

On the Perception of English Passives by Chinese EFL Learners

Kun-Peng Zhang* · Seung-Man Kang**
(Chungbuk National University)

Zhang, Kun-Peng & Kang, Seung-Man. “On the Perception of English Passives by Chinese EFL Learnersc.” *Studies in English Language & Literature* 46.1 (2020): 197-214. Passivization in Chinese takes place by placing the active Patient in subject position and demoting the active Agent to the *bei*-phrase. There are two noticeable differences between Chinese and English. First, the transitive verb in Chinese remains the same in the passive. Second, the *bei*-phrase is obligatorily present, which is a significant structural indicator of passive. These structural differences are shown to yield a host of different perceptual patterns of English passives by Chinese EFL learners. For our discussion, we have taken a survey among 50 Chinese college students to examine how they perceive English passives into Chinese. In this survey, we asked them to translate 5 short passives and 5 long passives with the *by*-phrase. The survey results reveal that the former give rise to a variety of Chinese constructions such as accusative constructions, *ba*-constructions, ergative constructions, existential constructions, and middle constructions other than Chinese passives. The latter, on the other hand, are perceived as accusative constructions and *ba*-constructions. We attribute this to the fact that passivization in Chinese is not highly productive and the subjects are strongly influenced by the *by*-phrase in their perception of English passives. (Chungbuk National University)

Key Words: passive, *bei*-construction, *ba*-construction, ergative, middle construction, theta role assignment

* First author

** Corresponding author

I. Introduction

English can be characterized as a language in which most of active sentences are freely passivized, whereas Chinese often resists passivization. Syntactic passives are by far more frequent in English than in Chinese (Xiao, 2006). The passive voice in English is one of the most common grammar points and easily formulated by placing the semantic object in subject position and altering the transitive verb. However, Chinese exhibits a different mode of passivization in terms of the morphology of the active transitive verb, as shown below.

- (1) a. John was murdered (by Mary).
b. John *bei* Mary mousha-le.
by murder-past
'John was murdered by Mary'.

We note in the above that the *by*-phrase in (1a) has been replaced by *bei Mary* in Chinese and that the active verb remains constant in its morphological form as in (1b). Another difference is noted here between the two languages; the Chinese *bei*-phrase, unlike its counterpart in (1a), is never allowed to be left out.

These syntactic and morphological differences are seen to cause a lot of difficulties in translating English passive constructions into Chinese. In this paper, we will delve into some basic properties of passive constructions in English and Chinese, centering around the differences mentioned above, and examine the patterns of translating English passive constructions into Chinese by Chinese EFL learners. For our discussion, we have conducted a survey among 50 college students. The findings of the survey reveal that the Chinese subjects tend to interpret English passive constructions as a variety of Chinese constructions. The relatively low rate of passives obviously shows the resistant aspect of passivization in Chinese.

II. Properties of Passives in English and Chinese

This chapter will introduce some properties of passive constructions in English and Chinese with our main focus on syntactic and morphological differences and aspects of Case and theta-role assignment. Besides, we will briefly introduce Chinese *ba*-constructions, which are unique in Chinese and frequently appear as a translation of English passive constructions.

2.1 Morphological Form of Passive Verbs

Passivization in English straightforwardly goes through the process of inserting the auxiliary verb *be*, changing the transitive verb into its past participle form, and demoting the active Agent in the *by*-phrase, as shown below.

- (2) a. John broke the window.
 b. The window was broken (*by John*).
- (3) a. John *dasui-le* chuanghu.
 break-past window
 ‘John broke the window’.
- b. Chuanghu *bei* (*John*) *dasui-le*.
 window by break-past
 ‘The window was broken by John’.

As seen above, we note two differences between the English and Chinese passive. First, the English passive needs the auxiliary verb *be*, which is inflected according to the person and the number of the subject as in (2b), whereas the Chinese counterpart does not, as seen in (3b). Second, the active verb *break* is shifted into its past participle form *broken*; by contrast, the Chinese verb *dasui* ‘break’ remains the same as in the active.

