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Putative Passives in Mengzi

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by

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Abstract

This dissertation is a multidimensional analysis of a debated topic in Classical Chinese (VI to III century b.C.) Syntax, unmarked passive sentences. The main data of the analysis consists of all the sentences with patient subject, with transitive verbs and without passivizing particles, in the text of Mengzi (IV century b.C.). The appropriateness of using such a label, which refers prototypically to European languages with their rich verbal morphology, to describe a very different language situation, has been put into question. A typologically based characterization of passive is proposed, which relies on lexical factors (transitivity), syntactic factors (object deletion and subject properties) and discourse factors (defocusing of the agent, topic properties and parallelism).

As Mengzi represents the standard and most investigated example of Classical Chinese, this study based on a single text and on about 30 sentences can throw light on a wider language situation. Constant reference to other Classical texts, from Zuozhuan and Lunyu to Zhuangzi and Hanfeizi, is provided to confirm, expand and revise the interpretative framework.

The purpose of the dissertation is 1) to provide a multidimensional framework of lexical, syntactical and pragmatic factors to analyze and classify the data. The factors are not mutually exclusive, and the classification is not an aim in itself, but a preliminary step to: 2) clarify the status of the patient preverbal NPs, providing the distinctive features of patient subjects in contrast with topicalized objects, both in presence of explicit markings and when the overt distinction is neutralized; 3) evaluate, in relation to my data from Mengzi, the more general issue of the influence of semantic and pragmatic factors on word order and deletion in Classical Chinese, and the explanatory power of topic prominence in contrast with subjecthood and transitivity; 4) delineate possible development of this framework of analysis to deal with lexical causativity and anticausativity, the role of construction grammar in the analysis of Classical Chinese and the relationship (synchronical and diachronical) between passive and causative constructions.
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Chapter 1 Introduction

In the text of Mengzi, which is composed of around 35,000 characters (around 80 pages in standard format), there are 29 putative passive sentences. Their list is given in Appendix 1. I will analyze them from three different perspectives: 1) the lexical properties of the putative passive verbs (chapter 2); the syntactic contexts in which these sentences occur (chapter 3); the pragmatic functions of putative passives within the sentence and in the textual context (chapter 4).

In this chapter I will provide some the background knowledge on marked and unmarked passive in Classical Chinese\(^1\); then I will review the literature on putative passives, topic and subject in Classical Chinese; finally I will provide a working definition of putative passives.

1.1 History of the Passive Construction

According to the prevalent view, we have two ways of expressing the passive voice in Late Zhou Chinese (LZC), a syntactically unmarked one, and a syntactically marked one. For the unmarked passive, Pulleyblank (1995:27) gives the following definition: transitive verbs require at least two nouns, an agent and a patient, to complete their meaning. When the agent (if expressed) is in the subject position in front of the verb and the patient (if expressed) is in the object position, the verb is active.

1. 七十者衣帛食肉

   *When seventy year olds wear silk and eat meat ...*

   (孟子 1.3)

   If the patient is in the subject position, the verb is passive.

2. 師行而糧食

   *The host proceeds and supplies are eaten.*

\(^1\) In this dissertation I will be focusing mainly on the stage of language from the VI to the III century BCE, namely Late Zhou Chinese (LZC)
Unmarked passives (in the above defined sense) are present in every stage of Chinese (Archaic, Medieval and Contemporary). Marked passives have a quite complex history, as different passive markers emerged in different periods of the history of the Chinese language. I am here giving as a reference a brief summary of our knowledge of the history of the passive construction from Archaic to Middle Chinese, mainly based on Peyraube 1989.

There is no passive syntactic marker in the jiaguwen. The first examples of marked passive constructions appear in the bronze inscription (jinwen). In Early Archaic Chinese (9th-6th centuries b.C.) only the form V+ 于+ Agent is attested. E.g.:

3. 憂心悄悄愠于群小

*my worried heart is saddened, (I am) infuriated by my inferior.*

(詩經, 北風, 柏舟)

In late Archaic Chinese (5th-3rd century b.C.) we have these fundamental forms: "V+ 于+ Agent”, “为 (+Agent) + V” and “见+ V (+ 于+ Agent)”. Also attested are two rarer forms: “为 +Agent + 所+ V” and “被 + V”.

Peyraube gives three examples of the “V+ 于+ Agent” construction in LZC

4. 卤克傷於矢

*Xi Ke was wounded by an arrow.*

(春秋左傳,成公,傳二年)

5. 治於人者食人，治人者食於人

*Those who are governed by others support them; those who govern others are supported by them.*

(孟子, 5.4)

6. 物物而不物於物

---


3 The locative particles 于 and 于, homophones now but phonetically distinct in Mandarin until the XIV century, and distinct in functions until the preclassical time, are used interchangeably in most LZC texts, including Mengzi (with a tendency for 于 to supplant 于altogether). See Pulleyblank 1995: 53-54 and, for more details, Pulleyblank 1986.
To treat things as things and refuse to be turned into a thing by things.

(莊子.外篇.卷七上.第二十 山木)

Then Peyraube raises the basic point: is the passive meaning expressed by the preposition *yu* 或 or by the verb? Hashimoto, in a paper on the historical evolution of the Chinese passive, states that before the Han dynasty “the Chinese verb seems to have remained ‘neutral’ to the active versus passive distinction.” For him, in the above sentence from Mengzi, the agent is marked with a locative particle *yu* 而 while the patient is unmarked, and the verb *zhì* 治 (to rule) remains neutral to this active versus passive distinction, just as some modern Chinese verbs remain neutral to the distinction of agent versus patient. The relationships of these constituents to the main verbs can be specified, if necessary, with the preposition, as in:

這個狗怕人

This sentence can mean both: “this dog is afraid of people” and “this dog frightens people.”

This shows, according to Peyraube, that the verb is neutral.

If this is the case, the logical consequence is that patient-subject sentences were actually like the so-called passives marked by *yu* 而 (the main difference being the possibility of dropping the subject from *yu* 而 sentences). This is the position of Wei Peiquan 1991.

He gives the following example from Archaic Chinese⁵:

7. 侯乍冊麥易金于辟侯。

(*xxx*) was given a gift of metal by a noble.

It is only relying on our real world knowledge (nobles are more likely to give gifts than to receive them) that we understand *yu bìhou* 于辟侯 as an agent and not as an in direct object.

Peyraube takes a middle stance. Though he agrees with Hashimoto on the fact that verb direction is context dependent, he also says that it is undeniable that the preposition *yu* 而 plays a non negligible role in distinguishing actives from passives in the examples from Mengzi and Zhuangzi cited above. On the other side, many verbs not followed by “於+  

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⁴ Hashimoto 1988: 340-341  
⁵ Wei 1991:428, ex. (2)
Agent’ still acquire a passive interpretation, and many sentences with “於 + NP” following a verb are not passive.

As for the other two forms, Peyraube gives the following examples:

“為 + V”

8. 臣已為辱矣
   
   I was already humiliated.

(呂氏春秋.紀部.第十一卷.第三篇 孝廉)

“為 (+Agent) + V”

9. 道術將為天下裂
   
   The doctrine of the Dao will be torn into pieces by the world.

(莊子.雜篇.卷十下.第三十三 天下)

“見 + V”

10. 貧成括見殺

   Péngchéng Kuò being put to death.

(孟子, 14.29)

11. 昔者繚子瑕見寵於衛君

   In the past, Mi Zixia was loved by the prince of Wei.

(韓非子.第四卷.第十二篇. 說難)

The syntactic nature of the passive markers jian 見 and wei 為 is debated. Jian 見 whose original meaning is “to see”, became an auxiliary verb marking the passive, a process with strong analogies with the evolution of Romance languages (6). As for wei 為, it is better understood as a preposition in examples like the following, where it marks the agent (lie shi 烈士):

12. 烈士為天下見善矣

   The martyrs are praised by the whole world.

(莊子.至樂.第十八)

and it is better understood as a verb in examples like the following::

13. 為天下之大僇

---

(He) was the big mockery of the world.

(荀子, 正 論, 篇 第 十 八)

Here wei 為 can only be a verb, because zhi 之 is a nominalizer.

1.2 Patient Subject Sentences in Chinese

1.2.1. Patient Subject Sentences in Mandarin
The term “Subject patient sentences” (shoushi zhuyu ju, 受施主語句) is used in the analysis of Modern Mandarin by Mainland scholars to describe sentences like:

老師的頭髮絞了

The teacher's hairs have been cut.

A more precise designation would be “sentences with non-agentive subjects of transitive verbs”. Such a category puts together under one label a term belonging to syntax (subject) and one belonging to semantics (patient). This can be a source of confusion or at least of scarce clarity, and that's probably the reason why western scholars have not adopted the label, preferring terms like: “pseudo-passives” or the less committing “putative passives”.

In fact, the term has been coined in the first place to deal with a class of sentences with passive meaning but without passive marking- to use the phrasing of Wang Huan (1963:96), they are “passive sentences which do not use bei”, or “unmarked passive sentences” (wu biaozhi de beidongshi). According to some scholars, though, the patient NP in preverbal position is not a subject but a dislocated object (the real subject being the agent, realized as a null-NP). In this case we should talk, instead of shoushi zhuyu ju 受施主語句, of bingyu qianzhi 賓語前置 (preposed object). In fact, the basic characteristic of the passive transformation is to have the object of a transitive verb playing the role of subject (fanbing weizhu 反賓為主).

7 Other scholars, like Li and Thompson 1981: 89, deny that these are passive sentences at all, identifying them with topic comment sentences where the subject of the verb is not present.
8 See Gong 1980 for the most systematic discussion of the issue.
9 For a review of the debate, see Shi 1997:42-45. In a recent paper, Shi and Tang (Shi and Tang 1999) have examined different explanations for the derivation of putative passives. In the framework of generative grammar, the patient subject can be analyzed as a subject as well as a preverbal object or a topic.
so we just expect to find a tension in explanation between object-like and subject-like properties for the preverbal NP, as we can see from the two readings of the following sentence:

chicken not eat LE

The sentence has an active reading:

A) chicken not eat food LE

The chicken has not eaten

And a passive reading:

B) chicken not by man eat completely LE

The chicken has not been eaten

In fact, in the spoken language, sentences are often elliptical and the notion of « agent » and « patient » are not necessarily explicitly marked. The rare markers, ba 把 (object marker) and bei 被 (agent marker) are not always necessary. In most cases, the « passive voice » is not marked by bei 被(Xu 1996: 10). Some patient subject sentences can become bei 被 sentences, while others cannot and- viceversa- some bei 被 sentences can be transformed into patient subject sentences, other cannot.\(^\text{11}\)

1.2.2. Patient Subject Sentences in Classical Chinese

While the notion of unmarked passive, or patient subject sentences, is widely accepted in the analysis of Classical Chinese, both in the Chinese and in the Western literature\(^\text{12}\), this notion has been far less accepted in the analysis of Mandarin, so that it remains a marginal feature in the modern studies on Mandarin and Sinitic passives.

This explains why Derek Herforth, a scholar of Classical Chinese Syntax known for his interest in typology and his rigorous linguistic approach, has rejected the notion of

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\(^{10}\) See Chao 1968:72-75

\(^{11}\) See Gong 1980: 336

\(^{12}\) Here are some authors using the concept of unmarked passive in their analysis: Zhou Fagao, Yang Bojun and He Leshi, Tang Yumin, Shen Pei, Gabelentz, Dobson, Pulleyblank, Peyraube, Xu Dan

Discussing the following sentence:

4. 不如人罰二甲
   
   \[
   \text{bu ru ren fa er jia} \\
   \text{not be-like man fine two armor} \\
   \text{It is better to fine them two pieces of armor}
   \]

   (韩非子,第三十五篇, 外储说右下)

Herforth asserts: “[here] ren 人 can hardly be the subject of fa 罰 ‘punish, fine’... More likely, ren 人 here is the underlying direct object of fa 罰.”

In his CLAO article Herforth makes frequent reference to Hungarian as a useful comparison. This has the aim of drawing attention to typological features that Hungarian and Late Zhou Chinese share, in terms of topic prominence and movement typology, and specifically in terms of focus and many preverbal operators (Herforth 2001: 251). Hungarian is in fact often described in typological terms as a language in which the grammatical functions of subject, object, etc. are not linked to invariant structural position in the sentence; the functions associated with the different structural positions are logical functions (topic, comment) instead of the grammatical functions subject, object etc; and there is an apparent freedom in word order - i.e. an attested parallelism between the syntactic behavior of the subject, object and other arguments (Kiss 2002:7-12). These similarities between Hungarian and Mandarin Chinese have already been noted (Kiss 2002: 12). The comparison implies that LZC shares these features with Mandarin- actually, that these features are even more prominent in LZC than in Mandarin. (see Yao 1999).

Comparing a living language with a thoroughly investigated grammar, like Hungarian, with a dead language like LZC, about whose grammar our knowledge is so scanty that Pulleyblank’s outline, the most recent Western authoritative grammar, runs for less than 200 pages (so that for some purpose the reference work is still Gabelentz’ 1881

\[13\] The issue matters, in Hertforth’s interpretation, as the domain of quantification of 人 in subject or in object position is bound to be different.
Chinesische Grammatik), might seem almost provocative.\textsuperscript{14} It is certainly, at least, thought provoking, as it forces us to make explicit the role given to the feature of topic prominence in Classical Chinese.\textsuperscript{15}

1.3 Subject, Object and Topic in Classical Chinese

1.3.1. Topic and Subject in Classical Chinese
As the main task of my inquiry into the unmarked passive is to distinguish between topic and subject, and the most authoritative and influential view on topic in Chinese has been given by Chao Yuanren, I will first review his position and spell out its wide ranging consequences.

Chao in his grammar (1968: 103) makes the following statement regarding putative passive sentences: “A sentence like: 我酒现在不喝了 wo jiu xianzai bu he le. “I’m not going to drink wine now” is often analyzed as having jiu as object of he, but placed in inverted word order for greater emphasis or prominence than the V-O order: wo xianzai bu he jiu le. But since the direction of the verb can go either outward from, or inward to, the subject, jiu can very well be the subject of he: ‘As for me, wine is not going to be drunk now’, and the emphasis, if desired, is made equally effective by jiu being in the subject position in the S-P clause. If the goal word is placed in the main subject position, still greater prominence is attained, as: 晚报老三拿去了 wanbao Lao San naqu le “(As for) the evening paper, Lao San took (it) away”. Similarly, the following sentences, often analyzed as having inverted objects, can be analyzed as having S-P predicates: 我头也不回, 汗也不擦. Wo tou ye bu hui, han ye bu ca ‘I, neither the head turns, nor the sweat is wiped, - I neither turn my head nor wipe my sweat.’ [...]. It may be objected that the

\textsuperscript{14} See Friedrich 2004 for an assessment of Gabelentz, and Djamouri 1996 for a balanced review of Pulleyblank’s grammar and his place in the Western tradition of grammatical investigation of Classical Chinese. As for the Chinese literature, Herforth himself writes that: “Chou Fakao (1959-62) may be more complete in his coverage of previous scholarship [...] while Yang and He (1992) range more widely in terms of both topics covered and chronological span”; but “Professor Pulleyblank has produced what is no doubt the most clearly reasoned general account in any language of the structure of Late Zhou Chinese (LZC)”.

\textsuperscript{15} For this purpose, Hungarian is not just one language between the others. The very notion of a topic-predicate structure and its relation to the subject-predicate structure attested in some Indo-European languages has been first identified by the Hungarian linguist Samuel Brassai in the middle of the nineteenth century (Kiss 2002:6)
transitive verbs *hui* ‘turns’, *ca* ‘wipes’, etc. will be left dangling without object if *tou* ‘head’, *han* ‘sweat’, etc. are made their subjects instead of their objects. The answer is that there are many verbs in which the direction of action is not clear to begin with semantically, [...]. Does my head turn, or do I have to turn it before it turns? And even with verbs which do have directed actions, it is the usual practice with Chinese transitive verbs to omit the object if the goal of action has been mentioned in a near context, even in a separate sentence, as: *Zhe shi wode bao; ni yao kan ma? ‘This is my paper; do you want to read (it)?’* If an object *ta* ‘it’ were added, it would have a totally different connotation: ‘Do you want to read that kind of stuff?’.” (underlining mine)

Two points have been raised here: 1) about transitivity: to which degree is it possible to omit the object? 2) about voice: to which degree verbs have directed actions?

I will now proceed to treat these two points, reviewing some known facts about Mandarin, and then contrasting them with some corresponding features of LZC.

### 1.3.2. Object Ellipsis and the anaphorical pronoun *zhi* 之

Li and Thompson in their grammar of Modern Mandarin (Li and Thompson 1981: 157) define transitivity in this way: “when the meaning of a verb requires two participants and one of them is doing something to or directing some behavior at the other one, such a verb is called a transitive verb. The participant who is doing something is the *subject* and the one toward which or whom the behavior is directed is the direct object. [...] In most languages of the world, certain transitive verbs may occur without a direct object. In Mandarin, transitive verb phrases without a direct object are particularly common because of zero anaphora: where in English, for instance, an entity in the world is referred to by a pronoun, in Mandarin such an entity is simply understood without the presence of a pronoun. The absence of a direct object in a transitive verb phrase, however, does not change the transitive nature of the verb involved [underlining mine]. In such a case, the direct object is implied, as here:

我吃了 (I have eaten (it))

他买了 (S/He has bought (it))

我打了 (I have hit (him/her)).”
“ [...] In general, a third person pronoun is used to refer to an inanimate entity only when the absence of a pronoun or other noun phrase would render the construction ungrammatical.”\textsuperscript{16} For example, as answer to the question \textit{a}, only \textit{b}, without the pronoun, is appropriate; \textit{c}, with the pronoun, is not. Here the context allows the absence of the pronoun without impairing the grammaticality of the sentence in \textit{b}:

\begin{itemize}
\item[a.] 你喜歡那本書嗎？
\item[b.] 我喜歡
\item[c.] ??我喜歡它.\textsuperscript{17}
\end{itemize}

In comparison with Mandarin, in LZC the situation of third person pronouns and constraints to zero anaphora in object position is quite different. There is no general third person pronoun in LZC equivalent to modern \textit{ta} 他. \textit{Zhi} 之 come closest to be a general third person pronoun. It is, however, almost exclusively confined to being an object of a verb or coverb (Pulleyblank 1995: 78-79). Unlike \textit{ta} 他, \textit{zhi} 之 has no constraints on animacy, as it can refer freely both to animate and inanimate entities. To show the different behavior of the two pronouns, we give an example cited by Lü Shuxiang in his article \textit{The Third Person Pronouns and Related Matters in Classical and Modern Chinese}.\textsuperscript{18} Lü analyzes a passage from \textit{Shijing}:

\begin{quote}
15. 經始靈臺, 經之, 營之,庶民攻之,不日成之.

\textit{When he planned the commencement of the marvelous tower, he planned it and defined it; and the people undertook the work, and in no time completed it}

(詩經, 大雅, 靈臺)
\end{quote}

“Not one of the four \textit{zhi} 之’s could be retained when the passage is translated into any of the modern colloquials. The Mandarin version would probably run like this:\textsuperscript{19} 交王打算造

\textsuperscript{16} Li and Thompson 1981: 134

\textsuperscript{17} On the other hand, there are syntactic environments in which a zero pronoun is not allowed, regardless of animacy and discourse factors. The noun phrase occurring immediately after a coverb cannot be a zero pronoun. 掛畫的釘子掉了, 我得把它掛好. And, when the pronoun occur in associative (NP 的 NP) phrases, for the associative phrase to be grammatical, it must contain a pronoun or noun phrase preceding the associative particle \textit{de} 的: 荷蘭地方非常好. 我們知道它的經濟問題不簡單.

\textsuperscript{18} Lu 1940: 50-51
座高臺,自己設計了一番,百姓拾著來做,幾天工夫就造成了。No equivalent of the ancient zhi 之 appears.”

Why is it necessary to express pronominal objects whose referents are perfectly clear from the context? After all, LZC displays an extreme freedom for zero anaphora in subject position. In his study on zero anaphora in Late Archaic Chinese (a study focused on Confucius’ Analects), Charles Li has formulated this situation under the Principle of Referential Choice (Li 1997: 278): “with a few exceptional situations, there is no grammatical requirement for expressing a referent once it has been established in the immediate discourse context”. But he himself noticed the contradiction between this principle and the fact that “the most numerous pronominal occurrences in the Analects are in the direct object position”. As many pronominal occurrences in direct object position do not show any strong discourse motivation, he is bound to recognize that it is “rare for a transitive verb to stand alone without an object in any discourse context independent of the referential status of the object. Without an object, a transitive verb appears incomplete both semantically and syntactically. This syntactic and semantic preference of the transitive verb […] often overrides the language-specific principle of not expressing a pre-established referent in Late Archaic Chinese.”19

We can so conclude that the realization of the anaphorical object pronoun (zhi 之) is quasi-obligatory20 and Li and Thompson’s claim for Mandarin that the absence of a direct object in a transitive verb phrase, however, does not change the transitive nature of the verb involved, doesn’t apply to LZC21, where the absence of the direct object actually gives a passive reading to the verb, as we will show later (see. 3.1.2).

1.3.3. Voice and Grammatical Categories

As we have seen from Li and Thompson’s definition of transitivity above, it is through the direction of the action that we establish the grammatical categories of subject and

19 Li relates this property to the fact that Classical Chinese is a verb medial language. As Modern Mandarin is a verb medial language as well, but it doesn’t show the same constraint, I don’t think the connection has a strong explanatory power


21 This is true even for English. See Jespersen, A Modern English Grammar, III: 321: “The omission of an obvious object probably produces more intransitive uses of transitive verbs than anything else.”
object\textsuperscript{22}. If the direction of the verb can, without grammatical constraints, go either outward from, or inward to, the subject, the implication is that we are not dealing with the traditional grammatical category of subject at all, but rather with the pragmatical category of topic (and this is indeed Chao’s position).

A basic assumption in the discussion of voice (Comrie 1981: 68) is that “the lexical representation of a given predicate will specify how many arguments that predicate takes, and provide a characterization of each argument in derived syntax. Corresponding to a given set of lexical arguments of a predicate, there may be more than one way of encoding these arguments in surface syntax (or, more generally, derived syntax), and the difference among these various encodings is a difference in voice.”\textsuperscript{23}

The arguments that the predicate takes are semantic roles; according to Trask 1993: 248: “semantic role is any one of several semantic relations which a noun phrase may bear in its clause, classified from the point of view of the involvement of the entity denoted by that NP in the situation expressed by the clause, independently of its grammatical form”. Voice as a grammatical category consists in the encoding of semantic roles into the grammatical relations of Subject and Object. Passive, a voice category, is precisely one of such encodings.

If we follow consistently Chao’s point of view and we take the position that grammatical relations of Subject and Object are not relevant for Chinese (both Classical and Modern)\textsuperscript{24}, and that we can better analyze sentences in terms of Topic and Comment, we don’t need a voice changing (passivization) rule, because voice/transitivity is undetermined in Classical Chinese (see LaPolla 2002: 5-10) and we are bound to find unnecessary a syntactical analysis of passive in the Classical language. We have seen Pulleyblank’s definition of unmarked passive as a grammatical correlation between word order and participant roles. But in a topic prominent language (in Chao’s and LaPolla’s sense), it is primarily factors of meaning (i.e. semantic factors) rather than grammatical

\textsuperscript{22} “When the meaning of a verb requires two participants and one of them is doing something to or directing some behavior at the other one, such a verb is called a transitive verb. The participant who is doing something is the subject and the one toward which or whom the behavior is directed is the direct object”

\textsuperscript{23} As noted by Comrie 1981: 69: “the terminology in this area (with such terms as active, passive and atipassive; ergative and accusative) is confused and unstandardized”. That’s why I’m proceeding by means of citation by authoritative sources.

