A UNIFIED ANALYSIS OF PASSIVES AND ANTICAUSATIVES*

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Abstract

Starting from the basic observation that, across languages, the anticausative variant of an alternating verb systematically involves morphological marking that is shared by passive verbs, the goal of this paper is to provide a uniform and formal account of these arguably two different construction types. The central claim that I put forward is that passives and anticausatives differ only with respect to the event-type features of the verb but both arise through the same operation, namely suppression by special morphology of a feature in *v* that encodes the ontological event type of the verb. Crucially, I argue for two syntactic primitives, namely *act* and *cause*, whereto I trace the passive/anticausative distinction. Passive constructions across languages are made compatible by relegating the differences to simple combinatorial properties of verb and prepositional types and their interactions with other event functors, which are in turn encoded differently morphologically across languages. New arguments are brought forward for a causative analysis of anticausatives. Agentive adverbials are examined, and doubt is cast on the usefulness of *by*-phrases as a diagnostic for argumenthood.

1 Introduction

As is well-known, across languages, the anticausative alternant of an alternating pair systematically involves morphological marking that is shared by passive predicates. For instance, in Albanian, similar to Latin and Modern Greek (MG), both the sentence in (1a) containing an anticausative and the sentence in (1b) containing a passive are rendered homomorphously as in (2).[1]

(1) a. The vase broke.

b. The vase was broken.

(2) Vazoja *(u) thye. (Albanian)

vase$_{NOM}$ NACT broke.AOR.3S

(i) 'The vase broke.'

(ii) 'The vase was broken.'

While both anticausatives and passives arguably lack an external argument (Marantz 1984), only the latter, but not the former, sanction *by*-phrases identifying the so-called logical subject, and can combine with purpose clauses and agent-oriented adverbs, as shown in (3) through (5).

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[1] The following abbreviations are used in the glosses in the examples: AOR (for aorist), CL (for clitic), DAT (for dative case) , IMP (for imperfective), NACT (for non-active voice), NOM (for nominative case), S (for singular).

(3) a. The window was broken by Pat / the earthquake.

b. *The window broke by Pat / the earthquake.

(4) a. The boat was sunk to collect the insurance. (Roeper 1987:268)

b. *The boat sank to collect the insurance. (Roeper 1987:268)

(5) a. The ship was sunk deliberately.

b. *The ship sank deliberately.

Depending on the theory, these facts have been taken to show that the external argument in the passive is still expressed in the syntax, albeit in an alternative manner (Baker, Johnson and Roberts 1989, Emonds 2000), or that the syntactically suppressed argument of a passive verb is present in argument structure (Roeper 1987, Grimshaw 1990), that is, that passives have an implicit argument. In contrast, the fact that anticausatives cannot combine with *by*-phrases, purpose clauses, or agent-oriented adverbs (Manzini 1983, Roeper 1987) is taken as evidence that the suppression of the external cause takes place in the mapping from the lexical semantic representation to argument structure (Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995). In other words, in spite of differences of opinions concerning the proper treatment of passives, the consensual view has been that anticausatives are lexically reduced (see also Chierchia 1989, 2004 and Reinhart 1996).

In this paper, I examine certain properties of passives and anticausatives that to the best of my knowledge have hitherto not been systematically discussed in the literature, and the ensuing ramifications for a universal theory of these constructions. Specifically, I challenge the view that passives and anticausatives are formed in different modules of the grammar and offer a uniform analysis for both constructions. The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 investigates the distribution of *by*- and *from*-phrases across English, Albanian, Latin and MG and its significance for theories of passives and anticausatives. Based on a discussion of less well-known data, section 3 provides evidence for two primitives, namely *act* and *cause*, which I contend, underlie the passive/anticausative distinction. In section 4, I put forward a novel account for the distribution of purpose clauses and agent-oriented adverbs in passives.

2 *By*- vs. *from*-phrases and the significance of the comparison

2.1 English

While anticausatives in English do not sanction *by*-phrases, as Piñón (2001) notes, they can combine with *from*-phrases identifying the (external) cause of an event. This is shown in (6a) vs. (6b).

(6) a. *The window cracked by the pressure.

b. The window cracked from the pressure.

