indicators of the grammaticalisation of the passive, since they indicate that the cluster '*be* + past participle' as a

passive verbal phrase, can substitute for an active verbal phrase. Their frequency increased after the ME period, and this is because the '*be* + past participle' cluster had to be grammaticalised as a passive phrase first, prior to ME. Details of the change in each component of the '*be* + past participle' cluster will be discussed further in the following chapter.

3
Components of *be*-passive and their Historical Change

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, each component of the verb phrase '*be* + past participle' is analysed. The results in Table 2.2 indicate the aspectual change, but, as hinted at in the discussion of Table 2.7, we need to look at auxiliary and past participle separately in order to understand the change better. For auxiliary, we look at the status of *be* as auxiliary and some particular syntactic constructions with the passive. As for the past participle, we look at various characteristics such as the suffix *-ed*, the prefix *ge-*, verbs with two different forms, stative verbs and prepositional verb phrases. These various features will clarify the grammaticalisation of the *be*-passive.

3.2 Auxiliaryhood

The category auxiliary has been a puzzle for linguists over several decades: 'In fact, in the recent history of linguistics, auxiliaries have provided one of the most popular battlegrounds for disputes on linguistic theory' (Heine 1993: 26). Indeed, it seems hard to describe satisfactorily what an auxiliary is. Generally speaking, auxiliary verbs possess morphosyntactic characteristics of verbs, i.e. the position in a clause, inflectional information (agreement, tense–aspect–mood, etc.), but differ in their lack of ability to create the major conceptual relation of the clause (i.e. state or activity expressed in the clause). In addition, they are often considered semantically empty, except for a subcategory of auxiliary commonly known as modal auxiliary, which can express modality. Even where a single language, say English for convenience, is concerned, there has been a debate over whether the category auxiliary

in grammar exists or not. For example, this category is rigidly distinguished in GB approaches, while some scholars claim that there is no such category, and what are known as auxiliaries should be considered as types of lexical verbs. Linguists who consider the auxiliary as a special category include Jackendoff (1972), Akmajian *et al.* (1979), Plank (1981), Steele *et al.* (1981), Palmer (2001); studies treating it as a lexical verb include McCawley (1975), Huddleston (1976), Pullum and Wilson (1977), Pullum (1981), Schachter (1983), Huddleston and Pullum (2002).

Whether the category 'auxiliary' exists or not represents the tip of the iceberg. A number of works differ over various syntactic or semantic characteristics. Apart from the lexical verb/auxiliary distinction, Schmerling (1983) considers that the auxiliary is a subject modifier, while for Janssen (1983), it is a verb modifier. As for dependency, Matthews (1981) treats auxiliaries as dependents of main verbs, while Schachter (1983) considers that auxiliaries are the head and the main verbs are the dependents. In distinguishing the head in a clause, Hudson (1987) identifies the auxiliary as the head, while Zwicky (1985) believes that there is no coherent way of defining a head once an auxiliary is involved, and therefore the auxiliary cannot be the head. We return to the issue of head and dependent in Section 3.4. In the face of these various approaches, there are some linguists who claim that the distinction depends greatly on one's perspective on grammar. For example, Gleason (1961: 104):

> There is doubtful value in this analysis [classification of *can*, *will*, etc. as fully lexical verbs, J.T.], but in any case the class is quite distinct from verbs in many other respects and quite uniform within itself in usage, and so must be recognized as a clearly marked class in English structure. Whether it is treated as a highly specialized subclass of verb (auxiliary verbs) or as a separate class closely associated with verbs (verbal auxiliaries) does not matter greatly.

In similar vein, Palmer (1979: 3) considers the matter a highly complex one that cannot be treated in a black-and-white manner.

Some typological accounts suggest that there are certain patterns with regard to the category auxiliary. For example, Greenberg (1966: 85; universal 16) reveals the relationship between the word order and the position of the auxiliary: 'in languages with dominant order VSO, an inflected auxiliary always precedes the main verb. In languages with dominant order SOV, an inflected auxiliary always follows the main verb'. Additionally, Steele (1978: 42) notes that no language with an SVO or VSO basic word order, or with free word order, has its auxiliaries

in the clause-final position. She (*ibid*: 43) also notes that the category of auxiliary exists, since various languages tend to cluster all the grammatical information about the clause, such as tense–aspect and mood, in the same slot (i.e. position in the clause). For example, languages such as Luiseño (Uto-Aztecan) express agreement, tense–aspect or mood marking by the insertion of particles (shown in bold in the following example), quite unlike auxiliary verbs in English, and Steele *et al.* (1981) consider that these particles are still auxiliaries:

(1) Luiseño (Uto-Aztecan, Steele *et al.* 1981: 23)

a.

noo	***n***	*hunwuti*	*patiq*
I	1SG	bear	shoot.PRS

‘I am shooting the bear.’

b.

noo	***nu***	***po***	*hunwuti*	*patin*
I	1SG	FUT	bear	shoot.FUT

‘I will shoot the bear.’

c.

noo	***xu***	***n***	***po***	*hunwuti*	*pati*
I	MOD	1SG	FUT	bear	shoot

‘I should shoot the bear.’

These types of example make it almost impossible to provide a clear definition of an auxiliary. However, one thing that emerges from various typological works is that languages tend to cluster all this information in the same slot.

Heine (1993: 8–24) classifies the various approaches dealing with the diversity of auxiliaries into three types, which can be summarised as follows:

Type I: Autonomous hypothesis

Any grammatical elements commonly known as auxiliary constitute a distinct category. Puglielli (1987: 346) assumes that this hypothesis is widespread and generally accepted and it ‘is a universal category, even if there are of course differences in the realization of this category in different languages’.

Type II: Main verb hypothesis

What are commonly considered auxiliaries are some kind of lexical verbs. The proponents of this hypothesis, as noted in Heine (1993: 9), ‘usually argue that there is neither syntactic nor any other evidence for defining a category “AUX”, . . . , and that assuming

that there exists such a category would render language description unnecessarily difficult'.

Type III: Gradience

The clear boundary between the auxiliary and the lexical verb is not assumed, but what distinguishes them is considered a continuum or gradience. This hypothesis is often employed in diachronic works (e.g. Bybee 1985, Givón 1979, 1984, Heine 1993), although there are some purely synchronic works (e.g. Bolinger 1980, Coates and Leech 1980, Leech and Coates 1980).

What we are interested in is the gradience approach, based on the hypothesis that by analysing the change from a lexical verb to an auxiliary verb and beyond (such as cliticisation realised as affix and loss), the unclear distinction between the auxiliary and main verb can be considered as a natural result of historical change and it is sometimes impossible to draw a line between the lexical verb and auxiliary. This idea is not unique: various linguists such as Bybee (1985), Bybee and Dahl (1989), Givón (1975, 1979, 1984, 1989), Haspelmath (1990), Heine (1993) and Hopper and Traugott (1993: 108–12) incorporate factors from diachronic change into their treatment of the auxiliary. For example, Givón (1984: 270–1) and Haspelmath (1990: 38) describe an auxiliary as an intermediate stage on the way from full lexical verb to clitic, later realised as an affix, and beyond that stage, as zero. Thus, this diachronic approach offers a gradience or continuum for the auxiliary, which is schematised in Figure 3.1. The arrow indicates the direction of historical change. This means that the auxiliary originates from a full lexical verb which ends up being lost. What is represented in the scale is apparently syntactically oriented. This is true in a sense, since auxiliaries are in general considered semantically empty. However, there are cases where some semantic changes are involved. When a lexical verb turns into an auxiliary, various semantic aspects, most commonly modality, can appear. One such case is the modal *can* in PDE, which was originally used as a lexical verb meaning 'know' but is now fully grammaticalised as a modal auxiliary: see Section 7.3.2 for details.

Figure 3.1 Schematic representation of auxiliary scale

The choice of passive auxiliary varies according to the language in question. However, we can taxonomise them into some general groups. Keenan (1985: 257–61) suggests that there are four different types of auxiliary verbs in the periphrastic passive: (i) the verb of being or becoming, (ii) the verb of reception, (iii) the verb of motion and (iv) the verb of experience. Among them, the verb of being seems to be the most common choice for the passive auxiliary across languages (Foley and Van Valin 1984; Payne 1997: 84), but there are some languages which do not use 'be' as an auxiliary at all, such as Hindi or Urdu (see (13) in Chapter 6 for an Urdu example). Also, certain types of auxiliaries are geographically restricted and languages with such auxiliaries are normally genetically related to each other, e.g. verbs of motion mainly found in Indo-Iranian languages (Hindi, Kurdish, Punjabi, etc.) and verbs of experience mainly in Sino-Tibetan languages (Burmese, Chinese, Thai, etc.); see Section 6.2.1.5 for examples.

When these verbs are considered in the scale shown in Figure 3.1, the distinction between the full lexical verb and auxiliary is, as we have seen earlier in this section, often difficult to make. However, the stage of clitic or affix is relatively easy to identify, and that is what we sometimes find in the morphological passive. For example, -(*r*)*are*, a suffix in the Japanese passive, historically originates from the verb *aru* 'exist' but now functions entirely as the passive suffix. The passive morphemes *-il*/*-ıl* in Turkic languages are believed to derive from *ol-* 'be' (Hetzron 1976: 377). Also, in the case of most Bantu languages, the passive morpheme can be considered to have been derived from the verb 'fall'. For example, in Shona, the passive morpheme is *-wa* (*-iwa* or *-ewa*, depending on neighbouring vowels), which can be considered to be historically related to *wa* 'fall'. As for the left-most stage in the scale, i.e. the stage of full lexical verb, there is a tendency for auxiliaries to be most commonly derived from copula verbs, and if not, from motion verbs. Less frequent, but still possible, other complement-taking verbs (often known as quasi-copulas) can be a source of auxiliaries (Foley and Van Valin 1984; Payne 1997: 84).

Auxiliaries, when seen from a typological perspective, seem to involve various characteristics as proposed in Heine (1993: 22–4). He lists 22 different properties ('a' to 'v') of auxiliary and considers that the more of these properties an item possesses, the better, i.e. more prototypical, an auxiliary it is. Here, we apply them to *be* over the history of English. *Be* itself expresses stative aspect in all periods, but it is hard to interpret the dynamic aspect from this verb. Earlier occurrence of passive or passive-like constructions were predominantly stative, as shown in Table 2.2, and

superficially the same pattern turned into a more dynamic construction. If this change is due to semantic change in *be*, it looks like a change from a lexical verb to a grammatical functional marker (Heine 1993: 86–7). Let us test whether it is plausible that *be* turned into an auxiliary before the end of ME.

A comparison of the properties associated with *be* in OE and ME onwards to PDE as proposed in Heine 1992: 22–4, is shown in Table 3.1. Some of the properties are not applicable at all to English at any period, such as obligatory presence (property m) or locative morphology in the main verb (property v). So we may be comparing twenty properties. Nevertheless, the result shows a clear difference in the use of *be* between OE and ME onwards: 17 matches out of 20 can be found in ME onwards, a high proportion. On the other hand, OE *be* exhibits only 10 matches out of 20 and this result is too weak to make OE *be* a legitimate candidate for auxiliaryhood. Thus, we can assume that *be* became a passive auxiliary during ME. However, the OE period can be considered as a sort of 'maturing' period for *be* as an auxiliary. For example, Warner (1992), claims that *be* as early as OE shows several syntactic properties, including raising and post-verbal ellipsis (e.g. *I do this because I should_*), which are all language-specific to English. Such characteristics indicate the beginning of auxiliaryhood, and what Table 3.1 tells us is that the semantic content of *be* was to a certain extent bleached sometime around ME. This allowed various semantic characteristics of the past participle, such as dynamic aspect, to be expressed in the passive. This depends primarily on inherent verbal semantic characteristics, i.e. some verbs like *hit*, *break* (those that express instantaneous action) hardly show stativity, while others like *influence*, *affect* (those that express change of state) are likely to express both dynamicity and stativity. So the overall interpretation of the clause seems to come from the main verb in past participle form. This is due to the change of *be*, i.e. it became an auxiliary after OE. See, for example, the case of inherently stative verbs in Section 3.3.4. These verbs in the past participle behave like a verbal participle but show stativity.

As for the language-specific case in English, there is a particular set of properties commonly known as the NICE properties, first introduced by Huddleston (1976). It is a mnemonic label representing four main properties of auxiliaryhood in English. NICE stands for Negation, Inversion, Code and Emphasis, and these features perhaps can indicate how much a verb is auxiliary-like or in historical terms, grammaticalised. The verb *do*, for example, can be qualified as a highly grammaticalised auxiliary, since it satisfies all four properties, as shown in examples (2), below.

Table 3.1 Properties of auxiliary associated with *be* in OE and ME onwards to PDE (properties discussed in Heine 1993: 22–4)

Period	Matching properties		Missing properties	
OE:	10	**b.** forming a closed set of units; **c.** neither lexical nor grammatical units; **d.** also as a main verb; **e.** verbal morphosyntax; **i.** unstressed or no contrastive stress; **k.** all morphological information for a predicate; **l.** marking of subject agreement; **n.** not governed by other auxiliaries; **t.** position in relation to basic word order; **u.** main verb in non-finite form	12	**a.** small range of notional domain; **f.** defective paradigm; **g.** not main predicate; **h.** full form and reduced form; **j.** clitic; **m.** obligatory presence; **o.** no meaning; **p.** separate from main verb; **q.** bound to adjacent element; **r.** not nominalisable; **s.** fixed word order; **v.** locative morphology in main verb
ME onwards:	17	**a.** small range of notional domain; **b.** forming a closed set of units; **c.** neither lexical nor grammatical units; **d.** also as a main verb; **e.** verbal morphosyntax; **g.** not main predicate; **h.** full form and reduced form; **i.** unstressed or no contrastive stress; **k.** all morphological information for a predicate; **l.** marking of subject agreement; **n.** not governed by other auxiliaries; **o.** no meaning; **p.** separate form main verb; **r.** not nominalisable; **s.** fixed word order; **t.** position in relation to basic word order; **u.** main verb in non-finite form	5	**f.** defective paradigm; **j.** clitic; **m.** obligatory presence; **q.** bound to adjacent element; **v.** locative morphology in main verb

However, some other verbs may not exhibit the degree of grammaticalisation shown in (2). *Dare* shows some NICE properties, but not all of them: it lacks code when positive, as exemplified in (3) below. This indicates that PDE has various items with various degrees of grammaticalisation. The passive auxiliary *be* can accept all four properties and

the result is identical with the case of *do*, but not *dare*: consider the examples in (4).

(2) a. *She doesn't go out in the evening.* (negation)
b. *Does she go out in the evening?* (inversion)
c. *She often goes out in the evening, so does her brother.* (code)
d. *She dóes go out in the evening.* (emphasis)

(3) a. *She dare not sing.* (negation)
b. *Dare she sing?* (inversion)
c. ?*She dare sing, so dare he.* (code)
d. ?She *dóes sing*. (emphasis)

(4) a. *He wasn't shot by a stranger.* (negation)
a. *Was he shot by a stranger?* (inversion)
b. *He was shot by a stranger, and so was her friend.* (code)
c. *He wás shot by a stranger.* (emphasis)

In the case of *be*, its lexical use shows the same result,[1] which makes the degree of grammaticalisation less credible for this verb. Passive *be* sometimes exhibits cliticisation as well, as in *He's sent off by the referee* (although it is not compulsory yet), but this is also found in copula *be*, as in *He's happy to see his friend*. What is commonly known as an auxiliary or modal auxiliary in English normally shows some differences between lexical and auxiliary use. Some can be compared synchronically (since both uses are still present in the case of *dare*), others diachronically (*can*, for example, has now lost its lexical use: see Section 7.3.2). Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 103–4) consider auxiliaries in terms of core and non-core use, where the latter is the lexical use. *Be* has the NICE properties even in non-core use. The distinction between core and non-core use is important, since *be* does not involve semantic change in the shift towards an auxiliary in the scale, i.e. *be* is a copula and its semantic content is empty (except perhaps expressing stative aspect), serving to link a subject to a predicate. Passive auxiliary *be* definitely shows some extra grammatical properties, such as the ability to express dynamic aspect, but this is at the semantic level and there is no obvious change at the syntactic level. Thus, the change in *be* is not so obvious in comparison with other auxiliaries.

The gradience approach allows us to see the historical relationship between the verb and auxiliary, and by using the auxiliary scale shown in Figure 3.1 above we can identify the degree of grammaticalisation as well as at what stage a grammatical item is located. Some auxiliaries in

English are easier to identify in this way. For example, PDE *can*, although its lexical verb counterpart does not exist any longer, clearly shows a high degree of grammaticalisation. Some others, like *dare* as we have seen, are not really comparable to *can*, not satisfying typical features of auxiliary in the same way. This does not exclude *dare* from the category of auxiliary but situates it somewhere in between lexical verb and auxiliary. As for passive auxiliary *be*, it is hard to decide where to locate it in the scale. It can sometimes even demonstrate cliticisation, though only sporadically as yet. Its semantic content has indeed changed and it has gained the ability to express dynamicity, but the syntactic behaviour has not changed much. Therefore, it is hard to classify passive *be* as an auxiliary at the same level as *can* or *do*, though it is certainly not a lexical verb.

3.3 Past participle and its various uses

There are a number of familiar grammatical features of the past participle. It is formed inflectionally, either by adding the suffix *-ed* or *-en* to the verb stem e.g. *talked* from *talk* and *taken* from *take*, or altering the internal vowel of the verb stem, e.g. *sung* from *sing*. The past participle is an inflectional variant of the verb, and it can appear in the passive or perfect, representing the meaning of the main verb. However, this apparent simplicity in form is deceptive, especially once it is analysed diachronically. We can identify at least seven different environments where the past participle can appear in PDE. Consider the following examples:

(5) i. Perfect with *have*
Meanwhile, the couriers were smashing glasses in the kitchen which by now had ***become*** *a suburb of Beirut.* (Ardal O' Hanlon, *The Talk of the Town*, 133)

ii. Perfect with *be*
"I'll decide who does what. You get that money on first then look for The Wop. Tonight I'm going to clean up so you'd better warn Sammy to keep plenty of the ready by him. I want a hundred nicker off him before I'm ***finished****."* (LOB L10 115–118)

iii. Verbal passive
The Senate Banking Committee, which is ***headed*** *by another Southern Senator — Willis Robertson, of Virginia — met today in closed session to discuss Weaver's appointment.* (LOB A01 91–93)

iv. Adjectival passive
The roof is ***covered*** *with 1/2in mesh netting, and the upper 20in of the front is composed of two sliding glass panels.* (LOB E14 59–60)

v. Pre-modifying adjective
Adkins had bent over the body that I had guarded, and a whole world of ***tortured*** *waiting passed before Adkins said: "I'm afraid there's nothing else we can do for him.* (LOB P24 156–158)

vi. Post-modifying adjective
In continuing its work on the basic causes and mechanism of corrosion, the National Bureau of Standards in the U.S.A. has established that with large single crystals of high purity aluminium ***exposed*** *to an acid mixture, configuration of etch pits differed according to crystallographic orientation, and the rates of attack varied radically from those* ***observed*** *in an alkali mixture.* (LOB **J**77 68–73)

vii. Adverb
The landau moved swiftly inside, the front doors were slammed ***closed*** *and bolted hard, and the lights in the dim and cavernous reception area were switched on.* (Simon Winchester, *The Professor and the Mad Man*, 117)

The past participle itself has various functions in PDE as shown above in (5i–vii), and in this section we will explore to what extent these various functions of the past participle are related to each other in terms of the verbal passive formation.

3.3.1 Various tests for the distinction between adjectival and verbal participles

Synchronically, various tests have been proposed in the literature for distinguishing verbal participles from adjectival ones, since there are some syntactic properties which signal the difference: applicability of prefix; possibility of comparative and gradability; replaceability of auxiliary *be* with quasi-copula. These tests are applicable to historical data, but the occurrence of the past participle in certain constructions such as comparative or with adverbs such as *very* is quite rare in the historical data. Nevertheless, I believe that these tests can still be used for the diachronic data and I apply them in what follows. We will note differences between historical and PDE data when necessary.

Not every kind of affix can be attached to a verb. Let us take the verb *beat* as an example. The negative prefix *un-* cannot be attached to a verb such as *beat* in **Ireland unbeat Belgium*, however, it can be attached to adjectives derived from *beat*, such as *beatable*, as in *Germany is unbeatable this year*. The acceptability of affixation to a verb in the past participle form indicates that if some past participle of a verb has an affix, it may not be derived from an original verb form, e.g. *unbeaten* is not derived

from the verb **unbeat*, as the verb cannot accept any affix, but from *beaten*, which is an adjective in its own right. However, Bresnan (1978: 20, 1982: 21–4) notes that a verb such as *zip* has a reversed-action form *unzip*, but a verb like *touch* does not have this reversed form, i.e. **untouch*. Therefore, the past participle form of the reversed-action form *unzipped* can appear in a syntactic passive sentence, and *untouched* can be treated only as an adjectival past participle. These reversed-action forms of verbs existed as early as the OE period. *OED* (s.v. *un*- prefix[2] 2.a.) gives examples such as *unbindan* 'unbind', *undón* 'undo', *unlúcan* 'unlock', etc. (exact dates are not given for these examples). Khomiakov (1964) excludes every form of the past participle with the prefix *un*-, considering they are all adjectives. His proposal, however, also questioned by Mitchell (1985: 286), seems dubious. These reverse-action forms are preserved from the OE period, and we are therefore unable to consider every instance of the past participle with the prefix *un*- as an adjectival passive.

Adjectives and adverbs can occur in comparative and superlative forms, such as *This jacket is more expensive than that one*, *This is the most beautiful creature I have ever seen*, and can be graded, as in *This jacket is very expensive*, *This is a very beautiful creature*. Again, this is a particular feature of adjectives and adverbs and it is not applicable to the past participle in the passive as the participle in the verbal passive still preserves verbal characteristics such as dynamic aspect. However, those categorised as stative (i.e. adjectival passives and some resultatives) can be graded, and in particular can be modified by *very*, as in *I am very surprised*, *He seems very disappointed*, etc.

Copula verbs normally take a complement, as in *I'm a student*. The same verb can be used as an auxiliary verb in the passive, as in *The plate was broken by Sandy* (verbal passive). However, with *He is very disappointed* (adjectival passive), a so-called **quasi-copula** (a copula with real semantic content, often aspectual, modal or perceptual) such as *look*, *seem*, etc. can occur in the place of *be*, e.g. *He seems very disappointed*.[2] In the verbal passive construction, on the other hand, this results in the ungrammatical **The plate looked broken by Sandy*.

There are some other key factors. One of them is agentivity, which is often not expressed in adjectival passive and resultative. In ModE as well as PDE, it is claimed that the presence of prepositions apart from *by* can be a good base to distinguish verbal passive from adjectival passive and resultative, as in *I was surprised at the noise* (resultative), but *I was surprised by the noise* (verbal). This is, however, not the case in the earlier period, since various prepositions, such as *of, off, from*, etc. are used in relation to actor (see Table 2.7). Another factor, related to agentivity,

is often associated with a stative reading. The verbal passive, when it is periphrastic with the auxiliary *be*, may be ambiguous between stative and dynamic readings, especially during earlier periods, since the frequency of stative readings was much higher. When a passive clause is agentive, the clause is dynamic, since agentivity and stativity cannot occur in the same clause.[3] However, other auxiliaries such as *weorðan* 'become' in OE and ME and *get* in PDE, which normally express dynamic reading, do not lead to ambiguity.

However, these tests are not straightforward, since adjectives can be divided into two types, one of which takes the prefix more easily than the other. Gnutzmann (1975: 423–4) classifies the adjective into gradable (e.g. *big*, *fast*, *intelligent*, *eccentric*) and non-gradable (e.g. *single*, *married*, *dead*). His classification (*ibid*: 424) is based on the criteria illustrated in (6) below. When an adjective fulfils these characteristics, it is considered a gradable adjective. These criteria can be applied to the past participle used in the passive. Let us take one example following Gnutzmann. His non-gradable adjectives include *married*, which is the past participle of *marry*. *Married* satisfies the last of the three tests identified at the start of this Section (replacability with other copula), but not the first two (prefix *un-* and gradability). This leaves the status of *married* ambiguous as to whether it is verbal or adjectival. Other non-gradable past participles, such as *broken* from *break* in *The window was broken by him*, can be considered more clearly as verbal participles.

(6) a. comparative construction, i.e. *more/ less . . . than*
    b. superlative, i.e. *most/least . . .*
    c. collocation with intensifier
    d. equative constructions, i.e. *as . . . as*
    e. exclamatory sentences, i.e. *How . . . !*

This type of ambiguity has led some scholars to the conclusion that there is no clear division between verbal and adjectival characteristics in the past participle, and the relationship may best be considered as a continuum (see, for example, Haspelmath 1994; Huddleston 1984; Quirk *et al.* 1985). We show one such example for PDE in Figure 3.2. Notice, however, that this continuum is only concerned with the verb and adjective. As we have seen earlier, there is an adverbial use – see (5). So a continuum like that in Figure 3.2 can be made more complicated. It may be worth mentioning that there are some claims that not all constructions containing an auxiliary verb and a verb in the past participle form are passive at all but are in fact clauses containing a copula verb and

adjective: see Freiden (1975) for this argument. In our system, however, such constructions are adjectival passives.

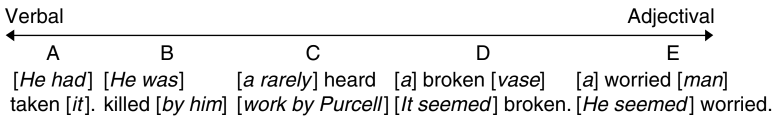

Figure 3.2 A continuum of past participle, from Huddleston (1984: 324)

In addition to these tests, the presence of inflection helps us to make the distinction in historical data. The inflection forces agreement between the subject and the past participle in number, person and gender. This is a typical characteristic of adjectives in the earlier period of English, i.e. the participles were often inflected and were truly adjectival before OE (Davis 1986: 20–7), and these adjectives started a process of reanalysis, at least partially, during OE (Traugott 1992: 193). However, it is claimed in Kilpiö (1989: 135) that the agreement system of the past participle in the passive was already simpler than that of the adjective in eOE. This claim also signals that the aspectual change from stative to dynamic seems to have happened during or even prior to OE. There are even some instances of a mixture of inflected and uninflected participles in the same clause, as exemplified in (8) below. The absence of inflection is indicated by Ø.

(7) *ðonne hæbbe we begen fet gescode suiðe untællice*
then have we both feet: ACC.PL shod.ACC.PL very blamelessly
'Then let us have both our feet very well shod.' (*CP* 5.45.10)

(8) *Fela Godes wundra we habbað gehyred and eac gesewene*
many God.GEN wonders we have heard.Ø and also seen.ACC.PL
'We have heard and also seen many of God's wonders.' (*ÆCHom* I 38.578.24)

Examples like (8) are a good indicator that the inflection was present earlier but is diminishing. Although agreement was in serious decline in ME and eventually died out during this period, there are some sporadic occurrences, as the eME example in (9) illustrates (taken from Mustanoja 1960: 440). Notice, however, it is difficult to tell whether agreement is present or not, since inflection often involved no change (i.e. -Ø). See Denison (1993: 417) and Mitchell (1985: §§759–65) for a similar argument.

(9) *Hwet sculen ordlinghes don. þa swicen & ta forsworene*
what must fornicators do the traitors and the perjured

hwi boð fole iclepede. & swa lut icorene.
why are many called: NOM.PL.MASC and so few chosen.NOM.PL.MASC

wi whi weren ho bizeten to hwon weren ho iborene.
woe why were they begotten for what were they born.
NOM.PL.MASC

þet sculen bon to deþe idemet. & eure ma forlorene.
that shall be to death condemned and ever more lost.
NOM.PL.MASC

'What are the fornicators, the traitors and the perjured to do? Why are many called and so few chosen? Woe! Why were they begotten, what were they born for, who are to be condemned to death and to be lost for ever?' (a1225 (?c1175) *PMor.*(lamb) 103)

3.3.2 Affixes

There are two particular affixes in English which help us to analyse the details of the past participle. They are the prefix *ge-* and the suffix *-ed*. By identifying their details, we can see how diverse the function of the past participle is.

3.3.2.1 Prefix ge-

The prefix *ge-* in OE and ME has often been considered in recent years as a perfective aspectual marker. Such an idea has been persistent in analysis for nearly a century, as the following quotation from Frary (1929/1966: 12) indicates:

> The distinction between the perfective and imperfective has gradually been lost in the Germanic languages. Evidence of this is seen in the use and disuse of the prefix *ge-*, originally a sign of perfectivation. By analogy, *ge-* was added to the past participles of verbs already perfective, and to simple duratives, without a change of meaning, until it came to be merely the sign of the past participle. In the same way, an OE verb frequently has a durative meaning in one context and a perfective one in another.

The *ge-* prefix is indeed attached to the past participle, as exemplified in (10), along with earlier examples from Chapter 2, (4)–(8), (11), (12),

(14), (33) and (37). Since the prefix is generally considered when expressing the perfective aspect, a better translation for (10) below may be something like 'we who were not worthy to have been called his slaves'. There are several variations in spelling of the prefix *ge*- in ME: -*i*- as in (11) below (see also (5), (7), (8) and (33) in Chapter 2) and *y*-as in (12) below (see also (6) in Chapter 7).

(10) *We ðe nǣron wurðe beon his wealas* ***ge****cigde*
we that were.not worthy be his slaves called
'We who were not worthy to be called his slaves.' (*ÆCHom* II, 21.181.49)

(11) *Þo þis bodi ne moste beo* ***i****-founde in Engelonde*
then this body not could be found in England
'Then this body could not be found in England.' (c1300 *Sleg.Kenelm* (Ld) 352.243)

(12) *He was yhoten Nicholas*
he was called Nicholas
'He was called Nicholas.' (HELSINKI, ME2 cmalisau)

As noted in Kilpiö (1989: 124), this prefix tends to be omitted in the periphrastic construction when the periphrastic clause is dynamic, not stative. However, as we have seen in Chapter 2, examples (4)–(8), there are earlier occurrences of verbal passive with this prefix. So before its disappearance during OE, there were instances in which the prefix was simply attached to the past participle without influencing the overall interpretation of the clause. The prefix eventually died out during ME, although its equivalent still exists in other Germanic languages and is fully functional.

This prefix is commonly considered a perfective marker, but it is far more complicated than simply a perfective marker. For example, the verb *gan* means 'go', while the prefixed form *gegan* means 'go away, happen, walk' and even further, *gegan* + noun in the accusative case means 'conquer'. A similar situation is evident in the verb *standan*, which means 'stand', while *gestandan* means 'stop, remain standing' (Lindemann 1970: 3). There are several functions that the prefix *ge*- can have, and a number of scholars have posited their own formulations. The most extensive summary can be found in Lindemann (1970: 1–18), and in (13) below, I simply list various claims found in his work:

i. *ge-* without any meaning (Krapp and Kennedy 1929; Samuels 1949; Hollmann 1936)
ii. *ge-* intensifies the action of verb (Bernhardt 1870; Wackernagel 1878; Lorz 1908)
iii. *ge-* converts an intransitive verb into a resultative transitive verb (Lenz 1886; Lorz 1908)
iv. *ge-* signals completion (Grimm 1878; Dorfeld 1885; Wustmann 1894)
v. *ge-* expresses perfect aspect (Martens 1863; Streitberg 1891; Mossé 1950; Quirk and Wrenn 1957; Sweet 1957)

Types i to iii are distinctive, but the difference between iv and v is subtle. The main difference is that in type iv the scholars assume that the completion of action can be etymologically derived from the meaning of *ge-*, i.e. 'with' , and the prefix is referred to as a preverb. We may note, however, that there are slightly different versions of this interpretation, which are listed below (taken from Lindemann 1970: 4–6):

- Wackernagel (1878): *ge-* must originally have meant 'with, together' and must have been the Germanic equivalent of Latin *cum* 'with'.
- Dorfeld (1885: 45): the preverb originally meant 'together', and this idea of 'being together' indicated completeness, and subsequently indicated completed action.
- Wustmann (1894: 18–230): *ge-* originally meant 'with': from this it evolved into the meaning of 'fully, entirely' and 'entirely to the end'.
- van Swaay (1901: 44): from the idea of 'union' could come the idea of 'collecting together' and from there on the prefix could indicate a point in the action that would be the equivalent of a 'result'.

As for type v, the prefix is part of the verbal paradigm and is considered indispensible for distinguishing between the perfective and imperfective aspect. This type was first popularised by Streitberg (1891), who claims that the Germanic languages must have made the distinction between the perfective and imperfective aspect, just like Slavic languages (*ibid.*: 103).[4] His explanation for the developmental path is as follows: the original meaning of *ge-* 'with' had faded out and been reduced to zero; consequently, when it was prefixed to a simple verb, it perfectivised that verb without modifying the meaning of the verb. Bloomfield (1929: 92) basically follows this idea. However, some doubt about Streitberg's analysis was expressed as early as Weick (1911) and Lorz (1908). Much

later, scholars like Pilch (1953: 131–3) compare OE with several Slavic languages (Russian, Polish and Serbo-Croatian) and point out that the role of the *ge-* prefix as a perfective aspect marker no longer holds true. Scherer (1958) goes as far as to claim that the *ge-* prefix in OE does not express aspect.

These counterexamples notwithstanding, type v in (13) is probably the most influential idea of the five, and even in current textbooks on Old English, such as Mitchell and Robinson (1992: 58), the perfective meaning is given when attached to verbs, and the sense of 'together' when attached to some nouns. Also, when the prefix is attached to the past participle, it tends to produce a perfective reading and its aspect is more stative.

More recently, Brinton (1988: 204–14) argues that the prefix has a spatial meaning. Her analysis can be considered a part of the **localist hypothesis**,[5] where the locational sense of the etymological meaning of *ge-* 'with, together' started to be reanalysed as an egressive aspectual marker. Her idea is that 'when not purely spatial in meaning, all these prefixes may, like the postverbal particles in Modern English, indicate the goal of action. Thus, they are better analysed as expressions of telic aktionsart than of perfective or intensive aspect' (*ibid.*: 202). She assumes two meanings for *ge-*, which are 'being together' and 'coming together' and the latter meaning is crucial for her argument. She argues (*ibid.*: 204): '*ge-* has a 'terminative and directional' meaning or indicates that 'the action expressed by any verb to which it is prefixed is directed toward some thing or in a direction forward and outward.'" In this sense, her approach is similar to the one made by Wustmann (1894: 18–230), as we have seen above. However, her approach is inclusive and she treats every preverbal prefix in the same fashion and admits that the case of *ge-* is not straightforward: 'Neither *ā-* nor *ge-* provides clear evidence for the semantic shift from directional to telic, since already in Old English their meanings are widely extended' (*ibid.*: 211).

If her localist approach is accurate, then why cannot the stative etymological meaning of 'with, together' appear in the prefix? Further, the telic meaning can be influenced by non-verbal elements, such as singularity/plurality of noun, as in *I read a book* (telic), *I read books* (atelic). Can the telic meaning of a verb with the prefix *ge-* be wholly attributed to the presence of the prefix? In my view, *ge-* is more stative in its own right, and a telic reading, i.e. to specify the end point of the action, is not suitable. Following Dorfeld (1885: 45) and van Swaay (1901: 44), as demonstrated above, I adopt the meaning of 'completeness', 'result', which tends to go with more stative meaning. The explanation is as follows. Each action or

state can be considered a sequence of actions represented by a series of events. When it is dynamic, the action has to terminate at some stage, while stativity can go on endlessly. In each case, looking at each point in the series of events from the subject's point of view, the action seems like an unchanging one, which is similar to stative aspect. In this sense, this prefix can be considered a de-dynamicising prefix. This can be also used to emphasise or intensify the action, since the prefix indicates the accompaniment to the action and the action is duplicated. The nature of the de-dynamicising effect may be closely related to stativity, but its presence does not always guarantee the stative reading of verbal phrases. Recall our earlier example (8) from Chapter 2, repeated below for convenience as (14). In this example, we saw an instance where the presence of a prefix does not result in stative reading.

(14) *Whanne þat* ***was i-ended*** *he ȝalde up þe laste breeþ wiþ*
when that was ended he yielded up the last breath with

a wel greet swetnesse of smyl, and so he was ***i-buried þere;***
a well great sweetness of smile and so he was buried there
'when that was ended, he gave his last breath with a great sweetness of smile and so he was buried there.' (HELSINKI ME3 cmpolych)

The presence of a prefix therefore is not a clear sign of stativity, since aspect is also closely related to meanings of verbs. So in the case of (14) above, one can claim that the meaning of *end* and *bury* contributed to the overall interpretation of the stative–dynamic distinction.

3.3.2.2 Suffix -ed

The suffix *-ed* is widely used to form the past tense as well as the past participle of most verbs in PDE. Historically, this suffix is only used for the weak verbs, i.e. those with regular conjugation. One of the main characteristics of weak verbs is productivity. A new verb introduced to the language at any period from foreign languages such as French, or a denominalised verb, nearly always takes this suffix for conjugation. However, the range of applicability of this suffix goes beyond verbs.

The suffix *-ed* can appear in a non-verbal construction. It is known that a noun modified by an adjective with an *-ed* suffix, as in *red-haired Mary*, *big-bellied man*, *black-eyed boy*, etc., always expresses inalienable possession (see, among others, Ljung 1970: 95–8, 1974, 1976, 2001; Bauer 1983: 93–4; McMahon 1994: 195).[6] This distinction is relatively simply made in English. In some languages, there is a morphological distinction for alienable and inalienable possession. Thus in languages like

Fijian (Fillmore 1968: 62) there is a pair *uluqu* (inalienable) 'the head which is now firmly attached to my neck', *kequ ulu* (alienable) 'the head which, for example, I am about to eat.' We may also note that some languages have a restricted range of inalienable possession, e.g. Irish *cailín rua* 'red-haired girl (lit. girl red)', *Seán bháin* 'fair-haired John (lit. John white)', etc., where the noun + adjective phrase denotes inalienable possession only when it refers to hair. Ljung (2001: 99–101) argues that this alienability involves prototypical possession, in the sense of prototype theory (see Taylor 1995). Thus, no matter what NP is involved in the *-ed* suffix construction, it tends to be understood that the possession is natural. However, as Ljung (2001: 100–1) points out, items of clothing are considered as something prototypical, i.e. *white-shoed woman* is fully acceptable[7] and there seem to be several examples, such as *middle-aged man*, *moneyed class*, *propertied class*, that cannot be explained by this prototypicalness.

Earlier in (5), we saw that a verb with suffix *-ed* can appear in eight different environments. In fact, this suffix can be attached to nouns, as shown in (15) and (16). This variety of categories seems to indicate that the suffix is derivational. However, it is inflectional when it is used in the verbal passive (from verb to verb), although it is a derivational suffix (from verb to adjective) when it is used in the adjectival passive. To confuse matters further, the resultative involves both inflectional and derivational types, i.e. the suffix in *I am very interested in linguistics* is derivational (i.e. more adjectival), while in *He was considered a good scholar*, it is inflectional (i.e. more verbal). Moreover, the participle that is used for the verbal passive can sometime have the actor attached to it, as in *sun-dried tomatoes*. Another example is provided in (17).

(15) Adjective

Skates and rays are descended from sharks, and sharks are already slightly flattened compared with bony fish which are typically ***deep-bodied*** *and blade-like. A* ***deep-bodied*** *blade of a fish can't lie on its belly, it has to flop over its side.* (Richard Dawkins, *Climbing Mount Improbable*, p. 123)

(16) Adverb

then he petered out and died and then the job was going to be given to Baxter to finish it ***single-handed*** *and then he very reasonably accrued a mighty team around him* (LL 4 6a 76 7010 1 1 B 11 1 - 4 6a 77 7040 1 1 B 11 1)

(17) *British nationals in Zimbabwe are attacked by* ***government-backed*** *militants*. (BBC 10 o'clock news, 16 August 2001)

The verbal passive is dynamic, and therefore the agent case is more likely to be applied to the actor, or the presence of agent subsequently implies that a relevant clause is dynamic, not stative. In (17) above, *backed* is clearly an adjective, but it still retains verbal characteristics and when it appears in the passive as in *Militants are backed by the government*, it is verbal passive, not resultative. This type of occurrence is rare, but it does happen. All these examples prove that the suffix *-ed* is an allomorph of both the verbal participle and the adjectival participle.

The allomorphic characteristic of the suffix *-ed* has not been given much attention in the study of the passive voice, but it seems to be one of the key factors in solving the puzzle. If there were a strict distinction for the passive participle, it would obviously be much easier to distinguish the passive from other related constructions as discussed in this section. There are, however, a couple of verbs that sporadically make a distinction in the past participle, i.e. one form for the passive and the other for perfect. We will consider these verbs in Section 3.3.3.

These affixes tell us how diverse the past participle can be. The significance of these affixes has not been much noticed in relation to the passive construction. The prefix died out mostly during ME, but the suffix still thrives. As we have seen, the suffix functions as both a derivational and inflectional suffix, which may indicate that it still contains some earlier (derivational, i.e. adjectival) and newer (inflectional, i.e. verbal) morphological characteristics. This is, then, a case of gradience, where one form can possibly be interpreted as two different grammatical items. It also mirrors the historical developmental path of the passive, i.e. earlier adjectival participles later became verbal.

3.3.3 Participle with two different forms

There are a few verbs which have alternative past participle forms, for example, *shaved* and *shaven*. Some of these alternations are the result of phonological assimilation, the introduction of weak/strong conjugation, etc. as exemplified below in (18) to (22).

- Phonological assimilation: in most cases, this happens between the voiced and voiceless alveolar stop /d/ and /t/, normally expressed by suffixes *-ed* and *-t*, respectively, e.g.

(18) *dwell*: *dwelt*, *dwelled*. *leap*: *leapt*, *leaped*. *sweat*: *sweat*, *sweated*.

- Weak/strong conjugation: there is no significant difference in meaning, although one of the forms may be lightly restricted, e.g.

(19) *swell*: *swollen* (strong), *swelled* (weak).

- Weak/strong conjugation with semantic difference:

(20) *lade*: *laden* (meaning 'loaded, burdened'), laded (meaning 'drawn water, removed from river, etc.')

- Semantic difference but not a case of weak/strong conjugation:

(21) *bear*: *born* (meaning 'given birth to'), *borne* (meaning 'carried).

- Two different sources: the present-day conjugation is the result of different historical sources. At some stage in history two different etymological forms end up in the same verb.

(22) *bid*: *bidden*, *bid*. Earlier forms are *béodan* and *biddan*; *béodan* became *bēde* (ME), which led to past participle *boden*. *Biddan* became *bidde*, whose past participle *bidden* was the source of both lModE past participle forms.

Most of the different forms are interchangeable, apart perhaps from some extra pragmatic or register implications, such as archaism, formality, etc. However, the use of different forms is sometimes influenced by grammatical voice (see Trask 1993: 202). The verbs involved are *prove* and *show*. Each verb has two different past participle forms, but one is used for the active (perfective aspect) and the other for the passive. Consider the case of *prove* in (23) and the case of *show* in (24). Surprisingly, this particular grammatical phenomenon has received very little attention. Within the limited literature, *OED* (*show* v.) notes that '[f]rom early ME. the verb has had a strong conjugation (after KNOW v., etc.) by the side of the original weak conjugation; in the pa[st] t[ense] this survives in dialects; but for the pa[st] p[articiple] *shown* is now the usual form; the older *showed* is still sometimes used in the perfect tense active (chiefly with material object), but in the passive it is obs[olete] exc[ept] as a deliberate archaism.' Trask (1993: 202) also notes that the choice is often based on personal preference.

(23) *prove*

a. *I **haven't proved** it*. (active, perfective aspect)

b. *The theory **has** not yet **been proven** by the researchers*. (passive)

(24) *show*

a. *He* ***has*** *rarely* ***showed*** *his affection.* (active, perfective aspect)
b. *The result* ***has*** *never* ***been shown*** *by the government.* (passive)

These different forms of past participles can indeed be found in our data from PDE. The overall occurrence and the distribution of the different forms of past participles are shown in Table 3.2. It is clear from the table that *shown* and *proved* are favoured instead of *showed and proven*, respectively. However, there seem to be further general tendencies. We shall consider each verb separately.

Tables 3.3 and 3.4 below show the distribution of *shown* and *showed*. *Showed* is only used for the perfective aspect, but it is very rare, while *shown* can be used for both the perfective aspect and the passive voice. When the perfective aspect is involved, the grammatical subject can either be human animate or inanimate, while the passive voice seems to favour an inanimate subject. Overall, *shown* seems to dominate the whole paradigm of past participle and *showed* is a marginal case.

(25) *This mystery we* ***have shown*** *elsewhere refers to the relationship that exists between Adam, his fall and his seed.* (LOB D12 174–175)

Table 3.2 Distribution of different past participles for *show* and *prove* in PDE

	Strong form	**Weak form**
show (total 228)	*shown* 224 (98.2%)	*showed* 4 (1.8%)
prove (total 55)	*proven* 4 (7.3%)	*proved* 51 (92.7%)

Table 3.3 Distribution of *shown*

Text type	**Passive/Perfect**	**Animacy**	
		Human animate	**Inanimate**
Written: 232 (95.1%)	PERF 68 (29.3%)	35 (51.5%)	33 (48.5%)
	PASS 164 (70.7%)	11 (6.7%)	153 (93.3%)
Spoken: 12 (4.9%)	PERF 6 (50.0%)	5 (83.3%)	1 (16.7%)
	PASS 6 (50.0%)	0 (0%)	6 (100%)
Total: 244 (100%)	PERF 74 (30.3%)	40 (54.1%)	34 (45.9%)
	PASS 170 (69.7%)	11 (6.5%)	159 (93.5%)

Table 3.4 Distribution of *showed*

Text type	**Passive/Perfect**	**Animacy**	
		Human animate	**Inanimate**
Written: 2 (50.0%)	PERF 2 (100%)	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)
	PASS 0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Spoken: 2 (50.0%)	PERF 2 (100%)	2 (100%)	0 (0%)
	PASS 0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Total: 4 (100%)	PERF 4 (100%)	3 (75.0%)	1 (25.0%)
	PASS 0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

(26) *Estimates of the adequacy of the diets, assessed by comparison with allowances based on the recommendations of the British Medical Association,* ***are*** *also* ***shown*** *in Table 30.* (LOB H04 171–173)

(27) *Before the first gleam* ***had showed*** *in the north-east sky Jimmy had taken the wheel and set more to the south, easing her along as the dawn came to them.* (LOB N24 139–141)

Past participles for *prove* seem to demonstrate a similar phenomenon, as shown in Table 3.5 and Table 3.6 below. *Proven* is only used in the passive, while *proved* can be used for both the perfective aspect and passive voice. Both forms in the passive seem to prefer the inanimate subject, while *proved* in the perfective aspect does not show this preference and can have either a human animate or inanimate entity as subject.

Table 3.5 Distribution of *proven*

Text type	**Passive/Perfect**	**Animacy**	
		Human animate	**Inanimate**
Written: 4 (100%)	PERF 0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	PASS 4 (100%)	0 (0%)	4 (100%)
Spoken: 0 (0%)	PERF 0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	PASS 0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Total: 4 (100%)	PERF 0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	PASS 4 (100%)	0 (0%)	4 (100%)

Table 3.6 Distribution of *proved*

Text type	**Passive/Perfect**	**Animacy**	
		Human animate	**Inanimate**
Written: 42 (82.4%)	PERF 25 (59.5%)	11 (44.0%),	14 (56.0%)
	PASS 17 (40.5%)	4 (23.5%),	13 (76.5%)
Spoken: 9 (17.6%)	PERF 4 (44.4%)	2 (50.0%),	2 (50.0%)
	PASS 0 (55.6%)	2 (40.0%),	3 (60.0%)
Total: 51 (100%)	PERF 29 (56.9%)	13 (44.8%),	16 (55.2%)
	PASS 22 (43.1%)	6 (27.3%),	16 (72.7%)

(28) *Many will agree that the excellence of the tutorial system* ***is not proven****.* (LOB G61 150–151)

(29) *Corrosion at welds* ***has*** *not* ***proved*** *a serious problem with aluminium since the dangers of flux entrapment were eliminated by the adoption of inert gas-shielded welding methods;* (LOB J77 147–149)

(30) *I have always said that our members are always right until they have* ***been proved*** *wrong, even when they have taken unofficial actions against an employer.* (LOB B17 85–87)

Superficially, the distributions of past participles for both *show* and *prove* are similar. However, there are significant differences, especially when it comes to historical development. The different forms in the past participle are due to the mixture of weak and strong conjugation, but the end product does not show any coherence: the weak verb *showed* can be used only for the perfect tense, the strong verb *proven* only for the passive. As noted in *OED* (*show v.*), the weak verb form (*gescéawod*, etc.) is older than the strong *shown*, which emerged around eME. This means that the strong form took over the past participle over a period of time. *Prove* shows a similar developmental path, i.e. the weak verb existed earlier (*proued*, *preued*, etc.) and the strong verb form came in around the 16th century through the Scottish dialect (ME *preve* 'prove'). However, the rarer form *proven*, which is a strong verb form, is only used in the passive. Thus, there is a contrast between the rarer forms: the weak verb form *showed* is used for perfect tense, the strong verb form *proven* for the passive. In general weak verb forms are more productive and when a new verb is introduced in the language, the verb tends to adopt the weak verb conjugation. It seems that *shown* has nearly completely replaced

the older form, *showed*, while as for *prove*, the older form *proved* still thrives and *proven* exists marginally. *Prove*, *proven* are derived from ME *preve* 'prove' which had already disappeared from Standard English after 1500 but still survives in literary Scottish and northern English dialects (*OED prove, v.*). Thus, the existence of *proven* seems to be influenced by a dialectal difference, which creates an untidy situation of co-habitation. However, the case of *showed* is a puzzle. The result in Table 3.4 does not show any significant differences, such as animacy, register, etc., except for its low occurrence.

Overall, the occurrence of rarer forms is so low (see Tables 3.4 and 3.5) that it is difficult to say that these two forms co-exist for a productive purpose. As far as frequency is concerned, one form seems to be dominant. In terms of their diachronic formation, there is no uniformity between them and the difference between them is very untidy.

3.3.4 Stative verbs

We have so far distinguished several properties that make a participle either more verbal or adjectival. When a participle is verbal, it tends towards stativity, and when verbal, towards dynamicity. However, this is not always the case and there is one particular set of verbs which behaves differently, i.e. inherently stative verbs, such as the perception verbs *see*, *hear*, *understand*, etc., which behave like verbal participles in the passive but where the interpretation of the clause as a whole is still stative. This interestingly proves that stativity in the passive can be expressed in terms of both syntax and semantics. The syntactic dichotomy is 'verbal passive vs. adjectival passive/resultative', where verbal passive is dynamic and adjectival passive/resultative are stative. The semantic dichotomy is 'process vs. state', where process is dynamic and state, needless to say, is stative. In order to make this statement clearer, consider the following example (31):

(31) *He was known by many people.*

The whole clause is stative, while the structure is like that of a verbal passive, since the past participle does not behave like an adjective. This example does not satisfy various tests introduced in Section 3.3.1 above: prefix *un-*, **He was unknown by many people*; comparative, **He was more known by many people*; quasi-copula, **He sounded known by many people*. We consider instances like (31) to be verbal passives, due to the characteristics of their participle. These verbs are an anomaly in our system of description, since the passive clause containing them expresses stativity,

but the participle has verbal characteristics. In addition, some stative verbs cannot be passivised at all: see (32) below. We account for such differences in the stative verb in terms of transitivity, i.e. some stative verbs express the transfer of action more explicitly than others: those that express such a transfer more explicitly can be passivised (Rice 1987a, 1987b; Arnett 1995, 1997, 2000). Consider ungrammatical examples like (32b) below, which involve a lesser degree of transitivity in comparison with (32a) or (31):

(32) a. *This book can be kept for three weeks.*
b. **This boy is resembled by his father.*

Some stative verbs like *resemble* do not require an outer cause, i.e. they denote a natural state as opposed to a secondary one (Nedjalkov and Jaxontov 1988: 4). Thus, passivisation is not possible with some stative verbs if they cannot imply the existence of an actor. Our category of adjectival passive is based on stativity and absence of actor so the semantic condition of examples like (32b) is identical with that of an adjectival passive, yet (32b) is ungrammatical.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Section 2.2, the hierarchical scale of thematic roles shown in Figure 2.2 reveals the likelihood of the passive. The stereotypical thematic role combination in the active–passive alternation is agent–patient, which occupy opposite ends of the scale. This means that if a high degree of affectedness of the active object is involved, voice alternation requires a wider range of the scale. When the degree of affectedness is low, as in the case of stative verbs, thematic roles toward the centre of the scale are involved, and the range is much smaller. When a wider range is involved, passivisation is possible and the clause is dynamic. A smaller range does not rule passivisation out, but the clause is less dynamic and is often stative. This also explains why examples like (32b) are ungrammatical, because the two arguments involved in the clause have the same thematic role and so appear at exactly the same point on the scale. Verbs like *believe*, *hear*, *know*, *like*, *see* and *understand* generally involve an experiencer as subject and a theme as object. Although it is difficult to draw a line between theme and patient, objects of stative verbs bear a much lower degree of affectedness or do not undergo the change. This reveals that patient is less likely to be involved in stative verbs.

