

A Unified Analysis of Passive and Perfect Constructions in English and German

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0. Introduction

There are syntactic differences in passive and perfect constructions between English and German, though they both belong to the West Germanic branch. For example, in English, verbs uniformly form perfects with HAVE, with a limited number of exceptions. By contrast, in German perfect constructions, two types of auxiliaries are used: HAVE and BE.¹ As for passive constructions, in English, only personal passives are possible, while in German, both personal and impersonal passives are possible. Most previous studies focus on either passive or perfect constructions, and few deal with both constructions.

This paper provides a ‘unified’ account of both constructions in English and German. Specifically, this paper concentrates on properties of the passive/perfect morpheme *-en*, and proposes the licensing conditions on the morpheme. This is given in (1).

- (1) a. The morpheme *-en* must be assigned Case.
 b. The morpheme *-en* must be assigned Case only if it forms a clitic-chain.

We further claim that the morpheme *-en* of English must meet (1a), whereas that of German must meet (1b).

This paper is composed as follows: Section 1 sketches out some

theoretical assumptions adopted throughout this paper and proposes that the passive and perfect morphemes are identical. Section 2 examines the difference of passive constructions between English and German. Section 3 deals with 'symmetrical' perfect auxiliary selection observed in English and asymmetrical perfect auxiliary selection observed in German. Section 4 is a conclusion.

1. Theoretical Framework

1.1 Properties of the Morpheme *-en*

1.1.1 Perfect *-en* and Passive *-en*

This section shows that the passive and perfect morphemes *-en* are identical. Cowper (1989, 1995) and Roberts (1987) make the same proposal. For example, Roberts (1987 : 40) states as follows :

This combination of either kind of *-en* with a Verb-stem triggers exactly the same phonological form in all instances, including suppletions and lexical gaps, so we might regard the two kinds of *-en* as instances of the same morpheme.

Evidence supporting this proposal comes from the complementary distribution between perfect and passive participles. This is shown in (2) and (3).

- | | | |
|-----|----------------------------------|---------|
| (2) | a. I have elected him president. | PERFECT |
| | b. *He has elected president. | |
| (3) | a. *I was elected him president. | |
| | b. He was elected president. | PASSIVE |

(Roberts (1987 : 40))

The combination of HAVE and a transitive past participle is interpreted as perfect, not as passive, as in (2). By contrast, the combination of BE and

a transitive past participle is interpreted as passive, not as perfect, as in (3). The same form *elected* is interpreted either as perfect or as passive, depending on the environment.

Note that there are also some examples of Old English supporting our proposal. These examples are ambiguous between passive and perfect meanings. One of the examples is given below.

- (4) and him wæs geðuht þæt seo cæppe hine atuge of ðam streame
 and him had seemed that the cap him pulled from the stream
 'and it seemed to him that the cap pulled him out of the stream'
 (ÆCHom II 11, 95, 107/Denison (1993 : 345))

Mitchell (1985) treats *him wæs geðuht* in the example of (4) as an impersonal passive, while Denison (1993) prefers the active reading. Such ambiguity as in (4) may appear partly because the two morphemes are identical. In what follows, therefore, the 'P-morpheme' is used to refer to the passive/perfect morpheme *-en*.

1.1.2 The Case assignment to the P-morpheme

Given that the passive and perfect morphemes are identical, it is worth reviewing previous studies on passive constructions. This section examines the Case assignment to the P-morpheme, and then the next section examines the θ -role assignment. In general, objective NPs do not appear in passives. Instead, objective NPs of active sentences are realized with nominative Case in passives. This property of passives is usually described as 'Case absorption' (cf. Baker, Johnson, and Roberts (1989) and Jaeggli (1986), among others). However, the Case absorption does not necessarily take place across languages. In some languages, so-called impersonal passives are found. In impersonal passives, objective subjects appear or unergative verbs are used.

With regard to the Case assignment to the P-morpheme, based on the

facts stated above, there are three possibilities : (A) the Case assignment to the P-morpheme is obligatory ; (B) it is optional ; (C) it is prohibited (cf. Goodall (1993) and Lappin and Shlonsky (1993), among others). Among them, the possibilities (A) and (B) are dealt with in this paper. This paper formulates the two possibilities as the licensing conditions in (1), repeated below.