However, though *from*-phrases identifying causes are generally fine with anticausatives, they are bad when the cause is not an event, as shown in (7).[2]

(7) *The window cracked from John / the book.

The contrast between (6b) and (7) is also replicated with non-alternating unaccusatives, as in (8a) vs. (8b), though there also are unaccusatives that do not combine with a *from*-phrase introducing a cause, as in (8c).

[2] It follows then that animate cause(r)s are exempted from anticausatives.

(8) a. Eva died from cancer.

b. *Eva died from John / the book.

c. *The refugees arrived from the invasion.[3]

Moreover, *from*-phrases are uniformly disallowed in passives, irrespectively of whether they introduce events, as in (9a), or non-eventive participants, as in (9b).

(9) a. *Eva was killed from cancer.

b. *Eva was killed from John / the book.

To generalize over the data presented in this section, it seems that only what Levin and Rappaport Hovav (1995) refer to as external causation verbs can combine with a *from*-phrase identifying a cause.

2.2 Albanian (and Latin and MG)

Unlike in English, as we saw in (2), passives and anticausatives in Albanian, as in Latin and MG, can be formally indistinguishable. This is so for two reasons. First, these languages use two distinct conjugational paradigms, namely active versus non-active (Albanian and MG), or active versus passive (Latin), a distinction which often though not always corresponds to the transitive/unergative vs. unaccusative verb classes.[4] Second, like Latin and MG, Albanian collapses (the distribution of) *by*-phrases and *from*-phrases.[5] As this latter fact would lead us to expect, the santioning of *by*-phrases, which is taken to be one of the most salient properties of the passive in English and one that distinguishes passives from anticausatives, does not apply in Albanian (as in Latin and MG). To illustrate, the Albanian counterparts of the sentences in (6b) and (7) are given in (10a) and (10b), respectively. As expected then, the grammaticality contrast in the English examples in (6b) and (7) is not replicated in Albanian.

(10) a. Dritarja u kris nga presioni.
window$_{NOM}$ NACT crack.AOR.3S from/by pressure
'The window cracked from the pressure.'

b. Dritarja u kris nga Xhoni / libri.
window$_{NOM}$ NACT crack.AOR.3S from/by John / book
'The window was cracked by John / by the book.'

[3] The sentence in (8c) is of course fine if the prepositional phrase is interpreted as locative.

[4] The correspondence of the active vs. non-active distinction to the transitive/unergative vs. unaccusative verb classes is rough by virtue of the fact that while transitives/unergatives are always active morphologically, some unaccusative verbs appear in this voice (i.e., are morphologically unmarked) too. Crucially, however, in all three languages unergatives cannot be formally non-active/passive, just as passives and (lexical) reflexives cannot be formally active. For details, see Kallulli (1999a,b) on Albanian, Gianollo (2000, 2005) on Latin, and Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (2004) on Greek.

[5] Alternatively, the Albanian, Latin, MG counterparts of *by*-phrases are ambiguous between *by*- and *from*-phrases. While in Latin and MG the same word is used both for *by* and *from* in passives and anticausatives, Albanian has two distinct prepositions, namely *nga* and *prej*, each meaning both *by*- and *from*. (Due to space considerations, in this article I only use *nga* throughout.) Both *nga* and *prej* phrases are always interchangeable, or have identical distribution (i.e., they entail each other). Consequently, *by*- and *from*-phrases are indistinguishable in Albanian.

Taken together, the arguments presented in this section, in particular the fact that the distribution of *by*- and *from*-phrases in English cannot be captured by appealing merely to the distinction between unaccusatives (whether anticausative or other) and passives, as well as the fact that there are languages that altogether collapse the distinction between *by*- and *from*-phrases, suggest that the significance granted to the fact that *by*-phrases are sanctioned with passives but not with anticausatives is simply not justified. It is clear that once we draw into the picture languages that do not make the distinction between *by*- and *from*-phrases, the ability to license a *by*-phrase irrespective of the ability to license a *from*-phrase cannot be granted such a theoretical status as it has in studies that focus on the English verbal passive. In other words, if the ability of a passive verb to combine with a *by*-phrase is taken as evidence for the existence of the external argument in passives (irrespective of whether this argument is syntactically expressed or implicit, depending on the theory), so should the ability of an anticausative verb to combine with a *from*-phrase identifying the (external) cause of the event. Under this view, anticausatives cannot be lexically reduced, contrary to Chierchia (1989, 2004), Levin and Rappaport Hovav (1995) and Reinhart (1996). I suggest then that *by*-phrases and *from*-phrases are more closely related than has been assumed in discussions on the sanctioning of *by*-phrases in passives in English.