\textsuperscript{24} See LaPolla 1993 and 1995, as well as Dryer 1997.
ones which determine the order of major constituents with respect to the verb. Thus, preverbal position is a signal for definiteness for topics, subjects, and objects, that is, for whether these topics, subjects and objects are already known to both the speaker and the hearer (Li and Thompson 1981: 19). As preverbal and postverbal positions are governed by pragmatic factors instead of syntactic ones, the idea of syntactical encoding of semantic roles into these positions would be meaningless.

So we need to rely on a different model, a model allowing us to distinguish between agents and patients in preverbal position. Mei Tsulin has been a prominent advocate of the thesis that Classical Chinese relies, much more than Middle and Modern Chinese, on the distinction between agent and patient- so much so that Classical Chinese would be better described as a Subject-Predicate language rather than as a Topic-Comment language, the passage between the two stages being situated between the Six dynasties and the Tang dynasty. In an important article on the emergence of the resultative construction (Mei 1991) he has demonstrated that after the Han there has been a big restructuring of transitivity relations. The ability to distinguish between topocalized object and patient subject, which was active in Archaic and LZX, was consequently lost, mainly because of a change of the requirements on the expression of transitivity (a realignment prominently including the loss of anaphoric 之). As the ability of distinguishing the semantic roles of agent and patient in preverbal position got lost, other structures to mark preverbal agent and patient like the ba 把 and bei 被 constructions emerged. I cannot bring any independent proof to support Mei’s hypothesis, but I’ll use it as a model of a description of Classical Chinese as a Subject-

25 Until the 5th century A.D. “V 殺” (verb-to kill) was transitive while “V 死” (verb-to die) was intransitive. Their usages were complementary. After the 5th century. “V 死” lost his constraint, and acquired also the transitive usage, meaning both “to kill” or “to be killed” according to its transitive vs. intransitive usage.

26 See also Shi 2002: 220

27 Here is a brief resume of Mei’s claims: 1) in LZX an agent subject can be followed by the verbs 能, 可以, while a patient subject can be followed by the verb 可; 2) the derivation by voicing of the initial derives intransitive verbs (自動詞) like 敗 loose (*p-) from transitive ones (他動詞), 敗 defeat (*b-); the first have an agent subject, the second a patient or middle subject; 3) LZX has a causative construction, where nouns, adjectives and intransitive verbs are put between two nouns, the former been the agent, the latter the patient. This “causative transformation” relying on word order disappears in Middle Chinese; 4) the word jian 見 in LZX is a marker of the patient subject. After the Han, this marker looses its function; 5) in LZX the zhe 者 in a “VP+者” construction refers to the agent, the suo 所 in a “所+VP” construction refers to the patient. This, in the way, the agent and the patient of the action can be made explicit in a nominalization. When, instead, during the Tang dynasty, the particle di 底 replaces zhe 者 and suo 所, the
Predicate language more than a Topic-Comment language, and I'll test its explanatory ability in dealing with the issues of transitivity and topicalization in the analysis of my database.

Stating that LZC, unlike Mandarin, is not a topic prominent language, doesn’t mean denying any role to topics. But the evidence for the distinction between transitive and intransitive verbs and for the distinction between the marking of agent and patient in preverbal position show that the application of such a model to LZC is ill founded. Furthermore, LZC differs from Mandarin in another related area, in its set of explicit constraints to object inversion (and these constraints are necessary to preserve the distinction between preverbal agent and patient).

1.3.4. Inversion
As the terminology dealing with inversion is not standardized, I will now clarify my usage of the term inversion, by reviewing some of its most frequent uses.

1) The term is usually employed as a general term for any phenomenon in which the canonical ordering of two elements is reversed (Trask 1993: 147). Such term is synonymous with the term daozhuangju 倒装句 or daoju 倒句 in the Chinese linguistic literature (see Yu 1981). This is also the way in which Pulleyblank uses it, to describe both the marked word order of the passive (called passive by inversion, as we saw) and the pattern found in exclamatory sentences, where the predicate is found before the subject, like in the following example:

16. 善哉問也

*an excellent question!*

(孟子 2.4).

construction “V+底” can express both the agent and the patient, so that the former ability of differentiate the two thematic roles is lost in the new construction; 6) in LZC transitive and intransitive verbs were tightly differentiated, also with different negation particles. The particles 弗, 勿 were used with transitive verbs, the particle 不 with intransitive verbs. A sequence with the subject followed by a transitive verb without object, would express the passive. While is was quasi-obligatory for a transitive verb to be followed by the anaphoric pronoun zhi 之 in case of object topicalization, the same construction became quasi-impossible in Middle and Modern Chinese. This change has played a great role in blurring the distinctive roles of agent and patient as coded in LZC grammar.

28 Pulleyblank p. 147, ex. (S47)
Pulleyblank's use of the term is coherent with the most usual connotation of the term, which "as applied to English denote a clause in which the logical subject appears in postverbal position while some other, canonically postverbal, constituent appears in preverbal position" (Birner and Ward 1998: 156).

2) In LZC, the most prominent kind of inversion in LZC is the Object-Verb Inversion (see Feng 1996:324). The subject, when it is expressed at all, doesn't move to postverbal position, but stays between the object and the verb. The Object-Verb inversion can be conditioned (a) (= Conditioned Object Inversion) or not conditioned (b) (=Object Topicalization).

(a) Interrogative pronoun objects precede the verb and personal pronoun objects are placed between the negative particle and the verb. These inversions are not discourse choices, they are constrained (obligatory).29

(b) As for full lexical NP objects, their inversion is pragmatically motivated (object topicalization and exposure30) and obligatorily marked.

When the object is exposed and announced as 'topic', it is repeated by 之.31

17. 然而不王者，未之有也

It has never happened that in such circumstances true kingship was not obtained.

(孟子 1.3)

In late preclassical Chinese of the Shijing and the early classical Chinese of the Zuozhuan and Guoyu, the exposure construction differed in an important way. A preposed object was repeated by a pronoun, usually zhi之 or shi是, placed in front of the verb instead of

30 Pulleyblank defines exposure as follows (Pulleyblank 1995: 69): "An element in a sentence may be given special prominence by being taken out of its normal position and placed in front. One common situation in which this occurs is when some element which is not grammatically the subject is announced as 'topic.' Exposure also occurs, however, when an element, such as the object of the verb, is given contrastive emphasis without becoming the topic, and since the grammatical devices involved are similar it is convenient to deal with the two matters together."
after it. This can be interpreted as a survival of a more widespread placing of pronouns in front of the verb in the preclassical language\textsuperscript{32}.

18. 戎狄是膺

\emph{The Róng and Di, them he repressed.}

(詩經，魯頌,閩宮)

One stereotyped survival of this construction is with the verb \emph{wei} 謂:

19. 夫子之謂也

\emph{It (the poem) refers to you, sir.}

(孟子 1.7).

3) In the passive transformation, we have an inversion were the logical subject (if it appears at all) appears in postverbal position, while the direct object of the SVO sentence appears in preverbal position. In LZC, we can indicate it schematically like this: A 殺 B (active) = B 殺 (於 A) (passive). \textsuperscript{33} I will call this case object promotion to subject.\textsuperscript{34}

4) The term inversion has a different but related meaning in Sino-Tibetan linguistics, where it is used in reference to verb orientation. Here the inversion doesn't refer to the reversal of the order of two elements, but to a change occurring within the verb, regarding the orientation of the action. In Dobson's words (1959: 65ff): “when the action flows from the verb, via the affectee, towards the directive, the voice of the verb is active. [...] Where by contrast the direction of flow of the action proceeds from the directive to the verb, the voice of the verb is passive. No formal distinction is made between the active voice (direction towards) and the passive voice (direction from) in the directive. The directive particles [that is, \emph{yu} 於] are common to both forms. The difference is simply one of directional flow.”

The following example makes clear the connection between voice and direction:

20. 禮聞取於人, 不聞取人。禮聞來學, 不聞往教

\textsuperscript{32} Pulleyblank 1995: 70. Other authors, like Peyraube 1997, oppose the view that Preclassical Chinese had more OV features than LZC.

\textsuperscript{33} This is a situation categorized by Birner under the ampler label of argument reversal, see Birner and Ward 1998: 155

\textsuperscript{34} Trask 1993: 221: “In Relational Grammar, any of various syntactic processes by which some NP is moved from a lower- to a higher-ranking position within the Relational Hierarchy, such as from direct object to subject during passivization. The term is also used informally for the same purpose in frameworks in which such operations receive no formal recognition.”
I have heard that it is in accordance with those rules that one should be chosen by others (as their model); I have not heard of his choosing them (to take him as such). I have heard in the same way of (scholars) coming to learn; I have not heard of (the master) going to teach.

(禮記 1.1)

Here the direction flow is first marked by the passive marker yu 於, and then by verbs of direction lai 來 and wang 往.

This connection between voice and direction is based on the traditional understanding of transitivity “as a global property of an entire clause, such that an activity is “carried-over” or “transferred” from an agent to a patient.” (Hopper and Thompson 1980: 251), but it is specifically related to Sino-Tibetan verb derivational morphology. Relying on the psychological notions of attention flow and viewpoint (about which see De Lancey 1981b), the notion is quite suggestive. Our analysis will not make use of this notion, though, and the usage of the category of inversion can be misleading, given the fact that the term inversion is most commonly used, in relationship to voice phenomena, in a quite different meaning (see Dixon and Aikhenvald 1997: 98-99). We mention it here because of its relationship with passive and ergative.

We will use the term inversion to refer to the cases of obligatory object inversion described in 2a, while using object topicalization for the cases covered by 2b, and promotion to subject for the case described in 3. We will use our set of unmarked passive sentences to test the adequacy of this description.

1.4 Defining features of the Unmarked Passive Construction

My main task is to be able to differentiate topicalized objects which do not act as subjects from objects promoted to subjects. This is possible because in LZC when an object is

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35 Inversion is used, in the analysis of voice, to describe systems (labeled ‘inverse systems’ or ‘direction systems’) where different transitive construction types are distinguished depending on the potential-to-control-the-activity of different core arguments (Dixon and Aikhenvald 1997:72). Prominent examples of such systems are the Algonquian languages in North American and Tibeto Burman languages in Asia.

36 In some languages (specially for some Philippine languages) there have been debates over the status of object focusing constructions, whether they should be identified or not with passive constructions. Shibatani 1985: 835 makes a distinction between Object focusing and Passivization. Philippine languages
topicalized, it is always marked as such by the anaphorical object pronoun zhi 之. From a pragmatic point of view, in situations where the status of the preverbal NP or S is not well defined and could be interpreted either as a topic or as a subject (situations I will investigate in chapter 3), it is the insertion, or better the presence of the agentive subject which constrains the interpretation toward the active reading.37

There are three areas of LZC grammar which are different and more developed than the corresponding Mandarin counterparts: 1) the one dealing with object inversion and object topicalization; 2) the one dealing with transitivity and transitivity change (including increase in transitivity=causativization, and decrease in transitivity=passivization); 3) the one dealing with the encoding of thematic roles into the grammatical categories of Subject and Object (direct and indirect) in nominalization by the particles 者, 所, 之; these tools allow the system to make a distinction between topicalized objects and topics promoted to subject, giving a marking to the firsts and not to the seconds.38

I have provided my arguments in favor of the treatment of patient subject sentences as passives. It is now time to give a definition of passive and unmarked passive to set the framework for my analysis.

Passive is (according to Trask 1993: 201): “a construction in which an intrinsically transitive verb is construed in such a way that its underlying object appears as its surface...
subject, its underlying subject being either absent (a ‘short’ passive) or expressed as an oblique NP (a ‘long’ passive, or ‘passive with agent’), the construction being overtly marked in some way to show its passive character.” These are the features of the construction as listed by Dixon and Aikhenvald (1997: 73): a) it applies to an underlying transitive clause and forms a derived intransitive; b) the underlying O becomes the S of the Patient; c) the underlying A goes into a peripheral function; it can be omitted.

Accepting this characterization implies accepting that: 1) we can define an “intrinsically transitive verb”, that is that we can establish transitivity as a lexical property;

In my analysis I will rely on the following 3 conditions for the unmarked passive construction:

1) decrease in transitivity (the verb must be transitive and there must be evidence of detransitivization: object deletion without anaphoric repetition)
2) patient promotion (there must be a preverbal patient NP)
3) agent demotion (there must be no preverbal agent NP)

39 Dixon and Aikhenvald add a fourth criterion: d) there is some form of explicit formal marking of a passive construction (generally, by a verbal affix or by a periphrastic verbal construction). If we assume a mode such as Construction Grammar in which meaning can reside in a syntactic configuration, we don’t need to postulate an explicit marking for the putative passive construction.

40 Agent Demotion is the primary pragmatic function of the Passive according to Shibatani (1985: 837)
Chapter 2  Lexical Properties Approach

2.1 Ambitransitive and Ergative verbs in Classical Chinese

There have been attempts\(^{41}\) to explain the seemingly passive features of so-called patient-subject sentences as deriving from the properties of ergative verbs (i.e. verbs that alternate between transitive and intransitive forms like break in English).\(^{42}\) In Modern Mandarin, “certain verbs, which are not to be confused with transitive verbs whose direct object are implied, may function either as transitive verbs or intransitive verbs”\(^{43}\), like xiao 笑 in the sentences:

A. 别 笑
   don’t laugh
B. 别 笑 我
   don’t laugh at me.

In Ancient Chinese we have many instances of such pairs of verbs distinguished by the so-called sisheng bie yi 四聲別義 (derivation by tone change) and qing zhuo bie yi 清濁別義 (derivation by voicing of the initial). A typical example is the verb bai 败, who has both the meaning of “to win” (dabai 打敗) and “to lose” (shibai 失敗), with a duplicity of meaning still preserved in contemporary Mandarin). The resulting pattern is like the ergative, with the subject of the intransitive verb corresponding to the object of the transitive one. So, if the state of Qi 齊 defeats the state of Lu 魯, (齊敗魯), then the state of Lu 魯 is defeated (魯敗). Beyond these cases, there are other instances of verbs having two distinct but related meanings, one with one meaning, and the other with the reverse one, like the contemporary Mandarin verbs jie 借 (borrow/lend), huo 貨 (buy/sell), zu 租 (rent/hire), and lin 賃 (be hired/rent, give for hiring).\(^{44}\).

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\(^{41}\) Most recently by Onishi 2004.
\(^{42}\) See Cheng 1988:88
\(^{43}\) Li and Thompson 1981:158
\(^{44}\) See Lu Shuxiang 1987 and Sun 1993
The term “ergative” is widely used in the literature, but it is sometimes ambiguous, as it refers both to the grammatical pattern in which subjects of intransitive verbs and direct object of transitive verbs are treated identically for grammatical purposes as well as to the verbs displaying this alternation, and it doesn’t always allow to distinguish clearly between the transitive and the intransitive use of the same verb. When more clarity is needed, I will make use of the term of inchoativelcausative verb pair, denoting “a pair of verbs which express the same basic situation (generally a change of state, more rarely a going-on) and differ only in that the causative verb meaning includes an agent participant who causes the situation, whereas the inchoative verb meaning excludes a causing agent and presents the situation as occurring spontaneously”\(^{45}\). The English verb “break” is inchoative in “the stick broke” and causative in “the girl broke the stick”, the verb bai is inchoative in “Lu bai 魂敗” and causative in “Qi bai Lu 齊敗魯”.

This kind of alternations is cross-linguistically widespread. While “languages differ in their ways of expressing the relationship between inchoative and causative verbs with a common lexical meaning, the variation we find is not random.” In the study from which I’ve been quoting, Martin Haspelmath has tested a sample of 31 alternations in 21 languages and found many semantic and functional similarities. I will refer to this sample and its relationship with the Chinese case in the final section of my dissertation, as a path for the future development of my research.

Ergatives and passives are related. “The inchoative member of an inchoativelcausative pair is semantically similar to the passive of the causative (the stick was broken), but it crucially differs from it in that the agent is not just unexpressed; rather, the situation is conceived of as occurring without an agent, spontaneously”\(^{46}\). Given this semantic similarity, there have been attempts, by Cikoski thirty years ago\(^{47}\) and most recently by Onishi (2004), to connect unmarked passives to ergative verbs (namely, verbs displaying inchoative/causative alternations). But such attempts are not able to provide an independent and sound definition to distinguish between ergative verbs and other verbs, and are not able to explain the fact that patient-subject sentences are not limited to a

\(^{42}\) Haspelmath 1993: 90
\(^{46}\) Haspelmath 1993: 90
\(^{47}\) I couldn’t have access to Cikoski’s papers. For a discussion of them as well as for the bibliographical data, see Onishi 2004
limited set of verbs. In my database, as I will discuss in detail, unmarked passives occur with 24 different verbs: 成 cheng (to complete), 行 xing (to carry into practice), 塞 sai (to obstruct), 炎 shi (to kill), etc. The rest of this chapter will be dedicated to prove that putative passive is a regular phenomenon applicable to any verb.

As morphological derivation provide us with the clearest case of inchoative/ergative alternations, as well as with active/passive alternations, I will now proceed to analyze the patterns of word formation in LZC.

2.2 Patterns of Word Formation in Classical Chinese

There are three patterns of word formation in LZC which are responsible for the derivation of verbs from verbs, with 1) increase in transitivity (causativization) as in: to eat (shi 食) -> to feed (si 餵); 2) decrease in transitivity (passivization, or anticausativization) as in: to break (zhe 折) -> to be broken (she 折); 3) change in verb direction (from endodirectional verbs [like buy 買 mres?] to exodirectional verbs [like sell 賣 mres]48).

2.2.1. Causativization (prefix *s-)

The first two root verbs are intransitive:

shun (*djens) 順 “obedient” (V1) / xun (*sdjen) 順 “to tame” (V2)
e(*ngwar) 笑 “to move” (V1) /hua (*sngwrars) 化 “to cause to move, to transform” (V2)50

the second two are transitive:

shi (*djek) 食 “to eat” (V2) / si (*sdjeks) 餵 “to feed” (V2)

mie (*mjiat) 滅 “to destroy”(V2) / mie (*smjiat) 廢 “to cause someone to be destroyed” (V2)51

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48 From LaPolla 2003: 25, using Baxter’s transcription
49 See Mei 1989. Schluesser 1985 has interpreted the derivation by tone change with the suffix *-s as a marker of inversion. He has taken the term from De Lancey 1981a. Mei 1989:47 has elaborated on this interpretation and stated that the *-s suffix manifests itself as either passive, or ergative, or middle voice; what these manifestations have in common is that attention flow is not directed but inverted
50 The examples and the OC reconstruction are from Mei 1989:35
Couples with zero derivation

WlJ xue (*sljewk) “to become weak” (V1)(inchoative) / “to make weak” (V2) (causative)

2.2.2. Anticausativization (prefix *N-)

This process is also known with the traditional term of qing zhuo bie yi 清濁別義 , (derivation by voicing of the initial)

敗 bai (*prats) “to defeat” (V2) / bai (*hprats>*brats) “to be defeated” (V1)

屬 zhu (*tjok)“to attach,connect”(V2)/屬 shu(*N-tjok) “be joined to, attached to” (V1)

壞 huai (*krus) “to destroy, to ruin” (V2) / (*N-krous>*grujs) “to be ruined” (V1)

折 zhe (*tjet) “to cut off, break off” (V2) / she (*N-tjet) “to be broken” (V1)

見 jian (*kens) “to see” (V2) / 現 xian (*N-kens>*gens) “to appear” (V1)

付 fu (*pjos) “to hand over, give” (V2) / 付 fu (*N-pjos) “to be attached” (V1)

2.2.3. Change in verb directionality (suffix *-s)

This process is also known with the traditional term of sisheng bie yi 四聲別義 , (derivation by tone change)

The functions of the *-s suffix are quite complex; it generally has a nominalizing function, where the derived noun is the patient of the action represented by the verb, but it also has functions connected with “inversion” as we have discussed before.

A) It may have a function of increase in transitivity, deriving transitive verbs form adjectives (a) and intransitive verbs (b), as well as causatives from transitive verbs (c):

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51 The difference between *mjiat and *smjiat is a difference between direct action and indirect causation

52 Following Baxter and Sagart, the alternation between voiced and unvoiced initials is reconstructed as provoked by an *N- prefix (N is a nasal of some kind, reconstructed from Chinese loanwords in Yao). (Baxter and Sagart don’t limit themselves to Early Zhou materials): *N- voicing prefix (pp.45-46, examples 15-23) (see also Pulleyblank 2000: 31- a detransitivizing prefix)

53 Following Baxter and Sagart, the derivation by tone change (which produces in Middle Chinese alternations between forms in qusheng and forms in other tones) is reconstructed as provoked by an *-s suffix. See Baxter and Sagart 1998: 55-59, as well as Downer 1959, Schussler 1985 and Mei 1980. See also Jiang Shaoyu’s list in his recent article on “Intransitives, transitives and causatives” Yuyanxue longcong 23 (2001): 46-7
(a)

好 hao (*xu?) “good” (V1)/ hao (*xu(?)-s) “to love” (V2)
恶 e (*?ak) “bad, evil” (V1)/ wu (*?ak-s) “to hate” (V2)
远 yuan (*wjan?) “distant”/ yuan (*wjan(?)-s) “keep one’s distance from” (V2)
近 jin (*giir?) “near” (V1)/ jin (*giir(?)-s) “approach” (V2)

(b)

语 yu (*n(r)ja?) “speak” (V1)/ yu (*n(r)ja(?)-s) “speak to, address” (V2)
雨 yu (*w(r)ja?) “to rain” (V1)/ yu (*w(r)ja(?)-s) “to rain ‘something’” (V2)

(c)

饮 yin (*?(r)jum?) “to drink” (V2)/ yin (*?(r)jum(?)-s) “to give to drink”

B) Bidirectional verbs (with preservation of transitivity)

Beyond these cases, there are other instances of verbs having two distinct but related meanings, one with one meaning, and the other with the reverse one. Just like we still have the contemporary Mandarin verbs jie 借 (borrow/lend), huo 贷 (buy/sell), zu 租 (rent/hire), and lin 赁 (be hired/rent, give for hiring), there are couples of verbs, in LZC, distinguished only for the opposite verb directionality.

Couples of endodirectional (內向動詞) and verbs exodirectional (外向動詞)

the following verbs follow Mei Tsulin’s reconstruction

貿 mai (*mrigx) “buy” /貿 mai (*mrigx) “sell”
聞 wen (*mjen) “listen” /問 wen (*mjenh) “ask”
赊 she (*hriag) “buy” /賃 she (*hriadh) “sell”
貸 te (*thek) “borrow” /貸 dai (*thegh) “lend”
學 xue (*grekw) “study” /學 xue (*gregwh) “learn”

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54 Schuessler proposes a different reconstruction, attributing to *-s both inversion in attention flow and decrease in transitivity (see Schuessler 1985:349 and ff.). Schuessler is investigating the earlier layer of qusheng couples, from early Zhou Chinese, Shujing and Shijing. His attempt to unify the variety of the phenomena connected with the derivation by qusheng to just one function (inversion of attention flow) is not completely convincing, nor theoretically necessary, as many different functions can indeed coexist.