Historically, stative verbs appear in the passive even from OE, but occur very infrequently in earlier periods, especially in OE. To check this, we arbitrarily chose seven such verbs, namely *believe*, *have*, *hear*,

know, *like*, *see* and *understand* and counted each occurrence in the corpus. The results are given in Table 3.7. The table shows that occurrence was infrequent and increased towards lModE. Interestingly, it drops suddenly in PDE. We cannot offer any decisive reasons for such a dramatic change, unless it is due to the involvement of spoken data. This is less than persuasive, however, since although the rate in the spoken data is much lower than in written, as indicated in Table 3.8, the rate in written PDE data per 100,000 words does not match that of lModE.

Table 3.7 Occurrence of stative verbs in the passive

	OE	**ME**	**eModE**	**lModE**	**PDE**
Overall occurrence	13	94	131	350	385
Occurrence per 100,000 words	3	15	23	57	20

Table 3.8 PDE stative verbs according to the written–spoken distinction

	PDE written	**PDE spoken**	**Total**
Overall occurrence	333 (86.5%)	52 (13.5%)	385 (100%)
Occurrence per 100,000 words	27	8	20

As we have mentioned, once these verbs appear in the passive, the whole clause behaves like a verbal passive. For example, the actor phrase overtly expressed in the clause is rare, as indicated in Table 3.9.

Table 3.9 Presence and absence of actor in the passive with stative verbs

	Actor present	**Actor absent**	**Total**
OE	0 (0%)	13 (100%)	13 (100%)
ME	6 (6.4%)	88 (93.6%)	94 (100%)
eModE	3 (2.3%)	128 (97.7%)	131 (100%)
lModE	19 (4.6%)	396 (95.4%)	415 (100%)
PDE	15 (3.9%)	370 (96.1%)	385 (100%)

If there are any differences, such occurrences are not frequent at all, considering that the general occurrence is considered around 20–30 per cent (see Section 2.2 for details of an overtly expressed actor-phrase). In addition, when the actor is mentioned, the mention of a specific individual tends to be avoided, and collective terms such as *by many people*, *by the public*, etc. are used, as shown in (33) to (35). However, the occurrence of a specific individual is not ruled out (36).

(33) *Soon after, it was reported that the Castle was haunted, and that the ghosts of Lord and Lady Lovel had been* ***seen by several of the servants***. (ARCHER 1778REEVE.F3 1:1)

(34) *"I still have one or two other bruises," said Miss Scott, "but fortunately they can't be* ***seen by the public***. (LOB A09 38–39)

(35) *Instructions were given that as far as practicable no enumerator should be assigned to a district in which he was* ***known by the residents****, as people might be reluctant that the confidential information on a census schedule should be made available to an enumerator personally known to them.* (LOB H01 176–181)

(36) *She was convinced all her feelings were* ***understood by Mrs. Arlbery;*** (ARCHER 1796Burney.F3 1:1)

Although overall frequency is low, the passive can involve stative verbs. However, some stative verbs cannot be passivised at all. Shibatani (1985: 831–2) considers that this is due to the lack of agent, since in his view, agent-defocusing is the prime function of the passive, and the lack of agent does not allow the passive clause to perform its prime function. We can, however, account for such differences with stative verbs in terms of transitivity and the degree of separation on the scale of thematic roles of the two arguments involved. This in essence corresponds to transitivity represented by the causer–causee relationship (Croft 1991: 247–60). Transitivity, as we have seen in Section 2.2, is concerned with the transfer of action from one entity to another. As represented in the scale of thematic roles, such a transfer is more likely when a wider range of the scale is involved, since this represents a higher degree of transfer. Since transitivity is gradient in nature, this allows certain stative verbs to be passivised, if there is *some* separation on the scale of Figure 2.2 (see page 10).

The use of stative verbs in the passive creates both morphosyntactic and morphosemantic gradience, i.e. they behave like verbal participles, but nevertheless show stativity. Although they do not occur frequently, these types of verbs should be treated with care in analysis.

3.3.5 Prepositonal verb phrase

Another issue concerning the past participle is the prepositional verb phrase. This alone does not affect the quality of the participle as much as the pefix *ge-* or the suffix *-ed*, but it affects the analysis of the whole verb

phrase containing the past participle. When such a verb phrase appears in the passive it is known as the **prepositional passive**. A typical example is shown in (37b). The preposition *in* is stranded when an active clause in (37a) is passivised. A similar case can be found in a relative clause, i.e. *This is the bed which he slept in*, but in this case the preposition can be fronted, as in *This is the bed in which he slept*.

(37) a. *He slept in this bed.*
b. *This bed was slept in (by him).*

What is commonly assumed is the reanalysis of the verb phrases. For instance, a phrase *look at*, used to consist of a monovalent verb phrase and a prepositional phrase, i.e. VP *look* and PP *at*, but it is later reanalysed as a **prepositional verb phrase**, i.e. VP *look at*. This is schematically represented in (38a). The prepositional verb phrase can be complex, since it can contain an extra element between the verb and the preposition, as in *set fire to*. This extra element is normally a noun; the verb and the noun first became a verb phrase, and then the preposition is incorporated into the verb phrase, as illustrated in (38b). This extra element, however, can be a non-nominal element, and it is often an adverbial, e.g. *up* in *put up with*. This type of phrase is called **phrasal-prepositional verb**. The sequence of reanalysis for this type is shown in (38c). Note that verbs used to form the prepositional verbs may appear to be monotransitive when used in PDE, but historically, some are often ditransitive, e.g. *taken for*, *plagued with*, *made at*, *worked upon*, and combinations with *do* such as *done to*, *done by*, *done for*, etc. (Visser 1963–73: §1949).

(38) a. [$_{VP}$ *look* [$_{PP}$ *at me*]] → [$_{VP}$ *look at* [$_{NP}$ *me*]]
b. [$_{VP}$ *set* [$_{NP}$ *fire*] [$_{PP}$ *to the building*]] → [$_{VP}$ *set fire* [$_{PP}$ *to the building*]] → [$_{VP}$ *set fire to* [$_{NP}$ *the building*]]
c. [$_{VP}$ *put* [$_{ADVP}$ *up*] [$_{PP}$ *with it*]]] → [$_{VP}$ *put up* [$_{PP}$ *with it*]] → [$_{VP}$ *put up with* [$_{NP}$*it*]]

In earlier English, the common order was preposition–verb. So a PDE example *He slept in this bed* was earlier formed in various orders, such as *He in bed slept*, *He bed in slept*, etc. We will discuss the word order change in detail in Section 5.2.2, but for the moment, it suffices to say that the word order was in general freer earlier with the basic order SOV, and it became fixed later as SVO. The freedom of word order in earlier English can be also found with the position of the preposition in the prepositional verb phrase, as examples (39) to (43) illustrate. Example (39) is an

instance of a verb–preposition order with the object between the verb and the preposition, and (40), a verb–preposition order but with the object following the preposition. Examples (41) and (42) illustrate a case of a preposition–verb order, with the direct object preceding the preposition. Notice also that the order in (41) to (43) has a special grammatical environment, i.e. after the modal verb (41), in the subordinate clause (42) or in the relative clause (43).

(39)

þa	*ticode*	*him*	*mon*	*þa*	*Eagan*	*ut*
then	stuck	him	someone	the	eyes	out
	V			O		Prep

'then his eyes were gouged out.' (*Or* 4.5.90.13)

(40)

Se	*fullwuht*	*ðone*	*mon*	*geclænsað*	*from*	*his*	*synnum*
the	baptism	the	man	purifies	from	his	sins
				V	Prep	O	

'Baptism purifies a man from his sins.' (*CP* 54.427.6)

(41)

þonne	*ne*	*miht*	*þu*	*na*	*þæt*	*mot*	*ut*	*ateon*
then	not	can	you	not	the	mote	out	draw
					O		Prep	V

'then you cannot draw the mote out.' (*ÆHom* 14.153)

(42)

swa	*þæt*	*se*	*scinenda*	*lig*	*his*	*locc*	*upateah*
so	that	the	shining	flame	his	locks	up-drew
					O		Prep-V

'so that the shining flame drew his locks up.' (*ÆC Hom* II, 39.1.295.241)

(43)

se	*micla*	*here.*	*þe*	*we*	*gefyrn*	*ymbe*	*spræcon*
the	great	army	that	we	before	about	spoke
OBJ			REL			Prep	Prep-V

'the great army that we spoke about before.' (*ChronA* 84.1 (893))

Hiltunen (1983) provides a thorough account of OE word order concerning the verb and the preposition in forming the prepositional verb phrase. His analysis distinguishes a prefixed preposition (42) and a preposition standing on its own, as in (39) to (41). His result shows that the preposition often precedes the verb in the subordinate clause, while the order in the main clause can be either verb–preposition or preposition–verb. A similar argument is proposed by van der Gaaf (1930) who claims

that the stranded preposition tends to be postverbal in ME. The subordinate clause is known to preserve an older word order system (see Sections 5.2.2 and 5.2.3 for further details and examples), and judging from the difference in word order between the main clause and the subordinate clause, the shift should be from the preposition–verb (verb suffixed) order to verb–preposition (preposition separate) order, and OE is a period of intermediate stage. So the prepositions became independent as English developed. This is considered to have laid the foundation for prepositional stranding. Van der Gaaf (1930: 12–13) claims that the prepositional verbs in ME replaced the OE compounds, and this can be supported by by Hiltunen's results (1983), reproduced in Table 3.10.

Table 3.10 Distribution of verb–preposition order in OE (from Hiltunen 1983: 114–15)

	prep . . . V	**prep-V**	**V . . . prep**	**V-prep**
Main clause	9 (3%)	103 (38%)	107 (39%)	54 (20%)
Subordinate clause	41 (12%)	251 (72%)	18 (5%)	37 (11%)

Phrasal-prepositional verbs, as in (38b) and (38c), appear in the passive later than the simpler form (38a), i.e, towards the end of ME. Some examples are given in (44) and (45) (from Denison 1993: 154):

(44) *when any . . . haves envy to þam þat es spokyn mare*
when any . . . feel envy towards them that are spoken more
gode of þan of þam
good of than of them
'when any . . . are envious of those who are praised more than them.' (a1450 (?1348) Rolle, *FLiving* 86.43)

(45) . . . *that the wickidnes of hys hows shal not be doon a*
. . . that the wickedness of his house shall not be made
seeth before with slayn sacrifices . . .
amend for with slain sacrifices . . .
'that the wickedness of his house shall not be purged with sacrifices.' (a1425 (a1382) *WBible (1)* I Sam.[=I Kings] 3.14)

A common analysis for the emergence of the prepositional passive follows the developmental path of the prepositional verb phrase shown in (38), and the development of the verb–preposition word order is often considered as one of the key factors. It is also assumed that the

settlement of the word order into SVO contributed to the establishment of the prepositional passive (Denison 1985). However, there have been various other related factors proposed to illustrate the development of the prepositional passive. For instance, it can be claimed that it is partly due to the sense extension of prepositions. Fischer *et al.* (2000: 189) claim that the prepositions used in prepositional verb phrases in OE are directional or locative. So there seems to be a metaphorical sense extension from locational sense, and perhaps they became idiomatised as a part of phrasal verbs. Another point is the case marking. De la Cruz (1973) argues that the loss of case marking made the distinction difficult especially between nominative and dative. As a consequence, by losing the overt dative marking, it became easier to assign the role of accusative object to the prepositional object. It is obvious because, as Van der Gaaf (1930) says, there were not many accusative-governing prepositions – the majority were dative-governing. Since accusative-marking was often a key to seeing whether a certain object could be passivised or not, the presence of dative-marking was an obstacle in a transition to the passivisation of indirect object.

In addition, functionally, the loss of an indefinite pronoun *man* 'one, someone' is said to have contributed to the appearance of the prepositional passive (Van der Gaaf 1930: 19). Van der Gaaf argues that the actor in the earlier prepositional passive is indefinite and cannot be specified. This seems to hold true, as far as the examples listed in Denison (1993: 125–7) are concerned. However, one needs to be aware of the fact that the unspecified identity of actor in the passive is very common (see Section 4.2.2) and the claims made in the research to date may be weakened if this general pattern is taken into consideration. Alternatively, it is possible to argue that the emergence of the verbal passive is the key factor here, in the sense that the newly formed functions allow the impersonalisation to be more explicit.

These points seem uncontroversial, but one problematic point is transitivity. We will see the details of semantic-based transitivity later (Sections 4.2.4.1 to 4.2.4.3), but it is important to clarify here that the transitivity was earlier expressed in terms of a semantic-based type of transitivity (prior to eModE), and it did not matter whether the direct object was present or not in order to highlight the transitive clause, since other features such as agentivity could be an alternative sign. This type later changed into the structure-based one, where the presence or the absence of the direct object is the key factor in deciding whether a clause is transitive or not. This shift affects the possibility of passivisation. For instance, the passivisation of the perception verb does not really occur in

the semantic-based transitivity, since the perception is often considered an event more spontaneous than volitional. However, English allows the passivisation of such spontaneous verbs, e.g. *This movie was liked by many people*. Among previous works concerning the prepositional passive, transitivity is mentioned by Vestergaard (1977), Couper-Kuhlen (1979), Thornburg (1985), Denison (1985, 1993), and they are aware of the affectedness of the undergoer. As English has developed, the system of transitivity has changed from a sense-based one to a structure-based one, and the presence or absence of the direct object decides whether a passive is possible or not in PDE. This shift more or less coincides with the loss of case marking and the shift of word order into SVO around the lME/ eModE period. Considering the shift of transitivity in English in general, it could be the syntactic nature of passivisation (i.e. turning the direct object into the subject) that actually aided the popularisation of the prepositional passive, not the semantic nature of the passive and transitivity.

3.4 *Be* + past participle as a syntactic unit

So far we have examined the individual development of auxiliary and past participle and pointed out a number of changes in each individual element of the passive. In this section we are concerned with their combination. The data (see Table 2.2) shows that the passive was more often stative and often perfective to begin with, while it became dynamic after 1500 or thereabouts. It also suggests that the change from stative to dynamic was more or less completed during ME, but that there are residues of earlier stative constructions (i.e. adjectival passive and resultative) even in PDE, as we saw in Section 2.3.1. As far as the *be* + past participle construction is concerned, the majority of PDE occurrences are dynamic, verbal passives.

There are also several grammatical signs of an earlier origin in a perfective construction, for example, prefix *ge-* on the past participle (Section 3.3.2.1), and inflection. The various changes with regard to the English passive, such as aspectual change from stative to dynamic, seem to have started during or even prior to OE and as we have seen in Section 2.3.1 (especially Table 2.3), there is a high degree of gradience in OE, especially when the verbal passive is taken into consideration. In our view, *be* was earlier related to the perfective construction and the origin of the English passive is a stative-adjectival construction with perfective aspect. Comparing the passive in PDE with the perfective construction in earlier English, we can observe many differences, which indicate the degree of grammaticalisation summarised in Table 3.11. These features,

Table 3.11 Summary of various features as indications of grammaticalisation

Relevant category	**Grammatical features**	**Relevant sections in this book**
Aspect	i. Change from stative to dynamic reading: earlier occurrence was more stative, adjectival.	2.3.1
	ii. Emergence of *have*-perfect: its emergence made it possible for *be*-perfect to be reanalysed as passive.	2.3.2
	iii. Presence of actor with high agentivity: there are some sporadic occurrences in OE, which indicates that verbal passive was already present in OE.	2.3.1
	iv. Progressive passive: its use indicates that the verb cluster *be* + past participle was reanalysed as verbal phrase, not adjectival as before.	2.3.3.1
	v. Perfective passive: its use indicates that the verb cluster *be* + past participle was reanalysed as verbal phrase, not adjectival as before.	2.3.3.2
Auxiliary	vi. Emergence of features typical of auxiliary after ME: *be* used in the periphrastic construction shows more typologically common properties of auxiliary verb.	3.2
Affix	vii. Decline of the prefix *ge-*: *ge-* was often associated with a perfective reading, but it was less frequent in the passive in comparison with the perfective construction already in OE, and it totally disappeared in ME.	2.3.1 3.3.2.1
Past participle	viii. Inflection and agreement: past participle showed agreement in OE and ME (although not always), but it ceased in ME.	3.3.1
	ix. Prepositional verb phrase started to appear in the passive, forming the prepositional passive, after lME.	3.3.5

especially i, ii, vi and vii, indicate that earlier use of *be* or past participle, or even the periphrastic construction, was used primarily for aspectual distinction, giving a stative reading. In addition, features iii, iv, and v make it possible for us to distinguish an earlier more adjectival form

from a newer verbal form, which created the verbal passive. The feature ix also reinforced the verbal characteristics of the participle.

A puzzle relating to tense–aspect and orientation is the source of the overall semantic interpretation: which contributes more, the auxiliary or the past participle? Stative verbs (Section 3.3.4) pose such a question. In this case, overall aspectual interpretation seems to rely on the stativity of the past participle, since the past participle behaves verbally. There are other cases where the characteristics of a past participle determine the overall functions, as with the presentative function in factual verbs, including speech act verbs, which will be discussed in Section 4.2.4. Judging solely from these instances, it seems plausible to consider the semantic content of the past participle as an important factor in the overall reading of the passive.

The status of *be* has changed during the course of history. As we have seen in Section 3.2 (especially Table 3.1), various characteristics associated with auxiliary verbs are present in *be* after, but not before, ME. This corresponds with an aspectual change, where dynamic aspect became dominant. This aspectual change reflects the meaning of past participles, which is possible only after the semantic bleaching of *be* as a part of auxiliarisation. In addition, we have also seen a possible change in the syntactic environment, i.e. the passive occurring in the perfective and progressive aspect. This indicates that *be* + past participle has been reanalysed as a verb phrase, not a phrase consisting of a copula and an adjectival participle.

In terms of the main constituent of the clause, we can clearly see the shift. This brings in the concept of **head**. Numerous scholars have analysed the nature of headship (Kiparsky 1982; Zwicky 1985, 1993; Hudson 1987, 1993; Nichols 1986, and others), and 'head' is used in various ways in different theoretical frameworks such as HPSG, GB, etc., It is used for percolation (the requirement of features identification between a head and its mother) or government (the requirement imposed on the form of a second, grammatically linked element), and so on (see Fraser, Corbett and McGlashan 1993 and Hudson 1987: 126 for summaries.)[8] A very general characterisation is as follows: 'the head of a phrase is one of its constituents which in some sense dominates and represents the whole phrase' (Fraser, Corbett and McGlashan 1993: 1), or 'the head is the word which governs, or is subcategorized for — or otherwise determines the possibility of occurrence of — the other word. It determines the category of the phrase' (Nichols 1986: 57). However, a finer characterisation can be found in some works. For example, Zwicky (1985,1993)

Table 3.12 Characteristics of head and dependent (adapted from Zwicky 1993: 298)

	Head	**Dependent**
Semantics	characterising	contributory
Syntax	required	accessory
	Word rank	Phrase rank
	category determinant	non-determinant
	external representative	externally transparent
Morphology	morphosyntactic locus	morphosyntactically irrelevant

incorporates semantic, syntactic and morphological aspects of head (and its counterpart, dependent) as in Table 3.12.

Table 3.12 reads as follows (based on Zwicky 1993: 296–8): at the semantic level, the head is the characterising participant, e.g. *blue shirt* denotes a subtype of shirt. At the syntactic level, the head is required, otherwise the construction is elliptical, as in the second clause of *I played football, and he golf*. Head is of Word rank, in the sense that the verb *play* in the VP *play football* is the head, and therefore the phrase is a verb phrase. This example, *play football*, also indicates that head is a category determiner (since this phrase is a VP, based on the category of the head *play*). Furthermore, the head triggers or signals external lexical subcategorisation, which is what is meant by 'external representation'. At the morphological level, morphosyntactic locus means that the head expresses morphosyntactic properties of the whole clause. Consider again the verb *play* in *He plays football*. It carries inflection for person (third person), number (singular) and tense (present tense).

We consider these features a basic definition of head in this work, but Zwicky (1993) further identifies three subtypes of head. These subtypes involve three binary features: F (semantic functor or semantic modifier), H (morphosyntactic locus or head) and B (external representative or base). Depending on the presence/absence of these (binary) features, three types of 'head' can be found, as shown in Table 3.13 (+ indicates 'present' and – indicates 'absent').[9]

A more traditional treatment of head is concerned with the identification of a single constituent as head, but this finer distinction is based on the prediction that the criteria of 'headness' will not always agree and such disagreement is still meaningful. Zwicky (1993: 310) claims that two entities in a construction can both be heads, making it look paratactic.

Table 3.13 Types of head according to three features

F (semantic functor)	H (morphosyntactic locus)	B (external representative)	Types of head
+	+	+	Operator head
−	+	+	Modified head
+	+	−	Specifier

Previous works on the historical change of English passive assume that the earlier construction was much closer to 'copula + adjectival participle', which later turned into 'auxiliary + verbal participle' (Denison 1993: 422–3). So in terms of a binary head–dependent distinction, a quite plausible explanation is that at first the syntactically lexical verb *be* was head and the participle dependent, changing to participle as head and auxiliary *be* as dependent. This appears to explain how the stative verb can retain its stativity and speech act verbs retain their presentative function in the passive (see Sections 3.3.4 and 4.2.4). However, such an assumption goes against the view generally held among scholars: in most theoretical frameworks (i.e. LFG, HPSG, generative grammar), and even in some descriptive grammar (such as Huddleston and Pullum 2002), it is generally considered that the head entity of the VP precedes all of its dependents. So in a passive clause, *be* is considered the head and the past participle its dependent, except in works like Huddleston (1984), and in Burton-Roberts (1986), who consider that *be* is the dependent and the past participle the head, as suggested above.

Although *be* is often treated as head, two features shown in Table 3.13, i.e. semantic functor and external representative, indicate at first sight that *be* is in fact dependent, as argued in Zwicky (1993: 304). Consider *The window was broken by Sandy*: the meaning of *was broken* is a subtype of *break*, and *was* behaves like a modifier, quite similar to an adverbial phrase. So *was* in this case is a semantic functor. The verbal phrase *was broken* is predictable not from the properties of *be*, but from *broken*. So *was* is not externally representative, *broken* is. These two characteristics of *was* alone, especially in comparison with *broken*, indicate that the auxiliary *be* is unlikely to be head. In order to judge objectively, we use various features of head shown in Table 3.12 and Table 3.13 as our basis. However, each criterion consists of further features,[10] which are considered elaborated characteristics of headedness. This relationship can be summarised in the Table 3.14, using a binary distinction H (head)

Table 3.14 Types of headedness with finer distinction

	OE		ME–eModE		lModE–PDE	
	be	**PAST PART**	***be***	**PAST PART**	***be***	**PAST PART**
F: semantic functor	H	D	D	H	D	H
agreement target	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
government trigger	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	H	D
lexically subcategorised	H	D	H	D	H	D
H: morphosyntactic locus	H	H	H	D	H	D
Word rank	H	D	H	D	H	D
category determinant	H	D	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
B: external representative	H	D	D	H	D	H
required	H	H	H	H	H	H
classifying	H	D	D	H	D	H

Key: H = head; D = dependent; n/a = not applicable

and D (dependent) depending on the presence/ absence of each feature. Table 3.14, therefore illustrates cases of *be* and past participle in the history of English, dividing the period into three parts: OE, ME to eModE, and lModE to PDE.

There are some features which are not applicable. Regardless of period, agreement target (F) is not detectable, since verbs do not carry any morphological marking showing agreement between the main verb and its verbal complement. In OE and ME–eModE, the government trigger (F) is not relevant, since *be* took past participle as its complement in most cases, but there are some instances of the present participle being used instead of the past participle, expressing the passive reading. See Chapter 7, examples (1) to (7) for actual examples and particularly (6) and (7) in that chapter, where the present participle is used in apposition to the past participle. It may be the case that these examples expressed passive meaning because of the orientation of the clause (a case of passive diathesis. cf. Chapter 7), but there are examples such as (1) to (4) in Chapter 7 which overtly express the actor phrase just like the verbal passive. So *be* earlier in OE and ME–eModE does not distinguish past participle from present participle to the extent that it does in lModE–PDE. As for ME–eModE and lModE–PDE, the category determinant (H) is not useful, since both the main verb and its verbal complement are verbs. In addition, there are some features which do not indicate difference, i.e. both entities are heads, e.g. morphosyntactic locus (H) in OE[11] and required (B) throughout history. There is the case of coordinated

Table 3.15 Types of head according to three features

		F (semantic functor)	**H (morphosyntactic locus)**	**B (external representative)**
OE	*be*	−	+	+
	PAST PART	+	−	−
ME–eModE	*be*	±	+	−
	PAST PART	±	−	+
lModE–PDE	*be*	+	+	−
	PAST PART	−	−	+

auxiliary deletion, as in *The food was cooked and served among the guests*. In such a case, the clause is grammatical but elliptical.

Based on Table 3.14, we can formulate the following type of headedness, as shown in Table 3.15 (here we use + = present, − = absent, following Table 3.13). When a mixture of features is observed, we choose the item with the majority of features and consider it as representative for each period. In comparison with the three patterns shown in Table 3.13, *be* in OE is identical with the modified head, and *be* in lModE–PDE, with a specifier, but the result for the past participle in these two periods does not show any identical pattern. According to Zwicky (1993: 308), the pattern for past participle in OE is modifier, and in ME onwards, specified, and this is why features associated with each entity complement each other. The problematic case is ME–eModE, where the overall understanding of head is based on the interpretation of F (semantic functor), although H (morphosyntactic locus) and B (external representative) changed into the pattern of lModE–PDE.

So the relationship between the auxiliary and the past participle is summarised in Table 3.16. We omit the period ME–eModE in the Table and simply state that the features in that period are intermediate ones, since it is a transitional stage from OE to lModE–PDE. As noted earlier, two entities can both be a head in the same clause. For example, Zwicky (1993: 302) says that English auxiliaries are modifiers semantically but

Table 3.16 Summary of headedness in *be*-passive

Period	***be***	**Past participle**
OE	modified head	modifier
lModE–PDE	specifier	specified

exhibit morphosyntactic locus like tense, person and number inflection. If the number of '+' features is considered as a sign of headedness, then *be* throughout history has been the head. Such a view follows the majority of previous research in treating *be* in the passive as head. However, Table 3.15 does not exclude the 'partial' headedness of the past participle. The distribution of features shown in Table 3.14 indicates that head cannot correspond to a single entity.

So it seems that the cluster '*be* + past participle' itself has been a verbal phrase, but the type of headedness involved changed over time. This is partly due to the nature of the earlier participle, i.e. that it involved some adjectival characteristics, such as inflection for agreement, but became more verbal later. In addition, the appearance of the perfective passive (early 14th century) and progressive passive (late 18th century) indicates that there were some syntactic changes, i.e. the earlier verbal cluster 'verbal *be* + adjectival participle' as a whole came to be treated as more verbal as the construction evolved. As for the semantic changes in relation to the syntactic ones, the earlier use of *be* seems to be more verbal. *Be* itself expresses a stative aspect, but it is hard to interpret the dynamic aspect denoted by this copula verb. If the aspectual change in the passive is due to semantic change in *be*, this seems to be a change from a lexical verb to a grammatical functional marker (see Heine 1993: 86–7). As we observed in Section 3.2, *be* after ME possesses more properties which are associated with the auxiliaries, so such a claim seems plausible in the historical development of English. Also, as mentioned in Heine's property of auxiliaries 'o' (that they do not have a meaning of their own)[12] there seems to have been semantic bleaching of *be*, which allows the overall semantic interpretation of a clause to be based on the characteristics of the past participle, as with the stativity of stative participles, despite their verbal behaviour. We will also see further evidence based on function in Section 4.2.4. This is a natural consequence if *be* became an auxiliary.

The emergence of the verbal passive is related to tense–aspect, especially the emergence of *have* as an auxiliary in the tense–aspect domain. So the passive was in a way destined towards the dynamic reading, in spite of the disappearance of *weorðan* 'become'. Although not mentioned in Note 6 to Chapter 2, one might wonder whether the increasing dynamic nature of *be*-passive forced *weorðan* 'become' out of the passive or passive-like construction. This cannot be the case, however, since *weorðan* 'become' completely disappeared from the language, and it is highly questionable that the change in *be* was so influential as to force another auxiliary or auxiliary-like item into extinction. Or one might think that the disappearance of *weorðan* 'become' forced *be* to obtain

auxiliary status. This has to be questioned too, since *be* as a passive auxiliary is aided by the development of the *have*-perfect (see Section 2.3.2), which allowed the perfective aspect to be expressed with undergoer–orientation, and the interference of *weorðan* 'become' seems minimal. We have been talking about the *be*-passive as a construction capable of expressing dynamic aspect. Even though it is common practice to consider the *get*-passive as the dynamic counterpart of the *be*-passive, the *be*-passive can itself express dynamic aspect. As we will see in Chapter 6, the *get*-passive in PDE can be dynamic and can lead to a stative–dynamic dichotomy between the *be*- and *get*-passives. But this PDE function is a later development, not the initial function.

The changes we have observed so far deserve further notice, especially in comparison with other Germanic languages, since we can claim that English has gone through slightly different changes: English lost the 'be' and 'become' distinction in the auxiliary and also the verbal prefix *ge*-, which are still functional in most Germanic languages. The auxiliary distinction between 'be' and 'become' is still rigidly made in other Germanic languages (see Table 3.17 below), and it allows a stative (with 'be') and dynamic (with 'become') distinction. So in a way, the periphrastic passive construction in these languages is still partially an aspect-marking construction, and 'be' -passive constructions in, say German, are unambiguously more stative than their English counterpart (Christian Mair, p.c.). The same grammatical situation can be found in Dutch (Fehringer 1999: 62–3). These languages normally have a binary auxiliary choice, which means that aspectual differentiation is still one of the prime functions of the periphrastic passive construction.

Table 3.17 Choice of passive auxiliaries in the Germanic languages

	Language	**Auxiliaries**	
EAST:	Gothic	*wisan* 'be'	*waírþan* 'become'
NORTH:	Danish	*være* 'be'	*blive* 'become'
	Faroese	*vera* 'be'	*verða* 'become', *blíva* 'become'
	Icelandic	*vera* 'be'	*verða* 'become'
	Norwegian	*være* 'be'	*bli* 'become'
	Swedish	*vara* 'be'	*bli* 'become'
WEST:	Dutch	*zijn* 'be'	*worden* 'become'
	English	*be*, *get*	
	Frisian	*wêze* 'be'	*wurde* 'become'
	German	*sein* 'be'	*werden* 'become'

Does this mean that English lost its sensitivity to aspectual distinction? As far as the *be*-passive is concerned, not entirely, although the use of quasi-copulas,[13] such as *seem*, *sound*, *stay*, etc. (Visser 1963–73: §§1892, 1894) and inchoative verbs such as *become*, *go*, etc. (Visser 1963–73: §1893) instead of *be* may mark the distinction better: quasi-copula for stative and inchoative verbs for dynamic. However, when these verbs are used, the past participle behaves like an adjective, according to the tests we saw in Section 3.3.1, and these verbs themselves have never really entered the domain of auxiliary. Thus, the overall construction with these verbs looks like main verb + adjectival complement, which is identical to the majority of periphrastic constructions in OE. *Be* on its own without the use of modal verbs or certain tenses cannot have a dynamic reading as a copula verb, but the *be*-passive is definitely used for a verbal construction.

Some scholars, for example, Beedham (1981, 1982, 1987) as well as Andersen (1991: 92–5) consider the English passive as a grammatical construction to express tense–aspectual difference, especially as a perfective construction: ‘the passive sentence portrays both the occurrence of an event and the state that arises from the event’ Beedham (1982: 45). He provides examples (*ibid*: 91) like *The house was painted by John*, which he claims is closer in meaning to *John has painted the house* than *John painted the house*, because they ‘share the most important semantic features, viz. those of action and state.’ This claim has been criticised by Palmer (1994: 139), who suggests that *painted* (past tense active) is the equivalent of the passive *was painted* in terms of tense–aspect, and *has painted* (perfective active) corresponds to *has been painted*. We have, in fact, mentioned such instances earlier in Sections 2.3.1 and 2.3.2 (especially in chapter 2, example (25)), claiming that the earlier passive can be interpreted as having both present tense and perfective aspect. Beedham and Andersen’s analysis is synchronic, and Beedham in particular often compares the English periphrastic construction with its German or Russian counterpart. In these two languages, the periphrastic constructions are used for aspectual distinction in varying degrees, while the English counterpart has gone through that stage and developed further into the passive voice *per se*. So the view of Beedham or Andersen that the English passive is related to the tense–aspect system seems to be more valuable in a diachronic analysis, since earlier constructions were more stative and often perfective in aspect. Synchronically, however, their view may be too extreme. The PDE passive is no longer primarily used as a tense–aspect marker. We will examine various functional motivations

in the following chapter. Such a comparison reveals that the English *be*-passive differs significantly from other Germanic counterparts, since it expresses a lesser degree of involvement of the tense–aspectual system. This also shows the degree of grammaticalisation in the passive voice in English compared with that in so-called 'passives' in other Germanic languages.

3.5 Summary

In this chapter, each component in the '*be* + past participle' was analysed. As for *be*, prior to ME, it behaved more like a lexical verb, but it changed into more of an auxiliary verb from ME onwards. We also saw that there is some variation in the use of the past participle. Some verbs have two different forms, while in others the past participle creates stativity while still behaving like a verbal participle. The suffix *-ed* can be either an inflectional or derivational morpheme. The changes summarised in Table 3.11, such as change of *be* into auxiliary, the emergence of *have*-perfect and the appearance of perfective and progressive passive, the disappearance of the prefix *ge-* and the inflection of the past participle, indicate that the later passive is more verbal than adjectival. The prepositional phrase in the passive also shows the verbal characteristics of the participle. In this case, the change was partly aided by the development of word order, but the reinterpretation of the prepositional object as the direct object coincides with the grammaticalisation of the *be*-passive.

The lexical verb *be* had become an auxiliary when it became semantically transparent. This allowed the semantic features of the lexical past participle to influence the overall interpretation of a clause, which is why the aspectual change happened during ME. Semantic transparency also indicates that the past participle of stative verbs, which behaves like a verbal participle, still creates stativity. So we have seen syntactic aspects of the developmental path of the *be*-passive in this chapter. However, this does not give a complete picture of the change, as we need to take into account various functional aspects of development. They are examined in detail in the next chapter.

4
Functions of *be*-passive

4.1 Introduction

We have so far seen the morphosyntactic and morphosemantic aspects of the passive voice, and in this chapter, we examine various functions associated with the passive. As we will see shortly, there are two main functions, topicalisation and impersonalisation, but some others have also been proposed. There are, however, some constructions which do not really fit into the typical functional characteristics. They are termed 'presentative passive' here and are analysed separately. The main purpose in this chapter is to present basic functions of the passive synchronically so that they become background information for the next chapter, where we discuss the historical changes of various functions and their contribution to the formation of verbal passive in PDE.

4.2 Functions of the passive

The function of the passive has been discussed by a number of linguists. For example, as one of the earlier definitions, Jespersen (1924: 167–8) claims the five features shown in (1) below. This type of claim has been made repeatedly: for example, consider the statements in (2) to (4). What seems to be common to all definitions is that the identity of the actor is either unknown or hidden for various pragmatic reasons, or the subject of the passive (or active object) is more topical.

(1) Jespersen (1924: 167–8)

i. The active subject is unknown or cannot be easily stated;
ii. The active subject is self-evident from the context;

iii. There may be a special reason (tact or delicacy of sentiment) for not mentioning the subject;
iv. Even if the active subject is indicated ('converted subject') the passive form is preferred if one takes naturally a greater interest in the passive than the active subject.
v. The passive may facilitate the connection of one sentence with another.

(2) Dik (1989: 214)

i. The speaker emphasises more with the second argument entity (OBJ).
ii. The subject is a new topic, the object is a given topic, i.e. definite.
iii. The subject is not known or indefinite, unimportant. The speaker wishes to leave it unidentified.
iv. Use of relative pronoun (in nominative), which may supersede other rules, i.e. the man who was bitten by the dog (ignoring animacy hierarchy)
v. Due to politeness, avoid addressing the addressee directly.

(3) Dixon (1991: 299)

i. If the speaker does not know who the subject was;
ii. If the speaker does not wish to reveal the identity of the subject;
iii. The identity of the subject is obvious to the addressee and does not need to be expressed;
iv. To place a topic in subject relation.

(4) Givón (1990: 567)

i. The agent is unknown;
ii. The agent may be cataphorically given;
iii. The agent may be generically predictable or stereotypical;
iv. The agent may be universal and thus unspecified. (cf. Impersonal-subject construction);
v. The agent may be predictable as the author of the text;
vi. The agent may be unimportant in the discourse.

A number of scholars argue that functions like topicality change or impersonalisation are the main function of the passive, although there are some other functions associated with the passive. We review each type below.

4.2.1 Topicality change

A number of so-called functionalists claim that **topicality change**[1] can serve as a prime function of the passive. The process of changing topicality typically involves two functions: to code the initial appearance of a referent in the discourse and to code appearances of a referent already in the discourse. There are different terms describing this phenomenon, but they all capture these two major functions:

Initial appearance	Subsequent appearance
comment	*topic*
rheme	*theme*
new	*given* (Halliday 1967)
previously inactivated	*activated* (Chafe 1987)
discontinuous	*continuous* (Givón 1983)

See also Chafe (1974), Prince (1981), Foley and Van Valin (1985), Du Bois (1980) for further details. This distinction deals with topicality based on discourse salience, but we need to bear the hearer's knowledge in mind as well to understand further details of topicality: Price (1992) introduced the term Hearer–New/Old and Discourse–New/Old, instead of rheme, theme, etc., since what is new to the discourse need not be new to the hearer (Firbas 1966; Chafe 1976; Lambrecht 1994). This distinction between discourse- and hearer-familiarity allows us to make four possible combinations, of which only three are said to occur in naturally-occurring data (Ward 2000: 3):

Hearer-old, discourse-old — Information which has previously been evoked in the current discourse, and which the speaker therefore believes is known to the hearer.

Hearer-old, discourse-new — Information which has not been evoked in the current discourse, but which the speaker nonetheless believes is known to the hearer.

Hearer-new, discourse-new — Information which has not been evoked in the current discourse, and which the speaker does not believe to be known to the hearer.

Hearer-new, discourse-old — Theoretically, information which has been evoked in the current discourse, but which the speaker nonetheless believes is unknown to the hearer. As Prince (1992) notes, this type of information typically does not occur in natural discourse.

This type of distinction may seem similar to a comment–topic or rheme–theme distinction. However, when the theme is considered to convey information that is known or can be gathered from the preceding sentence, it is only concerned with the discourse status of information and cannot incorporate the hearer's knowledge. This point will be crucial in some cases. For example, consider (5) (as discourse-initial). In utterances like (5), *Liam Neeson* constitutes discourse-new information, but it is at the same time hearer-old (or at least known to the hearer)[2] (Lambrecht 1994). The rheme–theme distinction does not capture such a subtle difference, whereas the four-way distinction above seems to provide a more concrete way of dealing with the data.

(5) *One of my friends told me that he had seen Liam Neeson on Monday.*

The passive is often considered to put an entity non-topical in the active into a slot where it gains more topicality from word order, morphology, etc. This line of argument strongly assumes that the passive is discourse-oriented. This is nicely summarised as follows (Givón 1979: 186):

> Passivization is the process by which a non-agent [undergoer, J.T.] is promoted into the role of a main topic of the sentence. And to the extent that the language possesses coding properties which identify main topics as subjects and distinguish them from topics, then this promotion may also involve subjectivization.

It is fairly safe to consider that function-oriented research on the passive assumes that the passive subject is more topical. Along with the quotation from Givón above, Dryer (1995: 113–14), as well as Tomlin (1983) and Thompson (1987), also claim that the undergoer (patient in their terms) has to be more topical than the actor (agent in their terms). However, they also consider the case of high topicality on both actor and undergoer, as illustrated in (6). Biber *et al*. (1999: §11.3.3.2) give statistics for PDE; they show that the combination 'topical undergoer and untopical actor' is the most common combination (45% in the following table). In their words, '[a]bout 90% of the agent [actor] phrases bring in new information'. They use a three-way distinction of topicality, i.e. given, given/new and new. They provide an intermediate stage in order to accommodate some dubious cases. Their results are reproduced in Table 4.1.[3]

(6) i. Passive is used if undergoer is more topical than actor.
ii. Active is used if actor is more topical than undergoer.
iii. Active is used if actor and undergoer are equally topical.

Table 4.1 Topicality of actor phrase in relation to undergoer (adapted from Biber *et al*. 1999: §11.3.2.2, Table 11.11)

	Actor phrase		
Undergoer	**Given**	**Given/New**	**New**
Given	5%	5%	45%
Given/New	less than 2.5%	less than 2.5%	20%
New	less than 2.5%	less than 2.5%	20%

Some scholars compare topicality beyond the active–passive relationship. Cooreman (1987), as well as Thompson (1994), for example, compare **inverse** vs. **direct voice**[4] and **antipassive**.[5] This relative topicality is also expressed more schematically, as shown in Figure 4.1. Notice that the passive involves three different types according to Thompson (1994). In each type, the actor is always untopical, but the undergoer can be topical, neutral or untopical. What is important in this distinction is that the actor is never more topical than the undergoer.

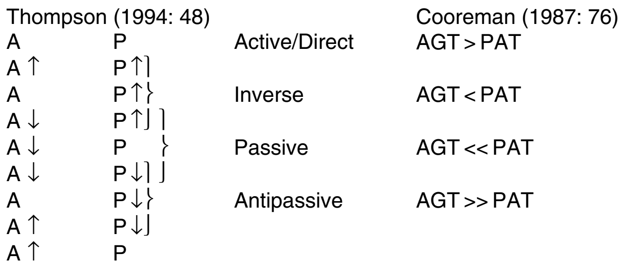

Figure 4.1 Topicality and voice constructions, adapted with permission from Croft (2001: 316, Figure 8.15)

What is commonly known as topicalisation of a patient [undergoer] in the literature is also explicitly shown in Givón (1983, 1994). He comments that the topicality of a nominal can consist of two different types: a NP which has a prior referent in discourse (**anaphoric accessibility**)

and a NP which recurs in a discourse following it (**cataphoric persistence**). The following definition is Givón's (1994: 9), and for further detail and data from various languages, see Givón (1983) and Wright and Givón (1987).

> Anaphoric accessibility: Whether the current referent has prior text antecedence, and if so how far back and how cognitively **accessible** that antecedence is. [emphasis original]
> Cataphoric persistence: Whether the current referent recurs in the following text, and if so how frequently, and thus presumably how thematically **important** or attentionally **activated** it is. [emphasis original]

It is obvious that the directions of referentiality are opposite, and the correlation of these two directions forms the relative topicality. Givón (1983) also employs the topicality measurements of **referential distance** and **persistence**. Referential distance is a measure of predictability, and persistence is a measure of local importance. These two measurements depend on the occurrence of the referent of the passive subject in neighbouring clauses and measure how far the reference can be traced. Givón's analysis reveals that the passive subject has high referential distance, which means that the identity of the passive subject has been established in the clause, i.e. it is highly topical. However, there are some instances of the passive which do not follow this common topicality-changing pattern, and the passive seems to be used to introduce new information, i.e. the passive is used as a focus construction. This type of passive generally appears in certain syntactic environments, such as in conjunction with the existential or a clause with the dummy subject *it*. We will analyse the case of the passive without topicality change later, in Section 4.2.4.

4.2.2 Impersonalisation

The actor in the passive is generally not topical, which leads to **impersonalisation**, i.e. due to topicality change involved in the passivisation, the passive subject is highly topical and identifiable, but the actor's identity is not known or is hidden. The definitions of the passive in Figure 4.1, especially that of Cooreman (1987), also indicate that the actor is extremely untopical, and such an interpretation also implies the function of impersonalisation. There are some traditional, descriptive works particularly concerned with the English passive, (among others, Dixon 1991; Givón 1990, 1995; Huddleston 1984; Jespersen 1924, 1933;

Palmer 1988, 1994; Quirk *et al.* 1985 and Visser 1963–73), where the function of impersonalisation is treated as something similar to 'hiding the identity of agent' or 'the identity of agent is unknown or unimportant'. As we have seen in Section 2.2, the actor in the PDE passive is overtly expressed in only about 20-30% of occurrences.[6] This hiding of the identity of the actor can help to increase the topicality of the undergoer, but impersonalisation puts more emphasis on making the subject's identity ambiguous. As we have seen above, there are various interpretations for this function, and some scholars like Shibatani (1985) go as far as to claim that the passive is used to make the identity of the actor ambiguous, or in his terms, to bring about agent-defocusing.

When impersonalisation is considered a deliberate pragmatic tactic in discourse, it can play an important role in **politeness**. Brown and Levinson (1987: 274) claim that '[i]mpersonalization serves basic politeness ends . . . and the passive exists (at least partially) to serve these ends'. In their view, the main function of the passive is agent-defocusing (see also Keenan 1975; Comrie 1977; Shibatani 1985) and the construction helps to remove responsibility from the actor, which eventually leads to politeness. This can be applied to the case of imperative. Instead of imperative *Do this*, the passive *This has to be done* produces the meaning less directly and can soften the tone of the language, which can be considered as a type of politeness. A similar argument can be found in Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989: 19); see also Watts (2003: 68–9) and Mills (2003: 141–4). Bhim-Kulka *et al.* argue that the choice among four perspectives, i.e. speaker oriented (*Can I have it?*), hearer oriented (*Can you do it?*), inclusive (*Can we start cleaning now?*) and impersonal (*It needs to be cleaned*), affects social meaning, noting that 'since requests are inherently imposing, avoidance to name the hearer as actor can reduce the form's level of coerciveness. The four alternatives are often available to speakers within a single situation, though not necessarily for the same request strategy'.[7] So the passive seems to create a certain degree of politeness, by avoiding direct mention of the actor. Such a pragmatic function creates an important linkage in the voice continuum in English: see Section 8.3 for further discussion of the passive and indefinite pronouns in relation to politeness.

Another particular feature of the passive related to topicality change is that the passive is often used to change viewpoint. Human beings tend to perceive events from a more human viewpoint - from the speaker/writer's own viewpoint, to be more precise. This leads to the cross-linguistic hierarchical order of animacy, often known as the **nominal hierarchy** (first introduced by Silverstein 1976).

Anderson (1997: 227–8) notes that '[m]any linguists (e.g., Givón 1979: 152) have commented on the 'ego/anthropocentric nature of discourse' – i.e., the fact that humans tend to speak about entities and events as they relate to the domain of human experience. Thus, in a canonical speech context, speakers and hearers are logically more likely to be interested in how the human (or otherwise 'animate') referents are affected by the actions and states described in the discourse.' This is reflected in the nominal hierarchy (see Figure 4.2): as stated in Saeed (1997: 161), human beings tend to conceive the action denoted by verbs from the viewpoint of an entity higher in the hierarchy, i.e. human, or more specifically, first person. This is so, because '[s]peaker and addressee are by definition more topical or salient to the interlocutors, since they are the interlocutors' (Croft 2001: 315). This factor is reflected to various degrees in different languages. See how the inverse voice is formed in (this Chapter, note 4), or how the nominal hierarchy interacts with transitivity in another Algonquian language, Fox, in (26) in Section 6.2.1.4. The entity higher in the hierarchy occupies the subject in the unmarked clause, which, in the case of English, is the active. In a marked construction like the passive, an entity lower in the hierarchy can become the subject, as we will see in Table 5.1.

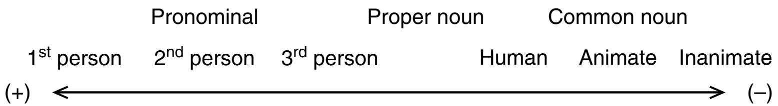

Figure 4.2 Nominal hierarchy

4.2.3 Other functions

In addition, Givón (1990: 567–72) adds **stativisation**, i.e. the passive is used to describe the result of an event.[8] Givón (1981: 168) also considers that the passive functions as a **de-transitivisation** device (transitive in terms of the number of arguments), i.e. a passive clause always has one less argument than its active counterpart, and the argument structure of the passive only involves the subject, not the object. So passivisation creates a monovalent clause.[9] Another line of argument involves **foregrounding** of the undergoer and **backgrounding** of the actor (Foley and Van Valin 1984: 149–68, 1985: 305–35). By foregrounding, the undergoer can gain the status of a subject (whatever that is in an individual language), and the actor is demoted from the argument structure.[10] However, the interpretation of these two functions varies: Perlmutter and Postal (1977), Givón (1979), etc. consider

foregrounding more prominent, Comrie (1977), Shibatani (1985), etc. consider backgrounding more prominent.

A somewhat different, yet still related, concept is rather formally expressed in Kuno (1987), known as the notion of **empathy**, which crucially depends on the speaker/writer's viewpoint. Kuno's definition (1987: 206): '[e]mpathy is the speaker's identification, which may vary in degree, with a person/thing that participates in the event or state that he describes in a sentence.' The speaker adopts the viewpoint of one of the participants in the event he describes, i.e. using that person as the deictic centre either by regular pragmatic constraint or by speaker's choice as determined by pragmatic considerations. Kuno's notion of 'speaker's identification' is similar to topicality, but differs in the fact that the high degree of empathy depends on the speaker's viewpoint, not various discourse factors. Thus, according to Kuno, passivisation happens because the speaker/writer feels more empathy towards the undergoer, not the actor.

The nominal hierarchy also indicates other functional properties of the passive: the passive subject is analysed in terms of **control** and **affectedness** (see, among others, Klaiman 1988, 1991). The subject in the passive is undergoer and not in control of the event, since it typically undergoes some changes and is often affected. Such characteristics, along with the ego/anthropocentric nature of discourse, indicate that entities at the higher end of the hierarchy are less likely to be passive subject. See Table 5.1 below for our data. Also, various hierarchies, such as nominal (Figure 4.2) or thematic role (Figure 2.2), indicate varying degrees of transitivity. We have in fact already seen one such instance, when stative verbs are analysed as past participle. Stative verbs do not involve a wide range of the thematic scale, which indicates a lower degree of transitivity. In addition to this, Hopper and Thompson (1980) introduce the relationship between transitivity and various discourse factors. We apply their approach to the case of passive without topicality change in the following section.

4.2.4 Presentative passive

The topicality-related features we have seen so far can be observed in the majority of the occurrences of the passive. However, the English passive can sometimes serve as a focus device, often then introducing new information. We call this type of passive **presentative passive**. It does not involve a high degree of transitivity, as already mentioned in Section 2.2. There are several environments in English where the presentative passive occurs: the use of so-called factual verbs (Quirk *et al.*

1985: 1180–2), the use of the dummy subject *it* and the passive in the *there*-existential. We examine these environments in the following three sections.

4.2.4.1 Passive with factual verbs

Factual verbs (also known as **opacity-inducing verbs**, Lumsden 1988: 82–6) can be divided into a public type and a private type. Those of the public type are speech act verbs, which can introduce indirect statements, while those of the private type express intellectual states such as belief, or intellectual acts such as discovery. The verbs in Table 4.2 can be included in these types (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 1181; see also Toyota 2001: 200 for similar examples).

