

GRADIENCE IN ANALYSIS: A CASE OF PRESENTATIVE PASSIVE

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Abstract. *In this paper, a concept of overlapping grammatical categories in a linguistic analysis is discussed. This overlap has gained recognition in research and is often termed as gradience. A specific instance of gradience concerning various types of the passive voice, especially the one involving less-typical information status, is used as an example to illustrate how gradience exists in different languages. The passive is known to function as a topic marker in a clause, but there are some cases where it is used as a focus device. By studying these features both synchronically and diachronically, one can find gradience of the passive both structurally and functionally.*

Key words: *gradience; grammatical category; passive; information status*

1. GRADIENCE IN LINGUISTICS: INTRODUCTION

Linguistic analysis often encounters less prototypical constructions created by overlap of characteristics. For example, the verbal participle often demonstrates the overlap between categories verb and adjective and linguistic analysis has to decide whether a particular instance should belong to one category or another. This kind of ambiguities always creates problems for scholars. When they are analysed synchronically, problems may remain as they are. However, once they are analysed diachronically, we may be able to explain them: these ambiguities are a result of constant historical change, i.e. ambiguities represent the transition from one form or meaning to another. Therefore, these ambiguities are inevitable elements in the language. In this paper, we argue that the best way to analyse this type of ambiguity is the use of gradience. There are various linguistic phenomena to be analysed using gradience, and we choose two such instances, a mixture of topic and focus in a single construction and a particular use of the passive auxiliary, i.e. the auxiliary used for the presentative function in the passive. The analysis is done using a single construction, but it involves several instances of gradience.

We organise this paper as follows: we demonstrate some examples of gradience first, using a case of tense-aspect system. Then we move on to our main argument, where we

analyse the auxiliary verb in the passive voice with the presentative function typologically. Then we proceed to a more language-specific analysis and we focus on a case of historical change in English.¹ Since this construction is related to the existential, we present data for both the passive and the existential. Based on the data, we demonstrate how gradience works.

2. GRADIENCE

The term gradience, in this work, is used to highlight a linkage between a grammatical category or a word class and their 'real' role in the overall interpretation of grammar both syntactically and semantically. There are two types of gradience (Aarts 2004: 6-18): the intersective gradience is a gradience between two categories as in the case of verbal participle. Consider *taking a walk* in *Taking a walk is good for health*. This phrase forms a subject NP, but *taking* in this case still takes the direct object and behaves like a verb. The same phrase, on the contrary, looks more verbal in *He is taking a walk*. A gradience within a single category, such as *less* in *less work* (uncountable noun) and *less students* (countable noun) (Denison 2001: 124) has been called subsective gradience.

Such grammatical features have been noticed: Givón (1979: 235) claims that "in each instance, a *crazy* synchronic state of the grammar has arisen via diachronic changes that are highly *natural* and presumably motivated independently by various communicative factors" [emphasis original], or as Harris and Campbell (1995: 261) put it, "[i]t is a commonplace of historical linguistics that changes leave residue." Hopper (1991) also calls such intermediate features layering. A similar concept has been commonly recognised in the grammaticalisation theory, which allows the existence of two forms for the same function or meaning, as summarised in the following:

Grammaticalization theory also accommodates the (empirically well-attested) fact that constructions with the same historical origin, but at the different degrees of grammaticalization on formal and/or functional dimensions, may coexist in a speech community at a given moment in time. ... grammaticalization theory, like sociohistorical theory, allows the existence of alternative ways of saying the same thing. (Croft 2000: 63)

This is so, since "grammaticalization has to be conceived of as a panchronic process that presents both a diachronic perspective, since it involves change, and a synchronic perspective, since it implies variation that can be described as a system without reference to time" (Heine et al. 1991: 261).