2.2 *By*-Phrase and *Bei*-Phrase

For the purpose of discussion on the *by*-phrase and the *bei*-phrase, it is necessary to introduce the main categories of passive sentences in English and Chinese briefly. Regarding the syntactic structure, the passive construction of English and Chinese could be basically categorized into long and short passives. Passive constructions with an overt agent are termed as a long passive, whereas those without one are called a short passive, as shown below.

- (4) a. The rat was killed by John.
 b. The rat was killed.
 c. The rat *bei* John shasi-le.
 by kill-past
 d. The rat *bei* () shasi-le.
 by kill-past
- (5) a. John *bei* Mary piping-le.
 by criticize-past.
 'John was criticized by Mary'.
 b. John *bei* () piping-le.
 by criticize-past
 'John was criticized'.
 c. *John piping-le.
 criticize-past.

According to the definition above, examples (4a) and (5a) are a long passive, whereas those in (4b) and (5b) are a short passive. A cross-linguistic difference is found between (4b) and (5b); the Agent in the former has been left out along with *by*, whereas only the Agent has in the latter. Otherwise, the sentence breaks as in (5c). The *by*-phrase in English often deletes due to a rule of ellipsis, but this rule

does not hold in Chinese as shown in (3b).¹ The argument NP *John* of the *bei*-phrase, however, is allowed to be deleted without much ado, enabling the sentence to remain as a passive. In this regard, the preposition *bei* in (5b) can be said to be an obligatory indicator of passivization in Chinese, as pointed out by Long & Kang (2019).

The two phrases in question reflect further differences as follows. Firstly, their syntactic positions are different from each other. Acting as an adjunct to modify the past participle, the *by*-phrase is located at the end of the whole sentence, as shown in (1a), (2b), and (4a). However, the *bei*-phrase is positioned prior to the passive verb as in (3b), (4c), and (4d). Secondly, they differ in functions. Since the *by*-phrase functions as an adjunct, one notable feature to distinguish between long and short passives is the covertness of the *by*-phrase in English. In other words, the lack of it will not cause any change in form and meaning. On the contrary, the removal of the *bei*-phrase in a Chinese passive immediately leads to ill-formedness in form and meaning, as illustrated in (5c), in which the verb *piping* 'criticize' is in the active but lacks its internal argument.

2.3 Theta Role and Case Assignment

Jaeggli (1986) illustrates that passivization takes place when the active verb is deprived of the ability to assign a θ -role to its external argument and Case to its internal argument. This illustration involves two theory-internal notions of θ -role and Case assignment.

- (6) a. John stole Mary a wallet.
b. Mary was stolen a wallet (by John).
c. A wallet was stolen for Mary (by John).

¹ Note that sentence (3b) is still grammatical without *bei-John*, but it becomes an ergative construction without it, which is not of our concern in this paper.

According to Theta-Theory in generative syntax (Chomsky, 1981), the three NPs in each sentence are assumed to receive a θ -role in relation to the ditransitive predicate *steal* in (6a). The θ -role, which is syntactic in nature, is often represented as a thematic role in semantic notion. It follows that the three NPs in (6a) are assigned Agent for *John*, Beneficiary for *Mary*, and Theme for *a wallet*.

What is noteworthy here is the fact that the three thematic roles in question remain constant all the way through derivation in (6b) and (6c), no matter where they end up being placed in a sentence. This consistency is licensed by the so-called θ -Criterion formulated in Chomsky (1981: 36).

(7) Theta Criterion

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

The criterion above guarantees that the three NPs can keep their θ -role unchanged even after they are passivized as in (6b) and (6c). Otherwise, they are obliged to get a new θ -role in their landing site on the surface, which constitutes a clear instance of the criterion above.

Chinese has parallel passive constructions corresponding to examples in (6). Interestingly, however, the indirect object *Mary* in (6b) is taken to have a Source role, not a Beneficiary one in English.

