

Present transformational generative grammar of a Chomskian type concentrates on formal properties of passive structures which have not yet been in the centre of attention of Czech linguistics. In this paper we are going to discuss the Czech analytic passive structures in (1b) using the contemporary stage of development of the Chomskyan framework. Our analysis is thus also meant to show that even languages with rich inflection and relatively free constituent order, like Czech, can successfully be described in terms of generative grammar, and that such an analysis can contribute to the development of the general linguistic theory as well.

1 Description of the passive structures

1.1 Passive transformation

The traditional analysis describes (2) as surface distinctions caused by the change of the verbal element in (1a/b). In this sense classical grammar perceives the formal distinctions between (1a) and (1b) as a kind of transformation, though it does not use this terminology.¹ The following (3) gives a schematic description of such a transformation starting as a structure (1a) and resulting in (1b).²

(3) Transformation T_1

(a) $[NP^1]_{NOM} - [V^1_{lex}]_{fin} - [NP^2]_{ACC} \Rightarrow$ (b) $[NP^2]_{NOM} - [V^2_{be}]_{fin} - [V^1_{lex}]_{part} - [NP^1]_{INSTR}$

The description of T_1 in (3) is obviously neither precise nor a full formalisation of all possible structures; e.g. it does not cover the cases in which the active variant contains a subordinate clause in the position of the ACC constituent. Because clauses are not morphologically case marked, the passive variant of this constituent is identical. We are also going to ignore all the possible changes in the linear order, one of which is illustrated in (4).

(4) (a) *Petr* *sliboval* *Pavlovi,* *že* *přijde* \Rightarrow (b)
 Peter_{NOM} promised Paul_{DAT} that arrives_{S_{SM}} \Rightarrow (b)
 ‘Peter promised to Paul that he arrives.’
 (b) *Pavlovi* *bylo* *slibováno* (*Petrem*), *že* *přijde*
 Paul_{DAT} was promised (Peter_{INSTR}) that arrives_{S_{SN}}
 ‘It was promised to Peter (by Paul) that he arrives.’

Nor does T_1 in (3) reflect the cases like (5), with infinitive, or (6), in which the active variant (a) contains (apart from NP_{NOM} and NP_{ACC}) another NP or prepositional phrase PP.

¹ The term transformation in this section has only a general meaning of ‘structural change’, because it is exactly the theoretical concept of transformation that differentiates many analyses of the passives. In section 2.2 we are going to define the notion of transformation with respect to the framework used in our analysis.

² The features of verbal tense and agreement are described only schematically in (3). For a detailed discussion of the morphology of V^1 and V^2 in (3) see section 1.1.1.