

PASSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN THE ENGLISH AND SERBIAN LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

The paper aims at examining the behaviour of passive constructions in English and Serbian, offering a short review of the concept of voice in both languages, a brief comment of the passive scale found in authors such as Palmer, Quirk, etc. and a short discussion of the thematic roles of the verb arguments taken from Haegeman (Haegeman, 2001). The analysed sentences are the examples of passive taken randomly from Julian Barnes' 1990 novel (Barnes, 1990), *Flaubert's Parrot*, and their Serbian equivalents taken from the official translation done by Nebojša Palić (Palić, 2008). The analysis provides an insight into the functioning of the passive gradience in practice, demonstrating that there are numerous in-between cases, which makes a contrast to the previously theoretically presented types of passive that can be clearly distinguished from each other. The analysis both shows that in the corpus presented in the paper the central type of passive is the most common, followed by the semi-passive, and that there are numerous in-between cases, challenging for classification. The incidence of active and passive in the translated Serbian sentences turns out to be approximately equal.

Keywords: passive, English, Serbian, passive gradience.

INTRODUCTION

Numerous authors who have done series of research on voice sometimes have different views on different issues related to this grammatical category, such as the classification of passives, or the treatment of ambiguous cases, but they all agree that voice is a grammatical category which makes it possible to view the action of a sentence in two ways, without the change in the facts reported, as defined by Quirk (1991). According to Đorđević (1996), the active voice entails that the verb has the form in which the agent can appear as the subject, whereas the passive voice has the opposite characteristics: the verb phrase has the form of a passive type, and the subject is an animate or inanimate noun phrase which is not the agent, but the patient.

Palmer (1988) remarks that voice is syntactically very different from the three other verbal categories (tense, phase and aspect). It concerns not only verb phrases, but other constituents in the clause as well (Quirk, 1991). The active-passive correspondence is unaffected by the presence of tense and aspect and can be represented by a simple formula:

$$\text{noun phrase 1} + \text{active verb phrase} + \text{noun phrase 2} \rightarrow \text{noun phrase 2} + \text{passive verb phrase} + \text{(by noun phrase 1)}$$

(1)

The switching of the two noun phrases does not influence the meaning, as shown in the following pair of sentences in the active-passive relation:

- 1) a) *Ben bought flowers.*
- b) *Flowers were bought by Ben.*

The reason why the meaning remains the same, despite the active-passive shift, is the fact that the thematic roles remain constant in this process. This means that in the examples above, *Ben* is the agent in both active and passive sentence, and *flowers* is the patient in both sentences.

THE REASONS TO USE THE PASSIVE VOICE

1. One function of the passive is that it allows the agent to be omitted, if the agent is:

- irrelevant: *Enough has been done here (by someone).*
- unknown: *The secret has been revealed (by someone).*
- obvious from the context: *The robbers were arrested early this morning (by the police).*
- deliberately concealed: *The window was broken (by someone).*

2. Another function of the passive is that of thematization, defined by Palmer (1988) as the placing of a certain noun phrase in the subject position for the purpose of prominence. For instance:

2) *As soon as she came in, she was welcomed by the committee.*

3. The passive is common if the agent is long (in terms of the number of words or if it consists of coordinated phrases), so it is more natural to put it in the final position in a sentence. This can be illustrated by the following example:

3) *The modern economy has been irreversibly changed by the constant use of highly sophisticated computer technology and the fast development of new business strategies.*

4. The passive is also used in order to provide for the easier binding of one clause to another, i. e. to keep the same subject, as in the example below:

4) *He rose to speak and (HE) was listened to carefully.*

This is a better solution than: *He rose to speak and they listened to him carefully.*

VOICE IN THE SERBIAN LANGUAGE

The passive voice in Serbian is made by transforming the active voice in the following way (illustrated by example 5) below): the noun phrase in the object position of an active sentence is made the subject of a passive sentence, while the noun phrase in the subject position of the active sentence is either omitted in its passive transform or introduced at the end of it. The thematic roles of both noun phrases remain the same, whereas an active verb phrase becomes passive, in one of the two ways discussed below. What proves to be significant in regarding the passive voice in Serbian is a remark that it is not always possible to establish a clear and recognizable grammatical division between the passive and active constructions, the latter being considered the unmarked member of this syntactic opposition, as in English (Piper et al., 2005).