- (1) a. The morpheme *-en* must be assigned Case.
 b. The morpheme *-en* must be assigned Case only if it forms a clitic-chain.

This paper proposes that the syntactic difference between English and German passives is attributed to the difference of the licensing conditions in each language. Specifically, I claim that, the P-morpheme in English is licensed by condition (1a) while that of German is licensed by condition (1b). We further demonstrate that the same conditions hold in perfect constructions. We will return to the correlation between the conditions and the syntactic differences in later sections.

1.1.3 The θ -role Assignment to the P-morpheme

Let us next consider the θ -role assignment to the P-morpheme. Jaeggli (1986) proposes that the passive morpheme must be assigned Case and a θ -role. In Baker, Johnson, and Roberts (1989), by contrast, it is proposed that the passive morpheme must be assigned Case and form a clitic-chain with a *by*-phrase. They further propose that the morpheme *-en* functions as an external argument. This subsection reviews their analyses, and then points out and makes some modifications on their shortcomings.

To begin with, passive sentences like (5) have two crucial properties stated in (6).

- (5) a. The rat was killed by the cat.
 b. *was killed the rat by the cat.

- (6) a. [NP, S] does not receive a θ -role.
 b. [NP, VP] does not receive Case within VP, for some choice of NP in VP.

(Chomsky (1981 : 124))²

Jaeggli (1986) explains the properties in (6) by claiming that the morpheme *-en* functions as the recipient of the external θ -role and accusative Case. He further proposes that the external θ -role, which has been assigned to the passive morpheme, is further assigned to a *by*-phrase, if there is one.

According to his approach, however, the passive morpheme ultimately has no θ -role. Then, the re-assignment of a θ -role, as Jaeggli proposes, results in a violation of the θ -Criterion.

(7) θ -Criterion

Each argument bears one and only one θ -role, and each θ -role is assigned to one and only one argument.

(Chomsky (1981 : 36))

This is because the same θ -role is assigned both to the different elements : the passive morpheme and a *by*-phrase.

By contrast, Baker, Johnson, and Roberts (1989) propose that the morpheme *-en* is a clitic, or it has clitic-like properties. Thus, the morpheme forms a clitic-chain with some full noun phrase, e. g., a *by*-phrase. Under their approach, unlike Jaeggli's, a θ -role is assigned only to a chain of the morpheme and *by*-phrase. A violation of the θ -Criterion would be avoided. In this respect, their approach is more plausible than Jaeggli's. Therefore, this paper adopts their approach, not Jaeggli's, and assumes that the P-morpheme has clitic-like properties and must form a clitic-chain with a *by*-phrase in passives (at least, of English). We will return to questions concerning passives with no *by*-phrase and perfect constructions.

1.2 The Case-assigning Ability of the Auxiliary *have*

It is controversial whether or not the auxiliary *have* can assign Case, just like the main verb *have*. This section proposes that the aspectual auxiliary *have* can still have the ability to assign Case. This proposal is explicitly or implicitly made by Carey (1994), Cowper (1995), Dikken (1994), Fabb (1984), Freeze (1992), Kayne (1993), Kageyama (1997), Mahajan (1994), Tremblay (1997), and so on.

Let us examine the Case assigning ability of *have* from the historical point of view. The original meaning of *have* is presumed to be physical possession or ‘unvolitional’ possession (cf. Ritter and Rosen (1997) and Washio and Mihara (1997), among others).

(8) a. Sally has a brother.

b. We have a lot of skunks around here.

(Washio and Mihara (1997 : 120))

Have within the ‘have-Obj-PP’ construction in Old English retains this possessive meaning (cf. Denison (1993), Mitchell (1985), and Traugott (1992) among others). Here are examples from early Old English.

(9) a. *ðonne hæbbe we begen fet gescod swiðe untælllice*
 then have we both feet shod very blamelessly
 ‘then we have both feet shod very blamelessly’

(CP 45.12/Denison (1993 : 349))

b. . . . *hwæðer he . . . þa stafas mid him awritene hæfde*
 whether he the letters with him written-out had
 ‘whether he had written out the letters with him’

(Bede 4 23.328.6/ibid.)