These verbs often occur in the impersonal passive construction with the dummy subject *it*, as in the following examples:

(7) *The Clerk, Mr. Ian Brown, recalled that* ***it*** *had been suggested that the old covered market might be suitable.* (LOB A43 108–109)

(8) *In the last section* ***it*** *was pointed out that the reliability of rejection or acceptance is a matter of choice, and clearly opinions will differ as to the desirable level.* (LOB J72 101-103)

OED (s.v. *it*, pron. B. 4.b.) notes that these verbs occur more frequently in the passive with dummy subject than in actives such as *People say that* ~, *One realises that* ~, etc. Both the impersonal passive construction and

Table 4.2 Factual verbs of public and private types

Public type	**Private type**
acknowledge, add, admit, affirm, agree, allege, announce, argue, assert, bet, boast, certify, claim, comment, complain, concede, confess, confide, confirm, contend, convey, declare, deny, disclose, exclaim, explain, forecast, foretell, guarantee, hint, insist, maintain, mention, object, predict, proclaim, promise, pronounce, prophesy, protest, remark, repeat, reply, report, retort, say, state, submit, suggest, swear, testify, vow, warn, write	*accept, anticipate, ascertain, assume, believe, calculate, check, conclude, conjecture, consider, decide, deduce, deem, demonstrate, determine, discern, discover, doubt, dream, ensure, establish, estimate, expect, fancy, fear, feel, find, foresee, forget, gather, guess, hear, hold, hope, imagine, imply, indicate, infer, judge, know, learn, mean, note, notice, observe, perceive, presume, presuppose, pretend, prove, realise, reason, recall, reckon, recognize, reflect, remember, reveal, see, sense, show, signify, suppose, suspect, think, understand*

the semantic characteristics of the verb can have a presentative function individually (Toyota 2001: 196–201), and their combination emphasises it. This is a case of co-operation between form and meaning for the same function, existing from OE and still surviving.

This type of presentative passive confirms that *be* in the passive is semantically transparent, and that the overall interpretation of the clause is derived from the semantic nature of the past participle; cf. Section 3.4.

4.2.4.2 Passive with dummy subject it

Studies of the passive often identify a particular type, commonly known as the **impersonal passive**. The term seems to have been used rather loosely, as argued at length in Siewierska (1984: 93–125). Probably the most inclusive, broad definition is found in Khrakovsky (1973: 67–71), who proposes the following four constructions:

(9)
- i. no overt subject and verb morphology
- ii. no overt subject and no verb morphology
- iii. a form word in subject slot and verb morphology
- iv. a form word in subject slot and no verb morphology

In a somewhat more restricted view, Trask (1993: 135) only includes type i in (9), claiming that the impersonal passive is '[a]ny of various constructions involving an overt passive inflection on the verb and no lexical subject. In languages exhibiting them, impersonal passives are most typically derived from intransitive verbs, though not exclusively so.' For Payne (1997: 206), what is important seems to be transitivity: '[o]ne difference between the personal and impersonal passives... is the impersonal passives can be formed from intransitive as well as transitive verbs.' Frajzyngier (1982) goes further, claiming that the intransitive impersonal passive in fact possesses two distinctive types, with indefinite or non-indefinite human actor. His definition of the passive includes these two types plus personal and transitive impersonal. Blevins (2003) argues that the term passive has been misapplied to impersonal construction. According to him, one has to make a distinction between subject-deleting passivisation and subject-suppressing impersonalisation. According to him, for instance, (9 ii) is a case of impersonal (i.e. subject-suppressing impersonalisation), not the passive.

Each claim identifies important features involved in the impersonal passive, but they have received some criticism. The definition in (9) is too broad and does not consider the formal marking of the passive, although

it captures the functional aspect of language very well. The subject of the impersonal passive can be absent syntactically, as exemplified in the Somali example in (10) (see (9 i) above), but it can be present in the form of a dummy subject, such as *it* in English or *es* 'it' in German, as shown in (11) (see construction (9 iii) above). Even when the dummy subject is present, it is semantically empty, which allows one to consider it as absent, if not syntactically. These two constructions raise the question of whether they are really passive in spite of the presence of passive morphology, since they do not allow alternation between the passive subject and an active object, as we have already seen in Figure 2.1 (cf. also Section 5.5.1 for passive prototype). However, according to scholars like Comrie (1977), constructions like (10) are considered a type of impersonal passive. So active–passive alternation does not seem to be demanded in the case of the impersonal passive.

(10) Somali

a. *Cali wùu bilaab-ay shír-kíi*
Ali DM.he start-PST meeting-the
'Ali started the meeting.'

b. *Shír-kii wàa bilaab-m-ay*
meeting-the DM start-PASS-PST
'The meeting was/got started.'

The distinction between monovalent and divalent/trivalent seems to be another prominent feature in the impersonal passive, since intransitive verbs are likely to appear in the impersonal passive, as noted by Trask. However, divalent/trivalent verbs can also appear, and criteria for discriminating monovalent from divalent/trivalent are lacking. Indefinite human entity as actor may be applicable to most cases, but there are certainly exceptions: the following example from German is a case of type iii of (9), and the actor phrase can be definite, although it may result in unnaturalness for native speakers.[11]

(11) German

Es wurde von den Jungen getanzt
it became from the boys dance.PST.PART
'The boys danced.' (lit. 'it was danced from the boys')

The notion of indefinite human as actor captures a lot of features involved in impersonalness. For example, this notion allows type iv of (9), indefinite pronouns and no passive marking, to be a part of

passive, although overt marking is lacking. In my view, some kind of overt marking, either morphological or periphrastic, is required in discussing the impersonal passive. The number of arguments does not make a significant difference in the impersonal passive: monovalent verbs can appear, only under the condition that there is some outer cause. In the German example (11), the main verb is monovalent *tanzen* 'dance' , but there is somebody who does the act of dancing. This type of actor, in our view, is an outer cause. It does not, however, have to be indefinite human, as claimed by Frajzyngier (1982).

In this work, when we refer to impersonal passive, we consider constructions (9 i) and (9 iii) by adopting a looser version of active–passive alternation, but (9 ii) and (9 iv) are not counted as 'passive' . Type iv, for example, normally involves the use of so-called indefinite pronouns. This non-passive form can be associated with the marked passive, since they both have the same function of impersonalisation or defocusing of the actor (cf. Shibatani 1985), which constitutes a functional gradience. Gradience involving indefinite pronouns is discussed at length in Section 8.3 onwards.

Looking at the history of English, we can find two types of impersonal passive, (9 ii and iii). The third-person neuter pronoun *it* has been used as a form word in English throughout its history (i.e. type iii). A clause without subject (type i) does not exist in PDE but did exist at earlier periods, dying out by 1500: see Allen (1995: 365–70) for a detailed account.

(12) Type i (no overt subject and verb morphology)
Nu is gesene þæt we syngodon
now is seen that we sinned
'It is now seen that we sinned.' (*Christ & Satan* 228)

(13) *Is sæd þæt se cining wære efenblissiende*
is said that the king was blessed
'It is said that the king was blessed.' (Ælfred, *Bede* (Sch.) 59, 4)

(14) *In prophecy is wreten þus: A best shalle swelowe þe covetous*
in prophecy is written thus: a beast shall swallow the covetous
'In prophecy, it is written: a beast shall swallow the covetous.'
(1400 *Tundale's Vision* (ed. Wagner) 485)

(15) Type iii (a form word in subject slot and verb morphology)
Hit wæs gehyred þæt he wæs on huse
it was heard that he was in house
'It was heard that he was at home.' (*O. E. Gosp.*, Mk. 2.1.)

(16) *Sene it was ðat ghe was fair wif*
seen it was that she was fair wife
'It was seen that she was a fair wife.' (1250 *Gen. & Ex.* 1173)

(17) *it was feared that the very science of architecture would in no long time be lost to the world.* (1823 Ch. Lamb, *Essays of Elia* (Nelson) 168)

The impersonal passive of type iii in (9), with dummy subject (*it* in English) and verb morphology, often exhibits a presentative function, as already indicated in (7) and (8). Some linguists such as Frajzingier (1982) notice this function, but his view is restricted to a particular construction: he only deals with the impersonal passive of intransitive verbs, not transitive ones. He claims that the intransitive impersonal passive implies an indefinite human actor, although it is rarely overtly expressed. Once an actor is overtly expressed, whether human or inanimate, he assumes that the construction is used for a presentative purpose, like the *there*-existential construction in English, which we will see in the following section. Furthermore, according to Frajzingier, the impersonal passive with intransitive verbs actually possesses a subject, i.e. indefinite human, and the construction is equivalent to the active with indefinite subject (impersonal passive type iv in (9)), which we will analyse in detail in Section 8.3. This leads to a very unclear account of the impersonal passive with transitive verbs, as criticised in Siewierska (1984: 115–17). As she observes, Frajzingier's use of transitive/intransitive causes unnecessary ambiguity, although his basic claim may capture some insight into the semantic characteristics of the impersonal passive. The problem is that his use of transitive/intransitive seems to be syntactic, i.e. presence or absence of the direct object.

On the semantic aspect of verbal transitivity, Hopper and Thompson (1980) claim that the most traditional or conventional definition, i.e. a matter of transferring an action from one participant to another, 'can be broken down into its component parts, each focusing on a different facet of this carrying-over in a different part of the clause' (1980: 253). They propose the ten characteristics shown in Table 4.3 as parameters of transitivity. If an example possesses more properties that have high values of a parameter, then it is more likely to be transitive.[12] This is not a clear-cut distinction and is better considered as gradience. For example, what is commonly considered a transitive construction like *I like cake* in fact scores lower than what is commonly considered an intransitive, such as *John left*: *John left* can match at least five high values – kinesis (action), aspect (telic), punctuality (punctual), volitionality (volitional)

Table 4.3 Parameters of transitivity (from Hopper and Thompson 1980: 252)

	High	**Low**
a. Participants	2 or more participants, agent and object	1 participant
b. Kinesis	action	non-action
c. Aspect	telic	atelic
d. Punctuality	punctual	non-punctual
e. Volitionality	volitional	non-volitional
f. Affirmative	affirmative	negative
g. Mode	realis	irrealis
h. Agency	agent high in potency	agent low in potency
i. Affectedness of object	object totally affected	object not affected
j. Individuation of object	object highly individuated	object non-individuated

and affirmative (affirmative) – as opposed to *I like cake*, which only scores on two parameters, participants (two) and affirmative (affirmative). Thus, the measure of transitivity made by Hopper and Thompson's parameters differs from the conventional definition, which depends on the number of arguments.

Hopper and Thompson (1980) also analyse these parameters in actual discourse, making a distinction between **backgrounding** (an utterance which does not crucially contribute to the speaker's goal, but merely assists, amplifies or comments on it) and **foregrounding** (an utterance which supplies the main points of the discourse). Their text analysis reveals that a clause that exhibits more high parameter values tends to be foregrounding (78% of high values), and backgrounding scores much lower (29%) (ibid.: 288). What is commonly known as a transitive clause is in fact closely related to discourse factors and is used to make the main point in a discourse. Clause types like existential can be considered to belong to backgrounding, which fits in with the fact that a monovalent clause is often involved in this construction: see (21).

Let us incorporate these parameters in the analysis of impersonal passives. Some languages use monovalent as well as divalent verbs in the impersonal passive construction. In order to demonstrate how the properties proposed by Hopper and Thompson work, it is better to have various different types of verb. Unfortunately, English does not involve monovalent verbs, so we use its close relative German as an example. Consider the examples in (18). Example (18a) is a verbal passive with the divalent verb *töten* 'kill'; example (18b) is an impersonal passive (type iii)

with the divalent verb *helfen* 'help', and example (18c), an impersonal passive (also type iii) with the monovalent verb *tanzen* 'dance':

(18) a. *Der Löwe wurde von ihm getötet*
the lion. NOM became by him killed: PST PART
'The lion was killed by him.'

b. *Es wurde dem Schüler geholfen*
it became the pupil. DAT help: PST PART
'The pupil was helped.'

c. *Es wurde gestern getanzt*
it became yesterday dance. PST PART
'There was dancing yesterday.'

On the ten parameters of transitivity, each example (18a, b, c) possesses the characteristics shown in Table 4.4.

We can see gradience in these three examples: (18a) scores highest, but (18a) and (18b) only differ by one, so the difference between them in terms of transitivity is not wide. (18c), however, shows a clear difference from the other two examples and only scores on two parameters. This indicates that it is possible for (18a) and (18b) to perform foregrounding (although they can be backgrounding at the same time), while it is unlikely for (18c) to be foregrounding. See Arnett (1995, 1997, 2004) for a similar analysis specifically on German.

Frajzingier makes some crucial points about the impersonal passive, but his use of transitivity is unclear. Once we employ the semantic-based distinction proposed by Hopper and Thompson (1980), Frajzingier's points can be made clearer: fewer high-scoring parameters indicates that a construction is more likely to be intransitive and used for introducing new information, i.e. the presentative function.

Table 4.4 Characteristics of examples (18a–c) in terms of ten parameters of transitivity

Example	Number of parameters	Parameters with high values in the example
(18a)	6	b. kinesis, c. aspect, d. punctuality, f. affirmative, g. mode, h. agency
(18b)	5	b. kinesis, c. aspect, d. punctuality, f. affirmative, g. mode
(18c)	2	f. affirmative, g. mode

The English dummy subject *it* in the passive does not score highly. For instance, a private type of factual verb such as *see* as in (19) and a public type *claim* as in (20) both score on only two parameters:

(19) *It is seen that this activity is dangerous.* (f. affirmation and g. mode)

(20) *It is claimed that this activity is dangerous.* (f. affirmation and g. mode)

At first sight, low scores seem to explain why these constructions can function as presentative passives. However, consider the fact that these examples involve factual verbs and that the presentative function may be derived solely from the semantic nature of the past participle. It is true that a passive clause with the dummy subject *it* functions as a presentative passive, as demonstrated in Toyota (2001) using referential distance and persistence. His result shows that persistence of the undergoer is observed, but not referential distance. Another factor is that the dummy subject hardly appears with non-factual verbs (see Svartvik 1966: 183–5 for a list of verbs compatible with this construction), but factual verbs can appear without the dummy subject, as in *He is considered to be a walking dictionary*. So the combination of dummy subject and factual verb may be a type of collocation based on their similar discourse function.

4.2.4.3 There-*passive*

In similar fashion existential *there* with the passive can have a presentative function. This type is slightly different from the two earlier constructions, since an existential *there* clause can introduce new information on its own without passive morphology. Perhaps, therefore, presentative function is due to the existential. However, this has to be examined further. 'Existential *there*' is a broad term, and it can be subdivided more strictly into existential *there* and presentative *there* (Aissen 1975; Rochemont and Culicover 1990; McNally 1992). One of the obvious differences between them is the main verb: existential *there* only involves *be*, and presentative *there* the following monovalent verbs apart from *be* (Quirk *et al* 1985: 1408):[13]

(21) i. Verbs of motion (*arrive, enter, pass, come,* etc.)
e.g. *There arrived my friends, There passed a stranger*, etc.
ii. Verbs of inception (*emerge, spring up*, etc.)
e.g. *There emerged a giant*, etc.
iii. Verbs of stance (*live, remain, stand, lie*, etc.)
e.g. *There lives a hermit, There remains a ruin*, etc.

However, much finer pragmatic characteristics are required. Recall from Section 4.2.1 the topicality distinction involving discourse topicality as well as the hearer's knowledge. Ward and Birner (1996) claim that existential *there* is sensitive to hearer status, and presentative *there* to discourse status. The constructions in (21 i–iii) are sensitive to discourse status, like presentative *there*, but that type of *there*-construction does not involve *be* but, rather, the verbs listed in (21). The passive in a *there*-construction can be sensitive to discourse, but involves *be*, whether as lexical verb or auxiliary. So we are dealing with a mixture of form (existential *there*) and function (presentative *there*).

Both existential *there* and presentative *there* have existed since OE, but their frequency seems to have increased after OE (see *OED there*, 4.d.). Some earlier constructions are given in (22) and (23). The first instance of the passive that appeared in the *there*-construction is, according to *OED* (s.v. *there*, 4.c.), around eModE, as (24) and (25) indicate. The existential with a copula verb generally involves a word order change or inversion (Freeze 1992: 555–7). The NP which is introduced into context swaps position with other grammatical elements in the clause. The examples (22) to (25) show this, in addition to deletion of the actor.

(22) *þær is mid Estum an mægð*
there is with Estum an tribe
'There is a nation among the Ests.' (c893 K. ÆLFRED *Oros*. I. i. §22)

(23) *þa com þær gan in to me heofencund Wisdom.*
then come there go in to me heavenly wisdom
'Heavenly wisdom entered me.' (c888 K. ÆLFRED *Boeth*. iii. §I)

(24) *There coude* ***not be founde*** *a more goodlyer man.* (a1533 LD. BERNERS *Huon* cxi 385)

(25) *For euer sence the Prelates were made Loordes and nobles, the ploughe standeth, there is* ***no worke*** *done, the people sterue.* (1549 LATIMER *Sermon on the ploughers* 25)

The historical development of such clauses is also related to the influence of specificity of referent (or low topicality), but in this case, negation plays an important role. Haspelmath (1997: 37–45) argues that negation denies the existence of events or objects in discourse. So in *He did not go*, the event of his going did not take place. An NP in the scope of negation,

such as *nobody* in *Nobody rang us today*, is much less specific than an NP without negation, such as *somebody* as in *Somebody rang us today*: the difference is that there is at least a certain referent in the case of *somebody*, although his/her identity is not known. By using *nobody*, the existence of its referent is denied, or in other words, 'negation is a digression into a possible but non-real world' (Hopper and Thompson 1980: 287). Thus, the absence of a specific referent in the discourse creates an environment where the NP in the presentative passive, which is indefinite, tends to be less topical.[14] In confirmation, a change involving the presence of negation can be observed in our data: earlier occurrences of the presentative passive involves more frequent use of a negative marker, which is reduced as the construction develops. The numbers in our data are shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Occurrence of the passive within the scope of negation

	Without negation	**With negation**	**Total**
eModE	12 (44.4%)	15 (55.6%)	27 (100%)
lModE	9 (64.3%)	5 (35.7%)	14 (100%)
PDE	12 (100%)	0 (0%)	12 (100%)

The frequency of occurrence of the passive in the existential in general seems to be quite low. However, what is noticeable is that the scope of negation fades away as time passes. This suggests that the earlier environment was more suitable for the presentative function and seems to have been aided by the negative marker, which can be considered to have helped the reanalysis of this construction as passive, although the function is not the main characteristic of the passive. To the two examples in note 13 to this Chapter, we add examples (26) to (28):

(26) *As there is **no Woman** made without a Flaw, your purest Lawnes haue Frayes, and Cambrickes Brackes.* (1630 MIDDLETON *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* 2)

(27) *There's **nothing** said herein.* (1692 T. H[ALE] *Acc. New Invent.* 99)

(26) *There were **no plenipotentiaries** sent to the East, and back again.* (1877 RUSKIN *St. Mark's Rest* i. §4)

This naturally indicates that the relative topicality of the undergoer could have been low up to 1550–1650, but low topicality still persists in PDE in this environment. The verbal passive emerged around ME, and we

consider that the presentative passive, at any stage of its existence, has been the exception to the common discourse topicality pattern. However, the earlier instances can be considered more exceptional, since the presentative function was aided by the scope of negation.

We have examined three different types of presentative passive in this section. These types are exceptional, and there is some restriction in terms of choice of main verb or construction or both, so the constructions are marked in some ways. They illustrate the diversity of the English passive.

4.3 The gradient nature of functions

A principal function related to topicality is impersonalisation, and a number of scholars like Keenan (1975), Comrie (1977), Shibatani (1985), Brown and Levinson (1987: 273–5) consider this its main function. However, this may include some impersonal constructions, which Blevins (2003) terms as subject-suppressing impersonalisation. In addition, there is a fine line between impersonalisation and topicalisation, i.e. by topicalising the undergoer, the actor normally has to be backgrounded, and both functions can work simultaneously. In such cases, it is hardly possible to determine which function is more prominent. This clearly shows that functions of the passive are best understood in terms of gradience.

In contrast to the functions, syntactic characteristics are more easily distinguishable and they can be considered better signs of the passive without much gradience. The mixture of the form and the function is often problematic (cf. Section 4.2.4.3 on *there*-passive), and this has caused a lot of problems in previous research concerning the passive. We will see one such instance concerning the *get*-passive in Chapter 6, especially Section 6.2.2. As extensively argued in Blevins, one has to distinguish impersonal constructions from the passive. In the case of English, it is not as difficult as in, say, Finno-Ugric or Celtic languages, but certain constructions have to be studied carefully. We return to them later in Sections 7.3, 7.4 and 8.3.

4.4 Summary

We have reviewed basic functions of the passive voice synchronically in this chapter. We have seen that topicality change and impersonalisation are very closely related to each other, but there are subtle differences, too. For instance, impersonalisation of actor can be triggered by the

topicalisation of undergoer, but the impersonalisation can happen without the topicalisation, as in a case of spontaneous demotion of actor (Comrie 1977). It is certain, however, that these two functions are the main reasons for the passive to be used, at least at the synchronic level.

There are, however, some exceptional cases. The presentative passive in fact introduces a piece of new information into context, functioning as a focus device. So this is an opposite of topicalisation. We have identified that there are morphosemantic (i.e. factual verbs) and morphosyntactic (i.e. dummy subject *it* and *there*-passive) features. These constructions show that the passive involves various aspects of grammar. This fact creates a gradient nature in the passive, and one has to bear this mind in order to understand the real characteristics of the passive.

5 Functional Change and Voice Continuum

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I analyse how functions contributed to the formation of the verbal passive and interacted with semantic and syntactic aspects of the passive throughout the history of English, concentrating on topicalisation and impersonalisation. Various aspects of grammar, such as word order, are incorporated in relation to the topicality. A comparison is also made between the periphrastic passive and the morphological passive, in order to highlight the semantic characteristics of the periphrastic passive both synchronically and diachronically. The origin of topicality changes in the passive is identified, and I point out that there are two types of origins involved in the passive. Finally, I introduce voice continuum and analyse the gradient nature of the passive.

5.2 Functional changes in the *be*-passive

We have seen various functions of the *be*-passive in the previous chapter, and that what is crucial for the PDE verbal passive is either topicalisation or impersonalisation. However, these functions have rarely been studied in an historical framework. The development can reveal some significant insights of the passive which have not been noticed before. We start off with general changes and move on to some specific questions.

5.2.1 General changes and functions of the passive

A principal function related to topicality is impersonalisation, and a number of scholars like Keenan (1975), Comrie (1977), Shibatani (1985), Brown and Levinson (1987: 273-275) consider this its main function. Synchronically, it may be easier to consider the source of

impersonalisation, such as the rarity of an overtly expressed actor phrase. Historically, however, impersonalisation was not the result of a simple functional change. It was previously achieved by the use of indefinite pronouns, details of which are analysed in Section 8.3. As will be argued there, these two constructions are related to each other in terms of politeness, but the basic relationship is in terms of impersonalisation. Indefinite pronouns such as *man* 'one, person' in OE and ME (see Chapter 8, examples (2)–(7)) were used for an impersonal reading. The earlier passive was not a marked construction, since it signalled perfective aspect or if not, was a hybrid between the perfective and passive (see Chapter 2, examples (62)–(64)). Notice that such use of indefinite pronouns complies with the nominal hierarchy by having a human subject, only differing in the definiteness of the referent. The passive' s functional competitor, the indefinite pronoun *man* 'one, person' itself, disappeared during ME, and there is no strong evidence that it did so because of the appearance of the verbal passive, although the timings seem to coincide.

Haspelmath (1990: 59–62) argues that what he calls **inactivisation** is historically the main function of the passive and the motivation for the grammaticalisation of the passive. Inactivisation may appear to be similar to stativisation but differs in that it refers specifically to a clause without high agentivity, regardless of aspectual difference. His claim is concerned with a typological generalisation and can be applied to whatever the origin of a language' s passive is,[1] including the periphrastic construction as in English. Specifically referring to the periphrastic construction, he claims that the passive auxiliaries in most cases involve intransitive verbs, such as 'be' , 'stay' , etc., but some transitive ones, such as 'undergo' , 'suffer' , 'receive' , etc. can be included (these, in fact, correspond to auxiliary verbs we will analyse in 6.2.1.5 below, known as in-bound transitive). His main argument is that the nature of an auxiliary allows the whole construction to be grammaticalised later as the passive.

At first sight such a claim seems to ignore various functions we have seen so far. However, Haspelmath considers that inactivisation is a sort of superordinate function over the topicalisation of undergoer and the impersonalisation of actor.[2] In his view, either topicalisation or impersonalisation can be specific instance of inactivisation (*ibid.*: 60–2). His explanation goes as follows. Since the clause is inactive, the actor (in his word, agent) is not directly expressed in the subject position. This creates a subjectless construction, which makes the undergoer occupy the

subject slot.[3] So following this line of argument, the logical sequence of change is as follows: inactivisation of the situation → backgrounding of the actor (impersonalisation) → foregrounding of the undergoer (topicalisation). Hence, he considers impersonalisation a more basic function than topicalisation, and he is sympathetic to views proposed by scholars like Comrie (1977) or Shibatani (1985).

The original construction of the English passive is a perfective construction. The aspect-bound nature of earlier constructions leads some scholars to consider that the formation of the passive was motivated by functions like stativisation, since a perfective construction expresses the state resulting from a previous event. This is exactly the same as Givón' s definition of stativisation, as we have seen above. However, such constructions are not yet passive, and our definition of the passive requires a dynamic aspect. Therefore, stativisation is not so important in our version of the development of the passive. This is where Haspelmath' s inactivisation becomes crucial, i.e. Haspelmath argues that it is not the stative aspect, but the lack of agentivity that matters in the development of the passive. Stativisation seems to describe some instances of passive at the synchronic level (although our own definition excludes them), and at the historical level, it is more reasonable to consider that the periphrastic passive was developed from earlier stative constructions, not due to the stative aspect, but because of other factors such as inactivisation or undergoer-orientation. So at the diachronic level, we assume that stativisation is not so significant in the development of the passive.

Having said that undergoer-orientation can be one of the main motivations for the development of the passive, we need to comment on this further, especially with regard to the English passive. It is true that earlier stative constructions sometimes involved an undergoer subject, which is a sign, seen from the perspective of PDE, that the verbal passive is starting to appear, although what we have been calling 'viewpoint change' does not seem to have existed during earlier periods. Earlier occurrences contain more human subjects, which is similar to the unmarked active clause. The subject' s animacy changes as the construction evolves towards the state of the PDE verbal passive. When we can detect these type of changes, in our view, the *be* + past participle becomes more established as the passive. The distribution of animacy of the subject in our data is indicated in Table 5.1. As is obvious from the table, the inanimate subject starts to increase its frequency during ME.[4] Non-human animates do not appear at all frequently as subject

Table 5.1 Animacy of the passive subject in different periods

	OE	ME	eModE	lModE	PDE
Human	729 (63.1%)	629 (41.1%)	1289 (37.7%)	2547 (27.7%)	2511 (23.1%)
Non-human animate	0 (0%)	3 (0.2%)	17 (0.5%)	12 (0.1%)	16 (0.1%)
Inanimate	426 (36.9%)	897 (58.7%)	2112 (61.8%)	6629 (72.2%)	8345 (76.8%)
Total	1155 (100%)	1529 (100%)	3418 (100%)	9188 (100%)	10872 (100%)

in the passive, so the significant entities in the analysis are human and inanimate. Svartvik (1966) presents a similar result from the PDE passive: in his data inanimate subjects appear in 81% of all occurrences of the passive, as opposed to 27% of active constructions with inanimate subjects.[5] As far as our result is concerned, the major viewpoint change happened during ME, and the frequency has stayed more or less the same since then. This result reveals several points. The earlier construction was a perfective construction, with undergoer-orientation (although not necessarily frequent), and there was a mixture of active and passive (or intermediate stage between active and passive) constructions. The result also confirms our earlier claim that the *have*-perfect allows actor-orientation in this aspect. Prior to *have* being settled on as a perfective auxiliary, the *be*-perfect accommodated actor-orientation. This leads to an assumption that the typical passive characteristics emerged during ME. When this change happened, the predicate started to show sensitivity to topicality change (Givón 1979: 295–303) or impersonalisation and as a result, the whole clause shows somewhat peculiar patterns in the hierarchy. We will come back to details of topicality change from historical perspectives especially of its origin, later in Section 5.3.2.

As far as IE languages, especially English, are concerned, the change in the nominal hierarchy can also be considered to show the direct influence of topicality change on the functional level. In unmarked constructions like the active voice, the subject entity tends to be higher in the hierarchy, i.e. human, due to the anthropocentric or egocentric nature of language (see Figure 4.2), but the passive in general involves entities lower in the hierarchy, and in terms of chronology, the earlier passive shows an unmarked hierarchical pattern. As far as our data is concerned, such a violation of the hierarchical order is stably found after ME, which also signals the grammaticalisation of the verbal passive.

5.2.2 Word order and topicality

The basic word order of PDE is doubtless SVO, whether main clause or subordinate. The word order of earlier English, however, cannot be defined so simply. It is often said that SOV is the basic order in OE and eME. Bammesberger (1992: 60) claims that OV order is the unmarked [= 'most frequent'] order in OE, although he admits the presence of order VO at the same period. Also, recent approaches assume that the subject position is not significant in considering the basic word order (therefore, Bammesberger' s claim only refers to OV or VO orders without S). Traugott (1992: 273–81) and Fischer *et al.* (2000: 104–37) point out the importance of verb-second order (V2). A typical V2 clause has an initial constituent, typically an adverb, followed by the finite verb. So the subject could come before or after the verb. Thus, in (1) below, the subject *magas* 'kinsmen' comes before the finite verb *ðancodon* 'thanked', but in (2), the subject *sum broðor* 'one brother' comes after the finite verb *wæs* 'was' .

(1)	***his***	***magas***	***ðancodon***	*mycclum*	*ðæs*	*Gode*
	his	kinsmen	thanked	much	this. GEN	God. DAT

'his kinsmen thanked God greatly for this.' (*ÆLS* (Swithun) 219)

(2)	*In*	*ðeosse*	*abbudissan*	*mynstre*	***wæs***	***sum***	***broðor***
	in	this	abbess'	minster	was	a	brother

syndriglice	*mid*	*godcundre*	*gife*	*gemæred*	*&*	*geweorðad*
specially	with	divine	gift	celebrated	and	honoured

'In this abbess's minster one brother was especially proclaimed and honoured for having a divine gift.' (*Bede* 4 25.342.3)

Some recent approaches assume that basic word order up to 1200 was V-final with V-2 in main clauses, and that V-2 lasted until 1400. This is exactly the case in OE, but as noted in Fischer *et al* (2000: 51), we need to bear in mind the fact that 'even in Old English, there is a good deal of variation between OV and VO word orders'. OV order, however, seems to be dominant in the subordinate clause, as noted in Traugott (1992: 277). One such case is illustrated in the following example. Notice that the main clause has V2 order (*þa com* 'then came'), but the verb in the subordinate clause (*gegrette* 'greet') comes last, i.e. the order in the subordinate clause is in general OV.

(3) *þa com þær gan in to me heofoncund Wisdom,*
then came there go in to me heavenly Wisdom
& þæt min murnede mod mid his wordum ***gegrette***
and that my sad spirit with his words greeted
'Then heavenly Wisdom came to me there and greeted my sad spirit with his word.' (*Bo* 3.8.15)

It has been claimed that archaic constructions are often preserved better in certain environments such as imperatives (Whitney 1889: 215; Watkins 1963, 1970; Kuryłowicz 1964: 137) or subordinate clauses (Givón 1979: 83ff.). SOV word order is one such case. Other Germanic languages, such as German, have the basic word order SVO, but SOV order can still be found in subordinate clauses. It is indeed arguable to consider the OE word order simply as OV, since, as Hopper and Traugott (1993: 51) explain, 'there is no "ideal" OV or VO order language. Instead, there are languages which may have predominant OV or VO order, or which may exhibit properties of both. This is because coding is constantly in flux, and because there are competing motivations in creating discourse.' As many scholars suggest, there was variety in OE word order, and it was changing from one type to another. However, only in lME was the order established as SVO. Judging from the subordinate clause, where the previous order tends to be preserved, we can claim that OV was the dominant or unmarked order prior to eME, while some variations existed alongside.

Some scholars suggest pragmatic motivations for the word order change in English: OE developed a tendency in which light forms as subject (i.e. phonologically short, often adverbials or pronominal elements) precede the verb. Also, in spite of the gradual shift from verb-final order, i.e. OV, when the object is pronominal it always precedes the verb (Traugott 1992: 276). This shows the increased sensitivity to weight during OE. Scholars like Strang (1970) claim that this sensitivity is the prime motivation for the word order change. Others like Vennemann (1973) and Bean (1983) argue that the change was triggered by the loss of subject and object inflection: when inflection is lost, there is a possible ambiguity between subject and object. This could be avoided by placing the verb between the subject and the object, which caused the word order change. Van Kemenade (1987) considers that a mixture of these two factors triggered the change.

Another line of argument involves topicality. As far as PDE is concerned, there is a clear basic word order, and subject and discourse

topicality often coincide (Keenan 1976). If there are special topic or focus constructions, such as cleft, they are syntactically marked. However, when the language is analysed diachronically, it appears subject and topicality were often not related, and there were only tendencies in word order rather than a single basic word order. Before we analyse a language-specific case, let us first consider a typological claim originally made by Li and Thompson (1976). They consider that word order change is related to topicality and its realisation in a clause, or in their terms, topic- and subject-prominence. Their main argument can be summarised in the following quotation (*ibid.*: 459):

> According to our study, there are four basic types of languages: (i) languages that are subject-prominent (a term introduced by E. L. Keenan); (ii) languages that are topic-prominent; (iii) languages that are both subject-prominent and topic-prominent; (iv) languages that are neither subject-prominent nor topic-prominent. In subject–prominent (Sp) languages, the structure of sentences favours a description in which the grammatical relation subject–predicate plays a major role; in topic-prominent (Tp) languages, the basic structure of sentences favours a description in which the grammatical relation topic–comment plays a major role. In type (iii) languages, there are two equally important distinct sentence constructions, the subject–predicate construction and the topic–comment construction; in type (iv) languages, the subject and the topic have merged and are no longer distinguishable in all sentence types.

Once this classification is put in diachronic perspective, they consider that languages shift between types i and ii, through intermediate stages, types iii and iv. They (*ibid.*: 485) formulate the diachronic change in Figure 5.1. When, for example, a language develops a system of shift from topic- to subject-prominence, the grammaticalisation of topics into subjects happens.

Scholars like Lehmann (1976) argue that the shift between topic- and subject-prominence and the word order change are in fact related. He argues that in the case of IE languages, the shift from OV to VO word order is the motivation for the shift from topic- to subject-prominence. Burridge (1993: 161–73), for example, following Lehmann, claims that features of Middle Dutch like the use of a dummy subject, personal pronoun subject, and special indefinite subject (i.e. *men* 'one') became compulsory in order to maintain V2 order. However, the claim that word

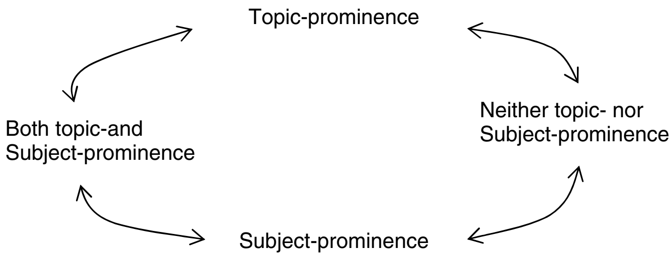

Figure 5.1 Diachronic change of topic-prominence and subject-prominence

order is the motivation for the prominence shift does not seem convincing, since prominence shift can rather be the motivation for the word order change, or perhaps they can influence each other. Considering the language-particular case of English, if word order is the motivation, it is plausible to assume that the subjectless construction (as shown in (4)), since the presence of the subject was not obligatory before (cf. Traugott 1992), came to have the subject compulsorily[6] due to the emergence of SVO order.

(4)	*þær*	*mæg*	*nihta*	*gehwæm*	*niðwundor*	*seon*
	there	may	of nights	every	horror.marvels	see

'There one can see marvels of horror every night.' (*Beowulf* 1365)

However, it has been the case that a clause-initial entity is more topical in English, as in constructions like inversion (see Section 8.2 for details). In PDE, the grammatical subject tends to be the most topical argument, and if a non-subject entity is topical, some marked construction is used. The semantic characteristics of the subject (i.e. high topicality) and the topic assignment in the clause seem to coincide. So it is plausible to think that emerging subject-prominence forced the subject to be placed in the most topical position in the clause.

Lehmann also claims (1978: 22) that 'passivization is prominent in SVO languages, but not at all in OV languages; it is essentially a tool for achieving topicalization for the object, and such a tool is unnecessary in OV languages'. As we will shortly see, such a typological generalisation has to be questioned, but as far as IE languages are concerned, it seems to hold true. Otherwise, a topicality-related construction such as inversion (i.e. quasi-passive, see Chapter 8) could have become more closely related to the passive, since they share the function of topicality

change. Functionally, it was difficult to assign topicality according to a particular structure in earlier periods of English, not only in the passive but also in the language in general. Topicality assignment onto the subject, as in the PDE passive, could not therefore be achieved until the ME period. This coincides with the change following from the aspectual change discussed in Section 2.3, which suggests that the PDE verbal passive was not formed due to a single influence, but that it is more likely that various factors contributed to its formation. The change in word order can be considered one such factor, and the assumption that the position of the subject and topicality is the sole motivation for the diachronic change can be questioned: for example, see Haspelmath (1990: 61–2).

5.2.3 Interaction of different functions in historical change

In addition to what we have discussed so far, another possible argument is, although it is highly speculative, that the original construction, i.e. perfective with undergoer subject, did not overtly express the actor, and the construction was reanalysed as a passive, primarily due to the emergence of the *have*-perfect, which made the clause more actor-oriented, followed by word order change and topicality assignment. It is possible that the absence of the actor phrase in the original construction could have been carried over into the verbal passive construction through grammaticalisation. Because of this, overt expression of actor was not frequent, which led to impersonalisation. So consider examples like (68) to (70) in Chapter 2. It would be much easier to decide whether these instances are passive or perfective if the actor phrase were present. However, such speculation poses a question whether the function made the form change or the form changed for some reason and the function followed afterwards. As we have argued so far, in terms of morphosemantic and syntactic changes, the basic form remained more or less the same, although some elements such as affixes are lost. The reanalysis of the earlier construction was made possible by the changing grammatical environment in English, where subject and topic became identical. This may indicate that the English passive is a case of form change first, followed by function change.

From the discussion so far, topicalisation and impersonalisation may be considered two sides of the same coin, since topicalisation can pave the way for impersonalisation, but at the same time, impersonalisation allows the undergoer to receive high topicality. They are both fully

functional in PDE, but did both of them emerge at the same time in history? As argued in Haspelmath (1990: 60), backgrounding (impersonalisation) is more basic than foregrounding (topicalisation), since the former allows the latter to happen, i.e. the fact that the passive clause is commonly an inactive clause indicates that no agentivity is involved. Such an effect can be achieved as a subjectless construction too. Consider impersonal verb constructions, for example (54) in Chapter 2, where the experiencer is commonly expressed in the accusative or dative and the outer cause in the nominative or genitive. Such a pattern, once applied to the passive, creates a syntactic gap in the subject slot, which forces the foregrounding of the undergoer. Such a claim can be supported by some earlier examples in English. Consider the following examples of the impersonal passive, repeated from (16) to (18) in Chapter 4, for convenience:

(5) *Nu is gesene þæt we syngodon*
now is seen that we sinned
'It is now seen that we sinned.' (*Christ & Satan* 228)

(6) *Is sæd þæt se cining wære efenblissiende*
is said that the king was blessed
'It is said that the king was blessed.' (Ælfred, *Bede* (Sch.) 59, 4)

(7) *In prophecy is wreten þus: A best shalle swelowe þe covetous*
in prophecy is written thus: a beast shall swallow the covetous
'In prophecy, it is written: a beast shall swallow the covetous.' (1400 *Tundale' s Vision* (ed. Wagner) 485)

These examples lack overt subject, unlike their PDE counterparts. Visser (1963–73: §1930) claims that such constructions occurred in OE and eME, but that (7) is in fact from lME. So it is safer to claim that this type of impersonal passive type existed up to lME. If topicality change in the passive was so significant prior to ME, then it is highly unlikely that the subject slot was left empty. This syntactic gap was later filled with the dummy subject as in PDE. So this corroborates what Haspelmath claims. In addition, such instances also support the claim that English used to be a topic-prominent language (see Section 4.2.1). As Lehmann says (1976: 453), 'topic-prominent languages also lack dummy subjects, like "it, there" .' So instances like (5) to (7) can be interpreted as a sign

of diminishing topic-prominence in English. Further evidence can be found in the following examples:

(8) *but now **it** es **þis appell** etten*
but now it is this apple eaten
'but now this apple is eaten.' (*Cursor* 873)

(9) *When **hit** knowen was **the case** . . .*
'When the case was known . . .' (c1400 *Destr. Troy* 12411)

These examples, contrary to (5) to (7), have two subjects in apposition, one of which is normally a pronoun, normally involving inversion between the subject and verbal phrase as in (9) (see Visser 1963–73: SS1930) but not in (8). Why are apposition or inversion involved? Such cases, in our view, demonstrate a sensitivity to topicality, expressed by inversion but without coincidence of subject and topic. The difference between (5) to (7) and (8) and (9) is that (8) and (9) are sensitive to topicality, although it is not expressed through the subject. Such instances are rare in OE. These instances also show that the passive became sensitive to topicality change in ME, and (8) and (9), which involve other topicality changing operations such as inversion as well as the passive, are a reaction of oversensitivity to the emergence of such functions. So claims focusing on impersonalisation, such as Shibatani' s (1985) agent-defocusing, are historically closer to the origin of the function of the passive.

However, it is still possible to consider changes working in the opposite direction: high topicality of the undergoer can make the identity of the actor irrelevant, and if this is the case, the foregrounding has more prominence, since without it, the backgrounding is not likely to happen. As far as the written records of English are concerned, such a claim seems unlikely. However, data involving an older language than OE may leave some possibility for such an interpretation. Earlier constructions described the resulting state of the undergoer without mentioning the actor (similar to Haspelmath' s inactive construction), although its existence was implied. Such an original grammatical state did not allow backgrounding to function, since there was no entity to background. This leads to the idea that the passive was developed after topic and subject became co-referential and the topicality on the subject made backgrounding possible.

As far as previous studies are concerned, topicalisation or impersonalisation seem to be more important than other syntactic changes. The assumption that word order change established the passive (as we have seen earlier in this section) is criticised by Haspelmath, based on his sample of languages. We reproduce his results in Table 5.2 (cf. his table 4, 1990: 61).

Table 5.2 Relationship between word order and the existence of the passive

	SOV	SVO	V-1	unknown/none	total
Having a passive	13 (35%)	8 (27%)	7	2	30 (38%)
Lacking a passive	24 (65%)	22 (73%)	2	2	50 (62%)
Total	37 (100%)	30 (100%)	9	4	80 (100%)

As indicated in Table 5.2, SOV languages also possess passives, and more than 70% of SVO languages lack a passive, *contra* Lehmann. The main difference is that those who emphasise the significance of word order consider topicalisation to be one of the main functions of the passive, while those who question this idea consider that non-topicalisation domains such as inactivisation play a crucial functional role in the grammaticalisation (Haspelmath 1990: 61–2). However, inactivisation *per se* is not considered a function of the passive but rather a precondition for, or the origin of, the construction. In addition, this difference seems to be, in part, due to the scope of analysis: whether research concentrates only on IE languages or involves wider typological data. As mentioned in Section 2.3.2, the periphrastic passive is typically found in IE languages, which indicates that there are some special features in the passive of these languages. Furthermore, the English *be*-passive is more grammaticalised than its Germanic counterparts, and word order change to SVO is more widespread and more rigid in English. Some other Germanic languages, for example, still preserve SOV order in the subordinate clause, and the 'be' -passive in these languages is more stative/perfective. So, a difference in the scope of analysis may lead to a crucial difference in the result.

This second point may also be related to the degree of functional motivation in the grammaticalisation. By this we mean that the higher the degree of functional motivation, the less significant the word order. This casts doubt on whether topicalisation or impersonalisation was really significant in the formation of the English passive, although they are two principal functions at the synchronic level. The auxiliary scale of Figure 3.1 indicates that auxiliaries can develop into affixes. As far as IE

languages are concerned, word order change seems to have contributed to the formation of the periphrastic passive, but this may not be applicable to other language families or more significantly, to the morphological passive. The passive auxiliary and passive morpheme can be considered to be at different stages of development, and the difference in form may correspond to different functional demands. This is an important issue and is dealt with separately in the following Section.

As far as PDE is concerned, the passive is no longer so much related to tense–aspect (however, see examples like (64) in Chapter 2 which indicate that there are still some residues of earlier constructions even in PDE), and a sensitivity to topicality often leads to a change in orientation: passive exhibits undergoer-orientation, which allows various functions such as topicalisation of the undergoer to be achieved. Such influence has a serious consequence in the choice of passive ahead of active, even beyond the functional level and there is also a syntactic motivation: recall (2) in Chapter 4 from Dik (1989: 214). The use of the passive in the relative clause allows several clauses to continue without altering the subject. Such instances commonly involve relative pronouns, as exemplified from our PDE data below:

(10) *WALTER NIGHTINGALL and his stable jockey Duncan Keith should follow up yesterday' s success of Release with a double at Windsor, **which may be initiated** by Duke Toledo in the Round Tower Handicap (3-30) and **completed** by King' s Probity, who goes for the Hatch Bridge Handicap (4-30).* (LOB A32 163–167)

(11) *The detailed machinery for the taking of the census and the precise forms of return to be used in all cases were prescribed in the Census Regulations, 1960, (S.I. 1960 No. 1175,) **which were signed** by the Minister of Health on the 11th July, 1960, and **laid** before Parliament on 18th July.* (LOB H01 113–117)

(12) *The first requirement is for an anionic electrolyte, **which can be fabricated** into suitable shapes impervious to gases and liquid sodium and **which is** neither **corroded** by sodium nor by sodium monoxide.* (LOB J01 123–126)

These instances go beyond the functional level, being based on more syntactic or stylistic constraints. It is also worth mentioning that although topicality-related features are so prominent in the passive,

there are some exceptional cases, such as the presentative passive, which show that the function of the past participle represents the overall construction (see Section 3.4) and that the past participle creates the main reading of the clause, the auxiliary being transparent. The case of presentative passive provides further evidence to our argument that overall interpretation of the clause, such as the aspect of stative verbs, is derived from the past participle.

5.3 Functional motivations in grammaticalisation

So far, we have mainly concentrated on topicality-related functions. For example, in Section 5.2.2, we saw how topicality became involved in the passive in terms of word order change and in Section 5.2.3, some exceptional cases for the general topicality pattern in the passive. In this sense, the establishment of SVO word order coincides with some crucial changes in the passive, such as the aspect from stative to dynamic or the topicality assignment to the passive subject. This was so, since subject and topic were less likely to coincide earlier, until SVO order was firmly established as the basic order in English in the ME period. Then the newly-acquired functional status of the subject created a new function for the earlier *be*-perfective, i.e. topicalisation of the undergoer for various pragmatic purposes, such as empathy. Topicalisation of the undergoer as subject became possible, since there are two or three arguments subcategorised in the verbal phrase, their relative topicality was earlier achieved by word order means such as left dislocation, and no overt grammatical marking was necessary. So it is possible to claim that word order change had a direct impact on the passive construction in English, since semantic and syntactic changes could not fully contribute to the formation of the passive voice unless subject and topic coincided.

5.3.1 Periphrastic passive vs. morphological passive

We can identify two types of historical change in general. When diachronic change is functionally motivated, it has been termed **atomistic functionalism**. According to Newmeyer (2002a), in atomistic functionalism there is a direct linkage between properties of particular grammars and functional motivations for those properties. The opposite of atomistic functionalism is known as **holistic functionalism**. In this, there is no direct linkage between external functions and grammatical properties. The influence of the former on the latter is played out in

language use and acquisition and (therefore) language change is manifested only typologically. In our view, the two different types of passive construction, periphrastic and morphological, develop according to the amount of functional influence.

Structurally the passive involves a more complicated syntactic alternation. Quasi-passive constructions to be analysed in Chapter 8, such as inversion or indefinite pronouns, are basically active, although like the passive they can allow for sensitivity to topicality change. It seems much simpler to use the active throughout its history, rather than developing a more complicated construction. What then is the motivation for preserving the periphrastic construction for the passive? When the passive is formed morphologically, the original function is easier to detect, as we will see shortly. The PDE passive has particular functions – topicality change and impersonalisation – but no grammatical sign has developed into a morpheme nor is a morpheme beginning to develop. Instead the passive has co-existed with other constructions with the same functions over centuries. In our view, the English passive was born when some basic constructions in English changed, represented by the word order change and topicality assignment to the subject, as we have seen in the previous section. The earlier construction remained and due to its undergoer-orientation gained a new function, but it did not develop out of functional motivation but was, rather, a by-product.

In addition, as we have seen in Section 3.2, auxiliary can be an intermediate stage in a scale between full lexical verb and its loss, via stages of auxiliary, cliticisation and affixation. Thus, it is apparent that the morphological passive has a higher degree of grammaticalisation than the periphrastic passive. There is little degree of 'morphemehood' in the passive morphemes, while there are various degrees of 'auxiliaryhood' in the passive auxiliary. It can be argued that this different degree of grammaticalisation is a result of varying degrees of functional motivation: the morphological passive has more function-motivated influences (i.e. a case of atomistic functionalism), while the periphrastic passive is barely influenced by function and the construction arose as the result of interaction with the development of other constructions (i.e. a type of holistic functionalism).

When it is possible to reconstruct the developmental path of a passive morpheme, the change can be often attributed to impersonalisation. For example, some combinations of person and number, such as 'third person and plural' or 'first person and plural' are often associated with indefiniteness and they often develop into a passive marker through impersonalisation. Languages such as Maasai, Barea, Moru, Lotuko

(Nilo-Saharan), Irish, Manx, Scottish Gaelic (Celtic), Kimbundu, Dzamba (Bantu) used to have a third person plural agreement marker which turned into a passive morpheme (see Greenberg 1959 and Heine and Claudi 1986 for Nilo-Saharan languages; Givón 1990: 605–8 for Bantu languages; Greenberg 2000: 109–114 for Celtic languages). Another language, Ainu (Altaic), has a passive marker *a-* as in (13b), which is derived from the first person plural agreement marker. An active clause of Modern Ainu with first person plural subject is shown in (13a), which is marked with the identical prefix as the passive one. Note that although Ainu is a pro-drop language, there are verbal agreement markers which indicate the subject and object of the clause, as shown in (13a). Such agreement markers do not appear in the passive example (13b). However, such a marker was indeed present earlier even in the passive, as in the Classical Ainu example (14). This shows that there has been a grammaticalisation of the Ainu passive clause. In Classical Ainu, the presence of an object marker indicates that the passive clause was not fully passive and was closer to the active, since the verbal prefix *a-* might have retained a certain degree of reference to the first person plural, although its reference was getting increasingly unidentifiable. So a more appropriate translation for (14), considering the lesser degree of impersonalisation, may be an active clause like 'One raised me in a god-built castle'. Such an interpretation is much harder to find in (13b), where the object marker is totally deleted. This change happened since the agreement marker which implied indefiniteness later became the impersonal marker. Since one of the main functions of the passive is impersonalisation, this marker was reanalysed as the passive morpheme.

(13) Modern Ainu (Shibatani 1985: 823-824)

a. *Tampe* *a-e-kore*
this 1PL-2SG-give
'We give you this.'

b. *Pirka* *hawe* *a-nu*
beautiful voice PASS-hear
'A beautiful voice is heard.'

(14) Classical Ainu (Shibatani 1985: 823–4)

Kamui *kat* *chasi* *upshorirke* *a-i-o-reshu*
god build castle inside PASS-1SG.OBJ-in-raise
'I was raised in a god-built castle.'

The development of the morphological passive is often closely related to functional motivations, such as the impersonalisation we have seen above. Such motivations, however, do not involve stativisation. Stativisation, if related to the passive, appears in the periphrastic construction, not the morphological. So in Germanic languages, for example, the 'be' -passive expresses state, the 'become' -passive dynamicity. As already mentioned in Section 2.3.2, such a periphrastic construction is, furthermore, common in IE languages (Dryer 1982: 55; Haspelmath 1990: 29). In this respect, the English *be*-passive seems like one instance among other Germanic languages. However, the aspect of the 'be'-passive in other Germanic languages is unambiguously stative, unlike the English *be*-passive. These various facts seem to indicate a strong historical relationship between tense–aspect and the periphrastic passive. As discussed in Sections 2.3.1 and 2.3.2, the introduction of *have* as a tense–aspect auxiliary seems to have played an important role, since the presence of 'have' in most IE languages[7] allowed 'be' or 'become' to function as a passive auxiliary, mainly due to the difference in orientation, i.e. *be*-perfect is undergoer-oriented (inactivation in Haspelmath' s 1990: 60–2 terms) while actor–orientation is found in the *have*-perfect. This is why these passives are considered to have a stative–adjectival origin, since the periphrasis formerly expressed perfective aspect.