56 Mei 1980: 328-329. In the column here under, the verb on the left is endodirectional, the verb on the right exodirectional. Mei’s final -h corresponds to Baxter’s -*s.
the following verbs follow Baxter and Sagart's reconstruction\textsuperscript{57}:

受 /授 shou (\text{*dju?}) “receive” /授 shou (\text{*dju?}-s) “give”

假 jie (\text{*tsjAk}) “borrow” /假 jie (\text{*tsjAk-s}) “lend”

some verbs present the same alternations without morphological markings\textsuperscript{58}:

丐 gai “to take” / “to give”

貢 jia “to buy” / “to sell”

沽酤 gu “to buy (wine)” / “to sell (wine)”

Actually, Baxter and Sagart consider the verbs we have described as bidirectional as just being pairs of transitive and ditransitives (causative). In their analysis the pair of verbs 受 shou (\text{*dju?}) give /授 shou (\text{*dju?-s}) receive is just like 喝 /喝 yin (\text{*?(r)jum?}) drink and 喝 yin (\text{*?(r)jum?-s}) to give to drink. We have preferred to treat these verbs differently, following Zhou Fagao (1962: 19) and Mei Tsulin (1980: 328-330), for two reasons. One is that these verbs form a homogenous semantic set around the ideas of giving and receiving (things, information, money). The phenomenon is not peculiar to Chinese\textsuperscript{59}. In English we have consult - ask for advice, give advice, dust - add fine particles, remove fine particles, rent - buy use of, sell use of, wear - endure through use, decay through use, and in Italian affittare (=rent in both meanings), imparare (to learn and, in popular Italian, also to teach), ospite (both host and guest).

The other reason is that these verbs can be analyzed as involving two animated participants (A and B) and an unanimated (or abstract) entity (X) that the two participants exchange, so that if A receives X from B (A 受 X yu B), then B gives X授 to A, and vice versa. A typical causative is instead a verb with two participants such that

\textsuperscript{57} Baxter and Sagart 1998: 58-59

\textsuperscript{58} See Sun 1993: 387 and Jiang 1989: 150-152

\textsuperscript{59} See the discussion in LinguistList on “words that are their own opposite”, retrievable at http://linguistlist.org/issues/6/6-74.html#1, as well as Basile 1997 and 1999.
if A V B, then B V (for example, if A makes B drinking (A 飲 B), then B drinks (B 飲), or if A defeats B (A 敗 B), then B is defeated (B 敗).

Focusing on the reciprocity of the action seems to capture something more significant about these verbs than focusing on the causation of the action, even though this reciprocity is not symmetrical but hierarchical, the giver having naturally more control on the action than the receiver.

2.2.4 Productivity of these morphological processes
To what extent were these morphological processes productive?
Certain patterns, like the following, make us think that some cases of lexical derivation not shown by the characters and not reconstructed through historical phonology must have been in operation:

21. 齊人伐衛, 衛人及齊人戰 (經) [...]  
Qi attacked Wei, Wei and Qi engaged a fight  
《春秋》伐者為客，伐者為主，故使衛主之也。(傳)  
In the Chunqiu, the one who invades is the guest (=comes second), the one whose country is invaded is the host (=comes first), that’s why (the author) puts Wei first.

(春秋公羊傳, 莊公, 二十有八年, 一)  
According to the Han commentator He Xiu (何休) (129-82) the first fa 伐 must be read long (讀伐長言之), the second fa 伐 short (讀伐短言之). The Qing scholar Kong Guangsen (孔廣森) (1752-1786) interprets accordingly the first as a qusheng (去聲), the second as a rusheng (入聲), with the rusheng representing the active voice (=attacking), the qusheng the passive voice (being attacked)60. We don’t know if He Xiu was stating an

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60 See the 上海古籍出版社 edition of 春秋公羊傳, p. 158 note 4. Onishi (2004: 391) disagrees with the correlation between length and tonal value proposed by Kong.
hypothesis or referring on Han language usage, though. The general consensus is that these phenomena were no more productive, mere remnants of a preceding stage.

2.3 How to establish verb transitivity in my Database

We have given above 3 conditions for the unmarked passive construction:
1) decrease in transitivity
2) patient promotion (object topicalization)
3) agent demotion (absence of a preverbal subject)

To satisfy our point 1, we need to check the transitivity of the verb to understand if the sentence under scrutiny shows detransitivization or not. So, we first have to establish if the verbs in our database are transitive or not. If the verb is an ambitransitive, we have to check if it is used in its transitive or in its intransitive meaning.

In Classical Chinese, just like in English, it is impossible to make a sharp distinction between the two classes of transitive and intransitive, and “we should rather speak of a transitive and an intransitive usage of verbs, for many verbs which are generally transitive, i.e. take an object (or two objects), are very often used without any object, and other verbs, which are as a rule intransitive, may at times be connected with an object.” (Jespersen 1909-49: Part iii: 319).

Many classifications of Classical Chinese verbs have been proposed. Pulleyblank (1995:23) proposes to distinguish between passives, active transitive, intransitive and

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61 Wei Peiquan says that now we need to rely on the context to interpret these sentences, while perhaps in spoken Ancient Chinese there were phonetic devices to mark the passive voice, devices like the already examined derivation by tone change or by devoicing of the initial consonant.

62 A similar phenomena has been investigated by Matisoff in his 1976 article on Lahu causative constructions. He present a dozen pairs of verbs where the semantic feature of transitivity or causativity is signaled morphologically (instead of syntactically, like usual in Lahu), principally by tonal changes from the simplex verb, but sometimes also by a devoicing of the initial consonant. These morphological causatives are a mere remnant in Lahu, a language that has shown a steady development towards a more and more analytical structure, hand in hand with phonological changes that have led to a simplification of the consonant combinations at the beginning and end of the syllable (Matisoff 1976: 419).
adjectives on the basis of their behavior with the verbal auxiliary ke 可. I will follow Yivchenko’s subdivision into four categories (1998: 60):
A) Verbs displaying no oscillation in transitivity:
   1) Strong transitive.
   2) Strong intransitive.
B) Labile, or ambitransitive, which can be divided into two classes:
   3) Ergatives (or unaccusatives): they are transitives that can be freely used as intransitives, and the intransitive subject (S) is identical with the transitive object (O) (S=O) (like zhī/chi 治, bǎi/bái 敗)
   4) Absolute transitives: they can optionally appear without an overt direct object, and the intransitive subject (S) is identical with the transitive subject (A) (S=A) (like yù 御, gǔ 鼓, yǔ 雨, qǐ 泣).

This classification is given here as a reference. Even though there have been attempts (eminently by Liu Chenghui) at providing a corpus based definition of transitivity in LZC, we are still at a tentative stage. To analyze my data, I need first to establish if the verbs in our database are transitive or not. If they consistently appear in Mengzi without a direct object, I consider them intransitive, and if they consistently appear followed by a direct object, I consider them transitives. If the pattern is not consistent, I need to find out if the verbs is an absolute transitive, an ergative, or a normal transitive whose object is (for discourse or syntactic reason) omitted.

The most difficult task is to distinguish between accusative and passive usage of a verb as causativization of intransitives, where we have promotion to subject of the object of the

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63 Only transitive verbs may follow ke 可 directly, in which case they must be understood as passive. A transitive verb in an active sense, or an intransitive verb requires keyi 可以. Like nouns, adjectives require the copula verb wei 是 after keyi 可以.
64 I have relabelled Yivchenko’s Mandarin categories, making use of Dixon’s categories. In Dixon’s terminology, S is the Subject of an Intransitive Clause, A the subject of the Transitive Clause and O the Object of the Transitive clause. Ambitransitive verbs may be used either with an object (transitively) or without an object (intransitively). They divide into two classes according as the intransitive subject is identical with the transitive subject (S=A) or with the transitive object (S=O). See Dixon 1991: 286-287
65 See Li 2002: 207
66 Repertories like the index and lexicon of Mengzi (<<十三經辭典>> 編纂委員會 (2002), Shi san jing ci dian. Mengzi juan 十三經辭典. 孟子卷.) and the glossary in appendix to Yang Bojun’s annotated edition of Mengzi provide a guidance in the process.
causatives 齊剖 刊-》 判 (A 殺 B/B 殺) and passivization of transitives, where we have promotion to subject of the logical object of a passive sentence 終剖 比千-》 比千剖 (A 殺 B/B 殺)- are antisymmetrical but they look alike at the surface. In fact, in certain cases where transitivization and detransitivization behave very similarly, like in lexical derivation by tone change and voicing of the initial, or in cases of VV and V 而 V compounds (see Feng 2002). But in analyzing our data, the symmetry between causative and passive construction is misleading: verbs alternate inchoative and causative use without condition, the only regularity being the semantic class of the verbs involved (see Li 1983 and Van Valin); for passivization, instead, there is no semantic constraint but there are clear syntactic constraints in around 2/3 of the data, as I will discuss in chapter 3. Notwithstanding this similarity, I will show below in the chapter that I am able to distinguish causatives and passives in my database.

Below I will discuss all the sentences in my database where the unmarked passive interpretation is dependant on the lexical features of the verb, in terms of semantic features (verbs with adverse meaning) and in terms of lexically encoded transitivity properties (ergative verbs, that is verbs displaying an inchoative-causative alternation).

2.4 Adverse Meaning

2.4.1 Classical Chinese Passive and Adverse Meaning

It is commonly noted that Modern Mandarin bei 被 passive is used essentially to express an adverse situation (Li & Thompson 1981: 493-500 and Chao 1968: 703). A similar association with adverse meaning is also attributed in the literature to the unmarked passive, the standard example of the construction being the following:

22. 昔者龍逢斬，比干剖，苑弘牖，子胥靡，故四子之賢，而身不免於戮。

 Formerly, Lung-fang was beheaded; Pi-kan had his heart torn out; Khang Hung was ripped open; and Dze-hsü was reduced to pulp (in the Kiang). Worthy as those four men were, they did not escape such dreadful deaths.

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67 See Dixon 1991 for minor counterexamples
Certain analysis of unmarked passive actually restrict the concept just to cover sentences containing verbs of adverse meaning. Li 2002: 202, for example, limit this class to the patient subject sentences occurring with the verbs like: sha 殺 to kill, lu 戮 to kill, zhan 斬 to cut off, to execute, wei 囲 to encircle. The analogy with the modern bei 被 construction might be misleading though, as we don’t find a rigorous criterion to separate adverse meaning from other kinds of meaning. Wang Li in his Hanyu Shigao 漢語史稿 (1958: 430) give some preliminary statistical data to support the view that bei 被 passives have an adverse meaning. A more recent study on the topic, though, Cui 2002’s article on The emotional coloring of Passive voice in Tang and Song Dynasties, shows that even for bei 被 passives adverse meanings are far from representing the totality of the data, even though they are indeed prominent quantitatively.68

I will now proceed to examine here all the sentences in my list showing adverse meaning, dividing them into two groups:

2.4.1) Sentences with verbs having an unambiguously adverse meaning.

2.4.2) Sentences whose general meaning is adverse to the subject, even though the verb in itself is not necessarily unambiguously denoting adverse situations.

Sentences in my list are labeled with the letter A and the number under which they are listed in Appendix 1 (An exhaustive list of putative passive sentences).

2.4.2 Sentences with verbs having adverse meaning

There are 4 unambiguously adverse verbs: shi 賦 to kill and xiao 削 to weaken, yiyi 遺佚 to discard and not employ, zui 罪 to punish.

A4) 暴其民甚，則身解國亡；不甚，則身危國削。7.2

A ruler who carries the oppression of his people to the highest pitch, will himself be slain, and his kingdom will perish. If one stop short of the highest pitch, his life will notwithstanding be in danger, and his kingdom will be weakened.

68 For data from Shiji, see He 1985: 202-203
Here the verb *shi* 試 to kill is unambiguously adverse. So is the verb *xiao* 削 to weaken.

A11)  遺佚 而不怨,  陨窮 而不憚 (3.9)

*When neglected and left without office, he did not murmur.*
*When straitened by poverty, he did not grieve.*

The verb *Yiyi* 遺佚 to discard and not employ is clearly adverse.

A23)  舜流共工于幽州，放駭兜于崇山，殺三苗于三危，殛鲧於羽山：四罪而天下咸服。（9.3)

*Shun banished the superintendent of works to Youzhou, he sent away Huandou to the mountain Chong, he slew the prince of Sanmiao in Sanwei and he imprisoned Gun on the mountain Yu. When the crimes of those four were thus punished, the whole kingdom acquiesced.*

The verb *Zui* 罪 to punish is clearly adverse.

2.4.3 Sentences whose overall meaning is adverse

A9) 使己為政，不用則亦已矣 (4.10)

*He pushed himself into the service of government. He was not employed, and he had to retire indeed*

A10)  司寇，不用 (12.6)

*When Confucius was chief minister of Justice in Lü, his counsels were not to followed.*

The verb *yong* 用 to employ is not an adverse one. The situation of not being employed is clearly quite adverse, though. In both sentences Legge’s translation supplies an agent (the prince) which is inferred from the context, but not actually present in the context. The
patient is instead in the context, either in the preceding clause (Confucius) in sentence 10) or two clauses before (Bai Lixi) in sentence 9).

A19) 夙民者不容於堯、舜之世 (12.8)

A destroyer of the people would not have been tolerated in the times of Yao and Shun.

The verb rong 容 to tolerate is not an adverse verb. The consequences of not being tolerated by Yao and Shun have an adverse implication, though.

A20) 罪不容於死 (7.14)

Death is not enough for such a crime.

The verb rong 容 to contain is not an adverse verb. The subject of the verb is not animate, it is actually an abstract noun, zui 罪 sin. The sentence might be considered anyway describing an adverse situation, one in which something unfortunate has happened (to follow Li and Thompson’s definition).

A25) 無說詭言，充塞仁義也。仁義充塞，則率獸食人 (6.9)

Then those perverse speakings will delude the people, and stop up the path of benevolence and righteousness. When benevolence and righteousness are stopped up, beasts will be led on to devour men

The verb chongsai 充塞 stop up is not inherently adverse and the subject is an abstract noun (renyi 仁義, benevolence and righteousness). Like the preceding sentence, this one describes an adverse situation, one in which something unfortunate has happened.

2.4.4 Conclusions on Passive and adverse meaning

Even if we accept as adverse all the sentences under discussion here, which is debatable for some of the ones in group b), we get 8 sentences with adverse meaning out of 29 in
my database. Turning from sentences to lexical item, the ratio of adverse verbs (4 over 24 over 34 if we count the tokens) is not very impressive.
There is indeed a connection between unmarked passive and adversity, but the presumption to limit unmarked passives to sentences used to express an adverse situation is not verified.

2.5 Ergative verbs

I will discuss here 5 simple verbs (ding 定, zheng 正, ping 平, chi 治, yuan 遠) presenting inchoative-causative alternations, as well as 5 other verbs (xiao 削 weaken, chong 充 to fill, sai 塞 to stop up, cheng 成 to complete and xing 行 to carry into practice) whose status is more problematic.
We can divide ergative verbs into two groups:
A) Ambitransitive ergatives (ding 定, zheng 正, ping 平).
B) Ergatives (unaccusatives) by word formation (chi 治, yuan 遠).

2.5.1 Ambitransitive ergatives

The verb ding 定 has both an intransitive sense, meaning stable, settled, and a transitive sense, meaning to settle. The intransitive sense is the basic one.
In the following examples:
23. 天下惡乎定？
   How can the kingdom be settled?
   (孟子 1.6)
24. 一正君而國定矣
   Once rectify the ruler, and the kingdom will be firmly settled.
   (孟子 7.20)
the verb is intransitive.
In the following example, instead, the verb is transitive:
25. 中天下而立，定四海之民
   To stand in the centre of the kingdom, and tranquillize the people within the four seas.
The above cited example is an instance of causative usage. Causative usage of intransitive verb is a productive mechanism. Certain intransitive verbs, though, have a more frequent and somehow specialized pattern of usage in their transitive sense. The verb *ding* 定 is often used transitively with the meaning: "to arrange, to regulate", like in the two following examples:

A5) 曰：「舍館 末定。」 (7.24)

*My lodging-house was not arranged.*

A28) 經界 既正，分田制祿，可坐而定也。 (5.3)

*When the boundaries have been defined correctly, the division of the fields and the regulation of allowances may be determined by you, sitting at your ease.*

It is not easy to draw the line between the intransitive and the transitive sense in these examples. By listing all them here together, I’m separating them from “pure” transitives. My rationale to consider them under the class of unmarked passive is based on two reasons. These verbs, as intransitives, are statives. In my examples, they refer to the result of an action (經界 既正…可坐而定) or to an action which is (or is not) accomplished (舍館 末定). Moreover, inchoatives describe spontaneous actions, actions which do not require an agent to occur (like in English: *the boat sinks*) or actions conceptualized in way that the intervention of agent may occur, but is not relevant (*the door opens*). In the examples already discussed in the others I’m going to review, though, an agent, though not expressed, is implied, insofar as the action is not a spontaneous one (the arranging of a lodging house, the regulation of allowances).

In example A28 there is another inchoative verb: *zheng* 正 *rectify, define correctly*. The verb *zheng* 正 is similar to the verb *ding* 定 in having a primary intransitive sense: *to be correct* and instances of a transitive causative usage:

26. 不能正五音

*(the music-master Kuàng) could not determine correctly the five notes.*

(孟子 7.1)

27. 有大人者，正己而物正者也

*There are those who are great men. They rectify themselves and others are rectified.*
In judging of inchoative verbs having instances of causative usages, there are two parameters to consider. One is the ratio of causative instances. The other is the degree of semantic specialization. If there is both a high ratio of causative vs. inchoative usage and the development of a somehow specialized meaning for the causative, the causative can be considered an independent item. For the ratio of causative instances, *zheng 正* is comparable to *ding 定*. The degree of semantic specialization is more elusive. For this I’m relying on the experience and intuition of Shao Yonghai, who has dedicated a study to the topic, and I follow him in his judgment that compared with the range of usage of *ding 定*, the verb *zheng 正* seems not to have developed a more specialized transitive meaning, but to be always satisfactorily paraphrasable as: “cause to be straight”.69

The verb *ping 平*, too, has a primary intransitive sense (*to be even, peaceful*) and a causative usage (*to bring to order, to pacify*).

In the following example, the meaning is resultative:

A7) 當堯之時，天下猶未平 (5.4)

*In the time of Yao, when the world had not yet been perfectly reduced to order.*

In this case, we take the passivized counterpart of its transitive (causative) sense as in this other passage from Mengzi:

28. 不以仁政，不能平治天下

* (The principles of Yao and Shun) without a benevolent government, could not secure the tranquil order of the kingdom.*

(孟子 7.1)

In Schuessler’s Dictionary of Early Zhou Chinese, the first three meanings of *ping 平* are listed as follows:

a) Intransitive:

29. 東原底平

*The Dong Yuan plain was leveled* (*底 = 致 = cause to*)

(尚書·禹貢)

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69 See Shao 1996: 186-7
b) Causative:
30. 汝平水土
You shall (make even) regulate water and land
(尚書·舜典)

c) Intransitive of causative= passive:
31. 喪亂既平
When death and disorder have been settled.
(小雅, 常棣)

Schuessler’s category of “Intransitive of causative= passive” captures just what we are analyzing here: the causative is an independent lexical item and it is passivized.

2.5.2 Ergatives by word formation

The verb zhi 治 is often used together with the aforementioned verb ping 平, as we have seen in one example from Mengzi. What is different is that the verb not only displays an intransitive and a transitive reading, but also two different phonetic realizations. The transitive meaning “to govern, to rule” is now pronounced chi, and it is the lexicalized derivate of the intransitive inchoative zhi 治 to be well ruled. We don’t have any doubt, so, that here we have two lexical items. This is the case when we consider the two lexical entries in dictionary, though, but what about the real cases? Which one of the two items is present in the text? In a few cases where intransitive and transitive meanings of Chinese verbs are differentiated in tone (and pronunciation), the traditional classical reading can be quoted in support of the transitive meaning of the verb, as in the following example from our database:

A29) 居下位而不獲於上，民不可得而治也. (7.12)

When those occupying inferior situations do not obtain the confidence of the sovereign, they cannot succeed in governing the people.

According to Simon (1951:50): “In the Chinese text reprinted in Legge’s Chinese Classics (Vol. II, p. 178) zhi 治 bears the mark of the level tone (pingsheng, “to govern”) not that of the falling tone (qusheng, “to be well governed”). This textual tradition

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70 I have modified Simon’s Romanization adopting pinyin
cannot be disregarded, but it cannot be considered the ultimate authority in establishing
transitivity features. Moreover, this authority is silent in other cases, like this other
example from our database:

A8) 治人不治反其智. (7.4)

*If he is trying to rule others, and (they) are not (well) ruled, let him turn
inwards and examine his wisdom.*

Is the 治 above an intransitive zhi or a transitive chi? Namely: is the meaning of 不治 in
this sentence closer to transitive luan 乱 (the government is in a state of disorder) or to
the transitive “the others don’t accept his rule”?

In the first interpretation, the meaning of 治 in our example 7) is intransitive as in the
following sentence from Mengzi:

32. 四境之内不治，则如之何？

*If within the four borders of your kingdom there is not good government, what is to
be done?* *(孟子 2.6)*

The second interpretation instead emphasizes the result and plays down the spontaneity
of the action described by the verb. I accept the second interpretation.

The verb yuan 遠 is similar to the verb chi/zhi 治, insofar as its transitive meaning, to
remove, is morphologically derived (by tone change) from its intransitive counterpart, the
adjective yuan 遠 to be far.

A24) 水由地中行，江、淮、河、漢是也。險阻既遠，鳥獸之害人者消。

(6.9)

*The waters pursued their course through the country, even the waters of the Jiang,
the Huai, the He, and the Han, and the dangers and obstructions were removed,
the birds and beast which have injured the people also disappeared.*

The verb could be interpreted both as an intransitive or the passive of the causative, to
use Schuessler’s terminology. Given the presence of the perfective particle ji 既, which is
often associated with unmarked passives, as I will discuss later, I take the sentence as an
unmarked passive.
2.6 Transitive verbs mistaken for causatives

I will consider here verbs which some authors consider (Yang Bojun, Li Zuofeng) consider inchoative with causative alternations, but that I will try to prove should just be considered strong transitive.

The first verb I will consider in this section is the verb xiao 削. Yang Bojun, in the dictionary in appendix to his authoritative commentary on Mengzi, gives two meanings for xiao 削, an intransitive (xiaoruo 削弱 = “to become weak”) and a transitive (jiannao 消減 = “to weaken”). Western dictionaries like Schuessler or the recent Grand Ricci, though, just provide one meaning, the transitive one (“scrape, destroy” in Schuessler, “peler, affaiblr, diviser” in the Grand Ricci).