In these constructions, the subjects and objects are in a *have* relation. Here, the *have* relation means that the former possesses the latter (cf. Carey (1994 : 110)). Syntactically, *have* takes an object as its complement, and then it assigns accusative Case to the object. This is formulated as

follows:

- (10) In a construction 'X has Y,' if X is in a *have* relation with Y, then Y must be assigned accusative Case by *have*.

By contrast, in certain constructions with 'have-PP-Obj,' or perfect constructions, as in (11), *have* designates the relation between a subject and a completed process performed by the subject.

- (11) a. John has pressed the button.
 b. The taxi has arrived.
 c. I have lived in London since 1980.
 d. I have read the book before.
 e. He has sung in this choir ever since he was a boy.

In these constructions, the completed process is expressed by the past participles. Thus, a *have* relation is established between a subject and a past participle. In order to satisfy the condition in (10), *have* must assign Case to the past participle.

One problem arises. According to Stowell (1981), verbal elements cannot be assigned Case. Assigning Case to the verbal element causes a violation of the Case-Resistance Principle (CRP) in (12).

- (12) The Case-Resistance Principle

Case may not be assigned to a category bearing a Case-assigning feature

(Stowell (1981 : 146))

Since past participles belong to a category bearing a Case-assigning feature, Case-assignment to them by *have* results in a violation of the CRP. In order to circumvent a violation of the CRP, we propose that *have* does not assign accusative Case to a past participle itself, but to the P-morpheme, which forms a past participle with a verbal stem. As a result, the condition in (10) is satisfied. Therefore, it can be concluded that the aspectual auxiliary *have* still has the Case assigning ability.

2. Passive Constructions

Before going into the main discussion, we provide the clause structure of the passive construction adopted in this paper. At first, it is assumed that English is an SVO language while German has the underlying SOV order.

Secondly, in passives of both languages (or including other languages), a *by*-phrase is supposed to be base-generated in the specifier of VP. This assumption is partly supported by the fact that a θ -role assigned to a *by*-phrase is not uniform. Some examples are given in (13).

- (13) a. Bill was killed by Mary. (Agent)
 b. The package was sent by John. (Source)
 c. The letter was received by Bill. (Goal)
 d. That professor is feared by all students. (Experiencer)
- (Jaeggli (1986 : 599))

The *by*-phrases are interpreted not only as Agent (13a) but also as others (13b-d). Each interpretation is determined by the argument structure of the past participles, just as in the corresponding active sentences.

Then, how about agentless passives, as in (14) ?

- (14) a. Belgium were beaten in the semi-finals.
 (Haegeman (1991 : 169))
 b. The Prime Minister has often been criticized recently.
 c. Jack fought Michael last night, and Jack was beaten.
 (Quirk et. al. (1985 : § 3.71))

Even in these cases, this paper assumes with Ura (1994) that a phonologically null *by*-phrase or something like that may exist. This assumption is supported by the following phenomena.

- (15) purpose clause
 a. They decreased the price [to help the poor].
 b. The price was decreased to help the poor].

- c. *The price decreased [to help the door].
- (16) agent-oriented adverb
- a. They decreased the price willingly.
- b. The price was decreased willingly.
- c. *The price decreased willingly.

(Jaeggli (1986 : 611))

The (c) sentences of (15) and (16) are middles, and they do not allow purpose clauses or agent-oriented adverbs. By contrast, the passive sentences in the (b) examples of (15) and (16) allow purpose clauses and agent-oriented adverbs. These facts indicate that passives without *by*-phrases involve Agent, while middles do not. The examples in (15) and (16) lead us to suppose that phonologically null agents may exist in agentless passives.

Thirdly, the P-morpheme is generated under INFL, which is a functional head for inflection.³ A partial structure of the passive sentence in (17a) is illustrated in (17b).

- (17) a. John was killed by Mary.
- b. [_{VP} was [_{INFLP} -en [_{VP} by Mary [_V kill John]]]]]

Finally, as for verb movement, in English, the auxiliary BE moves up to T and past participles raise to INFL. By contrast, in German, the auxiliary BE moves up to C through T in main clauses, and past participles move to INFL.

2.1 Personal Passives

Let us first consider personal passives with *by*-/*von*-phrases observed in English and German. Some examples of English and German are given in (18) and (19), respectively.

- (18) English
- a. The postman was bitten by a dog.