However, the English *be*-passive is a rather rare case, since it is not so closely attached to stativisation, but rather has other functions like topicality alternation, including impersonalisation. In confirmation, the development of word order and the assignment of topicality are also related to the formation of the periphrastic passive, making the English passive behave more like a morphological passive, although these functions were originally neither the prime nor the only motivation for the development of the passive. The English passive involves various syntactic, semantic and functional factors in its formation. If the functional motivation is so prominent that it forced the grammaticalisation of *be*-passive, analysis of the English passive in relation to other Germanic languages will be difficult: it is easy to see that the English passive prior to ME is grammatically quite similar to other Germanic languages at the same period. So if topicalisation or impersonalisation in the PDE passive had been functional forces for grammaticalisation, why wouldn' t other Germanic languages follow suit and develop similarly to PDE? It suggests that various functional changes observable in English are a secondary factor, in the sense that these changes were not initially motivations for the passive. It also suggests that the auxiliary of the periphrastic passive in IE languages is not likely to develop into

the affix stage, unlike the reflexive-origin suffix observable in North Germanic, see (16) below, where functional demands could accelerate the grammaticalisation further.

Thus there is a lower degree of functional motivation in periphrastic passive. Tense–aspect constructions concerning the periphrastic passive have not changed much, except, needless to say, in the choice of auxiliary, but the environment, such as word order, topicality, etc., changed and the periphrastic passive is more likely to have been created due to the changing environment. This is why it is peculiar to IE languages. Among IE languages, the English passive seems to be more grammaticalised: the auxiliary *be* is more transparent in English, and other languages use 'be' for stativity, while possessing other auxiliaries such as 'become' for dynamic reading. Such a distinction was possible earlier in the history of English, but not any longer, and the change happened during OE and ME, as Tables 2.2 to 2.4 indicate.

5.3.2 Origin of topicality

Another piece of evidence to support holistic functionalism in the development of the periphrasptic passive can be found in discourse topicality. The passive subject is said to be highly topical, even more topical than the active subject (see Figure 4.1, Cooreman's analysis). Topicality in the passive voice has been treated indiscriminately whether the structure is morphological or periphrastic. The grammatical subject tends to be topical whether it is the active or the passive, but this synchronic similarity may prove to be different historically concerning the passive voice. There seem to be two different historical sources for the high topicality, in other words, the topicality in the periphrastic passive is not the same as the one in the morphological passive. This is closely tied up with functional motivations of the formation of the passive.

In general, the passive clause is likely to be highly transitive (Section 2.2), and transitivity is somehow related to the topicality. Hopper and Thompson (1980: 253) claim that the individuation of object 'refers both to the distinctness of the patient from the [agent] . . . and to its distinctness from its own background'. The individuation consists of components shown in Table 5.3. The difference in the passive is that the subject tends to be inanimate. So this component is considered marked in the passive, but as for the rest of the components, it does not matter whether the construction is the active (i.e. the direct object) or the passive (i.e. the subject). Due to the close relationship between transitivity and the passive, it is natural that some features

Table 5.3 Components of individuation of object (Hopper and Thompson 1980: 253)

Individuated	**Non-individuated**
Proper	Common
Human, animate	Inanimate
Concrete	Abstract
Singular	Plural
Count	Mass
Referential, definite	Non-referential

related to transitivity in general influence some semantic and functional structures of the passive, including topicality.

Prior to the reanalysis, the passive construction formed a split-ergative system, since undergoer-orientation was the only possibility from this aspect (cf. Section 2.3.2). The perfective aspect originally expressed by the periphrastic construction belongs to anterior. Arguments involved in the anterior belong to the realis mood, since events and grammatical arguments involved in the past are supposed to be known to speakers. This means that the identity of arguments in discourse is very clear, i.e. their topicality is very high. The reanalysis of the periphrastic construction happens when the actor-orientation for the same tense–aspect is created, and the functional demands for this construction are not so high, since the creation of the passive can be considered a mere by-product of the changes in the tense–aspectual system. So topicality in this case was already encoded in the original structure and it was simply carried over in the new structure.

The morphological passive, on the other hand, is slightly different. A number of scholars have claimed numerous historical sources for the morphological passive, including the middle voice, the reflexive, the causative, the reflexive-causative, the agreement markers, etc. Their changes seem to have a common feature, i.e. impersonalisation. The volitional actor lost the volitionality or a certain construction became associated with avoiding mentioning the actor. This led to the demotion of the actor and put the undergoer into a more topicalised slot in the structure. See Sections 6.2.1.5 and 6.3.2 for some examples. What is obvious here is that the grammatical change happened individually, without much change in other grammatical structures. Impersonalisation is one of the main functions of the passive, as primarily argued by scholars like Shibatani (1985, 1998), and this is also the main functional

motivation for the historical change. Topicality in the morphological passive can be considered to have been derived during the process of grammaticalisation, and it was not encoded in the original construction.

So, what appear to be identical semantic characteristics of the passive can be different in terms of it their source and developmental path. The topicality found in the periphrastic passive was encoded in the structure from the beginning, but it was created during the process of grammaticalisation in the morphological passive.

5.4 Uniformitarian principle

What we have been discussing so far assumes that superficially identical or similar constructions gained different syntactic and semantic status. Such grammatical changes seem to support the **uniformitarian principle**. This principle claims that one should not posit anything for the past that is impossible for the present, or as Whewell (1837 III: 483–4, cited in Christy 1983: 2) states:

> All these speculations [problems of origin, J.T.] are connected by this bond [historical causality, J.T.], – that they endeavour to ascend to a past state of things, by aid of the evidence of the present. . . . for the ascertained history of the present state of things offers the best means of throwing light upon the causes of *past* changes. . . . The general aspect of all these trains of change is similar, and offers the same features for description. [emphasis original]

As explained extensively in Christy (1983), this idea stems from an earlier interdisciplinary attempt to solve chronology-bound problems of origin and development; the origin of the earth in the case of geology, human beings in the case of ethnology, and language in the case of linguistics. This principle stems from a revolutionary work in the field of geology, *Principles of Geology* (1830–33) by Sir Charles Lyell. His main argument in geological change is that 'no processes other than those now observable were ever at work in the past' (Christy 1983: 2). He assumes that as long as the known causes, such as erosion and sedimentation in geology, suffice to explain the change, no unknown causes are needed.

As for linguistic analysis, scholars working on historical linguistics have assumed that grammars of all languages are made of the same sorts of units, such as phonemes, morphemes, etc., which allow them to analyse languages by means of the same theoretical tools. So scholars have considered that, as far as the oldest written records, e.g. Chinese, Sanskrit,

Classical Greek, etc., are concerned, 'human languages have always been pretty much the same in terms of the typological distribution of the elements that compose them' (Newmeyer 2002b: 360). Likewise, Lass (1997: 28–29) states: 'no linguistic state of affairs can have been the case only in the past. . . . the global (cross-linguistic) likelihood of any linguistic state of affairs has always been roughly the same as it is now.' Labov (1972: 161), on the same lines, notes that 'the same mechanisms which operated to produce the large-scale changes of the past may be observed operating in the current changes taking place around us.' So according to this principle, as Hopper and Traugott (1993: 38) claim, 'the linguistic forces that are evidenced today are in principle the same as those that operated in the past. Operationally, this means that no earlier grammar or rule may be reconstructed for a dead language that is not attested in a living one. There is no reason to believe that grammaticalization did not occur in languages spoken ten thousand years ago in much the same way as it does now.'

Can such an idea of historical change be applicable to the grammaticalisation of the passive? In the passive there seems to be both functional and morphosyntactic gradience cross-linguistically. For instance, a number of middle or reflexive constructions are not clearly distinguishable from the passive: (see (19) and (20) in this Chapter; see also Geniušienė 1987: 261–71; Kemmer 1993: 147–9 for further argument. It is a well-known fact that these middle or reflexive-related constructions often turn into the passive (Croft, *et al.* 1987; Givón 1990: 600–18; Haspelmath 1990). The synchronic state of grammar (i.e. unclear boundary and similarity between passive and middle/ reflexive) indicates a possible developmental path of the passive. Apart from the case of middle/ reflexive constructions, we have seen that undergoer-orientation can be one of the basic conditions of the passive (see Section 2.2). Functions such as inactivisation or impersonalisation (see Section 4.2) are commonly associated with the development of the passive. Such a view follows a stereotypical pattern of uniformitarian principle.

However, as questioned in Section 5.3.1, there seems to be a slight difference according to whether a passive is periphrastic or morphological. The periphrastic passive seems to be rather restricted to a certain language group and is less influenced by various functions. Does this raise a question about the validity of the uniformitarian principle? The periphrastic passive is most commonly found in the IE languages, but within this language group, we can still find some coherent pattern. Recall the distinction between B- and H-languages (see Section 2.3.2). Languages which are classified as H-languages tend to have the passive,

while B-languages, such as Slavic, tend to lack a passive, and their grammatical voice system consists of an active and a middle (Toyota and Mustafović 2006). This shows a consistent developmental pattern from a tense–aspect related construction to the passive. According to the uniformitarian principle, it is possible to assume the future development of the passive in B-languages, once other forms develop to express the perfective aspect in these languages.

Furthermore, language-specifically, the synchronic state of the English passive has three different types of construction commonly analysed under the term 'passive' : adjectival passive, resultative and verbal passive. Disregarding the frequency of each construction, we can claim that some instances of current passive or passive-like constructions – either adjectival passive or resultative – represent an earlier state of the construction, which co-exists with the newer, the verbal passive. So the development of the English passive can be regarded as a textbook illustration of the uniformitarian principle.

5.5 Voice continuum

What we have seen so far has mainly been directly related to the *be*-passive construction, which has been present throughout the history of the English language. It has changed less than other constructions to be discussed in the following chapters. It is only then that we can see what the voice continuum is really like in English. This section will be the basis for later chapters. We first describe the voice continuum and relevant previous scholarship, and then apply it to the particular case of English.

5.5.1 What is voice continuum?

Grammatical voice is mainly concerned with the relationship between participant roles of NP arguments of a verb and the grammatical relations borne by those same NPs. This relationship can be realised in various ways: the voice system in English involves the active and the passive, where the actor argument is encoded as subject and the undergoer argument as object in the active, while in the passive, the actor is the oblique phrase and the undergoer is the subject. English does not have an overt marking system for the middle voice, but a similar relationship is often expressed by the use of reflexive pronouns. Those languages that have the middle (or reflexive) voice express both the actor and the undergoer identically as subject. In addition, there are a number of languages that use various other voice systems, such as applicative (actor as subject

and undergoer as oblique phrase), circumstantial (actor as subject and indirect object as undergoer), etc. These various combinations are commonly all treated under the label 'grammatical voice'. This means that each voice does not exist independently: they are somehow related to each other, whether the relationship is syntactic, semantic or functional. This feature of grammatical voice has been called the **voice continuum**. Various scholars, some more explicitly than others, have noticed the continuous nature of grammatical voice. For example, analysing the passive voice cross-linguistically, Siewierska (1984: 1) claims that 'the analysis of the various constructions referred to in the literature as passive leads to the conclusion that there is not even one single property which all these constructions have in common'. Her claim serves as a good indicator that the passive involves various qualities of 'passiveness' and that this variety is something essential to the continuum. Shibatani (1985: 821) notes the nature of the voice continuum more explicitly, saying 'passives form a continuum with active sentences'. As a result of a survey of inverse voice constructions, Thompson (1994: 61) concludes that 'I know of no structural features which can define inverse constructions and distinguish them from passives'. Lazard (1995: 192) usefully provides various cases of what is commonly described as passive to illustrate the diversity of syntactic properties of the passive. Consider the following list of forms for the passive where V^p stands for a passive verb and V^r, a reflexive verb.

(15) V changes to V^p (passive voice), Y becomes 'subject' , X drops or becomes X_n (n = oblique marker): this is the 'canonical' passive as found in Western European languages;

V changes to V^p, Y remains unchanged, X drops or becomes X_n: this is the 'impersonal passive' , as, for example, in French;

V changes to V^p, X and Y remain unchanged (Jinghpaw);

V changes to V^r (reflexive), Y becomes 'subject', X drops or becomes X_n (Russian);

V changes to V^r, Y remains unchanged, X drops: 'impersonal' (Spanish);

V remains unchanged, Y becomes 'subject', X drops or becomes X_n(Chinese).

Croft (2001: 283–319) extensively analyses the phenomena of the voice continuum, mainly concerned with the active, passive and inverse voice, but not the middle or reflexive in his analysis. He takes full

advantage of conceptual space, which he defines (*ibid*.: 93) as 'a structured representation of functional structures and their relationship to each other', and postulates that the typologically least marked speech act participant alignment is from 1st or 2nd person to 3rd person, and therefore, that this is the typological prototype for the transitive active or direct construction. This relationship can be usefully schematised as in Figure 5.2. In this figure, the upper right corner is the least marked conceptual space, and the opposite side of the figure, i.e. the lower left corner, the most marked one. It should read that 1 (speaker) and 2 (addressee) are hierarchically placed higher than 3 (others). This is shown as 1, 2<3. The order between 1 and 2 can vary in different languages, and it is left unspecified. In English, for example, it is the norm to have a hierarchical order 1<2<3, but Cree (Algonquian) has an order 2<1<3 (see Croft 2001: 286–7 for details).

		Patient		
		1,	2 <	3
Agent	1,	—		
	2		—	
	< 3			

Figure 5.2 Conceptual space for active-passive-inverse voice (Croft 2001: 284, Figure 8.1, reproduced with permission)

In Croft's view, this figure can serve as an indicator of the basic voice form and can express discourse salience or topicality, since '[s]peaker and addressee are by definition more topical or salient to the interlocutors, since they *are* the interlocutors' (*ibid*.: 315, emphasis original). The conceptual map in Figure 5.2 can be augmented with more syntactic elements of grammatical voice: thus he further incorporates discourse topicality and verbal transitivity. In this way, speech participants are considered either the actor [his transitive subject] or the undergoer [his transitive patient], and both of them can be measured in terms of discourse salience. This extended conceptual space, which is schematised below in Figure 5.3, allows us to understand comprehensively the relationship among different constructions in the voice system. We have noted for Figure 5.2 that the upper right corner is the least marked portion of conceptual space and the lower left corner, the most marked. This may be applicable to Figure 5.3, but for the transitive construction, antipassive (see Chapter 4, note 5) lies beyond the border, since '[t]he typologically unmarked transitive voice type must have a sufficiently salient P [transitive patient, J.T.] argument as well as a salient A [transitive

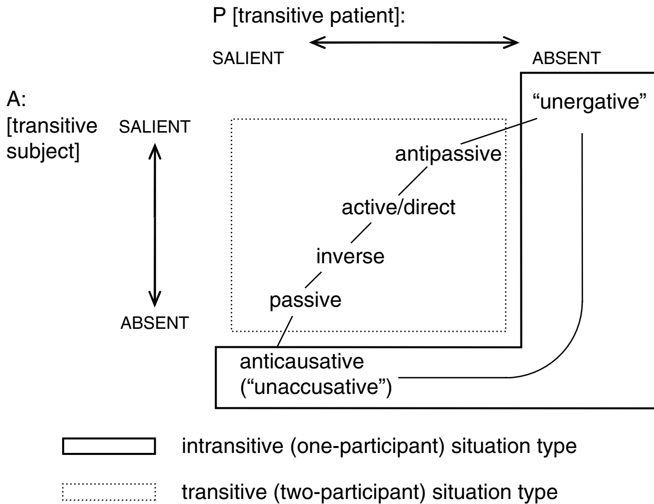

Figure 5.3 The conceptual space for voice and transitivity (Croft 2001: 317, Figure 8.16, reproduced with permission)

agent, J.T.] argument, and hence the antipassive is typologically marked (often expressed with an overt verbal affix or an overt P [transitive patient] case marking)' (*ibid.*: 319).

The approach taken by Croft convincingly shows there is no clear boundary between the two different types of voice constructions. Scholars like Comrie (1989), Givón (1984: 164), Shibatani (1985, 1998) claim that the passive is better considered in terms of a **prototype**. This is, in a way, looking at what Croft proposes from a different angle: Croft views grammatical voice from a wider perspective to a narrower one, while those who are interested in prototype analysis do it from a narrower to wider. Several scholars have produced the properties of the passive prototype. We list several formulations in (16) to (18). What seems to be common among them is that the active–passive alternation is assumed (see Figure 2.1), and additionally, Payne includes the properties of intransitive verbs. What he means here is the number of arguments, i.e. the intransitive verb is monovalent, and the property (18) also refers to a valency-reducing operation, when the active counterpart is either divalent or trivalent. These characteristics form the prototype of the passive. Let us take one example to demonstrate how prototype analysis works. Earlier in Section 4.2.4.2, we defined what we regard as the impersonal passive, i.e. no overt subject and verb morphology (type i in (9) in that

Chapter) and a form word in the subject slot as well as verb morphology (type iii in the same item (9)). So in a prototype analysis, the latter is 'more' passive than the former, although they are both considered passive.

(16) Siewierska (1984: 256):

i. The passive has a corresponding active construction the subject of which does not function as the passive subject.
ii. The event or action expressed is brought about by some person or thing that is not the passive subject, but the subject of the corresponding active.
iii. The person or thing if not overt is at least strongly implied.

(17) Dik (1989: 219–21):

i. They [passive constructions] are alternative expressions of a predication which can also be expressed in the active.
ii. In a passive construction, some non-first argument must have acquired the coding and behavioural properties which characterise the first argument in the active construction.

(18) Payne (1997: 204):

i. The actor is either completely omitted or expressed as an oblique phrase.
ii. The undergoer entity possesses all the necessary properties of subject in the language.
iii. The verb carries all the necessary properties of intransitive verb.

Another case involves the middle voice. Some variations of the middle voice can express passive meaning in various languages, but does this mean that we can now consider the middle marker as a passive marker? The middle/reflexive constructions can develop into the passive (see Croft *et al.* 1987; Greenberg 1995: 150) and they are certainly related to the passive semantically and functionally. Due to this relationship, some scholars do not discriminate the passive from the middle/ reflexive with passive meaning. Shibatani (1985), for example, presents various non-passive data under the analysis of passive. One such instance is shown in (19):

(19) Tetelcingo Nahatl (Uto-Aztecan, Shibatani 1985: 828)

wali *mo-kwo-s*
good REFL-eat-FUT
'It can be eaten.'

Shibatani considers examples like (19) a type of passive, but is it really? In my view, this type of example is the middle voice sharing a functional border with the passive. However, the reflexive marker can develop into the passive morpheme and this change can lead to the creation of a new reflexive marker. One such a case is Swedish. Swedish has the suffix -*s*, which is derived from the suffix -*sk* in Old Scandinavian languages.[8] It only appears in the passive reading, as shown in (20) below. As for the reflexive, a new reflexive pronoun *sig* is used, as in (20). It is worth mentioning that the suffix -*sk* is believed to have rarely expressed reflexiveness (Steblin-Kamenskij 1953: 239, cited in Geniušienė 1987: 245), and judging from this, the change seems to have already started in Old Scandinavian languages.

(20) Swedish

a. *Té* *servera-s* *inte* *på* *rummen*
tea serves-REF NEG in room.the
'Tea is not served in the room.'

b. *Han* *kallar* *sig* *Olaf*
he call himself Olaf
'He calls himself Olaf.'

These various reflexive/middle-related constructions with passive meaning are indeed a case of voice continuum. Apart from this combination of grammatical voice, Lazard (1998: 180) suggests some possible combinations of forms, summarised in Figure 5.4, assuming that grammatical voice is considered in terms of a continuum.

	Meanings		
	'Passive'	'Reflexive'	'Middle'
Forms L1	Passive verbs		
L2	Passive verbs	Middle verbs	
L3	Passive verbs	Reflexive verbs	Reversible verbs

Figure 5.4 Examples of different patterns of grammatical voice and its form, from Lazard (1995: 180)

This type of difference in the voice continuum can be compared to our gradience, since those reflexive verbs in Figure 5.4, for example, are not formally marked as passive, but often have a passive meaning or the same meaning that the passive can make. In order to capture these types of relationships, we use the terms **diathesis** and **quasi-voice construction**, which can be defined from the relationship between the orientation of a particular voice construction and various functions of that voice construction. When a particular construction shares the same orientation as the passive (i.e. undergoer-orientation), but lacks grammatical marking, it is called **passive diathesis**. An example of passive diathesis in English is the construction *need + V-ing*, as in *This sock needs mending*, which is not grammatically marked for passive but possesses the same orientation. On the other hand, some constructions, in spite of their ability to express passive meaning (i.e. share the same functions), do not follow the same orientation as the verbal passive. These constructions are called **quasi-passive construction** in our work. One example of an English quasi-passive is the use of the indefinite pronoun, such as *One should never trust advertisements*, which has the same orientation as the active but has a the function of impersonalisation.

Along this line of argument, our basic distinction of the English passive into three types, verbal passive, resultative and adjectival passive, in fact also involves passive diathesis and quasi-passive constructions. As defined in Section 2.2, the basic type of passive is the verbal passive. The resultative, then, is a construction with the same orientation as the verbal passive, but with a slightly different function, stativisation. Thus, the resultative can be considered a type of passive diathesis. Adjectival passive lacks the causer–causee alternation. So in terms of orientation and function, this is not a passive, but it appears to share the same form as the verbal passive. This is an instance of quasi-passive. Shibatani's account is heavily function-based, and he does not discriminate non-passive constructions from the passive at the formal level. In addition, he treats any constructions with a passive meaning as passive, although the overt marking is not passive. Examples (19) and (20) above are certainly related to the passive, but his approach misses the formal linkage among various types of voice constructions. By using diathesis and quasi-voice constructions, we can capture the linkage better.

In our view, hard-and-fast distinctions among grammatical voice types are hardly ever possible. Instead, we consider that various categories in the voice system, such as the passive or the middle, are prototype phenomena, with some kinds of overlap between them. In order to capture them comprehensively, we use diathesis and quasi-voice constructions.

In Chapters 7 and 8 various cases of passive diathesis and quasi-passive are analysed for English.

5.5.2 *Be*-passive in voice continuum

The conceptual space approach seems to have gained in popularity in the last few decades (see, for example, Anderson 1974, 1982, 1986; Croft 1991; Kemmer 1993; Haspelmath 1997; Kortmann 1997; Shibatani 1998). In this study, I adopt the methodology and represent the English passive in terms of conceptual space. Some previous studies such as Kemmer (1993: 201ff.) involve various **situation types**, i.e. 'sets of situational or semantic/pragmatic contexts that are systematically associated with a particular form of expression' (*ibid.*: 7). Instead of situation types I use gradient axes to represent such semantic/pragmatic contexts and position various different constructions in the conceptual space. The version of conceptual space is 'passive-centric', hence the order of constructions on the left-hand vertical axis in Figure 5.5. The middle voice is aptly named, since its semantic and syntactic characteristics are partially active and partially passive. However, since this study concentrates on the passive, the passive is placed in the middle of the axis.

The benefit of this approach is that it allows us to compare various related constructions, such as passive diathesis or quasi-passive, in the same schema. Also, the same schema can be analysed diachronically by

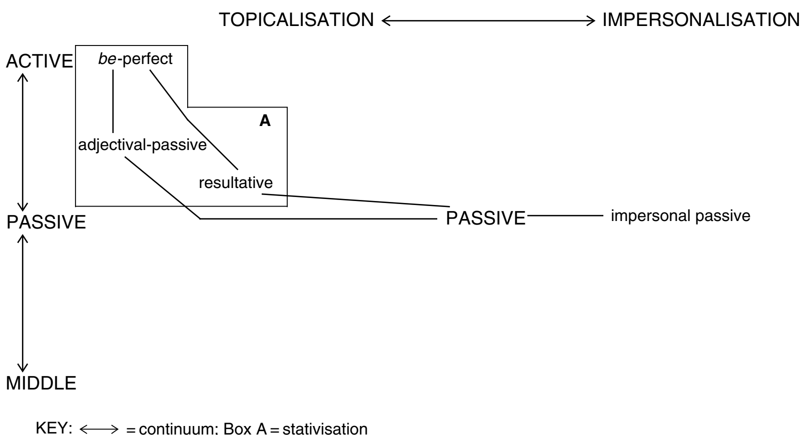

Figure 5.5 Conceptual space for the PDE *be*-passive

marking relevant constructions. The first conceptual space is illustrated in Figure 5.5. Different constructions like adjectival passive, impersonal passive, etc. are what we have seen so far in this section, and they will be expanded as we bring in other constructions in later chapters.

This conceptual space has two axes: the one on the left, the vertical one, is for grammatical voice and as we have already mentioned, the passive is located in the middle due to the nature of this work. The top, horizontal one is the gradience of two main different functions, i.e. topicalisation and impersonalisation. Notice that we have seen that inactivisation is a superordinate function over these two (Section 5.2), but we employ a finer distinction in order to make the functional difference clear. So for example, a construction at the top right-hand corner is construction as an active construction creating a high degree of impersonalisation, or similarly, a construction located at the bottom left-hand corner, is a middle construction expressing a high degree of topicalisation.

Another important feature in our conceptual space is the length of the line. We use two types of line, short and long. The length of the line indicates the formal relatedness of the construction. So when a construction is related to the passive with a shorter line, it must have some distinctive formal and semantic characteristics of a passive, such as the use of auxiliary, undergoer-orientation, etc. Some constructions possess partial passive characteristics, and since our version of conceptual space is passive-centric, the length of the line depends on the definition of the verbal passive, i.e. a construction which has formal characteristics of the passive (the formal and semantic characteristics of the passive would include auxiliary, having the main verb in the past participle, undergoer-orientation, and being dynamic). The conceptual space in our analysis also implies the presence of an outer cause, which does not have to be overtly expressed. So when constructions exhibit some partial similarities, the length of the line is decided according to how many characteristics they possess. Apart from the length of the line, an inner box is also employed to signify extra characteristics which cannot be expressed in the axes. The two axes are concerned with the types of voice (active, middle and passive) and two functions (topicalisation and impersonalisation). When a need emerges to signal overtly a function like stativisation or a grammatical voice like causative, then a box is used to signify constructions which fall into a relevant voice or function.

So far we have seen, both synchronically and diachronically, five distinctive constructions with regard to the English passive: verbal passive, impersonal passive, adjectival passive, resultative and *be*-perfect. So our first version of conceptual space, shown in Figure 5.5, is the basis for describing these five constructions. We start with the constructions in PDE, and other historical differences are discussed afterwards. Consider first Figure 5.5 on page 143, representing the conceptual space of the *be*-passive in PDE.

Notice, first, that we abbreviated verbal passive as simply PASSIVE, since it is what we consider the stereotypical passive. The impersonal passive is connected to the passive with a shorter line, and located to the right of the space, where impersonalisation is more prominent. As for resultative, adjectival passive and *be*-perfect, they are linked with a longer line. In fact, *be*-perfect is not directly linked to the verbal passive, since this construction is more significant historically as the origin of the construction. They are all located to the extreme left, even beyond the scope of topicalisation, and they are contained in box A, which signifies stativisation. This box, due to its positioning, may appear to interfere with topicalisation, but this is simply caused by lack of space in a two-dimensional lay-out: the entities in the box A are not influenced by topicalisation.

This is a synchronic sketch of constructions we have seen so far. We can apply this conceptual space to a diachronic framework. Although there have been some changes, we cannot observe a remarkable change in the *be*-passive. If there is any change at all, it is in the frequency, as shown in Table 2.2. The earlier construction was more stative, and the majority of occurrences became dynamic from ME. This means that the general direction of diachronic change is from left to right of the space. This can be expressed by highlighting relevant constructions. So in the following figures, the constructions highlighted by grey shading are those involved in that period. Figure 5.6 for OE and eME indicates that the *be*-perfect construction was fully included earlier, but from lME onwards (Figure 5.7), the perfective is almost excluded from the passive domain. Such a change is shown in the shift of the domain covered in the grey area slightly towards the bottom left-hand corner.

The lack of radical change in the conceptual space indicates that the *be*-passive has always existed as far as the recorded materials of English are concerned. However, this conceptual space will be altered as we analyse more constructions in subsequent chapters. We can observe more radical changes then.

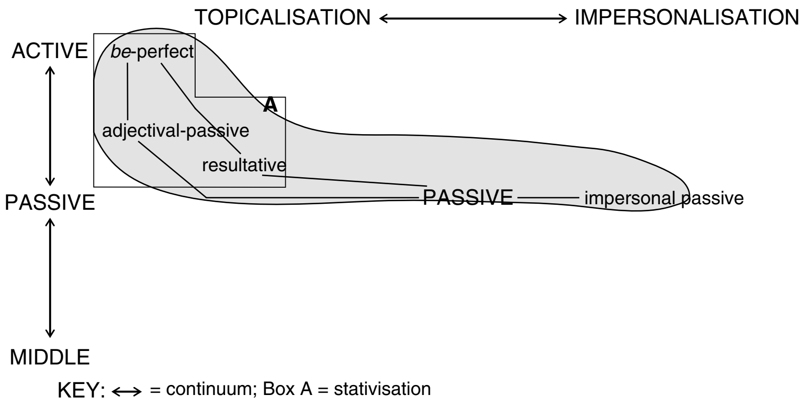

Figure 5.6 Conceptual space for the OE and eME *be*-passive

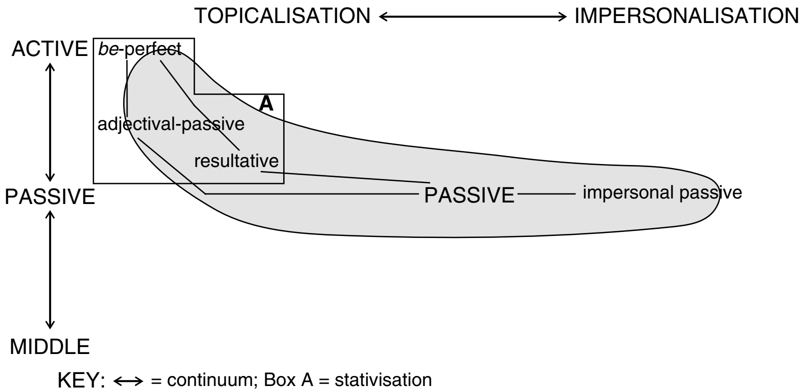

Figure 5.7 Conceptual space for the *be*-passive lME onwards

5.6 Summary

In this chapter, we have seen various changes relating to the functional aspect of the passive. We looked extensively at the importance of topicality in the passive voice. In the passive in PDE, the subject and the topic entity are identical (in the unmarked case), but this was not the case earlier in history. With the establishment of rigid SVO word order, the language assigns topicality specifically to the subject,

i.e. there is a change from topic-prominent to subject-prominent language (Section 5.2). This is considered to have aided the formation of the verbal passive in English.

We have also seen the difference in historical development between the periphrastic and the morphological passive. The periphrastic passive is derived from earlier perfective constructions. Such a developmental path seems to be unique to IE languages, as claimed by Dryer (1982: 55) and Haspelmath (1990: 29). This type of historical development is hardly observed in the morphological passive, and the emergence of that type of construction is often associated with functions of the passive, such as impersonalisation, as we have seen in examples from the Altaic language, Ainu, in (13) to (14). This difference also indicates a difference beyond the construction: it seems that the morphological passive has a higher degree of functional influence in its development than the periphrastic one.

We also established the voice continuum in the English passive, involving the passive-diathesis (same orientation as the passive but performing a different function) and quasi-passive construction (different orientation but performing the same function as the passive). What we have seen so far is primarily concerned with the *be*-passive, but some scholars consider that there is another auxiliary in the PDE passive, *get*. The whole of the following chapter is devoted to the use of the auxiliary *get* in the passive.

6
Get-passive

6.1 Introduction

In the previous four chapters, we looked at one type of passive, with the auxiliary *be*. As already noted, there are two possible auxiliaries in PDE, *be* and *get*. In this chapter, we will analyse various characteristics of the so-called *get*-passive and examine how 'passive' this construction is and how it fits in the voice continuum in English. The *get*-passive has received a lot of attention and has probably provided the most active debate concerning the English passive or related constructions over the past few decades. There are basically two trends in research on the *get*-passive. One trend, which is more traditional, assumes that the construction *get*+ past participle is a type of passive, commonly the dynamic counterpart of the *be*-passive. The other does not consider the construction a type of passive, pointing out some extra semantic characteristics or pragmatic functions which are all absent in the *be*-passive, and instead associates the *get*-passive with other voice forms, such as the middle-reflexive voice. Also, most previous research is synchronic (Hatcher 1949; Lakoff 1971; Barber 1975; Chappell 1980; Haegeman 1985; Vanrespaille 1991; Collins 1996; Downing 1996), although there is some diachronic work (Miller 1985; Givón and Yang 1994; Gronemeyer 1999; Hundt 2001, as well as Jespersen 1909–49; Visser 1963–73; Denison 1993).

6.2 *Get*-passive: dynamic counterpart of *be*-passive?

Superficially, the *get*-passive in PDE looks identical to the *be*-passive except for the choice of auxiliary, hence the name '*get*-passive' for the construction *get* + past participle. Generally speaking, both *be*-passive

and *get*-passive are considered variations of the passive, but various differences between them have been observed. For example, the *get*-passive is documented to be more frequent in colloquial, informal speech than written texts, whereas the *be*-passive is known to be more frequent in written text than colloquial speech (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 161). There are dialectal differences too. Scholars such as Sussex (1982), Hundt (2001) study the frequency of the *get*-passive in various dialects, and Sussex (1982), for example, notes that it is more common in American English than British or Australian English, and considerably less common in British English than Australian English. As for more grammatical characteristics, Huddleston (1988: 78), for example, notes that there are preferences between these two constructions:

i. *be* is preferred in a formal register; *get* is avoided if the active counterpart belongs to the transitive catenative construction.
ii. *get* is preferred when the subject referent is not a purely passive participant, i.e. a speaker tends to take the initiative.
iii. *get* is preferred when responsibility or intention is attributed to the understood subject-referent.

On the other hand, some scholars such as Granger (1983) reject the view that the *get*- passive is always an alternative for the *be*-passive, claiming that the *get*-passive sometimes lacks an active counterpart. Examples like *get started*, *get lost*, *get involved*, etc. are relevant here, since no actor can be implied, e.g. **He must have got lost by his friends* is ungrammatical. This makes their credibility as a type of passive construction dubious. See Stein (1979), Siewierska (1984: 136) for a similar argument.

What differentiates the *be*-passive and the *get*-passive is most commonly considered to lie in aspectual difference: the *get*-passive is a dynamic counterpart of the *be*-passive. This is similar to the aspectual distinction made between *beon*/*wesan* 'be' and *weorðan* 'become' in OE and ME, as we saw in Section 2.3.1, and scholars like Traugott (1992: 200) claim that '*weorðan* ['become'] was eventually replaced by the *get*-passive'. This claim has to be questioned, due to the chronological gap: see Section 6.2.1.1 below. It is true that the *get*-passive mainly has dynamic aspect,[1] but the *be*-passive can be dynamic too, and as we have seen in Section 2.3.1, the *be*-passive in PDE is predominantly dynamic (about 85% of all occurrences, see Table 2.2). Why are two different auxiliaries used in the same construction, the verbal passive, for the

same function of expressing dynamic aspect? A diachronic perspective is helpful here.

The first attested example of the so-called *get*-passive dates back to 1652 (s.v. *OED get* v. 34b), as shown in (1) below. Gronemeyer (1999: 29, following Denison 1998: 320 n.59) suggests that example (2) should, rather, be considered as the first example. The next example (3) is from 1731 (Jespersen 1909–49: IV 108–9). The *get*-passive construction seems to occur rarely in the earlier period, and the earlier examples do not seem to demonstrate the grammaticalisation of *get* as an auxiliary. In fact, these examples are rather isolated occurrences and may not have had a direct impact on the development of this construction as passive. Grammaticalisation is claimed to have occurred much later: Strang (1970: 151) claims that it took place in the late 18th century and Denison (1993: 440) suggests that it was in the 19th or 20th century. Indeed, examples cited in *OED* (s.v. *get* v. 34b), Jespersen (1909–49: IV 108–9) and Visser (1963–73: §1893) clearly show that the frequency increases after the middle/ late 1800s. Denison (1993: 433) also points out that the earlier examples often involve idiomatic phrases, such as *get rid of*, and the past participle may have more adjectival characteristics than verbal.

(1) *A certain Spanish pretending Alchymist . . .* ***got acquainted*** *with foure rich Spanish merchants*. (1652 Gaule, *Magastrom*. 361)

(2) *I am resolv'd to* ***get*** *introduced to Mrs Annabella*. (1693 Powell, *A very good wife*, II.i. p.10)

(3) *so you may not only save your life, but* ***get*** *rewarded for your roguery*. (1731 Fielding, *Letter Writers* II.ix.20)

Thus, the emergence of the *get*-passive happened much later than the ME increase in dynamic reading in the *be*-passive. Both synchronically and diachronically, the emergence of the *get*-passive seems redundant, if this construction is purely for the purpose of being the dynamic counterpart of the *be*-passive. This is only one of many problems associated with the emergence of the *get*-passive. As we will see in Section 6.3, there are two possible sources of the *get*-passive, inchoative *get* + adjective (see Section 6.3.1) and reflexive causative '*get oneself* past participle' (Section 6.3.2). However, before we embark on an analysis of the origins, there are various other characteristics to note which distinguish the *get*-passive from the *be*-passive, both diachronically and synchronically.

6.2.1 Problems

Linguists such as Haegeman (1985), Downing (1996) and Toyota (2007) question how 'passive' the *get*-passive is. For example, *get* in the environment *get* + past participle does not satisfy various grammatical characteristics of auxiliaries, as argued by Haegeman (1985: 54–6) and Downing (1996: 183).[2] Consider the properties listed in (4). *Get* cannot satisfy any of them, whereas another choice of auxiliary, *be*, applies to all. In addition, the use of existential *there*, as in (4,vii), is related to the presentative function of *be*, which may not be directly related to the auxiliary in the prototypical passive, since the passive is predominantly used for the function of the undergoer topicalisation (see, for example, Givón 1979, 1983, as well as Section 4.2).

(4)
i. Negation, i.e. *He was not caught*, but **He got not caught.*
ii. Interrogative, i.e. *Was he caught?*, but **Got he caught?*
iii. Stranding by deletion of the verb, i.e. *He was caught and so was his friend*, but **He got caught, and so got his friend.*
iv. Emphasis, i.e. *Do you think he got caught? - Yes,* **he GOT caught.*
v. Position of adverbs, i.e. *He was never caught*, but **He got never caught.*
vi. Position of a quantifier, i.e. *The boys were all caught*, but **The boys got all caught.*
vii. Existential *there*, i.e. *There was a plane hijacked*, but **There got a plane hijacked.*

It seems that *get* does not possess any auxiliary characteristics at all. In this respect, the *get*-passive should be treated as a construction 'verb + past participle as complement', like *go* + past participle or *fall* + past participle. However, the *get*-passive always involves some outer cause, and the subject entity is always a recipient of this cause, i.e. this construction is undergoer-oriented. In what follows, we will examine further evidence which casts doubt on the status of the *get*-passive as a type of passive.

6.2.1.1 Lack of dynamic auxiliary after ME/possibility of other inchoative verbs

It is commonly claimed that there have been three different auxiliaries for the English passive, i.e. *bēon/wesan* 'be', *weorðan* 'become' (Section 3.2 above), and *get*. The chronology of these auxiliaries is summarised in Figure 6.1.

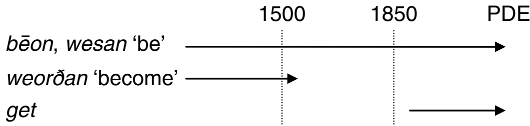

Figure 6.1 Passive auxiliaries in English

Apart from these three, there are some other verbs, discussed below, which did not gain popularity as passive auxiliaries. These verbs can be categorised into two groups: those which create a more stative aspect lexically, often known as **quasi-copula** (see note 1 to this chapter) and those which mainly have dynamic aspect,[3] which we collectively call **inchoative verbs**. The difference between these verbs and *be*, apart from syntactic behaviours such as the NICE properties (Section 3.2), is that the auxiliary *be* in the passive can denote both a stative and dynamic readings from early on.

Visser (1963–73: §1893) lists eight inchoative verbs in the environment 'verb + past participle'. Figure 6.2 summarises the chronology of appearance of the inchoative verbs in this construction.[4] Speakers of PDE may find some verbs such as *fall* and *wax* unacceptable in this construction. This is because these verbs ceased to appear in this construction by ME or early lModE. Examples are shown in (5) and (6).

(5) *This Master Benedicke **fell** inamoured of this maiden.* (1578 Roper, *Life of More* (1913) 47)

(6) *such foolish brethren . . . as . . . would **waxe** offended with all.* (c1534 St. Thomas More, *Wks.* (1557) 1184 A11)

As we have seen, there is another verb present up until ME that belongs to this type: *weorðan* 'become'. Generally speaking, in various grammar books *be* throughout the history of the language (*beon*, *wesan* 'be' in OE

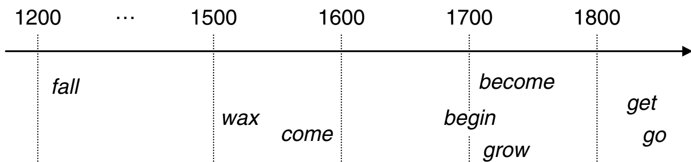

Figure 6.2 Chronological order of appearance: inchoative verbs

and ME), *weorðan* 'become' in OE and ME and *get* in PDE (also marginally in lModE) are considered within the category of passive auxiliary, but not other verbs.[5] Typologically, inchoative verbs like *become*, *fall*, *come* and *go* can fully function as the passive auxiliary. In general, many languages have several choices for the auxiliary and each choice is based on various different factors and used for distinct purposes.

In Italian, motion verbs are particularly used for epistemic modality, especially obligation (cf. Van Molle-Marechal 1974; Roccetti 1982; see also Sections 7.2 to 7.4 for modality-related passive diathesis). Example (7a) is an instance involving the motion verb *andare* 'go', which expresses obligation. The same modality can be expressed with the modal auxiliary *dovere* 'must, have to' + 'be' -passive, as shown in (7b).

(7) Italian

a.

Questo	*laboro*	***va***	*finito*	*per*	*domani*	*(da te)*
this	work	goes	finished	by	tomorrow	by you

'This work must be finished by tomorrow (by you).'

b.

Questo	*laboro*	***deve***	***essere***	*finito*	*per*	*domani*	*(da te)*
this	work	must	be	finished	by	tomorrow	by you

'This work must be finished by tomorrow (by you).'

The Bengali 'fall' -passive only accepts verbs in the past participle expressing sudden or violent action, such as *mār-* 'kill', *ghir-* 'surround' or *dhar-* 'seize, arrest'. This type of restriction does not happen when *ha-* 'be, become' is used as an auxiliary, although yet another choice, *ya-* 'go', has almost the same restriction as *par-* 'fall':

(8) Bengali (Anderson 1962: 24)

Se	*mār-ā*	*par-ila*
he	kill-PST.PART	**fall**-PST

'He was (suddenly) killed.'

The Maltese periphrastic passive can have five auxiliaries: *kien* 'it or he was'; *ikun* 'it or he will be'; *safa'* 'he was reduced to the state or condition of'; *gie* 'it or he came'; and *jigi* 'it or he will come'. Auxiliaries *gie* 'it or he came', *jigi* 'it or he will come' are interchangeable with *kien* 'it or he was', *ikun* 'it or he will be', respectively, but the use of motion verbs is considered colloquial and is avoided in literary writing:

(9) Maltese (Borg and Azzopardi-Alexander 1997: 214)

It-tabib	*gie*	*afdat*	*bil-każ*
the-doctor	**come**.3.SG.PST	trusted.M.SG	with-the.case

'The doctor was entrusted with the case.

The Polish 'become' -passive as in (10) is only compatible with perfective verbs, and stresses the result of the action. Its 'be' counterpart can appear with both perfective (implying an additional remoteness or disjointness in time, which is not found in the 'become' counterpart) and imperfective verbs (creating the habitual or continuous nature):

(10) Polish (Siewierska 1984: 129)

Pokój	*został*	*pomalowany*	*w*	*zeszłym*	*roku*
room	**become**	paint. PST.PART.PFV	in	last	year

'The room was painted last year.'

We can observe a different, but distinctive purpose for using different auxiliaries in the above examples, but there are some cases where an alternative choice does not make much difference to the meaning or function. For example, the periphrastic passive in Scottish Gaelic is formed with the auxiliary *tha* 'be' and the main verb in past participle form as in (11). However, when the motion verb *rach* 'go' is used as in (12), the main verb is in verbal noun form, not past participle, although there is not much difference in meaning. However, there are some languages which use only inchoative verbs as the possible passive auxiliary. One such case is Urdu, whose passive is a periphrastic one, using *jānā* 'go' as the only choice for the auxiliary, as exemplified in (13).

(11) Scottish Gaelic (MacAulay 1992: 177–8)

Tha	*Iain*	*leònte*	*aca*
is	Iain	wound.PST.PART	at-them

'Iain has been wounded by them.'

(12)

Chaidh	*am*	*bainne*	*òl*	*leis*	*na*	*cait*
go.PST	the	milk	drink.VN	with.him	the.PL	cats

'The milk was drunk by the cats.'

(13) Urdu (Willatt 1942: 55)

Wuh	*sipāhi*	*ke hāth*	*talwār*	*se*	*māra*	*gaya*
he	soldier	by	sword	with	killed.M.SG	**go**.3.SG.PST

'He was killed by the soldier with a sword.'

In spite of the typological data shown above, inchoative verbs have not entered the category of passive auxiliary in English. We have to admit that *wax* and *begin* as auxiliary are rather uncommon cases based on the typological distinction, but the rest are legitimate candidates for auxiliaryhood. Some instances in English involving inchoative verbs as the auxiliary are exemplified below. For further examples, see Visser (1963–73: § 1893). The problem is that the English auxiliary for the passive does not show a higher degree of grammaticalisation (see NICE properties as introduced in Section 3.2), whatever verb is considered except *be*. Nevertheless, there is a gap of about three centuries between the disappearance of *weorðan* 'become' and the appearance of *get* as a passive auxiliary.

(14)

þa	***com***	*Gallicanus*	*eac*	*to*	*gode*	*geborgen*
then	came	Gallicanus	also	to	God	saved

'Then Gallicanus also came to be saved by God.' (Ælfric, *Saints' Lives* (Skeat) 7, 336)

(15) *The gazer* ***grows*** *enamoured.* (1735–6 James Thomson, *Liberty* IV, 181)

(16) *It means playing ducks and drakes with things all round and letting the whole business****go*** *thoroughly rotten.* (1893 *Punch* 11 March 109)

Historically, except for *fall*, these verbs started to appear in this type of construction after the 16th to 17th centuries, and *weorðan* 'become' died out from the language after ME. When *weorðan* 'become' was still functional, there was an aspectual distinction in the passive, i.e. *bēon*, *wesan* 'be' could be both stative and dynamic, while *weorðan* 'become' was only dynamic. Are the increase of inchoative verbs and the disappearance of *weorðan* 'become' historically related or just a coincidence? If *weorðan* 'become' died out, one may question why its functional equivalent *become* did not take over its role. It can be argued that there was a need for an aspectual distinction in the '*be* + past participle' construction to judge from the appearance of verbs in a similar construction: all these typologically possible candidates for auxiliary such as *become*,

come, *fall*, etc. cannot start to appear in the same construction by accident. However, there does not seem to be any satisfactory explanation as to why only *get* and not the other inchoative verbs enter the category of auxiliary. Some of the inchoative verbs other than *get* could possibly have taken the place of *weorðan* 'become' during the gap of about three centuries between the disappearance of *weorðan* and the appearance of *get*. However, although the general frequency increased, the inchoative verbs never materialised as passive auxiliaries.

6.2.1.2 Subject responsibility: control and generic characteristics

The *get*-passive is often distinguished from the *be*-passive on the grounds of so-called **subject responsibility**. This means that the referent of the subject of a *get*-passive is often responsible for the event. Compare the pair of sentences in (17), for example. In both cases, an intentional or volitional action can be involved, but the difference lies in whose intention/volition it is. In (17a), it is the NP in the oblique phrase *the riot police* that could have acted intentionally, whereas it is the subject of the clause, *he*, in (17b). This becomes obvious when adverbials expressing intention are added, as in (18). In (18a), the possible reading is that the riot police deliberately opened fire at him, while in (18b), he acted deliberately to be shot by the riot police. Givón (1990: 621–3) provides another instance, where the passive appears in a phrase embedded under a command. The command in *He told her to clean the room* enforces the volitional action on the object *her*, the actor of the action of cleaning. Thus, when a *be*-passive is used in the embedded verb phrase in a sentence with the meaning of command, it ends up ungrammatical, while the *get*-passive can appear in such circumstances. Consider the examples in (19).

(17) a. *He was shot by the riot police.*
  b. *He got shot by the riot police.*

(18) a. *He was shot by the riot police deliberately/was deliberately shot by the riot police.*
  b. *He deliberately got shot by the riot police.*

(19) a. **He told her to be fired.*
  b. *He told her to get fired.*

What we have so far called subject responsibility can be divided into two much finer characteristics. One is **subject control** and the other, **generic characteristics of subject**. In instances like (17), (18) and (19),

the subject of the *get*-passive is to some extent in control of the action, as has been documented in various works (see, for example, Lakoff 1971; Vanrespaille 1991; Collins 1996; Downing 1996). This seems to be natural, since a high degree of intention or volition can be detected from the grammatical subject in *get*-passive. As argued in a number of studies such as Klaiman (1988, 1991), the common property of passive subjects is that they are not in control. An entity which is in control tends to be the active subject. Thus, the subject in the *get*-passive seems to contradict the common characteristics of the passive subject. Subject control functions merely as one of the characteristics which help us to distinguish one construction from others, but how much the subject is in control differs, since, as we will see below, there is another factor, i.e. subject generic characteristics, involved in the *get*-passive. This creates a gradience in the construction, which seems to correspond to the agentivity gradience proposed by Vanrespaille (1991: 107), and shown in Figure 6.3. Her work is unique in that the subject is marked on a gradient of agentivity, and an intermediate stage is assumed. This range is described as from 'a mere hint of responsibility with a human subject over reflexive activity to causation on the part of the subject' (1991: 104).

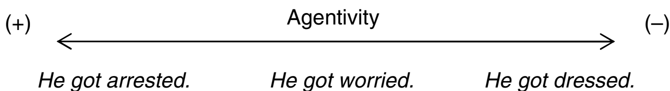

Figure 6.3 Gradience based on agentivity

In addition, the meaning of the *get*-passive can be slightly wider than intentionality/volitionality or control. It sometimes indicates that the event in the *get*-passive was made possible because of the nature of the subject. For example, consider (20): the event of promotion was made possible because of something that John possesses or does, such as his hard work, intelligence, connections to managers in the company, etc. This is known as the subject' s generic characteristics:

(20) *John got promoted last week.*

As hinted in Figure 6.3, there seem to be a couple of semantically distinctive constructions in the *get*-passive. We can demonstrate this by simply using semantic characteristics discussed so far in this section.

Consider the set of examples in (21). Among them, (21a) is probably the only example with subject control, while generic characteristics seem to be detectable in every example, most obviously in (21b). The analysis is summarised in Table 6.1.

(21) a. *He got shot by the riot police.*
b. *He got promoted last week.*
c. *He got accused of the pedestrian's death.*
d. *He got worried about the result.*

Table 6.1 Various types of subject in *get*-passive

	Subject control	**Generic characteristics**
(21a)	++	+
(21b)	–	++
(21c)	–	±
(21d)	±	±

Notes: ++ = obviously present; + = present; ± = 'may be present'; – = 'absent'

The difference in the four examples in (21) is complex, since every instance possesses slightly different characteristics, as shown in Table 6.1. What is noticeable, first of all, is that every instance carries a certain degree of the subject' s generic characteristics, although it is more obviously detectable in (21b) than in (21a,c and d). Subject control is absent in (21b) and (21c). The distinction among the examples is subtle: (21a) is the only example clearly distinguishable in terms of both control and generic characteristics. (21b) may also be distinguishable due to the high degree of generic characteristics. However, the distinction between (21c) and (21d) is subtle, since the only difference is a 'possible' subject control, but when they are compared with (21a) and (21b), the distinction is more easily made. Nevertheless, there is no clear distinction possible concerning the characteristics of the subject in *get*-passive. Table 6.1 indicates that there are various degrees of possibility of presence. Figure 6.3, indicating the agentivity also suggests that the characteristics of the *get*-passive are best considered as a gradient. We will come back to the gradience within *get*-passive later in Section 7.5.1.