The plan of linearization in the Serbian language is characterised by the tendency to put the noun phrase which bears the meaning of the agent before the noun phrase which bears the meaning of the patient, so the active sentence 5) a) sounds more natural than its passive transform b):

5) a) *Sud je doneo presudu.*

b) *Presuda je doneta od strane suda.*

There are two principal ways of transforming an active sentence into a passive one, according to Piper et al. (2005): pronominal and participial. In this way, the pronominal and participial passives are formed.

The pronominal passive consists of the pronoun *se* (which is an enclitic of the pronoun *sebe*) and an indicative verb form, for example: *Ručak se kuva* (The lunch is being cooked). The active transform is: *Oni kuvaju ručak*. It is clear from this shift that the noun phrase which is the patient in the active sentence keeps that role in the passive transform. Additionally, it acquires the position and form of the grammatical subject of the passive sentence.

The agent is usually not included in a passive Serbian sentence. However, when it is present, it can be expressed by the construction *od strane* + NP, or by various prepositional phrases, their heads being the prepositions *kod*, *na*, *u*, as in the following sentences: a) *Predlozi se razmatraju na školskom odboru*, b) *On se šiša kod Marije*. Their English correspondents would be: a) *The proposals are considered by the school board* (not: **The proposals are considered on the school board*), b) *He has his hair cut by Maria* (not: **He has his hair cut at Maria*).

The participial passive consists of an auxiliary *biti* + the passive participle (glagolski pridev trpni). The example is the following sentence: *Ručak je skuvan* (The lunch is cooked).

Stevanović (1969) points out that in Serbian, beside the active and the passive, there is also the third member of the category of voice, the middle. *The middle process (medijalni proces)* is the one which happens in the subject, i.e. in the experiencer (Piper et al., 2005) and such a process is expressed by *the middle verbs*. These verbs are present in the following sentences:

- 6) a) On se ljuti.
- b) Porodica tuguje.
- c) Oko nas su se beleli vrhovi Olimpa.

THE PASSIVE SCALE

The relation between the active and the passive is not always completely clear and it can be realized either up to a certain degree or completely (Đorđević, 1996). The highest degree of passivity is present when there is an unambiguously verbal V^{en} , and it is lowest in those cases in which the V^{en} is actually an adjective. On the grounds of this, the following passive scale can be made, i. e. the following types of passive can be distinguished (Quirk et al., 1991):

I Central (regular, or true passive) is the construction in which there is a direct relation between the active and passive. The V^{en} in these passives is a past participle verb. The central passive can be:

1. *Agentive passive*, when the agent is expressed by the *by*-phrase,
e.g. *This e-mail has been sent by my sister.*
2. *Agentless passive*, when the agent is omitted,
e.g. *A business letter can be written in several ways.*

II Semi-passive is the passive form in which the V^{en} is an adjective, but the transformation into active is possible,

e.g. *We were shocked by her behaviour/ Her behaviour shocked us.*

III Pseudo-passive also includes an adjectival V^{en} , but it cannot be transformed into active. For this reason, the addition of the *by*-phrase is impossible:

e.g. *The problem was complicated.*

The pseudo-passives primarily express a state which is a result of an action that can be expressed in a perfect form, i.e. the resulting state. Palmer (1988) gives an interesting remark by stating that the pseudo-passives are lexically restricted, which is the reason why they cannot be freely formed from any verb. According to him, the pseudo-passives should not be confused with *the statal passives*. The statal passive also expresses the resulting state, but it is not lexically restricted. On the contrary, it can be formed from any verb that has a passive. If we compare the following two sentences:

7) a) *The problem was complicated.*

My bags are now packed.

(*Somebody has packed my bags.* or: *My bags have been packed.*),

it follows that a) is the pseudo-passive, while b) is the statal passive, which is exactly the observation made by Palmer (1988).

IV Lexical (notional) passive can be found in those intransitive verbs which have an active form, but whose meaning is actually a passive one, since the subject is the theme rather than the agent.

e.g. *The window broke.*

The bell rang.