I believe the Western Dictionaries entries to account better for this verb’s usage in Mengzi. I want to discuss the verb in detail here, though, because the reasons implicit in Yang Bojun’s categorization of the verb as an intransitive are a very important source of difficulty in establishing verb transitivity in LZe.

Yang Bojun lists one transitive meaning of xiao 削:

33. 一不朝，則貶其爵；再不朝，則削其地

If a prince once omitted his attendance at court, he was punished by degradation of rank; if he did so a second time, he was deprived of a portion of his territory

(孟子 12.7)

The verb is clearly transitive, being followed by an object. There being no inchoative stative verb of which xiao 削 would be the causative counterpart, the transitivity of the item is not under discussion.

What about the intransitive meanings?

Here are the other three occurrences of xiao 削 in Mengzi.

A4) 「暴其民甚，則身弑國亡；不甚，則身危國削。名之曰『幽厲』。」(7.2)

A ruler who carries the oppression of his people to the highest pitch, will himself be slain, and his kingdom will perish. If one stop short of the highest pitch, his life will notwithstanding be in danger, and his kingdom will be weakened. He will be styled The Dark, or The Cruel.
34. 鲁之削也滋甚

the dismemberment of Lu then increased exceedingly

(孟子 12.6)

35. 不用賢則亡，削何可得與！

Ruin is the consequence of not employing men of virtue and talents; how can it rest with dismemberment merely?

(孟子 12.6)

Example 35 is an instance of unmarked nominalization (削=dismemberment), and establishing transitivity is not possible here. Example 34 is an instance of marked nominalization (N V). 鲁之削=the dismemberment of Lu can be interpreted with Lu being the subject or the object of the verb xiao 削. Yang Bojun and Shao Yonghai (1996:184) interpret it as the subject of an intransitive verb, while the other interpretation is given by Zhao Qi (d. 201) in his commentary: “鲁之見削奪亡其土地著多” (Lu has been dismembered and many countries robbed its land).

Finally, Mengzi 7.6 is in our analysis an unmarked passive 身危國削 (his life will notwithstanding be in danger, and his kingdom will be weakened). The ground to analyze this example as an unmarked passive is just based on the lack of evidence for an intransitive reading: as the verb xiao 削 is transitive in Mengzi, the subject (國) is a patient, the logical object of the transitive verb. In xiao 削’s case, we have found the apparent intransitives meanings of the verb were analyzable as unmarked passives or as being conditioned by nominalization. There are other verbs which behave in a similar way, but under different syntactic contexts.

Li Zuofeng in his books on the lexicon of Classical Chinese, Wenyan shici 文言實詞 (1994: 117-8), discusses four examples of verbs recurring in our database which he categorizes as ergatives, while we deem them to be transitives. Li’s modus operandi is to give two examples for every verb, possibly with the same word occurring as direct object in the transitive use and as subject in the intransitive use. We will now discuss Li Zuofeng’s examples.
The first two verbs are *chong* 充: “be full”/ “to fill” and *sai* 塞 “to block”. They are not present separately in my database, but as a VV compound, *chongsai* 充塞 (*stop up*). If both *chong* 充 and *sai* 塞 would be ergatives, as Li claims, the VV compound would also be ergative and couldn’t be considered a passive, or at least it would fall in the same category as the above discussed *ding* 定, *ping* 平, *zhi* 治, *yuan* 遠. But if just one verb is ergative and the other is transitive, as I will show here under, the compound can act transitively, as discussed in Feng 2002: 195.

Here are Li’s examples for *chong* 充:

36. 而君之食廪實，府庫充

*Your granaries, O prince, have been stored with grain, and your treasuries and arsenals have been full*

(孟子 2.12)

Here *chong* 充 is intransitive.

37. 我能為君辟土地，充府庫

*We can for our sovereign enlarge the limits of the cultivated ground, and fill his treasuries and arsenals.*

(孟子 12.9)

Here *chong* 充 is transitive. The primary meaning given for *chong* 充 in the authoritative 王力古漢語字典 is *sai* 塞, with two examples from the *Shijing*. Then is listed a derived meaning *man* 滿, with our passage from Mengzi 2.12 as an example. Yang Bojun’s glossary on Mengzi instead doesn’t distinguish between the transitive and the intransitive usage, glossing both our examples with verbs which are ambitransitives in Mandarin too, 充滿 and 充實.

Here are Li’s examples for *sai* 塞:

38. 門戶塞，大迷惑

*When doors and gates are barred, going astray through delusion is magnified.*

荀子，成相篇第二十五

39. 蒙掩耳目，塞門戶

*He has covered his eyes, shut his ears, and barred his doors and gates*
The transitivity of *sai* is more clearly attested in the dictionaries. The *Liu* reads *dusai* as the primary meaning and *chongman* (full/fill) as the derived meaning. Both Legge’s and Yang Bojun’s glossaries on Mengzi just give the transitive meaning, *to block, to fill up*. We also have to note that the two examples from Xunzi come from the same passage and are consecutive:

40. 蒙撰耳目，塞門戶，門戶塞，大迷惑.

The fact that the intransitive usage of the verb follows immediately the transitive one, using the direct object of the preceding verb as its subject, is a feature of parallelism that we will discuss later, while analyzing the discourse factors influencing the unmarked passive construction. Another factor to be aware of is the fact that this section of Xunzi, *Chengxiang* 成相, is actually a poetic text, with tighter constraints of rhyme and rhythm than a normal prose text.

While we can still have some doubts about considering primarily transitive the verb *chong* 充, we don’t have many about the verb *sai* 塞. The VV compound *chongsai* 充塞 must be so transitive as well.

The following two verbs, *cheng* 成 *complete* and *xing* 行 *carry into practice*, are a bit more complex.

Here are Li’s examples for *cheng* 成

41. 功立而身廢，事成而家敗

*When its work is done, its body is cast away; when its undertaking is completed, its family is ruined.*

荀子，賦篇第二十六

42. (楚子)祀于河，作先君宮，告成事而還

*After this the viscount offered sacrifice at the Ho, reared a temple for the tablets of his predecessors, announced to them the succesful accomplishment of his enterprise, and returned to Chu*
According to Li, the intransitive meaning is the basic one, and the transitive use is a causative one. In my analysis, the transitive meaning is the basic one and the intransitive one is an unmarked passive.

Wang Li’s dictionary and Legge’s and Yang’s glossaries give the transitive meaning complete as the primary sense. Derived, more restricted intransitive meanings are “to be mature” and “to be rich and fat” (of a sacrificial offering). In the sense of “to be complete, accomplished” Schuessler lists three entries (all intransitive, according to him):

43. 九載，績用弗成

*After 9 years the work was not accomplished*

(Shujing, 1,11)

44. 亡不成

*Everything was accomplished (on the military campaign).*

(Bronze inscription, d6 Mu)

45. 寝成孔安

*The temple-hall was completed.*

(Shijing 305,6)

In the first two entries the verbs are modified by the negative particles 弗 and 不. In the third entry, there is an aspectual meaning of perfectivity, clear from the context and made clear by the translation. The same connotation of perfectivity is sometimes conveyed by the usage of perfective particles like 既 or 已, like in the following example from *Shijing*:

46. 翔廟既成

*(He) then completed his ancestral temple.*

(詩經, 蕭之什·崧高)

As I will show in Chapter 3, examples of intransitive usage of verbs modified by negative particles or with a clear perfective meaning should be kept separate from the discussion of a verb’s primary features of transitivity, as these contexts can neutralize the distinction between transitives and intransitives.

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71 See Yao 1999:45. Yao gives a different interpretation to the correlation between passive and perfectivity, though.
On the basis of the above data, so, I deem the primary meaning of *cheng* 成 to be transitive, as the transitive usage is well attested and all the instances of intransitive usage occur in a well defined set of syntactic and aspectual contexts, treated in the two following chapters.

Here are Li’s examples for *xing* 行 carry into practice:

47. 故王者之制名，名定而實辨，道行而志通，則慎率民而一焉。

*Accordingly, the way a True King institutes names [is as follows]: Because fixed names keep objects distinguished and because when his Way is practiced his goals are universally understood, he takes pain to produce uniformity [in regard to names and his Way] among the people.*

荀子, 正名篇第二十二

48. 故仁者之行道也，無為也

*The man of humane principles in practicing the Way requires no assertion in his actions.*

荀子, 解蔽篇第二十一

The verb *xing* 行 has a variety of meanings. Beyond its basic intransitive meaning of *to walk, to march*, it has the separate transitive meanings of *to do, to carry into practice*. Both are very common meanings in Mengzi, listed with 22 occurrences for *to do* and 44 occurrences for *to carry into practice* in the glossary of the *Shi san jing ci dian. Mengzi juan* 十三經辭典. 孟子卷.

Here is one example for the meaning *to carry into practice*:

49. 王欲行王政，則勿毀之矣

*If your Majesty wishes to practice the true royal government, then do not pull it down.*

(孟子 2.5)

Let’s have a look at some seemingly intransitive examples:

50. 王如善之，則何為不行？

*Since your Majesty deems them excellent, why do you not practise them?*
If their words were not carried into practice, they would leave him.

Again, here we have verbs modified by negation. So, notwithstanding Li’s analysis of these verbs as primarily intransitives, we will consider them primarily transitives. Similar considerations apply to other verbs in my database which could be deemed primarily intransitives, especially to some like Ju 舉 to raise or pi 辜 [=闊] to extend, to spread which are present in Haspelmath sample list of 31 most common inchoative/ergative alternations. Recurring to dictionaries or glossaries entries and to textual data limited to small databases is not enough to give a definite answer to such a complex issue as transitivity and the status of ambitransitives- but such evidence can be considered provisionally sufficient to deal with my set of unmarked passives.
Chapter 3  Syntactic Contexts

3.1 Syntactic contexts connected with the unmarked passive construction

3.1.1 Jiang Shaoyu’s framework

In his recent (2004) paper on the development of patient subject sentences, Jiang Shaoyu has proposed the following categorization for Patient-Subject sentences (P= patient, A=agent, O=object, V=verb; V3 is a trivalent verb):

1) Sentences marked by 見 and 為.

2) Sentences with “passives meaning” (意念上的被動句), that is sentences with “preposed object” (反賓為主).

3) Unmarked sentences without passive meaning, occurring in 3 patterns:
   a) P (A) 不 V.
   b) P 可/不可 V (O-if V is V3).
   c) P (A) V + 之.

Category 1) covers explicitly marked sentences. We have already seen how these sentences are treated by Peyraube and actually in most historical analysis of the Chinese Passive.

Category 2) is not explicitly defined, but it appears that Jiang intends it just to cover sentences with both patient subject and adverse meaning, a category that, as we have seen, in Mainland Chinese Linguistic tradition is often equated with “real” passive meaning.

Category 3) is a set of syntactic contexts, partly coinciding with our putative passives, allowing the presence of the agent between the patient and the verb, a feature which separates them from sentences of category 1) and 2), which do not allow the presence of an unmarked NP Agent between the Patient NP and the Verb.

This becomes clear if we compare these two sentences:
Kind 2) 昔者龍逢斬，比干剖，良弘旖，子胥豎。

In the past Long Feng was beheaded, Bi Gan cut open, Chang Hong annihilated,
Zi Dan tortured.

Zhuangzi 胠箧第十

Kind 3) 子曰，夏禮吾能言之。

The Master said, 'I could describe the ceremonies of the Hsia dynasty.
(Lunyu 3.9)

Gong had already noted, for Modern Mandarin, that some patient subject sentences can have the agent inserted between the patient and the verb, and some cannot (Gong 1980: 342). And before him, Wang (1963: 96) had already tried to correlate this distinction with the distinction between “real” (or “strong”) passives and “apparent” (or “weak”) passives.72 As for Wang’s and Gong’s categorization, I think one weak point of Jiang’s analysis is to give as undefined the category of sentences with “passives meaning” (意念上的被動句). The important features of Jiang’s analysis in my viewpoint are 1) the correlation between the unmarked passive construction and a set of syntactic contexts (negations, modals, topicalization), as well as 2) the attempt to make explicit the conditions under which an agent can appear between the patient subject and verb.

While these features point to the right direction to deal with putative passives, Jiang’s set of contexts fits only partially our characterization of patient passive sentences. Sentences

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72 Wang lists 4 kinds of “real passives” (A) and 3 kinds of “apparent, or weak passives (B). Here are Wang’s categories, with an example for each category.

A. Real passives (with “stative” verbs):
A1. single verbs or verb with auxiliary 我們的仗打不打?
A2. the verb is followed by a single complement without de 得 or by a prepositional construction 房子收拾妥當以後
A3. the verb has another object 訴了好多公事回答不了
A4. the subject is the near object or near object of the verb 大勝了, 兄弟們每人賞一兩土

B. Weak passives (with “descriptive” verbs):
B1. The verb is preceded by an additional verb (like: 可以, 不用)果可以開, 但說工作一定還得作
B2. There is a de 得 or bu 不 between the predicate and the complement.街上那裡聽得見
B3. The verb is preceded by adjectives like hao 好, nan 難 這件事真難辦

Wang doesn’t elaborate over his description of verbs as “stative” and “descriptive”. Other scholars do not find the same sort of difference between verbs of type A and B. In fact, once we have accepted the formal principle of accepting as putative passive all the sentences with non agentive objects, it is not easy to subcategorize them into “real” versus “unreal” (or “strong” versus “weak”) passives. Wang’s list of contexts is not useless to us, though: we will find it a stimulating reference while addressing the syntactic environment of Classical Chinese patient subject sentences.
with a patient subject with the verb modified by a negative particle framework are putative passives. but sentences with the modal verb ke 可 are better treated separately, just like sentences where the patient is topicalized and repeated by the anaphoric pronoun zhi 之. Furthermore, there are sentences without clear passive meaning, allowing NP agent insertion, and that cannot be categorized into any of Jiang Shaoyu’s categories. I will give here three examples of such sentences:

52. 子曰：暴虎冯河、死而無悔者、吾不與也.

The Master said, 'I would not have him to act with me, who will unarmed attack a tiger, or cross a river without a boat, dying without any regret.

(論語 7.11)

53. 水火，吾見蹈而死者矣，未見蹈仁而死也。

I have seen men die from treading on water and fire, but I have never seen a man die from treading the course of virtue.

(論語 15.33).

54. 盛德之士，君不得而臣，父不得而子。

A scholar of complete virtue may not be employed as a minister by his sovereign, nor treated as a son by his father.

(孟子 9.4)

To deal with these counterexamples, we first need to revise Jiang’s framework. Taras Yivchenko, a Russian scholar presently at Moscow University, has provided a set of contexts better suited for my analysis.

3.1.2 Yivchenko’s framework

Yivchenko in his Beijing University PhD dissertation on the syntactical and semantical features of predicates in Sunzi Bingfa (1998) has treated this problem in depth, while analyzing what he calls direct predicatives (our S=A labiles). He gives a list of 5 contexts under which the logical object can move from the postverbal to the preverbal position, becoming, in our analysis, the patient subject of the unmarked passive. These contexts are common to object ellipsis and object promotion to subject- I will first list them and discuss them, then explain the reason for the link between this two functions.
The contexts are:  

1) The verb is modified by a negative particle.  
2) The verb is preceded or followed by the particle er 而.  
3) The verb is preceded or followed by the particle ze 則.  
4) The verb is governed by a verb like nenfj, ke 可, zu 足 or 必 bi.  
5) The verb is modified by nan 難, yi 易, xian 先, duo 多, shao 少, zi 自, xiang 相.

I will illustrate every condition with an example from Mengzi. For point 5 I will give examples just for some items in the list, which is an open one, taking them partly from Mengzi partly from Yivchenko’s examples.

1) Negation:

A16) 田野不辟，貨財不聚，非國之害也 (7.1)

*It is not the cultivable area not being extended, and stores and wealth not being accumulated, which occasions the ruin of a State.*

2) er 而 (preceding the verb)

A23) 四罪而天下咸服。 (9.3)

*When the crimes of those four were thus punished, the whole kingdom acquiesced.*

3) er 而 (following the verb)

A14) 五穀熟而民人育 (5.4)

*When the five kinds of grain were brought to maturity, the people all obtained a subsistence.*

3) ze 則 (preceding the verb)

55. 今也爲臣，諫則不行，言則不聽

*Now-a-days, the remonstrances of a minister are not followed, and, so that no blessings descend on the people.*

(SM 8.3)

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73 I’m changing the order of presentation and adding some features to Yivchenko’s framework: for the original treatment, see Yichenko 1998: 73

74 See also Li 2002: 204
ze 則(following the verb)

A4) 暴其民甚，則身弑國亡 (7.2)

A ruler who carries the oppression of his people to the highest pitch, will **himself be slain**, and his kingdom will perish.

4) neng 能

56. 悅賢不能舉，又不能養也：可謂悅賢乎？

*When a prince professes to be pleased with a man of talents and virtue, and can neither promote him to office, nor support him in the proper way, can he be said to be pleased with him?*

(孟子 10.6)

ke 可

57. 賢者之為人臣也，其君不賢，則固可放與？

*When worthies are ministers, may they indeed banish their sovereigns in this way when they are not virtuous?*

(孟子 13.31)

zu 足

58. 則文王不足法與？

*Is king Wen then not a sufficient object for imitation?*

(孟子 3.1)

必 bi

59. 日月有明，容光必照焉

*The sun and moon being possessed of brilliancy, their light admitted even through an orifice illuminates.*

(孟子 13.24)

5) nan 難

60. 故君子可欺以其方，難罔以非其道.

*Thus a superior man may be imposed on by what seems to be as it ought to be, but he cannot be entrapped by what is contrary to right principle.*

(孟子 9.2)
yi 易
61. 其教易知
His teaching being so easy to understand.
(韓非子. 用人. 第二十七)

xian 先
62. 成功出于眾者，先知也
What enables the wise sovereign and the good general to strike and conquer, and achieve things beyond the reach of ordinary men is foreknowledge.
(孫子兵法，用間篇·第十三)

3.1.3 A Revised Framework
I find Yivchenko’s framework by far the best tool available for my purpose of establishing in which contexts objects are elliptical, and so in which contexts the repeating pronoun zhi 之 is not required, omitting the only explicit marker of object topicalization. I will modify his framework, though. I’ll regroup Yichenko’s 5 categories into 3:
A) Negatives (Yivchenko’s category 1)
B) The particle er 而 (Yivchenko’s category 2)
C) Modals, adverbs and particles (Yivchenko’s categories 4 and 5)
Yivchenko’s category 3 (the particle ze 则) will be treated, together with the particle zhe 者, in the next chapter, when I’ll deal with pragmatic and discourse factors.
I’ll proceed discussing all the examples in my database occurring in contexts A) and B). After having discussed the unmarked passive cases in Mengzi, I will discuss the wider properties of the feature, and its connections with object ellipsis. Then I will motivate my exclusion of context C) from the scope of this study.

Altogether, there are 19 sentences occurring in at least one of the 3 syntactic contexts. 13 are modified by negations (category A), 6 by er 而 (category B) and 1 by nan 難

75 See also Pulleyblank 1995: 42-44 on “Adjectives that make a following verb passive” (discussing ke 可, zu 足, nan 難, yi 易)
3.2 Negation

There are 13 sentences containing negative particles. I will discuss A) the ten sentences containing *bu* 不, B) the two sentences containing *wei* 未 and C) the sentence containing *wu* 無.

A) Examples with *bu* 不

A3) 立 乎 人 之 本朝 而 道 不 行，恥也。 (10.5)

*When a scholar stands in a prince's court, and his principles are not carried into practice, it is a shame to him.*

Here *bu* 不 modifies the transitive verb *xing* 行, *carry out*:

A8) 治人不治反其智 (7.4)

*If he is trying to rule others, and (they) are not (well) ruled, let him turn inwards and examine his wisdom.*

Here *bu* 不 modifies the transitive verb *chi* 治, *to rule*.

A9) 使己為政，不用則亦已矣 (4.10)

*He pushed himself into the service of government. He was not employed, and he had to retire indeed*

Here *bu* 不 modifies the transitive verb *yong* 用 *to employ* The same applies to the following example:

A10) 孔子為魯 司寇，不用 (12.6)

*When Confucius was chief minister of Justice in Lù, his counsels were not followed.*

A16) 田野不辟，貨財不聚，非國之害也 (7.1)

*It is not the cultivable area not being extended, and stores and wealth not being accumulated, which occasions the ruin of a State.*

Here *bu* 不 modifies the transitive verbs *pi* 貼 *to extend* and *ju* 聚 *to collect*
A17) 地不改辟矣，民不改聚矣 (3.1)

No change is needed for the enlarging of its territory: no change is needed for the collecting of a population.

Here *bu* 不 modifies the transitive verbs *pi* 升 to extend and *ju* 聚 to collect, but it doesn’t immediately precede them. It instead modifies immediately the verb *gai* 改 to change, which here acts as an adverb.76

A19) 央民者不容於堯、舜之世 (12.8)

*A destroyer of the people would not have been tolerated in the times of Yao and Shun.*

Here *bu* 不 modifies the transitive verb *rong* 容 to tolerate. Here and in the following example, the particle *yu* 於 following the verb is not marking the agent, but location in time and space.

A20) 罪不容於死 (7.14)

*Death is not enough for such a crime.*

In the following example, *bu* 不 is modifying a verb inside a nominalizing NP 之 (不) V construction. According to Pulleyblank (1995:64), marked nominalization by inserting *zhi* 之 can be used:

(i) as subject of a sentence:

63. 故王之不王，不為也，非不能也.

*Therefore Your Majesty's not becoming a true king is [a matter of] not-doing, it is not not-being-able.*

(孟子 1.7)

(ii) As object of a verb (here *qi* 其 is used as a substitute for N + 之):

64. 王若隱其無罪而就死地，則牛羊何捨焉.

*If Your Majesty was pained by its going without guilt to the place of execution, then what was there to choose between an ox and a sheep?*

(孟子 1.7)

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76 See Yang 1996: 61 note 26
It can be used as well as object of a coverb, or absolutely, at the beginning of a sentence, but: “unlike the English gerund construction, a noun linked to a following verb by nominalizing zhī 之 in Chinese can only be the subject or another preverbal element. There is no 'objective genitive' in Chinese.” (ib: 65).

In the following example, the NP of the NP 之 (不) V construction is actually the logical object of the underlying NP(不) V sentence:

A26)一羽之不舉，為不用力焉；薪之不見，為不用明焉 (1.7)

_The feather is not lifted, because strength is not used; the waggon-load of firewood is not seen, because the eyesight is not used._

Bu 不 modifies the verbs _ju_ 舉 to raise and _jian_ 見 to see. The clause _一羽之不舉_ can be derived from the clause _一羽不舉_ , where the patient subject _一羽_ (one feather) is the logical object of the verb. The unmarked passive interpretation of the sentence is the only one compatible with Pulleyblank’s generalization on the lack of an “objective genitive” in LZC.

The last example with _bu_ 不 occurs in a sentence where also _er_ 而 is present. As this example is an instance of

A29)居下位而不獲於上，民不可得而治也 (7.12)

_When those occupying inferior situations do not obtain the confidence of the sovereign, they cannot succeed in governing the people._

Here _bu_ 不 modifies the transitive verb _chi_ 治 to govern by modifying the special construction _ke de er_ 可得而; we will discuss this case in more detail under the next section, dedicated to _er_ 而.