Interestingly, as Clark and Carpenter (1989) note, children commonly use *from*-phrases instead of *by*-phrases in passives in English, too.

3 Two primitives and one account of the distribution of *by*- and *from*-phrases

The central claim of this paper is that the passive/anticausative distinction boils down to an event-based difference, namely the difference between an activity and a causative event, which I contend is syntactically relevant. In other words, while not attempting an exhaustive ontology of event types, I submit that *act* and *cause* are two syntactic primitives.

Let us first consider the evidence for the primitive status of *act* and *cause*.

Many languages share the construction in (11), in which a dative (or in some languages, a genitive) combines with a non-active (or reflexive) core yielding among other possible interpretations a reading that in previous work (Kallulli 2006) I have referred to as 'unintended causation'.[6]

(11) Benit i-u thye një vazo. (Albanian)
Ben$_{DAT}$ him$_{CL}$-NACT break.AOR.3S a vase
'Ben unintentionally broke a vase.'

On the other hand, many languages also share the construction in (12), where a dative combines with a non-active (or reflexive) core yielding among other interpretations what in previous work I have referred to as an involuntary state reading, rendered for lack of a better alternative through 'feel like' in the English translation.[7]

[6] The other possible readings are a possessor reading ('A vase of Ben's broke'), and an affected (in the sense: benefactive/malefactive) reading ('A vase broke on Ben'). I have shown in Kallulli (2006) that the unintended causation reading is not due to pragmatic factors but is really part of the semantics of the verb (root), that is, the sentences in (11) are not vague but truly ambiguous. Therefore I will not dwell on this issue here specifically, though one argument for this view is presented further down in this section.

[7] Indeed the construction has sometimes been referred to as the '*feel-like* construction' (Dimitrova-Vulchanova 1999, Marušič and Žaucer 2004, to appear). Marušič and Žaucer (2004, to appear) also provide an extensive survey of previous analyses of this construction across several languages.

(12) Benit i-u hëngër një mollë. (Albanian)
Ben$_{DAT}$ him$_{CL}$-NACT ate.AOR.3S an apple
'Ben felt like eating an apple.'

Formally, the sentences in (11) and (12) are identical. Yet, their interpretations vary greatly. Moreover, while the unintended causation reading is missing in (12), both the involuntary state reading and the unintended causation reading may obtain with one and the same verb, as illustrated through the Albanian examples in (13).

(13) a. Benit i-u thye një vazo.
Ben$_{DAT}$ him$_{CL}$-NACT break.AOR.3S a vase
(i) 'Ben unintentionally broke a vase'
(ii) *'Ben felt like breaking a vase'

b. Benit i thy-hej një vazo.
Ben$_{DAT}$ him$_{CL}$ break-NACT.P.IMP.3S a vase
(i) 'Ben felt like breaking a vase'
(ii) *'Ben unintentionally broke a vase'

Formally, the Albanian sentences in (13a) and (13b) constitute a minimal pair; they differ only with respect to their grammatical aspect. As is obvious from the glosses of these sentences, Albanian has two forms for the past tense, which differ in their aspectual value: Aorist, which is aspectually perfective, and Imperfective.[8] Only the perfective sentence in (13a) but not the imperfective in (13b) can get an unintended causation reading. On the other hand, with imperfective aspect only the involuntary state reading but not the unintended causation reading obtains. That is, the semantic complementarity in (13a) vs. (13b) is effected solely by the choice of the aspectual morpheme. Note, however, that the verb in (13a) and (13b) is what Levin and Rappaport Hovav (1995) refer to as an external causation verb.

Consider now the Albanian examples in (14).