The clock winds up at the back (Palmer, 1988).

The lexical passive is very closely related to the middle verbs, since it entails the verbs which have the connotative meaning of quality rather than action (Đorđević 1996). The middle verbs have the object, but they cannot be transformed into the passive voice, since they serve to express the state in which the experiencer is, e.g. *He lacks confidence.*

THE ANALYSIS

The novel *Floberov papagaj*, written by Julian Barnes, and its official Serbian translation, *Floberov papagaj*, done by Nebojša Palić (Palić, 2008) served as the corpus material from which

the sentences containing passive constructions have been taken and analysed (Barnes, 1990). The aim of the analysis is to show how the passive gradience functions in a piece of literature written in the British variant of contemporary English, to try to make a distinction between the types of passive that have been theoretically presented on the previous pages and to contrast them with their Serbian equivalents, as well as to discuss the thematic roles of the verb arguments. The sentences have been taken randomly from the novel in its entirety and they are listed in the order they appear in it. The numbers in brackets after the sentences are page numbers in the source text and its Serbian translation. Throughout the paper, including the following section, the English examples are typed in italic, whereas a different font type (Arial Narrow) is used to present Serbian examples. In total, forty English and forty Serbian sentences have been analysed, but only twenty sentences are presented in this paper. The dictionary definitions are given in bold and are taken from the online version of *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (Longman Dictionary [LDOCE], 2021).

It should be noted that, for the reasons of simplicity, the lexical part of the passive is marked as V^{en} in all types of passive. Similarly, the term *by*-phrase is consistently used instead of the term *agentive phrase*, even in the cases when a preposition other than *by* occurs in this phrase.

1.

- a) ...*the political sage much admired in the desert.* (1)
- b) ...politički mudrac kome se mnogi divu u pustinji. (7)

In the given example, the underlined construction in English is reduced to the bare passive, a passive construction from which the auxiliary is excluded, so it consists only of the V^{en} *admired*. No agent is introduced, but the thematic role of location is expressed. Although there are cases in which the location can be made an active subject, it cannot be done in this example since the transformation into active proves to be ungrammatical: **The desert much admires the political sage*. The V^{en} is already premodified with the intensifier *much*, which strongly indicates that the V^{en} might be adjectival. The other adjectivity tests show the following:

- *the political sage becoming admired in the desert.*
- *the admired political sage in the desert.*
- **the political sage popular and admired in the desert.*

Apart from the premodification with an intensifier already given in 1a), the introduction of a copular verb other than *be* is also possible (although the passive is bare), whereas the coordination with another adjective is unusual exactly because the copular *be* is missing. Finally, since the shift of the V^{en} to the premodification position of the NP does not cause any significant impact on the semantics, the conclusion is that the passive is adjectival, semi-passive.

The Serbian translation is the middle verb construction, since the psychological process of admiring happens in the experiencer (Piper et al. 2005). The intensifier *much* is translated into Serbian as a noun *mnogi*, probably out of stylistic reasons, although the translation *politički mudrac kome se veoma divu u pustinji*, which is syntactically more equivalent to the English sentence, would also be acceptable.

2.

- a) *Perhaps he was processed into cap-badges.* (1)
- b) Možda su ga pretopili u značke za kape? (7)

Under the entry *process*, the LDOCE offers the definition which matches the situation in the example 2a): *to make food, materials, or goods ready to be used or sold, for example by preserving or improving them in some way* and gives the explanation [transitive]. Bearing in mind that food, materials and goods are [+ inhuman], it is somewhat confusing that the subject of this passive sentence is a personal pronoun *he*, which is, of course, marked [+ human]. In order to analyse this sentence, we must consider its context. Namely, the preceding sentence is: *The Germans took the first Flaubert away in 1941, along with the railings and door-knockers, and the first Flaubert* here refers to the statue of the writer Gustave Flaubert. Now it is clear that the inanimate *statue* is actually the animate *Flaubert/he*, so the semantics of the sentence is no longer odd.