**B) Examples with _wei_ 未**

The following two examples are modified by the negative particle _wei_ 未. _Wei_ 未 is an aspectual negative, meaning “not already (the negation of _ji_ 即, already)”77.

A5)曰：「舍館 未定。」(7.24)

_My lodging-house was not arranged._

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77 See Pulleyblank 1995: 109
Here *wei* 未 modifies the transitive verb *ding* 定 to *establish, to arrange*

A7) 當堯之時，天下猶未平 (5.4)

*In the time of Yao, when the world had not yet been perfectly reduced to order*

Here *wei* 未 modifies the transitive verb *ping* 平 to *pacify.*

In both these examples, the modification by *wei* 未 contributes to our understanding of the verb as denoting an action and not a state, and so toward the interpretation of the verb as transitive instead of intransitive.

C) Example with *wu* 無

My last example with a negative particle is a verb modified by the prohibitive particle *wu* 無 (= 毋)²⁸

A13) 士無世官，官事無攝 (12.7)

*Let not offices be hereditary, nor let officers be pluralists.*

The particle *wu* 無 modifies the transitive verb *she* 攝 *occupy jointly.*

### 3.2.1 Negation and Object ellipsis

Negation is quantitatively prominent in the formation of unmarked passives. We have already seen that negative particles trigger obligatory object inversion, where personal pronoun objects are placed between the negative particle and the verb. Even though the inversion of full lexical NP objects is not obligatory, we might suppose that, by *analogy or percolation,* negation is favoring inversion even in this case. This explanation is hypothetical. But the links between negation and object deletion are well documented. In LZC, when an object is preposed (Pulleyblank says “exposed”) it is repeated by *zhi* 之. But *zhi* 之 is frequently omitted when the verb is governed by the particle of simple negation *bu* 不. This is clearly shown in the following examples from Mengzi, where the parallelism between the affirmative and the negative sentence is striking:

65. 山徑之蹊間：介然用之而成路：爲間不用，則茅塞之矣。

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²⁸ See Pulleyblank 1995: 107
There are the footpaths along the hills;--if suddenly they be used, they become roads; and if, as suddenly they are not used, the wild grass fills them up.

(孟子 14.21)

66. 吾弟則愛之，秦之弟則不愛也.

There is my younger brother;--I love him. But the younger brother of a man of Qin I do not love.

(孟子 11.4)

The omission is especially common with the negative particle *fu* 弗, less common with *wei* 未⁷⁹. As these differences are not relevant for the discussion my data, and as the difference between *bu* 不 and *fu* 弗 in this regard is not as systematic as has sometimes been assumed (He Leshi has suggested that the difference is based on discourse differences⁸⁰), I will just treat all the cases of negation under the same heading, and I will treat them just as linear sequences, without investigating their structure, as the overall "conditions for the deletion of zhi 之 are still not well understood" (Pulleyblank 1978: 126).

What is relevant for our purposes, is that the sequence NP *bu* 不 V is structurally ambiguous between two readings:

1) NP *bu* 不 V (zhi 之), with active sense, NP agent subject
2) NP *bu* 不 V, with passive sense, NP patient subject

In the following example from Lushi Chunqiu:

67. 己因以知聖對昭王，昭王有非其有，田詫不察.

In *Tian Qu's response to the king, he himself introduced the subject of recognizing sages, thus attributing to the king a quality he did not possess. In this *Tian Qu does not bear scrutiny.*

(呂氏春秋, 卷第十八,審應)

The clause 田詫不察 can be interpreted as in Riegel's translation, as an unmarked passive (*Tian Qu does not bear scrutiny*) or as active with object ellipsis (*Tian Qu attributed to king a quality the king didn't actually possess, without making due

⁷⁹ See Pulleyblank 1995: 84-85
⁸⁰ He 1994
This is just one example. As the optional ellipsis of the repeating pronoun is a feature with deep implications for any attempt to distinguish between patient subject and topicalized object, I have made a more systematic research.

3.2.2 Analysis of the Data from The Academia Sinica Database

I have made an exploratory search of the pattern NP \( bu \) \( V \) in the Academia Sinica Database of Classical Chinese Texts (上古汉语语料库, http://www.sinica.edu.tw/~tdbproj/handyl1, inclusive of the following texts: 論語, 孟子, 墨子, 莊子, 荀子, 韓非子, 吕氏春秋, 老子, 商君書, 管子, 晏子春秋, 孫子), choosing the verb \( sha \) 殺 as a prototypical transitive verb (in this I’ve been inspired by Mei Tsulin 1991 article, where he makes use of the verbs \( si \) 死 as a typical intransitive and \( sha \) 殺 as a typical transitive, to evaluate cases of ambiguous transitivity in the evolution of the resultative construction).

Out of 22 examples of the pattern (NP) 不殺, only one is passive, the following example from Guanzi:\(^2\):

68. 故國無罪而君壽，而民不殺。

As a result, the state will suffer no retribution, the prince will live a long life, and the people will escape being killed

管子, 第三十五篇 侈靡

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\(^1\) This is the interpretation given in 呂氏春秋全譯, 貴州人民出版社: “這說明田誥並不覺察自己瑣非所問”

\(^2\) There are other two passages, also from Guanzi, with the same seemingly unmarked passive pattern, but they are believed to be corrupted. 七十二日而畢，嗜甲子，木行御，天子不賦，不賜賞，而大斬伐傷。君危，不殺，太子危，家人夫

If the son of Heaven during this period does not distribute stores and grant rewards but engages in cutting off heads, attacking, and wounding people on a grand scale, the princes of the various states will be in danger. Even if [here 不殺 is emendated as 不然] they themselves are not in danger, their heir apparent will be.

管子, 第四十一篇 五行

叩之，其音清搏徹遠，純而不殺，辭也。

when struck, its sound being clear and distinct, penetrating, yet simple and uncluttered

\([sha\) 殺 is emendated as xiao 殺 mix]\)

管子,第三十九篇 水地
In another case, from *Lushi Chunqiu*, the verb *sha* 殺 is used intransitively with a different meaning, *to wither*:

69. 及禹之时，天先见草木秋冬不杀

*When it came to the time of Yu, heaven first caused trees and grasses to appear that did not wither in autumn and winter.*

(呂氏春秋, 譬部/第十三卷, 第二篇 應同)

This is a regular usage of an intransitive verb.

In the other cases, the verb is active, like in the following example from *Lushi Chunqiu*:

70. 萬箇不殺。

*Scorpions or aconithe are not lethal (don’t kill).*

(呂氏春秋, 論部/第二十五卷, 第二篇 別類)

Here the elliptic object is generic (Scorpions or aconithe don’t kill people, humans).

In the following examples, the object is specific:

71. 瞑，兩目眇，君奚爲不殺？[...] 愍君乃不殺。

*The blind man shuts both his eyes. Why don’t you kill him?” [...] Hearing this, the Ruler of Tsou refrained from killing him.*

(韓非子, 說林上, 第二十二)

In the two examples below, we have contextually motivated object ellipsis (the object is mentioned in the immediately preceding sentence)

72. 王大怒，使人殺中射之士[...] 王乃不殺。

*Enraged thereby, the King sentenced the court usher to death [...]. Hearing this, the King refrained from killing him.*

(韓非子, 說林上, 第二十二)

73. 將軍曰『縛之，殺以戰鼓。[...] 軍因不殺也。

*The commander of the Ching army said: “Arrest them and kill them for painting the festive drum with their blood.” [...] Accordingly, the Chings did not kill them.*

(韓非子, 說林下, 第二十三)

The last 殺 seem to have the implication that the king didn’t proceed with the killing, with his intent to kill- or: he didn’t deem appropriate to kill him.

66
These examples suggest that the unmarked passive reading of sentences with the pattern NP \( bu \) V constitutes a small subset of the cases, where most cases simply omit the object after the negative particle. In fact, the unmarked passive is a highly marked structure, whose frequency of usage is pretty low. The low frequency of usage is not an argument against the existence of the construction, though: marked passive with \( yu \) 於; a construction about whose relevance there is wide agreement, has an even lower frequency (15 occurrences in Mengzi, half of the occurrences of unmarked passives). But the fact that unmarked passives represents just a subset of the cases of object ellipsis implies that we will have a more definite picture of them only when we will have reached a deeper understanding of the wider contexts of object ellipsis.

3.3 The particle \( er \) 而

3.3.1 Properties of \( er \) 而

The particle \( er \) 而 is used as a connective between verbs occurring in a series in which they form a narrative or logical sequence, like in the following example from Mengzi:

74.滕文公為世子，將之楚，過宋，而見孟子

*When Duke Wén of Têng was Crown Prince, he passed through Sòng on his way to Chù and saw Mencius.*

(孟子 5.1)

Besides its use in the serial verb construction, \( er \) 而 is used as a conjunction after concessive clauses and between sentences in the sense of 'but.' (Pulleyblank 1995: 44-46), as well as acting as a marker of verb object inversion. There have been attempts to unify these features into a single one (Xue 1991 and 1997), coordination between two sentences. In contrast to such unifying approach, I have found that syntactical and discourse factors of \( er \) 而 are better accounted separately.

First of all, I will discuss the sentences in my list of putative passives

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83 Tang and Zhou 1985
3.3.2 Analysis of the data with er 而

There are 6 sentences containing er 而. I will discuss now 4 sentences with er 而 preceding and following the putative passive verb. The other two sentences have a more complex pattern, 可 V 而 V, and will be treated as special constructions at the end of this section.

In the two following examples, the particle er 而 follows the passive verb:

A11) 遠佚而不怨，阨窮而不憤. (3.9)

When neglected and left without office, he did not murmur. When straitened by poverty, he did not grieve.

Here the particle er 而 follows the transitive verb yi yi 遠佚 to discard and not employ

A23) 四罪而天下服. (9.3)

When the crimes of those four were thus punished, the whole kingdom acquiesced.

Here the particle er 而 follows the transitive verb zu i 罪 to punish. The verb has also the intransitive meaning to commit a crime, but the transitive meaning “to punish” here is clear.

In the two following examples, the particle er 而 precedes the passive verb:

A6) 士無事而食，不可也. (6.4)

For a scholar performing no service to receive his support notwithstanding is improper.

Here the particle er 而 precedes the transitive verb si 食 to feed.

A14) 五穀熟而民人育 (5.4)

When the five kinds of grain were brought to maturity, the people all obtained a subsistence.

Here the particle er 而 precedes the transitive verb yu 育 to nourish.

The particle er 而 has a wide range of functions. I will now try to make clear its syntactic functions in relations to coreference and object ellipsis, to be able to separate them form its discourse functions connected with contrastiveness.
3.3.3 The particle *er* 而 and its constraints on coreference

I have taken into consideration all the elements present in two sentences coordinated by *er* 而, and analyzed which elements are regularly dropped, which ones instead cannot be dropped. In a sequence S V O 而 S V O, both the first subject and the second can be absent, in accordance with the widespread freedom of zero anaphora in subject position typical of LZC. There is no coreference constraint on the second subject when it is null. It can be:

(A) coreferential to the object of the first verb, as in the following example:

75. 王者之民，嘆嘆如也。殺之而不怨，利之而不庸.

*Under a true sovereign, the people have an air of deep contentment. Though he slay them, they do not murmur. When he benefits them, they do not think of his merit.*

(孟子 13.13)

(B) It can be coreferential to the subject of the first verb

76. 子皙怒，既而裹甲以見子南，欲殺之而取其妻。

*Zisi was enraged, and by and by went with his bow-case and in his buff coat to see Zinan, intending to kill him and take away his wife.*

(左傳正義,昭公,傳元年)

(C) Or it can be coreferential to with an other NP altogether

77. 取之而燕民悅，則取之

*If the people of Yăn will be pleased with your taking possession of it, then do so.*

(孟子, 2.10)

As for the object of the second verb, when it is realized as the anaphoric pronoun *zhi* 之, the pronoun doesn’t show any coreferential contraint.

(A) *Zhi* 之 can be coreferential with the object of the preceding clause:

78. 為巨室，則必使工師求大木。工師得大木，則王喜，以爲能勝其任也。匠人斃而小之，則王怒.
If you are going to build a large mansion, you will surely cause the Master of the workmen to look out for large trees, and when he has found such large trees, you will be glad, thinking that they will answer for the intended object. **Should the workmen hew them so as to make them too small, then your Majesty will be angry.**

(孟子, 2.9)

(B) Zhi 之 can be coreferential with the the subject of the preceding clause

79. 故文王說紂而紂囚之

*Thus, King Wen attempted to persuade Chow and (he) was put in jail.*

(韓非子，難言，第三)

(C) Or it can be coreferential with an NP in another clause:

80. 孔子曰：『求，非我徒也，小子鳴鼓而攻之，可也。』

*Confucius said, Qiu is no disciple of mine. Little children, beat the drum and assail him.*

(孟子, 7.14)

There is only one constraint on coreference, between the two pronominal zhi 之 objects of the serial verb construction. In a sequence $V_2 (O) \rightarrow V_1$, where the object of the first transitive verb is deleted, the elliptic object is always coreferential with the pronominal object of the second verb. Namely, we never find the structure $V_2 \rightarrow V_1$ if the first pronominal object is coreferential with the second, it’s omitted.

3.3.4 The particle er 而 and Object ellipsis

But this is not the only reason for omitting the anaphoric pronoun zhi 之 in a serial verb construction. The first zhi 之 can be omitted without special constraints, like in the above cited 匠人斬而小之, as well as in the following examples:

81. 三里之城，七里之郭，環而攻之而不勝

*There is a city, with an inner wall of three li in circumference, and an outer wall of seven. The enemy surround and attack it, but they are not able to take it.*
82. 人不知而不愠，不亦君子乎。

*Is he not a man of complete virtue, who feels no discomposure though men may take no note of him?*

The conditions for the ellipsis of the second anaphoric pronoun *zhi* 之 in the sequence 而 V之 are more complex. As for the pattern NP 不 V, I’ve made an exploratory search for the pattern 而 V之 using in the Academia Sinica Database of Classical Chinese Texts, investigating the two sequences 而 殺 (之) and 而 死 (之).

I just found one example of the sequence 而 死之, that is, intransitive verbs after 而 而 with causative usage:

83. 崔子之徒以戈斫公而死之。

*Ts’ui Tzu’s followers cut the duke with lances and killed him.*

(Si 死 is an intransitive verb that extremely seldom has causative usages- in most cases, if followed by an object, the object is the beneficiary of the action, and *si zhi* 死 之 means: “to die for him”. In a few cases, though, there is a real causative object, and *si zhi* 死 之 means: “to make him die, to kill him”.

So, far from forcing object ellipsis, preverbal 而 allows even the transitivization of strong intransitives.

As for sha 殺, we have both examples of V 而 殺之 and of V 而 殺.

The first pattern, V 而 殺之, without the omission of the pronominal object, is the more common:

84. 是何異於刺人而殺之

*In what does this differ from stabbing a man and killing him.*

85. 孔子不欲於魯，衛遭宋桓司馬，將要而殺之

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84. According to table II in appendix to Li 2002, there are 5 such instances in the texts of 春秋經傳, 論語, 孟子, 墨子, 庄子, 荀子, 禮記, 韓非子. As the examples are so few, I reported this one for information.
When Confucius, being dissatisfied in Lū and Wèi, had left those States, he met with the attempt of Huán, the Master of the Horse, of Sòng, to intercept and kill him.

(孟子 9.8)

As for the second pattern, V 而 喻, with the omission of the pronominal object, I’ve just found sentences with passive meaning, like the following from Lushi Chunqiu:

86. 蜀成, 齊莊 不 自 知 而 喻,

Because of their failure to recognize their own mistakes, King Cheng of Chu and Duke Zhuang of Qi were killed

(呂氏春秋.論部.第三篇 自知)

This means that, if there is the ellipsis of the pronominal object, the sentence acquire a passive interpretation. We don’t have two possible interpretations, like with the pattern bu V 不 V and its structural ambiguity between an unmarked passive reading and an active reading with object ellipsis. Unmarked passive, in an V 而 V2 context, is not (at least according to my data) a subset of object ellipsis. But it might be connected with object topicalization, as I will investigate in the next chapter.

3.3.5 The sequence 可 V 而 V

The sequence 可 V 而 V is better treated separately, as the verb ke 可 plays a special role in modifying the serial verb construction V 而 V, especially when cooccurring with the verb de 得. I will first analyze the examples from my list, and then discuss other cases of the sequence 可 V 而 V.

A28) 經界 既正，分田制祿，可坐而定也。(5.3)

When the boundaries have been defined correctly, the division of the fields and the regulation of allowances may be determined by you, sitting at your ease.

The particle er 而 precedes the transitive verb ding 定 settle, determine and it is preceded by the verb zuo 坐 modified by ke 可. Ke 可 could be the modal verb “to can” or just a mark of passive.; as the verb zuo 坐 is a strong intransitive, it cannot be passivized, and the verb ke 可 must just have the meaning “to can”, so the verb ding 定 is an unmarked passive and not a passive marked by ke 可.
The case of the following sentence is more complex, as here we have the special construction \textit{ke de er} 可得而.

A29) 居下位而不獲於上，民不可得而治也 (7.12)

\textit{When those occupying inferior situations do not obtain the confidence of the sovereign, they cannot succeed in governing the people.}

The particle \textit{er} 而 precedes the transitive verb \textit{chi} 治 to govern, and it is preceded by the verb \textit{dé} 得 modified by \textit{ke} 可. According to Pulleyblank (1995: 46) “the verb \textit{dé} 得 'get' is used as an auxiliary verb in the sense of 'get to, manage to, be able to, can,' but instead of taking an object clause construction like \textit{něng} 能 'be capable of, can,' it has a serial verb construction: 'get and do (something).’ This is shown both by the fact that one can optionally insert \textit{er} 而 between the two verbs and by the fact that, after \textit{ke} 可, both \textit{dé} 得 and its following verb are made passive.” Beside example A29, Pulleyblank cites the following example from Mengzi:

87.盛德之士，君不得而臣，父不得而子

\textit{A scholar of complete virtue, the ruler is not able to treat as subject and the father is not able to treat as son.}

(孟子-9.4)

Is the construction \textit{ke de er} 可得而 really an unambiguous mark of passive, as claimed by Pulleyblank or is it mainly a marker of object topicalization, as proposed in Simon 1951?\textsuperscript{85} I have made a search of the pattern 可得而 in the Academia Sinica Database of Classical Chinese Texts, looking for a systematic difference between ellipsis of anaphoric \textit{之} after transitive verbs modified by \textit{ke de er} 可得而, as opposed to its preservation after transitive verbs modified by \textit{de er} 得而. If \textit{ke de er} 可得而 passivizes the verbs it precedes, there shouldn’t find sequences 可得而 V 之, when the verb is just a transitive (bitransitives might retain it).

The data do not show systematic differences of transitivity. While we don’t find instances of transitive verbs modified by \textit{de er} 得而 and not having an anaphoric object (unless

\textsuperscript{85} See Simon 1951-52: 48. Simon’s proposal is actually far more complex than this. I’ve reformulated part of his reasoning.
there is a negative preceding the verb, allowing the ellipsis of zhi 之), we do find many instances of transitive verbs modified by ke de er 可 得 而 with the anaphoric object zhi 之, and so the verb following ke de er 可 得 而 do not seem to have been passivized.

A) 得 而 + V 之 and transitivity

In the following example, the transitive verb chen 臣 (treat as a minister) is preceded by de er 得 而 and followed by the anaphoric object zhi 之.

88. 見且猶不得亟，而況得而臣之乎？
If they [kings and dukes] thus found it not in their power to pay them frequent visits, how much less could they get to employ them as ministers?
(孟子 13.8)

Here is another example with the verb jin 禁 (prohibit):

89. 夫舜惡得而禁之？夫有所受之也！
Indeed, how could Shùn have forbidden it? Gàoyào had received the law from a proper source.
(孟子 13.35)

When there is no anaphoric object zhi 之 after the transitive verb, it is because the verb is modified by a negative particle, like in the following example:

90. 天子不得而臣也，諸侯不得而友也
The Son of Heaven was unable to make him (such a man) his minister, nor was any feudal prince able to make him his friend.86
(新序, 節士第七)

B) 可得 而 V 之 and transitivity

The following example from Xunzi shows the transitive verb qiu 求 preceded by ke de er 可 得 而 and followed by the anaphoric object zhi 之:

91. 以所欲為可得而求之.
When what is desired is judged to be obtainable, it will be pursued.87

86 I’ve reproduced Simon’s translation, from Simon 1951: 55
In the following example from Mozi, the verb modified by ke de er 可得而 is first without the anaphoric object, and almost immediately later in the text it appears again modified ke de er 可得而 and followed by the anaphoric object, without any apparent difference in meaning or pragmatic function.

Therefore whether an object is circular or not is all known, because the standard of circularity is all established. [...] Therefore whether an object is square or not is all known.

On the basis of these data, we are so inclined to answer negatively to the question if the construction ke de er 可得而 is an unambiguous mark of passive. It might be, though, that being not always easy to separate the modal from the purely grammatical passivizing role of de 得, our examples of the pattern 可得而 V之 are not relevant.

C) 得而 + V + 之 and topicalization

As for a connection between the pattern 得而 + V and object topicalization, there are some examples, like the following from Zhuangzi:

*If he does what is not good in the light of open day, men will have the opportunity of punishing him; if he does it in darkness and secrecy, spirits will inflict the punishment.*

Here the nominalized clause 爲不善乎顯明之中者 (those people who do what is not good in the light of open day) is the object of the verb zhu 談, as well as the nominalized clause 爲不善乎幽閟之中者 (those people who do what is not good in darkness and secrecy) in the following sentence. Both are repeated by the anaphoric object zhi 之.

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87 The 上海古籍出版社 edition gives: 認爲想要的東西可以得到從而去追求它
D) 可得 而 + V and topicalization

The connection between the pattern 可得 而 + V and topicalization is quite straightforward, but it is the patient subject and not the object that is topicalized, like the two following examples show:

94. 夫子之文章，可得而聞也

'The Master's personal displays of his principles and ordinary descriptions of them may be heard

(論語 5.12)

95. 山林邃土之民，不可得而一也

All the peoples in the mountains and woods and those far distant cannot be unified.

(墨子·尚同中第十二)

3.4 Counterexamples discussed

While discussing the limitations of Jiang’s framework, I have given three sentences which are not explainable with his set of contexts. Here I will show that my modified framework is able to provide an explanation to these cases.

52. 子曰，暴虎冯河，死而無悔者，吾不與也

The Master said, 'I would not have him to act with me, who will unarmed attack a tiger, or cross a river without a boat, dying without any regret.

In this sentence the exposed object (the complex clause 暴虎冯河，死而無悔, someone who will unarmed attack a tiger, or cross a river without a boat) is not repeated by an anaphoric pronoun, but we can explain the absence of zhi 之 after 吾不與 because of the presence of the negative particle bu 不.

53. 水火，吾見蹈而死者矣，未見蹈仁而死也。

I have seen men die from treading on water and fire, but I have never seen a man die from treading the course of virtue.
The clause 水火,吾見蹈而死者矣 has an agentive subject inserted (吾), but there is no negation and no resumptive 之. But there is the particle er 而. As we have seen, in serial like verb constructions with er 而 the anaphoric pronoun can be omitted

54. 盛德之士，君不得而臣，父不得而子。 (Mengzi 9.4)

A scholar of complete virtue may not be employed as a minister by his sovereign, nor treated as a son by his father.