- b. The patient is examined by the doctor.
 c. He was praised by his boss.
- (19) German
- a. Der Briefträger wurde von einem Hund gebissen.
 the postman became by a dog bitten
 'The postman was bitten by a dog.'
- b. Der Patient wird vom Arzt untersucht.
 the patient became by-the doctor examined
 'The patient is examined by the doctor.'
- c. Er wurde von seinem Chef gelobt.
 He became by his head praised
 'He was praised by his head.'

(Zaima (1992 : 78-9))

In English, the P-morpheme must be assigned Case, as proposed in section 1. If it need not be assigned Case, it would be predicted that an accusative NP appears in passives. This is not the case.

- (20) *Him was praised by his boss.

So, it may be concluded that in passives, the P-morpheme of English is assigned Case from main verbs.

The P-morpheme of English may form a clitic chain with a *by*-phrase in examples like (18), though this is not a necessary condition.

How about German cases? The condition on the German P-morpheme is assumed as follows:

- (21) The P-morpheme must be assigned Case only if it forms a clitic chain.

Unlike the condition on the English P-morpheme, the condition of German in (21) includes the necessary condition : (only if) the P-morpheme forms a clitic chain. In examples (19), the P-morpheme forms a clitic chain with an overt *von*-phrase in order to satisfy the necessary

condition. Thus, the P-morpheme must be assigned Case. In fact, it is assigned Case.

No accusative NP may also appear in German passives, as shown in (22).

- (22) *Ihn wird geliebt.
him. Acc becomes loved

One might suspect that the condition on the German P-morpheme is the same as that of English. This will be examined in the following section.

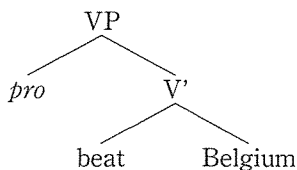
Next we consider personal passives without *by-/von*-phrases. In both languages (of course, in other languages, too), *by-/von*-phrases are optional. This is exemplified in (23 = (14)) and (24).

- (23) a. Belgium were beaten in the semi-finals.
b. The Prime Minister has often been criticized recently.
c. Jack fought Michael last night, and Jack was beaten.

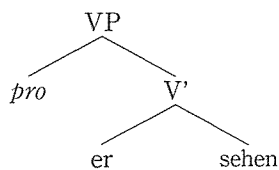
- (24) a. Er wird gesehen.
he becomes seen
'He is seen.'
- b. Das Haus wurde zerstört.
the house became destroyed
'The house was destroyed.'

As assumed above, in these cases, *pro*, instead of *by-/von*-phrases, is generated in the specifier of VP. This is illustrated in (25).

- (25) a. English



- b. German



In the examples of (23) and (24), the P-morpheme is assigned Case after raising to INFL, just as in (18) and (19).

As for a clitic chain, the P-morphemes of both English and German form clitic chains with a phonologically null element *pro*. In German, since it forms a clitic chain with *pro*, the P-morpheme must be assigned Case, as required in (1b).

2.2 Impersonal Passives

This section examines impersonal passives, which are observed in German but are not found in English. Some German examples are given in (26), and the corresponding examples of English are ungrammatical.

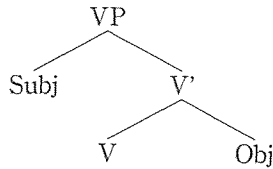
- (26) a. Dort wurde heftig gekämpft.
 there became violently fought
 ‘There happened violent battles.’
- b. Hier wird heute abend getanzt.
 here become today evening danced
 ‘Here is danced this evening.’
- c. Es darf hier nicht geraucht werden.
 it my here not smoked become
 ‘It may not be smoked here.’
- (27) a. *It was sung.
 b. *It was gesticulated.
 c. *It was danced.

The ungrammaticality of examples like (27) is straightforwardly accounted for under the condition in (1a). The licensing condition on the English P-morpheme is not satisfied, since the P-morpheme is not assigned Case from any element. However, one might suspect that unergative verbs could assign Case to the P-morpheme.

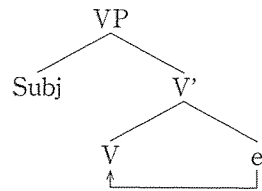
According to Hale and Keyser (1993), unergatives are derived by incor-

porating abstract NPs into verbs. This mechanism is illustrated in (28).