(14) a. Benit i-u hëngër një mollë.
Ben$_{DAT}$ him$_{CL}$-NACT ate.AOR.3S an apple
(i) 'Ben felt like eating an apple'
(ii)*'Ben unintentionally ate an apple'

[8] In Albanian the non-active paradigm is built by employing three different linguistic means with a well-defined distribution. The definition of the distribution of non-active realization (adapted from Trommer 2005) is as in (i):

(i) **If** the clause contains perfective:
express Non-active by choice of the auxiliary
Else: If the clause contains Tense (Present or Imperfect) but not Admirative:
express Non-active by an inflectional affix
Else: express Non-active by a reflexive clitic

b. Benit i ha-hej një mollë.
Ben$_{DAT}$ him$_{CL}$ eat-NACT.P.IMP.3S an apple
(i) 'Ben felt like eating an apple'
(ii)*'Ben unintentionally ate an apple'

Formally, (14a) and (14b) differ from each other in exactly the same way that (13a) and (13b) differ, that is, with respect to their grammatical aspect only: (14a), which is a repetition of (12), is aspectually perfective, whereas (14b), is aspectually imperfective. However, in spite of this difference, only the involuntary state reading but not the unintended causation reading obtains. That is, the semantic complementarity observed in (13a) vs. (13b) does not replicate in the examples in (14), despite the fact that morphologically (14a) is identical to (13a) and (14b) is identical to (13b). The question then arises as to why the semantic complementarity in (13a) vs. (13b) does not replicate in (14a) vs. (14b). The only possible explanation must be that non-active morphology interacts differently with different (feature) primitives. That is, the (lexical, and consequently, syntactic) feature composition make-up of *eat* must be different from that of *break*. In fact, one such difference is already argued for in Levin and Rappaport Hovav (1995), who distinguish between internal and external causation as a syntactically relevant meaning component. According to Levin and Rappaport Hovav (1995), *break* but not *eat* is an external causation verb. Capitalizing on this difference, I will assume that *break*-type verbs (or their roots) differ from *eat*-type verbs (or their roots) in that the former project a *cause* feature, whereas the latter an *act* feature in the syntax. In other words, the features [+cause] and [+act] represent two syntactic primitives that reflect an ontological event-type difference.[9] Note, however, that though I assumed that the features [+cause] and [+act] in *v* have the status of syntactic primitives, in principle, one could be derived from the other through morphological operations that take place before the projection of these features in the syntax. That is, under some version of the lexicalist hypothesis, one of these features could be the outcome of lexical (de)composition. A case in point here is that though the verb *break* is a cause verb and will *ceteris paribus* therefore project a [+cause] feature in *v*, due to a procedure such as event composition (Pustejovsky 1991) in the lexicon (i.e., prior to syntactic structure building), it could project a [+act] feature in the syntax instead. Specifically, if imperfective morphology is an event functor that invariably shifts the event type of a lexical item into an activity as I have argued in Kallulli (2006), then we could explain how *break* projects a [+act] and not [+cause] feature in syntax. So the idea is that re-iteration of a causative event (e.g. *breaking* events) will yield an (e.g. *breaking*) activity.[10] This point is crucial for the derivation of the involuntary state reading of (13b), which I will however not dwell into here. (The interested reader is referred to Kallulli (2006), where I have detailed the derivation of dyadic unaccusative constructions such as those in (13) and (14).)

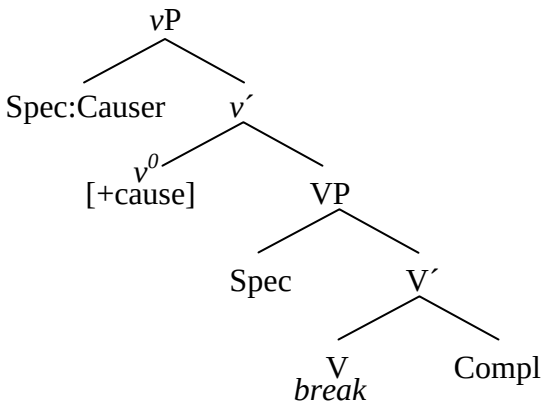
Adopting the basic structure in Chomsky's (1995) shell theory, where the "internal" arguments of a verb occupy the positions of specifier and complement of V, with the external argument occupying Spec of *v*P, the difference between a causative predicate and an activity predicate can be depicted structurally as in (15) vs. (16). That is, unless event composition has applied previous to syntactic composition, *break*-type verbs project a [+cause] feature in *v*, as in (15), whereas *eat*-type verbs project a [+act] feature in *v*, as in (16). In other words, I contend that *v* contains at least one (lexical-semantic) feature encoding the ontological event type of the verb, and further, that it is precisely the need of this feature to be saturated, or