盛德之士 is certainly a topic, given the fact that we have the subject 君 there, but we have no topicalization markers. Here 不得而 is a marker of object topicalization88. So, we don’t expect a 之, as the topicalization marker is already explicit with the 不得而 construction. 89

3.5 Modals, adverbs and Particles

While negation and er 而 constitute contexts for putative passive and object deletion due to their syntactic properties, modal verbs and adjectives have a semantic component linking them to passive meaning. There are many patient subject sentences belonging to these category. In the two paragraphs below, I will motivate their exclusion from my exhaustive list.

3.5.1 Passives marked by ke 可 and other modal verbs

Patient subject sentences with ke 可 constitute by far the majority of putative passives in Mengzi. Evaluations of their numbers are bound to differ, as it is sometimes difficult to distinguish cases where ke 可 is acting as a modal or as a mere passive marker, but I will rely on the exhaustive study by Shao Yonghai (Shao 1996), which count 116 occurrences

88 See Simon 1951-52: 48
89 A complementary explanation, given by Chen 1988: 29 is that with complex predicates (that is, with modals or quasi-modals like ke 可, jian 見, de 得, neng 能 governing another verb) 之 is not used. This would be bring our examples 2) and 3) under our third category of syntactic conditioning.

Another issue I’ve been exploring in connection with unmarked object topicalization is the length (the weight) of the preposed elements. While I found some interesting correlations between the length of topicalized elements and the presence of the repeating anaphoric pronoun (the longer elements tend to topicalize without the need for a repeating anaphoric pronoun), the definition of syntactic contexts is enough for the purpose of explaining seemingly deviant examples, so I will not elaborate on the topic.
of passivizing ke. Out of the 38 different verbs recurring in these sentences, 10 have an adverse connotation, confirming the limited but definite relevance of this semantic category of verbs in the formation of putative passive sentences. Ke 可 seems actually to constitute a genuine mark for passive in Mengzi; in comparison, the two attested productive ways of marking passives have an almost negligible role: passives marked with jian 見 appears only three times in the whole text of Mengzi and there is no passive sentence marked with wei 為. Ke 可, as well as well as neng 能 (be capable of), ken 肯 (be willing to) and gan 敢 (dare) would be better considered as passive markers, and would require a separate treatment.

3.5.2 Adjectives that make a following verb passive
As for zu 足, 必 bi , nan 難, yi 易, xian 先, duo 多, shao 少, etc., they should rather be considered marks of mediopassives. Van Oosten in his paper on patient subject constructions in English remarks that the choice of subject in sentences like:

a) John opened the door with this key
b) This key will open the door
c) The door opened
d) The door will open with this key

depends on what the speaker sees as the most responsible for the successful occurrence of the action of the verb. Responsibility, in his view, is a basic feature of subjects and it allows us to distinguish between unmarked passives on one side, and on the other mediopassives like: Yifu hen rongyi xi 衣服很容易洗 in Mandarin (see Cheng 1989: 89), 故君子可欺以其方, 難罔以非其道 (and other examples cited at paragraph 3.1.2) in Classical Chinese and The woolens wash well in English (see Dixon 1991: 322), where

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90 Here is the list of verbs: 得 obtain, 致 obtain (causative), 繼 inherit, carry on, 為 do, 復 do again, 待 wait, expect, 兼 get together, 仍 surpass, 當 to match, 拘 retain, 食 eat, 諫 reprove, remonstrate, 及 reach, 達 transport, 傳 to transmit, hand down, 止 stop, 已 stop, 閏 hear, 知 know, 法 imitate, 法 rule, administer, 行 carry into practice, 定 fix, settle, 食 feed, 用 employ, 受 receive, 召 call, summon, 謂 call, be called Adverse: 放 banish, 殺 kill, 伐 to attack, to punish, 欺 deceive, 失 lose, 破 put aside, 懊 be worried, 砥 provoke, excite anger. 避 avoid, escape, 緩 delay. The two verbs recurring in sentences marked with jian 見 are: 殺 kill and 保 protect
91 For these data, beyond my own analysis, I rely on the table in appendix to the fundamental study of Tang and Zhou 1985: 285, very interesting also to get a comparative view of the frequency of marked forms in PreQin texts.
the verb expresses a spontaneous activity, for which no agent is recoverable. In such sentences, according to Van Oosten,\(^2\) "[the subject of a mediopassive] no longer has any responsibility for the occurrence of the action of the predicate, since the entire point of saying the sentence is to assert that properties of the patient have taken over this task. The difference with the passive construction, which also allows a patient to occur in subject position, is that the purpose of the mediopassive construction is precisely to assert that the relation that the patient bears to the verb is the one that the agent, the normal subject of the verb, usually bears, that is, that properties of the patient bear the responsibility for the occurrence of the action of the verb. This is not the case in passive sentences, where responsibility still lies with the agent, the underlying subject. (underlining mine)."

The patient of a putative passive doesn't change its relationship with the action and its agent when it is promoted to subject position. It is still the agent who bears responsibility for the action, not the patient.

What actually makes sentences like the aforementioned from Zhuangzi:

22. 昔者龍逢斬，比干剖，葦弘鮑，子胥靡，故四子之賢，而身不免於戮

Formerly, Lung-făng was beheaded; Pi-kan had his heart torn out; Khang Hung was ripped open; and Dze-hsū was reduced to pulp (in the Kiang). Worthy as those four men were, they did not escape such dreadful deaths) typical as unmarked passives, is probably that for this sort of strongly adverse verb meaning, a spontaneous interpretation, that is a situation in which responsibility for the occurrence of the action of the verb lies with the patient and not with the agent, is completely ruled out.

\(^2\) Van Oosten 1977: 462, shortened.
Chapter 4 Discourse Factors

"Consider the question of person, definiteness and animacy which has often been mooted as an explanatory factor in the marking of transitivity. We might view this feature of nouns and pronouns as a hierarchy which is fixed in speakers’ minds as a way of ordering the world of things about them. In this view, the many linguistic phenomena which appear to be responding to such a segmentation of the real world are explicable at the sentence level by simple classification of the arguments of the sentence, and no wider discourse context is of the slightest help in understanding the grammatical phenomenon. On the other hand, we might find that when discourses as a whole are studied in detail, what emerges as an explanatory parameter is a set of broader, more pragmatic organizational principles such as anaphoricity, topicality, foregrounding, and so on. From this perspective it might now seem that we are mistaken in thinking of the categories of person, animacy and definiteness as fixed, semantic fields, and that instead these are imprecise “local” correlates or the broader principles which at the sentence level are seen only obscurely and indirectly.” (Hopper P.J., Causes and affects, in Papers from the Parasession on Causatives and Agentivity, at the 21st Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistics Society. Chicago, Chicago Linguistics Society, 1985: 87)

I have placed this quotation from Paul Hopper at the beginning of this chapter as a reminder of the aims of discourse analysis. In the present discussion on Classical Chinese Grammar, we are not only far from a sound understanding of anaphoricity, topicality and foregrounding, but we have still to come to a full grasp of the lower level questions of person, definiteness and animacy. It is still possible, though, and necessary, to supplement the picture we get from the lexicon and syntax with some rough incursions into discourse analysis and pragmatics, as we have seen that anaphora, topics and preposing are at the very centre of the unmarked passive. Unmarked passive is fundamentally a phenomenon of marked word order, and the origin itself of the scientific study of word order lies in the attempt to distinguish between syntactically motivated and discourse motivated phenomena (see Weil 1978 and Scaglione 1972). As my incursions are determined by the attempt to provide explanation for examples which wouldn’t

I have not mentioned the influence that different discourse modes certainly have on phenomena like anaphoric repetition and foregrounding. The examples I’ve been using are mainly from philosophical and historical texts in prose, though, and are so more or less homogenous in this respect.

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otherwise be dealt for under other heading, they are not tightly interconnected with each other. I will treat, in order, of pragmatically motivated object preposing, of the connections between unmarked passive and perfect, and of the purely discursive phenomena of parallelism.

4.1. Pragmatically motivated Object Preposing with Negatives, Contrastive Particles and Focus Particles

For one third of my sentences, lexical and syntactic factors do not offer any motivation for the usage of the unmarked passive. And for many others, like the already investigated sentences with negative particle and sentences with er 而, the optional deletion of the anaphoric pronoun zhi 之 tell us just part of the story. We understand that such patterns favor the occurrence of the unmarked passive, but we still do not understand why they are quantitatively so prominent over the other examples.

One clue might be the similarity between object topicalization and object promotion to subject. Even though we can distinguish between the two (this has been actually one of the main aims of my analysis) they seem to occur in quite similar syntactical contexts. Gabelentz’s classical 1881 Grammatik has a very thorough, even though not systematic, treatment of the contexts for the inversion between verb and object (=object topicalization), and these contexts (negation, particles er 而 and ze 則, particle zhe 者) almost overlap with the contexts allowing object deletion, as listed by Yivchenko. Actually, my opinion is that some contexts listed by Yivchenko as allowing object deletion (like preverbal er 而 and pre- as well as postverbal ze 則) are actually better explained as licensing pragmatically motivated object topicalization.

I will here discuss, feature by feature, the examples provided by Gabelentz, and then draw implications on the relationship between object topicalization and unmarked passive for each of the licensing features.

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94 Inversion between verb and object is equal to object topicalization whenever we have an O (S) V pattern. In case of an S O V pattern, we have just object exposure.
4.1.1 Gabelentz on Negatives and Object Topicalization

Gabelentz presents the following examples of “inversion with negation”, noticing that they all recur in sentences implying presuppositions, conditions and so on.\(^95\)

96. 食不厭精，脍不厭細。

*He did not dislike to have his rice finely cleaned, nor to have his minced meat cut quite small.*

(論語 10.8)

97. 沾酒市脯不食。

*He did not partake of wine and dried meat bought in the market.*

(論語 10.8)

These two examples come from *Lunyu*’s tenth chapter, *Xiang Tang* (the village). Like most of the other passage in this chapter, they describe Confucius’ behavior. The subject of these two sentences is the agent, Confucius, and not the patient preverbal NPs (食 and 腊).

98. (子曰，篤信好學，守死善道). 危邦不入，亂邦不居

*(Someone uniting sincere faith and the love of learning, who holding firm to death, perfects the excellence of his course) such a one will not enter a tottering State, nor dwell in a disorganized one.*

(論語 8.13)

In this example, the subject is a person displaying the qualities described in the preceding clause, and not the preverbal NPs (危邦和亂邦).

The examples above conform to the first two points of our definition of unmarked passive, decrease in transitivity (the verb has no object, be it a full NP or the anaphoric particle *uzzi* 之) and patient promotion (object topicalization), but not to the third point, agent demotion. Even though there is no explicit preverbal agentive subject realized in the clause, the subject is understood and it the meaning of the sentence requires it. So these sentences have to be considered object inversion and not promotion to subject.

\(^95\) Gabelentz 1881: 437, par. 1175. I have provided Legge’s translation, slightly modifying the part between square parenthesis in Lunyu 8.13
4.1.2 Pragmatic functions of Negation

Topics are often divided into two types: discourse topics, which function to set the scene or establish what will be talked about, and focus topics, which introduced an entity to be focused on in contrast to another. English examples of the kinds are the following (from Ernst and Wang 1995: 239):

a) As for sonatas, it’s easy to find a good one for almost any instrument, and they are popular with listeners. [discourse topic]

b) (I’m familiar with soccer, but) Australian football, I just can’t figure out. [focus topic]

The examples cited from Gabelentz above are instances of discourse topic.

This already cited passage from Mengzi is an instance of focus topic:

99. 吾弟則愛之，秦人之弟則不愛也. (11.4)

There is my younger brother;--I love him. But the younger brother of a man of Qin I do not love.

Within my putative passive examples with negation, some are closer to discourse topic:

A20) 罪不容於死 (7.14)

Death is not enough for such a crime.

Some other examples quite clearly display contrastiveness:

A8)治人不治反其智 (7.4)

If he is trying to rule others, and (they) are not (well) ruled, let him turn inwards and examine his wisdom.

Even in Modern Mandarin putative passives, we find a large proportion of sentences with negation and contrastiveness. Shi and Tang (1999: 5-6) provide some examples relating negation and unmarked passives, examples where a positive sentence is unacceptable while the negated sentence is acceptable (or nearly acceptable).

In the first example, the event is presupposed by using a negation:

(*) 張三喜歡

‘As for Zangsan, someone likes him’

(?) 張三不喜歡

‘As for Zangsan, someone does not likes him’
In the second example, the event is presupposed in contrastive contexts:

(*)

‘As for Zhangsan, someone likes him’

The connection between negatives and object exposure suggests that it is reasonable to look for additional, pragmatic factors to explain the preponderance of negative sentences in our database, and that the syntactic function of negation, eliciting object deletion, is presumably not the only reason for such preponderance.

4.1.3 Gabelentz on er 而 and inversion

Here are Gabelentz examples of object preposing with the particle er 而 (once again, in sentences implying presuppositions and conditions). In the first example, the object (renren 人人, everybody) is preposed and repeated by the pronoun zhi 之

100. 君子平其政：行辟人可也，焉得人人而濟之

Let a governor conduct his rule on principles of equal justice, and, when he goes abroad, he may cause people to be removed out of his path. But how can he convey everybody across the rivers?

（孟子 8.2）

In the following example from Xunzi, the object (zi chan 資 財, valuable goods) is preposed without being repeated by the pronoun zhi 之

101. 假之人有弟兄 資財 而分者

Now suppose that younger and elder brothers have valuable goods that are supposed to be apportioned among them

（荀子，性 惡 篇 第 二 十 三）

It is the same with the following example from Kongzi Jiayu (孔子家語) a Han miscellany of pre-Han and Early Han materials):

102. 堯桀不共國而治，以其類異也

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96 Gabelentz 1881: 255, par. 623.
King Yao and the bandit Jie couldn't rule together the same country, because they belonged to different categories (of men).

(孔子家語, 致思第八).

In these examples, the object is exposed but not topicalized (=moved to clausred initial position).

And we shouldn’t confuse these examples of NP 而 V with sentences displaying the same pattern NP 而 V, but where the noun preceding er 而 is to interpreted as a verb (to act as an NP), as in the following examples97:

103. 子曰，人而無信，不知其可也

The Master said, 'I do not know how a man without truthfulness is to get on.

(論語, 2.22)

104. 管氏而知禮，孰不知禮

If Kwan knew the rules of propriety, who does not know them?

(論語, 3.22)

In the two sentences above, the preverbal noun is not the object of the verb, and the verb has another object. In the examples given by Gabelentz, instead, there is both the ellipsis of the postverbal object and the raising of the object to preverbal position, before er 而.

4.1.4 Pragmatic functions of er 而

In the preceding chapter, I have shown that the only case when there is a relationship between the particle er 而 and object ellipsis is when er 而 follows the verb. That left unexplained cases of object deletion when er 而 precedes the verb. Even though it is clear that er 而 has a very important syntactic function in serial verb construction and clause coordination, no single factor emerged connecting these functions with object ellipsis.

I suggest that in these examples the particle er 而 act as a focus marker, or at least serves Shi and Tang’s function of presupposing an event in contrastive contexts, putting in contrast the preceding with the following clause, and that it is this pragmatic factor (that

97 Discussed by Xue 1997.
we have seen into action in Gabelentz examples of object preposing) and not the syntactic factor of object deletion that elicits the unmarked passive.

Contrastiveness is a common feature of the *er* 而 context, as we have seen in Gabelentz’ example as well as in my putative passive sentences from Mengzi, like:

A6)士無事而食，不可也。(6.4)

*For a scholar performing no service to receive his support notwithstanding is improper.*

In the literature on *er* 而, there is to my knowledge no explicit connection between these particle and contrastive focus. Even though this calls for caution, there are some examples where *er* 而 is used interchangeably with the particle *ze* 則, whose function as topic markers is well known:

105. 若是，則先死者非父則母，非兄而姒也

*So then those who die first would be the mother if not the father, and the elder sister if not the elder brother*

(墨子，明鬼下第三十一)

106. 士妾有子而為之緦，無子則己

*When the concubine of an officer had a son, he wore the three months' mourning for her. If she had no son, he did not do so.*

(禮記，喪服小記第十五)

4.1.5 Gabelentz on *ze* 則 and inversion

Gabelentz gives the following examples for inversion with *ze* 則:

107. 子曰: 可以爲難矣, 仁則吾不知也。

*The Master said, 'This may be regarded as the achievement of what is difficult. But I do not know that it is to be deemed perfect virtue.'*

(論語 14. 2)

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98 Zhou 1961: 224
99 Gabelentz 1881: 212, par. 509
Here the object ren 仁 (perfect virtue) is preposed and immediately followed by ze 則. ren 仁 is in a contrastive focus, being opposed to other things which are merely difficult but not virtuous.

The Duke Ling of Wei asked Confucius about tactics. Confucius replied, 'I have heard all about sacrificial vessels, but I have not learned military matters.'

(論語 15.1)

Here the object zu dou zhi shi 墟豆之事 (the things concerning sacrificial vessels) is preposed and immediately followed by ze 則. It is in contrastive focus, being opposed to jun luzhi shi 軍旅之事 (military matters).

4.1.6 Pragmatic functions of ze 則

The particle ze 則 is often used to mark contrast or emphasis\(^\text{100}\), not necessarily with object inversion, like in the following example from Zhuangzi:

109. 子則祥矣，父則不祥

It is the good fortune of your son, and you count it his misfortune.

(莊子, 徐無鬼第二十四)

Here zi 子 the son, the subject of the intransitive verb xiang 象 be auspicious, lucky, is put in contrast with the subject of the following, symmetrical clause, the father.

The function of ze 則 as mark of contrastive focus is quite clear in the sentences in my database:

A4) 「暴其民甚，則身討國亡：不甚，則身危國削。(7.2)

A ruler who carries the oppression of his people to the highest pitch, will himself be slain, and his kingdom will perish. If one stop short of the highest pitch, his life will notwithstanding be in danger, and his kingdom will be weakened.

A9) 使已為政，不用則亦已矣 4.10

\(^{100}\) See 古代漢語虛詞辭典 p. 813 left column subdivision II
He pushed himself into the service of government. He was not employed, and he had to retire indeed.\(^{101}\)

A25) 邪說誣民，充塞仁義也。仁義充塞，則率獸食人 (6.9)

Then those perverse speakings will delude the people, and stop up the path of benevolence and righteousness. When benevolence and righteousness are stopped up, beasts will be led on to devour men.

I think that for the contexts associated with ze 則, the function of exposure is more relevant than the function of object ellipsis hypothesized by Yivchenko.

### 4.2. Connections between Putative Passives and Perfect

Some sentences in my list give the immediate feeling that there is a connection between their marked word order and a perfective meaning, like in:

\[A1)\] 師行而糧食 (2.4).

The host proceeds and supplies are eaten.

Given the fact that aspect in LZC can be explicitly marked by aspectual particles \(ji\) 既, \(yi\) 已 and \(yi\) 畢, or completely unmarked (without any particle and without marked word order) the question arises if there is a more general, typological connection between passive and perfect which might help us to give a further dimension to our description of passive. Bernard Comrie has dedicated a paper to the relations between perfect and passive in a typological framework, and this passage provides us with the necessary background before proceeding to an analysis of the data. “By Perfect, I mean that a given form describes a state that is the result of an earlier situation by giving expression to the earlier situation: for instance, the English sentence John has broken the cup relates a present state (the fact that the cup is broken) to an antecedent state (the fact that John broke the cup), and does so by using a form of break the cup, which in itself refers to the antecedent situation rather than to the resultant state, which latter is inferred from the use of a form with perfect meaning (have plus Past Participle). [...] In the perfect, one’s viewpoint of

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\(^{101}\) Here I have altered Legge’s translation in line with my reading of the sentence as an unmarked passive
the situation is from a later point, where its result felt, so that the perfect has much in common with relative past tense. With the perfect, one is interested in a state resulting form an earlier situation, and [...] with most two place predicates, in particular those that, lexically, describe a change of state [e.g. ‘kill’, ‘melt’ (transitive), ‘move’ (transitive)] the state is attributed primarily to the patient [...] rather than to the agent. Given this, one might expect the perfect to favor Patient-orientation, that is, that the perfect would be more likely than other aspects to correlate quite highly with passive-ergative.\textsuperscript{102}

I will first review the examples, in my database and from the literature, of passive marked by aspectual particles, and then proceed to the analysis of the unmarked cases.

4.2.1. Sentences with Passive Meaning where the Perfect Aspect is marked

In the two following sentence from \textit{Zuo zhuan}\textsuperscript{103}, we find sentences with passive meaning where the perfect aspect is marked by aspectual particles \textit{ji} 既, \textit{yi} 已 and \textit{yi} 矣\textsuperscript{104}.

110. 夫諸侯之會，事既畢矣

\textit{The princes have met and their business is completed}

(左傳, 哀公 十有二年, 傳十二·四)

111. 門已閉矣

\textit{The gate is shut}

(左傳, 哀公 十有五年, 傳十五·五)

Two of the examples in my database have such a marking:

A15) 今乘輿已駕 矣 (2.16)

\textit{Now, the horses have been put to the carriage}

Here the verbal particle \textit{yi} 已 modifies the transitive verb \textit{jia} 駕 to put (horses) to the carriage, together with the sentential particle \textit{yi} 矣.

A24) 水由地中行，江、淮、河、漢是也。險阻既遠，鳥獸之家人者消。

(6.9)

\textsuperscript{102} Comrie 1981: 66
\textsuperscript{103} The two following examples are taken from Yao 1999: 45
\textsuperscript{104} On \textit{ji} 既, see Pulleyblank 1995: 113, on \textit{yi} 已 see Pulleyblank 1995: 115, on \textit{yi} 矣 see Pulleyblank 1995: 116-117
The waters pursued their course through the country, even the waters of the Jiang, the Huai, the He, and the Han, and the dangers and obstructions were removed, the birds and beast which have injured the people also disappeared. Here the verbal particle modifies *ji* 既 the transitive verb *yuan* 遠 *to remove*.

For other two examples, an aspectual information is encoded in the negative particle *wei* 未, meaning "not already (the negation of *ji* 即, already).

4.2.2 Sentences with Passive and Perfect Meaning without explicit Perfect Marking

For the other examples in my database, though, there is no explicit marking with perfective particles, even when there seems to be an implication of perfectivity, like in:

- *A1*) 従行 而 粧食
  
  *The host proceeds and supplies are eaten.* (2.4)

In this example, as in the following, the conjunction *er* 而 makes explicit the temporal sequence of two actions, implying that the later action is a consequence or result of the former:

- *A3*) 立 乎 人 之 本朝 而 道 不行，恥也。 (10.5)
  
  *When a scholar stands in a prince's court, and his principles are not carried into practice, it is a shame to him.*

- *A14*) 五穀 餓而 民人 育 (5.4)
  
  *When the five kinds of grain were brought to maturity, the people all obtained a subsistence.*

- *A23*) 舜 流 共工 于 幽州，放 驤兜 于崇山，殺 三苗 于三危，殛鲧於羽山：四罪而天下咸服。 (9.3)

  *Shun banished the superintendent of works to Youzhou, he sent away Huandou to the mountain Chong, he slew the prince of Sanmiao in Sanwei and he imprisoned*
Gun on the mountain Yu. When the crimes of those four were thus punished, the whole kingdom acquiesced.