(8) a. John tou-le Mary yi-ge qianbao.

steal-past one-CL wallet

‘John stole a wallet from Mary’.

b. Mary bei John tou-le yi-ge qianbao.

by steal-past one-CL wallet

‘A wallet was stolen from Mary by John’.

- c. Yige qianbao *bei* John cong Mary nali tou-le.²
 One-CL wallet by from there steal-past.
 'A wallet was stolen from Mary by John'.

Although (8a) is similar to (6a) in syntactic configuration, the θ -role that *Mary* gets from *tou* 'steal' in (8a) is regarded as a Source in Chinese, as can be seen from its passive form (8c) in which the Chinese preposition *cong* 'from' is inserted to introduce *Mary*, the Source of *a qianbao* 'one wallet'. According to (7), *Mary*'s θ -role should be constant in (8a,c) no matter if it is active or passive.

As a matter of fact, we can note that the meaning of (6a) in English is opposite to that of (8a) in Chinese. Thus, it is assumed that (6a) would be translated into a Chinese sentence mistakenly due to their similar syntactic configuration and different θ -roles of *Mary*. Therefore, the examination of θ -roles borne by the arguments in source text is indispensable to the process of translation from English into Chinese.

Now let us turn to how passive constructions are derived in both languages. Passivization is often dubbed as an NP movement, in which the internal argument of the active verb is assumed to move into subject position for a Case reason. Let us look at the examples in (2) and (3), repeated here as (9) and (10).

- (9) a. John broke the window.
 b. *The window* was broken __ (John).
 (10) a. John dasui-le chuanghu.
 break-past window
 b. *Chuanghu* bei John dasui-le ____.
 window by break-past

It is straightforward that *the window* in (9b) is seen to move to subject position

² It should be noted that the indirect object should be followed by *nali* when the direct object is passivized, rendering it to become a sort of location from which an action originates.

because the passive verb *broken* is assumed to be deprived of the ability to assign Case to *the window*. This theory-internal explanation does not hold in Chinese passives. As mentioned in section 2.1, the passive verb in Chinese remains the same as in the active, as shown in (10b). It follows that the passive verb *dasui* 'break' should be assumed to have the ability to assign Case to *chuanghu* 'window'. If this is the case, *chuanghu* is assumed to move to the position in question for some other reason, which we simply argue in this paper is the EPP requirement.³

2.4 *Ba*-Constructions

The so-called *ba*-constructions in Chinese are those in which the Theme argument of an active verb is placed before the verb preceded by *ba* to get an emphatic reading.

- (11) a. John he-le guozhi.
 drink-past juice.
 'John drank juice'.
 b. John *ba* guozhi he-le ____.
 ba juice drink-past.
 'John drank juice'.
 c. Ba guozhi he-le.
 juice drink-le
 'Drink juice, please'.

The internal argument *guozhi* 'juice' in (11a) is base-generated to the right of the

³ An alternative assumption might be that the passive verb in Chinese passives likewise lacks the ability to assign Case to its internal argument, which renders it to move to subject position to get Case there. In this analysis, *bei* is treated as a verb responsible for Case assignment by carrying tense. In this paper, however, we simply opt for the analysis of *bei* as an analogous preposition to *by* in English. See Hashimoto (1987), Wei (1994), and Deng (2008) for a more detailed discussion.

verb *he* 'drink', but it is seen to move to the preverbal position preceded by *ba* as in (11b). When the external argument is left out, the rest forms an imperative sentence demonstrated in (11c).

Although Theme arguments are preverbally positioned in both *ba* and *bei* constructions, they sharply contrast from each other in terms of syntactic features. The Theme argument is preposed from the internal argument position to the position following *ba* in the *ba*-constructions, while it shifts to structural subject position in the *bei*-constructions. The basic structure of *ba*-constructions could be formulated as NP₁(Agent)+*ba*+NP₂ (Theme)+VP, in which the matrix verb assigns a theta role to NP₂ with inserted *ba* as accusative Case assigner (Travis, 1984).