(28) a.



b.



(29) John laughs a laugh. → John laughs.

We suggest that unergatives take objects even in the case that objects are not realized. An unergative verb cannot assign Case to the P-morpheme, but to an abstract NP. The abstract NP is assigned Case before it is incorporated into the verb. Therefore, examples like (27) are ruled out as ungrammatical, because the P-morpheme is not assigned Case.

By contrast, German cases are a little complicated. Unergatives in German, like those of English, have the ability to assign Case. They are derived by incorporating abstract nouns into verbs, just as in English. Thus, German unergatives cannot assign Case to the P-morpheme, either. Note that in German, unlike English, Case assignment to the P-morpheme takes place only if the P-morpheme forms a clitic chain. Then, another question arises: whether or not German passives with unergatives include *pro* or something like that.

According to Zaima (1992: 82-4), impersonal passives are expressions focusing only on actions stated by participles. Thus, this paper assumes that in German impersonal passives, *pro* is eliminated. By assuming so, the P-morpheme in German cannot form a clitic chain with *pro*, because *pro* does not exist. As a result, the P-morpheme in German need not be assigned Case, under the condition in (1b).

This section has accounted for the syntactic difference between English and German passives. In the following section, we deal with perfect

auxiliary selection in English and German, by using the same condition on passives.

3. Perfect Constructions

Before going into the main discussion of perfect auxiliary selection, we consider the derivation and clause structure of perfect constructions.

Cowper (1995) proposes that perfect constructions are a kind of control constructions, and that a surface subject is base generated in the specifier of *have* and controls PRO in the specifier of the lower VP. The structure of example (30a) proposed by her is roughly like (30b).

- (30) a. The children have swept the floor.
 b. The children_i have [_{VP} PRO_i swept the floor].

She further assumes that the auxiliary *have* can assign a θ -role to the subject. Her assumptions do not seem to be plausible, however.

According to Pollock (1989), only verbal elements which cannot assign θ -roles raise to T(ense) because this position is θ -opaque in English. If the auxiliary *have* can assign a θ -role, as Cowper assumes, it would be predicted that it cannot raise to T. Namely, the auxiliary *have* would show the same behavior as main verbs. In fact, however, there are syntactic differences between the auxiliary *have* and main verbs. For example, the auxiliary *have* precedes VP adverbs whereas main verbs do not.

- (31) a. John has completely lost his way.
 b. *John completely has lost his way.
 c. *John kisses often Mary.
 d. John often kisses Mary.

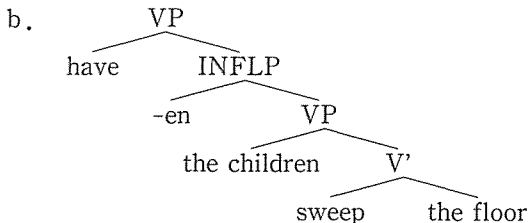
The difference in position between auxiliaries and main verbs is accounted for in terms of the difference of them with regard to movement. Namely, auxiliaries move to T while finite main verbs do not.

This paper assumes with Pollock (1989) and Roberts (1985), contra Cowper (1995), that in perfect constructions, subjects are base-generated in the specifier of the lower VP and assigned a θ -role by the main verb. This means that the auxiliary *have* cannot assign a θ -role because only verbal elements that cannot assign a θ -role can move to the head T. This would be one of the factors which distinguish the auxiliary *have* from the main verb *have*.⁴ Thus, the auxiliary *have*, along with the assumption made in section 1.2, indicates the following properties:⁵

- (32) a. *have* can assign accusative Case
 b. *have* cannot assign θ -roles

The relevant structure of perfect constructions is informally described in (33b), by using the sentence in (33a).

- (33) a. The children have swept the floor.



A derivation proceeds as follows. The verbal stem *sweep* raises up to the head INFL and merges with the P-morpheme *-en*. The subject NP *the children* is base-generated in [Spec, VP] and raised up to [Spec, TP]. The subject NP is assigned a θ -role in its base position, not in the surface subject position.

Section 3.1 reviews the unaccusative approach and points out its disadvantage. Section 3.2 is concerned with 'symmetrical' perfect auxiliary selection observed in Present-day English. Section 3.3 is concerned with asymmetrical perfect auxiliary selection observed in German.