In the following example, it is the conjunction ze 则 that has the same function:

A25) 是邪誣民，充塞仁義也。仁義充塞，則率獸食人 (6.9)

Then those perverse speakings will delude the people, and stop up the path of benevolence and righteousness. When benevolence and righteousness are stopped up, beasts will be led on to devour men.

4.2.3 Other Sentences

In the following example, there is no particle making explicit a temporal sequence.

A12) 諫行言聽，膏澤下於民．(8.3)

The admonitions of a minister having been followed, and his advice listened to, so that blessings have descended on the people.

But we still have a clear sequence with an antecedent state (諫行言聽) and a resultant state (膏澤下於民).

A2) 歲十一月徒杠 成，十二月輿梁 成，民未病涉也 (8.2)

When in the eleventh month of the year the foot-bridges are completed, and the carriage-bridges in the twelfth month, the people have not the trouble of wading.

In this example there is a time frame (provided by the time phrases 歲十一月 and 十二月) and an action presented as completed (徒杠 成，輿梁 成)，and given as the antecedent of the following clause (民未病涉也 the people have not the trouble of wading).

4.3 Parallelism

Half of the examples of my database (15 out of 30) display some features of parallelism. Parallelism is quite a widespread feature of Classical Chinese literature, even in texts of philosophical prose like Mengzi. But there seems to be a particularly close connection between parallelism and some instances of usage of unmarked passive sentences in our database. In this paragraph I will make explicit this connection by subdividing these 15 sentences into 3 kind of parallel sequences: chiasmus, simple parallelism, parallelism
with variation in transitivity. This treatment will enable me to give a discourse motivation for some examples of unmarked passive which are not explainable in terms of lexical or syntactic features. To describe the different patterns found in the database, I will just rely on the elementary definition of parallelism given by Trask (1993: 198) as: “The use of the same construction in consecutive sentences for rhetorical effect, as in: I came, I saw, I conquered” and on the labeling of sentences with roman numbers, of clauses with Latin capital letters, and of V for verb, X for preverbal NPs and Y for postverbal NPs.

4.3.1 Chiasmus
According to the Routledge Dictionary of Language and Linguistics, chiasmus (from the Greek ‘diagonal arrangement’, after the letter χ chi) is “the inversion of the second of two parallel phrases or clauses”. In our case, it consists in the repetition in inverse order of the same verb and NP, with the NP first in preverbal, then in postverbal position.

A25) 是邪說誣民，充塞仁義也。仁義充塞，則率獸食人 (6.9)  
Then those perverse speakings will delude the people, and stop up the path of benevolence and righteousness. When benevolence and righteousness are stopped up, beasts will be led on to devour men.

Here the NP 仁義 is first the object of the transitive verb 充塞 (XV) and then its subject (YV).
In the following example, the second occurrence of the verb is preceded by the negative particle bu 不 and the subject is dropped, but we still have clearly the same pattern as above:

A8)治人 [人] 不治反其智 (7.4)  
If he is trying to rule others, and his government is unsuccessful, let him turn inwards and examine his wisdom.

4.3.2 Simple Parallelism
In this category, exactly the same pattern is repeated one or more times.
In the following example, the parallel pattern is just SV/SV:

A12) 謫行言聽 (8.3)
The admonitions of a minister having been followed, and his advice listened to

In the following example, the parallel pattern is just Time Phrase- SV/ Time Phrase- SV:

A2) 壬十一月徒杠 成，十二月輿梁 成 (8.2)

In the eleventh month of the year the foot-bridges are completed, and the carriage-bridges in the twelfth month.

In the following example, the five clauses repeat the same pattern (S 舉於 place name) five times:

A22) 傳說 舉於版築之間，賸鬲舉於魚鹽之中，管夷吾舉於士，孫叔敖舉於海，百里奚舉於市 (12.15)

Fu Yuè was called to office from the midst of his building frames; Jiāogē from his fish and salt; Guān Yìwǔ from the hands of his gaoler; Sūnshū Āo from his hiding by the sea-shore; and Bālí Xī from the market-place.

The other two examples are nominalizations. In both cases the two nominalized sentences repeat the exactly the same pattern, with the single difference of the different proper names.

In the following example, the sentences are consecutive:

A27) 齊公 之封於魯，為方百里也 […] 太公之封於齊也，亦為方百里也(12.8)

When Zhōu Gōng was invested with the principality of Lǔ, it was a hundred li square. […] When Tài Gōng was invested with the principality of Qi, it was a hundred li square.

In the following example, the sentences are at a short distance:

A26) 一羽之不舉，為不用力焉；軾薪之不見，為不用明焉 (1.7)

The feather is not lifted, because strength is not used; the waggon-load of firewood is not seen, because the eyesight is not used.

At the end of this category, I put 2 sentences displaying a more loose parallelism:

A16) 田野不辟，貨財不聚，非國之害也 (7.1)

It is not the cultivable area not being extended, and stores and wealth not being accumulated, which occasions the ruin of a State.

A17) 地不改辟矣，民不改聚矣 (3.1)
No change is needed for the enlarging of its territory: no change is needed for the collecting of a population.

4.3.3 Parallelism with variation in Transitivity

The same pattern is repeated, but one the verbs is transitive (and passivized), while the other is intransitive.

A4) 暴其民甚，则身弑国亡；不甚，则身危国削. (7.2)

_A ruler who carries the oppression of his people to the highest pitch, will himself be slain, and his kingdom will perish. If one stop short of the highest pitch, his life will notwithstanding be in danger, and his kingdom will be weakened._

Here the verbs _shi_ 註 and _xue_ 削 are transitive (and passivized) while the other 2 verbs (_wang_ 死 and _wei_ 危) are intransitives.

A11) 遺佚而不怨，阝窮而不憤 (3.9)

_When neglected and left without office, he did not murmur. When straitened by poverty, he did not grieve._

Here the _yiyi_ 遺佚 is transitive and passivized, while the verb _e qiong_ 阝窮 is intransitive.

A14) 五穀熟 而民人育 (5.4)

_When the five kinds of grain were brought to maturity, the people all obtained a subsistence._

The verb _yu_ 育 is transitive and passivized, while the verb _shu_ 熟 is intransitive.

A18) 土地辟，田野治 (12.7)

_The new ground was being reclaimed, and the old fields well cultivated_

Here I will give the larger passage divided into sentences and clauses marked by numbers and letters, to show the parallelism:

(A) (1) 入其疆：土地辟，田野治 [...] (2) 則有慶. (B) (1) 入其疆：土地荒蕪 [...] (2) 則有讓。

_When the sovereign entered the boundaries of a State, if the new ground was being reclaimed, and the old fields well cultivated [...] then the prince was rewarded. On the other hand, if, on entering a State, the ground was found left wild or overrun with weeds [...] then the prince was reprimanded._
The clause *tu di pi* 土地 pregnant in (A) (1) is repeated by the parallel clause *tu di huang wu* 土地荒蕪 in (B) (1), with variation in transitivity—while *pi* 被 is transitive and passivized, *huang wu* 荒蕪 is intransitive.

4.3.4 Parallelism in Herforth’s Example
If we look at the whole passage from which Herforth took his example, we find that the sentence from Han Feizi which is the starting point of our research is also an instance of parallelism:

*King Chao of Ch’in was ill. The hundred surnames in every hamlet bought an ox and every family prayed for the King’s early recovery. When Kung-sun Shu went out, he saw it. Therefore, he went in to congratulate the King and said: “The hundred surnames in every village bought an ox to pray for Your Majesty’s earliest recovery.” He King, accordingly, sent out men to inquire into the matter, and found it true. Therefore, the King said: “Make the people of every village pay a fine of two suits of armour. To be sure, who with no order offer prayers at his pleasure, loves me, the King. Indeed, when the people love me, I will have to alter the law and bend my will to comply with their requests. In this manner the law will not stand. If the law does not stand, it leads to chaos and ruin. Thus, the best measure is to fine the people of every village two suits of armour and restore them to order.”*

(韓非子,第三十五篇 外儲說右下)

The verb *zi* 諸 here is synonymous to *fa* 罰105. The particle *zhi* 之 in the sentence

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105 According to the authoritative Sung edition *Qian dao* 乾坤.
瞥之人是甲 is equivalent to the particle 且
tと, and the sentence means “fine their people two suits of armor”. The former clause瞥之人二甲 and the following clause
(不如)人罰二甲 constitute a chiasmus at some distance.

4.4 Prototypical cases of Putative Passives

I have discussed all the factors playing a role in the use of putative passive sentences: negatives, particle 且, particle 且, particle 且, perfect, parallelism, adverse meaning. The results are shown in Table 1, Appendix 2. Most sentences have more than one factor. Only one, sentence A21, is not related to any factor. It is also the only example of a sentence whose subject is outside the clause and not easily recoverable (the subject occurring at the beginning of the passage, more than 4 clauses before, as shown in Table 3, Appendix 2). This suggests that in this case we are not dealing with a patient subject sentence, but with a sentence with a deleted (active) subject.

There is no apparent lexical or syntactic or semantic restriction on the verbs recurring in patient-subject sentences. What we can derive from the data are just some prototypical cases:

1) NP-VP: Nouns not referring to animate beings, preceding verbs requiring animate subjects.
2) NP-VP: Transitive verbs whose object is neither present, nor recoverable from the context.
3) NP-VP-NP sentences with verbs designating punishments or other adverse conditions.

\[\text{See 古代汉语虚词辞典, sub voce 之, H.3, p. 837.}\]
Chapter 5  Conclusion

In this concluding chapter I will discuss object topicalization, subject ellipsis and agentivity making use of the framework established in chapters 3 and 4. Then I will proceed to analyze instances of unmarked object topicalization and evaluate some examples which seemingly contradict my framework. Then I will provide my conclusions and indicate some directions for further research.

5.1 Marked Object Topicalization

We regularly have cases of topicalization with O (S) V pattern after negative particles, with personal and demonstrative pronouns, and, up to a certain extent, with nominalized clauses- but very rarely with simple unmarked NPs. Otherwise, the object is usually marked by the postverbal anaphoric pronoun zhi 之 or by topicalization markers (fu 夫, zhe 者). While defining different instances of inversion, I have already briefly described the contexts for obligatory and pragmatically motivated inversions, mentioning that for full lexical NP objects, inversion is pragmatically motivated and obligatorily marked. I will now give more details about marked object preposal in Mengzi, concentrating on the usage of the anaphorical pronoun zhi 之. 107

5.1.1 Object Topicalization with anaphoric zhi 之

The pronoun zhi 之 follows the verb, and the sentence has this pattern: O (S) V 之. In the following clause from Mengzi, for example:

107 I will not discuss object exposure marked by 之 or 是, placed in front of the verb instead of after it, as it is not relevant for the data discussed in my database. I have already given a few informations derived from Pulleyblank about this pattern, of which Mengzi has some examples, like the stereotyped此之謂也 It refers to this. For more examples, please refer to Dai 1981: 404-406.
112. 善政 (O) 民 (S) 畏 (V) 之.

*Good government is feared by the people.*

(Mengzi 13.14)

The noun *shan zheng* 善政 is topicalized and repeated by postverbal *zhi* 之.

In Mainland Chinese literature on Classical Chinese inversion and Topicalization, what we have described as an exposed object is analyzed as the subject, so instead of describing the pattern as O (S) V 之, it is analyzed as S1 (S2) V 之, with S1 (primary subject) and S2 (secondary subject) sometimes analyzed as primary and secondary topic. Such is for example the analysis given by Yang and He (1992: 762) to the following sentence:

113. 險阻艱難，備嘗之矣；民之情僞，盡知之矣

*He has experienced perils, difficulties and hardships; he is thoroughly acquainted with the truth and the falsehood of men.*

(左傳, 僖公, 傳二八三)

I’m following Pulleyblank (1995: 68) and treating them as preposed objects (Pulleyblank uses the term “exposed object”). In the linguistic literature on English, sentences like: *Lisa, I like her* are analyzed as *left dislocations*. Trask 1993: 155 gives the following definition of left dislocation: “A dislocation in which some element is displaced to the front of the sentence, its normal position being occupied by an anaphor.”

LZC seems to conform without problems to such a description, which corresponds to a typologically very widespread pattern.

I will discuss a few examples taken from the first chapter of Mengzi.

114. 獸相食，且人惡之

*Beasts devour one another, and men hate them for doing so.*

(Mengzi 1.4)

The anaphoric pronoun *zhi* 之 repeats the exposed object. *Zhi* 之 can refer to the beasts (獣) as well as to the fact that beasts devour each other (獣相食).

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108 See Birner and Ward 1998: 93-95 for a discussion of the similarities and differences between left dislocation and other preposing constructions in English.

109 See Scaglione 1972: 379-387 for a discussion of left dislocation in Italian, where the phenomenon is very widespread and is traditionally known as “ripresa dell’oggetto” (repetition, or recalling of the object).
115. 南辱於楚：寡人恥之

On the south we have sustained disgrace at the hands of Chù. I have brought shame on my departed predecessors.

(孟子 1.5)

The anaphoric pronoun 之 repeats the exposed object (南辱於楚), which is identical to the first clause as a whole.

The following example displays both anaphoric repetition and obligatory inversion after a negative:

116. 諸侯之禮，吾未之學也

The ceremonies to be observed by the princes I have not learned

(孟子 5.2)

The anaphoric pronoun 之 repeats the exposed object (諸侯之禮), and 之 in its turn moves from postverbal to preverbal position.\(^{110}\)

Most of the topicalized we have seen are either clauses (our first two examples) or complex nouns (NP NP). Note that in all these cases, the agent subject is present, between the exposed object and the verb, so that we have the pattern: O S V 之. Without the presence of the agent subject, ambiguities might arise. When both the agent and the patients are simple, animate NPs, it might be difficult to tell if a sentence like 君殺之 means “the king killed him” (SV 之) or “the king, (they) killed him” (O (S) V 之). In fact, when the second, marked interpretation is involved, the agent subject is almost always present, to disambiguate the sentence.\(^{111}\)

5.1.2 Object Topicalization with the particle \(fu\) 夫

Beside being marked by postverbal by 之, the exposed object can be preceded by the topicalization marker \(fu\) 夫, as in the following sentence:

\(^{110}\) As noted in 古代漢語虛詞辭典 p. 835, left column, there are actually cases without inversion, like: “吾不知之矣” such persons I do not understand (論語, 8.16).

\(^{111}\) I have explored the connection between unmarked object topicalization and the length (the weight) of the preposed elements. There are interesting correlations between the length of topicalized elements and the presence of the repeating anaphoric pronoun (the longer elements tend to topicalize without the need for a repeating anaphoric pronoun).
117. 今夫水，搏而躍之，可使過顙

*Now, by striking water and causing it to leap up, you may make it go over your forehead*

(孟子 11.2)

Here, as in the following example, we have both explicit topicalization with 夫 and anaphoric repetition with anaphoric zhi 之

118. 夫世祿，滕固行之矣。

*As to the system of hereditary salaries, that is already observed in Teng.*

(孟子 5.3)

Fu 夫 is most commonly used as an introductory particle announcing a topic. This function is not limited to the marking of the exposed object- the most typical usage of fu 夫 as an initial particle is actually to mark a noun or a NP as the topic subject of a sentence, be it a sentence with verbless noun predication, like in the following example from Mengzi:

119. 夫志，氣之帥也

*The will is the leader of the passion-nature (qi 氣).*

(孟子 3.2)

The sentence can also have normal verb predication, like in the following example:

120. 夫我，乃行之

*As for me, I did it.*

(孟子 1.7)

In the following example, fu 夫 marks the topicalized patient subject of a sentence:

121. 夫章子，豈不欲有夫妻子母之屬哉！亖得罪於父，不得近；出妻屏子，終身不養焉。

---


113 It can also mark a whole clause as topic, as in:

夫撫劍疾視曰：『彼惡敢當我哉！』此匹夫之勇，敵一人者也 (Mengzi 2.3)

If a man brandishes his sword, looks fiercely, and says, How dare he withstand me? -- this is the valour of a common man, who can be the opponent only of a single individual.
Moreover, did not Zhāng wish to have (in his family) the relationships of husband and wife, child and mother? But because he had offended his father, and was not permitted to approach him, he sent away his wife, and drove forth his son, and all his life receives no cherishing attention from them.

(孟子 8.30)

Here the passive usage of the verb is explicitly marked by the particle yān 焉 (by them) at the end of the sentence.

Topicalization marked by fū 夫 is not a source of ambiguity, as we have seen. A far more complex case is given by the particle zhe 者.

5.1.3 Object Topicalization with the particle zhe 者

The particle zhe 者 has a wide range of meanings, most importantly nominalization, but also topicalization. Gabelentz has treated it under the rubric of object inversion, and I will start reviewing his examples:

122. gāo 者 抑之，下者挐之，有餘者損之，不足者與之.
   The (part of the bow) which was high is brought low, and what was low is raised up. (So Heaven) diminishes where there is superabundance, and supplements where there is deficiency.
   (道徳經, 77)

Here the object gāo 高 (the part of the bow which was high, in Legge’s translation) is topicalized, marked with zhe 者 and repeated by the anaphorical pronoun zhī 之.

123. 爲不善乎顯明之中者，人得而誅之；為不善乎幽閨之中者，鬼得而誅之
   If he does what is not good in the light of open day, men will have the opportunity of punishing him; if he does it in darkness and secrecy, spirits will inflict the punishment.
   (莊子, 庚桑楚第二十三)

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115 Gabelentz 1881: 200, par. 474
In this example from Zhuangzi, a whole clause (做不善乎顯明之中 “doing what is not good in the light of open day”) is topicalized (and nominalized), and then repeated by the anaphorical pronoun zhi之.

In these examples the topicalized objects are marked by zhe者 and anaphoric zhi之. In the following example\(^\text{116}\), due to the negative particle bu不, the topicalized clause is not repeated by anaphoric zhi之:

124. 不合乎先王之法者，君子不法也

*What is not in conformity with the Laws of the former Kings, the Gentleman doesn’t conform to it*

(法言義疏四)

Here below are two examples of V者 (nominalizations marked by zhe者) as patient subjects:\(^\text{117}\)

125. 先歸復所，後者劓

*Those who were first in coming over (to the new rule) should be restored to their places, while those who delayed should have their noses cut off*

(左傳，昭公，傳十三·二)

126. 在軍，熟食者分而後敢食

*When he was with the army, he did not venture to eat himself until all the soldiers had had their share of what was cooked*

(哀公，傳一六)

These cases are not ambiguous. But the following example, instead, with the preverbal NP topicalized by zhe者 but without anaphoric zhi之, is structurally ambiguous:

127. 夫子之設科也，往者不追，來者不拒。苟以是心至，斯受之而已矣。

*You, Master, having arranged to give lessons, do not go back to inquire into the past, and you do not reject those who come to you. If they come with the mind to learn, you receive them without any more ado.\(^\text{118}\)*

\(^\text{116}\) From Gabelentz 1881: 140

\(^\text{117}\) from He 1986: 211. He reports that: “There altogether 207 examples of subjects “V者” in Zuozhuan, and patient subjects are 32. about 15%.”

\(^\text{118}\) 楊柏峻: 你老人家開設課程,[對學生的態度是]去的不追問，來的不拒絕.
Here 往者 and 來者 are ambiguous between a topicalized object and a patient subject reading. We can have an exposed object interpretation, where zhi 之 has been deleted after bu 不:

往者不追 (之), 來者不拒 (之)

as proposed in Legge’s translation; or we can have a patient subject interpretation:

往者不追, 來者不拒

Those who go away are not chased after, those who come are not refused.

The ambiguity of the sequence VP 者 不 V is just a special case of the ambiguity of the sequence NP 不 V, ambiguity due to the fact that after a negative particle the disambiguating anaphoric pronoun zhi 之 is often deleted.

Here, as the agent of the action is clearly Mengzi, the master (夫子) mentioned in the introducing clause, I deem preferable to consider 往者 and 來者 topicalized objects.

To justify this decision, I need to make explicit my view on the more general issue of agentivity and subject ellipsis in LZC.

5.2 Subject ellipsis and agentivity

Classical Chinese is language allowing an extraordinary freedom in subject deletion. As remarked by both Zhu Dexi 1999 and Li 1997, most sentences actually do not have an explicit subject NP. The problem for any analysis focusing on the properties of the subject (in our case, its thematic property) is how to identify the subject in cases where the subject can either be the agent or the patient. While mediopassive sentences like 衣服很容易洗 and 君子 […]難罔以非其道 do not presuppose any agent, sentences like the following still do it:

128. 彼竊鈎者誅，竊國者為諸侯

The stealer of a clasp is executed; one who steals a country becomes a feudal lord.\(^{119}\)

\(^{119}\) Pulleyblank’s translation, in id. 1995: 87 ex. 304.
If whenever an agent is recoverable (that is, in any sentence beyond mediopassives) we understand the agent as if it had been present in the structure of sentence (but optionally deleted), we are bound to treat all agents, present or not on the surface, as subjects, and all the preverbal patient as topicalized objects.

This is in fact the strategy used by Xue 1997 in his article on subject ellipsis and marked word order in Classical Chinese. He deems that, given that in Classical Chinese we have free subject deletion, we can symmetrically freely insert an agentive subject whenever there is no one already there. This unrestrained recourse to insertion is somehow analogous to the traditional treatment of patient subject sentences as sentences paraphrasable with an agentive yu 於 passive. In this case, the aforementioned sentence from Zhuangzi would be paraphrased as:

`彼竊鈎者誅 (於人)`

In Xue’s case, the paraphrase would be:

`彼竊鈎者, (人)誅`

*As for the ones stealing a hook, (someone) kills (them).* Xue translates in Mandarin: 至於那些偷鉤子的人, (有人) 殺死(他們). The meaning is certainly the same, and the Modern Mandarin version is an acceptable paraphrase of the text. But a passive is (almost) always paraphrasable in a non-passive form. And a paraphrase is not equivalent to a syntactical explanation.

If we had a sentence like:

`彼竊鈎者, 人誅之`

there would be no doubt that 彼竊鈎者 would be interpreted as a topicalized object. The resumptive pronoun 之 is the standard object topicalization marker; the presence of an agent (人) in preverbal position is also by itself enough to constrain the interpretation of the patient as a topicalized object and not as a subject. But the anaphoric pronoun 之 and the agent 人 are not present. And in their absence, we cannot simply insert them.

The following passage from Hanfeizi makes clear the difference between these two syntactic strategies, which serve different discourse strategies:
Of yore, Shun ordered officials to drain the Great Deluge. One official set himself to work before the order came, and accomplished merit. However, Shun executed him. Once Yu received the feudal lords in audience in the vicinity of Kuei-chi. As the ruler of Fang Feng arrived late, Yu beheaded him. From this viewpoint it is clear that if those who went ahead of orders were executed and those who lagged behind were beheaded, the ancients must have held conformity to orders in high esteem.

First the actions are presented in their entirety, with their presuppositions and their consequences, focusing on the respective roles of the agent (舜) and the patient (之). Then a general statement is given, deriving from the actions described above, where just the fate of the patients is relevant. The agents (Shun and Yu) are demoted. The point raised by Xue is certainly not trivial, though. The degree of demotion (and of recoverability) of the agent in an ambiguous sentence like the one above mentioned is just not clear enough, and contextual as well as length factors play a role that is not possible (at least until now) to quantify.