As for the type of the passive, the results of the adjectivity tests show that the passive is central:

- *Perhaps he was very processed into cap-badges.
- *Perhaps he remained processed into cap-badges.
- *Perhaps he was cheap and processed.

The translator opted for an active preterite equivalent in Serbian, although it would be possible to translate this sentence as: Možda je pretopljen u značke za kape.

3.

a) *Perhaps the foundry's assurances can be believed; perhaps this second-impression statue will last.* (2)

b) Možda se livcima i može poverovati; možda će ovaj drugi odlivak potrajati. (8)

This is an example of the modal passive construction: *can* followed by *be* + V^{en}. The time reference is present. The passive is agentless because there is no particular agent, but *people in general*. It is the central passive, since the V^{en} is clearly verbal.

The Serbian translation keeps the present time reference and the modality in the middle construction V + *se* complemented by the infinitive of the verb *poverovati*. It seems that the prefix *po-* has been added to the verb *verovati* in order to give it the meaning: 'to believe the foundry's assurances only for a certain (very short) period of time' or 'to start to believe' which further intensifies the sense of suspicion already semantically marked by the presence of the word *možda* (*perhaps*).

4.

a) *The writer's house at Croisset was knocked down shortly after his death and replaced by a factory for extracting alcohol from damaged wheat.* (2)

b) Piščeva kuća u Kruaseu srušena je nedugo posle njegove smrti, a na njenom je mestu podignuta fabrika za destilaciju alkohola iz plesnivog žita. (8)

The English sentence contains two coordinated passive constructions: the simple past form of the phrasal verb *knock down* meaning 'demolish' and the same form of the verb *replace*.

The verb *knock down* is not gradable, so it cannot be premodified with an intensifier: **the house was rather knocked down*; the introduction of a copular verb is possible: *the house remained knocked down*; and the coordination with an adjective proves to be somewhat odd: ?*the house was old and knocked down*. It follows that the passive is central and also agentless, since the agent is unknown.

The translation of the first example keeps the passive, but it does not keep the preterite of *biti*, so it is not: *Piščeva kuća u Kruaseu bila je srušena*. This confirms the assumption that the V^{en} *knocked down* implies a completed process. If it implied a resulting state, the translation would rather keep the preterite, as offered in the sentence mentioned above in this paragraph: *Piščeva kuća u Kruaseu bila je srušena*.

The second example is also the past simple central passive, but it is agentive, as the agent is expressed in a *by*-phrase. The verb *replace* can be followed by either *by* or *with*, according to LDOCE. Indeed, the *by*-phrase here does not have the role of an agent, but that of an instrument. The translation once again affirms the assumption that the central passive is the issue in this example.

5.

a) *My children are scattered now; they write whenever guilt impels.* (3)

b) Deca su otišla; pišu samo kad ih spopadne griza savesti. (9)

The underlined construction in 5a) is the present simple passive. As for the type of the passive, the adjectivity tests prove that it is a pseudo-passive. The V^{en} is adjectival; it expresses a resulting state, not a process. There is no semantically acceptable active transform: **Somebody scattered my children*. Based on Palmer's discussion about pseudo-passives and statal passives, we could further argue that this is a statal passive.

The translation maintains the same time reference only by keeping the present of the auxiliary, but it does not maintain either the passive voice, or the tense of the whole construction. The underlined construction in the Serbian sentence is active, consisting of the present of the auxiliary and *radni* glagolski pridev (*otišla*), which is the Serbian preterite.

6.

a) 'Here on the 6th June 1944 Europe was liberated by the heroism of the Allied Forces.' (4-5)

b) „Ovde je 6. juna 1944. herojstvom savezničkih snaga oslobođena Evropa.”(10)

The example 6a) includes the passive construction in the simple past tense, whose V^{en} cannot be premodified with an intensifier because the V^{en} is not gradable. Neither the coordination with an adjective is possible. The active transform would be: *The Allied Forces liberated Europe on the 6th June 1944* and the *by*-phrase in this example has an instrumental meaning. The passive is central agentive.

The Serbian translation in 6b) keeps the passive construction. This is the participial passive, as it consists of the auxiliary *biti* (in the present tense) and the passive participle (glagolski pridev trpni). This translation is preferred, although the auxiliary might be in the past tense: Ovde je 6. juna 1944. herojstvom savezničkih snaga bila oslobođena Evropa.