As a matter of fact, *ba*-constructions are active in voice, focusing on the disposal, causative, and resultative aspect of an action. By contrasting (11a) with (11b), we find Agent argument *John* remains in the same structural subject position in both *ba*- and declarative constructions. The Theme argument *guozhi* 'juice' is positioned after *ba* to stress the accomplishment of the action *he-le* 'drank'; the transitive verb with the telic aspect suffix *le* stays in its original position. A Chinese speaker's intuitive perception of (11b) is that *John* drank up all the juice; however, (11a) cannot be construed as such, but it only describes the fact that *John* drank some juice.

III. Method

3.1 Subjects

A total of 50 Chinese EFL freshmen were invited to participate in this survey. They are all non-English major students, whose English proficiency level is rather low. Although the subjects have studied English passive constructions and some grammar points of this sort relevant to Chinese passive constructions previously in

high school, they are assumed not to have learned them from a syntactic perspective, which involves passive movement from an underlying deep structure. Accordingly, they are highly expected to depend on their traditional grammar knowledge to perceive English passive constructions along with their intuitive judgement interwoven by corresponding Chinese passive constructions.

3.2 Materials and Procedure

We have prepared for two sets of 10 English passive constructions for the questionnaire. Each set consists of 5 short passives and 5 long passives, all of which have only a single clause along with some appropriate adjunct adverbials. As mentioned earlier, long passives include the *by*-phrase, whereas short ones do not. It is widely observed that short passives appear more frequently than long ones in both written and spoken English (Greenbaum et al., 1985; Xiao, 2006). This typological difference is expected to give rise to different perceptual aspects of English passive constructions by Chinese subjects.

All the sentences in the questionnaire have been scrambled randomly in order not to give the subjects any predetermined idea on differentiating the two types of passives. Now the students were given 10 scrambled sentences and asked to translate them into Chinese within 20 minutes. The subjects were instructed to write down Chinese sentences which they deemed sound natural to their judgement. They were also informed that their translation would be evaluated according to the degree of naturalness in Chinese. This intends to elicit their intuitive perception of the constructions of our concern.

3.3 Results and Discussion

The results of the survey show Chinese EFL learners' disparate ways of perceiving basic English passive constructions. The findings also reveal that Chinese

EFL learners vary in their translation of short and long passives. First of all, let us take a look at the results of short passives in Table 1, in which their choices are represented in number and percentage in parenthesis (%).

Table 1. Perceptual Patterns of Short Passives (n=50)⁴

Category	Passive	Active				
	<i>Bei-Con</i>	Acc	<i>Ba-Con</i>	Erg	Exist	Middle
S1	3(6.0)	42(84.0)	5(10.0)	0	0	0
S3	24(48.0)	19(38.0)	0	0	0	7(14.0)
S5	27(54.0)	23(46.0)	0	0	0	0
S6	5(10.0)	0	6(12.0)	0	39(78.0)	0
S8	18(36.0)	7(14.0)	6(12.0)	19(38.0)	0	0
Total:	77(30.8)	91(36.4)	17(6.8)	19(7.6)	39(15.6)	7(2.8)
	77(30.8)	173(69.2)				

As illustrated in Table 1, we note that short English passives account for 30.8% of passives in Chinese. As illustrated earlier, Chinese passives are represented by the existence of *bei* 'by' whether or not the Agent is present in the passive. This is one of noticeable differences between English passives and Chinese ones. For example, a short English passive is translated as follows.

- (12) a. The glass was broken.
 b. Boli *bei* () dasui-le.
 glass by break-past
 c. Boli *bei* ren dasui-le.
 person

⁴ Abbreviations are as follows: Acc (accusative construction), *Ba-Con* (*ba* construction), Erg (ergative construction), Exist (existential construction), Middle (middle construction), and *Bei-Con* (*bei* construction).

