

**A SYNTACTIC DERIVATION OF EVENTIVE AND STATIVE PASSIVES:
NEW EVIDENCE FROM OLD EGYPTIAN**

Chris H. Reintges

1. BACKGROUND. The contrast between eventive passives (*the option was chosen*) and stative passives (*the unchosen option*) is found in such diverse languages as English, German, and Chicheŵa (Bantu); yet its analysis is far from settled. In Wasow’s (1977) classic paper, the distributional differences between eventive (verbal) and stative (adjectival) passives are taken as *prima facie* evidence for modular distinctions in grammar, with eventive passives representing a transformational operation that applies in the syntax, while the corresponding stative passives are formed in the lexicon. According to the strict lexicalist hypothesis (Bresnan 1982, Levin & Rappaport 1986), the syntax of passivisation can be projected from a passive participle created in the lexicon, while the exceptional behaviour of stative passives is derived from category conversion $V \rightarrow A$. However, if category changing were relevant, the contrastive behavior of Chicheŵa passive and stative formatives, both of which create verbs from verbal stems, would be left unexplained (Dubinsky & Simango 1996). Within the anti-lexicalist view of Distributed Morphology, the passive-stative alternation is derived syntactically from two distinct functional heads, which, crucially, stand in a particular hierarchical relation with respect to the little *v* head: the functional head of the *STAT(ive)* (voice)*P* that attaches *below* little *v* generates stative passives, whereas the functional head *PASS(ive)*(voice)*P*, which attaches *above* little *v* generates eventive passives ((Halle & Marantz 1993; Marantz 1997; Doron 2003).

2. THE PROPOSAL. I present new evidence from Old Egyptian (Afroasiatic, 2500-1900 BCE), to support the view of two distinct voice heads, *STAT* and *PASS*, which are realized in English and Hebrew as stative and eventive passives. I will show, however, that both the *STAT* and *PASS* voice heads attach above the *vP* domain. The *STAT* head, which corresponds to a stativiser formative (Kratzer 2000), is merged into the *AGR-S*⁰ node, while the three morphologically distinct eventive passives derive the amalgamation of a *PASS* head with interpedently licensed *T(ense)* and *Asp(ect)* nodes (see below, (4a-b)). The different inflectional positions into which *STAT* and *PASS* voice heads are merged captures some fundamental aspects of the eventive-stative passive alternation in Old Egyptian that are hard to reconcile with previous accounts.

3. TRANSITIVE-ACTIVE STATIVES. Old Egyptian has two finite verb conjugations, the Eventive and the Stative paradigm, which formally distinguish between event-denoting and state-denoting verbs that are derived from the same root. Consider the following minimal pair, where the Eventive variant *rx-n(-j)* ‘I have learned’ in (1a) describes an accomplishment (viz. the acquisition of some knowledge), while the Stative alternant *rx-k(j)* ‘I know’ in (1b) denotes the resultant state (viz. the possession of that knowledge). Both Eventive- and Stative -inflected verbs can take direct objects.

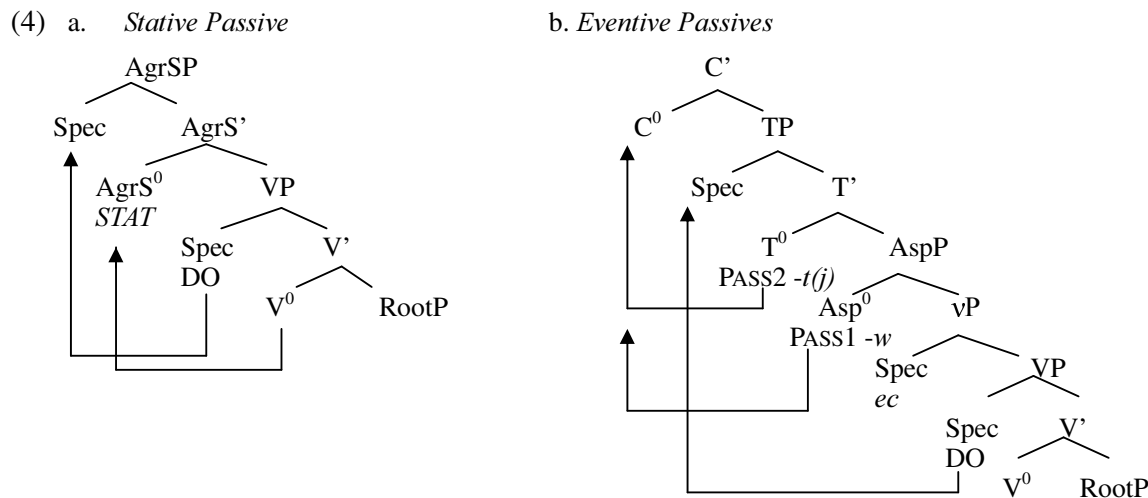
- (1) a. *jw rx-n(-j) fġkʔ nb ŧtʔ n(j) ʧnw* (Eventive)
 AUX learn-PERF-1SG_{EVENT} magic every secret of residence
 “I learned about every secret magic of the residence.” (*Urkunden* I 143:2)
- b. *jw rx-k(j) fġkʔ nb ŧtʔ* (Stative)
 AUX learn-1SG_{STAT} magic every secret
 “I know (by learning) every magic.” (*Urkunden* I 263:14)

The occurrence of active-transitive Statives is unexpected under previous theories that assign to Statives an unaccusative syntax. It is clear, then, that Stativisation is independent both of passivisation and of adjective formation. Moreover, the Old Egyptian Stative cannot be equated with Perfect aspect, which is marked by a distinct tense-aspect suffix *-n*, as in *rx-n(-j)* ‘I have learned about’ in (1a).

PASSIVE STATIVES. Morphological passives appear only in the Eventive verbal paradigm, while there are no passive Statives in the morphological sense. Yet, as seen in (2b) and (3), transitive-based Statives commonly an adjectival-passive-like interpretation where the verb is predicated of the object. Eventive passives, on the other hand, are agentive in a sense in which Stative passives are not insofar as the presence of an agent is semantically implied, even if the agent argument is not overtly realised, as seen in (2b) and (3).

- (2) a. **fz-t(j)(-j)** fir-s ?Ω wrt
praise-PASS2-1SEV for-3SF great much
“I was praised for it very much.” (*Urkunden* I 124:15)
- b. **fz-kw** fir-s m pr njswt
praise-1SGSTAT for-3SG.F in house king
“I was praised for it in the royal palace.” (*Beni Hasan* I pl. 8:13)
- (3) **ms-jj-j** m grfi m-jj **ms-kj**
bear-PASS-1SGEVENT at night come-IMP:PL bear-1SGSTAT
“I have been born at night. Come! I am a newborn (child).” (*Pyramid Texts* 714a/P)

I will show that the implicit agent of eventive passives is syntactically active and acts as a controller for PRO in infinitival purpose clauses and subject depictives. It is therefore projected as an external argument in the Spec, vP position (Roberts 1987, Baker, Johnson & Roberts 1989). Stative passives, on the other hand, are simply unaccusatives that lack an agent-licensing vP layer. See the tree diagrams in (4a-b) for further illustration (*ec* represent the implicit agent).



I will show that merge of the PASS1-*w* morpheme in the lower Asp⁰ and the PASS2-*t(j)* morpheme in the higher T⁰ node correlates not only with the complex semantic distribution of both Eventive passive patterns, but also with respect to the Verb Second Condition: unlike passive 2s, passive 1s may, but need move all the way up to C⁰ (Reintges 1997).

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