The term gradience focuses on a case narrower than what is often assumed in grammaticalisation, and the main object of research is concerned with various interpretations from a single construction. This is what makes gradience differ slightly from the main stream grammaticalisation approaches. In spite of some scholars mentioned above, however, various grammatical features analysable under gradience have been rather neglected in linguistic analysis, and have not received their deserved attention. Some recent works (e.g. Aarts 2004; Denison 2001; Toyota 2008), however, particularly focus on this intermediate stage of grammatical feature and call it gradience. These previous works, how-

¹ Corpora are used for statistical analysis, i.e. Early Modern English (eModE) from Helsinki corpus, Late Modern English (lModE) from ARCHER corpus and Present-day English (PDE) from London-Lund (LL) corpus and London-Oslo-Bergen (LOB) corpus, and only the British English part is used for ARCHER.

ever, tend to focus on English and this is an obvious shortcoming, since English is rather unique in the grammatical structure and one should not solely rely on this language in order to develop a new trend of analysis. (see Toyota 2004 for Anglocentric view on linguistics analysis and see Croft 2007 for more typology-oriented argument on gradience). Nevertheless, gradience will prove to be useful, especially in historical analysis and it deserves much attention. Analysis of gradience focuses on each instance of an intermediate stage, mainly concentrating on the syntactic one, but semantic and pragmatic ones are also analysed.

2.1 A case of tense-aspect system

The most common method to distinguish tense-aspectual differences is addition of affixes to the verb. However, there are more complex tense-aspect marking systems across languages. For example, the article or the case, which are generally not associated with tense or aspect, can signal the aspect. In Finno-Ugric languages, the partitive case marking has two functions: expressing a part of a whole and creating a progressive aspect. In 0 from Hungarian, a-example demonstrates a canonical reading with the accusative marker, but in b-example, both the partitive reading and progressive aspect can be expressed due to the partitive marker.

Hungarian

- (1) a. *Olvasta a könyvet*
 read.3SG the book.ACC
 'He read the book.'
- b. *Olvasott a könyvből*
 read.3SG the book.PART
 'He reads some part of the book.' (partitive)
 'He is reading the book.' (progressive)

Another similar case can be found in the use of the antipassive in Chamorro, as exemplified in 0. The antipassive marker can function as an aspectual marker as well as a valency alternating affix. In this case, it denotes the iterative aspect for an aspectual distinction and it demotes the direct object into oblique phrase. Note that it has been noticed that the ergative and antipassive constructions are closely tied up with the perfective and imperfective aspect, respectively. So (3a) with the anticausative (cf. *i* in (3a)) is often used expressing imperfective aspect, but the association with certain aspects is different from the case in Chamorro in 0. Imperfective aspect is merely a likely environment for the antipassive, and this is not a case of gradience.

Chamorro (Austronesian, Cooreman 1988: 583)

- (2) *Mang-galuti gue' ni ga'lagu*
 ANTIP-hit 3SG.ABS OBL dog
 'He hit the dog.' (only partially affected)
 'He repeatedly hit the dog.' (iterative)

Samoan (Austronesian, Milner 1973: 635)

- (3) a. *Na va'ai le tama i le i'a*
 tense look.at the boy OBL the fish
 'The boy was looking at the fish.'
- b. *Na va'ai-a e le tama le i'a*
 tense look.at-TR ERG the boy the fish
 'We see the birds.'

These examples so far are rather simple cases of intersective gradience. However, the following Japanese examples demonstrate a complex case of subsective gradience. In Japanese, a phrase *te i-ru* creates various aspectual readings. Takeuchi (1999: 86-89), following Kindaichi (1976), identifies three different aspectual readings, i.e. resultative, iterative and progressive. As these examples demonstrate, the same phrase can create four different aspectual readings. This is a complex case of intersective gradience.