6.2.1.3 *Lack of actor phrase*

Impersonalisation is one of the functions the passive can perform (cf. Section 4.2.2), and this perhaps is best represented in the absence of

the actor phrase in the passive. As already stated in Section 2.2, roughly 20–30 % of PDE *be*-passive clauses overtly express an actor phrase. However, as will be revealed, there is a significant difference between the *be*-passive and the *get*-passive in terms of the presence of the actor phrase. In conjunction with subject animacy, which is analysed in the following Section, this fact will establish a crucial element in our argument.

Considering the tendencies in the *be*-passive, one might expect moderately low occurrence of the actor phrase in the *get*-passive, if this is passive at all. The results from our data are shown in Table 6.2. The result is striking: the actor is hardly *ever* overtly expressed. The overall occurrence is less than 2 %. Also, there is no difference between written and spoken data in PDE. It seems fairly safe to conclude that in the *get*-passive an actor phrase is hardly ever expressed. Those few instances are shown in (22) to (25).

(22) lModE

the only attention which it subsequently requires is to renew the oil of vitriol when it gets weakened ***by absorption of aqueous vapour***. (ARCHER 1875 CROO.S6 1:1)

(23) PDE

'Well, we're not going to bother to train anybody in our industry because they' ll promptly get snapped up ***by another industry****,' the Duke added.* (LOB A12 107–108)

(24) *she gets flatly contradicted* ***by Bernard*** *every time she opens her mouth* (LL 1 3 7212310 1 2 A 11 – 1 3 7212310 1 1 A 11)

(25) *I was getting quite impressed* ***by this*** [orderliness and uniformity in new paintings of flats] (LL 4 4 12613200 1 1 D 11)

Table 6.2 Presence/absence of actor phrase in *get*-passive

		Present	**Absent**	**Total**
lModE		1 (1.6%)	61 (98.4%)	62 (100%)
PDE	written	1 (1.0%)	100 (99.0%)	101 (100%)
	spoken	2 (1.9%)	106 (98.1%)	108 (100%)
	total	3 (1.4%)	206 (98.6%)	209 (100%)

In terms of volitionality, (23) and (24) are the only instances with an agent, while (22) and (25) are instances of a non-volitional outer cause. Traditionally, a finer distinction based on semantic role is used to identify entities in the prepositional phrase. According to this distinction, there are only two instances of 'agent' -phrase in our data (PDE), which make up only 1 % of all the occurrences. This makes a much sharper contrast with the *be*-passive, i.e. 20–30 % (*be*-passive) against 1 % (*get*-passive). The result shown in this section should be considered as a significant difference between the *be*- and *get*-passives.

6.2.1.4 Animacy of subject and subjective viewpoint

Animacy plays a central role in grammatical constructions in some languages, and the distinction between animate and inanimate entities or the distinction of human entities among first, second and third person can be crucial: see how the inverse voice is formed in Chapter 4, note 4. Apart from this, consider the case of Fox (Algonquian). This language has to express at least one animate referent in order to make the verb formally transitive. So for example, transitive verbs that subcategorise for an inanimate object must have an animate subject. When this type of verb does not have an animate subject, the transitive verb stem has to undergo a derivational process (by adding the suffix *-amo:mikat-*) to form an intransitive verb stem. Consider one such example in (26):

(26) Fox (Algonquian, Anderson 1997: 237)
kehke:net-am(-)o:mikatwi
know.TR-INTR-INAN.independent IND
'It knows it.'

Thus, the absence of animate entities in both subject and object slots forces a transitive verb to be intransitive. This example shows that animacy can control verbal transitivity. As for English, such an animacy distinction is not crucial in grammatical organisation, but as we have seen in Section 4.2.1, there seems to be a general tendency in the same direction, in that it is more common to have a human subject than an inanimate one due to the ego/anthropocentric nature of discourse (see Givón 1979: 152; Saeed 1997: 161; Anderson 1997: 227–8). It is true that some syntactic devices such as cleft, pseudo-cleft, as well as the passive, are used to alter this anthropocentric nature of discourse, without involving the highly complex derivational processes observable cross-linguistically. The *be*-passive in English in this sense does not comply with the human-oriented view on the event (see Section 4.2.1). But

how about the *get*-passive? If it is a prototypical passive, it should show similar results to the *be*-passive, due to such semantic and pragmatic factors as topicality change. Our data in Table 6.3 clearly indicate that the dominant animacy of the subject in the *get*-passive is human. However, a slight diachronic change can be observed: inanimate subjects increase slightly in PDE over lModE (by about 6 percentage points) and likewise, human subjects decrease by about 7 percentage points. The pattern of occurrence in the *get*-passive indicates that by using this construction an event is viewed from the perspective of a human entity. This is what is supposed to be a common pattern across languages, i.e. in sentences in general. However, the passive is often used to alter this common viewpoint and to view an event from a non-human entity (Givón 1979: 152; Saeed 1997: 161). Table 6.4, a modified version of Table 5.1 for convenience, indicates that inanimate subject entities are more common in the *be*-passive after ME. The pattern of animacy in OE is that the human is more common than the inanimate, but this pattern changed during ME and the ratio of entities has continued to be more or less the same since, although the gap in percentage occurrence between the human and inanimate entities is growing.

Comparison of these two tables reveals that the ratio in the *get*-passive is similar to the situation of the *be*-passive in OE. However, we can observe a slight change in *get*-passive, the direction of change heading towards the ratio in the *be*-passive in PDE, i.e. the inanimate subject is

Table 6.3 Animacy of the subject entity in the *get*-passive

		Human	**Non-human animate**	**Inanimate**	**Total**
lModE		57 (91.9%)	0 (0%)	5 (8.1%)	62 (100%)
PDE	written	81 (80.2%)	1 (1.0%)	19 (18.8%)	101 (100%)
	spoken	96 (88.9%)	1 (0.9%)	11 (10.2%)	108 (100%)
	total	177 (84.7%)	2 (1.0%)	30 (14.3%)	209 (100%)

Table 6.4 Animacy of the subject entity in the *be*-passive

	Human	**Non-human animate**	**Inanimate**	**Total**
OE	729 (63.1%)	0 (0%)	426 (36.9%)	1155 (100%)
ME	629 (41.1%)	3 (0.2%)	897 (58.7%)	1529 (100%)
eModE	1289 (37.7%)	17 (0.5%)	2112 (61.8%)	3418 (100%)
lModE	2547 (27.7%)	12 (0.1%)	6629 (72.2%)	9188 (100%)
PDE	2511 (23.1%)	16 (0.1%)	8345 (76.8%)	10872 (100%)

gaining in frequency. The change observable in the *get*-passive is small, and the idea that animacy has started to shift from human to inanimate is mere speculation. Whether this change happens in the future or not, the animacy pattern in the *get*-passive, as far as we can see, is clearly different from that in *be*-passive at the synchronic level. Historically, there was a period when the *be*-passive exhibited a similar pattern to the modern *get*-passive, but only in OE: as the passive evolved, the subject has become predominantly inanimate.

Another commonly noted peculiarity of the *get*-passive is **subjective viewpoint**. The term 'subjective viewpoint' covers several different types: for example, Lakoff (1971) interprets it as the speaker's attitude towards the event, especially in the circumstance that a speaker is actually involved in or affected by the event, while for Stein (1979: 58), as well as Hatcher (1949) and Chappell (1980), Vanrespaille (1991: 97–9) and Downing (1996: 200–2), it means the speaker's opinion on the event without his/her direct involvement. We adopt the latter characterisation: the speaker's direct involvement is not always necessary, since the *get*-passive can express an event concerning the third person, as we will see in Table 6.5. However, the *get*-passive is capable of expressing meanings such as sentiment, sympathy, etc., of which the *be*-passive is not capable. These extra meanings may be taken for direct involvement, since the speaker needs to associate himself/herself with the participants in the event. Also, direct involvement may be better considered in terms of alienability, which will be analysed in relation to adversative meaning in Section 6.2.1.5.

The animacy of the grammatical subject seems to hold little importance as far as creating the speaker/writer's opinion on the event is concerned, since one can comment easily on inanimate objects. However, it is much easier for a speaker/writer to associate himself/herself with more animate, preferably human entities. What can be observed in the *get*-passive is a high frequency of human subjects, as shown in Table 6.5. This explains why the *get*-passive accommodates subjective viewpoint better than the *be*-passive, which tends to force the

Table 6.5 Hierarchy among human entities in the subject slot in *get*-passive

		1st Person	**2nd Person**	**3rd Person**	**Total**
lModE		13 (22.8%)	11 (19.3%)	33 (57.9%)	57 (100%)
PDE	written	26 (32.1%)	11 (13.6%)	44 (54.3%)	81 (100%)
	spoken	40 (41.7%)	17 (17.7%)	39 (40.6%)	96 (100%)
	total	66 (37.3%)	28 (15.8%)	83 (46.9%)	177 (100%)

speaker/writer to view the clause from the viewpoint of third person or inanimate entities (cf. Table 6.4). What is peculiar in the result is that the distribution of first person and third person is more or less equal regardless of period, although the third person is slightly more frequent. This becomes more obvious when compared with the result for the *be*-passive, as shown in Table 6.6, where the third person is the most frequent entity, at more than 75 %. Also in comparison with the *be*-passive, the *get*-passive has a higher frequency of first and second person. The second person especially differs significantly, since its occurrence in the *be*-passive is extremely rare. The *get*-passive also shows a certain difference in terms of register. The spoken data has a higher frequency of first person and a lower frequency of third person in comparison with the written data. Also, the first person seems to be gaining in frequency in spoken data in PDE.

The interlocutors of discourse, i.e. first and second person, in fact, occupy nearly half of all occurrences of the subject in *get*-passive. The *be*-passive exhibits third person as the most frequently occurring entity, as shown in Table 6.6, but the ratio is different, i.e. third person is the absolutely dominant entity (more than 75 %) in *be*-passive, while its dominance in *get*-passive is not as obvious as in *be*-passive (about 50 %). This also shows a significant difference between *be*-passive and *get*-passive. As far as person distinction is concerned, the third person has been common in the *be*-passive (see Table 6.6), and the ratio of second person has also decreased dramatically. This means that after ME the interlocutors tend to be excluded from the passive subject in the *be*-passive. The personal subject in *get*-passive is different: third person is as popular as first person, and the second person can still appear as a grammatical subject, although this is the least common. Its use is not, however, as infrequent as in the *be*-passive. Our result with regard to person distinction in the subject indicates that there is a certain degree of subjective viewpoint in the *get*-passive, which is absent in the *be*-passive.

Table 6.6 Hierarchy among human entities in the subject slot in *be*-passive

	1st Person	**2nd Person**	**3rd Person**	**Total**
OE	141 (19.4%)	146 (20.0%)	442 (60.6%)	729 (100%)
ME	85 (13.5%)	81 (12.9%)	463 (73.6%)	629 (100%)
eModE	250 (19.4%)	54 (4.2%)	985 (76.4%)	1289 (100%)
lModE	764 (30.0%)	64 (2.5%)	1719 (67.5%)	2547 (100%)
PDE	510 (20.3%)	55 (2.2%)	1946 (77.5%)	2511 (100%)

6.2.1.5 Adversative/benefactive reading

Adversative reading and passive are sometimes realised in the same construction. Probably one of the most commonly cited examples is from Japanese, as exemplified in (27) below. Japanese has a passive morpheme *-(r)are*, which is multifunctional and can create five different readings: spontaneous reading, potential reading, honorific reading, verbal passive and adversative passive (see Toyota 1998, as well as (36) below, example (18) in Chapter 7 and example (13) in Chapter 8). This morpheme generally forces a reduction of valency, except for the honorific reading and adversative passive. The valency stays the same in the honorific reading, but it increases in the adversative passive, as shown in (27c), where the insertion of the sufferer, *watashi* 'I', can be observed. Japanese is a pro-drop language, and this extra entity may not always be present, but it is always implied.

(27) Japanese

a. *Neko-ga* *kabin-wo* *kowashi-ta*
cat-TOP vase-ACC break-PST
'The cat broke the vase.' (active)

b. *Kabin-ga* *neko-ni* *kowas-are-ta*
vase-TOP cat-DAT break-PASS-PST
'The vase was broken by the cat.' (verbal passive)

c. *(Watashi-wa)* *neko-ni* *kabin-wo* *kowas-are-ta*
I-FOC cat-DAT vase-ACC break-PASS-PST
'I was adversely affected by cat's breaking the vase.' (adversative)

The adversative passive is, however, not a speciality of Japanese. It can be found in other languages, too, although they are rather restricted both geographically, i.e. east and south east Asia, and genetically, i.e. Altaic (Even, Japanese, Korean, etc.), Sino-Tibetan (Burmese, Chinese, Thai, etc.), Austric (Indonesian, Javanese, Vietnamese, etc.). However, there are some exceptions, such as Yup'ik (Eskimo-Aleut), which is spoken on the west coast of Alaska.

There are two distinct syntactic constructions related to the adversative passive, periphrastic and morphological. The difference in construction among these languages are shown in (28). The adversative passive is achieved by these constructions, but there is a difference between them related to valency: the periphrastic construction, like other 'normal' passives, has a valency-decreasing operation, the morphological passive, a valency-increasing operation. We have already seen

one example of the morphological passive in (27c), and a periphrastic passive is exemplified from Vietnamese. Notice that (30) is an instance of the benefactive passive.

(28) Periphrastic : Burmese, Cambodian, Chinese, Lao, Palaung, Thai, Vietnamese
Morphological : Even, Evenki, Indonesian, Japanese, Javanese, Korean, Yup'ik

(29) Vietnamese (Keenan 1985:260–1)

Quang	***bi***	*(bao)*	*ghet*
Quang	suffer	(Bao)	detest

'Quang is detested (by Bao).' (adversative)

(30)

Quang	***duoc***	*bao*	*thuong*
Quang	enjoy	Bao	love

'Quang is loved by Bao.' (benefactive)

Languages of the periphrastic type use **submissive verbs** or so-called **in-bound transitive verbs** (Chen 1994), sometimes known as **verbs of experience** (Keenan 1985: 257–61) for the auxiliary. What is characteristic of this type of verb is that the action is directed towards the subject, which automatically makes the subject a recipient, as in *I fear him*, where the subject is the recipient of fear, as opposed to **out-bound transitive verbs**, as in *I beat him*, where the direct object is the recipient of the action.[6]

The valency-increasing operation in the morphological passive sometimes causes ambiguity in distinguishing constructions, especially between the adversative passive and the causative (see Comrie 1976b: 271; Babby 1981, 1993; Shibatani 1976, 1977). In the following example (31) from Korean, the verbal suffix *-hi* can be considered as either a passive or causative morpheme:

(31) Korean (Kim 1994: 333–4)

John-un	*Mary-eykey*	*son-ul*	*cap-hi-ess-ta*
John-TOP	Mary-DAT	hand-ACC	hold-PASS/CAUS-PST-DEC

'John had his hand grabbed by Mary.' (adversative passive)
'John made Mary grab his hand.' (causative)

Kim (1994: 332–6) claims that there is an unclear distinction between the passive morpheme and the causative one in a restricted set of verbs

in Korean, as exemplified in (31) above. This type of ambiguity indicates the historical link between these two constructions. Indonesian expresses such a link more explicitly. Indonesian has several types of passive, with prefix *di-* or with circumfix *ke- . . . -an*. The former is used for the verbal passive, as in (32), the latter normally for the adversative passive, as in (33).

(32) Indonesian verbal passive (Sneddon 1996: 247–48)

Saya	*di-jemput*	*oleh*	*dia*
I	PASS-meet	by	him

‘I was met by him.’

(33) Indonesian adversative passive (Kana 1986: 184)

Orang	*itu*	*ke-curi-an*	*sepeda*
person	that	AD-steal	bicycle

‘The bicycle was stolen to the detriment of that person.’

In the adversative passive, the latter part of the affix *-an* can be considered to have been derived from a causative marker *-kan* which originally functioned as a directional marker meaning ‘to’ or ‘towards’ (cf. *akan* ‘towards, to’). There is also an intermediate construction, where depending on the choice of main verbs, the causative can express the subject’s emotion, creating a reading similar to the passive, as exemplified in (34). The suffix *-kan* is polysemous and often expresses a sense of directionality, as well as causative. The form with *-kan* often takes actor (volitional agent to be more precise), rather than undergoer. Consider *sewa* ‘rent from’ vs. *sewakan* ‘rent out to’ or *pinjam* ‘borrow’ vs. *pinjamkan* ‘lend’ (Hopper and Thompson 1980: 261). Directionality seems to be a crucial factor in the Indonesian causative, since the preposition meaning ‘to’, *kepada* or *pada*, is used to indicate the causer, as in (35) (Sneddon 1996: 74). This directionality is carried over to the adversative passive, in the sense that this directionality indicates the sufferer. Thus, the Indonesian adversative passive may well be historically related to the causative.

Causative with interpretation of emotion (Sneddon 1996: 73)

(34)

kami	*men-gkhawatir-kan*	*munculnya*	*monopoli*	*baru*
we	TR-worry.about-CAUS	appearance	monopoly	new

‘We are worried about the appearance of new monopolies.’

(35) *Saya meminjam-kan buku saya kepada Ali*
I borrow-CAUS book I to Ali
'I lent my book to Ali.' (lit. I caused Ali to borrow a book/Ali caused me to lend him a book')

There is a common characteristic among both periphrastic and morphological adversative passives: the presence of alienable possession can be an indicator of adversative reading. As shown in Shibatani (1994: 461–5), when inalienable possession is present, the whole clause cannot produce an adversative passive, and the reading is restricted to the basic verbal passive. One such a pair of examples taken from Japanese are shown in (36). The presence of the inalienable noun *atama* 'head' in (36a) prevents the passive clause from creating an adversative reading, while in (36b), the adversative reading is the only possible one, since the NP *musko* 'son' is not an inalienable noun.

(36) Japanese

a. *Kare-wa shiranaihito-ni atama-wo nagur-are-ta*
he-FOC stranger-by head-ACC hit-PASS-PST
'He was hit on the head by a stranger.' (verbal passive)
'*He was adversely affected by stranger's hitting him on the head.' (adversative passive)

b. *Kare-wa shiranaihito-ni musko-wo nagur-are-ta*
he-FOC stranger-by son-ACC hit-PASS-PST
'He was adversely affected by a stranger's hitting his son.' (adversative passive)

This lengthy description of adversative passive reveals that the *be* and *get* passives provide an adversative reading in different ways, although the absence of inalienable possession can be a sign of adversative reading in both types of construction. The English passive (i.e. *be*-passive) is not known to signal the overtly marked adversative passive we have seen above. However, the possibility of an adversative reading in the *get*-passive has been noted by Hatcher (1949), Chappell (1980), Downing (1996), Gronemeyer (1999) and Toyota (2007). The examples commonly considered as *get*-passive with an adversative reading (henceforth ***get*-adversative**) are illustrated in (37):

(37) *She got arrested by the police.*
He got rejected by the company of his choice.

There seen to be two indicators to give these constructions an adversative reading: one is lexical, the choice of the main verb, and the other, the construction itself, i.e. *get*-passive as opposed to *be*-passive. We term the first case **lexical adversity** and the second, **syntactic adversity**. The likelihood of certain verbs to be involved in lexical adversity has not been noticed much, except by Downing (1996: 195–6) and Toyota (2007), but verbs like *arrest*, *beat*, *break*, *chase*, *hurt*, *steal*, etc. are likely to be associated with adversity. As noted in Toyota (2007), these main verbs can even allow adversity in the *be*-passive as well. However, the *get*-passive can create adversity syntactically. We illustrate some such cases below. The verbs *leave* and *send* on their own do not create a high degree of adversity, but we can detect a certain degree of adversity (suffering, annoyance, etc.) in each case.

(38) *What do you mean a couple of hundred tiles? Why do you have a couple of hundred tiles? Oh I don' t know. You just **get left** with these things*. (LL 210 28 2250 1 2 c 20 - 210 29 2270 1 1 B 11)

(39) *I mean but they can do something fairly minor and **get sent** there.* (LL 4 7 15 1380 1 2c 12 - 4 7 16 1400 1 1c 11)

In our data, both types of adversity can be found in the *get*-passive throughout its history, as shown in Table 6.7 and Table 6.8. The frequency is generally low (slightly more than 20 %) regardless of period. There is a slight increase observable in the adversative reading of 5 percentage points in PDE. What seems more significant is the nearly three-fold increase in syntactic adversative. This indicates that the *get*-passive to a certain extent is getting identified with adversative meaning.

We have earlier seen typologically common characteristics of adversative passives, and it is worth comparing various characteristics of the *get*-passive with them. The construction is periphrastic and the auxiliary verb *get* – suppose for the moment it *is* 'auxiliary' – is an in-bound transitive like other languages with the periphrastic adversative passive, i.e.

Table 6.7 Adversative reading in the *get*-passive in ModE

Adversative	Non-Advers.	Total
13 (21.0%): syntactic 1 (7.7%); lexical 12 (92.3%)	49 (79.0%)	62 (100%)

Table 6.8 Adversative reading in the *get*-passive in PDE

Data type	Adversative	Non-Advers.	Total
Written	28 (13.4%): syntactic 7 (3.3%); lexical 21 (10.0%)	73 (34.9%)	101 (48.3%)
Spoken	27 (12.9%): syntactic 5 (2.4%); lexical 22 (10.5%)	81 (38.8%)	108 (51.7%)
Total	55 (26.3%): syntactic 12 (21.8%);lexical 43 (78.2%)	154 (73.7%)	209 (100%)

the subject of this verb is the recipient of the event. So according to the typological characteristics, the adversative *get*-passive could be expected to have a valency-reducing operation. However, there seem to be some exceptions to this. Consider example (40) which is repeated here from (23) for convenience:

(40) *'Well, we' re not going to bother to train anybody in our industry because they' ll promptly* ***get snapped up*** *by another industry,' the Duke added.* (LOB A12 107–108)

Who is affected by another industry's snapping up? According to what we have seen so far, it is supposed to be the subject of the passive clause, *they*, but *they* is undergoer rather than sufferer. Instead, it is more natural to think that it is *we*, the ones who train people, that undergo the suffering. Thus, (40) can be paraphrased as follows:

(41) 'We would be adversely affected by another industry's snapping up people in our industry.'

In the active counterpart, *snap up* is divalent, involving *another industry* (actor) and *them* (undergoer), but in the adversative passive, we can detect three arguments, i.e. *we* (sufferer), *another industry* (actor) and *they* (undergoer). This means that the valency is increased in the passive, i.e. from divalent to trivalent, although it is not at the syntactic but at the semantic level. Valency change in the morphological adversative passive is mainly concerned with syntactic valency, and an increase in semantic valency may not be comparable to a syntactic one, but the periphrastic construction does not increase the syntactic valency. On the contrary, the periphrastic adversative reduces the number of arguments. Thus,

examples like (40) show a mixture of characteristics of the morphological and periphrastic adversative passive. This seems to contradict the typological characteristics.

In addition to the increase in valency, the sufferer, an additional semantic argument, tends to be the speaker/writer, as shown in the above example (40). This is not a categorical, but the majority of occurrences have speaker/writer as sufferer, as shown in Tables 6.9 to 6.11, separated by period (and by writing and speech in PDE). We can observe a shift of sufferer entity. The lModE results indicate that a non-speaker/writer sufferer was as common as a speaker/writer sufferer, but this balance was broken in PDE, where the speaker/writer is more likely to be the sufferer, especially in spoken discourse. This result can be attributed to the subjective nature of the *get*-passive and means that the construction allows the speaker/writer to share sympathy with the grammatical subject, the actual affected entity.

Example (40) is a case with animate subject, but an inanimate subject can occur in this construction, although it is quite rare, as indicated in Tables 6.9 to 6.11 (about 15% in lModE and 7% of all occurrences in PDE). Inanimate subjects often make it hard to distinguish adversative and benefactive clauses. Consider (42).

Table 6.9 Tendency of sufferer as speaker/writer in the adversative *get*-passive in lModE

	Speaker/writer sufferer	**Non-speaker/ writer sufferer**	**Total**
Human subject	5 (38.5%)	6 (46.2%)	11 (84.6%)
Non-human animate	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Inanimate subject	2 (15.4%)	0 (0%)	2 (15.4%)
Total	7 (53.8%)	6 (46.2%)	13 (100%)

Table 6.10 Tendency of sufferer as speaker/writer in the adversative *get*-passive in PDE (written)

	Speaker/writer sufferer	**Non-speaker/ writer sufferer**	**Total**
Human subject	16 (57.1%)	9 (32.1%)	25 (89.3%)
Non-human animate	1 (3.6%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.6%)
Inanimate subject	2 (7.1%)	0 (0%)	2 (7.1%)
Total	19 (67.9%)	9 (32.1%)	28 (100%)

Table 6.11 Tendency of sufferer as speaker/writer in the adversative *get*-passive in PDE (spoken)

	Speaker/writer sufferer	**Non-speaker/ writer sufferer**	**Total**
Human subject	18 (66.7%)	7 (25.9%)	25 (92.6%)
Non-human animate	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Inanimate subject	2 (7.4%)	0 (0%)	2 (7.4%)
Total	20 (74.1%)	7 (25.9%)	27 (100%)

(42) *Now the hoodlums don't run liquor. They run governments. State governments like Nevada. Articles* ***get written*** *about it.* (ARCHER 1956 Fleming.F9 1:1)

A first ambiguous point is the recipient of the adversity or benefit: either the speaker/writer, i.e. 'speaker/writer is adversely/positively affected by articles' being written', or the people concerned, i.e. 'the hoodlums are adversely/positively affected by articles' being written'. When the subject is inanimate and an adversative/benefactive reading is possible, the recipient of adversity/benefit seems to be the people concerned, not the speaker/hearer. This reveals an interesting relationship between the adversative and benefactive reading. When an adversative reading is derived from (42), the people concerned, *the hoodlums*, do not expect the event and have no control over it, while under a benefactive reading, they normally expect the event and can sometimes (but not necessarily) have some control or influence. We have seen that the subject in the *get*-passive tends to have some control over the event (Section 6.2.1.2 above), and in the context of an adversative/benefactive reading, the presence or absence of control can influence the interpretation of the clause, along with the possible underlying structure, i.e. passive-related (control absent) or causative-related (control present). Therefore, we can speculate that the adversative reading is derived from the passive, while the benefactive can come from either the passive or the causative. This can be summarised in Table 6.12.

Finally, alienable possession is one of the crucial factors in the adversative passive crosslinguistically, as shown in the examples in (36). Languages like Japanese have a marked adversative passive in terms of structure, and even the use of verbs that can inherently increase the adversative reading, such as *hit, beat, kill,* etc. cannot suppress the influence from inalienable possession. This is exactly what is indicated in the

Table 6.12 Different readings with inanimate subject and the passive/causative

Type of reading	Characteristics
Adversative reading	• Subject has no control over the event → similar to the passive, i.e. *Articles are written about it to the detriment of the hoodlums.*
Benefactive reading	• Subject has no control over the event → similar to the passive, i.e. *Articles are written about it for the benefit of the hoodlums.* • Subject has control over the event → similar to the causative, i.e. *The hoodlums get articles written about it.*

Japanese examples in (36). In the case of the adversative *get*-passive, the influence of inalienable possession is less significant, probably because there is a high degree of lexical influence, i.e. the lexical adversative is more frequent than syntactic adversative (cf. Table 6.7 and Table 6.8). Thus, examples like *My back got hurt by his sudden attack* can still create a meaning of suffering although the subject *my back* is inalienably possessed by the speaker. Examples of lexical adversity in our data do not contain such instances, but it is possible in English. This suggests that the influence of inalienable possession may be present, although it can be violated in lexical adversity. It is more crucial in the syntactic adversative and there is no instance there where the influence of inalienable possession is violated.

In terms of ability to express adversity, some characteristics in the *get*-passive, such as subject control and inalienability, are typologically not common, which makes the status of *get*-passive peculiar as an adversative passive.

6.2.2 *Get*-passive: more than a dynamic counterpart

The *get*-passive is often considered the dynamic counterpart of the *be*-passive. It is true that the *get*-passive has dynamic aspect, but the lengthy description above of various characteristics found in the *get*-passive, but not in the *be*-passive, reassures us that the *get*-passive is not simply a dynamic counterpart of the *be*-passive. Even where synchronic analysis points to a stative–dynamic dichotomy between these two constructions, historically this is incomplete since the *be*-passive has extended its aspectual range from more stative to more dynamic (see Table 2.2). Also a synchronic analysis concerned with the tense–aspectual difference misses the fact that subjective viewpoint, subject responsibility,

animacy of the subject (i.e. more human-oriented) and adversative passive (i.e. syntactic adversative) do not occur in the *be*-passive but do in the *get*-passive.

What then is what we have been calling the *get*-passive: a type of passive or something else? As we have seen (see Tables 6.1, 6.7, 6.8 and 6.12), there is a mixture of characteristics and more than just one type of construction involved in the *get*-passive. This is also expressed in the gradience of agentivity proposed by Vanrespaille (1991: 107) (see Figure 6.3). In terms of functions, certain types of *get*-passive, especially those without subject control, seem to behave similarly to the *be*-passive. However, *get* is typologically rather unusual in terms of choice of auxiliary. Equivalents of *get* can be found in other languages as an 'alleged' passive auxiliary (i.e. 'verb of reception', Keenan 1985: 257–61), as shown in (43) and (45):

(43) Irish (Celtic, Nolan 2006: 157)

Fuair	*sé*	*léigheas*	*ar*	*sin*
get.PST	he	healing/medicine	on	that

'He got healed of that.'

(44) Welsh (Celtic, Awbery 1976: 47)

Cafodd	*y*	*bachgen*	*ei*	*rybuddio*	*gan*	*y*	*dyn*
get.PST	the	boy	his	warning	by	the	man

'The boy was warned by the man.'

(45) Tzeltal (Mayan, Keenan 1985: 259)

La	*y-ich'*	*' utel*	*(yu' un*	*s-tat)*	*te*
PST	he.receive	bawling.out	(because	his-father)	ART

Ziak-e
Ziak-ART
'Ziak got a bawling out (from his father).'

For example, the Welsh sentence (44) above does not involve the verb in the past participle, but instead NP *ei rybuddio* 'his warning', which functions as a complement of *cael* 'have, get'. Exactly the same construction can be found in Irish (43) and Tzeltal (45). This seems to indicate that constructions like (43) to (45) above may be better considered as an active voice with passive reading. On the other hand, the construction in English where *get* is used can be considered as passive, due to the involvement of the verb in past participle. In addition, as we have seen

in Section 6.2.1.5, the *get*-passive can express syntactic adversity as a construction, and not because of the meaning of the auxiliary. Periphrastic adversative passives generally have in-bound transitive verbs as auxiliary, and *get* fits this pattern. It fails, however, to express adversity or benefactiveness based on the lexical meaning of the auxiliary (cf. verbs such as 'suffer' or 'enjoy'). These factors may cast doubt on whether verbs of reception can be candidates for passive auxiliary.

Further evidence to make one question whether the *get*-passive is actually a type of passive can be found elsewhere. As we have seen in Section 6.2.1.2, the *get*-passive often involves generic characteristics of the subject, which can sometimes account for the occurrence of the passive with the auxiliary *get*, e.g. *He got shot by the police* instead of *He was shot by the police*, where only *get* can create additional meanings based on the subject's characteristics. Also, the subject's animacy in the *get*-passive (Section 6.2.1.4) shows a different pattern from that in the *be*-passive, i.e. the *get*-passive is more human actor-oriented, while the *be*-passive is inanimate undergoer-oriented. These various counter-arguments make the status of *get*-passive less comfortable as a type of passive. In the next section, we take its origin into consideration.

6.3 Possible sources

Previous research reveals that two different origins can be suggested for the *get*-passive: 'inchoative *get* + predicative adjective', and 'reflexive causative'. The first type seems to be more favoured among scholars than the second. As we will see in due course, we are inclined to support the second case, due to various characteristics that can be found in the *get*-passive but not the *be*-passive. We start reviewing the arguments for inchoative *get* + predicative adjective below.

6.3.1 Inchoative *get* + predicative adjective

One possible source is inchoative *get* + predicative adjective. The first usage attested in *get* is dated from the very late 15th century, but the actual frequency seems to have increased during the 16th century. The earliest instance shown in *OED* (s.v. *get* v. IV 33a) is from 1596, as exemplified in (46). Scholars like Gronemeyer (1999) and Hundt (2001) consider that this usage of *get* evolved into the *get*-passive.[7] In their view, the past participle was once more adjectival, similar to example (46) above, and was reanalysed later, becoming more verbal. Thus, 'inchoative *get* + predicative adjective' turned into the 'passive auxiliary *get* + past participle'.

(46) *How to* ***get cleere*** *of all the debts I owe.* (1596 SHAKS. *Merch V.* 1. i. 134)

Chronologically, this line of argument seems to make sense, since inchoative *get* started taking adjectival complements during the 16th century, and the *get*-passive increased its frequency roughly around the mid-18th or 19th century (see Strang 1970: 151; Denison 1993: 440). Indeed, examples cited in *OED* (s.v. *get* v. 34b), Jespersen (1909–49: IV 108–9) and Visser (1963–73: §1893) clearly show that the frequency increases after the middle/late 1800s. Also, the celebrated first case of the *get*-passive is found in 1652: see (1) above, which can be used to support the argument that the past participle was earlier more adjectival. Denison (1993: 433–6), for example, argues that there is a 'passivisable' alleged *get*-passive, as in *The problem is got rid of*, from *A neat solution rids us of the problem*. He (*ibid.*: 436) claims that VP *is got rid of* is possible since it is derived from an intermediate stage *We got rid of the problem*. Without this intermediate stage, constructions like *is got rid of* are impossible. Thus, examples like **Free tickets were got given us*, from *We got given free tickets*, are not grammatical. This seems to suggest that earlier numerous early occurrences of the phrase *get rid of* (*ibid.*: 433) are not passives of the verb *rid* but involve an adjectival phrase: *rid of* was adjectival and *get rid of* an idiomatic VP.

The past participle in the *get*-passive in PDE is more verbal than adjectival, based on various tests such as (i) premodification, as in **She got* ***very*** *arrested*; (ii) replaceability of *get* with *become*, as in **She* ***became*** *arrested*, and (iii) gradability, as in **She got* ***partly*** *arrested*. When participles pass these tests, they are considered more adjectival than verbal (see also Section 3.3.1). So there seems to have been a reanalysis of the adjectival participle into a verbal one. In spite of its plausible chronology, this line of argument, however, fails to explain several peculiarities of the *get*-passive. It concentrates on surface structure ('auxiliary-like' verb + past participle) and the quality of the past participle, but changes in the quality of *get* are not taken into consideration to a desirable degree. We have seen various characteristics of the *get*-passive, such as subject generic characteristics or the presence of syntactic adversity, in Sections 6.2.1.1 to 6.2.1.5, which clearly distinguish it from the *be*-passive, but this analysis cannot explain where those peculiar features came from. Also, this derivation tends to assume that the *get*-passive is a dynamic counterpart of the *be*-passive. However, its chronology fails to explain why other possible candidates for dynamic reading, i.e. inchoative verbs shown in Figure 6.2 and exemplified in (5), (6) and (14) to (16) above, could not

enter the passive domain after the disappearance of *weorðan* 'become' during ME, especially its functional equivalent, *become*, if speakers were ever aware of the aspectual difference. Thus it cannot explain why *get* was picked on as a candidate for passive auxiliary, although the whole sequence can perfectly match the diachronic change in the quality of the participle (i.e. from adjectival to verbal quality).

These unanswered points suggest another way to analyse the developmental path of the *get*-passive, to which we turn now in the following Section. This analysis, less often advanced, provides some insights into the possible path of historical change.

6.3.2 Reflexive causative *get oneself* + past participle

An alternative origin is the reflexive causative *get oneself* + past participle. As we will see shortly, this explains various characteristics more systematically. The *get*-passive is evolving from more non-passive constructions towards the passive (Sections 6.2.1.1 to 6.2.1.5). Various characteristics seem to be related to features of the middle/reflexive-related constructions, as we will see in more detail in Section 7.2. This makes scholars like Givón and Yang (1994), Toyota (2007) consider the developmental path from middle/reflexive-related constructions.

It is not unusual in world languages for a passive to develop from a reflexive causative construction, as noted by Keenan (1985: 262), Haspelmath (1990: 46–9) and others. Kupferman (1995), for example, demonstrates the case of French *se faire* 'make oneself' as passive auxiliary. The general change can be expressed in terms of the subject's control over the event/action. As claimed in Croft *et al.* (1987), reflexive verbs often evolve and start to express a passive reading, triggered by the loss of a subject's control. We have also seen in (33) and (34) above a possible case of the adversative passive derived from the causative in Indonesian. In analysing the English data, the diachronic sequence of characteristics has to be coherent, i.e. in the following sequence: (i) emergence of causative *get*; (ii) causative reflexive *get oneself*; (iii) causative reflexive + past participle on the way to *get*-passive. We investigate if this sequence can be observed in the history of the word *get*.

The causative use of *get* in Givón and Yang (1994) and Gronemeyer (1999) can, in our view, be classified as what Song (1996: 49–67) calls a 'purposive type'. The **purposive type** is a type of causative derived by insertion of a recipient of benefit or adversity, as in *He got her a book*, where the recipient of the book (beneficiary) is often expressed with a purposive case. In English this is normally expressed by a dative, reflexive pronoun or later a nominal preceded by *to* or *for* (*OED get* v. I 18a, 18b).

The construction with a dative beneficiary/reflexive pronoun started to appear around 1300, according to *OED* (*get* v. I 18a, 18b), as exemplified in (47) and (48):

(47) *Ay* *was* *he* *bone,* *To* ***gete*** [*Cott. Fete*] *his*
always was he ready to get his
fadir *venisun*
father.DAT venison
'He was always ready to get his father venison.' (a1300 Cursor M. 3502 (Cott.))

(48) *Melior* .. *preide* *hire* *priueli* .. *to* ***gete*** *hire*
Melior .. asked her in private .. to fetch her
þat *gode* *gras* *as* *sone* *as* *sche* *miȝt*
the good grass as soon as she could
'Melior asked her in private to fetch her the good grass as soon as she could.' (c1350 Will. Palerne 644)

In our view, following Givón and Yang (1994) and Gronemeyer (1999), the locativeness in the purposive case helped the development of the causative construction with *get*. The examples in (47) and (48) can be considered as a causation of possession, 'cause someone to possess something', with the subject acting volitionally. A causative construction such as *He gets her to clean the room* can be considered to have been derived from the causation of possession. This change can be expressed in the following three stages:

Stage I: *He gets her a book*. (from 1300 onwards)

Examples like (47) and (48) above belong to this stage. Characteristics of this type of construction are: subject is agentive; *get* itself basically denotes the onset of possession, but it can be interpreted as causation of possession, in the sense 'cause someone to possess something'. Indirect object is beneficiary, but when the causation in the verbal meaning is emphasised, beneficiary can be considered the causee.

Stage II: *He gets her some words to say.* (from around 1450 onwards)

Examples that belong to this type can be illustrated below (s.v. *OED get* v. I 18b, III 30a)

(49) *Thomas .. preiched .. for to gite him heiuen to mede.*
'Thomas preached so that he could reach heaven as a reward.'
(c1340 *Cursor M.* 21094 (Fairf.))

(50) *And so myght we gett hym som word for to say.*
'And so we will provide some words for him to speak'
(c1460 *Towneley Myst.* xxi. 218)

(51) *Promysyng to gete them xls. more then their ordynary to play yt.*
'Promising to get them 40 shillings in addition to their usual allowance for playing it.' (1600 in SHAKS. *C. Praise* 36)

Constructions at stage II may look similar to the ones in stage I. However, the difference lies in the appearance of *to*-infinitive. This infinitival clause is used as an adverbial, specifying purpose, which is clearly shown in (50) by insertion of *for*. This infinitival clause had not become part of the subcategorisation of *get* at this stage. The main verb *get* expresses both the onset and causation of possession. The person expressed as the indirect object is the actor of the verb in the adverbial phrase (i.e. *to*-infinitive) and it is still a beneficiary (or alternatively a causee, if causation in the verb is stressed), since it is a person who is provided with something in order to achieve something, which is expressed in the adverbial phrase. So in paraphrasing (51), we can get something like 'promising to give them 40 shillings, which is more than their usual allowance, so that they can play it.'

Stage III: *He gets her to clean the room.* (from around 1600 onwards)

Get at this stage exhibits the typical characteristics of causative verbs in English: it loses the meaning of possession and denotes only causation; the *to*-infinitival clause is part of the subcategorisation of *get* and functions as a verbal phrase, not an adverbial expressing purpose (cf. the insertion of *for* in (50)). The first example of the *get*-causative with a *to*-infinitive attested in Visser (1963–73: §2068) dates back to 1386, i.e. (52), and the next example is from 1410, i.e. (53). However, earlier examples (up until around 1600) seem to be ambiguous between stage II and stage III. The earliest instance in Visser's list, (52), may be an isolated instance, but instances like (53) and (54) can perhaps be interpreted as 'get you more to have' and 'got his men into the temple in order to go', respectively, which are closer to stage II than III.

(52) *Non* **gete** *me . . . to glent out of ryȝt*
none made me . . . to swerve out of justice
'No one got me to deviate from rightness.' (c1386 *St. Erkenwald* 242)

(53) *Abideth a litell, and I schal* **gete** *ȝow to haue more*
wait a little and I shall get you to have more
'Wait a little longer and I shall make it that you will have more.' (c1410 Nicholas Love, *Mirrour Blessed Lijf of Chr.* (ed. Powell) 106)

(54) *Scho gate hys men of myȝt vnto þe tempyll to gang.*
she got his men of might into the temple to go
'She got his mighty men into the temple to go.' (c1425 Metric. Paraphr. *Old Test.* III (ed. Ohlander) 13581)

Clear-cut examples of stage III listed in *OED* (*get* v. III 30a) start around lME. In such examples, the earlier indirect object (i.e. beneficiary) became unambiguously a causee. Consider the following example:

(55) *The women .. got their husbands to sit down again.* (1662 J. DAVIES *Olearitus' Voy. Ambass.* 83)

So the causative *get* is considered to have been derived from the meaning of possession. The meaning of *get* changed from possession (or causation of possession) to causation alone, but the grammaticalisation was much helped when the adverbial phrase (i.e. realised in a *to*-infinitive) that expressed the purpose was reanalysed as part of the subcategorisation of *get*.

At stage II, it is sometimes difficult to decide whether the earlier beneficiary was still a beneficiary or already turned into a causee, showing that this is an intermediate stage. The stages can be schematised as in Figure 6.4 on page 180.

From stage II to stage III, the *to*-infinitival phrase, on its own, functions as GOAL in the sense of endpoint of purpose, but its realisation in the syntactic structure changed. Also, notice that the preposition *to* functions as an indicator of direction as well as the infinitive marker (cf. Haspelmath 1989).[8] Thus, it can be applied to the fact that the *get*-causative takes a *to*-infinitive, but not a bare-infinitive, when it takes a verbal phrase as the object, i.e. *He got his brother to clean the room*, but not **He got his brother clean the room*. This use of the infinitive marker *to*

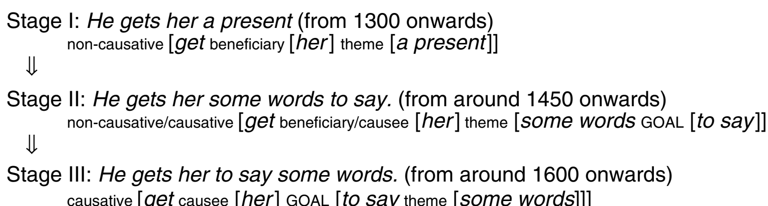

Figure 6.4 Schematic representation of the development of the causative *get*, adapted from Toyota (2003b: 136)

does not appear in some other causative verbs in English, i.e. *He makes her help him*, but not **He makes her to help him*. This *to* can be considered as a case of hypoanalysis (Croft 2000: 126–30) or exaptation (Lass 1990) or regrammaticalisation (Greenberg 1991), where a contextual semantic and functional property of the locative use of *to* is reanalysed as an inherent property of the syntactic unit (i.e. infinitive marker). For a similar argument, see Miller (1985: 178–9), Duffley (1992), Español-Echevarra and Mahajan (1995, cited in Gronemeyer 1999: 24), as well as Toyota (2003b).

The *get*-causative with past participle, another construction related to the *get*-passive, started to appear around 1500 (*OED get* v. III. 28), although there are some earlier isolated examples in Visser (1963–73: §2115), as shown in (56) and (57):

(56) *Thow* ***getest*** *fable* *noon* *ytold* *for* *me*
you get fables none told for me
'You won't hear any fables told from me.' (c1386 Chaucer, C.T. I 31)

(57) *I can* ***get*** *no such some* [= *sum*] *confessed.* 'I cannot get such sum confiscated' (1548 Invent. *Ch. Goods* (Surtees) 119)

Compare the dates of (52) to (55) with (56) and (57) above. Visser (1963–73) notes that examples like (52) to (55) occur often from lME to the present (ibid.: §2068) and the construction in (56) and (57) occurs from ME up to the present (*ibid.*: §2115). This seems to suggest that the *to*-infinitive and the past participle both started to appear in the *get*-causative and gained in frequency around 1500 to 1600. This may indicate that as long as the indirect object NP retains purposive sense, the

verb phrase in the subordinate clause can take the form of a *to*-infinitive or participle clause.

Among *get*-causatives with a past participle, the direct object is sometimes the reflexive pronoun in *-self*. Some of the earlier occurrences are shown in (58) and (59).

(58) *La Fleur .. had* ***got*** *himself so gallantly array' d, I scare knew him.* (1768 STERNE *Sent. Journ.* (1778) II. 120 (Le Dimanche))

(59) *Poor Barty .. had applied, and****got*** *himself appointed a writer to the .. East India Company.* (1779 R. GRAVES *Columella* I. 184)

In our view, examples like (58) and (59) are the source of various *get*-passive constructions. The development can be explained as follows. The reflexive pronoun makes the clause more like the middle construction or unaccusative (see Sections 7.2.1 and 7.2.2 for details of each construction). In these examples, the lower clause has a subject, which is still in control of an action or at least responsible for it. As shown in Croft *et al.* (1987), the loss of the subject's control in the reflexive construction often turns into the passive reading. This is closely related to the animacy of the subject: when it is inanimate, it is less likely to be in control. In (60), for instance, the subject is not in control, but is still responsible for the event denoted by the past participle:

(60) *One of the most costly, splendid, and elaborate structures in the world ..* ***got*** *itself built.* (1877 MRS. OLIPHANT *Makers Flor.* Intro. 12)

The alleged first example of *get*-passive (61) and other early examples (1) to (3) repeated here for convenence as (62) and (63), precede the examples of the '*get oneself* + past participle' construction shown above in (58) to (60).

(61) *A certain Spanish pretending Alchymist . . .* ***got acquainted*** *with foure rich Spanish merchants.* (1652 Gaule, *Magastrom.* 361)

(62) *I am resolv' d to* ***get*** *introduced to Mrs Annabella.* (1693 Powell, *A very good wife*, II.i. p.10)

(63) *so you may not only save your life, but* ***get*** *rewarded for your roguery.* (1731 Fielding, *Letter Writers* II.ix.20)

This seems to contradict the claim that the reflexive causative is the source of the *get*-passive. However, the reflexive pronoun itself is not normally obligatory, except for certain verbs such as *avail oneself*, *absent oneself*, *pride oneself in*, etc. in English, and examples (61) to (63) can imply a reflexive reading. Also, examples prior to the mid/late 1800s tend to have a subject which is still in control of the action. The result from our data is shown in Table 6.13. The striking result is that the presence of control decreases dramatically from lModE to PDE. Thus, even if we consider the first occurrence of the source of the *get*-passive to be example (61), it is not until the late 1800s that the frequency increases and the loss of the subject control occurs.

Table 6.13 Presence of subject control in *get*-passive

	Control present	**Control absent**	**Total**
lModE	41 (66.1%)	21 (33.9%)	62 (100%)
PDE	64 (30.6%)	145 (69.4%)	209 (100%)

This line of argument can explain why *get*, but not the other inchoative verbs, started to appear in place of *be* in the *be*-passive, and also the presence of various characteristics peculiar to the *get*-passive, such as subject-generic characteristics. Various characteristics attributed to the subject in the *get*-passive are often found in the medio-passive, as in *This book sells very well*, where the quality of the book helps sales (see Section 7.2.2 for details of this construction). This also supports the case for a relationship with the reflexive construction, which often functions as the middle voice in English.

I am inclined to consider the reflexive-causative construction as the historical source of the PDE *get*-passive, rather than the inchoative *get* + predicative adjective construction. These two lines of argument can both satisfy the chronology, but the first approach we have seen fails to explain certain crucial areas of the *get*-passive which distinguish it from the *be*-passive. This reflexive-related source allows the *get*-passive to perform an important role in the voice continuum in English, since English lacks an overtly marked middle construction. This is discussed at length in the following section.

6.4 *Get*-passive in the voice continuum

We have seen that most occurrences of *get*-passive involve a certain degree of subject-generic characteristics, although some examples show more subject-generic characteristics than others. When the clause does not express subject control, it may be understood as the dynamic counterpart of a *be*-passive, although the occurrence of the actor phrase is extremely infrequent. It is worth noting that the occurrence of *get*-passive without subject control increased in PDE. Various characteristics of the *get*-passive can also be found in other constructions, which are most likely to be associated with the middle voice-related constructions. This is mainly due to its historical developmental path from reflexive causative. The presence of reflexive at an earlier stage gives the construction characteristics not found in the *be*-passive.

The subject characteristics can be found in various middle-voice-related constructions, including the reflexive construction. This is summarised under what Kemmer (1993) terms **facilitative**. 'The facilitative is similar to the spontaneous events . . . in that the focus is on the affected entity. The [i]nitiator status of the [p]atient, unlike in the case of the spontaneous events, derives from the fact that the event is conceived of as proceeding from the [p]atient by virtue of an inherent characteristic of that entity which enables the event to take place' (Kemmer 1993: 47). English does not have an overtly-marked middle construction, i.e. a construction whose subject is both the actor and undergoer and is somehow affected by the action or state (see Lyons 1977: 373; Klaiman 1991: 92), but instead, constructions like reflexive often cover such a function. However, in respect of Kemmer's facilitative, there are types of middle-related constructions in English known as **unaccusative**.[9] Some examples are illustrated in (64) and (65). We will come back to the analysis of the relationship between the *get*-passive and middle-related constructions later in Section 7.5.1. It is important to note that these constructions are, in fact, passive diatheses (same orientation as the passive, without overt marking), which we examine extensively in the following chapter.

(64) Unaccusative (Obj. + V (INTR) type)
This book sells well.

(65) Unaccusative in progressive (V (INTR) in progressive type)
The book is printing.

6.5 Summary

This chapter has reviewed various characteristics of the *get*-passive. We started by questioning the common view that the *get*-passive is the dynamic counterpart of the *be*-passive, considering various points such as a lack of dynamic auxiliary after ME, subject responsibility, adversative reading, and so on. From a study of these characteristics, it is hard to consider the *get*-passive simply as a dynamic counterpart of the *be*-passive, because of the semantic and functional differences between them. Instead, we consider that the *get*-passive is more closely related to middle-related constructions. This creates a case of voice continuum involving both the passive and middle domains of grammatical voice in English, which will be analysed in detail in the following chapter.

What makes the *get*-passive behave like a passive depends on the presence/absence of the subject control. When subject control is absent, the subject is more likely to be considered the undergoer. This leads us to its historical source, a reflexive causative construction. There is another source proposed in the literature, inchoative *get* + adjective, as in *The soup gets cold*. However, examining various semantic characteristics, I consider the reflexive causative to be the source, with a sequence of change as follows. The earlier construction '*get oneself* + past participle' does not always express the reflexive pronoun overtly. This is not particular to this construction but is a general characteristic of English. Instead, we can often obtain a reflexive reading. Then the subject of the clause is gradually losing the control, which creates a passive reading of the clause (see Croft *et al.* 1987). The construction itself is relatively new in the history of English, and still exists in PDE with and without subject control. This transitional phase may create confusion in the analysis, since scholars often try to assign the *get*-passive to one particular category, such as the passive, without allowing for the possibility that it might belong to a couple of categories at the same time. The construction is still developing, and it is premature to consider it under one category.

