

THE LAMNSO PASSIVE STRUCTURE IN RELATION TO ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, the structural or the syntactic representation of passivization in Lamnso is examined in relation to English, within the contexts of universal, optimal and minimalistic grammatical considerations. Inasmuch as there are structural universals for the phenomenon of passivization as established by the theory of Universal Grammar-UG (a grammar that attempts to establish the properties and constraints common to all possible languages and based on the innate system of principles underlying the human faculty), there equally exist some passive divergences that justify the existence of what I will call here "Structural Optionality " (SO), where the same grammatical phenomena are syntactically represented differently in the various languages; a justification for Individual Language Grammars (ILG).The comparative approach, within the optimal and minimalist theoretical considerations, adopted for this study reveals that while passivization in English is generally an ex situ leftward substitution movement for both passivization with or without the by-phrase, in Lamnso it involves both in situ and ex situ passivization. In situ passivization occurs both with the option using the by-phrases (that undergo a concurrent verb-tense raising above the IP) and with the indefinite 'á' usage option without by-phrases. Ex situ passivization (with a leftward substitution movement) equally occurs for the option without the by-phrases.

Keywords: *Syntax; Representation; Passivization; Lamnso; English; Universal; Optionality; Grammar; Substitution; Raising; Movement; Ex Situ; In Situ.*

INTRODUCTION

In a sentence using the passive voice, it is generally advocated that the object becomes the subject and the subject becomes the object. The passivized object usually moves to the sentence initial subject position as is the case with English, be it passivization with or without the by-phrase. This paper sets out to examine the grammatical phenomenon of passivization in Lamnso, within the optimal, minimalistic and universal grammatical backgrounds. The study adopts a comparative approach (juxtaposing Lamnso and English) in order to discern and describe those movements and other contexts that generate the Lamnso passive structure. In as much as there are common language properties and constraints based on the innate system of principles underlying the human faculty (accounting for UG-Universal Grammar), there equally exist individual language-specific properties and constraints: the basis of ILG-Individual Language Grammar. The aims of this paper are two-fold. Firstly, to look for facts and secondly, to provide data and evidence that support not only the OT claim or presupposition that there are no language-specific restrictions on the "Input" and that every grammar can handle every possible "Input" in its own way but also the minimalist premise that "each feature projects" (what Sportiche (1996) calls the 'atomization of syntactic structures) amongst other claims discussed below.

DATA/METHODOLOGY

The Lamnso corpus on its part was designed by this writer and self-established, being a native speaker of the language. As for the analysis, this work adopts the analytical procedure of a comparative approach, based on the following optimal theoretical premise stipulating that "given any Input, GEN generates an infinite number of candidates, or possible realizations of that input". In short, languages do not have the same GEN method (s) for the same Input. Our Input here being passivization, the analyses below demonstrate how the various Lamnso passive syntactic choices are generated in relation to English. In the same light, the analyses fall in line with the following minimalistic assumptions: -'Syntactic structures are binary branching structures, obeying the X-bar theory' (Kayne, 1994; Chomsky,1995):

- 'All languages are underlyingly identical' (Universal Base Hypothesis).
- 'There is no head initial / head final parameter: all languages are Spec head complement underlyingly' (Kayne 1994). For the purpose of this work, it is sufficient that there are no underlyingly mixed languages.
- 'There is no cross linguistic difference in hierarchical structure' (Sportiche 1995, Koopman 1994). This means that language variation cannot be attributed to different hierarchical locations of projections associated with the same semantic interpretation.

DATA AND ANALYSIS

A In Situ Passivization

Let us start by considering the following data in relation to the by-phrase option:

Active (Past)

(1)

English	Lamnso
I ate the fufu	m k̀i ỳi kibán kiy
You ate the fufu	à k̀i ỳi kibán kiy
S/he ate the fufu	wu k̀i ỳi kibán kiy
We ate the fufu	ver k̀i ỳi kibán kiy
You ate the fufu	ven k̀i ỳi kibán kiy
They ate the fufu	awuné k̀i v̀i kibán kiy

NB (Lamnso): k̀i = Past 1; ỳi = eat; kibán = fufu and kiy = that.

Passive (Past)

(2)

English	Lamnso
That fufu was eaten by me	k̀i ỳi mo kibán kiy
That fufu was eaten by you	k̀i ỳi wo kibán kiy
That fufu was eaten by her/him	k̀i ỳi wun kibán kiy
That fufu was eaten by us	k̀i ỳi ver kibán kiy
That fufu was eaten by you	k̀i ỳi ven kibán kiy
That fufu was eaten by them	k̀i ỳi awune kibán kiy

NB (Lamnso): k̀i = Past 1; ỳi = eat; kibán = fufu and kiy = that.