- (4) *Kare-wa saishinno bideo preiyaa-wo ka-te i-ru*
 he-FOC the.most.recent video.player-ACC buy-RES-PRS
 'He has already bought the most recent video player.' (resultative)
- (5) *Kare-wa heya-no souji-wo shi-te i-ru*
 he-FOC room-GEN cleaning-ACC do-PROG-PRS
 'He is cleaning the room.' (progressive)
- (6) *Kanojyo-wa yoku chokoreeto-no koto-wo kangae-te i-ru*
 she-FOC often chocolate-GEN matter-ACC think-ITER-PRS
 'She often thinks about chocolate.' (iterative/habitual)
 'She is often thinking about chocolate.' (progressive)

These examples are only the tip of the iceberg. Different languages demonstrate different types of gradience. Linguistic approaches need to cope with these characteristics of syntactic or semantic overlapping in language. However, it is important to note that it is often possible to disambiguate gradience at synchronic level given proper contexts, as argued in Aarts (2004). So it may be possible to determine what specific aspect should be assigned to the examples above. What is obvious, however, is that they can be potentially ambiguous although they are determinable. In the rest of this paper, we analyse some exceptional uses of the passive construction involving the existential clause. It involves gradience at both syntactic and functional level. In order to illustrate the common pattern, we first introduce what is typical in the passive and then discuss some specific constructions later.

3. GRADIENCE IN THE PERIPHRASTIC PASSIVE

The passive is known to possess some gradience features (cf. Toyota 2008). For instance, the periphrastic passive and the perfective aspect can be sometimes found in one sentence. Aspectual nature in the passive has been noticed, as in Beedham (1981; 1982; 1987), Andersen (1991), but their claim is that the passive should be considered as an aspectual construction, not the passive. Their argument is partially correct, since some instances of the periphrastic passive can be interpreted as an aspectual construction, but not all of them, and as revealed below, some cases can be interpreted intermediate between the passive and the aspectual construction. Rydén and Brorström (1987: 24) noticed such gradience, as exemplified in 0. This is an example from eModE, and it is often assumed that this type of gradience does not exist any longer. However, Toyota (2008: 45-49) argued that this type of example can also be found in PDE, as shown in 0. This can be problematic, since the passive in general does not express the actor overtly, making the interpretation even more difficult in some cases. However, the existence of ambiguity itself shows a hint that the gradience still exists.

- (7) *Our hopes are again revived of seeing the Viceroy of Mexico.* (1797 Nelson, *Letters*, ed. Naish (1958) 190 p., 328 (30 Jun.))
- (8) *I was knocked out, but I bear Rossi no ill-will. The fight is finished.* (LOB N23 96-97)

This type of gradience has been noticed, but there is another kind of gradience using the topicality. The passive is used for a specific topicality alternation, but there are some instances of different patterns. In the rest of this paper, we analyse a case of conflation between the passive and *there*-existential construction. The gradience in this case involves a complex case: the discourse topic and focus at the functional level and the use of *be* as the passive auxiliary and the copula at the morphosyntactic level.

3.1 Passive

When marked constructions such as the passive (cf. Givón 1979: 58-59) are involved, we are bound to find some unusual pattern, and this marked pattern, in comparison with the unmarked one, is often known to involve topicality change. The discourse is organised in different ways, but what can be found there is that some parts are already known and important and others are new and adding extra pieces of information to pain parts. This relationship is often represented in terms of topicality and focus, respectively. There are various other features associated with the topicality-focus distinction within the passive. A number of so-called functionalists claim that topicality change can serve as a prime function of the passive. The passive is often considered to make a non-topical entity in the active placed in a slot where it gains more topicality, due to the change in word order, morphological change, 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 any function-oriented research on the passive assumes that the passive subject is commonly considered as highly topical. Along with the quotation from Givón above, Dryer (1995: 113-114), Tomlin (1983) and Thompson (1987) also claim that the undergoer [patient in their term] has to be more topical than actor [agent in their term]. However, they also consider a case of high topicality on both actor and undergoer, which creates three-way distinction of active-passive dichotomy in terms of topicality as in 0.

- (9) 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.