7.

a) *When I was a medical student some pranksters at an end-of-term dance released into the hall a piglet which had been smeared with grease.* (5)

b) Dok sam bio student medicine, na igraci priređenoj povodom kraja semestra, neki obešenjaci su pustili u salu prase premazano mašču. (11)

The sentence 7a) contains the pluperfect passive. The situation expressed by this passive refers to a time reference before another situation occurred (the active *released*). The adjectivity test shows that the V^{en} is adjectival. The passive is agentless, since the agent is unknown, and the prepositional phrase *with grease* is rather the instrument. Since the adjective status has been established and the active paraphrase is possible: *Grease had smeared a piglet*, the conclusion is that the underlined construction is the semi-passive. However, the status of this passive remains somewhat ambiguous as the V^{en} can also be regarded as verbal, if we perceive the situation as the process of 'somebody having smeared a piglet with grease'.

The translation is a condensed relative clause with a passive participle (glagolski pridev trpni).

8.

a) *Parked near the hospital was a large white Peugeot hatchback: it was painted with blue stars, a telephone number and the words AMBULANCE FLAUBERT.* (6)

b) Nedaleko od bolnice bio je parkiran veliki beli pežoov kombi: na njemu su bile naslikane plave zvezdice i ispisan telefonski broj i reči AMBULANTNA KOLA FLOBER. (11)

The first clause in the complex sentence 8a) has a marked order achieved through the process of inversion. Actually, the sentence with a normal word order would be: *A large white Peugeot hatchback was parked near the hospital*, which would become: *Near the hospital was parked a large white Peugeot hatchback* through the process of inversion. However, in the sentence 8a) more than this has been done: the V^{en} is placed at the very beginning of the sentence, the adverbial phrase *near the hospital*, with the role of the location, thus coming between the lexical part of the passive and the auxiliary, which is placed before the grammatical subject of the passive sentence, i.e. the patient: *a large white Peugeot hatchback*. The nature of the V^{en} is ambiguous. It cannot be premodified with an intensifier: **Very parked near the hospital was a large white Peugeot hatchback*, the attempt of using a copula other than *be* also proves to be unacceptable: **Parked near the hospital became a large white Peugeot hatchback*, and the coordination with another adjective is odd due to the unusual word order: ? *Clean and parked near the hospital was a large white Peugeot hatchback*. If tried in the following sentence: **A large white Peugeot hatchback was clean and parked*, it once again proves ungrammatical. This passive seems to be central.

The second part of the sentence contains another passive, the V^{en} of which is ambiguous, so the context-dependent V^{en} interpretation is necessary in this case, identically to the example 7a). Both situations could be perceived as processes, which would make both V^{en}s verbal.

When translated into Serbian, the sentence keeps both passive forms. The underlined constructions in 8b) are the participial passives. The auxiliary has the past reference (the preterite of *biti*), as in the English counterparts.

9.

a) *At the Hôtel-Dieu I was admitted by a gaunt, fidgety gardien whose white coat puzzled me.*(6)

b) U Hotel-Dijeu me je dočekao suvonjavi, nervozni *gardien* koji me je zbunio svojim belim mantilom. (11)

The English sentence is an example of the central agentive passive.

However, in the translation, the active construction is used instead of the passive one, as the latter would have to include the odd construction *od strane + NP*: U Hotel-Dijeu sam bio dočekan od strane suvonjavog, nervoznog *gardiena* koji me je zbunio svojim belim mantilom.

10.

a) *I am devoured by comparisons as one is by lice, and I spend my time doing nothing but squashing them.* (11)

b) Izjedaju me poređenja kao što nekoga izjedaju vaši, pa ne radim ništa drugo nego što ih gnječim. (16)

The English example above is the present simple passive. The V^{en} is verbal. The active transform is possible: *Comparisons devour me*. This is the central agentive construction, although it might have looked like a semi-passive at first sight, especially when we bear in mind the fact that Palmer (1988, p. 88) has noticed that the verbs that form the semi-passive often relate to some kind of emotional condition. In the example 10a), the meaning of the verb *devour* i.e. the phrase *be devoured by something* is: *to be filled with a strong feeling that seems to control you*.