3.1 The Unaccusative Approach to Auxiliary Selection

This section shows that the unaccusative approach is not adequate in explaining auxiliary selection in English, where verbs uniformly select HAVE in perfects.

Grewendorf (1989) proposes that auxiliary selection in German is dependent only on θ -marking to its subject position. He also proposes that HAVE has the ability to reactivate the subject θ -role of main verbs.

In the case of transitive and unergative verbs, the subject θ -role is absorbed by the P-morpheme. This subject θ -role which is absorbed should be reactivated by *haben* 'have,' so that the active perfect is formed. By contrast, unaccusatives (ergative verbs in his term) have no subject θ -role to be absorbed. Thus, since the subject θ -roles need not be reactivated, not *haben* 'have' but rather *sein* 'be' is selected in German perfects of unaccusatives.

Instances of German perfects are given in (34).

- (34) a. Der Junge hat den Hund geschlagen.
 the boy has the dog hit
 'The boy has hit the dog.'
- b. Die Gäste sind schon gekommen.
 the guests are already come
 'The guests have already come.'

In (34a), the transitive verb *geschlagen* selects HAVE, whereas in (34b), the unaccusative verb *gekommen* selects BE.

If his approach is on the right track, then it would predict that, even in English, unaccusatives must select BE in perfects. In English, verbs uniformly select HAVE in perfects. This phenomenon would be a plausible consequence if there are no unaccusatives in English. In fact, however, English has unaccusative verbs, and there are phenomena indicating unaccusativity even in English, as illustrated in (35) and (36).

- (35) a. There exist three men in the room.
 b. There appeared a ship on the horizon.
- (36) a. *Phyllis existed a peaceful existence.
 b. *Karen appeared a striking appearance at the department party.

The examples of (35) involve *there*-constructions,⁶ which are in general compatible only with unaccusative verbs. Unaccusatives are also assumed to take no cognate objects, as in (36).

In spite of these facts, unaccusatives of English select HAVE in perfects. This is illustrated in (37).

- (37) a. The ship has appeared on the horizon.
 b. He has gone to America.
 c. Leaves have not fallen yet.

3.2 'Symmetrical' Perfect Auxiliary Selection

Let us first consider 'symmetrical' perfect auxiliary selection, as observed in English. In English, verbs uniformly form perfects with HAVE, with a limited number of exceptions.⁷ Some examples with HAVE are illustrated in (38).

- (38) a. I have already finished reading the book.
 b. He has written the letter to her.
 c. She has gone to America.
 d. The boy has hit the bog.
 e. They have departed from the city.

These examples cannot be accounted for by the unaccusative approach. Our approach, by contrast, correctly predicts 'symmetrical' auxiliary selection, as in (38). The relevant assumptions made in the previous sections are repeated in (39).

- (39) a. The auxiliary *have* can assign Case.

b. The P-morpheme in English must be assigned Case.

In the examples of (38), regardless of the Case assigning ability of the past participles, HAVE is selected and assigns Case to the P-morpheme. Thus, the condition in (39b) is satisfied.

Let us next consider an example where BE would be selected in a perfect construction with an unaccusative verb, contrary to fact. Given that unaccusative verbs have no ability to assign Case, the P-morpheme cannot be assigned Case by the main verb (or the past participle) or by BE. This is illustrated in (40). Under our approach, it would be correctly predicted that BE perfects with unaccusatives are ungrammatical in English. This prediction is borne out, as shown in (41).

(40) a. BE $\begin{matrix} [_{\text{INFLP}} \\ [-\text{Acc}]] \end{matrix}$ V $\begin{matrix} \text{unacc} \\ [-\text{Acc}] \end{matrix}$ -en $\begin{matrix} [_{\text{VP}} \\ \text{t} \end{matrix}$ (Subj)

b. BE $\begin{matrix} [_{\text{INFLP}} \\ [-\text{Acc}]] \end{matrix}$ V $\begin{matrix} \text{unacc} \\ [-\text{Acc}] \end{matrix}$ -en $\begin{matrix} [_{\text{VP}} \\ \text{t} \end{matrix}$ (Subj)

(41) a. *The ship is appeared on the horizon.

b. *They are departed from the city.