The relationship based on topicality is shown in the statistical result in Biber et al. (1999: §11.3.3.2). They show that the combination 'topical undergoer and untopical actor' is the most common combination (45% in the following table). In their words, "about 90% of the agent [actor] phrases bring in new information" (ibid.: §11.3.3.2). They use three-way distinction of topicality, i.e. given, given/new and new. They provide an intermediate stage in order to accommodate some dubious cases. We reproduce their result in 0.² Such marked topicality pattern indicates that the passive is mainly concerned with the discourse topicality.³ This topicality change can be interpreted in various ways. For

² Notice that they use two types of measurement: one is a multiple of 5 percent and the other, less than 2.5 percent. Therefore, the overall percentage in the table does not add up to 100%.

³ Some scholars consider more stylistic strategies as its function, i.e. avoid changing subject (cf. Jespersen 1924: 167-168).

example, impersonalisation is often considered as the main function (cf. agent defocusing in Shibatani 1985). Impersonalisation is closely related to the topicalisation of undergoer (often known as foregrounding of patient). The difference is that this indicates the removal of topicality from actor (often known as backgrounding of agent). It is often the case that both topicalisation and impersonalisation happen in the same clause, but they can also happen independently. For example, impersonalisation without topicalisation often happens in impersonal passive, where the topicality of the undergoer remains unchanged, while the actor becomes extremely untopical (cf. later section 4.2).

Table 1. Topicality of actor phrase in relation to undergoer
(adapted from Biber et al. 1999: §11.3.2.2)

Undergoer	Actor phrase		
	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%

Givón (1983) analyses the topicality change more formally, and employs the topicality measurements of *referential distance* and *persistence* in his work. Referential distance is a measure of the predictability, and persistence is a measure of local importance. These two measurements are counted according to the occurrence of the reference of the passive subject in neighbouring clauses and trace how far the reference can be made. His detailed work reveals that the most occurrence of the passive has a grammatical subject which is high in referential distance or topicality. There are some other signs: for example, it is difficult to create a natural reading from the passive subject with indefinite article as in (10a). The passive is much more natural with definite pronoun as in (10b).

- (10) a. ?*A window was broken by him.*
 b. *The window was broken by him.*

What we have discussed so far is a more prototypical case of the passive. However, as is often the case in language, there are several exceptions for such topicality change in the passive. The passive is occasionally used to introduce undergoer entity as a new piece of information into discourse. We term such use of passive presentative passive. Below, we focus on the use of the passive in the existential clause.

3.2 Presentative and existential *there* and the passive

Similar to the impersonal passive with the dummy subject *it* (cf. Toyota 2001), the use of existential *there* with the passive can create a presentative function. The existential *there* clause without the passive morphology can introduce a new piece of information on its own. Therefore, one may argue that the presentative function in this case is not due to the passive, but the existential. However, this has to be examined further. The term 'existential *there*' may be a broad term, and in a more strict sense, it can be defined into existential *there* and presentative *there* (cf. Aissen 1975; Rochemont and Culicover 1990; McNally 1992). One of the obvious differences between them is the main verb: existential *there* only involves *be*, while presentative *there*, the following monovalent verbs apart from *be* (Quirk et al 1985: 1408):⁴

⁴ Historically, however, it is slightly different. There was a period (up to ca. 1500) when a transitive verb (divalent) could appear in the construction, as exemplified in the following examples (Ingham 2000: 14):

- (11) 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, it requires much finer pragmatic characteristics. Topicality distinction may involve the discourse topicality as well as the hearer's knowledge. Price (1992) introduces the term Hearer-New/Old and Discourse-New/Old, instead of topic and focus, since what is new to the discourse need not be new to the hearer (cf. Firbas 1966; Chafe 1976; Lambrecht 1994; Birner 1994). This distinction between discourse- and hearer-familiarity allows us to make four possible combinations, of which only three are said to occur in the naturally-occurring data. Such combination can be summarised as follows (Ward 2000: 3, cf. H-O/N, hearer old/new; D-O/N, discourse old/new):

- H-O/D-O — Information which has previously been evoked in the current discourse, and which the speaker therefore believes is known to the hearer.
 H-O/D-N — Information which has not been evoked in the current discourse, but which the speaker nonetheless believes is known to the hearer.
 H-N/D-N — Information which has not been evoked in the current discourse, and which the speaker does not believe to be known to the hearer.
 H-N/D-O — Theoretically, information which has been evoked in the current discourse, but which the speaker nonetheless believes is not known to the hearer. This type does not occur in natural discourse (Prince 1992).