The Serbian translation is an active sentence that keeps the present time reference.

11.

a) *...so perhaps he would have been less hurt than his readers, his pursuers, by the destruction of his own house.* (12)

b) ...tako da bi ga možda rušenje njegove vlastite kuće manje pogodilo nego što je pogodilo njegove čitaoce, njegove progonitelje. (17)

The construction in question consists of *would + perfect infinitive of auxiliary + V^{en}* and is used to express the assumption about the past. There is already an intensifier before the V^{en} and the following results are obtained when it is further tested for adjectival features:

- *...so perhaps he would have remained less hurt than his readers.*

- *...so perhaps he would have been self-confident and less hurt than his readers.*

The V^{en} *hurt* is clearly adjectival in this example. This assumption is reinforced by the presence of the comparison. The agent is also present. Therefore, this is the semi-passive, the verb once again expressing the emotional state, as in the example 10a) in which, however, the instance of the central passive has been found.

The Serbian mode of *potencijal* is used in its active form in the translation to present the assumption expressed in the corresponding English sentence.

12.

a) *The items on display were so poorly arranged that I frequently had to get down on my knees to squint into the cabinets.* (13)

b) Predmeti su bili tako loše izloženi da sam često morao da se spuštam na kolena da bih zavirio u ormare. (18)

When the V^{en} in 12a) undergoes the test of adjectivity, the V^{en} seems to be verbal and the type of the passive central, since neither the premodification by an intensifier nor the replacement of *be* with *remain* is possible. The coordination with another adjective is also unacceptable. The agent is not present because it is unknown or even irrelevant. What seems to be of importance in this sentence are the consequences of the state in which the patient is. On that ground, the V^{en} could be perceived as adjectival, statal passive, expressing the resulting state of a process, not the process itself.

The translation is the participial passive. The auxiliary is in the preterite, and it could not be in the present, as opposed to the example 6b) in the section *Analysis*, in which the English sentence can be translated in both ways.

13.

- a) *I was almost embarrassed.* (14)
b) *Bio sam gotovo zbunjen.* (18)

The passive *was embarrassed* is the agentless semi-passive, as the V^{en} shows clear adjectival features. The translation comprises the preterite of the auxiliary *biti* and the past participle. It can be analyzed as the construction: the preterite form copula + adjectival complement. The following translation, containing the middle verb, would also be possible: *Gotovo sam se zbunio.*

14.

- a) *I was both moved and cheered.* (8)
b) *Bio sam istovremeno i ganut i razdragan.* (13)

Both coordinated V^{en}s are adjectival, as proved by the adjectivity tests:

- *I was both rather moved and quite cheered.*
- *I remained both moved and cheered.*
- *I was moved and sad.* *I was jolly and cheered.*

Furthermore, the transformation into active is possible. The cause is omitted in this sentence because it has been expressed in the preceding one: *But here, in this unexceptional green parrot... was something which made me feel I had almost known the writer.* The underlined phrase has the thematic role of the cause or initiator, so the active transformation would be: *Something which made me feel I had almost known the writer both moved and cheered me.* It follows that both constructions are the examples of the semi-passive.

The Serbian translation also displays adjectival features: there is no auxiliary, but the copula *biti*, in its preterite form instead, complemented by the coordinated adjectives *ganut* and *razdragan*.

15.

- a) *How do you compare two parrots, one already idealised by memory and metaphor, the other a squawking intruder?* (14)
b) *Kako uporediti dva papagaja, od kojih je jedan već idealizovan sećanjem i metaforom, a drugi je kreštavi uljez?* (19)

The bare passive in 15a) seems to be a condensed relative clause *who is already idealised*. There are reasons to believe that the V^{en} is adjectival:

- *...one already rather idealised by memory and metaphor.*
- *?...one already remaining idealised.*
- **...one already legendary and idealised.*

The agent is expressed in the *by*-phrase. The presence of the adverb *already* reinforces the assumption that the V^{en} expresses a resulting state. Two active transformations are possible: *Memory and metaphor have already idealised one parrot*, and *Memory and metaphor (already) idealise one parrot*. These are all indications that the passive is statal. However, the second and third adjectivity test strengthen the argument that this is the example of the central passive, since neither the replacement of *be* with a copula nor the coordination with an adjective seem plausible.