As seen above, (12a), S8 in the table, has been translated into passives (12b,c) by 18 subjects (36%), which are further divided into the one without the Agent (12b, 55.5%) and the one with the Agent *ren* 'person' (12c, 45.5%). Interestingly, in (12c) 8 students have completed the passive by inserting the most generic Agent *ren* 'person' although it is not present in (12a).

Turning to active translations, we have classified them into 5 grammatical categories such as accusative, *ba*-, ergative, existential, and middle constructions. All of these active translations exhibit the rate of 69.2% in total, each representative example of which is as follows: accusative (13b), *ba*-construction (14b), ergative (15b), existential (16b), and middle (17b).

- (13) a. Nowadays, English is spoken in many countries and regions.
 b. Muqian, henduo guojia he diqu de ren shuo yingyu.
 nowadays many country and region of people speak English
 'Nowadays, people of many countries and regions speak English'.
- (14) a. A painting was hung on the wall of the classroom.
 b. Youren *ba* yi-fu youhua gua zai jiaoshi de qiang shang.
 someone *ba* one-CL painting hang on classroom of wall
 'Someone hanged a painting on the classroom's wall'.
- (15) a. The glass was broken.
 b. Boli dasui-le.
 glass break-past
 'The glass broke'.
- (16) a. A painting was hung on the wall of the classroom.
 b. *Zai* jiaoshi qiang *shang* gua-le yi-fu youhua.⁵
 on classroom wall upper side hang-past one-CL painting
 'On the wall of the classroom hung a painting'.

⁵ *Zai...shang* in (16b) is a Chinese prepositional phrase in combination to denote location and direction. It refers to the English preposition 'on' in this context.

- (17) a. Anyway, the sweater was washed well.
 b. Wulunruhe, zhe jian maoyi hen hao xi.
 anyway this CL sweater very well wash
 'Anyway, this sweater washes well.'

The diverse constructions illustrated above exhibit Chinese EFL learners' varied perceptual patterns of English short passives. Such variation is reflected by adding an Agent in the accusative construction (13b), adding *ba* to the passive subject (14b), shifting the passive subject to the ergative subject (15b), topicalizing the locative PP *zai jiaoshi qiang shang* 'on the classroom wall' (16b), and turning the passive into the middle (17b).

Now let us turn to long passives with the *by*-phrase. Interestingly, the rate of Chinese passives with respect to long English passives is higher than that of short passives, as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2 The Perceptual Patterns of Long Passives(n=50)

Category	Passive	Active	
	<i>Bei-Con</i>	Acc	<i>Ba-Con</i>
S2	29(58.0)	3(6.0)	18(36.0)
S4	34(68.0)	9(18.0)	7(14.0)
S7	21(42.0)	17(34.0)	12(24.0)
S9	36(72.0)	10(20.0)	4(8.0)
S10	9(18.0)	38(76.0)	3(6.0)
Total:	129(51.6)	77(30.8)	44(17.6)
	51.6	48.4	

It is obvious that the translation of long passives does not exhibit such high variation as in short passives, as shown in the above table. First of all, long English passives are represented as a *bei*-construction (*Bei-Con*), a typical Chinese passive,

in which the *bei*-phrase, analogous to the *by*-phrase in English, never deletes regardless of the existence of the active Agent. As mentioned above, the rate of Chinese passives in long passives is much higher (51.6%) than that in short passives (30.8%). We argue that the *by*-phrase in long passives provides the students with a significant clue that they are a passive, per se, in English, as illustrated below.

- (18) a. The storeroom was cooled *by a fan*.
 b. Zhe-jian chucangshi *bei fengshan* lengque.
 this-CL storeroom by fan cool down
- (19) a. Nowadays, English is spoken in many countries and regions.
 b. Muqian, Yingyu *bei henduo guojia* he diqu de ren shuo.
 nowadays English by many country and region of people speak

As noted, (18a), S9 in Table 2, is a long passive due to the phrase *by a fan*, which takes up the highest rate of Chinese passive (72.0%). Example (19a), S1 in the Table 1, is a short passive without the phrase in question, and it takes up the rate of 6.0%. This indicates that the existence of the *by*-phrase plays a vital role in Chinese speakers' perception of English passives. Another indication is that they are less affected by the verbal form *be*-participle in their perception. This is due to the Chinese passive verb morphology, as illustrated in section 2.1, in which the passive verb remains the same as the active one.