Ambiguous cases like this occur in a well defined set of contexts allowing the ellipsis of the anaphoric pronoun zhi 之 and consequently neutralizing the marking of object topicalization. I will now deal with examples of unmarked and unconditioned object exposure, which seem to contradict my premise that unmarked object exposure is always conditioned.
5.3 Instances of unmarked Object Exposure

It is not easy to find examples of unmarked object exposure, even though it is often stated there is some free variation between VO and OV order both in Archaic and Late Zhou Chinese. Feng Shengli (Feng 1994: 79-80) gives two examples of unmarked object topicalization with simple NPs.

Feng’s first example comes from the Book of Documents.

130. 興陶曰：「都！慎厥身修，思永。惇敘九族.

Gao Yu said: “Oh, let him be careful about his personal cultivation, with thoughts that are far reaching and then he will effect a generous kindness and nice observance of distinctions among the nine classes of his kindreds.

(周書. 興陶謨)

According to Feng’s analysis, the object 噹身 (his person) precedes the verb 修 (to cultivate) without any marking of exposure.\(^{120}\)

But Karlgren, in his Glosses on the book of documents, p. 107, gives a different punctuation: 慎厥身，修思永， with 思 interpreted as a copula: “He should be careful about his person, the cultivation (of it) should be perpetual.”

The example is therefore quite dubious.

As for Feng’s second example, it comes from the Zhou Li, a pre-Han text the provenance and identity of whose author is unknown, but datable to the late Spring and Autumn and Warring State periods.

131. 腹豆 篙 徙

Offer wooden vases and remove the bamboo container.

(周禮. 大宗伯)

According to Feng’s analysis, the object 篙 (bamboo container) precedes the verb 徙 (remove) without any marking of exposure.

But here, as in the example above, a different reading might be more appropriate.

凡大祭祀，王后不與，則撤而薦豆籮，撤。\(^{121}\)

\(^{120}\) Here and in the following example, I have made explicit the reasoning implicit in Feng’s text.
“whenever there is a big sacrifice, and the empress cannot participate, have someone to act in her role, and offer wooden vases and bamboo containers, and then remove them.”

Biot’s translation (Le Tcheou-li : ou, Rites des Tcheou, vol. 1: 437) gives the following reading: “dans tous les grands sacrifices, si l’emperatrice n’est pas présente, il (=大宗伯, grand supérieur des ceremonies sacrées) la supplée pour presenter (祭祀) et enlever (撤) les vases, les corbeilles.”

The discussion above is meant to show how problematic it can be to evaluate the exposed object status of unmarked preverbal NPs.

Not all the examples are so debatable, though. Sun Liangming (Sun 1994:105) provides a dozen examples, mainly from Liji and Zhouli, which seem to be just interpretable as unmarked Object NPs preceding the verb, like the two following examples from Liji

132. 歲適。諸侯方祀，祭山川，祭五祀

The feudal princes present oblations (祔), each to (the spirit presiding over) his own quarter (方); to (the spirits of) its hills and rivers; and offer the five sacrifices of the house, all in the course of the year.

(禮記, 曲禮下第二)

133. 行步，則有環佩之聲

When he walks, there are the notes from his girdle pendant. (佩, carry on the belt, 璿 jade pendant).

(禮記, 經解第二六)

I think we can attribute these few examples to the discourse features of ritual texts. These texts have special constraints given by their prosody, as well as being quite formulaic, especially when referring to actions like sacrifices and dealing with ritual objects. Actually, as noted by Zhao Cheng (Zhao 1991:135-136) in Jiaguwen texts, we find regularly unmarked exposed objects with verbs connected with actions like sacrifices dealing with ritual objects. This has been sometimes been interpreted as a remnant of SOV order, and some scholars have claimed that Archaic Chinese had no restraints on the

121 This is the punctuation provided by the BeiDa online edition of the Zhou Li (http://chinese.pku.edu.cn/david/zhouli.html). I don’t mean with this that the punctuation is in itself able to solve a problem of syntactic analysis, it is just the final result of the analysis of the text by the text’s editor, and is given here for reference.
preverbal or postverbal position of the object, and actually that even verb directionality and voice where undetermined. But in two recent articles Peyraube has evaluated these claims and has reached the conclusion that for these features Archaic Chinese was not different from LZC. The dominant word order was SVO, an exposed object was always marked by the focus particles hui 惠 and wei 位, and unmarked preverbal patient NPs have to interpreted, in Archaic as well as in LZC, as patient subjects (Peyraube 1997: 109).

That means that instances of exposed object are extremely marginal and there is no support in diachrony for free variation between VO and OV order.

5.4 Conclusions and Further Developments

Is it fruitful to describe our putative passives as unmarked passives? If it would always be possible to distinguish between marked Object topicalization and (unmarked) promotion to Subject, the answer would certainly be affirmative. There would still be a certain number of ergative verbs, like zheng 正, about whose status we have not been able to give a definitive answer, but their ratio of occurrence in putative passives is not very high. The possibility to distinguish between topicalized objects and patient subjects is linked to the occurrence of the anaphoric pronoun zhi 之. And the occurrence of zhi is just optional in a set of syntactic contexts which are also connected with the pragmatic functions of topicalization and exposure. Even though I have tried to separate the syntactic factors from the pragmatic ones, there is an overlap between the two that would require more fine grained analytical tools. Measures for the weight of the promoted elements as well as for their degree of giveness are needed.

Another way to deal with the problem is to analyze the affinities between the passive construction and the causative construction, synchronically and diachronically, as well as between the putative passive and the passive marked by yu 於. If meaningful correlations emerge, it is an argument in favor of treating putative passives as unmarked passive.

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Some of these topics are sketched in the following paragraphs, namely: 5.4.1) typological characteristics of some ergative verbs in Classical Chinese; 5.4.2) Similarities between Passive and Causative Constructions; 5.4.3) Similarities and Differences between Putative Passives and Passives marked by *yu 於*.

5.4.1 Haspelmath’s list of causatives and anticausatives alternations

Inchoative/causative pairs play a prominent role in word derivation processes in Classical Chinese. Comparing the list of morphologically derived pairs with the list given in Haspelmath, we find interesting similarities.

Haspelmath has tested a sample of 31 alternations in 21 languages. These are the pairs of verbs in his sample:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Wake up (intr./tr.)</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>Change (intr./tr.)</th>
<th>22</th>
<th>Finish (intr./tr.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Break (intr./tr.)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Melt (intr./tr.)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Turn (intr./tr.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Burn (intr./tr.)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Be destroyed/destroy</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Roll (intr./tr.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Die/kill</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Get lost/lose</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Freeze (intr./tr.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Open (intr./tr.)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Develop (intr./tr.)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Dissolve (intr./tr.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Close (intr./tr.)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Connect (intr./tr.)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Fill (intr./tr.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Begin (intr./tr.)</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Boil (intr./tr.)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Improve (intr./tr.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Learn/teach</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Rock (intr./tr.)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Dry (intr./tr.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Gather (intr./tr.)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Go out/put out</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Split (intr./tr.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Spread (intr./tr.)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Rise/raise</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Stop (intr./tr.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Sink (intr./tr.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Haspelmath has correlated the verb pairs with the direction of derivation in 21 languages. He found out that there is a tendency, consistent crosslinguistically, to prefer the causative alternation (where the inchoative is the basic form, the causative the derived form) when the change of state doesn’t require an external agent (like for “sink” or “wake up”), and the anticausative alternation (where the causative form is the basic and the inchoative verb is derived) when an external agent is needed (like for “break” or “die/kill”).
I have found that 13 morphologically marked verb pairs in Classical Chinese conform to Haspelmath prediction. Here below are the 13 verb pairs from Haspelmath. The pairs on the top are causative alternations, the pairs at the bottom are anticausatives alternations. I have used bold characters to mark out cases where, according to Haspelmath’s model, we would expect causative alternation but we find anticausatives in Classical Chinese, and vice versa.

As these correlations are not studied in the literature, it would be interesting to explore them further.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>to wake up</th>
<th>覺</th>
<th>to be conscious of/to awake</th>
<th>Downer F1</th>
<th>*-s</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>to go out/put out</td>
<td>出</td>
<td>to emerge/to put out</td>
<td>Downer C8</td>
<td>*-s</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>to sink</td>
<td>沉</td>
<td>to sink/to drown/to immerge</td>
<td>Downer C4</td>
<td>*-s</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>to learn, teach</td>
<td>學</td>
<td>to learn/to teach</td>
<td>Downer C19</td>
<td>*-s</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>to destroy</td>
<td>壞</td>
<td>to destroy/to be destroyed</td>
<td>LaPolla 2003:23</td>
<td>*N-</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>to fill</td>
<td>盛</td>
<td>to be full/to be full</td>
<td>Downer F13</td>
<td>*-s</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>to spread, develop</td>
<td>張/脹</td>
<td>to stretch/to be stretched</td>
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<td>*-s</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>遺</td>
<td>to lose, abandon/to leave to</td>
<td>Downer D20</td>
<td>*-s</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>to rise/raise</td>
<td>竈/舉</td>
<td>to lift, raise up</td>
<td>Baxter-Sagart 1998:59</td>
<td>*?-</td>
<td></td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>to connect</td>
<td>zhu/shu</td>
<td>to connect/to be attached</td>
<td>Baxter-Sagart 1998: 46</td>
<td>*N-</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>to gather</td>
<td>集/萃</td>
<td>to collect/to assemble</td>
<td>Baxter-Sagart 1998: 59</td>
<td>*-s</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>to break</td>
<td>折</td>
<td>to break off/to be broken off</td>
<td>Baxter-Sagart 1998: 43</td>
<td>*N-</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>to split</td>
<td>別</td>
<td>to separate/to take leave</td>
<td>Baxter-Sagart 1998: 46</td>
<td>*N-</td>
<td>A</td>
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</table>

5.4.2 Similarities between Passive and Causative Constructions

The data discussed in the preceding section show a pattern of correspondences between causatives and anticausatives in Ancient Chinese derivational morphology. It remains to be explored if this pattern can be described as a mechanism to produce passives from actives, as Downer and Baxter and Sagart have suggested. What is quite clear, is that the mechanism was not highly productive. In LZC, the regular way to produce causatives from intransitives was not morphological, but syntactical. It is generally accepted that in ancient Chinese a sequence Vintr-NP can be interpreted as having a causative “reading”. These “readings” can be described as a “construction” in the sense of Goldberg's
Construction Grammar, namely as a “pairing of forms with meaning/use such that some aspect of the form or of the meaning/use is not strictly predictable from the component parts or from other constructions in the language”\textsuperscript{123}. Putative passives can also be described as constructions. Just as we have a symmetry between causatives and anticausatives, it is worth investigating if we can find the same sort of symmetry between causative constructions and the putative passives constructions, namely between A) and B):

A) Causative Construction

\[
\text{Vintr}+\text{NP} \Rightarrow \text{make NP } V
\]

133. 王如改諸則必反予

\textit{If the king will change his attitude, then he will certainly make me come back.}

(反=return, here = 使反 make me return).

(孟子 4.12).

B) Passive Construction

\[
\text{NP}+\text{Vtr.} \Rightarrow \text{NP is } V-\text{ed}
\]

A12） 諫行言聽 (8.3)

\textit{“Admonitions are followed and words of counsel are heard.”}

(equivalent to 諫見行言見聽or to 諫為所行言為所聽)

Finding a formal symmetry between the two constructions would prove very interesting from the point of view of historical evolution, as recent studies by Peyraube and Jiang Shaoyu have demonstrated how the passive and the causative construction interact with each other in their grammaticalization path.

5.4.3 Similarities and Differences between Putative Passives and Passives marked by \textit{yu} 於

In his 1999 article on “The system of pre-Qin patient-subject sentences” Yao Zhenwu claims that passive in Ancient Chinese is defined in term of pragmatics and context and never in term of a specific passive morphology. According to this interpretation, patient-

\textsuperscript{123} Goldberg 1996: 68. See also Goldberg 1985 and the seminal Fillmore 1968.
subject sentences are basically like the so-called passives marked by yu (the main difference being the possibility of dropping the subject from yu sentences).

There are 16 sentences in Mengzi with passives marked by yu (one more sentence is marked by the particle yan). The verbs are 11. In all of them, both the agent and the patient are animate. They can be divided into two groups:

1) “Give/receive” verbs, where the agent can be conceived as someone with a higher status or power than the patient, like a giver versus a receiver: 治 rule, 食 feed, 賜 give, 法 give example, 見 give an audience to.

2) Verbs with adverse meaning: 葬 to obscure, 棄 reject, 挫 break, snap, 濕 contaminate

Compared with the unmarked passives, where the verbs do not fall into any special semantic class (even though there is a subset of verbs with adverse meaning), passives marked by yu seem to possess a much more consistent semantic pattern. The other difference with the putative passives is related to the nature of the patient subjects (mostly single NPs and mostly inside the clause for unmarked passive sentences, while they are mostly inferred or outside the clause for yu sentences).

It would be interesting to explore if these differences are systematic enough to disprove Yao Zhenwu's claim of the basic identity of unmarked passive and passive marked by yu.

124 "The postverbal particle yan is equivalent in meaning to an expected *yu zhi in it, to it*, etc., which is never found." (Pulleyblank 1995: 9-10).
APPENDIX 1

EXHAUSTIVE LIST OF PUTATIVE PASSIVE SENTENCES IN MENGZI

1) 師行而糧食 (2.4)
Army- go- ER- supplies- eat
_The host proceeds and supplies are eaten._

2) 歲十一月徒杠成，十二月輿梁成. (8.2)
year-eleven-month- foot bridge- complete, twelve month carriage bridge complete
_In the eleventh month of the year the foot-bridges are completed, and the carriage-bridges [are completed] in the twelfth month._

3) 立乎人之本朝而道不行，恥也. (10.5)
stand-in-man-ZHI- court-ER- principle- not- carry out, shame YE
_When a scholar stands in a prince’s court, and his principles are not carried into practice, it is a shame to him._

4) 暴其民甚，則身殞國亡；不甚，則身危國削. (7.2)
to oppress- Q1- people- extreme, then- himself- kill- kingdom- perish;
not- extreme, then- himself- be in danger- kingdom- weaken. To name- him- saying- dark-cruel
_A ruler who carries the oppression of his people to the highest pitch, will himself be slain, and his kingdom will perish. If one stop short of the highest pitch, his life will notwithstanding be in danger, and his kingdom will be weakened._

5) 曰：「舍館未定。」 (7.24)
to say- lodging-house- not yet- arranged
_My lodging-house was not arranged._
For a scholar performing no service to receive his support notwithstanding, is improper.\textsuperscript{125}

In the time of Yao, when the world had not yet been perfectly reduced to order,\textsuperscript{8}

If he is trying to rule others, and (they) are not (well) ruled, let him turn inwards and examine his wisdom.\textsuperscript{126}

He pushed himself into the service of government. He was not employed, and he had to retire indeed\textsuperscript{127}

When Confucius was chief minister of Justice in Lu, his counsels were not to followed.\textsuperscript{128}

When neglected and left without office, he did not murmur. When straitened by poverty, he did not grieve.

The admonitions of a minister having been followed, and his advice listened to

officer- not have- hereditary- government office,

\textsuperscript{125} I have interpreted here 食 as *si*: to be fed, to be supported
\textsuperscript{126} Legge translates: *his government is unsuccessful*
\textsuperscript{127} Legge translates: *his prince declining to employ him*
\textsuperscript{128} Legge translates: *the prince came not to follow his counsels*
to carry out- the affairs of government- not have- to act as deputy, to occupy concurrently
Let not offices be hereditary, nor let officers be pluralists.

14)五穀熟而 民人 育 (5.4)
five- grains- to be mature- ER people- nourish
*When the five kinds of grain were brought to maturity, the people all obtained a subsistence.*

15)今 乘舆 已 駕矣 (2.16)
now- carriage for nobles- already- attach a horse- YI
*Now, the horses have been put to the carriage*

16) 田野 不辟，貨財不聚，非國之害也 (7.1)
cultivable area- not- to extend, store- wealth- not- to accumulate, not be- state- ZHI- damage- YI
*It is not the cultivable area not being extended, and stores and wealth not being accumulated, which occasions the ruin of a State.*

17) 地不改辟矣，民不改聚矣 (3.1)
*No change is needed for the enlarging of its territory: no change is needed for the collecting of a population.*

18) 土地 辟， 田野 治 (12.7)
ground open up cultivable area manage
*The new ground was being reclaimed, and the old fields well cultivated.*

19) 殃民者不容於堯、舜之世 (12.8)
destroy- people- ZHE- not- tolerate- YU- Yao, Shun ZHI- time
*A destroyer of the people would not have been tolerated in the times of Yao and Shun.*

20) 罪不容於死 (7.14)
crime- not- be contained- YU- death
*Death is not enough for such a crime.*

---

129 I have here interpreted the particle yu 於 as marking location in time and not agency. Yang Bojun translates: "加害於百姓的人，如果在堯舜的時代，是不被容納的．"

130 I have here interpreted the particle yu 於 as marking location in space and not agency. 容= contain, according to Yang Bojun, =容納 accommodate, have capacity for- so death cannot accommodate for this crime, death is still too small as a punishment.
21) 時舉於秦 (9.9)

at the time when- raise- in- Qin

_Having become chief minister of Qin_.

22) 傳說 舉於版筑之間，膠鬲舉於魚鹽之中，管夷吾舉於士，孫叔敖舉於海，百里奚舉於市 (12.15).

Fù Yuè- _raise_- in- building frames _ZHI_- between, Jiǎogē- _raise_- in- fish- salt _ZHI_- middle, Guàn Yìwū- _raise_- from- officer, Sūnshū Ao- _raise_- from- sea, Bālì Xī- _raise_- from- market

_Fù Yuè was called to office from the midst of his building frames; Jiǎogē from his fish and salt; Guàn Yìwū from the hands of his gaoler; Sūnshū Ao from his hiding by the sea-shore; and Bālì Xī from the market-place._

23) (舜流共工于幽州，放驪兜于崇山，殺三苗于三危，殛鲧於羽山)：四罪而天下咸服。 (9.3)

Shun- to banish- superintendent of works- in- Youzhou,

to sent away- Huandou- in- Chong- mountain, to slay- Sanmiao- in- Sanwei,

to banish (or: execute)- Gun- in- Yu- mountain: four- to punish- ER-world- all- to submit

_(Shun banished the superintendent of works to Youzhou, he sent away Huandou to the mountain Chong, he slew the prince of Sanmiao in Sanwei and he imprisoned Gun on the mountain Yu). When the crimes of those four were thus punished, the whole kingdom acquiesced._

24) 水由地中行，江、淮、河、漢是也。險阻既遠，鳥獸之害人者消。 (6.9)

_water_- from- earth- middle- to go, Jiang, Huai, He, Han- like this- YE.

Danger- obstruction- already- to remove, bird- beast _ZHI_- to injure- people _ZHE_- to disappear

_The waters pursued their course through the country, even the waters of the Jiang, the Huai, the He, and the Han, and the dangers and obstructions were removed, the birds and beast which have injured the people also disappeared._

25) 是邪說誣民，充塞仁義也。仁義充塞，則率獸食人 (6.9)

---

131 I have here interpreted the particle _yu_ 於 as marking location in space and not agency. Yang Bojun translates: 當他在秦國被推舉出來的時候.

132 I have here interpreted the particle _yu_ 於 as marking location in space and not agency.
Then those perverse speakings will delude the people, and stop up the path of benevolence and righteousness. When benevolence and righteousness are stopped up, beasts will be led on to devour men.

26)一羽之不举，為不用力焉；薪薑之不見，為不用明焉 (1.7)

one- feather- ZHI not- to raise, because- not-to use- strength- YAN,
wagon- firewood- ZHI- not- to see, because- not- to use- eyesight- YAN

The feather is not lifted, because strength is not used; the waggon-load of firewood is not seen, because the eyesight is not used.

27)周公 之封於魯，為方百里也 (12.8)

Zhōu Gōng- ZHI- to give fiefdom- in- Lu, to be- square- one hundred- li- YE

When Zhōu Gōng was invested with the principality of Lù, it was a hundred li square.

28)絳界 既正，分田制祿，可坐而定也 (5.3)

boundaries- already- to define correctly, to divide- field- to regulate- allowance,
to can- to sit- ER- to settle- YE

When the boundaries have been defined correctly, the division of the fields and the regulation of allowances may be determined by you, sitting at your ease.

29)居下位而不獲於上，民不可得而治也 (7.12)

to inhabit- inferior- position- ER- not- to obtain- from- above (=the sovereign),
people- not- to can- to obtain- ER- to govern- YE

When those occupying inferior situations do not obtain the confidence of the sovereign, they cannot succeed in governing the people.
APPENDIX 2

TABLE 1
LEXICAL, SYNTACTIC AND DISCOURSE FEATURES OF PUTATIVE PASSIVE

Neg.= Negative; Perf.=Perfect; Parall.=Parallelism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence</th>
<th>Neg.</th>
<th>Er 面</th>
<th>Ze 則</th>
<th>Zhe 者</th>
<th>Perf.</th>
<th>Parall.</th>
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<td></td>
<td>tìng 聽</td>
<td>to listen, obey</td>
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<td>shè 撮</td>
<td>to occupy jointly</td>
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<td>yù 育</td>
<td>to nourish</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>jīa 駕</td>
<td>to put (horses) to the carriage</td>
<td></td>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>ju 聚</td>
<td>to collect</td>
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<td>to give as fief</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td>to govern</td>
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# TABLE 3: SUBJECTS

A= Animate; U=Unanimate; I.C. = Inside the Clause; O.C. = Outside the clause (the number indicates how many clauses before is the subject); NP= simple NP; Pron.=Pronoun; Nom.= Nominalization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>TRANSLATION</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>U</th>
<th>I.C.</th>
<th>O.C.</th>
<th>NP</th>
<th>Pron.</th>
<th>Nom</th>
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<td>territory</td>
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<td>✔</td>
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<td>✔</td>
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<td>✔</td>
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<td>✔</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>一羽輿薪</td>
<td>one feather wagon of firewood</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td>27</td>
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<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Tài Gōng 太公</td>
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<td>NP之V</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>分田制祿</td>
<td>the division of the fields and the regulation of allowances</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>people</td>
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Bibliography

For the Classical Chinese sources and their translation, I have made use of Legge’s translation whenever possible (for Mengzi133, Lunyu, Zuo zhuan, Shi jing, Shu jing, Li ji, Lao zi, Zhuang zi); for the other texts, I have used the standard translation: W.K. Liao for Han feizi, Y.P. Mei for Mo zi, J. Knoblock for Xun zi, J. Knoblock and Riegel for Lushi Chun qiu, Rickett for Guan zi. In the other cases, I have used the translation given by the source citing the example (Pulley blank, Schuessler and Gabelentz) or I have given my own translation. The translations are not meant to be the basis for my analysis of the text, but merely an aid for a quick understanding of the cited passage; when Legge’s translation of some example was in conflict with my own analysis, I have provided my own translation of the passage, mentioning it in a note. For every citation from Mengzi, I have given the number of chapter and number of paragraph according to Yang Bojun’s edition.


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