The only possible way to reconstruct the time reference of the passive is to consider the preceding clause, which has been done by the translator. As the preceding clause is in the present simple, the Serbian auxiliary is in the present, followed by the passive participle.

16.

- a) *Then I realised: Flaubert, after all, hadn't been given a choice of parrots.* (14)
b) *A onda sam shvatio: Flober, na kraju krajeva, nije mogao da bira između više papagaja.* (19)

The underlined construction in 16a) is a negative pluperfect passive of a di-transitive verb *give*. The situation expressed by the passive refers to a time before another situation occurred (the active *realised*). The di-transitive verbs, such as also *tell*, *leave*, *bring*, take two objects as well as a single object plus *to/for* and noun phrase (Palmer, 1988). Two different passives can be formed with these verbs and, similarly, there are two active constructions that account for two passives. In our example, which is the agentless central passive, another possible passivization would be: 16.c) *After all, a choice of parrots hadn't been given to Flaubert.*

The active counterpart of 16.a) is: *After all, they hadn't given Flaubert a choice of parrots.*

The active counterpart of 16.c) is: *After all, they hadn't given a choice of parrots to Flaubert.*

The di-transitive verbs also occur in the Serbian language. They have two objects, one of which is direct and expressed in the accusative case, and the other indirect and expressed in the dative case. However, in the sentence 16b), the di-transitive Serbian verb *dati*, the direct correspondent to the English *give*, has been replaced with the transitive verb *birati* in the form *da + present*, which is preceded by the negative modal *moći* in the preterite. The past reference is preserved and the preterite is here a preferred solution to the imperfect or plusquamperfect, which is also a common way to translate the English pluperfect passive:

...Flober, na kraju krajeva, ne beše mogao da bira između više papagaja.

17.

a) *The writer's voice – what makes you think it can be located that easily?* (15)

b) *Piščev glas – zašto mislite da se može tako lako odrediti?* (19)

The passive construction in 17a) consists of the modal *can* complemented with *be + V^{en}*. When the *V^{en}* is tested for adjectival features, the following results are obtained:

- *...*what makes you think it can be rather located that easily?*

- *...*what makes you think it can remain located that easily?*

- *...*what makes you think it can be soft and located?*

There are more reasons to consider the *V^{en}* verbal, which is why the passive in question is classified as the central passive. The exclusion of the agent happens because there is no particular agent, the meaning is rather general. The translation achieves the same effect with the middle verb modal construction.

18.

a) *Such was the rebuke offered by the second parrot.* (15)

b) *Ovaj prekora mi je uputio drugi papagaj.* (19)

The inversion in the example 18a) is achieved by the use of *such* with *be*. It serves to give the emphasis by introducing the meaning *so much/so great*. The passive construction is the past simple passive and it is the example of the agentive central passive, as the *V^{en}* is unambiguously verbal because it cannot be premodified by an intensifier: **Such was the rebuke very offered by the second parrot*; the auxiliary *be* can be replaced with *remain*: *Such remained the rebuke offered by the second parrot*; and the coordination with another adjective is not possible: **Such was the rebuke strong and offered by the second parrot*.

The translation does not keep the passive voice. It is an active construction in the preterite. The emphasis is somewhat preserved through the placing of the object at the initial position. The natural linearization in the Serbian sentence would be: *Drugi papagaj mi je uputio ovaj prekora*.