Turning to the other two active translations, we note that the subjects tend to perceive English passives into active by translating them into accusative constructions (30.8%) and *ba*-constructions (17.6%).

- (20) a. A study on longevity was conducted *by Prof. Wang*.
 b. Wang jiaoshou zuo-le yi-ge guanyu changshou de yanjiu.
 Wang prof. conduct-past one-CL about longevity of study
 'Prof. Wang conducted a study on longevity'.

- (21) a. The precious vase was shattered *by John* yesterday.
 b. John zoutian *ba* nage zhenguide huaping dasui-le.
 yesterday *with* that precious vase shatter-past
 'Lit. John *with* that precious vase shattered'.

Example (20a), S10 in Table 2, is translated into accusative construction (20b, 76.0%), in which the active Agent *Prof. Wang* surfaces as the subject, indicating that the students have translated the passive into the active. In (21b), the passive subject *the precious vase* is preceded by *ba* and construed as the object of the verb *dasui* 'shatter', forming the so-called *ba*-construction (36.0%).

Comparing the two types of passives shown in Tables 1 and 2, we note that the total rate of accusative constructions (Acc) (30.8%) in the long passives is lower than that (36.4%) in the short passives. *Ba*-constructions, on the other hand, take up the higher rate (17.6%) in the long passives than those (6.8%) in the short passives. We speculate that the different rates are caused by the presence of the *by*-phrase, while the higher rate of *ba*-constructions shows that some Chinese subjects are more inclined to perceive English long passives from the perspective of disposal and causativeness in contrast with short passives.

Based on the discussion above, it follows that the perception of English passives among Chinese EFL learners shows two different features. First, English passives are centered on the objective description or resultive state of an event. Chinese EFL learners, however, are inclined to employ various non-passive Chinese constructions in order to express the meaning of the source text. This asymmetric feature, in some sense, manifests Chinese EFL learners' natural resistance to passives on a regular basis. Second, the higher rate of *bei*-constructions in the translation of long English passives leads us to assume that the *by*-phrase could be symbolized as a more seminal passive marker than the *be*-participle in the perceptive process of Chinese EFL learners.

IV. Conclusion

In this paper, we have delved into the perceptual patterns of prototypical English passive constructions among 50 Chinese EFL learners. The results of this survey are as follows. Firstly, English short passives are translated into a variety of constructions in Chinese such as accusative constructions, *ba*-constructions, ergative constructions, existential constructions, and middle constructions. This is attributed by the lack of the *by*-phrase, and it naturally leads the subjects to perceive short passives as indicating the static and resultative state of an event, leading to the low rate of passives (30.8%).

Secondly, long passives elicit a high rate of passives in Chinese (51.6%) along with the other two constructions (48.4%) such as accusative and *ba*-constructions. The high rate of Chinese passives, which is indicated by *bei*, is due to the existence of the *by*-phrase in the long passives. As the phrase in question is accompanied by an Agent, the long passives are strongly perceived to denote an activity performed by the Agent.

Overall, English passives, short and long, are shown not to be translated straightforwardly into Chinese passives. To a great extent, they are often perceived by Chinese EFL learners as non-passive constructions such as accusative constructions, *ba*-constructions, ergative constructions, existential constructions, and middle constructions, subsequently making up 58.8% averaging in the two types of passives. In this paper, we attribute this to the fact that Chinese in nature resists passivization and thereby its process is not highly productive.

Works Cited

Baker, M. *Incorporation: A Theory of Grammatical Function Changing*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988. Print.