[9] See also Wunderlich (1997:56) and Doron (2003).

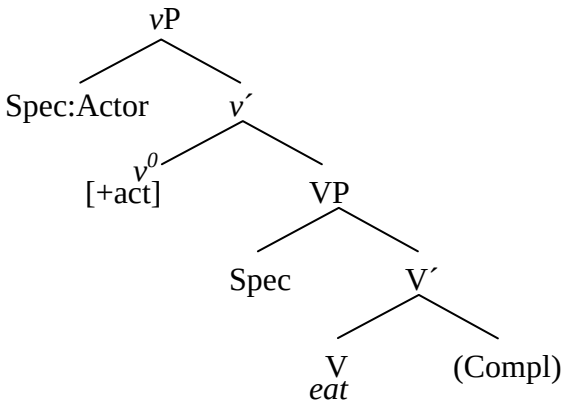
[10] Interestingly, Davis (1997) and Demirdache (2005) argue that in St'át'imcets all activity predicates are morphologically derived from causative predicates.

checked off, that makes Spec of *v*P an argumental position. Therefore, (non-oblique) argument realization proceeds because of the need to check off lexical-semantic features in a predicate structure (here: *v* and/or other heads involved in predication). Consequently, when *v* contains a [+cause] feature, the argument in Spec of *v*P will be interpreted as Cause(r), whereas when *v* contains a [+act] feature in *v*, the argument in Spec of *v*P will be interpreted as an Actor.

(15) The basic structure of a causative verb

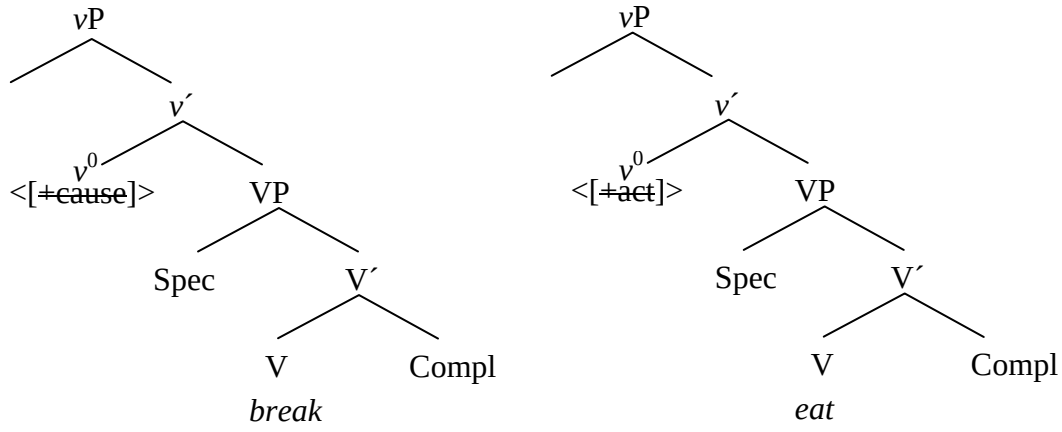


(16) The basic structure of an activity verb



Abstracting away from further details, in Kallulli (2006), I define non-active (and/or reflexive) morphology as an operation that suppresses a feature in the syntactic structure of a predicate. Building on this proposal, I claim that while the passive is derived from an activity predicate through suppression by special (e.g., non-active or reflexive) morphology of a [+act] feature in *v*, the anticausative is derived from a causative predicate through suppression of a [+cause] feature in *v*. If non-active morphology suppresses the feature in *v* that encodes the ontological event type of the verb, as I claim, when operating on the structures in (15) and (16), it will suppress the [+cause] or the [+act] feature, respectively. If, as I suggest, (non-oblique) arguments are realized in the specifier positions of verbal projections whose heads have at least one (lexical-semantic) feature that encodes the ontological event type of the verb, it follows that no arguments can be realized in Spec of *v*P once the feature [+cause] or [+act] in it is stricken out by non-active morphology. That is, the resulting structures will be strictly monadic (that is, containing only one internal argument), as in (17).