7
Passive Diathesis

7.1 Introduction

So far we have dealt with constructions considered by a number of scholars to be passive. In this chapter, we will analyse what we termed the passive diathesis (see Section 2.2), i.e. certain constructions with the undergoer-orientation, but without the overt marking of the passive. The passive diathesis tends to be language-specific, unlike the quasi-passive, which we will analyse in the following chapter. English has four such constructions, and we have already briefly seen two types of unaccusative in Chapter 6, examples (64) (i.e. unaccusative-middle) and (65) (i.e. unaccusative in progressive). The other two are related to modality. The modality domain contains clauses with an adjective with the suffix *-able* (potentiality) and the construction type *This TV needs fixing* (obligation).

7.2 Characteristics of unaccusative

There are several distinctive characteristics between the unaccusative-middle and the unaccusative in progressive, which can be roughly distinguished by the following three features: time reference, subject generic characteristics and spontaneity. There may be finer distinctions, but we use these three as basic distinctions.

In terms of stativity, the unaccusative construction denotes a generic predicate such as *The prison officer bribes easily*, which is not compatible with a particular time reference: **The prison officer bribed easily yesterday*. It does not generally appear in the imperative or progressive, as in **Bribe easily!* or **The prison officer is bribing easily*, but these restrictions can be violated, as in *This book is selling well*. This construction occurs

normally in the present tense or other tense in a habitual sense, as in the past habitual *The prison officer used to bribe easily*. The unaccusative in progressive, on the other hand, can appear with a particular time reference regardless of tense (i.e. it is eventive) and can be used in the imperative or progressive as in *The boat sank yesterday* (time reference), *Sink, boat!* (imperative), *The boat is sinking* (progressive). See Keyser and Roeper (1984) for details, although they use different terms (middle for unaccusative-middle and ergative for unaccusative in progressive). Thus, the unaccusative construction seems to be more time-durable and the unaccusative in progressive less time-durable.

The second distinction is the subject's generic characteristics. The subject argument in the unaccusative-middle is considered to be primarily responsible for the action or event denoted by the predicate (Erades 1950: 156; Rosta 1995), or often the predicate expresses something generic (Rosta 1995). For example, the unaccusative-middle (but not necessarily the unaccusative in progressive) occurs frequently with adverbials such as *well*, *easily*, as in *This book reads easily*, *This new car steers well*. This is due to the fact that the subject argument is responsible for the action or event. Thus, ?*This book reads*, ?*This new car steers* are not well formed, since it is, although partially, the characteristic of 'this book' that enables it to be read or of 'car' that enables it to be steered. However, the clause requires some extra information which can be attributed to the particular subject's generic characteristics. So the addition of adverbials can give the extra information related to the subject's characteristics, and the relationship between the unaccusative-middle and adverbials can be considered as a type of collocation. See Fellbaum (1985) for a similar argument. We can classify the adverbials which appear in the unaccusative-middle into a couple of semantic groups. Dixon (1991:325–6) indicates that three semantic types of adverb can be found in the unaccusative: speed, such as *slowly*, *fast*; value, such as *well*, *badly*; and difficulty, such as *easily*, *with difficulty*. In addition to the use of adverbials, the use of modals can indicate the subject's characteristics clearly, e.g. *This book will sell*, *This type of cloth will not wash*, etc. It is worth mentioning that the subject argument can be considered to be affected, as argued by Jaeggli (1985), which is similar to the claim of the passive subject's affectedness (Klaiman 1991).

The third distinction is spontaneity. The unaccusative in progressive often has a subject which is in control of the event. For example, the subject in *He washed this morning* is the initiator of the event and can control the situation at his will, while an event happens spontaneously in the unaccusative-middle. An example of the latter type is the subject

in *The vase broke*, which cannot have the intention of making the event happen. We can still assume some kind of outer cause but this particular type of construction can suppress the identity of such outer causes and stress that the event happens on its own. Thus, it is often possible to assume some outer actor argument in the unaccusative in progressive, but not in the unaccusative-middle, as in *The car steers easily*, where there must be somebody who steers the car. The animacy of the subject may interfere with the control in the unaccusative in progressive, i.e. it has to be high in the nominal hierarchy (i.e. human or at least animate), and when inanimate, no control is observed. It is often the case that indefinite pronouns such as *one* or *people* are assumed as a cognate actor entity. Another argument is proposed by Rosta (1995): based on earlier claims that the subject argument has prime responsibility in the unaccusative-middle and unaccusative in progressive constructions (cf. Erades 1950: 156), he proposes a term 'archagonist' which is distinguishable from the causer of the action or event. It seems true that the characteristics of the subject are related to readings of the unaccusative-middle, but some indefinite outer cause can be implied, which leads us to assume that this construction may be used in order to impersonalise a clause. As for the unaccusative in progressive, an actor argument cannot be assumed at all. Thus, compare *The shop opens at nine* (unaccusative in progressive) with *They opened the shop at nine yesterday* (active with indefinite pronoun). There is a generic or habitual sense in the unaccusative in progressive, but not in the active with the indefinite pronoun. Thus, it is possible that the unaccusative in progressive expresses a spontaneous reading.

A number of these characteristics can be summarised in Table 7.1. We note that subject control is sensitive to the animacy hierarchy in the

Table 7.1 Distinction between the unaccusative in progressive and the unaccusative-middle

	Unaccusative in progressive	**Unaccusative-middle**
i. Time reference	✓	×
ii. Imperative/ progressive	✓	×
iii. Adverbials	×	✓
iv. Subject control	✓	×
v. Generic characteristics of subject	×	✓
vi. Modal verbs	×	✓

Key: Characteristic present = ✓, absent = ×.

unaccusative in progressive, and when the subject is inanimate, there is no control even in the unaccusative in progressive. These two types of construction have complementary properties, and it seems relatively easy to distinguish one construction from the other. Also, these two types of unaccusative involve a certain set of phrases or constructions. The first type, termed as the unaccusative in progressive, can be found in the construction *The book is printing* (V (INTR) in prog. type), and the second one, termed as unaccusative-middle, in *This book sells well* (Obj. + V (INTR) type). We will look at each construction separately below.

7.2.1 *This book is printing* (V (INTR) in progressive type)

Although unaccusative constructions are not generally restricted to a certain tense or aspect, this type is restricted to the progressive aspect. One such example involves *print*, as in *A new edition of that book is printing now*. Generally speaking, the actor cannot be overtly expressed in this construction. However, we can find a handful of instances with an overt actor in Visser's list of examples (1963–1973: §§ 1875–1881), shown in (1) to (4) below. These instances are all taken from the ModE period, and there are no instances in PDE in Visser's list.[1] We consider PDE examples like **A new edition of that book is printing by the publisher now* to be ungrammatical, but the indication of the actor in a locative sense is possible, as in *A new edition of that book is printing at the publisher now*.

(1) *Coming home to-night, a drunk boy* ***was carrying by our constable*** *to our new pair of sticks*. (1663 *Pepys's Diary*, April 12)

(2) *At the very time that this dispute* ***was maintaining by the centinel and the drummer***, *was the same point debating betwixst a trumpeter and a trumpeter's wife*. (1753 RICHARDSON, *Sir Charles Grandison* (London 1776) I.179)

(3) *it is there the search must* ***be making by Manfred and the strangers***. *(1765 Walpole, Castle of Otranto* (Classic Tales) 457)

(4) *the baize . . .* ***was actually forming*** *into a curtain* ***by the house-maids***. (1814 Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London 1897) 116)

This construction seems to have existed from the OE period, as in (5) below. In some earlier examples, the present participle appears in apposition to the past participle, as shown in (6) and (7). As already discussed in Section 3.3, such instances, along with the instances with

an actor phrase as in (1) to (4) above, indicate that the association of the past participle with the passive in earlier English is not as strong as in PDE, and the present participle could appear in the same slot, although such an occurrence does not seem to be so frequent. The situation became complicated around 1800, since the progressive passive '*be being* + past participle' started to appear around this period, as we have seen in Section 2.3.3.1. Some scholars such as Curme (1947: 233) claim that this emergence of the progressive passive caused the unaccusative in progressive construction to decrease in frequency and as a result, it may be obsolete in PDE.

(5) *Nu ic wille æfter þysum areccan hu þæs mynstres*
now I wish after this tell how that minister's
gesetnysse ***healdende wæs***
ordinance. ACC keeping was
'Now I wish to tell after all this how that minister's ordinance was kept.' (*LS* 23 (MaryofEgypt) 109)

(6) *He* [sc. *herenacius*] *is y-bounde and y-honged vp by þe hynder feet and* ***is*** *so* ***hongyng*** *and* ***y-slawe*** *wiþhonger.* (c1398 Trevisa, tr. Bartholomew, *De Proprietatibus Rerum* (photostat of MS Add 27944, in poss. Of MMED) 289 b/a)

(7) *vertue shal euer be pardurable, Where vice shal**be abhorred** & **hatyng**, And euer be in trouble & crakying.* (1463 Ashby, *Poems* (EETS) 79)

There are two more similar constructions historically (see, for example, Denison 1993: 391–2), which involve the use of prepositions, commonly *in* or *on*, and the prefix *a-*, as shown in (8) and (9), respectively. They are considered by some to be the origin of this unaccusative in progressive construction. There are various accounts of the developmental path: see, among others, Åkerlund (1914: 322–4), Denison (1993: 408), Jespersen (1909–49: IV 205), Mossé (1938: §§202–15, 232–57), Schibsbye (1972–7: II §7.4.8) and Visser (1963–73: §§1874, 1881).

(8) *While this gode was* ***in*** *gederyng the grettes among,*
while this wealth was in gathering the persons-of-rank among
Antenor to the temple trayturly yode
Antenor to the temple treacherously went
'While this wealth was being collected among the nobility, Antenor treacherously went to the temple.' (c1450 *Destr. Troy* 11735)

(9) *and while it was doing in one room, I was forced to keep Sir G. Carteret . . . in talking while it was **a**-doing.* (1660 Pepy's, *Diary* I 199.5 (13 Jul))

The use of prepositions seems to have existed from the OE period, although Visser (1963–73: §§1875–7) notes some occurrences without preposition even in OE, as shown in (10), as well as our earlier example in (5). As for the suffix *a-*, it emerged around 1400, probably as a reduction of the preposition *in* or *on* (see, for example, the glossary in Burrow and Turville-Petre 1996), and not the same prefix in OE, which means 'away'.

(10) *&* *wæs* *monigu* *ðrowunga*
and was greatly suffering
'and was greatly suffered.' (*MkGl (Ru)* 5.26)

We note that some verbs in the unaccusative-middle construction can be expressed with progressive aspect, which can be confused with unaccusative in progressive constructions, such as *These books are selling very well*. As shown in Table 7.1 above, there are five characteristics which distinguish one from the other, and the unaccusative-middle should not be confused with the unaccusative in progressive. Thus, a possible reason for the obsolescence of this construction in PDE produced by Curme (1947) seems a little doubtful. His account suggests that the progressive passive, as in *This book is being printed* (see, for example, Curme 1947: 233) took over from the unaccusative in progressive. However, his explanation involves a spontaneous reading (*ibid*: 233), which is a characteristic of the unaccusative-middle, and it is obvious that he did not make a distinction between the unaccusative in progressive and unaccusative-middle.

7.2.2 *This book sells well* (OBJ. +V (INTR) type)

As we have already seen, the subject's generic characteristics are a key semantic feature in this construction. Thus, in examples like *This book sells well*, *The door opens smoothly*, the addition of adverbials often helps to identify the generic characteristics of the subject. However, there is some ambiguity as to what these adverbs refer to. In an example like *This book sells well*, the adverbial can refer either to someone's action of selling or to the result of selling. Also, the subject tends to be inanimate or an entity lower in the nominal hierarchy. This helps to create a spontaneous reading, by suppressing the identity of the subject.

Table 7.2 Occurrence of unaccusative verbs

Period	Occurrence	Examples
15th C	1	*sell*
16th C	2	*soil, tell*
17th C	4	*peel, pull, steer, vend*
18th C	6	*polish, read, spoil, tear, thresh, wear*
19th C	16	*compose, fuse, let, load, make up, milk, paint, photograph, plough, sing, smoke, subscribe, translate, transplant, wrap, write*
20th C	4	*open, scare, shock, tire*

This type of construction is rather new in the language, and the first instance cited in Visser (1963–73: § 168) is dated 1437, the verb *sell*, as shown in (11), followed by some more early examples in (12) to (17). Visser (1963–73: § 168) lists 34 verbs used in this type of construction. His list shows that the frequency rises during the 19th century, illustrated in Table 7.2 above.

(11) *grete pleynte . . . of Wynes made nygh the*
great plenty of wines made near the

siede Portz come into this londe . . . atte
said ports come into this land at

that tyme . . . the tone of such Wynes
that time the barrel of such wines

***solde** better chepe by a gretter quantite*
sold better cheap by a greater quantity

than it is nowe
than it is now
'A large quantity of wine made near the said ports came into this land at that time . . . the barrel of such wines sold more cheaply by a large quantity than it is now' (1437 Rule Parlt. 5, 113 b)

(12) *The rinde or skin **peels** off most easily.*
'The bark or skin peels off most easily.' (1643 Sir T. Herbert, *Trav.* 183)

(13) *I chose my wife as she did her wedding-gown, not for a fine glossy surface, but such qualities as would **wear** well.* (1766 Goldsmith, *Vic. Wakef.* Ch. 1)

(14) *The comfortless, unaccomodating reality of those times which **paint** and **write** so well.* (1827 Lady Morgan, *Mem.* (1862) II, 247)

(15) *If you do not daily sweep your houses they **will** defile.* (1673 J. Caryl. Nat. & Princ. *Love* 79)

(16) *Mrs. Stevenson bids me tell Sally, that the striped gown I sent her **will** wash.* (1765 Franklin, *Lett. Wks.* III, 402)

(17) *The window **would** not lift.* (1844 W. H. Maxwell, *Sports & Adv. Scot.* xxxlii (1855) 26a)

As we have seen, an adverbial can be added in order to specify the subject's generic characteristics, but there is another way to derive such characteristics from the subject, which is the use of the modal verbs *will* or *would*, as in (15) to (17). These forms seem to have developed later than the ones without a modal as far as examples in Visser (1963–73: § 169) are concerned. This could be related to the development of the modal verbs and it may not be appropriate to specify which construction emerged first.

7.3 Potential passive

One of the uses of the passive across languages is to create potentiality, which is often expressed by the passive, or by constructions related to it such as the reflexive-middle construction (Geniušienė 1987: 273–5, 288–9). In the following examples, (18) is a case of the passive, and (19) and (20), of reflexive-middle constructions.

(18) Japanese

Chigatta	*houhou-mo*	*kangaer-are-ru*
different	method-as well	think-PASS-PRS

'One can think about a different method too.'

(19) Spanish

Se	*va*	*por*	*aquí*	*a*	*la*	*estación?*
REFL	go	via	here	to	the	station

'Can one go to the station from here?'

(20) Tetelcingo Nahatl (Uto-Aztecan, Shibatani 1985:828)

wali	*mo-kwo-s*
good	REFL-eat-FUT

'It can be eaten.'

The Japanese example in (18) involves a valency-decreasing operation, and the identity of the actor is kept ambiguous by this construction. There is no apparent difference between the potential and verbal passive in Japanese in terms of overt marking, and the difference is generally inferred from the context. So the translation for (18) could also be the verbal passive 'A different method is thought about too.' Examples from Spanish (19) and Tetelcingo Nahatl (20) involve reflexive constructions (see Geniušienė 1987: 273–5 for further examples). These instances illustrate what unites the passive and middle functionally. It is suggested in Shibatani (1985: 828) that such cases are likely to occur in a negative clause. Thus, the following examples express their potentiality more explicitly. Note that in Hindi, the negation is obligatory in the potential passive:

(21) Hindi (McGregor 1995: 130):

mujh-se	*soyā*	***nahīm***	*gayā*
I.OBL-by	sleep.PERF.PART	not	go.PST

'I couldn't sleep.' (lit. It was not slept by me)

(22) Turkish (Rona, 1998: 230)

urada	*park*	*yap-ıl-maz*
here	park	do-PASS-NEG

'One cannot park here.'

The Hindi example (21) is an impersonal passive, formed periphrastically with the auxiliary *gaya* 'go' and the perfective participle *soyā* 'slept', while the Turkish example (22) is a morphological passive, with the addition of the suffix *-ıl-*. When the passive is involved, the negative marker can function as a device to create indefiniteness (or impersonalness), which we have discussed at length in Section 4.2.4.3. In the Japanese passive, as noticed by many scholars (e.g. Doi 1982: 432–3; Shibatani 1985: 828; Kinsui 1997: 766; Yamaguchi *et al.* 1997: 56), the earlier potential passive always appeared in the negative clause (23) until the 12th/13th century. Shibatani (1985: 839–40) claims that when spontaneous event is negated, this event expresses 'impotentiality'. This impotentiality is the link between spontaneous event and the potentiality. However, the

potential passive in modern Japanese does not require negation, and an argument based on impotentiality does not explain why the negation was required only at the beginning. Alternatively, the earlier examples can be explained in terms of the realis–irrealis modality distinction. Old Japanese *uru* 'get', a component of the origin of the passive suffix, indeed expressed the potentiality on its own, but it did not fit in the spontaneous reading which was frequent in the Old Japanese passive, especially in terms of agency. Spontaneity does not imply volitionality, but the potential clause can, i.e. in *I can finish this work*, the subject *I* is likely to be considered an agent, not an experiencer or other semantic role. The only possibility to accommodate the potentiality along with the spontaneity is in the negative clause, since the subject's volition is reduced in the negative clause. In other words, the action does not take place, and the possible volition involved in the action is not detectable. In this way, the potentiality can be expressed while spontaneity is maintained, since both the potentiality and spontaneity belong to the irrealis modality. If the verbal passive had been popularised already in Old Japanese, the use of negation would not have been necessary, since the construction can express the volitional action.

(23) Old Japanese

imo	*wo*	*omo-i*	*i*	*mo*	*ner-aye-nu*
beloved	ACC	think-CONJ	I	too	sleep-PASS-NEG

'I cannot sleep, for I think of my beloved one.' (ca. 759-83 *Manyooshyuu*)

The potentiality expressed in the passive allows the speaker/ writer not to get himself/ herself involved in the context. Thus, languages like Turkish often use the potential passive with a negative marker in public signs, which softens the message. Instead of *I tell you not to do this*, less offensive forms like *This cannot be done* are much preferred (Rona 1998: 230).

However, this type of passive is not widespread across languages. In English, the passive is not used for potentiality, except where the modal auxiliary *can* or a verbal phrase *be able to* are used. In this case, it is obvious that the potentiality is not derived from the passive itself unlike the Japanese example in (18). However, there is a passive diathesis which creates potentiality with undergoer-orientation: copula+adjective with suffix *-able*. Before we actually analyse this construction, I will review modality and change of modality.

7.3.1 Mood and potentiality

Potentiality is part of the grammatical category of **mood** (or **modality**), along with permission, possibility, necessity, etc. A distinction is often made between **deontic modality** and **epistemic modality**. The former is concerned with permission, obligation and prohibition, the latter with knowledge and belief, including expression of possibility, probability and certainty (as perceived by the speaker), and in some cases, the speaker's degree of commitment to what he/she says, as with the use of **evidentials**. Evidentials in some languages force overt and obligatory marking to indicate the source of the speaker's evidence for his/ her utterance. It is often expressed in English by a speech act verb, such as *assume*, *insist*, etc., but in Fasu (Papuan), it is expressed morphologically. The English phrase *It's coming* has six distinct translations in Fasu according to the degree of evidentiality (Foley 1986): *apeare* 'I see it', *perarakae* 'I hear it', *pesareapo* 'I infer it from other evidence', *pesapakae* 'somebody says so, but I don't know who', *pesaripo* 'somebody says so, and I know who' and *pesapi* 'I suppose so'.

Mood distinction seems to be present cross-linguistically, but its realisation varies. Some languages use the inflection of the verb and others use special lexical items often known as **modals** (or **modal auxiliaries**). In English, mood can be expressed by modals, such as *can*, *may*, *must*, *will*, etc.[2]

As far as the English language is concerned, these modals are historically derived from full lexical verbs in OE, e.g. *must* from *mōtan* 'be allowed', *will* from *willan* 'wish, desire', etc. However, it is questioned whether such verbs in OE are fully lexical or not: Denison (1990) claims that these verbs, when they appear with impersonal verbs, for instance, still preserve the characteristics of the impersonal verb, i.e. there will not be a nominative subject, nor will the verb agree with any NP. Thus, in the following example, *sceal* 'shall' exhibits the syntactic pattern of the impersonal verb *aþreotan* 'weary', and the subject is expressed in the dative (i.e. *me* 'to me (DAT)', where *ic* 'I (NOM)' might have been expected) and the cause in genitive. (See also examples (53) and (54) in Chapter 2.)

(24)	*his*	*me*	***sceal***	*aþreotan*	*for*	*Romana*	*gewinnum*
	it.GEN	I.DAT	shall	weary	for	Roman.GEN.PL	conflict.DAT.PL

'I must weary of it because of the conflicts of the Romans.' (*Or.* 115.30)

Furthermore, there are instances where these modal-to-be verbs appear followed by both personal (as opposed to impersonal) and impersonal verbs in the same sentence. This means that these verbs are used as fully lexical verbs and as partially modal verbs. In the first (emboldened) instance, in the following example (25), *mōt* 'be allowed' is subjunctive plural and agrees with the nominative subject *we* 'we'. It goes with the main verb *geþencean* 'think through, resolve', which is a personal verb. In the second emboldened instance in example (25), *mōt* 'be allowed' is subjunctive singular and does not agree with any NP, and the main verb *gelimpan* 'be conducive' is impersonal with dative, not nominative, subject *us* 'to us'.

(25) *For þan we sceolon geþæncan þa*
for that we ought resolve that

hwile þe we ***moten*** *and hit*
while that we.PL be.able.SUBJ.PL and it

on urum gewealde sy þæt we
in our power may be that we

þa þing don þe us to
those things.PL do that us.DAT.PL to

ecere hælu gelimpan ***mote***
eternal salvation be conducive may.SUBJ.SG

'Therefore, while we are still able to do so and it is in our power, we ought to resolve to do those things that may lead us to eternal salvation.' (*HomS* 25 412)

This type of characteristic makes scholars like Traugott (1989) and Denison (1990) doubt the claim that these modals were still main verbs (see Lightfoot 1979: van Kemenade 1985). Judging from these instances alone, the status of these verbs as full lexical verbs seems uncertain. Instead, it may be better to think that they might have been full lexical verbs prior to OE, but that OE is the beginning of a transitional period when these verbs started to function as full auxiliaries.

The diachronic change of the modals from lexical verbs is commonly known to follow a certain pattern, i.e. from deontic to epistemic modality, and this direction is irreversible. This unidirectionality is associated most with Traugott's studies (1982, 1986, 1989, 1990; Traugott and Dasher 1987, 2002), but the sequence of different stages has been noted by various other scholars, e.g. Shepherd (1982), Bybee and Pagliuca (1985), Sweetser (1990), etc. Traugott's argument is that a pattern of

change from deontic to epistemic modality can be observed in various languages, and that this cannot be a mere coincidence. Also, she argues that the change involves subjectification, so that towards the last stage of the change, meanings are strongly based on the speaker's subjective belief or attitude towards the proposition.[3] She describes the change as a three-stage process, which she summarises as follows (Traugott 1989: 34–5):

Stage I: Meanings based in the externally described situation > meanings based in the internally (evaluative/perceptual/cognitive) described situation.
Stage II: Meanings based in the externally or internally described situation > meanings based in the textual and metalinguistic situation.
Stage III: Meanings tend to become increasingly based in the speaker's subjective belief state/attitude toward the proposition.

Not just modals but any verb which expresses one of the various modalities, such as speech act verbs for evidentials in English, should follow a similar pattern of semantic change to the three stages shown above.

7.3.2 Adjective with suffix *-able*

In English, the passive *per se* cannot create a potential reading without the use of the modal *can* or alternative phrases such as *be able to*. However, there are some diathesis constructions which can be used for potentiality, i.e. undergoer-orientation. Adjectives with the suffix *-able* such as *understandable* can have a passive reading. For example, *This book is understandable* can be paraphrased as *This book can be understood*, if we disregard some semantic details, which we will analyse shortly. This derivational suffix turns the verb into an adjective, so that this suffixed form can appear as a prenominal modifier or in a complement position in ditransitive verbs, as in (26) and (27) respectively. It can also appear in the complement of quasi-copulas, as in (28).

(26) *His school friends . . . describe him as a very* ***likeable*** *lad.* (LOB A09 171-172)

(27) *. . . as this unfortunate man had, for some days past, discovered such marks of insanity as made it* ***advisable*** *to remove him.* (LOB G56 103-105)

(28) *Jackson ceased to be cocksure and* ***became*** *jumpy,* ***irritable*** *and maladjusted.* (LOB R09 140-141)

Some -*able* adjectives have gained new meanings and the original verbal meaning has often disappeared. Examples of such cases are *readable* 'interesting or enjoyable to read', *considerable* 'fairly large or great; of an amount or degree that must be taken seriously', to name but two. Furthermore, the suffix can be attached to nouns, or denominal verbs, such as *microwave* as in *This container is microwavable*.[4] We restrict our study to the occurrence of the -*able* adjective as complement of the copula, since it can be contrasted with the passive more accurately in this way. Also, we disregard examples of nouns with the suffix (e.g. *clubbable*) or adjectives with independent meanings (*readable, considerable*) or adjectives without verbal counterparts (*feasible*).

Wasow (1977: 336) claims that one of the reasons for the co-existence of -*able* adjectives and '*can be* + past participle' constructions is the fact that the semantic content of the suffix -*able* is close to that of one meaning of *can*. However, he does not specify what meaning. Whether this claim is accurate or not is dealt with later in this Section, but it seems worth investigating the meaning relationship between these two constructions. The modal *can* itself underwent some dramatic changes over time, and we summarise them as follows. OE *cunnan*, the origin of PDE *can*, used to mean 'know, know how to', and marginally 'be able to'. Thus, the usage of *can* in OE was like one found in some Romance languages, such as the Present-day French *savoir* 'know' in (29a) below, which is clearly distinguished from a modal *pouvoir* 'can' as in (29b). The difference between them is that *savoir* 'know' indicates mental capability, which is often related to one's knowledge, while *pouvoir* 'can' denotes physical capacity, which is not necessarily related to knowledge.

(29) a. *Je* ***sais*** *parler français*
I know speak French
'I can speak French.' (mental capacity, knowledge)
b. *Je* ***peux*** *parler français*
I can speak French
'I can speak French.' (physical ability)

According to *OED* (cf. *can, v.*[1] *irreg.* II. 3, 4.a.), the meanings of 'know how (to do anything); to have learned, to be intellectually able' pass imperceptibly into the current sense, 'be able; to have the power, ability or capability'. Apart from these two meanings, *can* also expresses or

expressed at some stage of its development the following meanings: ‘possibility’, ‘permission’, ‘learn, study, get to know’. Examples for each meaning are illustrated below, and their chronological order is shown in Figure 7.1 (for a similar, simplified version of the table, see Traugott 1972: 198).

(30) ‘know’
Most of the Inhabitants ***can*** *no word of Cornish.* (1602 CAREW *Cornwall* 56a)

(31) ‘know how, be intellectually able’
On al maners that ye shal ***conne*** *demaunde.* (1485 CAXTON *Paris* § *V.* (1868) 64)

(32) ‘be able, have the power, ability or capacity’
What Madness ***cou’d*** *provoke A Mortal Man t’ invade a sleeping God?* (1697 DRYDEN *Virg. Georg.* iv. 642)

(33) ‘possibility’
Ye ***can****not drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of the devils.* (1611 BIBLE I Cor. X. 21)

(34) ‘permission’
Can *I speak with the Court?* (1879 TENNYSON *Falcon* 12)

(35) ‘learn, study, get to know’
He laboured . . . to ***can*** *many texts thereof by* ***harte.*** (1528 MORE *Dial Heresyes* 1. Wks. 111/1)

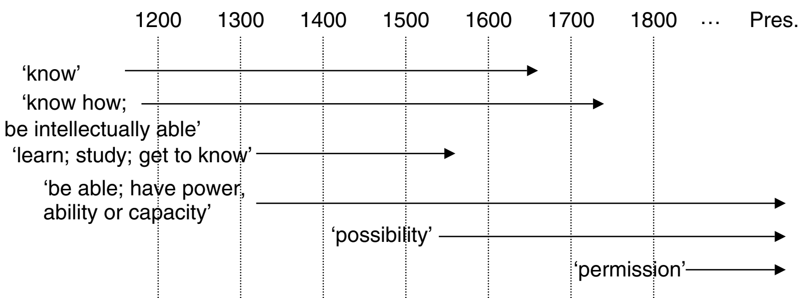

Figure 7.1 Diachronic change of meanings of PDE *can*

As we can see, the lexical verbal usage had disappeared completely by the mid 18th century and the modal use dominates thereafter. We can roughly say that 'ability', 'possibility' and 'permission' are the main meanings of *can* in PDE, but the sequence of appearance is not what we expect. In the previous Section, we saw the unidirectionality of change in modality, from deontic to epistemic, involving subjectification towards the end of the stage. What we can observe in the Figure 7.1 is slightly different, in that the epistemic modality 'possibility' comes earlier than the deontic 'permission'. This peculiarity is indeed noticed by Bybee and Pagliuca (1985) and Bybee (1988). Their argument is that the 'permission' is directly derived from the ability reading, not via the epistemic 'possibility'. Bybee and Pagliuca claim that the developmental path of *can* is coherent with those modals that shifted from obligative to epistemic meanings, like *must*. Also, there are some ambiguities from *can* in PDE, especially when the potentiality meaning is used with the passive (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 165–6). This causes meaning change in the active–passive alternation. Therefore, *can* in (36a) and (37a) expresses ability, in (36b) and (37b) arguably possibility, although ability is still detectable. These examples indicate the integration of potentiality in the English passive, although the passive requires modals for such a meaning change. What creates the ambiguity seems to be the orientation, i.e. when the actor is subject, there is no ambiguity, but an undergoer subject creates the possibility of two different readings.

(36) a. *John cannot do it.* ('John is unable to do it')
b. *It cannot be done* (*by John*). ('It is impossible for John to do it' or 'John is unable to do it')

(37) a. *She can't teach John.* ('She is unable to teach John')
b. *John can't be taught.* ('It is impossible to teach him' or 'He is unable to learn')

In the case of *-able* adjectives, potentiality is expressed without modals, but what meaning or meanings are expressed by the suffix is not yet clearly known. We have seen the earlier quotation from Wasow (1977: 336), who claims that one meaning of *can* corresponds to that of *-able* adjectives. However, it seems difficult to identify which of three meanings he has in mind. These meanings, in fact, can all appear in *-able* adjectives. A useful distinction among these three distinctive meanings is made in Coates (1983: 93), i.e. PERMISSION: human authority/rules and regulations allow me to do it, POSSIBILITY: external circumstances

allow me to do it, ABILITY: inherent properties allow me to do it. We use this distinction for analysing our data. Consider the examples in (38) to (40). Obviously, there are also some ambiguous cases, like the examples in (41), where the sense of both 'ability' and 'possibility' can be extracted.

(38) 'ability'
*He has always been **predictable**, in the sense that once he has made his position clear all his actions flow logically from that position.* (LOB B08 157-159)

(39) 'possibility'
*In ancient thinking the words "blood" and "life" were almost **interchangeable** and many endeavours were made to transfer the healthy life blood of a young man to the aged and infirm.* (LOB J13 117-120)

(40) 'permission'
*. . . the County Council shall defray the expense of the survey and examination and the amount thereof shall be a debt due from the County Council to the Crown and shall be **recoverable** accordingly.* (LOB H13 192-195)

(41) both 'ability' and 'possibility'
*The first deals with the outward and the second with the inner world. It is said that they are **inseparable** but it is not clear why (for example) my sensation of colour and my thought of Substance should combine into the amalgam we call 'seeing a thing'.* (LOB D09 39-43)

Table 7.3 provides an overall distribution of these three different meanings from *-able* adjectives found in our corpora, with the identification of each meaning based on the criteria given above. The periods covered

Table 7.3 Distribution of different readings of *-able* in different periods after eModE

	Ability	Possibility	Permission	Ambiguous	Total
eModE	14 (24.6%)	27 (47.4%)	8 (14.0%)	8 (14.0%)	57 (100%)
lModE	37 (25.2%)	78 (53.1%)	13 (8.8%)	19 (12.9%)	147 (100%)
PDE	54 (14.2%)	263 (69.0%)	35 (9.2%)	29 (7.6%)	381 (100%)

are eModE, lModE and PDE. In terms of distribution, synchronically in PDE, 'possibility' seems to be favoured, but other meanings are not impossible and there are some ambiguous cases. Diachronicaly, the distribution of these meanings doesn't change much between eModE and PDE but the frequency of 'possibility' has gradually increased, i.e. from 47.7% (eModE) to 69% (PDE), while 'ability' and 'permission' have overall decreased, although the decrease in 'ability' is slightly less gradual than that in 'permission'. So based on Table 7.3, we can claim that possibility, which is an epistemic reading, has been the dominant use of the *-able* adjective from its first appearance. This seems to indicate that the unidirectional change of modality from deontic to epistemic cannot be observed here, since epistemic modality is dominant from the beginning, although judging from the earlier slightly lower frequency, possibility is still developing. It is generally considered that this type of construction started to become more frequent after the 18th century. The overall occurrence in Table 7.4 may not reveal this, since the size of corpora varies. However, when examples are counted according to the size of the corpora for each period, we find a steady increase in occurrence, as shown in Table 7.4.

The meaning of possibility in *can* started around the mid 16th century. Its semantic counterpart in the *-able* adjective construction started around the 18th century. The increase in frequency of the *-able* adjective construction coincides with that of the permission meaning of *can*. Although the meanings expressed by these two different constructions are different (but somewhat related), this timing seems to be important in the development. Permission and possibility are each closely related to the passive, in the case of the modal *can* in English as well as in other languages, as we have seen earlier in (18) to (22).

The development of the potential passive diathesis in English, as I understand it, can be assumed as follows. The suffix was originally used only with Old French loan words but was soon reanalysed and applied to words of Anglo-Saxon origin (cf. *OED -able* a.). The suffix can also appear on its own, and *able*, derived from Old French *hable*, could be used both as a verb and an adjective. It used to have various meanings,

Table 7.4 Occurrence of *-able* adjective constructions after eModE

	eModE	**lModE**	**PDE**
Overall occurrence	57	147	381
Occurrence per 100,000 words	10	24	31

but in PDE only certain meanings of adjectival usage have survived (*OED able* a., †*able* v.). OED divides adjectival use into two, passively (*OED able* a. I) and actively (*OED able* a. II). Interestingly, all passive usage has died out (although the date of disappearance varies), and what survives belongs to the active usage. 'Permission' and 'ability' can be expressed by *able*, but not 'possibility'. 'Permission' from *able* started around the end of OE or eME, while 'ability' started at the end of ME. Also, *able* ceased to be used passively, while the *-able* adjective gradually narrowed in use towards the passive (*OED -able* a.). There may be various factors involved, but what seems to be the crucial one is orientation.

The subject became predominantly the undergoer after the eModE period (after about 1800: Strang 1970: 135), which naturally creates a better environment for a passive meaning. Following this change, another major factor in my view, the intervention of subjectification, happened. Due to the shift in orientation, later cases involve an undergoer more frequently, which means that the subject is only the recipient of action. When the actor is subject, it tends to express ability, as in *This bed is comfortable* (i.e. this bed can provide comfort). When the undergoer is the subject, the statement tends to be based on the speaker/writer's own evaluation of whether it is capable of doing something, e.g. in *He is comfortable*, the question is whether someone or something can comfort him or not and this is judged by the speaker/writer. This subjective view may be the reason that the epistemic modality 'possibility' is the most frequent meaning in *-able* adjectives. So as far as we can observe, the earlier claim by Wasow, that one meaning of *can* matches a reading of the *-able* adjective, does not affect the semantic and functional changes in these two constructions at all. Both constructions can in theory express identical meanings – ability, possibility and permission – although with differing frequencies. This alone disproves Wasow's claim. Our approach does not disregard these facts and incorporates various factors more comfortably.

The importance of change in orientation is obvious by now, and there are other linkages attested elsewhere. Hundt (2002: 124–5) considers that the *-able* adjective constructions and the medio-passive constructions (our unaccusative-middle and unaccusative in progressive) are semantically equivalent, due to the fact that these two constructions can both take an overtly expressed agent phrase. Other scholars like Lemmens (1998: 83) also consider the linkage between the medio-passive and *-able* adjectives along the same lines. However, the actor phrase in the *-able* adjective is hardly ever overtly expressed, as will be exemplified shortly. Also, their argument is based on our definition of orientation,

i.e. passive diathesis, but orientation does not suffice to explain the relationship between them. The *-able* adjective construction generally assumes the presence of an outer cause, which indicates that it is related to the unaccusative-middle. In addition, the unaccusative-middle entails the generic characteristics of the subject (see Section 7.2.2) and this can be found in the *-able* adjective construction. Therefore, *This text is incomprehensible* implies that inability to comprehend a text can be attributed to the way the text is written, its organisation, etc.

Now let us turn our attention to the relationship between the passive and *-able* adjective. Various cases of the *-able* adjective exhibiting a passive meaning may well be related to the animacy of the subject. The animacy of the subject in this construction generally follows the pattern of the passive as well and the subject tends to be inanimate, although it is possible for either animate or non-animate entities to occupy the subject slot. As we have seen earlier, the various readings of the suffix can be attributed to the subject, particularly the subject's generic characteristics. The actor, although not present and merely inferable, has little impact on the action itself. This can be considered an unaccusative-middle, although that construction does not require the presence of various adverbials to intensify the generic characteristics of the subject (see Section 7.2.2).[5] These general characteristics can be observed in our data, as illustrated in Table 7.5.

It is fairly obvious that this construction is predominantly inanimate-oriented. This resembles the distribution of animacy in the subject entity in the verbal passive (see Table 5.1 and Section 5.2.1). Thus, apart from the orientation, this construction follows a similar animacy pattern on the subject. There are some ambiguous cases, but as Strang (1970: 135) notes, the crucial difference is animacy: a human subject signals the active reading, an inanimate subject the passive reading, as in the case of *sensible*, i.e. *sensible person* 's/ he feels or realises' and *sensible object* 'it is perceptible' (as cited by Strang, but note that *OED* examples end c1880). The actor is predominantly human, however, it is not overtly expressed but merely inferable. Thus, examples like ?*This book is understandable by the students* are not acceptable. The omission of the actor indicates that

Table 7.5 Animacy of arguments in *-able* construction in PDE

	Human animate	**Non-human animate**	**Inanimate**	**Total**
Undergoer	23 (6.0%)	0 (0%)	358 (94.0%)	381 (100%)
Actor	293 (76.9%)	0 (0%)	88 (23.9%)	381 (100%)

the *-able* construction can also function as an impersonalisation device. As indicated in Table 7.5, the actor tends to be the human animate. There are, however, three occurrences of the actor overtly expressed in PDE (0.8% of all examples), as shown in (42) to (44).[6] As we have mentioned earlier, some scholars consider the presence of an overtly expressed actor as a sign of a relationship between the *-able* adjective and unaccusative-middle or unaccusative in progressive constructions. This view fails to grasp two points: the infrequency of the overtly expressed actor, and that the *-able* adjective construction is only related to the unaccusative-middle, not the unaccusative in progressive. Their argument seems to be too broad to capture the details of this *-able* construction.

(42) *A really cheap midday meal is widely available* ***by*** *law, and the quantity and quality and service is much above what one would expect in Britain, . . .* (LOB B21 57-59)

(43) *. . . sin is commonly defined as the contravention of God's will by thought, word, deed, or the omission to do what is enjoined, and must not be confused with crime (behaviour which is declared to be punishable* ***by*** *the law) or with immorality (behaviour which is below, or contrary to, the standards of current public morality);* (LOB G57 160-164)

(44) *. . . if the tenant shall at any time fail to keep the demised premises insured as aforesaid the landlord may do all things necessary to effect or maintain such insurance and any moneys expended by him for that purpose shall be repayable* ***by*** *the tenant on demand and may be recovered by action forthwith.* (LOB J48 146-150)

There may be a loose lexical restriction on the *-able* adjective. As noted in Wasow (1977: 344), some verbs sound better with this suffix than in the passive. Those verbs include the ones listed in (45). He also claims that when a verb cannot be passivised, naturally these verbs do not have a corresponding *-able* form (*ibid*: 344). These verbs are shown in (46). This also indicates a close relationship between the passive and adjectives with the suffix *-able*. All these verbs in (45) are non-stative, but this does not exclude the possibility of stative verbs in this form. As we have seen earlier, the stative verb *understand* can appear with the suffix. The following examples containing verbs in (45) in *-able* adjective form are found in our data, e.g. (47) and (48).

(45) Better in *-able* form than passive : *regret, afford, deplore, munch*

(46) No passivisation and no *-able* adjective: *resemble, cost, last*

(47) *In view of the importance of the experiments and their potential value to suffering humanity this seasonal lack of "guinea pigs" is, of course,* ***regrettable****, but is the explanation quite so simple?* (LOB B18 137-140)

(48) *The demoralising effect on the staff of the new towns was* ***deplorable****.* (LOB H15 138-139)

We assume that these verbs are used in the *-able* adjective construction, because the predicate's semantic characteristics are based on the subject's responsibility and this is more important than the participation of the actor, i.e. *The result is regrettable* indicates that what causes the regret is not within the actor's capability - that something else causes it. However, these verbs can also be found in the passive, as shown below in (49) to (51). There is a preference for the use of these verbs in the *-able* adjective, but it does not mean that they are restricted to this form. Also, when these verbs are passivised, they tend to appear in the impersonal construction (the type with dummy subject with verbal morpheme), as in (49) and (50) but this is not categorical, as exceptions can be found as in (51). As far as these verbs are concerned, the *-able* adjective construction involves the speaker, as we have seen above, while the passive does not and is used as a type of report.

(49) *Of those closely associated with Rutherford in Manchester, Marsden, Darwin, Chadwick, Andrade and Niels Bohr were all present, and it was greatly* ***regretted*** *that William Kay, Rutherford's laboratory steward and personal assistant, to whom he acknowledged a great debt, did not live to be present at these celebrations;* (LOB J09 23-27)

(50) *It is, I think, appropriate that local authorities should be active and responsible in the preservation of this country's heritage and it is* ***regretted*** *that opportunities appear to have been missed as ownership of such estates has enormous prestige value for a local authority.* (LOB F43 76-80)

(51) *In England 11-plus selection has been* ***deplored*** *because of its adverse effects on education in the primary school.* (LOB J36 36-38)

By now, it is clear that the *-able* adjective and the passive are closely related. However, it may seem peculiar that the modal sometimes appears

with *-able* adjectives. This is not at all frequent, but as shown in (52), it is possible. This is the only example in our data of PDE (0.3% of overall examples). The combination is made possible due to two different meanings, i.e. *be acceptable* indicates ability, while *can* indicates a possibility whose condition is expressed in the following *if*-clause. The two different constructions in examples like this do not mean the same in the same clause. They can in theory have the same meaning, and the avoidance of such cases may explain the low occurrence of this combination.

(52) *We woke to storm and wind, but even these* ***can be acceptable*** *in a quiet hut, if days are not too precious.* (LOB G33 81-82)

7.4 Necessitative passive *This TV needs fixing* (main V +V-*ing*) type

In relation to modality, there is another passive diathesis in English, **necessitative**, expressing necessity or obligation. This type of modality can be either deontic or epistemic: *I really have to finish this work* (deontic), but *This phone call must be from my friend* (epistemic). The necessitative mood is expressed most frequently with the modal auxiliaries, but in some languages it can be overtly expressed in the passive. We have in fact already seen one such example from Italian in (4) in Chapter 6. In English, the passive cannot express the necessitative mood without the help of a modal auxiliary. However, there is a diathesis construction like *This TV needs fixing*, where the grammatical subject is the undergoer and the clause can express meanings similar to the passive without the overt marking. In what follows, we analyse how this construction came to function as a passive diathesis.

Verbs such as *need*, *want*, etc. + gerund can also express passive diathesis. Visser (1963–73: SS1788), for example, lists about twenty such verbs. What this gerund form expresses is a passive sense and this sentence can be paraphrased as *This TV has to be fixed*. Visser claims that the construction sounds a little archaic[7] and as a result, a passive form with one of these verbs as main verb, such as *This TV needs to be fixed*, may be more frequently used nowadays. As far as we can observe in examples cited in Visser (1963-73: SS1788), there seem to be three groups of verbs which belong to this type of construction, exemplified in (53) to (55). Those verbs whose semantic/lexical characteristics involve endurance and necessity survived in this construction. In them, the meaning of necessity seems to be more productive, but in this work we collectively

call the construction with main verbs with meanings of endurance or necessity + gerund **the necessitative passive**.

Type i. Some verbs, such as *abide, avoid, continue, escape, lack, suffer,* ceased to be used in this type of construction around the 17th to 18th centuries. An example is:

(53) *The books* ***continue selling.*** (1769 J. Priestley, *Rudiments of English Grammar* p. 111)

Type ii. Some verbs, such as *await, miss, prevent, repay, stand,* only appear in this type of construction in the 19th to 20th centuries. An example is:

(54) *Regular mess of prints and some odds and ends where they'd* ***missed sweeping.*** (1947 N. Marsh, *Final Curtain* (Fontana Bks.) 228)

Type iii. Some verbs, such as *bear, deserve, merit, need, require, want,* started to appear in this type of construction as early as 1400 and can still appear in PDE. An earlier example is:

(55) *As al men of a comynte* ***berun punishing*** *for*
as all men of a community bear punishing for
þe defaut of two or on
the failing of two or one
'All the men in a community except one or two bear punishment for the crime.' (c1400 Wyclif, *Apology* 27)

The animacy of the subject has no effect on the appearance of this type of construction: the subject can be either human-animate or inanimate. Consider (56) and (57). Some verbs, such as *avoid*, can take V-*ing* as their object, but the orientation in PDE is different from that in the earlier period. Thus, compare (58) with (59). The earlier example (58) is undergoer-oriented, while the PDE example (59) is actor-oriented. When these verbs are used and the undergoer-orientation was still present, the passive reading was possible, but actor-orientation prohibits this. Our data does not contain many instances of necessitative passive examples (only 14 in PDE, and there is no earlier example). Nevertheless, we show the characteristics of the undergoer-subject found in our corpora in Table 7.6. Our data clearly shows that the proportions of human and inanimate are not very different. This indicates that

undergoer-orientation regardless of animacy is the necessary element in this construction, which reassures us that this is a type of passive diathesis.

(56) *I only hope* ***you*** *will not need rescuing before the day is out.* (1954 J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring* 120) [human-animate]

(57) ***Davis' evergreen verses*** *(happily too familiar to need recalling here).* (1922 James Joyce *Ulysses* (The Odyssey Press) 329) [inanimate]

(57) ***those, that escape****, shall avoid killing* (Söd) (1683 Dryden, *The Duke of Guise* (Wks., ed. Scott/ S.) 90) [undergoer-oriented]

(58) *This means that* ***one*** *should avoid choosing wines that are very dry or of delicate flavour.* (LOB E19 8-9) [actor-oriented]

Table 7.6 Characteristics of subject in necessitative passive in PDE

	Human	Non-human animate	Inanimate	Total
Subject	6 (42.9%)	0 (0%)	8 (57.1%)	14 (100%)

Types i and ii of this construction are no longer productive, and only some of the verbs in type iii are productive. As in the case of the potential passive, the necessitative passive also sometimes involves a shift of orientation in the subject historically, i.e. from actor-orientation to undergoer-orientation. This is also, in our view, related to the subjective view. Earlier examples shown in Visser (1963–73: SS1788) are either more deontic than epistemic or not sensitive to modality at all. However, the later occurrences are better considered epistemic, especially when the construction involves *need* or *want*. So unlike the potential passive, the necessitative passive, in our view, follows the general diachronic pattern of modality change described in Section 7.3.1.

In Section 7.2.1, we saw an unaccusative in progressive in which the progressive was obligatory: *The book is printing now*, but not **The book prints*. Like the gerund in the necessitative passive, the use of verbs in the *-ing* form seems to be closely related to passive sense. Indeed, the difference is the auxiliary: for the unaccusative in progressive the copula is used, but the verbs used in necessitative passive can be considered as quasi-copulas, with a certain degree of modality. So this is why only certain verbs could survive in this construction: the construction itself is

a variation of the unaccusative in progressive, licensed by the modality of the main verb as quasi-copula. Other verbs lack this characteristic and fail to survive.

A general tendency with regard to modality, attested cross-linguistically, is for archaic constructions like impersonal verbs, if some of them remain in a language, to produce some kind of modality. For example, in Classical Greek, we find residues of earlier impersonal verbs - 'residues', since most earlier impersonal verbs are 'personalised' by this stage (Bauer 1998: 112). At the stage of development from Classical Greek onwards, most of them express modality, as shown below:

(60) Classical Greek (Bauer 1998: 112)
- a. *éksesti moi* 'it is allowed to me'
- b. *khré* 'there is need'
- c. *seî me* 'I have to'

As for such a developmental pattern, Bauer (1998: 111) claims that '[s]ince the underlying "agency" is less apparent in these verbs than in verbs conveying emotions it is clear why these verbs are late in developing personal forms.'[8] The same can be applied to the development of Latin impersonal verbs (Bauer 1998: 108–11). It may explain why certain verbs in English were used as impersonal verbs even shortly after ME[9] and in addition, the verb *need* draws our particular attention in this respect. It was used impersonally earlier and developed a personal form only in the meaning of 'need', and the impersonal verb construction is kept when it denotes the notion of 'obligation' (van der Gaaf 1904: 127–9).[10] Thus, during ME, two distinct constructions could be found, as shown in (61) and (62). These examples indicate the stability of verbs denoting modality and there is little wonder why only a couple of verbs remain in the necessitative passive in PDE.

(61) Impersonal (denoting 'obligation')
me *nede*
I.DAT need.IMPERS
"I need' (lit. 'need to me')

(62) Personal (denoting 'need')
He needs not to be asked.

The necessitative passive in English, thus, is deeply related to modality. This can be shown synchronically and diachronically. Synchronically,

verbs denoting necessitative modality, such as *need* or *want*, are the only verbs that can appear in this construction. Diachronically, there is some evidence even cross-linguistically, as we have seen, that modality tends to delay the diachronic change (e.g. the loss of impersonal), probably due to lack of agency in the subject entity, and this allows certain verbs expressing modality to appear in a syntactically marked construction. Due to its modality, the construction may appear to be semantically marked as well. In the case of the necessitative passive in English, we can assume that the modality plays an important role in its development and existence in PDE.

7.5 Passive diathesis in voice continuum

The passive diathesis will now be analysed in terms of the voice continuum. As hinted earlier in Section 6.4, some characteristics of the *get*-passive can overlap with some diathesis constructions. So we first analyse the relationship between the *get*-passive, the unaccusative in progressive and the unaccusative-middle. Then we study the potential and necessitative passive in the voice continuum.

7.5.1 *Get*-passive: comparable to unaccusative?

Table 7.1 (on page 187) indicates various characteristics of the unaccusative-middle and unaccusative in progressive which are complementary to each other. All of the six characteristics listed in the table seem to be present in the *get*-passive. However, as we have seen, the *get*-passive involves several different constructions. For example, subject control is present in one type, e.g. *He got shot by the riot police*, and absent in the other, e.g. *He got worried about the result*. Since this subject control can be considered as a characteristic which allows us to make a rough distinction, two distinctive types of *get*-passive in terms of subject control are compared to the unaccusative-middle and unaccusative in progressive. Consider Tables 7.7 and 7.8. The *get*-passive does not perfectly match either the unaccusative-middle or the unaccusative in progressive, although in the presence of subject control it seems to resemble the unaccusative in progressive and in its absence the unaccusative-middle. So a *get*-passive with subject control is like an unaccusative in progressive with the addition of subject-generic characteristics, while one without is like an unaccusative-middle with the addition of time reference.