On the other hand, if unaccusatives select HAVE in perfects, HAVE can assign Case to the P-morpheme and such sentences are grammatical, even if unaccusatives cannot assign Case. Some examples are repeated in (37).

(42) a. HAVE $\begin{matrix} [_{\text{INFLP}} \\ [+Acc]] \end{matrix}$ V $\begin{matrix} \text{unacc} \\ [-Acc]] \end{matrix}$ -en $\begin{matrix} [_{\text{VP}} \\ \text{t} \end{matrix}$ (Subj)

b. HAVE $\begin{matrix} [_{\text{INFLP}} \\ [+Acc]] \end{matrix}$ V $\begin{matrix} \text{unacc} \\ [-Acc]] \end{matrix}$ -en $\begin{matrix} [_{\text{VP}} \\ \text{t} \end{matrix}$ (Subj)

(37) a. The ship has appeared on the horizon.

b. He has gone to America.

c. Leaves have not fallen yet.

3.3 Asymmetrical Perfect Auxiliary Selection

This section finally examines asymmetrical perfect auxiliary selection, which is found in German and other Germanic and Romance languages.

Recall the condition on the German P-morpheme.

- (43) The P-morpheme in German must be assigned Case only if it forms a clitic chain.

This condition implies that if the P-morpheme forms no clitic chain, it need not be assigned Case. In other words, BE, not HAVE, is selected in perfect constructions.

Let us first examine perfects with HAVE, by taking examples (44).

- (44) a. Der Junge hat den Hund geschlagen.
 the boy has the dog hit
 ‘The boy has hit the dog.’
 b. Er hat ein Buch gekauft.
 he has a book bought
 ‘He has bought a book.’
 c. Ich habe den Brief gelesen.
 I have the letter read
 ‘I have read the letter.’

In these examples, the P-morpheme is assigned Case by HAVE, as assumed above. However, a question will be raised: with what element the P-morpheme forms a clitic chain.

In perfect constructions, unlike passive constructions, there is no *von*-phrase or phonologically null element (e. g., *pro*). We propose that in perfect constructions, the P-morpheme forms a clitic chain with an external argument. In example (44a), the P-morpheme forms a clitic chain with the external subject *der Junge* ‘the boy.’ As a result, the condition of (43) is satisfied.

Here, we should make a slight modification of the condition of (43). In

(43), an element with which the P-morpheme forms a clitic chain is not referred. In passives, as discussed in the previous sections, it is a *von*-phrase, which is base-generated in [Spec, VP]. In perfects, it is an external argument, as seen above. Thus, we modify the condition of (43) as in (45).

- (45) The P-morpheme must be assigned Case only if it forms a clitic chain with an external argument.

Let us consider an example where a transitive or unergative verb would select BE in perfects, contrary to fact. Regardless of whether HAVE or BE is selected, the P-morpheme forms a clitic chain with an external argument. Then, it must be assigned Case. In examples where BE is selected, the P-morpheme is not assigned Case, yielding a violation of the condition of (45). Therefore, it can be concluded that verbs having external arguments select HAVE in perfect constructions.

How about perfects with unaccusatives, as illustrated in (46) ?

- (46) a. Die Gäste sind schon gekommen.
 the guests are already come
 ‘The guests have already come.’
 b. Die Kinder sind zu Bett gegangen.
 the children are to bed gone
 ‘The children have gone to bed.’

It is generally assumed that unaccusatives have no external arguments. When an unaccusative verb forms a perfect, the P-morpheme does not form a clitic chain with an external argument. Then, since the P-morpheme need not be assigned Case, BE is selected in unaccusative perfects, instead of HAVE. If HAVE were selected, the P-morpheme would be assigned Case, though it forms no clitic chain. This is a violation of the condition of (45).

4. Concluding Remarks

This paper has provided a unified account of passive and perfect constructions in English and German. In particular, the following licensing conditions have been proposed on the P-morpheme:

- (47) a. The P-morpheme must be assigned Case.
 b. The P-morpheme must be assigned Case only if it forms a clitic chain with an external argument.

This paper has further proposed that the P-morpheme in English must meet the condition in (47a), while that of German must meet the condition in (47b).

By assuming (47a), it was shown that in English, impersonal passives are not possible, and that verbs (including unaccusative verbs) uniformly form perfects with HAVE.