- Belletti, A. "The Case of unaccusatives." *Linguistic Inquiry*. 19 (1988): 1-34. Print.
- Burzio, L. *Italian Syntax: A Government-Binding Approach*. Dordrecht: Reidel, 1986. Print.
- Cao, B. *Nominative-Prominent Principle and its Relevant Study on Chinese Syntactic Patterns*. Doctoral Dissertation. Central China University, 2015. Print.
- Chomsky, N. *Lectures on Government and Binding*. Dordrecht: Foris Publications, 1981. Print.
- Deng, S. Y. "Syntactic analysis of Chinese passives." *Current Linguistics*. 4 (2008): 308-319. Print.
- Hashimoto, M. "The history and regional development of Chinese passive patterns." *Studies of the Chinese Language*. 1 (1987): 36-49. Print.
- Huang, James C.-T. "Chinese passives in comparative perspective." *Ting Hua Journal of Chinese Studies*. 29 (1999): 423-509. Print.
- Jaeggli, O. Passive. *Linguistic Inquiry*. 17 (1986.): 587-622. Print.
- Jeong, Y. "Inherent vs. structural Case assignment." *Studies in Generative Grammar*. 13 (2003): 21-37. Print.
- Keyser, S. J. "On the middle and ergative constructions in English." *Linguistic Inquiry*. 15 (1984): 381-416. Print.
- Li, David C. S. & Luk, Zoe Peisui. *Chinese-English Contrastive Grammar: An introduction*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2017. Print
- Liu, L. "Analysis of *Ba* marker in Chinese." *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*. 12 (2013): 2227-2233. Print.
- Liu, F. H. "An aspectual analysis of *Ba*." *Journal of East Asian Linguistics*. 6 (1997): 51-59. Print.
- Long, Yu & Kang, S. "A comparative analysis of English and Chinese DOCs." *The Mirae Journal of English Language and Literature*. 24.2 (2019): 463-485, Print.
- Quirk, R. *A Grammar of Contemporary English*. London: Longman, 1972. Print.
- Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G., & Svartvik, J. *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. London: Longman, 1985, Print.
- Ross, J. R. *Constraints on Variables in Syntax*. Doctoral Dissertation, MIT, 1967. Print.
- Travis, L. D. *Parameters and Effects of Word Order Variation*. Doctoral Dissertation, MIT, 1984. Print.
- Wei, P. C. "The development and evolution mechanism of the passive patterns in Ancient Chinese." *Language and Linguistics in China*. 2 (1994): 293-319. Print.
- Xiao, R. *Passive Constructions in English and Chinese: A Corpus-based Contrastive Study*. John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2006. Print.
- Yu, C. Q. *Study of Unaccusative Verbs*. Central China University of Science and Technology Press, 2013. Print.

Appendix

Direction: Please translate the following English sentences into Chinese ones that you think are natural in Chinese within 20 minutes. Your translation will be evaluated mainly according to the degree of naturalness. Thanks for your time.

- S1. Nowadays, English is spoken in many countries and regions.
- S2. The precious vase was shattered by John yesterday.
- S3. Anyway, the sweater was washed well.
- S4. The famous cathedral was destroyed by a big fire in 2019.
- S5. He was awarded Nobel Prize for Literature in 2012.
- S6. A painting was hung on the wall of the classroom.
- S7. John was given a bottle of water by Mary the day before yesterday.
- S8. The glass was broken.
- S9. The storeroom was cooled by a fan.
- S10. A study on longevity was conducted by Prof. Wang.

Zhang, Kun-Peng (Chungbuk National University/ Graduate Student)

Address: (28644) Chungdae-ro 1, Seowon-gu, Cheongju-si, Chungcheongbuk-do, Korea, Department of English Education, College of Education, Chungbuk National University

Email: 2350538887@qq.com

Kang, Seung-Man (Chungbuk National University/ Professor)

Address: (28644) Chungdae-ro 1, Seowon-gu, Cheongju-si, Chungcheongbuk-do, Korea, Department of English Education, College of Education, Chungbuk National University

Email: smkang@chungbuk.ac.kr

Received: December 31, 2019 / Revised: January 31, 2020 / Accepted: February 5, 2020