(17) a. *Deriving the anticausative* b. *Deriving the passive*



However, in spite of the effect of non-active morphology, namely the suppression of the feature [+cause] or [+act] in *v* and the consequence that Spec of *v*P is in this way rendered inert, both the cause in anticausatives and the actor in passives can be realized obliquely, namely in a *from*-phrase and a *by*-phrase, respectively.

Assuming that accusative case is assigned in *v* (that is, that accusative case is checked in Spec of *v*P only) and, that the complementarity of theta-checking (here: theta-feature-checking) and case-checking is a general property of the theory (Bennis 2004), then Burzio's Generalization follows trivially: the internal argument will need to have its case features checked by a higher head, namely T, which assigns nominative.

The question however arises why languages vary with respect to whether they obfuscate the distinction between oblique actors and oblique causes, as is the case in Albanian, Latin, MG, English child language (Clark and Carpenter 1989) and Old English, or articulate this difference, as is the case in adult present-day English. One obvious difference between Albanian, Latin, MG on the one hand and adult present-day English on the other is precisely the fact that in English anticausatives and passives are always morphologically distinct, whereas, as already pointed out, in Albanian, Latin and MG passives and anticausatives are often identical morphologically. That is, there might exist some implicational relation between verbal morphology and the ability to distinguish between *by*- and *from*-phrases (i.e., oblique actors and oblique causes). Specifically, the generalization seems to be that languages that collapse the morphological distinction between passives and anticausatives also fail to differentiate between *by*- and *from*-phrases.

Consider now how the claim that the distinction passive vs. anticausative boils down to an event-based difference can accomodate the fact that *break*-type (i.e., causative) verbs can passivize, as in (18).

(18) The window was broken by Pat.

Emonds (2000) suggests that due to the fact that English lacks a verbally finite synthetic passive, both verbal and adjectival passives are in a sense "more adjectival" than in languages like Albanian, Latin and MG, which have a (partially) verbal finite synthetic passive. Indeed anticausatives are more eventive than passives in English, a point that cannot be made for Albanian, which as discussed above collapses the morphological distinction between passives and anticausatives. The idea then is that the passive in English in a sentence like (18) implies that the breaking event was more sustained, or involved an activity on Pat's part, as compared to the breaking event in an anticausative, which happens spontaneously, or all-at-once. That is, the English passive, whether or not due to its special (adjectival) morphology, induces an implicature of activity, or open-endedness, even for external causation verbs, which is obvious when comparing it to an anticausative like the one in (19).

(19) The window broke.

Note that the feature [+act] entails an actor, that is, animacy. The question then arises how to account for sentences such as (20) where a natural force, namely the earthquake combines with the preposition *by*.

(20) The window was broken by the earthquake.

I suggest that these forces are conceptualized as animate, as opposed to inanimate forces that can cause breakage such as a construction fault, which is indeed ungrammatical in a *by*-phrase. Interestingly, judgments on a sentence like (21) with a cause like pressure rising in a *by*-phrase seem to vary.

(21) (?)The window was broken by the pressure rising.

My interpretation of this fact is that a cause like the one in (21) could be seen as a very slow but nevertheless animate force, or else as a more stationary force. In the former case it would be acceptable in a *by*-phrase; in the latter it would not.

Turning to the distinction between passives/anticausatives on the one hand and middles on the other, I believe this is due to the presence of a dispositional aspectual operator in the latter. That is, the middle construction is derived when the verb in the structures in (17) is under the scope of a dispositional operator (Lekakou 2005), such as the imperfective.

4 The distribution of purpose clauses and agent-oriented adverbs revisited

Let us now turn to the facts illustrated in (4) and (5), repeated again here for ease of reference, namely that passives but not anticausatives can combine with purpose clauses and agent-oriented adverbs.