When the focused entity 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 the utterance in 0 as discourse initial. In this case, *Liam Neeson* constitutes discourse-new information, but it is at the same time hearer-old. The rheme-theme distinction may not capture such a subtle difference, but the distinction based on Hearer-New/Old, Discourse-New/Old distinction seems to provide a more concrete way of dealing with the data.

- (12) *One of my friends told me that he had seen Liam Neeson in the town on Monday.*

Ward and Birner (1996) claim that the existential *there* is sensitive to hearer status, while presentative *there*, to discourse status. This creates a puzzle when the passive is incorporated into the existential or presentative *there*-construction, i.e. the passive in the *there*-construction can be sensitive to discourse, but involves *be*, whether it is a lexical verb or an auxiliary. So we are dealing with the mixture of existential *there* and presentative *there*. The presentative *there* should involve verbs listed in 0. We look at the historical development of the passive in the presentative *there*-construction, which is termed henceforth *there*-passive.

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- 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)

We may note that English examples with transitive verbs often appear with a negative subject, i.e. *no man* in the above example.

3.3. History of *there*-passive

There has been used in either existential *there* or presentative *there* since OE, but their frequency seems to have increased after OE (see OED *there*, 4.d.). We show some earlier constructions in 0 and 0.

- (13) *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)
- (14) *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)

The first instance of the passive that appeared in the *there*-construction is, according to OED (s.v. *there*, 4.c.), around eModE. (15) is taken from mid ME, but this seems to be an isolated instance. So the actual frequency increased after ME (e.g. 0 and 0). The existential with a copula verb generally involves a word order change or inversion (cf. Freeze 1992: 555-57). The change happens between the NP which is introduced into context and other grammatical elements in a clause. The above example has such function, in addition to the deletion of actor.

- (15) *For ther shall noon be saved*
 for there shall none be saved
 'For there shall be none saved.' (a1400 MES 113, 19)
- (16) *There coude not be founde a more goodlyer man.* (a1533 LD. BERNERS *Huon* cxi 385)
- (17) *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 clause is also related to the influence of specificity of referent (or low topicality), but in this case, negation also plays an important role. Haspelmath (1997: 37-45) argues that the negation denies the existence of event or objects in discourse. NP in the scope of negation, such as *nobody* in *Nobody rang us today*, is much less specific than NP without the 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 specific referent in the discourse makes an environment where the NP in the presentative passive, which is indefinite, tends to be less topicality.⁵ As a proof, the change involving the presence of negation can be observed in our data: the earlier occurrence of presentative passive, as demonstrated in 0 and 0, involves more occurrence of negative marker, which is reduced as the construction develops, as demonstrated from our data in 0, along with later occurrences in 0 and 0.

⁵ We may note that the decrease in the use of negative marker can be also observed in the existential per se. Breivik (1983: 338-341) considers a relationship in the existential in general between the word order change, such as inversion, and the negative maker. His data suggests that the presence of a negative marker, such as *ne*, *nat/not*, *nawihl/nauht/noht* 'not at all', etc. often coincides with the existential *there*.

Table 2. 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%)

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

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

The frequency of occurrence of passive in the existential in general seems to be quite low. However, what is noticeable is that the scope of negation is fading away as time passes. This seems to indicate the earlier environment was more suitable for the presentative function and it seems to have been aided by the negative marker. This can be considered to have helped the reanalysis of this construction as passive, although the function is not the main characteristics of the passive. This naturally indicates that the relative topicality of the undergoer could have been low earlier, i.e. up to 1550-1650, but this low topicality is still persistent in PDE in this environment. The verbal passive emerged around ME (Toyota 2008: 15-28, 32-41), and we consider that the presentative passive, at any stage of its existence, has been exception to the common discourse topicality pattern. However, the earlier instances can be considered less exceptional, since the presentative function was aided by the scope of negation. When such function is achieved without negation, this type of passive starts to be a marginal case.