Active (Future)

(3)

English	Lamnso
I will eat that fufu	m lo yí kibán kiy
You will eat that fufu	à lo yí kibán kiy
S/he will eat that fufu	wu lo yí kibán kiy
We will eat that fufu	ver lo yí kibán kiy
You will eat that fufu	ven lo yí kibán kiy
They will eat that fufu	awuné lo yí kibán kiy

NB (Lamnso): lo= Future 1; yí = eat; kibán = fufu and kiy = that.

Passive (Future)

(4)

English	Lamnso
That fufu will be eaten by me	lo yí mo kibán kiy
That fufu will be eaten by you	lo yí wo kibán kiy
That fufu will be eaten by her/him	lo yí wun kibán kiy
That fufu will be eaten by us	lo yí ver kibán kiy
That fufu will be eaten by you	lo yí ven kibán kiy
That fufu will be eaten by them	lo yí awuné kibán kiy

NB (Lamnso): lo= Future 1; yí = eat; kibán = fufu and kiy = that.

Active (Present Continuous)

(5)

English	Lamnso
I am eating that fufu	m sí yí kibán kiy
You are eating that fufu	à sí yí kibán kiy
S/he is eating that fufu	wu sí yí kibán kiy
We are eating that fufu	ver sí yí kibán kiy
You are eating that fufu	ven sí yí kibán kiy
They are eating that fufu	awuné sí yí kibán kiy

NB (Lamnso): sí = Present Continuous; yí = eat; kibán = fufu and kiy = that.

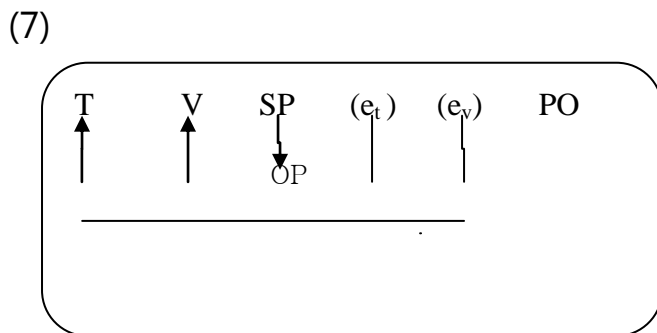
Passive (Present Continuous)

(6)

English	Lamnso
That fufu is being eaten by me	sí yí mo kibán kiy
That fufu is being eaten by you	sí yí wo kibán kiy
That fufu is being eaten by her/him	sí yí wun kibán kiy
That fufu is being eaten by us	sí yí ver kibán kiy
That fufu is being eaten by you	sí yí ven kibán kiy
That fufu is being eaten by them	si vi awuné kibán kiy

NB (Lamnso): si = Present Continuous; yí = eat; kibán = fufu and kiy = that.

Looking at the above data, we note that instead of 'kibán kiy' (that fufu) moving to the sentence initial position as the case of the passivized object as in English, the passivized object remains in situ and the verb plus the tense particle raises to the pre-IP position. Due to the case assignment property of verbs, the pronoun(s) receive(s) the objective case in the indirect object position. The syntactic representation of this phenomenon can be described in (7) below and the precise rule for its generation is as in (8):