19.

a) *I wrote letters to various academics who might know if either of the parrots had been properly authenticated.* (15)

b) *Pisao sam raznim stručnjacima koji bi mogli da znaju da li je ijedan od ovih papagaja zaista autentičan.* (20)

This is one more example of the pluperfect passive. The situation expressed by the passive refers to a time before the situation expressed in the active past simple (*wrote*) occurred. The *V^{en}* to a great degree undergoes the adjectivity tests:

- *...*if either of the parrots had been very authenticated.*

- ?...*if either of the parrots had remained authenticated.*

- ...*if either of the parrots had been real and authenticated.*

The *V^{en}* status is ambiguous. The gradability of the *V^{en}* *authenticated* proves to be equivocal, since it is not gradable when premodified with the intensifier *very*, as demonstrated. In contrast to this, the following sentence is grammatically and semantically correct: *...if either of the parrots had been authenticated to a great degree*. Therefore, the *V^{en}* *authenticated* proves to be gradable when used with the modifier *to a great degree*. Similarly, if the copula *remain* is replaced with the copula *become*, the resulting sentence is acceptable: *... if either of the parrots had become*

authenticated. This passive can be interpreted as both the semi-passive or the central agentless passive. The adjectival interpretation is favoured by the translation, in which the construction consisting of the present copula *biti* + adjective corresponds to the English pluperfect passive.

20.

a) *Looking back, he is relieved she didn't return his passion.* (18)

b) *Prisećajući se kasnije, srećan je što nije udovoljila njegovoj strasti.* (22)

The passive construction in question is specific: it consists of the present simple form of *be* and the V^{en} which is complemented with a clause. The V^{en} has to be tested:

- *Looking back, he is very relieved she didn't return his passion.*
- *Looking back, he remains relieved she didn't return his passion.*
- *Looking back, he is content and relieved she didn't return his passion.*

The V^{en} is, therefore, adjectival. No plausible active transform can be made: ? *(That) she didn't return his passion relieves him*. This example seems to illustrate the pseudo-passive. As if the translation serves to further support this thesis since it does not contain any participle, but an adjective followed by the copula *biti* (present).

CONCLUSIONS

In the forty analysed English sentences from the novel *Flaubert's Parrot* and their Serbian equivalents, of which only twenty were presented in this paper for the sake of the paper length limitations, forty-seven instances of the passive occurred, since there were seven English sentences in which two examples of the passive were found (examples 4a, 8a, 14a, 26a, 27a, 32a and 36a). It is, in total, forty-seven examples of the passive in English. The table 1 includes some details about these forty-seven examples:

Table 1. Types of Passive in the Corpus.

Type of passive	agentless	agentive
Central passive	16	6
Semi-passive	9	3
Statal passive	4	
Pseudo-passive	3	
Semi-/Central passive	2	1
Statal/Central passive	1	
Pseudo-/Central passive	1	
Semi-/Statal passive	1	

As shown in the table above, twenty-two examples of the central passive were found in the forty-seven English examples, sixteen of them agentless and six of them agentive. The semi-passive was found in twelve examples, nine of which were agentless and three agentive. The conclusion is that the examples of agentless passive were more common. Also, it should be noted that out of the twelve examples of the semi-passive, even four expressed some emotional state, which echoes Palmer's observation that this type of passive often relates to some kind of emotional condition (1988, p. 88). These examples proved to be especially challenging for the classification within the passive scale presented in an introductory part. Additionally, there were five examples in which the status of the V^{en} was ambiguous – it could be treated as both verbal and adjectival.

Further, three examples of the pseudo-passive were found. According to Palmer's definition of the statal passive, four examples proved to have its characteristics. One example remained ambiguous, as it was difficult to determine precisely whether it was the case of the semi- or the statal passive. Forty-five out of forty-seven instances of the passive included the auxiliary *be* and

only two examples of GET-passives were analysed. Similarly, two examples were the passive constructions without the auxiliary.

The translation kept the passive form in nineteen out of the mentioned forty-seven cases. Only two of these nineteen Serbian passives were pronominal, the rest of them were participial. The middle verb construction was found in five examples, while the remaining twenty-three instances of the passive in English were translated into Serbian as active forms. It turns out that approximately half of the chosen English sentences were translated into Serbian as active and the other half as passive. These details are presented in the following table:

Table 2. Serbian Equivalents.

Active		23
Passive	Pronominal passive	2
	Participial passive	17
Middle verb construction		5

In conclusion, the relation between the passive constructions in English and Serbian represents an interesting and rewarding field for research in which the actual analysis always reveals numerous details and in-between cases which are specially challenging for discussion.

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