We further accounted for the German passive and perfect constructions by using the condition in (47b). In particular, it was proposed that in German, the Case assignment to the P-morpheme takes place, only if a clitic chain is formed between the P-morpheme and an external argument.

We assumed that in impersonal passives of German, no clitic chain is formed because *pro* is deleted. As a result, the P-morpheme need not be assigned Case, and then impersonal passives are possible. As for asymmetrical perfect auxiliary selection, since unaccusatives have no external arguments, no clitic chain is formed in perfect constructions. Then, the P-morpheme does not require Case, under the condition in (47b), and BE is selected in perfect constructions.

Notes

¹ Throughout this paper, we use HAVE and BE to refer to *have/haben* 'have'

and *be/sein* 'be' / *werden* 'become' for convenience.

² Within the recent framework, the property in (6a) would be restated as in (i).

(i) [Spec, VP] does not receive a θ -role.

³ Assuming such functional projections as INFLP is not compatible with a spirit of the Minimalist Program (cf. Chomsky (1995)). Under the Minimalist Program, some modifications should be needed.

⁴ Some other crucial factors are so-called NICE properties (cf. Huddleston (1979) and Denison (1993) among others). The paradigm is illustrated below.

(i) NICE properties

- a. Negation : Max hasn't seen the car.
- b. Inversion : Has Max ever seen the car ?
- c. Code : (Tim has seen the car) and Max has too.
- d. Emphasis : Max has seen the car.

⁵ These assumptions would cause a violation of Burzio's generalization in (i).

(i) Burzio's generalization

All and only the verbs that can assign a θ -role to the subject can assign (accusative) Case to an object.

(Burzio (1986 : 178))

This paper does not touch upon this problem. We just assume that the aspectual *have* is the only exception to Burzio's generalization without any argument.

⁶ It is controversial whether *there*-constructions can be used to diagnose the unaccusativity of a given verb. This section follows Burzio (1986) without argument. For arguments against this approach, see Levin (1993) and Levin and Rappaport (1995), among others.

⁷ Examples like (i) are not dealt with in this paper, because they are idiomatic expressions or taken to be archaic forms (cf. Curme (1993 : 358-61), Quirk et. al. (1985 : 170n), and so on).

(i) a. He is gone. b. They are come.

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Synopsis

A Unified Analysis of Passive and Perfect Constructions
in English and German

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The main purpose of this paper is to provide a 'unified' account of passive and perfect constructions in English and German. Specifically, this paper proposes the licensing conditions on the passive/perfect morpheme (henceforth, the P-morpheme), as illustrated in (1).

- (1) a. The P-morpheme must be assigned Case.
b. The P-morpheme must be assigned Case only if it forms a clitic chain with an external argument.

First, it is observed that in English, only personal passives are possible and impersonal passives are not found. This is exemplified in (2).

- (2) a. Mary was killed by John.
b. *It was danced.

By contrast, in German, both personal and impersonal passives are available. This is given in (3) by using the corresponding English.

- (3) a. The postman became bitten by a dog.
b. Here becomes danced this evening.

Secondly, as for perfect constructions, in English, verbs uniformly form perfects with HAVE, with the limited number of exceptions. This type of auxiliary selection is called 'symmetrical' auxiliary selection in this paper. On the other hand, in German, so-called unaccusative verbs (or mutative verbs) form perfects with BE, not with HAVE. Other verbs select HAVE in perfects. This type of auxiliary selection is called asymmetrical auxiliary selection. The same behavior is observed in other Germanic and Romance languages. By using the corresponding English, each auxiliary selection is illustrated in (4) and (5), respectively.

- (4) a. He has written the letter.
b. He has come.
- (5) a. He has written the letter.
b. He is come.

This paper shows that the difference between them is attributed to the difference of the licensing conditions on the P-morpheme in (1). Since in English, the P-morpheme must be assigned Case, as required in (1a), only personal passives are possible, and 'symmetrical' auxiliary selection is observed.

In German, on the other hand, the P-morpheme must be assigned Case only if it forms a clitic chain with an external argument (cf. (1b)). Then, in German, both personal and impersonal passives are available and asymmetrical auxiliary selection is observed. Further we show that when the P-morpheme does not form a clitic-chain in German perfects, BE is selected as an perfect auxiliary.