However, these tables should not be taken as they are, since as we have seen, there is a certain gradience in subject generic control. This affects the relationship between the *get*-passive and unaccusative in progressive,

Table 7.7 *Get*-passive with subject control in relation to unaccusatives

	Unacc-middle	**Unacc. in prog.**	***Get*-passive**
i. Time reference	×	✓	✓
ii. Imperative/progressive	×	✓	✓
iii. Adverbials	✓	×	×
iv. Subject control	×	✓	✓
v. Generic characteristics	✓	×	✓
vi. Modal verbs	✓	×	✓

Table 7.8 *Get*-passive without subject control in relation to unaccusatives

	Unacc-middle	**Unacc. in prog.**	***Get*-passive**
i. Time reference	×	✓	✓
ii. Imperative/progressive	×	✓	×
iii. Adverbials	✓	×	✓
iv. Subject control	×	✓	×
v. Generic characteristics	✓	×	✓
vi. Modal verbs	✓	×	✓

as shown in Table 7.7 with the presence of control. As we have seen, the *get*-passive differs from the unaccusative in progressive in respect to the generic characteristics of the subject. The degree of their presence in the *get*-passive varies (cf. Table 7.7), and some instances can make the presence more obvious than others. So it is possible to speculate that this characteristic creates a gradience: some behave like the prototype of the unaccusative in progressive more than others do. Also, there is a certain degree of lexical restriction, since not every verb can appear in the unaccusative-middle or unaccusative in progressive. Also the *get*-passive can cover the lexical range of both the unaccusative in progressive and unaccusative-middle. Such characteristics indicate that the *get*-passive is more flexible than the unaccusative in progressive and unaccusative-middle, and that the *get*-passive is a construction that is partly functioning in the domain of the middle voice in English.

Does this mean that the *get*-passive came into existence spontaneously, or were there any functional demands? The chronology of the three constructions in question is shown below in Figure 7.2. Dotted lines in the table indicate that the frequency is low but that the construction was or still is used to a certain degree. It is obvious that the unaccusative in progressive was used earlier, and this was the only construction

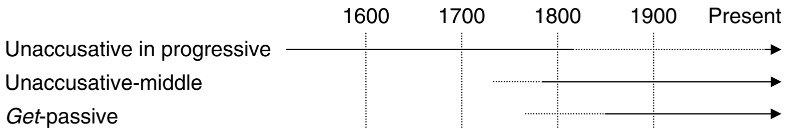

Figure 7.2 Chronology of unaccusatives and *get*-passive

among these three up until 1800. The shift happened around 1800, when the frequency of the unaccusative in progressive decreased and the unaccusative-middle and *get*-passive gained in frequency. The *get*-passive seems to share various characteristics of both the unaccusative in progressive and unaccusative-middle, since there are still about 30% of occurrences with the subject control, which is similar to the unaccusative in progressive. However, the majority of occurrences in PDE are related to the unaccusative-middle. The major difference between the *get*-passive and unaccusative-middle is spontaneity, indicated by the time reference in Table 7.7 and Table 7.8 above, i.e. the unaccusative-middle indicates a spontaneous event, while the *get*-passive does not. Thus, by expressing unspontaneous events, the *get*-passive differs from the unaccusative-middle, but this characteristic allows these two constructions to co-exist, i.e. there are different functional demands and the characteristics of the *get*-passive in PDE can cover the functions of the rather diminishing unaccusative in progressive.

The English passive in the voice continuum seems to stand on its own and does not involve much of the middle voice or reflexive construction domain. The middle-related constructions do invade the functional domain often associated with the passive cross-linguistically (cf. Siewierska 1984: 164–84; Geniušienė 1987: 257–71; Givón 1990: 637–9; Kemmer 1993: 147–9, 201–6; Greenberg 1995: 150, and others), but not much in English. However, by the introduction of the *get*-passive, PDE allows us to use another tactic to express functions in the middle-related domain. The *get*-passive, as we have seen so far, does not have a clear morphosemantic boundary of its own but is related to various other constructions. Thus, this flexibility may explain its growing popularity in use. This diversity in function may best be expressed in conceptual space. Figure 7.3 illustrates a space for the PDE *get*-passive. This schema represents a situation type including the *get*-passive, a revised version of the schema for the *be*-passive (see Figure 5.5), The added constructions (*get*-passive, unaccusative in progressive and unaccusative-middle) are all located towards the middle voice on the left-hand axis.

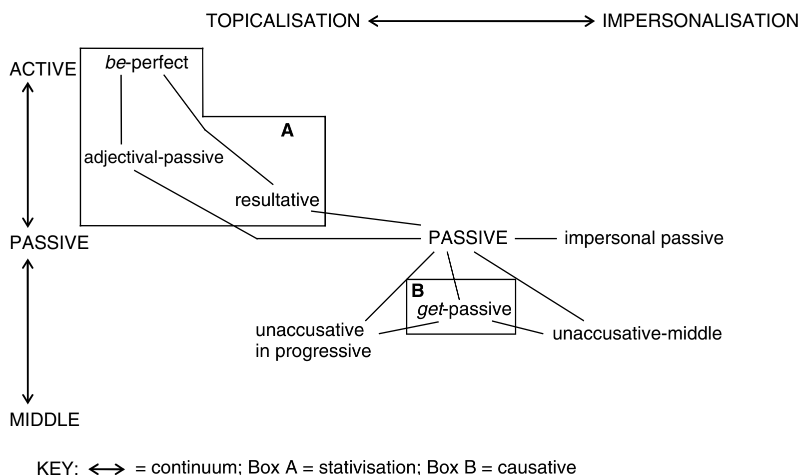

Figure 7.3 Conceptual space for the PDE *get*-passive

As for the topicalisation–impersonalisation axis, the *get*-passive is located between unaccusative in progressive and unaccusative-middle, since the *get*-passive possess partial characteristics of both the unaccusative in progressive and unaccusative-middle (Table 7.7 and Table 7.8). They are all somehow related to the passive, e.g. by having the same orientation, but the *get*-passive is more closely related to the passive due to the similarity of the construction. We also need another box B, which signifies another type of grammatical voice, i.e. causative. This is due to the historical origin of this construction (see Section 6.3.2).

The *get*-passive is relatively new in the history of English, so the conceptual space may not vary much in a diachronic analysis. If there is a difference, it lies in the fact that the earlier *get*-passive construction was more agentive, with the subject in control of the action, but the subject gradually lost this control (Table 6.13), turning it into a less agentive construction. As long as examples have the subject in control it shows that the construction has not developed to the extent that the *get*-passive starts to have a passive reading. In addition, the unaccusative in progressive and unaccusative-middle appeared at different periods (see Figure 7.2), so once they are involved in a diachronic representation, the result shows a much clearer difference. So in Figures 7.4–7.6 we represent the conceptual space of the *get*-passive for periods after lME, and for the sake of clarity we exclude what we have already seen about the *be*-passive. We will come back to the overall change in the passive and

related constructions in English in Section 9.5 below. Like Figure 5.6 and Figure 5.7, the shaded area represents constructions present in each period. These Figures clearly show that there is a gradual development of the constructions we analysed in this chapter. Unaccusative in progressive existed earlier but is disappearing. Unaccusative-middle appeared earlier than the *get*-passive, but they are both productive in PDE.

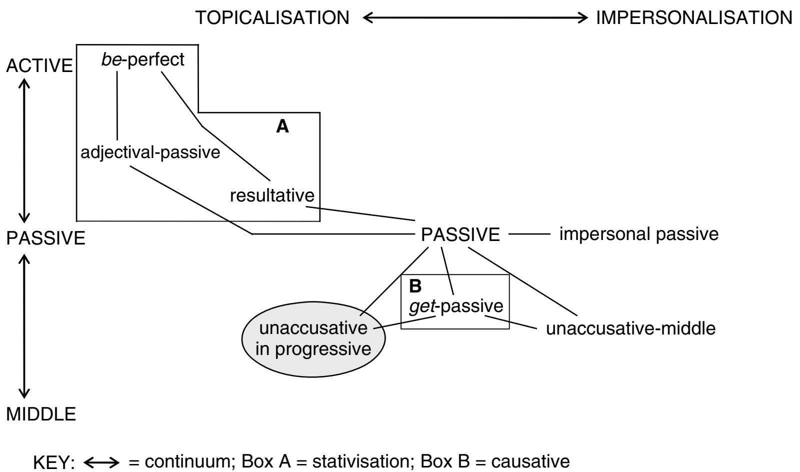

Figure 7.4 Conceptual space of the *get*-passive for eModE

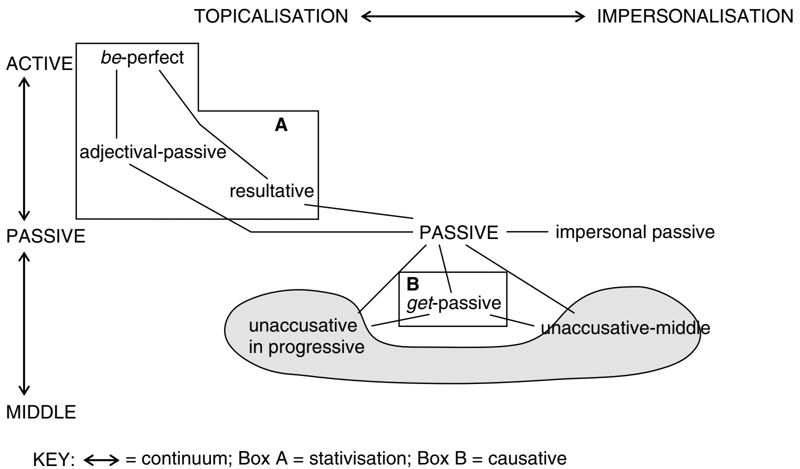

Figure 7.5 Conceptual space of the *get*-passive for lModE

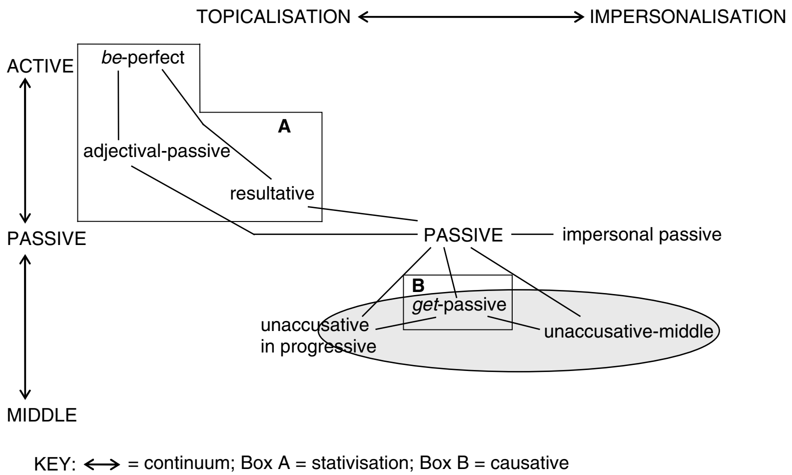

Figure 7.6 Conceptual space of the *get*-passive for lModE and PDE

7.5.2 Diathesis in relation to the passive

In terms of voice continuum, we have so far seen various constructions related to the *be*-passive and *get*-passive. The passive diathesis constructions we have seen in this section involve various grammatical characteristics which are distinct from the *be*-passive and *get*-passive, although a hint of generic characteristics of the subject as in potential passive can also be found in the *get*-passive, unaccusative in progressive and unaccusative-middle. We have looked at modality-related constructions, i.e. potential and necessitative passive. Although they are related in terms of modality, they differ in one crucial point in terms of the voice continuum: generic characteristics of the subject. Their presence indicates that the potential passive is also related to the middle voice in English, but not so the necessitative passive. So the potential passive is located more towards the middle voice. In addition, these two constructions are slightly different from the other passive diathesis constructions, i.e. unaccusative in progressive (Section 7.2.1) and unaccusative-middle (Section 7.2.2), based on expression of modality. So in modelling conceptual space we employ another box, C, to represent constructions that are capable of expressing modality. Constructions we have noted in this Chapter are added to the conceptual space of PDE, (Figure 7.7).

This conceptual space is, historically speaking, formed around lME or eModE, depending on the date of appearance of each construction, as

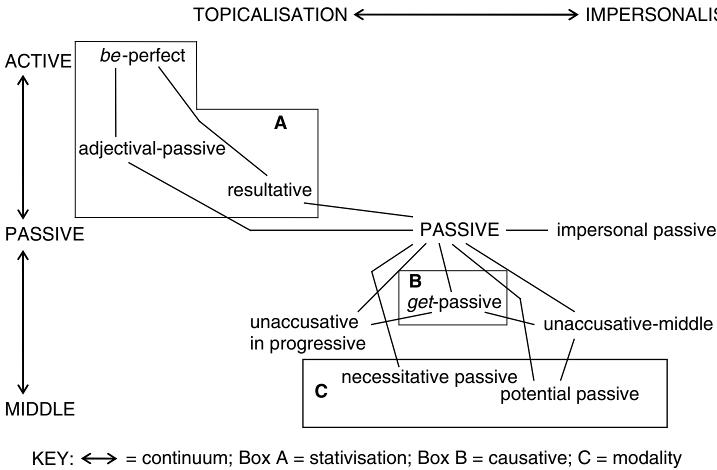

Figure 7.7 Conceptual space of PDE, including *be*-passive, *get*-passive and passive-diathesis

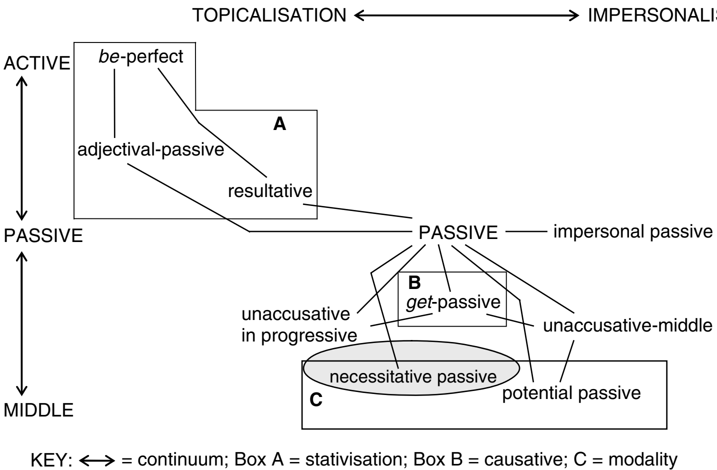

Figure 7.8 Conceptual space of lME, including *be*-passive, *get*-passive and passive-diathesis

shown in Figures 7.8 and 7.9. As in the diagrams for the voice continuum so far, the shaded area represents a construction present in that period.

Recall the dates for the appearance or disappearance of unaccusative in progressive (from earlier to around 1800) and unaccusative-middle

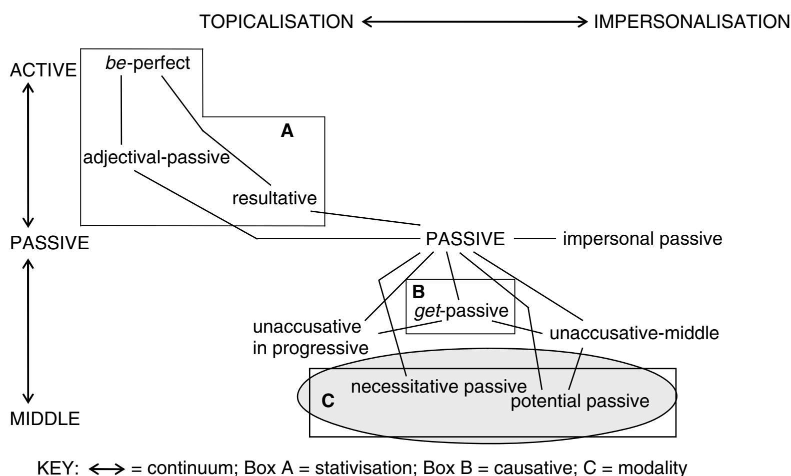

Figure 7.9 Conceptual space of eModE, including *be*-passive, *get*-passive and passive-diathesis

(from around 1800 to the present; Fig. 7.2). As far as the passive diathesis is concerned, ModE is a period when constructions either emerged or disappeared.

7.6 Summary

In this chapter two passive diathesis constructions were analysed, the potential and necessitative passives, which are related to modality. It is a well-known fact that modality follows a unidirectional pattern of diachronic change from deontic modality to epistemic, including subjectification towards the end of the process. Necessitative modality seems to follow this general pattern of change, but potentiality does not: the epistemic meaning seems to appear earlier than the deontic one. In spite of this difference, both types involve subjectification at some point in the development.

These constructions often create passive readings without any overt marking. This is most likely due to undergoer-orientation, which indicates that these constructions form a voice continuum. However, this is only a part of the continuum. There is another type, quasi-passive, which is analysed in the following chapter.

8
Quasi-passive

8.1 Introduction

In Section 2.2, the quasi-passive was defined as a construction that has the 'same function [as the passive] with different orientation' . We have also seen that this can contribute to the voice continuum, along with passive diathesis. In this section, we analyse a case of quasi-passive involving inversion and the use of the indefinite pronoun. Inversion is not generally related to the passive by scholars, except for example in some papers in a book edited by Givón (1983). The passive and the inverse are related in terms of topicality. The use of indefinite pronouns is another case of quasi-passive, often cited in the literature, and normally described in terms of expressing a passive reading. However, the explanation for such phenomena, which can be cross-linguistically attested, has not gone further than impersonalisation. An attempt is made in this Chapter to propose further evidence for the linkage between the passive and these quasi-passive constructions.

8.2 Inversion

Inversion is a grammatical phenomenon where a canonical ordering of two elements is altered for various pragmatic reasons (see Givón 1979, 1994; Dryer 1982; Thompson 1994). So for example, SVO languages can achieve inversion by changing the word order into SOV, OSV, etc. One of the major consequences of this word order change is a topicality change, since preposed entities in inversion normally have higher topicality than postposed entities. In our discussion of how discourse topicality plays an important role in passivisation (Section 5.2.2), we introduced distinctions including discourse salience as well as hearer's knowledge like Hearer-Old/New, Discourse-New/Old which are commonly used in discussing inversion (Price 1992; Birner 1994, 1995; Birner and Ward

1996; Ward and Birner 1995, 1996). For example, an analysis of English inversion presented in Birner (1994) suggests that preposed information tends to be Discourse/Hearer-Old: the identity of this entity has already been established in the discourse and thus its relative topicality is high. Also, topicality of postposed entities has to be equal to or lower than that of preposed ones, when they are both Discourse/Hearer-New. Her results can be roughly schematised as in Table 8.1.[1] Note that her results correspond to those of Prince (1992), who claims that the combination of Discourse/Hearer-New (preposed) and Discourse/Hearer-Old (postposed) is impossible.[2] Also compare Table 8.1 with Table 4.1 (in Chapter 4), where the topicality change between the actor and undergoer in the passive are shown. The two tables show a remarkable similarity, although Table 4.1 allows the (very low) occurrence of the combination Discourse/Hearer-New (undergoer) and Discourse/Hearer-Old (actor).

Table 8.1 Relative topicality and inversion

Postposed entities	**Preposed entities**	
	D/H-New	**D/H-Old**
D/H-New	possible	common
D/H-Old	impossible	possible

Preposing the object entity can allow the object to receive higher topicality than the postposed subject entity. This process resembles the process of passivisation, through which object entities receive higher topicality, except that it does not involve any grammatical marking on the verb phrase and the verb stays in the active form. Thus, superficially the difference between the passive and inversion lies in the grammatical marking, but there are certain other differences as well. For example, inversion does not require a change in the argument structure. It is also claimed that the relative topicality of the subject is higher in the passive, due to the fact that postposed entities in inversion tend to retain a certain amount of topicality: see, for example, Cooreman (1982, 1985, 1987), Givón (1994: 8–9, 1995: 77–8), as well as Figure 4.1 in Section 4.2.1, for a similar argument. This relationship is summarised in Givón (1994: 9), quoted in (1) below:

(1) Inverse: The patient is more topical than the agent, but the agent retains considerable topicality.
Passive: The patient is more topical than the agent, and the agent is extremely non-topical ('suppressed', 'demoted').

The use of inversion in the history of English seems rather chaotic. This is due, as we have already seen in Section 5.2.2, to the lack of a well-established basic word order in the earlier period, like SVO in PDE, against which we can consider inversion or earlier occurrences of the passive. The word order is relatively free in the earlier period (Denison 1986: 28; Traugott 1992), which, in our view, represents the change from a topic-prominent language to a subject-prominent one (see Section 5.2.2). Another problem is the variation of word order. This is not due to information status, but to other factors, such as genre of texts, metrical effects, etc. Generally speaking, there was more freedom of word order in verse than in prose.

Inversion can in theory serve as a quasi-passive at any period. However, in order to classify a certain instance as inversion, we need to distinguish it from the basic word order. Considering the factors mentioned above which indicate the lack of a rigid basic word order in earlier English, inversion as a quasi-passive is unsuitable for diachronic analysis. For this reason, further analysis of inversion is omitted in this work.

8.3 Indefinite pronouns

As mentioned in Section 4.2.2, the passive is often associated with the function of impersonalisation, which some linguists believe is the core function (Keenan 1975; Comrie 1977; Shibatani 1985; Brown and Levinson 1987: 273–5). As its name indicates, the identity of the actor is not clear and naturally this leads to a low occurrence cross-linguistically of overtly expressed actor in the passive. In some extreme cases, the omission of the actor is compulsory (e.g. Latvian, Hungarian, Machiguenga (Equatorial-Tucanoan), Maninka (Sino-Tibetan), etc.). Impersonalisation, however, can be achieved by different constructions. One such case is the use of indefinite pronouns such as *someone*, *nobody*, etc. or of generic nouns such as *one*, *people*, etc., both of which are here collectively called indefinite pronouns. The relationship between the passive and indefinite pronouns has been noted, but merely descriptively, typically characterised as something like 'the idea [of the passive voice, J.T.] was expressed by the impersonal *man* 'one' with the active voice' (Mitchell and Robinson 1992: 111, referring to OE grammar). This is a typical case of quasi-passive according to our definition. In what follows, I illustrate what I mean by indefinite pronouns, then explain why these pronouns are related to the passive, especially in terms of

various tactics for politeness; finally I examine the historical linkage between the two constructions.

8.3.1 English indefinite pronouns

In my view, indefinite pronouns are pronouns which even in context, have no specific identifiable referent. This type of definition includes *somebody* or *something*. However, since our argument involves impersonalisation, we need to restrict our definition and exclude non-human pronouns. Thus, *nothing*, *something*, etc. are not considered in the rest of this chapter. Also, the argument is mainly concerned with functional features and this allows us to include what one may consider generic nouns, such as *one*. On formal grounds, *one* may be considered something like a quantifier, but *one* as in *One may find it highly amusing* does not bear any specific referent and this fits our basic definition. So this leaves us with some sets of pronouns, such as *someone*, *anybody*, *one*, etc. Further restrictions are made: pronouns with a quantifier like *everyone*, or a determiner, *someone*, *anybody*, are excluded. This is purely for the purpose of historical work, since the inclusion of such indefinite pronouns would demand another level of analysis, the grammaticalisation of each pronoun, e.g. *everyone* from *every one*, etc. Once such pronouns are involved, it is difficult to decide when to include them in the analysis, since there is a period when *everyone* and *every one* can be used for the same purpose. Also, the difference can be simply due to the orthography. We want to avoid the inclusion of such dubious cases.[3] So what is left in our scope of analysis are pronouns like *one*, *man*, *you*, *they*, etc. One may argue that they are all generic nouns, but as Haspelmath (1997: 12) considers, they can be considered as indefinite pronouns, but strongly on functional grounds. This suits our analysis of the functional features of impersonalisation.

Indefinite pronouns perform a function of impersonalisation. This means that the identity of the actor cannot be specified. There are two reasons for the use of such pronouns: the identity of the actor is not known or the speaker tries to hide it. This corresponds to what Haspelmath (1997: 45–8) calls 'knowledge of speaker and hearer', i.e. the speaker may or may not be able to identify the NP in question, depending on whether it is known to him or not. When the speaker is familiar with the identity of the referent of the NP but tries to hide it from his interlocutor, the NP is considered indefinite, but it is specific. This makes the indefiniteness of NP two-fold, involving an overlap between specificity and the knowledge of the speaker. Haspelmath schematises

this relationship as in Table 8.2. In this schema, the left-most combination, 'non-specific' and 'unknown to the speaker', expresses the highest degree of indefiniteness, while the right-most one, 'specific' and 'known to the speaker', the least indefiniteness.

Table 8.2 Definiteness/indefiniteness, specificity/non-specificity and knowledge of speaker/hearer, from Haspelmath (1997: 46)

indefinite		**definite**
non-specific	**specific**	
unknown to the speaker	known to the speaker	known to speaker and hearer

In English, there are six different pronouns used for impersonalisation throughout its history: *man* (until the 15th century), *thou* 'you (SG)' (until the 16th century), *we* (from the mid 10th century), *one* (from the 13th century), *they* (from the 14th century), *you* (from the 16th century), as summarised in Figure 8.1, followed by examples.

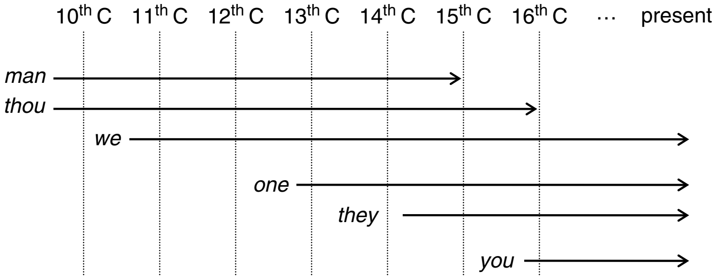

Figure 8.1 Diachronic change of the indefinite pronoun or generic noun in English

(2) *man* (s.v. *OED man* indef. pron.)[4]

þæt	***mon***	*his*	*winedryhten*	*wordum*	*herge*
that	man	his	beloved lord	word.PL.DAT	praise.SUBJ.PRS

'that his beloved lord is praised with words.' (*Beowulf* 3176)

(3) *thou* (s.v. *MED thŏu* pron. g.)
Thou *shall do as þe preste says, but not as þe preste doos.*
'One will do as the priest says, but not as he does.'(c1450 *Dc.Prov.* p.53)

(4) *we* (s.v. *OED we* pron. 2.b.)

Beowulf	*maþelode . . . :*	***We***	*þæt*	*ellenweorc . . .*	*feohtan*	*fremedon*
Beowulf	spoke	we	that	valorous deed	with battle	performed

'Beowulf said 'valorous deed was performed in the battle.' (*Beowulf* 958)

(5) *one* (s.v. *OED one* V. indefinite pronoun 20. a.)

As	*me*	*him*	*drinke*	*tok,*	*on*	*was*	*prest*	*ynou,*
as	man	him	drink	took	one	was	prompt	enough

&	*þoru*	*is*	*wumbe*	*smot*	*a*	*knif*
and	through	his	belly	stuck	a	knife

'as he was brought a drink, one was fully ready and stuck a knife through his belly.' (1297 R. Glouc. (Rolls) 5864)

(6) *they* (s.v. *OED they* pers. pron. 3.a.).

A	*man ..*	***yay***	*calle*	*Skranby*	*toke*	*me*	*a*	*lettre*
a	man ..	they	call	Shranby	took	me	a	letter

'a man they call Shranby took me a letter.' (1415 SIR T. GREY in 43 *Dep. Kpr.'s Rep*. 583)

(7) *you* (s.v. *OED you* pers. pron. III. special uses 6)
***You** shall sometime have one branch more gallant than his fellowes.*
(1577 GOOGE *Heresbach's Hush*. 11. (1586) 87)

Although the use of various pronouns may appear to follow certain patterns in PDE, their development differs from one another in some cases. *We* is the oldest among the indefinite pronouns in PDE. This development seems to be two-fold. One is inclusive use (cf. *OED we* pron. 1.f. and 1.g.) and the other, actor defocusing (cf. *OED we* pron. 2.a. and 2.b.). As for the indefinite use of *we*, it is used to defocus the identity of a speaker or writer, but this is restricted to a certain register (i.e. more formal, see *OED we* pron. 2.b.), and the identity is relatively easily retrieved as being the speaker or writer, although syntactically it can behave in the same way as other indefinite pronouns.

One can be used as an indefinite pronoun; its use is similar to the indefinite article *a*, since its origin is the same, the numeral *one*. This indefinite pronoun possesses a couple of functions (cf. Quirk *et al.* 1985: 387–8, 1467) and there is a now old-fashioned usage to avoid the egocentricity

of *I*, as in (8) below (*ibid.*: 1467). This usage seems to be similar to the indefinite usage of *we*, i.e. hiding the identity of the speaker/writer.

(8) A: *Did you enjoy your schooldays?*
B: *Well, one can hardly remember; it's all so long ago.*

The use of *man* can be observed in most Germanic languages, if not all, especially at an earlier period. The loss of its impersonal use is peculiar to English. Some previous works have dealt with its disappearance: intensification in the meaning 'a male person' or 'a human being' made the indefinite use decrease (Mustanoja 1960: 222); influence of religious and didactic literature, where *man* is commonly presented as an opposite of *God* (Marchand 1937); confusion of identity, i.e. whether it is indefinite or referential (Trager 1931) and intensification of the meaning 'a male person' as contrasted with 'a woman' (Meier 1953).[5] Also Mitchell (1982: 282), quoting Fröhlich (1951), suggests that the use of *man* was preferred in translating the Latin passive, which indicates that the indefinite use was genre-sensitive (see also Gray 1945 for a similar argument). Influence of religious text seems to be noticed from an earlier period, but even when *man* is used in contrast to *God*, the form can still be used indefinitely. So a convincing explanation is yet to be found.

The case of *you* is rather complicated (see Silverstein 1985: 242–51). What is peculiar about the PDE pronoun system is the lack of number distinction in the second person. English lost the distinction of number in the second person, but while the distinction was maintained (up to the end of ME/beginning of eModE), number could function as a sign of politeness. Brown and Gilman (1982: 278) and Jespersen (1909–49: V §§247–9) discuss the English *thou* and *ye* distinction in contrast to the usage of 'formal' vs. 'familiar' pronouns of address in European languages. Brown and Gilman (1982: 278) and similarly Barber (1976: 210) claim that *thou* was used to express contempt ('thou' of contempt), and this usage was so familiar that the pronoun was even verbalised, as in (9). Usage of *thou* decreased in frequency, since it could imply disrespect, and it gradually became taboo to address a person with it, the plural form starting to take over the whole paradigm of the second person. When the plural form was standardised, it had to undergo the grammaticalisation of number (from plural only to both singular and plural). *You* thus underwent several different stages of change.

(9) *Taunt him with the license of ink, if thou* ***thou'st*** *him some thrice, it shall not be amiss.* (Shakespeare *Twelfth Night*)

As for *they*, its combination of 'third person and plural' is often associated with indefiniteness, and cross-linguistically its equivalent can function widely as various grammatical markers. If this combination of person and number is observable, it tends to function as an **evasive** device. It is used to avoid specificity of natural sex or gender.[6] In English (for detail, see Newman 1992), the use of *they* or its genitive form *their* in *If a student wishes to change options they should see their tutor immediately*, or in *Somebody has forgotten their umbrella*, allow the speaker to avoid identifying a person as male or female. Thus, in English *they* as an indefinite pronoun can function as an evasive marker. Also in terms of the combination of person and number, third person and plural *they* can be considered as one of the most likely candidates for the indefinite reading. However, it is gradually being interpreted as a singular pronoun when it comes to indefiniteness, as we will see shortly.

In terms of chronology, the singular pronouns are used from earlier on (i.e. *thou*, *man* and *one*), while the plural ones become involved later (i.e. *they* and *you*), with the exception of *we*, which, although plural, exists from a relatively early date. In PDE, the plural pronouns *they* and possibly *you* (since it can also be singular) are involved, but it seems to be ambiguous whether they are still plural in indefinite use or not. Since the earlier examples involve singular pronouns, if *you* and *they* are plural, they might be a new invention. However, *they* and *you* may cause problems for researchers. There are some ambiguous cases where they can be understood as either singular or plural. There is a test which can determine if the pronoun is actually singular or plural, involving the use of reflexive pronouns. When the reflexive pronoun agrees in number with the subject referent, as shown in (10) below, it signals the number of the subject as either singular or plural. This can be used as a test to judge the singular/plural distinction of the subject (cf. Quirk *et al.* 1985: 768–9).

(10) A. *He can defend* ***himself.***
b. *We can defend* ***ourselves.***

A straightforward example is the third person singular *he* in (10). It requires the singular reflexive pronoun, and therefore, the subject is singular. Traditional grammar enforces us to follow the agreement rule. Thus, a plural pronoun such as *we* should have the plural reflexive pronoun *ourselves* as in (10). However, in colloquial English, a singular form of reflexive pronoun is increasingly becoming popular when the

pronoun functions as the indefinite pronoun (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 770–1). The agreement with the singular reflexive pronoun can be applied to the third person plural, *they*,[7] as illustrated in (11). Semantic characteristics of this pronoun appear to be getting grammaticalised to function as impersonal. Another dubious case, *you*, seems to be following suit, as in (12). It seems that the singular form *yourself* is more acceptable than the plural form *yourselves* when the pronoun is used as indefinite, and singular usage of *yourself* is more widely acceptable than *themself*. Overall, the pronouns, when they are used impersonally, are all considered as singular, in spite of their original number distinction. Their historical development is, however, slightly different.

(11) **They can feed themself.* (indefinite)
They can feed themselves. (indefinite)

(12) *You can hurt yourself.* (indefinite)
You can hurt yourselves. (indefinite)

Two indefinite pronouns, *man* and *one*, have their origin in a generic noun and a determiner/numeral, respectively, while the other four are personal pronouns in origin. As we have seen above, singularity and third person are clues for indefiniteness and the most popular pattern of indefiniteness using a pronoun is the use of third person singular. The English indefinite pronouns thus seem to operate with singularity, but the person distinction does not play as important a role as in other languages. This seems to be due to the grammaticalisation of the number in the plural pronouns, especially *you* and *they*, which are often considered as singular when they are used as indefinite pronouns. Thus, the English indefinite pronouns can be taxonomised as in Table 8.3, according to the person and number distinction. *You* and *they* can appear in both the singular and the plural, but their identity as singular is still developing. This is indicated by brackets in the Table. The popularity of singularity is indicated by the number of pronouns in the singular slots and can

Table 8.3 Combination of person and number of indefinite pronouns in English

	1st	**2nd**	**3rd**
SG	–	*thou*, (*you*)	*man*, *one*, (*they*)
PL	*we*	*you*	*they*

be attributed to (un)markedness: generally speaking in grammar, first and second persons are often marked in some way, but not third person. Likewise, plural, dual, etc., are marked, but not singular. So the third person and singularity are the least marked entities for person and number (Comrie 1977: 11; Silverstein 1985: 243). Indefiniteness or impersonalness is a strategy to avoid any identification, and when the verb or noun phrase is marked for a number or a person, an entity tends to be more marked for definiteness. Therefore, the least marked item naturally tends to serve the function of impersonalisation better. This is reflected in the number of arguments involved in each person and number slot in Table 8.3.

8.3.2 Functional linkage

One of the obvious relationships between the passive and indefinite pronouns is impersonalisation. Both constructions are used in similar contexts, such as when the identity of the actor is unknown or an effort is made to hide it. A slight difference, if there is any, would be related to previous reference, i.e. discourse topicality. When there is no previous reference, indefinite pronouns are used in preference to the passive from an early period (Mustanoja 1960: 226–7, 438) and this construction in a way functions as a presentative marker.[8] Note that there is a mixture of the indefinite pronoun *one* and the passive in PDE in *When one is given permission, the detail of the meeting will be provided*. The combination of indefinite pronoun and passive voice seems to be quite rare in previous periods of English, although some examples of *man* in a passive clause from Old High German (700–1050) are shown in Gray (1945: 28). The example of the passive with *one* in the subject slot has to be treated with care, since *one* in this case is likely to be the egocentricity-avoiding usage, mentioned in the previous section.

As we have mentioned in Section 4.2.2, the passive can be used to serve the function of politeness. In some extreme case, a type of passive exists specifically for politeness, often called **honorific passive**.[9] The term can be found in descriptive grammars of some languages. A particular usage of the passive in Japanese is one of the most frequently cited such cases. Japanese has a passive suffix -*(r)are*, which can function in five different readings: verbal passive, adversative passive, honorific passive, potential passive and spontaneous passive, some of which we have already seen in Chapter 6, examples (27), (36) and in Chapter 7, example (1). The example (13) below illustrates the honorific passive:

(13) Japanese

a. *Sensei-ga* *wara-tta*
teacher-TOP laugh-PST
'The teacher laughed.'

b. *Sensei-ga* *waraw-are-ta*
teacher-TOP laugh-PASS-PST
'The teacher was laughed at.'
'The honourable teacher laughed.' (honorific passive)

A range of syntactic behaviour falls under the term 'passive' in Japanese. The verbal passive, for example, involves a valency-reducing operation, which is supposed to happen in the prototypical passive. The adversative passive, on the other hand, has a valency-increasing operation (see Section 6.2.1.5). The honorific passive, as shown above, does not involve valency change at all. Toyota (1998: 59–63, 69–77) questions whether these various characteristics can all be considered under the passive construction. He argues that this variation is gradient – a gradience which is partly functional and partly syntactic. Bearing this claim in mind, the honorific passive in (13b) is certainly a variation of the passive, but what is passive about it? This is most likely because of various functional effects shared by the passive and politeness. What is peculiar in this case, however, is that the passive is used to avoid direct mention of the actor. This avoidance of either speaker/writer or actor can be treated as the creation of distance between speaker and interlocutor, which is analysed in detail in Section 8.3.2.2.

8.3.2.1 Politeness

There have been numerous studies on the topic of politeness. Some of them are more focused on the social aspect of this phenomenon, how it functions to maintain social equilibrium, to achieve smooth interaction, to avoid (social) breakdown (and to be culturally appropriate), etc. (see Leech 1983, Brown and Levinson 1987, to name two), while others involve the psychological aspect, such as evidence of the speaker's interest in expressing consideration, support and concern, conscious choice to enhance one's standing with respect to the other, interpersonally supportive behaviour to preserve face or to regulate interpersonal activities, etc. (see Watts 1992, Zegarac 1998, to name two). See Kallia (2002) for a summary of research on politeness. **Politeness**, in this work, means 'one of the constraints on human interaction, whose purpose is to consider others' feelings, establish levels of human comfort, and promote rapport' (Hill *et al.* 1986: 349). This involves two characteristics: the necessity for

the speaker's discernment (e.g. conforming to the expected norm, such as use of an **honorific**) and the opportunity for the speaker's volition (e.g. speaker's active choice, such as **politeness**). In the narrowest definition, only the latter case involving the speaker's volition should be involved in politeness, but the speaker's discernment cannot be totally excluded, since a mixture can occur, as when expressing concern or sympathy: this may be a social norm, but the speaker may be willing to do it without such influence. Therefore, we do not make a finer distinction between these two characteristics and include both cases in this work. Honorific implies the expected norm, politeness the speaker's active choice.

The internal relationship in politeness can be represented by certain types of interaction between the speaker and outside world. Based on Comrie (1976c) and Blom and Gumperz (1972), Brown and Levinson (1987: 181) categorise the honorific readings using the following four axes: referent, addressee, bystander and setting (Figure 8.2). Notice that the interlocutor only corresponds to addressee in the figure, and the definition shown below is more inclusive. Devices to express this interaction vary from language to language, but we can identify two basic types. These can best be represented according to the distance and the level between the speaker and entity in question. In a neutral reading the interlocutors are on the same level in the schema, but when an honorific use is detected, the interlocutor is placed above the speaker in the schemata and as a consequence, greater distance is created between the interlocutors (see also Hill *et al* 1986 for perceived distance). The difference in types can be discerned by the way the interlocutors are put at different levels.

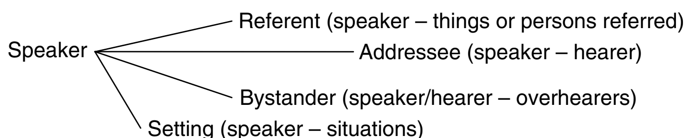

Figure 8.2 Possible types of honorific axis (Brown and Levinson 1987: 181)

The first type of interaction (Type I: humble) involves the lowering of the speaker. In this type, the interlocutor still remains at the neutral point, but the speaker lowers himself in order to create a difference in level. This relationship is schematised in Figure 8.3. The second type of interaction (Type II: respect) involves the raising of the interlocutor, while the speaker remains at the neutral level. This is schematised in Figure 8.4.

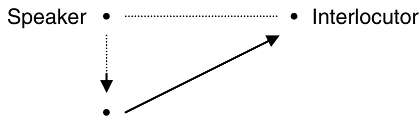

Figure 8.3 Schematic representation of Type I: humble

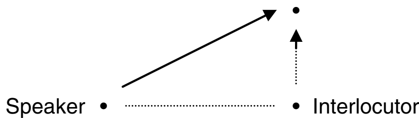

Figure 8.4 Schematic representation of Type II: respect

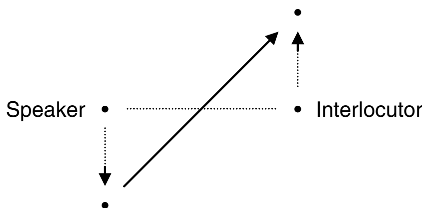

Figure 8.5 Schematic representation of mixture of Types I and II

However, these two types are merely core cases and there are various intermediate cases or combinations of types. For example, we can easily formulate a mixture of Types I and II, as illustrated in Figure 8.5. These schemata indicate a simple relationship between the speaker and one of the honorific axes in Figure 8.2, but overlap between the axes is reported: see Brown and Levinson (1987: 276–7) for overlaps between referent and addressee honorifics, and Garvin and Risenberg (1952: 203) for a case of overlap between addressee and bystander honorifics in Ponapean (Oceanic) royal honorifics. Whatever the combination, as the schemata indicate above, the speaker has to be lower in level in order to create politeness.

8.3.2.2 Distancing in impersonalisation and politeness

As we have seen in Sections 4.2 and 8.3.2, the avoidance of direct mention of the actor can soften the tone, which can lead to an effect of politeness. Blum-Kulka *et al.* (1989: 19) seem to be mainly concerned with how a request imposes on the recipient, but the use of the impersonal can extend its function beyond the context of requests. For

example, impersonalisation can be found in an attempt to avoid responsibility. Instead of *He dropped the vase and broke it*, *The vase was dropped and broken* can refer to the same event without mentioning the actor. This demotion of actor can create a tone of language which allows the actor some extra pragmatic effects, such as avoiding blame or responsibility for the consequences. How can we account for these variations in terms of impersonalisation? The actor is intentionally demoted from the argument structure and not overtly expressed. So superficially, the actor does not seem to be involved in the discourse. This pragmatically creates a distance between the actor and the event, and this **distancing**, allows the speaker to create various effects with regard to the actor.

Distancing, in our view, is what unites impersonalisation and politeness. The speaker tries to create distance between him/herself and an entity, and the distance created as a result of the use of the passive and indefinite pronouns is what we can observe in the gap in Figures 8.3 to 8.5, i.e. the distance at the neutral level is shorter than the distance created by either the demotion of the speaker or the raising of the interlocutor. Further refinement is required, however. When politeness is involved, the distancing happens 'vertically' (i.e. **vertical distancing**), in the sense of 'up' (more distance, i.e. respect) and 'down' (less distance, i.e. disrespect), while impersonalisation requires both a '**horizontal' distancing**, in the sense of 'near' (neutral) and 'far' (polite) when the actor is unknown, and a 'vertical' distancing when a speaker tries to hide the identity of the actor. The difference between vertical and horizontal distancing can be attributed to the speaker's intention to hide an identity. This is because concealment can be caused by various pragmatic factors, such as the speaker's delicacy or sentiment, when he/she tries to avoid direct mention of the actor (see Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989: 19). This avoidance of directness naturally triggers the distancing of the actor from the discourse, and distancing, whether humble or respectful, is involved in politeness. It is this indirectness that makes the indefinite pronoun serve as a device to create politeness, involving various types, such as speaker–bystander or speaker–setting honorific axes, as shown in Figure 8.2.

We have claimed that impersonalisation, which indefinite pronouns can perform, involves two types of distancing, vertical and horizontal. We can classify the six English indefinite pronouns according to these two different types of distancing. The result is shown in Figure 8.6. For horizontal distancing, two pronouns are involved, *man* and *they*. They are both used when the speaker does not know the identity of the actor. The vertical dimension is more complicated. *We* belongs to

vertical distancing, but its degree of impersonalness is not as high as the others. Thus, *we* is located at the intermediate stage. *One*, when used as an avoidance of egocentricity, follows the same pattern as *we*. However, *one* has another function as an indefinite pronoun. *Thou*, *one*, *they* can allow the speaker to hide the identity of the actor on purpose, so they can be located at the highest end of the vertical scale. In the scale, *they* in fact appears in both horizontal and vertical distancing. This is because it can be used on occasions either when the identity of actor is not known or when the speaker tries to hide it. Thus, Figure 8.6 reveals that *they* is the most useful indefinite pronoun in English.

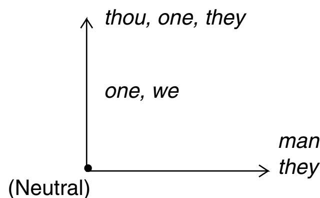

Figure 8.6 English indefinite pronouns in terms of vertical and horizontal distancing

Distancing in impersonalisation tends to be vertical, when the passive and indefinite pronouns are used for the sake of politeness. Thus the distancing can relate the passive and indefinite pronouns under the condition that the speaker intends to create a special pragmatic effect – politeness. What we have seen so far is a synchronic account, and in the following section this relationship is applied to diachronic change in these two constructions.

8.3.3 Historical relationship

As we have seen in Table 5.1 in Section 5.2.1, human entities as passive subject are not so frequent after OE, and we argued that this signals a topicality change in the passive construction. A closer look reveals another type of change related to politeness. Consider the change in frequency among the human entities in Table 8.4, repeated from Table 6.6. Throughout the history of the language, the third person is the most popular choice, although earlier occurrences are not as frequent as later ones. The second person has never been the most popular choice for the subject. However, although less frequent, the second person was used to a certain extent up until the end of ME. We can observe a sudden drop in its frequency from ME to ModE. Recall that the passive before ME was a more adjectival construction expressing perfective aspect rather than

Table 8.4 Hierarchy among human entities in the subject slot

	1st Person	2nd Person	3rd Person	Total
OE	141 (19.4%)	146 (20.0%)	442 (60.6%)	729 (100%)
ME	85 (13.5%)	81 (12.9%)	463 (73.6%)	629 (100%)
eModE	250 (19.4%)	54 (4.2%)	985 (76.4%)	1289 (100%)
lModE	764 (30.0%)	64 (2.5%)	1719 (67.5%)	2547 (100%)
PDE	510 (20.3%)	55 (2.2%)	1946 (77.5%)	2511 (100%)

a verbal one (Table 2.2), and this aspectual change triggers the typical topicality pattern in the passive. Therefore, neither topicality alternation between active and passive nor impersonalisation were the main function in the earlier passive. When there was no topicality alternation, the passive could not perform a distancing function, since there was no device to create any kind of pragmatic distance in discourse. We assume that the lack of distancing in the earlier passive is represented in the higher frequency of the second person.

If a certain construction is used for the purpose of politeness, mention of the second person is preferably avoided, since it is too direct and distancing cannot be achieved. This is why the third person is often used in addressing the second person for politeness in languages like German or Italian. In PDE, the passive *This room has to be cleaned* can be used instead of *I'm telling you to clean the room*. By avoiding mentioning the subject *I* or the actor of cleaning, *you*, the passive can soften the tone of utterance, which effects politeness. Table 8.4 indicates that the passive did not function for the purpose of politeness earlier. As for the indefinite pronoun, however, impersonalisation has been its main function from OE. Therefore, politeness can be achieved with it from an earlier date. The indefinite pronouns in PDE, however, hardly function for an honorific purpose. So the politeness function of the indefinite pronoun must have ceased at some stage.

Politeness in conjunction with these two constructions has been present throughout the history of the English language, but we can observe a certain shift in the use of politeness: it was earlier found in the indefinite pronoun, and mainly in the passive now. The period of change can be roughly stated as during ME. The major changes in both constructions – the topicality change of the passive implied by the change in the tense–aspect system (from stative to dynamic, see Table 2.2), the emergence of plural-origin pronouns *you* and *they* as indefinite pronouns (Figure 8.1), the disappearance of *thou*/*you* distinction (second person

singular and plural) and the tendency to consider the pronouns as singular although the origin is plural (i.e. *you* and *they*) – happened around the same period, i.e. lME or eModE. This indicates that the environment where politeness can be expressed more easily was increased in the passive but decreased in indefinite pronouns, since the indefinite pronouns, although they could have been plural, tend to be singular, which creates a less suitable environment for pragmatic distancing. Therefore the period around ME is a crucial one for our argument.

The English passive on its own can achieve the function of politeness, but such a function is less likely to be achieved by indefinite pronouns in PDE. This may be considered as differentiating these two constructions in PDE. OE had the *þū* 'thou'/*ʒē* 'you' distinction (as indefinite pronouns) and its disappearance also explains the earlier sensitivity to politeness among indefinite pronouns, which was somewhat neutralised by the loss of the distinction and the standardisation of the plural form. A singular reading of *they* as an indefinite pronoun also indicates that there is less room for distancing to function. After this change, the politeness use of indefinite pronouns generally decreased. A similar relationship can be found in other languages, such as Japanese, which use the passive for an honorific reading but do not use the indefinite pronoun as a substitute for the passive. We can conclude that the relationship between the passive and indefinite pronouns is made clearer once the politeness use of language is taken into account, and the presence of the pragmatic function of politeness is an important indicator in the grammatical voice continuum in English.

8.4 Quasi-passive in voice continuum

We have so far seen various voice continua with regard to the English passive and related constructions. Now that we have analysed the quasi-passive, we are able to obtain the complete (as far as our analysis is concerned) conceptual space for the English voice continuum. The material discussed in this chapter is added in the schema (Figure 8.7). Inversion and indefinite pronouns are only related to the passive on the functional level, and they do not carry any grammatical marker for passive (the construction itself is active). So they are both located at the top of the conceptual space. Inversion is related to topicality, so it is located at the top left-hand corner, and indefinite pronouns at the top right-hand corner.

In terms of historical development, we did not investigate inversion, due to the lack of a firm basic word order in earlier periods. Without it,

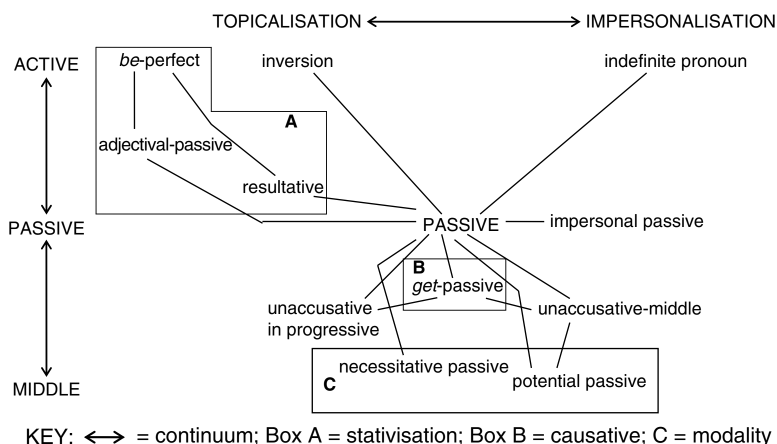

Figure 8.7 Conceptual space for the PDE quasi-passive

there is no construction against which we can compare inverted order. As for the use of the indefinite pronoun, this construction has been present since OE, but there is indeed some change: the use of second person as the passive subject decreased dramatically after ME. This indicates that the passive was earlier used more directly towards the addressee, while such usage is avoided later. Unfortunately, it is not possible to illustrate this change in the above schema. So Figure 8.7 should be considered as applicable to any periods in English as far as quasi-passive is concerned.

8.5 Summary

In this Chapter we investigated a linkage between passive and two different constructions, inversion and indefinite pronouns. The passive and inversion are related to each other in terms of topicality change, and they can both be used for the same function. However, the lack of earlier rigid word order in English makes it harder to analyse inversion diachronically so we have simply stated the fact at the synchronic level.