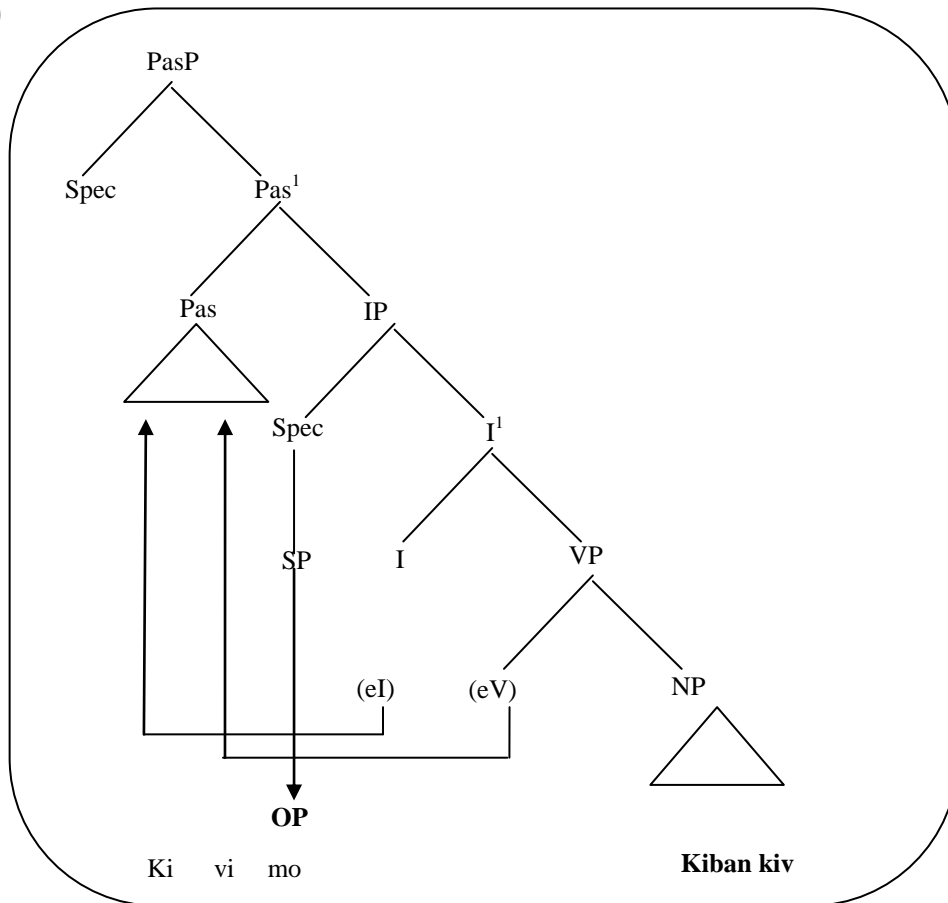


(8)

SP-----> OP / V-----PO, where
 SP = Subject Pronoun; OP = Object Pronoun
 V = Verb; PO = passivized Object.

Representing this Passive Phrase (PasP) in a tree diagram, we have:

(9)



Using proper nouns, the raising movement is obtained as in (10b) below:

(10a)

English	Lamnso
John ate that fufu	Joon k̄i ȳi kibán kiy
John will eat that fufu	Joon lo ȳi kibán kiy
John is eating	Joon sí ȳi kibán kiy

(10b)

English	Lamnso
That fufu was eaten by Jon	k̄i ȳi Joon kibán kiy
That fufu will be eaten by John	lo ȳi Joon kibán kiy.
That fufu is being	sí ȳi Joon kibán kiy

With ordinary nouns as subjects in the active voice, the raising movement still remains unchanged. But what is worth noting is that the subjective concord marker (s) can never be subjected to the case assignment property of the verb (s). Consequently, the concord marker (s) become (s) null or deleted when the main noun (s) is/are moving to adjoin at the VP-node. Consider the examples in (11) below involving the following nouns: ana' (cows); menən (birds) and vitam (elephants) from classes 2, 6 and 8 respectively:

(11a)

English	Lamnso
That fufu was will be eaten by those cows	kì yì ana' viy kibán kiy
That fufu will be eaten by those cows	lo yí ana' viy kibán kiy
That fufu is being eaten by those cows	si yí ana' viy kibán kiy

(11a.1)

English	Lamnso
Those cows ate that fufu	ana' viy yi kì yì kibán kiy
Those cows will eat that fufu	ana' viy yi lo yí kibán kiy
Those cows are eating that fufu	ana' viy yi si yí kibán kiy

NB: yi = concord marker (class 2)

(11b)

English	Lamnso
Those birds ate that fufu	menən mey me kì yì kibán kiy
Those birds will eat that fufu	menən mey me lo yí kibán kiy
Those birds are eating that fufu	menən mey me si yí kibán kiy

NB: me = concord marker (class 6)

(11b.1)

English	Lamnso
That fufu was eaten by those birds	kì yì menən mey kibán kiy
That fufu will be eaten by those birds	lo yí menən mey kibán kiy
That fufu is being eaten by those birds	si yí menən mey kibán kiy

(11c)

English	Lamnso
Those elephants ate that fufu	vitam visə vi kì yì kibán kiy
Those elephants will eat that fufu	vitam visə vi lo yí kibán kiy
Those elephants are eating fufu	vitam visə vi si yí kibán kiy