(4) a. The boat was sunk to collect the insurance. (Roeper 1987:268, (3b))

b. *The boat sank to collect the insurance. (Roeper 1987:268, (3a))

(5) a. The ship was sunk deliberately.

b. *The ship sank deliberately.

Virtually all existing work on this distinction takes these facts to indicate: (i) the presence of an argument in the passive, which depending on the theory, is either syntactically expressed (Baker, Johnson and Roberts 1989, Emonds 2000) or implicit (Roeper 1987, Grimshaw 1990); and (ii) the lack of such an argument in unaccusatives (Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995 and references therein).

However, all that purpose clauses and so-called agent-oriented adverbs do is identify an intention-bearing (i.e., animate) event participant as the source or initiation of the event named by the verb. Passives, but not anticausatives, control into purpose clauses and combine with agent-oriented adverbs because purpose clauses and agent-oriented adverbs simply make reference to participants capable of intentionality (i.e., actors). And as was stated earlier, unlike [+cause], the feature [+act] implies an actor, that is, a participant capable of wilful agency. However, this does not entail that the animate participant in passives is a non-oblique argument. One obvious alternative is that the animate participant here is not introduced by a non-oblique argument, but by a *by*-phrase, and this may in turn be either overt or implicit. If, as established in section 3.1, animate causers are disallowed with from-phrases in English and, anticausatives only license from-phrases but not by-phrases, then the inability of anticausatives to combine with purpose clauses and agent oriented adverbs follows straightforwardly without further stipulations. Further evidence for the view that it is the animate participant in an overt or implicit by-phrase that controls into the purpose clause involves the fact that whenever a purpose clause is licit, a by-phrase can be inserted overtly.

Note in this context that agent-oriented adverbs are not incompatible with unaccusative syntax. The Italian examples in (22) show that the unaccusative verbs cadere 'fall' and rotolare 'roll' continue to exhibit the characteristic essere 'be' (vs. avere 'have') selection, even in the presence of an adverb like "on purpose".

(22) a. Gianni é caduto /*ha caduto apposta. (Folli and Harley 2004: 47)
John is fallen / has fallen on purpose.

b. Gianni é rotolato / *ha rotolato giu apposta.
John is rolled / has rolled down on purpose.

The example in (23) shows that the same fact holds in German, as witnessed by the fact that the auxiliary sein 'be' and not haben 'have' is selected.

(23) Peter ist / *hat absichtlich eingeschlafen.
Peter is / has deliberately fallen asleep
'Peter fell asleep on purpose'

To account for the facts in (22) and (23), I suggest that the so-called agent-oriented adverbs here do not necessarily tell anything about whether the event participants that they modify really act agentively (i.e., intentionally). These adverbs are rather interpreted at the pragmatic interface, that is, they merely provide information on the beliefs of the utterer of the sentences in which they occur.

5 Conclusion

In this article I have discussed a variety of – to my knowledge – new empirical arguments, which show that the picture depicted for the passive in English is quite idiosyncratic, and that the properties that have attained the status of identificational criteria of the passive are simply not revealing or even maintainable when looking at other languages. In particular, unlike generally assumed, neither *by*-phrases nor purpose clauses or agent-oriented adverbs witness the presence of a non-oblique argument (either implicit or syntactically encoded, depending on the theory). In contrast, the analysis that I have laid out here derives the properties of the passive and anticausative both in Albanian and English uniformly. The main conclusion here is that universally anticausatives and passives differ only with respect to the ontological event type feature in *v* which can be affected by morphological operations in the syntax. The distinction between *by*- and *from*-phrases in English is a simple reflection of this feature: a *by*-phrase introduces an oblique actor upon suppression of the *act* feature in *v*, whereas a *from*-phrase introduces an oblique causer upon suppression of the *cause* feature in *v*. I have shown that the English verbal passive can be made more compatible with its Albanian (or Latin and MG) cousin by relegating the differences to simple combinatorial properties of verbs and prepositional types and their interactions with other event functors, which are in turn encoded differently morphologically across these languages.

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