As for the relationship between the passive and indefinite pronouns, they obviously share the same function of impersonalisation. There are a couple of characteristics which enable us to distinguish one construction from the other functionally. Topicality change is one such characteristic, and another one, which has been argued for in this Chapter, is politeness. We have especially considered politeness as a distancing device. These

two characteristics are inseparable, since topicality change makes it easier to bring about distancing. Topicality alternation is also related to the property held in common by the two constructions: impersonalisation. It involves two types: when the identity of the actor is unknown or when a speaker/writer tries to hide the identity of the actor. When an effort is made to hide the identity, politeness is most likely being expressed. Direct address to the interlocutor is preferably avoided for reasons of politeness, and as shown in Table 8.4, the decline in the use of the second person as subject of the passive in ME indicates that it is less likely that the passive was used for politeness earlier. This also indicates a diachronic change: politeness relied on indefinite pronouns early on, and when topicality change became more important in the passive, the passive took over the role of expressing politeness, since topicality in the later passive made impersonalisation possible.

Overall, the presence of politeness can be an indicator of position in the voice continuum. The indefinite pronouns are often used as a substitute for the passive, and impersonalisation is often considered a bridging function between them. However, additionally, politeness can be an important factor in relating these two different constructions.

9
Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

Throughout this book we have examined the passive voice and its related constructions both synchronically and diachronically. Our main argument is that the English passive is derived from an earlier perfective construction, and that we can observe intermediate constructions in the course of language history. In terms of the voice continuum, gradience is involved in the passive diathesis and quasi-passive, although such gradience may be more semantically or functionally oriented than syntactic. Since language change is a gradual process, it is natural that we can observe intermediate stages. This particular process involves various semantic and pragmatic characteristics, and the characteristics investigated in this work are summarised briefly below.

9.2 Variation of the passive: a three-way distinction

The traditional definition of the passive voice often involves citation of the form 'auxiliary *be* or *get* + past participle form of the main verb', and of the active–passive alternation, such as the one shown in Figure 9.1 (repeated from Figure 2.1). Influenced by these two elements, one may include constructions such as *The box is covered with dust*, based on the fact that the construction is identical in terms of form. Our definition is much finer, and one of its main characteristics is the presence of an outer cause. This is not restricted to the commonly used thematic role 'agent', but may involve other thematic roles such as 'experiencer'. In order to avoid confusion, the term 'actor' is used to treat such outer causes collectively. Likewise, the recipient of the cause is also assumed, but it is not restricted to the role of 'patient'. For this, the term 'undergoer' has been

Active				Passive			
NP1	- VP (ACTIVE) -	NP2	=	NP2	-	VP (PASSIVE) -	(NP1)
SUBJ		OBJ		SUBJ			OBL

Figure 9.1 Schematic representation of active–passive alternation

used. Actor and undergoer are grammatically realised as the subject and object, respectively, in the active, and oblique and subject, respectively, in the passive. So, on this view, the active–passive alternation represents a force–dynamic alternation. This can be usefully expressed in terms of orientation. When the force–dynamic alternation exists, the passive subject entity is an entity towards which an action is oriented.

Another related characteristic is stativity. The passive can be divided into two constructions, periphrastic and morphological, both of which are basically dynamic. When a clause is stative in the morphological passive, this is due to the addition of a stativising morpheme. However, the periphrastic construction is more complex. We can find stative examples in some cases. Some of them have undergoer-orientation, while others do not. Thus, while the morphological passive is always a dynamic passive, the periphrastic one, in our view, involves three different constructions: the verbal passive, resultative and adjectival passive. Each type can be summarised in (1) below. Therefore, constructions like *The house is surrounded by the forest* may look like a stereotypical passive – auxiliary *be*, past participle form of verb, oblique phrase introduced by *by* – but it lacks the presence of an outer cause, and the clause expresses the primary state. The adjectival passive is the same as an active adjectival predicate. Relatively insignificant synchronically, it has a special role in diachronic study.

(1) Verbal passive: Undergoer-oriented, dynamic.
Resultative: Undergoer-oriented, stative (secondary state).
Adjectival passive: Subject-oriented, stative (primary state).

9.3 Diachronic change of English and grammaticalisation of the passive

We have argued that the passive construction in English was initially used for the purpose of a perfective construction, but the surrounding environments such as emergence of the *have*-perfect, made it possible for the earlier *be*-perfective to be reanalysed as the passive. In addition, word order change and topicality assignment to the subject made the language in general more topicality-sensitive (Givón 1979: 299–303) and

this assisted the grammaticalisation of the passive, since the passive subject is normally topical. Due to its origin, the construction itself can still be a type of stativisation (as in the case of the resultative and adjectival passives). This often leads scholars to consider the principal meaning of the passive as related to a resultative state or a process towards a final state (Haspelmath 1990: 61–2; Cornelis 1997: 95). Such stative constructions can be considered residues of an earlier perfective construction, since the most common semantic characteristic of the PDE passive is as a dynamic, verbal passive. The change seems to have happened around OE, and during ME the construction was a more dynamic, verbal-like, topicality-sensitive construction.

As claimed by Dryer (1982: 55) and Haspelmath (1990: 29), the periphrastic passive is very common in, but not exclusive to, IE languages. Our interpretation of this phenomenon is that the passive is derived from the perfective construction, which is primarily concerned with the secondary state of the undergoer. This explains why the earlier construction was undergoer-oriented in English, expressing stativity. The periphrastic passive is in general created once other grammatical constructions in the particular language change, and due to its new grammatical environment, the earlier periphrastic perfective (normally with 'be') gets reanalysed as a passive. So in comparison with the way the morphological passive is grammaticalised, the periphrastic passive has less functional influence in its creation.

9.4 Diathesis and quasi-voice constructions

We introduced a novel distinction based on orientation and function: passive diathesis (where the orientation is the same as the passive but the clause lacks passive marking) and quasi-passive (where the orientation is different, but the clause performs the same functions as the passive). The passive involves various functions, but we assume that the variation is formed around a core function, which is impersonalisation. There are numerous constructions which can be qualified as either a passive diathesis or quasi-passive construction cross-linguistically, but as far as the English language is concerned, we find the constructions illustrated in (2):

(2) Passive diathesis: Potential passive (adjective with *-able* suffix); necessitative passive (*This TV needs fixing* construction);

	unaccusative in progressive (V (INTR) in progressive);
	unaccusative–middle (OBJ + V (INTR)).
Quasi-passive:	Indefinite pronouns;
	inversion.

9.5 Voice continuum and gradience

The English passive is made up of two main components, i.e. the auxiliary and a past participle form of a main verb. Each component shows varying degrees of gradience: as for the auxiliary, we assume a scale between full lexical verb and its loss, with the intermediate stages: auxiliary, cliticisation and affixation. According to this scale, *be* is located somewhere in the middle, which makes its status somewhat ambiguous. As for the past participle, its functional range varies dramatically, and we can assume at least seven different properties (see (5i–vii) in Section 3.3). A scale between the verbal and adjectival is applied to the past participle, which can occupy a wide range of the scale according to the construction – verbal, resultative or adjectival. The combination of these two components as the English passive itself can be viewed as a kind of gradience. As we have seen, there are three different constructions, verbal, resultative or adjectival. Our distinction is based on orientation, the stative/dynamic distinction and the presence of an outer cause. The resultative shows ambiguity according to this distinction. This is due to the combination of various characteristics of both the auxiliary and past participle forms of the main verb, as schematised in Figure 9.2.

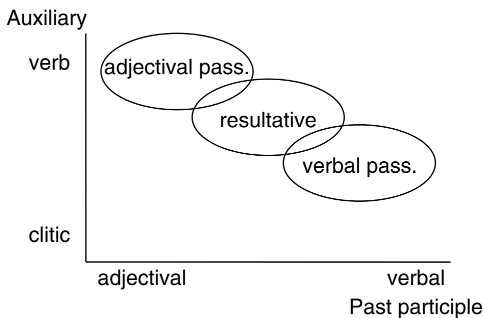

Figure 9.2 Schematic representation of gradience in the English passive

When diathesis and quasi-constructions are involved, the gradience is more complex, since both constitute a mixture of construction and function. These constructions represent various characteristics of other non-passive constructions. For example, unaccusative-middle and unaccusative in progressive constructions in English often create characteristics of the middle. This can be considered a case of the voice continuum in English. Indefinite pronouns, on the other hand, resemble a use of the passive for the purpose of politeness, which is not generally considered a case of voice continuum, but the function of distancing relates these two different constructions together. As shown in Figure 9.3, the chronological appearance of the diatheses and the quasi-passives seem rather co-ordinated, i.e. around the end of ME or the beginning of eModE. Our interpretation of this phenomenon is that it signals the establishment of sensitivity to topicality change in the passive, i.e. the characteristics of earlier stativisation are replaced by the more verbal, topicality-oriented construction.

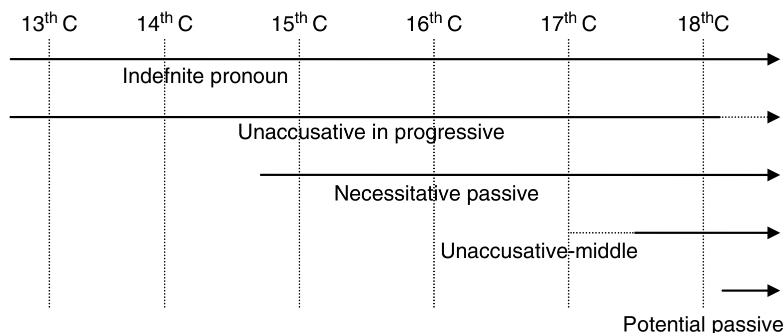

Figure 9.3 Diachronic change of passive diatheses and quasi-passives

Various such changes and the internal relationship in the English passive as well as related constructions discussed throughout this work can be represented by situation types and conceptual space. This constitutes a voice continuum. In each section, we described one particular case separately, and below, we show the diachronic change in comparison with the PDE passive. The situation type involved in the conceptual space is the one we saw in Figure 8.7, where we completed the whole set. In Figures 9.4 to 9.7, situation types shaded in each period represent the types that exist in that period.

Earlier constructions up to ME are more concentrated in the top part of the conceptual space. This means that the passive related to the middle voice is not so overtly expressed in English in the earlier periods. In addition, box A is fully involved in the voice continuum early on. By eModE, much of the lower part of the space, involving box C (modality-related

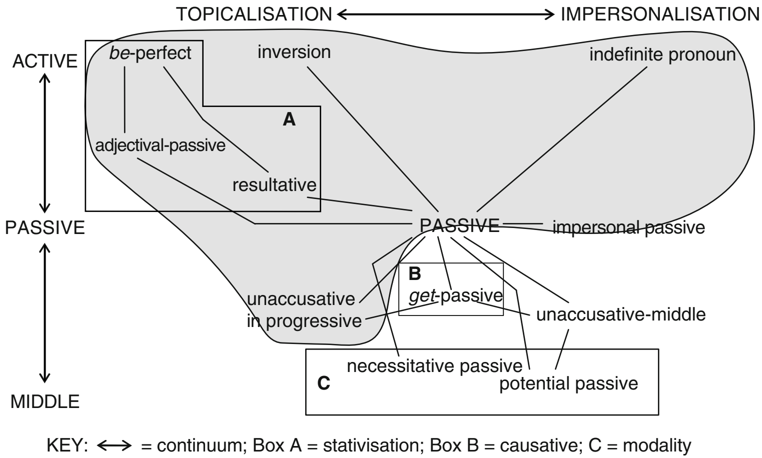

Figure 9.4 Conceptual space for the OE passive

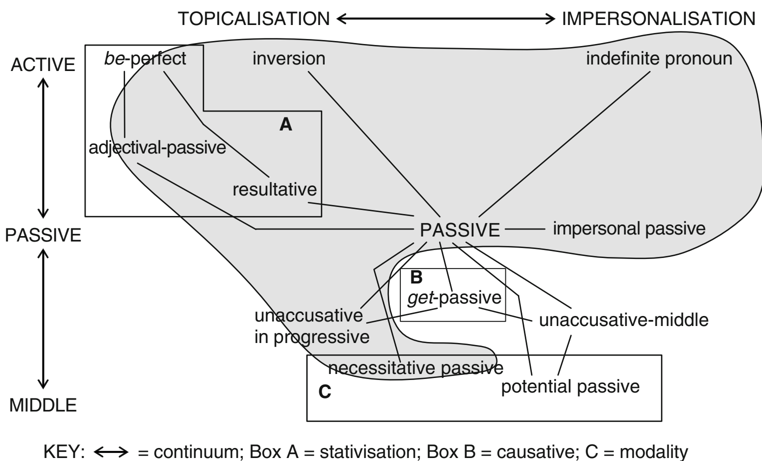

Figure 9.5 Conceptual space for the ME passive

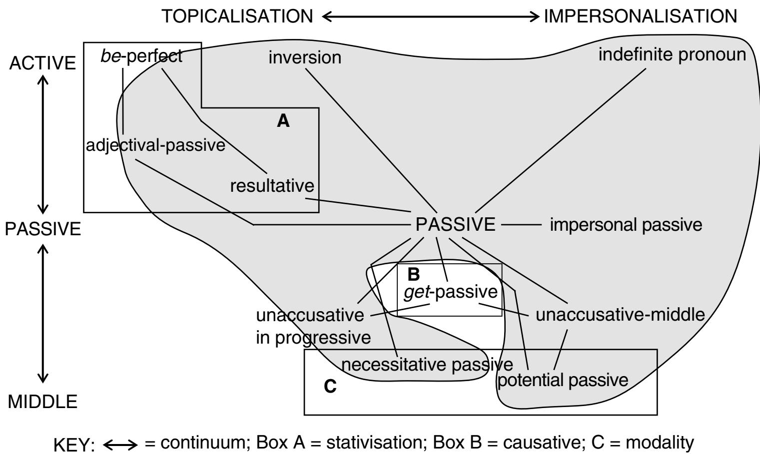

Figure 9.6 Conceptual space for the eModE passive

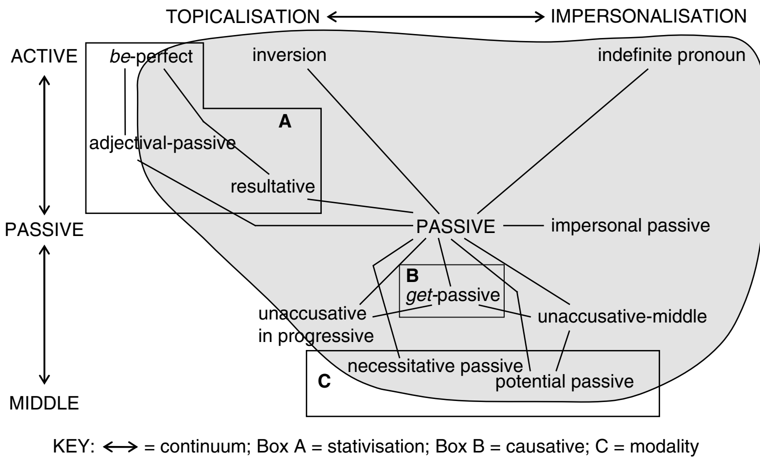

Figure 9.7 Conceptual space for the lModE and PDE passive

constructions) is occupied, except for the *get*-passive. The involvement of box A becomes less obvious. This means that the causative has not been involved earlier and the stativisation-related construction has been gradually detached from the 'passive-centric' voice continuum. By lModE, the *get*-passive is involved and the voice continuum is completed.

What such a gradual historical change shows is that the passive was in origin related to an aspectual construction and it develops into more

grammatical voice-oriented constructions. At the same time, English enriched itself with the middle-related constructions in the course of its history. They are middle-related, since they lack overt marking and are constructionally somewhat related to the passive. As far as our version of voice continuum is concerned, the passive becomes equipped with other related constructions as time passes.

9.6 Directions for future research

In the course of this book, we have covered a wide variety of grammatical features, but there are still many aspects of the English passive requiring further study. Some topics, such as the prepositional passive, have been hardly explored, while others have been looked at but, still merit further analysis. Features involved in such cases are the preposition *by* as an actor marker (except Kilpiö 1989: 136–9; Peitsara 1992; Toyota 2003a); emergence of the passive with a recipient subject, as in *Mary was given the present by John* from *John gave Mary the present* (see Allen 1995: 389–411; Fisher *et al.* 2000: 77–9); emergence of the prepositional passive, as in *She was laughed at by him* from *He laughed at her* (Traugott 1992: 214; Fischer *et al.* 2000: 29); disappearance of the morphological passive *hatan* 'be called'; disappearance of the auxiliary *weorðan* 'become', etc. Explanations for such phenomena will provide further insight towards our better understanding of the development of the passive.

In addition, when English is considered in a wider context, such as within Germanic or Indo-European languages, we can observe more problems. For example, English has not developed the use of reflexive constructions as a passive diathesis, while this kind of development can be seen in other Germanic or even other Indo-European languages. Another instance is the choice of auxiliary. Other Germanic languages preserve the dichotomy based on the stative–dynamic distinction, i.e. they always use 'be' and 'become' from earlier periods. From this perspective, the disappearance of the 'become' counterpart in English is worth analysing and the quality of *be*, as we have discussed in 6.2.1.1, can be viewed from a slightly different angle. English seems to have developed in a different way from other Indo-European, or more precisely, Germanic languages. This work puts emphasis on a language-specific case of historical development, focusing on the passive, but hopefully it will serve as a contribution towards a much more comprehensive explanation of various diachronic changes in English from a wider perspective.

Notes to Chapters

Chapter 1

1. Only samples of British English are extracted from ARCHER; and the size of the Helsinki corpus is according to Kytö (1996:2).

Chapter 2

1. Note that the presence of an outer cause, in addition to the stativity, makes the passivisation of perception verbs difficult, since transitivity is not so high in this construction. The perception verbs also often have marked actor markings, such as the use of different cases. This also signals the peculiarities of these verbs.
2. Typologically, the SOURCE is the most popular conceptual domain to express the actor (p.c. William Croft). If not, INSTRUMENT may also be used. The opposite conceptual domain, i.e. GOAL, to express actor seems to be rare, but not impossible. Such cases can be found in a limited number of languages, e.g. Altaic (Japanese, Korean, Mongolian), Tungus (Even, Evenski).
3. Aarts (2000) argues that there are two types of gradience: the first one is **intersective gradience**, which is a gradience between two categories as in the case of verbal participle, e.g. *taking as in Taking a walk is good for the health* can be considered either noun or verb. A gradience within a single category, such as a quantifier *less* in *less work* (uncountable noun) and *less students* (countable noun), has been called **subsective gradience**. However, he assumes that most cases of intersective gradience can be judged to belong to one category at the synchronic level.
4. For the moment, the term 'function' is used, but the detail will be discussed later in Section 4.2.
5. The PDE *be* is morphologically 'a **suppletive verb** made up of three different PIE roots (compare *am*, *be*, *was*), and in the Old English present indicative and subjunctive there was actually a choice of forms from different etymological roots, for example *he is, he bið* 'he is' ' (Denison 1993: 418).
6. There have been several proposals as to why *weorðan* 'become' as passive auxiliary disappeared, and we can roughly categorise these arguments into three groups: (i) influence of foreign languages (such as Latin, French, Scandinavian languages etc.) through translation from these languages (Jespersen 1909–49: IV. 99–100; Klaeber 1923: 193, 1931: 351; Frary 1966: 71–72); (ii) sound and form, i.e. *be* was phonetically lighter and also less ambiguous in conjugation (Curme 1931: 446; Kurtz 1931: 111; Mustanoja 1960: 618); (iii) meaning components of *be*, such as stativity, supersede those of *weorðan* 'become' (van Draat 1902: 375; Zieglschmid 1930: 111–15). However, let us not forget that *weorðan* 'become' disappeared from the language completely

towards the end of ME and this disappearance was not restricted to its use as passive auxiliary.

7. A similar distinction can be made in other IE languages, such as the Goidelic branch of the Celtic languages (i.e. Irish, Manx and Scottish Gaelic), Spanish, etc. For example, Irish *tá* 'is' expresses abstractness, *is* 'is', concreteness, and some scholars such as Preusler (1956: 323–4) ascribe the functional distinction between *beon* and *wesan* to Celtic influence.
8. Since actor phrases are not so frequent and the combination of various features is important for our argument, I take examples (9) to (14) from secondary literature, not from our corpus. Examples (9) and (14) are taken from Mitchell (1985: 336, 340), examples (10), (11) and (12) from Traugott (1992: 174, 207–8) and (13) from Denison (1993: 416).
9. This does not mean that the preposition has to be *by*; as long as one preposition is used consistently, it can be *from* or *of* in earlier periods.
10. One may question the validity of PDE paraphrase for historical data. We use inherent aspectual nature in paraphrase and characters such as egressive aspect which should not be confused with the actual word *finish*. We consider such aspectual characteristics can be applied to English in different periods or even to different languages (although pseudo-cleft is language-particular). For example, the Japanese counterpart of the English stative verb *know*, *shiru* is dynamic. This is proven by paraphrasing:

    Japanese: *Kare-wa* *shiri-oe-ta*
    he-FOC know-finish-PST
    'He learned everything.' (lit. 'He finished knowing')

    So paraphrasing can be applied to various languages with differing results.
11. Mutative verbs are a unique category in the IE verbal system, since they allowed the actor to appear in the subject slot. In addition, the adjectival participle of these verbs first developed into a verbal participle, indicating the resulting state of verb.
12. In addition, as noted in Ziegelschmid (1929: 59), Kluge (1888: 382–97) pointed out that the lexical influence of Romance languages like Old French on Old High German was relatively weak during 700–1100. If borrowing had happened, this would have to have been the period when the use of 'have' as perfective auxiliary was introduced.
13. These examples should not be confused with instances in some Modern Germanic languages, where the indirect object (NP in dative) behaves like the overt subject without overt nominative marking, as in German *Ihm wurde ein Buch gegeben* 'He was given a book' (lit. 'to him became a book given'), where *ihm* is a dative form of third person singular masculine pronoun. Notice that examples (50) to (52) do not involve an indirect object in dative case.
14. The verb *(ge)lician* 'please' is an impersonal verb, since the experiencer is expressed in dative and the outer cause in nominative. Impersonal verbs in OE and ME involve several different constructions. For the detail of classification and examples, see Denison (1993: 66–73).
15. Lehmann (1986: 167, 1989: 237–8) claims that the origin of Gothic *haban* 'have' is still disputable.

16. Serbo-Croatian, unfortunately, does not belong to either of the types. It can satisfy criteria i, iii and iv, but not ii listed in (55). It forms a perfective aspect with *biti* 'be', whereas *imiati* 'have' does not form any tense or aspect in a periphrastic form.
17. Finnish, Estonian and Hungarian are, in fact, not IE languages, but Finno-Ugric.

Chapter 3

1. Thus, the following examples are all grammatical: *She wasn't a student* (negation); *Was she a student?* (inversion); *She was a student, and so was he* (code); *She wàs a student* (emphasis).
2. This replaceability is not restricted to the resultative but also involves adjectival passive, as in *That town looks run down*. Such examples can be found in earlier periods. See Visser (1963–73: §1894) for more examples.
3. Consider inherently stative verbs like *understand, know*, etc. The actor for such verbs is most likely an experiencer, not an agent, whereas dynamic (i.e. punctual) verbs like *break* normally take an agent (except for its use as labile verb, which has more than one type of valency, e.g. *I dreamed last night* (monovalent), *I dreamed a strange dream last night* (divalent)).
4. The positing of type v was much influenced by the aspectual system in Slavic languages as earlier scholars tried to apply the Slavic tense–aspect system to Germanic languages. However, each language organises its internal grammatical system individually and makes its own packaging to view the world (known as categorisation: see, for example, Györi 1996), and this is also reflected in the tense–aspect system. It is natural that the Slavic and Germanic languages have their own tense–aspect system and aspectual marking system. The presence of certain morphemes, affixes, etc. in one language does not necessarily imply their presence in others. Also, the tense–aspect system in general cannot be accounted for by looking simply at verbs and their affixes. We have, for example, seen the distinction between B- and H-languages in Section 2.3.2. Most Slavic languages are B-languages, while Germanic is an H-language. This instance indicates a significant difference. It seems premature to judge the whole aspectual system by just looking at the prefix.
5. This is also often called localism, which can be summarised as follows: 'The doctrine that spatial expressions are linguistically more basic than other kinds of expression, and that spatial expressions accordingly constitute the primary raw materials for such processes as metaphor and grammaticalization' (Trask 2000: 201).
6. A similar construction can be made with suffix *-y*, as in *hairy man, brainy child*, etc. Superficially, this type of adjective seems to denote inalienable possession, but this type of construction differs from the one with suffix *-ed*. The suffix *-y* normally denotes excess or unusualness, e.g. *a hairy man* means a man with lots of hair and a *brainy child*, a child with an unusually good brain, etc. Constructions involving *-y* seem to undergo metaphorisation, as in *nosy* 'inquisitive', *cheeky* 'disrespectful, rude', etc. (but consider *big-headed person* 'conceited person'). Some adjectives have both the *-ed* and *-y* form, as

in *pricey* and *priced*. The difference between them is excess or unusualness, i.e. *a pricey shirt* means a shirt at an excessive price (a case of unusualness), while *a low-priced shirt* means a shirt with a low price (a mere description and no unusualness), but not vice versa. Following Ljung (2001; but see Fillmore 1968 for a more restricted view), we do not confine inalienable possession to examples where the possessor is human animate or animate but also include inanimate possessors, as in *long-keeled ship, three-legged table*, etc.

7. However, one may wonder why examples like **lots-of-chocolated woman,* **completely Armanied woman*, or **two hundred-pair-of-shoed woman*, etc. are ungrammatical.
8. However, we note that there is some coherence in differing notions of headship: '[l]inguists of divergent theoretical persuasions are in almost complete agreement as to what is the head and what is the non-head in a given construction' (Nichols 1986: 57). This claim may be optimistic when it comes to the passive, as we will see later in this Section.
9. Specifier here means 'a marker of grammatical categories — aspect, tense, modality, case, definiteness, subordination, degree, etc. — on the constituent with which it combines' (Zwicky 1993: 303).
10. Most features in Table 3.14 are repeated from Table 3.13, but some of them need clarifying: agreement target = whether an entity shows morphology to indicate agreement with its verbal complement or not; government trigger = whether an entity requires a certain form of verb as its complement or not; classifying = whether an entity has contributory or classifying semantics.
11. There was agreement of person and number even on the participle in OE: see Chapter 2, example (13) and examples (7)–(9) in this chapter.
12. Heine's property 'o' (Heine 1993: 86–7): auxiliaries do not have a meaning of their own, or do not contribute to the meaning of a sentence, but rather, are 'synsemantic' and 'syncategorematic' to the lexeme to which they apply, i.e. they preserve the categorical status of the latter.
13. Quasi-copula differs from copula in respect of semantic content: a copula is semantically empty, but a quasi-copula possesses real semantic content, such as aspect, modal or perception. Visser (1963–73: §§1892, 1894), for example, divides them into two, 'copula of aspect' (*abide, continue, keep, leave, remain, rest, stay, survive, wunian* 'dwell') and 'copula of modality' (*appear, æteowian* 'appear', *look, seem, sound*).

Chapter 4

1. Topicality change is, however, not unique to the passive and various other constructions such as cleft, pseudo-cleft have that function too. See Toyota (2002: 578–80) for further argument.
2. Notice that we are not discussing the event of having seen Liam Neeson in this instance. If the event itself is considered, it constitutes hearer-new/discourse-new information.
3. Notice that they use two types of measurement: one is a multiple of 5 % and the other, less than 2.5 %. Therefore, the overall percentage in the table does not add up to 100 %.

4. This is a construction where nominal hierarchical order (cf. Figure 4.2 later in this Section) determines the distinction between **direct form** and **inverse form** of the verb. In direct form, an NP in a lower part of the hierarchy will never be actor when a higher-ranking one is involved in the same clause. This hierarchical relationship can be altered by adding the inverse affix, so that a hierarchically lower NP can be an actor and a higher-ranking one, undergoer. The following examples from Cree (Algonquian) illustrate this (examples taken from Wolfart and Carroll 1981: 69). Notice the use of suffixes *-ā-* for direct voice and *-ikw-* for inverse voice and the hierarchical change made by these suffixes.

   Cree (Algonquian): a. *ni-wāpam-**ā**-wak*
   -see-DIR-3PL
   'I see them.' (Direct form)
   b. *ni-wāpam-**ikw**-ak*
   I-see-INV-3PL
   'They see me.' (Inverse form)

5. Antipassive is a superficially intransitive (monovalent) construction whose subject is actor and an oblique NP in a clause represents an underlying direct object (i.e. undergoer). The following examples from Greenlandic Eskimo (Eskimo-Aleut) illustrate this construction (Woodbury 1977: 322–3):

   Greenlandic Eskimo (Eskimo-Aleut):

a.	*miirqa-t*	*paar-ai*
	child+ABS-PL	take care of-IND+3SG.3PL
	'She takes care of the children.'	
b.	*miirqu-nik*	*paar-si-vuq*
	child-PL+INSTR	take care of-ANTIP-IND.3SG
	'She takes care of the children.'	

   This construction is often, though not necessarily, used to indicate that the object is indefinite or partially affected.
6. The frequency becomes even less once the *get*-passive is considered. See 6.2.1.3 for detail.
7. Blum-Kulka (1989: 58–9) shows that the impersonal among other strategies is not as frequently used as others. However, her data only deals with requests and thus the results are not conclusive. Other situations can be as follows (for details, see Blum-Kluka *et al*. 1989: 18): mood derivable, performatives, hedged performatives, obligation statements, want statements, suggestory formulae, query preparatory, strong hints, mild hints.
8. However, Haspelmath (1990: 38) argues that 'there is no direct relation between passives and states'. The difference will become crucial once the functional motivations for the historical change have been considered. We will return to this question later in Sections 5.2.1 and 5.3.1.
9. The problem of this claim is the passivisation of ditransitive verbs. The result in this case is still transitive, i.e. in *He was given a present by his parents*, two arguments *he* and *a present* still remain in the argument structure. Also, the impersonal passive with monovalent verbs, as in (11) from German, does not perform 'de-transitivisation', since it was monovalent in

its active counterpart. This function is normally applicable to the passive of divalent/trivalent verbs, but we need to bear in mind that there are some exceptions. Also, this definition is based on the syntactic aspect of transitivity, i.e. the number of arguments, but not the semantic definition given in Section 4.2.4.2.

10. They consider that every passive achieves either foregrounding or backgrounding. However, as the English passive alone can easily prove, one instance of the passive can have both functions simultaneously. Thus, if we assume that these two functions can exist in a single example, these functions will turn out to be very useful.
11. Native speakers tend to interpret (11) as 'a certain type of dance was performed by the boys', and this dance is represented as neuter pronoun *es* 'it'. The problem here is that most names of dance in German belong to either masculine or feminine, not neuter, which also makes the grammaticality of examples like (11) doubtful.
12. As for the individuation of object, the following properties will help to make the distinction:

    Individuated: proper, human or animate, concrete, singular, count, referential or definite.
    Non-individuated: common, inanimate, abstract, plural, mass, non-referential
    (Timberlake 1975, 1977; Hopper and Thompson 1980: 253).

13. Historically, however, the position is slightly different. There was a period (up to ca. 1500) when a divalent verb could appear in the construction, as exemplified in the following examples (taken from Ingham 2000: 14):

    i. *Ther mai no man kepe a fals law*
    there may no man keep a false law
    'No man may keep a false law.' (a1400 *LS* 21)
    ii. *For ther shall noon be saved*
    for there shall none be saved
    'For there shall be none saved.' (a1400 *MES* 113, 19)

    Examples with transitive verbs often appear with a negative subject, e.g. *no man* in (i) and *noon* 'none' in (ii) above.
14. The decrease in use of a negative marker can also be observed in the existential *per se*. Breivik (1983: 338–41) considers that there is a relationship in the existential in general between word order change, such as inversion, and the negative marker. His data suggests that the presence of a negative marker, such as *ne*, *nat/not*, *nawiht/nauht/noht* 'not at all', etc. often coincides with the existential *there*.

Chapter 5

1. The origin of the passive varies; in some languages it has often had its origin in a middle voice or causative construction. In English it originates in the

perfective construction. Along with this, as we will see in the next chapter, the reflexive-causative construction can be considered an origin of *get*-passive. For an extensive typological survey of the origin of the passive, see Givón (1990: 600–18) and Haspelmath (1990).

2. Cf. our usage of terms such as actor or undergoer, where e.g. 'actor' is a superordinate term over various thematic roles such as agent, experiencer, theme, etc., so that agent, experiencer, etc. are specific instances of actor.
3. On this point, he somewhat speculatively says (*ibid.*: 60): '[t]his is probably because of a strong general tendency favouring clauses with subjects over subjectless clauses.' However, notice that there are subjectless constructions (cf. type i and ii in (9), which we saw in Section 4.2.4.2) and this tendency is not always realised in languages.
4. One may wonder if the result is somehow influenced by the nature of the original texts, such as genre of medium. Earlier data lack spoken material, but apart from this deficit, the corpora from which our data is derived involve as varied genres as possible, and as already mentioned in Section 1.4.2, the result is considered representative.
5. Comrie (1977) also notes from text counts that the agent/subject of an unmarked sentence is typically animate and definite, while objects are typically indefinite and inanimate. This result indicates a general tendency, and a marked construction like the English passive (i.e. the statistically rarer construction: Givón 1979: 58–59 claims that the passive is used in English about 4 % in less-educated styles or about 18 % for more-educated styles) is bound to show a different pattern.
6. Previous works, such as Goossens (1987) and Warner (1990), claim that such instances involve a particular class of raising verbs. This point is further analysed in Westvik (1994), who claims that 'the modalized nominativeless sentences should be analyzed as structures where a non-finite sentence with a lexically empty subject position has been embedded under the modal' (*ibid.*: 340). However, they do not incorporate topic- or subject-prominence in their argument.
7. Obvious exceptions are the Slavic languages, where a 'be' + past participle construction still expresses perfective aspect, regardless of the orientation. See also (56) in Chapter 2 for the term 'B-language'.
8. This suffix is believed to have been derived from an earlier Germanic reflexive pronoun in accusative case *sik 'self-ACC' (van Gelderen 2000: 28).

Chapter 6

1. There is a counter-argument for this claim. Collins (1996), for example, argues that there seem to be some marginal cases, such as *get entangled*, where get can be resultative and express stativity. His judgement is based on the possibility of the following four points: (i) premodification, as in *She got very entangled with ...*; (ii) replaceability of *get* with *become,* as in *She* ***became*** *entangled with ...*; (iii) attributive function, as in *an* ***involved*** *politician* from *get involved*; and (iv) gradability, as in *get* ***partly*** *fossilised*.
2. Previous approaches on this issue deal with language-specific characteristics of auxiliaries, unlike what we saw in Section 3.2, where Heine's properties

are more typology-oriented. For example, the first four properties in (4) correspond to the NICE properties.

3. A stative reading is possible, since most of these verbs express ingressive aspect. When egressive aspect is present, a stative reading is not possible at all, while an ingressive reading can leave the choice open and the whole clause can be considered 'onset of state'.
4. The dates shown in the figure indicate the period of reasonable frequency, not necessarily the date of the first attested example.
5. However, note that Jespersen (1909–49: III, IV), Curme (1931), Svartvik (1966) and Stein (1979) consider that *become*, as well as other inchoative verbs such as *grow*, should be considered a passive auxiliary even in PDE.
6. This relationship of directedness is sometimes known as **version**. Those languages that use an overt marking for version can explicitly express the directedness of action and the person (beneficiary, not addressee) for whom the action is intended. Georgian, for example, has a ternary version system (marked in bold), i.e. neutral version *v-**a**-k'eteb* 'I do', subject version *v-**i**-k'eteb* 'I do for myself' and object version *v-**u**-k'eteb* 'I do for him' (Gamkrelidze and Ivanov 1995: 290). Indo-European languages have neither such a ternary version system (it is binary) nor an overt version marker. Gamkrelidze and Ivanov (1995: 291) argue that Indo-European languages have a beneficiary which is always co-referential to the subject, and the object-oriented beneficiary never existed in them. This is why Indo-European languages have the binary version system, which is not overtly marked as in languages like Georgian.
7. Note that Miller (1985) incorporates the localist hypothesis, claiming that *get*-passive became possible only after *get* acquired the sense of direction, as in *I have to get* [i.e. reach] *to the station*.
8. The same change can be observed in the morphologically-marked causative construction. For example, Khasi (Mon-Khmer, Austric) still preserves the same prefix *pyn-* 'to' for both the causative and benefactive case, as shown below (examples taken from Song 1996: 92–3):

Khasi (Austric)	causative:	*iap* 'die'	*pyniap* 'kill'
		long 'be'	*pynlong* 'create'
	benefactive:	*kren* 'speak'	*pynkren* 'speak for another'
		repair (loan from English)	*pynrepair* 'repair for someone'

It is interesting to note that the directionality involved in the benefactive (in the sense of 'benefit from SOURCE to GOAL') is often considered in terms of localism (see Section 3.3.2.1 for a definition). It is often claimed that this tendency for a metaphorical extension of locativeness to a more abstract notion is a characteristic of localism (see, for example, Heine *et al.* 1991: 113–18).

9. These constructions, as exemplified in (64) and (65), have been given various names: 'activo-passive' (Jespersen 1924; Bresnan 1982; L. Levin 1982), 'middle voice' (Andrews 1982; Bresnan 1982), 'medio-passive' (Bresnan 1982; Grady 1965; Rosta 1995), 'passival' (Sweet 1898), 'patient–subject construction' (Fellbaum 1985; van Oosten 1977) and Kemmer (1993: 2) adds a few more: 'quasi-reflexive', 'pseudo-reflexive', 'neuter' and 'deponent'.

Chapter 7

1. See Denison (1993: 390–1, 1998: 148) for further examples.
2. Other items such as adverbials can also be used to express modality; see, for example, Perkins (1983).
3. Subjectivity itself can be considered in terms of our version of gradience from 'more subjective' to 'less subjective' (see Lyons 1982: 109; Coates 1983; Palmer 2001: 16; Langacker 1985). Thus, as stated in Traugott (1989: 36), *You must be very careful* has the following four possible different readings: *You are required to be very careful* (deontic, weakly subjective), *I require you to be very careful* (deontic, strongly subjective), *It is obvious from evidence that you are very careful* (epistemic, weakly subjective), *I conclude that you are very careful* (epistemic, strongly subjective).
4. It may be interesting to note that this suffix can be attached to a noun or pronoun. During the 19th and most of the 20th century, *clubbable* 'sociable' was one such example (see *OED -able*, a.). Another example in PDE is a pronoun, used in a contrived, informal 'literary' usage, as in a line from a song: *So make-you-**mineable**, you're mine* (The Corrs, 1999, *Irresistible*).
5. However, as we have claimed, the judgement of whether something is able to be done or not is based on the speaker/writer's subjective belief, viewpoint, etc.
6. Example (43) is arguable, since the *by*-phrase can refer to either *declared* or *punishable*. Since we cannot disregard the possibility, we include this example.
7. Some doubt this claim: even in PDE, *need* and *want* at least are still stably productive (p.c. David Denison).
8. Bauer (1998: 111) goes further to claim that 'their use may also be related to their bound nature and especially their combining with infinitives, which fits the increasing use of auxiliaries'.
9. There were about 40 verbs classified as impersonal verbs in earlier English. See Pocheptsov (1997) for a list of such verbs. The majority of them developed into 'personal' verbs by the end of ME, but there are cases where certain phrasal or modal verbs started to be used 'impersonally' rather than 'personally' during ME (some of them even in lME), verbs such as *have liefer* 'prefer', *must, ought, þurfe* 'need'. See Plank (1984: 322–3), Denison (1993: 71–2), Visser (1963–73: §§33, 40–1, 1715) for examples.
10. There are languages which behave similarly. See (56iv) in Chapter 2 for examples from Russian and Hungarian, where the impersonal verb construction is preserved when the verb expresses modality.

Chapter 8

1. D/H stands for discourse/hearer. Therefore, D/H-new information tends to be of low topicality, D/H-old information, of high topicality.
2. Her results also involve change of position of adverb phrases, but the type of inversion we consider as quasi-passive here only involves the inversion of subject and object, and the word order of other grammatical elements is considered irrelevant.

3. Typologically, however, pronouns like *everyone* and *anyone* are more likely to be found across languages, as noted in Haspelmath (1997: 12): 'most languages make do without them [*one*, *man*, etc., J.T.], whereas the large majority of languages seem to have indefinite pronouns like *someone*'.
4. See (5) below, which contains an instance of *me* 'man' as well as *on* 'one'.
5. Meier attributes this change to the change in women's social status, i.e. women started to be given similar status to men during ME. Consider the particular OE word *wif* 'wife' and its grammatical gender. This word is a neuter noun, although the referent's natural sex is female. Such an instance may suggest that 'wife' is considered as a type of object which can be possessed by a male regardless of her will through marriage, since this type of grammatical convention is highly based on cultural bias (see Wolfe 1980). There are some languages which differentiate the grammatical voice of the verb 'marry' according to the gender of the subject, i.e. he can marry her, but she cannot marry him. Instead, she has to be married by him. The actor and the undergoer are not interchangeable, and therefore, he cannot be married by her either. In Nyanja (Bantu), for example, *ku-kwatibwa* 'be married', derived from *ku-kwata* 'marry', is only applicable to women (Hetherwick 1920: 162). Meier's claim in relation to the use of the indefinite *man* does not seem to be a popular one, but in conjunction with the gender distinction in the nominal, his claim may be significant.
6. In languages like Alamblak (Indo-Pacific), the gender is distinguished in the singular, but not in the dual or plural. Thus, when the speaker tries to hide or does not know the identity, the third person plural form is used. Consider the following example, taken from Bruce (1984: 98):

   Alamblak (Indo-Pacific): *yën-m* *heawrahtm* *indom* *yamtn*
   child-3PL she.will.bear.them another month.in
   'She will bear a child in another month.'

   Notice the plural marker on the object and the verb, although she is carrying only one baby at the time of utterance.
7. The reflexive pronoun can be singular, but as for verbal morphology, *they* does not require singular marking. Also, David Denison (p.c.) pointed out that the indefinite use of *they* is often preceded by indefinite pronouns such as *anyone*, *somebody*, etc.
8. However, we should bear in mind that the passive can be used as a presentative marker, as we have seen in Section 4.2.4.
9. This is 'honorific', since the use of the passive in such an environment is somehow forced by the social norm. See Sections 4.2 and 8.3.2.1 for the difference between honorific and politeness.

Appendix: Stativity Tests

Stativity has various semantic characteristics. Among these characteristics there are two main distinctions, natural state and secondary state (Nedjalkov and Jaxontov 1988: 4). A **natural state** is a state which comes into existence on its own, without any outer cause, while a **secondary state** is one created by some outer cause, which is normally a conscious action; see for example Dowty (1979: 184) and Brinton (1988: 34–5) for examples. The importance of this distinction is made clearer when analysing the difference between stative and resultative. Both states denote stativity, but the difference lies in whether the state is a result created by an outer cause or not. If so, it is resultative and if not, stative (Nedjalkov and Jaxontov 1988: 6–7). In this sense, we can say that the natural state tends to be stative, and the secondary state resultative. Let us take some examples. In a clause such as *The window was already broken*, some previous event of breaking the window is implied, so this is resultative, while *The cottage is surrounded by lovely scenery* denotes a natural state of the surrounding of the cottage and thus it is stative (or adjectival). Also, in the resultative, we can assume that there is some instigator of an action, while in the stative there is no such outer cause. As we can see, the same construction can be usefully divided into two different types of stativity and we use this distinction in our work (see also Toyota 2002).

In order to analyse the difference between stative and dynamic reading in the construction auxiliary + past participle, we need to employ some tests. Fortunately, previous studies have dealt with these tests and in addition, stativity has a number of characteristics which enable us to create tests. Six such tests are proposed below, considering various claims about verbal aspect put forward by linguists such as Brinton (1988: 242), Freed (1979: 57–8), Dowty (1979: 55–6), Givón (1970: 831) and Trask (1993: 259). These six tests involve: (i) non-occurrence in the progressive, (ii) incompatibility with durative adverbial phrases, (iii) incompatibility with ingressive and egressive aspects (iv) appearance in imperative mood, (v) incompatibility with agentivity and (vi) applicability of the pseudo-cleft *What S do is* ~.

(i) Non-occurrence in the progressive

In normal circumstances, stative expressions cannot occur in the progressive. There are some exceptions among active stative verbs, such as *He is understanding the subject better day by day* but not for the construction *be* + past participle. Although this test may look reliable, we may need some contextual clue as well as the progressive form. Consider the following examples. The second example can be both dynamic passive and resultative, but the sentence on its own does not suffice for any judgement to be made.

(1) a. **I am being interested in linguistics.* (stative)
b. ?*The work was being done.* (OK as verbal passive, but not as resultative)
c. *The building was being demolished.* (dynamic)

(ii) Incompatibility with durative adverbial phrases, such as *for* ∼ , *all* ∼ , *still* ∼ etc.

This test seems to work particularly well to disambiguate especially between the resultative and verbal passive. Consider the following examples:

(2) a. *The window was broken all week.* (stative, resultative)
b. *The window was still broken.* (stative, resultative)
c. **The window was broken by him for five years.* (dynamic)

However, this may not work with some stative passives. Consider the following:

(3) a. ?*I was surprised at the noise for two hours.* (stative, resultative)
b.**I was surprised by the noise for two hours.* (dynamic)

(iii) Incompatibility with egressive aspects

In order to express ingressive and egressive aspects, it is useful to see how possible it is to use verbs such as *stop*, *finish* with the construction *be* + past participle. The result is shown below:

(4) a. *The house started being demolished.* (dynamic passive)
b. *The house finished being demolished.* (dynamic passive)
c. **The work started being done.* (resultative)
d. **The work finished being done.* (resultative)

Note that in some marginal cases, the ingressive aspect can be acceptable, but the egressive can never be. Consider the following examples:

(5) a. *I started being interested in linguistics.* (adjectival passive)
b. **I finished being interested in linguistics.* (adjectival passive)

However, there seem to be some other ways to express these aspects in stative passives, using other auxiliaries. Consider the following:

(6) *I became interested in linguistics.*
I got interested in linguistics.

(iv) Appearance in imperative

This test is useful on condition that the subject is animate. Consider the following examples:

(7) a. *Be thoroughly checked!* (transitive resultative, from *He was already thoroughly checked*)
b. **Be broken by him!* (dynamic passive, from *The window was broken by him*)

(v) Incompatibility with agentivity

This characteristic is restricted to the passive and may include several useful tests, such as insertion of adverbs like *deliberately*, *conscientiously*, as in:

(8) a. **I am deliberately delighted with the result.* (stative)
b. *The window was deliberately broken by him.* (dynamic)

These adverbs do not fit in the stative constructions. Another test with regard to agentivity is the use of the verb *force*, which ensures agentivity, as shown below:

(9) a. *He forced the window to be broken.* (dynamic)
b. **He forced me to be surprised at the noise.* (stative)

(vi) Applicability of the pseudo-cleft *What S do is* ~.

The *wh*-clause reflects the stativity of the verb in the predicate. Thus, when a stative verb is used in the *wh*-clause, the verb in the predicate is stative, and conversely for a dynamic verb. Thus, when the passive is dynamic, it can be used in the pseudo-cleft construction, such as *What S do is* ~. Consider the following examples:

(10) a. *What he does is (to) be criticised by his enemies.*
b. **What he does is (to) be surprised at the noise.*

We may summarise the six tests and their application to the four types of constructions in Table A1 below.

These tests are specifically designed for English, but they are useful for other languages as well, with the exception of test (vi), applicability to a pseudo-cleft. We made a distinction between the periphrastic passive and morphological passive (i.e. the periphrastic one is more sensitive to the tense-aspectual system than the morphological one, cf. Section 5.3.1), but it does not affect the applicability of these tests.

The characteristics shown above are mainly concerned with verbal aspectuality. However, aspectuality may not be related purely to verbal aspect alone: there are some other grammatical clues for the dynamic/ stative distinction.. As for the aspect of a whole clause, it may be necessary to take into consideration other grammatical elements such as noun phrases and adverbial phrases. This was rightly pointed out by a number of scholars, such as Bach (1986), Gruber (1976), Mourelatos (1978), Smith (1991), Verkuyl (1972, 1993, 1999), and more specifically on the passive, Beedham (1982, 1987), to name a few.

We can point out two such grammatical items: the use of certain temporal adverbials and the number and definiteness of the noun phrase. We have already seen the use of adverbials in test (ii) above, and we will look at other sources

Table A1 Semantic characteristics of stativity tests

	Progressive	**Durative**	**Egressive**	**Imperative**	**Agentivity**	**Pseudo-cleft**
Verbal pass.	+	−	+	−	+	+
get-passive	+	−	+	−	+	+
Adjectival	−	+	−	+	−	−
Resultative	−	+	−	+	−	−

of aspectuality, i.e. number and definiteness of the object (either grammatical or cognate). When the object is a plural, indefinite noun, this tends to go with a more stative reading, while a definite, singular noun tends to go with a more dynamic reading, but the whole relationship is not quite that simple. We can in theory create four different situations in terms of definiteness and singularity/ plurality: singular-indefinite object; singular-definite object; plural-indefinite object; plural-definite object. Consider examples for each type:

singular-indefinite object (stative)

(11) a. *He read a book.*
b. ?*A book was read by him.*

singular-definite object (dynamic)

(12) a. *He read the book.*
b. *The book was read by him.*

plural-indefinite object (stative)

(13) a. *He read books.*
b. *Books were read by him.*

plural-definite object (stative/ dynamic)

(14) a. *He read the books.*
b. *The books were read by him.*

The singular-indefinite noun, as shown in (11) has a more stative reading. This is because *a book* does not designate any specific book and has a kind of generic reading, i.e. 'book in general' . This generic reading is also ambiguous as to whether the action of reading is terminated or not. This leads to an imperfective reading, i.e. stative. We may note that this indefiniteness is not compatible with the passive, since topicality is normally low with indefinite nouns. Thus the passive subject tends to be definite (cf. (11) and (12)). On the other hand, a singular-definite noun can refer to a specific book, and the action tends to be terminative, since there is only one book concerned in this type, which therefore has a more dynamic reading.

A plural-indefinite object has a more stative reading, due to its indefiniteness. A singular noun can possibly go with egressive aspect, as in (12), but plurality does not indicate this aspect, in the sense 'He read one book after another'. However, this type is more natural as the passive subject than is an indefinite-singular noun, as shown in (13b), where plurality reduces the aspect of generic reading and it becomes more like a collective noun, as opposed to a common noun in (11b). A plural-definite object is ambiguous between stative and dynamic aspect. This is because two readings are possible: either the reading of a set of books is over (dynamic) or a reading among a set of books does not specify the end of such action (stative).

Note that incorporation of number of object noun phrase in the verbal aspectual system is overtly marked in some languages, often case-marked as partitive. As shown in (15) below, the partitive normally expresses a part of a whole or related notion, such as an entity only partly affected by an action (Trask 1993: 201), and it functions as a progressive marker, since it expresses an indefinite quantity and leaves the egressive aspect or the completion of action ambiguous (Blake 1994: 153). Some examples are shown in (16) and (17) below:

(15) Hungarian
  a. *Olvasta a könyvet*
     read. 3.SG the book. ACC
     'He read the book.'
  b. *Olvasott a könyvböl*
     read. 3.SG the book. PAR
     'He read some of the book.'
(16) Finnish (Payne 1997: 243)
  a. *Han luki kirjan*
     he read book. ACC
     'He read the book' (past perfective)
  b. *Han luki kirjaa*
     he read book. PAR
     'He was reading the book.' (past progressive)
(17) Inari Sami (Finno-Sami, Uralic, Nelson 2001)
  a. *Luen kirja-n*
     read. 1SG book. ACC
     'I read the book.' (present pefective)
  b. *Luen kirja-an*
     read. 1SG book. PAR
     'I am reading the book.' (present progressive)

Such testing of noun phrases is not specifically designed for English, but can be usefully applied to various other languages. However, we need to pay attention to each language' s grammatical structures. For example, languages like Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, etc. do not have an article, and so the test cannot function as it does in, say, English, as in examples (11) to (14).

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Lancaster-Oslo/ Bergen (LOB) Corpus

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