We have examined the *there*-passive. This type is exceptional and there is some restriction in terms of lexical choice of main verb or auxiliary, discourse topicality restriction. So this construction is marked in some ways even in the passive. Such a construction indicates the diversity of English passive.

3.4. Passive with presentative function: gradience of auxiliary

As we have seen in section 2, there are a number of grammatical ambiguities created by the overlap of categories at the synchronic level. This diversity can be applied to the auxiliary verbs. Linguists such as Bybee (1985), Bybee and Dahl (1989), Givón (1979; 1984; 1989), Heine (1993) and Hopper and Traugott (1993: 108-112) consider that the auxiliary can be graded between a full lexical verb and a clitic. Auxiliaries in the passive can be usefully divided into four types (verb of being, verb of reception, verb of motion and verb of experience, cf. Keenan 1985: 257-61) and in their view, these auxiliaries all fit in various intermediate stages in the gradience as a result of historical development. There are some cases where fully lexical verbs turned into passive morphemes. One such case is some Bantu languages, where the passive morpheme can be considered to have been derived from a verb 'fall'. For example, in Shona, the passive morpheme is *-wa* (*-iwa* or *-ewa*, according to neighbouring vowels), which can be considered to be historically related to *wa* 'fall'. At the other end of the scale, the full lexical verbs can be involved in the passive, like verbs of reception in Keenan (1985: 257-61). Toyota (2008: 172-174) argues that what is known as the periphrastic passive with verbs of reception (e.g. Irish, Welsh, (both Celtic), Tzeltal (Mayan)) may be better considered an active voice construction with passive meanings, apart from a marginal case of English *get*-passive. Thus, what is commonly known as the passive auxiliary can occupy the full range of the scale. These diversities may seem odd synchronically, but diachronically, it can be considered a natural product of diachronic change in each language.

A particular case we will analyse here is a case of existential meaning in the passive auxiliary. There are some languages that use the verb of existence as the passive auxiliary, or in case of morphological passive, the passive morpheme is derived from verb of existence, as shown in 0 to 0. Needless to say, the copula used in the passive often appears also in the existential clause. As we have seen so far, English is one such language and its generic close relatives, such as German, follow suit. So the auxiliary is considered to retain a certain degree of existential meaning in the presentative passive. Thus, this diachronic approach can create a continuum of auxiliary. In this way, we can identify several types of the passive in relation to the existential clause, as shown in 0. Since we are concerned with the auxiliary, we omit affixation and loss in the following figure and concentrate on the scale between full lexical verb and clitic. Generally speaking, there are not many languages that can be located towards the clitic in the scale, while languages towards the lexical verb seem to be common. This indicates that the relationship between the existential and the passive may not be so common and it seems to be less grammaticalised cross-linguistically, but it is not impossible at all and we can still observe some intermediate stages in the scale, i.e. languages like German, English, etc. demonstrate instances of gradience, as illustrated in 0.

- Verb of existence as passive auxiliary
- Malagasy (Austronesian, Payne 1997: 125)
- (20) a. *misy mi-tomany*
 exist INTR-cry
 'One cries.' (lit. there is crying (by someone))
- b. *misy mi-tady*
 exist INTR-look.for
 'One looks for.' (lit. there is looking for (by someone))
- Tagalog (Austronesian, Haspelmath 1997: 54)
- (21) *May ginawa ang Americano*
 exist do.PAT TOP American
 'American did something.' (lit. 'As for the American, there exists something that was done')
- Passive morpheme derived from verb of existence
- Japanese (cf. *-(r)are-* derived from *aru* 'exist')
- (22) *Kabin-ga neko-ni kowas-are-ta*
 vase-TOP cat-DAT break-PASS-PST
 'The vase was broken by the cat.'