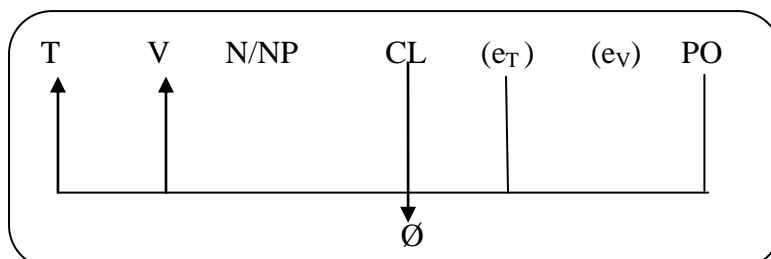
NB: vi = concord marker (class 8)

(11c.1)

English	Lamnso
That fufu was eaten by those elephants	kì yì vitam visə kibán kiy
That fufu will be eaten by those elephants	lo yí vitam visə kibán kiy
That fufu is being eaten by those elephant	si yí vitam visə kibán kiy

As earlier indicated, when nouns or noun phrases are passivized, the pre-verbal active voice class marker (s) become (s) null (\emptyset) as the verb raises to the pre-IP position. As a kind of rule that captures this movement, we have:

(12)



Equally, in situ passivization occurs with one of the options without the by-phrase usage. Let us consider the following examples:

(13a)

English	Lamnso
(a) Those cows are eaten	á sí yí ana' viy
Those birds are eaten	á sí yí menən mey
Those elephants are eaten	á sí yí vitam viy
Those fufus are eaten	á sí yí vibán viy

(13b)

English	Lamnso
Those cows will be eaten	á lo yí ana' viy
Those birds will be eaten	á lo yí menən mey
Those elephants will be eaten	á lo yí vitam viy
Those fufus will be eaten	á lo yí vibán viy

(13c)

English	Lamnso
Those cows were eaten	á kì yì ana' viy
Those birds were eaten	á kì yì menən mey
Those elephants were	á kì yì vitam viy
Those fufus were eaten	á kì yì vibán viy

Looking at the above examples (13a-c), English and Lamnso clearly oppose each other. English realizes this kind of passivization ex situ at sentence initial position while Lamnso realizes it in situ at sentence final position

B Ex Situ Passivization/Impersonal Passivization

Like English, Lamnso realizes this type of passivization at the initial sentence position. This option, it should be noted, admits no by-phrase addition. Secondly, the present progressive usage requires the obligatory presence or addition of the nominal referent 'wún' for all the passivized nouns or noun phrases. Consider thus the examples below:

(14)

English	Lamnso
(a)	
That fufu was eaten	kibán kiy ki si k̀̀ ỳ̀-in
That fufu will be	kibán kiy lo a dzə k̀̀ ỳ̀-in
(b) That fufu is being eaten	kibán kiy ki sí ỳ̀ wún

NB: ki = class marker; si = progressive; ỳ̀ = eat; -in = aspect (perfective); lo = future1; a = to; dzə = be; wún = nominal referent.

(15)

English	Lamnso
(a)	
Those birds were eaten	menən mey me si me kvər-in
Those birds will be eaten	menən mey me lo a dzə me kvər-in
(b) Those birds are being eaten	menən mey me sí kvər wún

NB: me = class marker; si = progressive; kvər = eat (birds); -in = aspect (perfective); lo = future1; a = to; dzə = be; wún = nominal referent.

(16)

English	Lamnso
(a)	
Those elephants were eaten	vitam viy vi si vi kvər-in
Those elephants will be eaten	vitam viy vi lo a dzə vi kvər-in
(b) Those elephants are being eaten	vitam viy vi sí kvər wún

NB: vi = class marker; si = progressive; kvər = eat (animals); -in = aspect (perfective); lo = future1; a = to; dzə = be; wún = nominal referent.

CONCLUSION

Summarily, the grammatical phenomenon of passivization that exists in Lamnso manifests itself in two structurally syntactic representations, namely, the in situ and the ex situ. The analyses carried out so far demonstrate that in situ passivization occurs both with the option using

the by-phrases (that undergoes a verb-tense concurrent raising) and with the indefinite 'á' usage option without by-phrases. Here, the passivized elements remain in situ at the sentence final position. Meanwhile, ex situ passivization (with a leftward substitution movement to the sentence initial position) equally occurs for the option without the by-phrases. Thus, the OT claims that there are no language-specific restrictions on Inputs and that Input-Output mappings vary from language to language are clearly demonstrated in this paper.

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