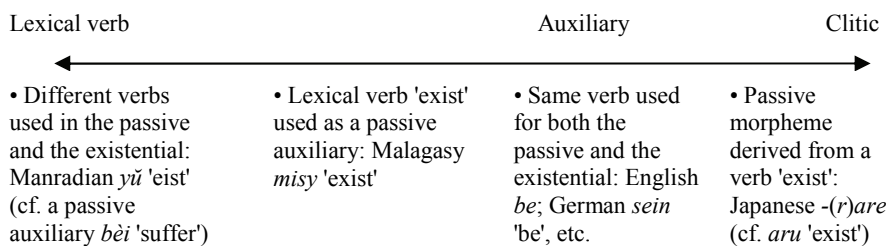


Fig. 1. Auxiliaryhood for existential verbs

There is a general tendency for auxiliaries to be derived from copula verbs and if not, from motion verbs. Less frequent, but still possible, other complement-taking verbs (often known as quasi-copula) can be a source of auxiliaries (Foley and Van Valin 1984, Payne 1997: 84). Thus, verb of existence is used as a passive auxiliary much less often than other types of verbs, such as copula or motion verbs. Therefore, the examples we have seen in (20) to (21) above are rather rare cases and the Tagalog example in (21) is particularly interesting, since this illustrates the demotion of the undergoer (i.e. passive subject), while the actor is present. Although it is rare, there is a language in which the passive morpheme is derived from the verb of existence, e.g. Japanese (Toyota 2007). The verb of existence is rare for the passive auxiliary and it is less likely to be involved in the passive, because it does not follow the dominant topicality change pattern.

As we have stated, copula is the best candidate for the auxiliary. However, copula is sometimes involved in the presentative passive, because it can be used for the existential clause as well. The use of *there*-passive involves functional and morphosyntactic gradience, since like the two other constructions, it creates marginal functions, but this construction involves the use of copula in two different functions: one is presentative, and the other, existential. The copula in existential-*there* is known to be sensitive to hearer-status, but what *there*-passive creates is the sensitivity to discourse-status. This instance shows how the copula *be* interacts with various different functions in different syntactic environment, which in our term is an instance of functional subsecutive gradience.

4. CONCLUSION

Looking at the PDE passive and existential constructions, the nature of *be* in each construction seems to be completely different from each other at first sight. However, there is a mixture of these two constructions, i.e. the presentative passive. Auxiliary *be* in this construction demonstrates an intermediate stage between the passive and the existential auxiliary. This type of linguistic phenomenon involving the overlap of categories is common and it keeps causing problems in formal analysis at synchronic level. However, at the diachronic level, we assume that they are unavoidable products of the diachronic language change, since the language change is a gradual process and there are various stages of transition from one form or meaning to another. This gradualness allows us to analyse ambiguous cases created by overlaps in terms of gradience.

In recent years, scholars like Aarts (2004), Croft (2007) are particularly working on gradience. Intermediate stages of the language change have been noticed before, but this has not been put forward as a rigid linguistic discipline. Therefore, we believe that the use of gradience in analysis can create a new dimension in future studies.

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GRADIJENTNOST U ANALIZI: SLUČAJ PREZENTACIONOG PASIVA

Junichi Toyota

U ovom radu razmatra se koncept preklapanja gramatičkih kategorija u lingvističkoj analizi. Za ovu vrstu preklapanja se u literaturi često koristi termin gradijentnost. Posebna vrsta gradijentnosti koja se tiče različitih oblika pasiva, naročito onog koji obuhvata manje tipičan informacijski status, razmatra se kao primer kako gradijentnost postoji u različitim jezicima. Poznato je da pasiv funkcioniše kao tematski marker u klauzi, ali postoje izvesni slučajevi kada se koristi i kao sredstvo za označavanje fokusa. Proučavanjem ovih karakteristika kako sinhronijski tako i dijahronijski, može se utvrditi gradijentnost pasiva i strukturalno i funkcionalno.

Ključne reči: *gradijentnost, gramatička kategorija, pasiv, informacijski status*