

From Possession to Passive: The Slovenian Recipient Passive through the Prism of Grammaticalization Theory¹

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0. Introduction

The predicative possessive construction usually expresses the “state” of possessivity in the general meaning. Yet this variety of possessivity may tentatively be interpreted as static.² By contrast, the dynamic possessivity, according to Marina Milovanova,³ can be conceived of as a series of “changes in state,” which are (1) the initial stage of

1 The following native speakers have greatly assisted in my research for this paper: Janez Orešnik, Andrej Bekeš, Jelisava Dobovšek-Sethna, Ludwig Karničar, Andreja Žele, Alja Lipovic-Oštir, and Frančiška Lipovšek. I am also grateful to Wayles Browne, Janez Orešnik, Andrej Bekeš, Predrag Piper and Andriy Danylenko for expert advice during earlier stages of this research.

2 In fact, even static *have*-verbs sometimes indicate dynamic possessivity. For example, *imeti* in Slovenian may express the initial stage of possessivity., cf. *Zakaj si tako debela? A boš imela dojenčka?* ‘Why are you so fat? Are you expecting a child?’

3 Cf. Milovanova, Marina *Kategorija posesivnosti v ruskom i nemetskom iazykakh v lingvokul'turologicheskom osveshchenii* (Volgograd, 2007), p. 92.

possessivity, (2) the actual state of possessivity, and (3) the final stage of possessivity.⁴

The dynamic type of possessivity has been, in particular, in the center of Predrag Piper’s Localistic approach similar to that employed in cognitive linguistics. Having studied the grammatical categories in Serbian and other Slavic languages as “spatial metaphors,” Piper analyzed possessive constructions with the help of such concepts as temporality, aspect, contrast, and determinacy. Based on different representations of dynamic possessivity, he came up with the following four case categories which correspond with different aspects of possessivity.⁵

Case	Aspect of possessivity
1) Locative	<i>imati</i> (to have), <i>posedovati</i> (to possess)...
2) Allative	<i>dati</i> (to give), <i>prodati</i> (to sell)...
3) Ablative	<i>dobiti</i> (to get), <i>kupiti</i> (to buy)...
4) Perlative	<i>predati</i> (to pass from A to B)...

Categories 2) through 4) may be further sub-divided according to verb meanings. Focusing on aspect, however, one may note that while category (1) yields the standard possessive construction, categories (2) through (4) are instances of what may be called the “transfer of possessivity.” In other words, unlike (1), verbs belonging to (2) through (4) do not directly express relations of possessivity. For this case, Petr Piťha, for instance, posits a category of “implicit possessivity” (*implicitní posesivita*).⁶

What is noteworthy here is the fact that while the “transfer of possessivity” may appear a distinct phenomenon, it is actually observed in several different situations. The following example sentences employing the Slovenian verb *dobiti* (to get) come into consideration.

4 Thus, Elena Paducheva interprets the notion of possessivity rather broadly, while speaking about a semantic class of “possessive verbs” such as *dat’* (to give), *imet’* (to have), *kupit’* (to buy), *podarit’* (to present) and the like. See Paducheva, Elena *Dinamicheskie modeli v semantike leksiki* (Moscow, 2004), p. 42.

5 Predrag Piper *Jezik i prostor* (Belgrade, 2001), p. 116.

6 Petr Piťha *Posesivní vztah v češtině* (Prague, 1992), p. 105.

(1) Janez je dobil knjigo / denar / pismo / bonbone.

‘Janez got a book/money/a letter/sweets’

(2) Janez je dobil večino premoženja.

‘Janez got most of the property’

Both sentences express a real transfer of possessivity. The only difference is that, while the objects in (1) actually move spatially, in (2) we deal with a transfer of ownership.

Moreover, in the following examples the verb no longer expresses a simple transfer of possession – rather, it denotes a transfer of situation. The grammatical subject becomes the recipient of the situation transferred, and the accusative complement is no longer that of the possessivity. The accusative complement in (3) through (8) becomes semantically abstract, approaching the state of passivity. The verb *dobiti* starts to resemble a function word.⁷

(3) Janez je dobil ošpice.

‘Janez got measles.’

(4) Janez je danes dobil obisk.

‘Janez got a visitor today.’

(5) Janez je dobil idejo.

‘Janez got an idea.’

(6) Janez je dobil ukaz.

‘Janez received an order.’

(7) Janez je dobil sive lase.

‘Janez got gray hair.’

⁷ Vincenot calls constructions using *dobiti/dobivati* ‘to get’ passive versions of the sentences with *dati/dajati* ‘to give’; cf. Claude Vincenot, *Essai de grammaire slovène* (Ljubljana, 1975), p. 264.

For Czech and Slovak, Alexandr Isačenko argued that the expanded use of *get*-verbs was not accidental in Indo-European, since it was correlated to the expanded use of *have*-verbs, a trend observed in the so-called *have*-languages.⁸ Examples (3') to (7') show that a similar tendency is typical of Slovenian, since *dobiti* (to get) can be easily replaced with *imeti* (to have).

(3') Janez ima ošpice.

'Janez has measles.'

(4') Janez ima danes obisk.

'Janez has a visitor today.'

(5') Janez ima idejo.

'Janez has an idea.'

(6') Janez ima ukaz.

'Janez has been ordered (to do something).'

(7') Janez ima sive lase.

'Janez has gray hair.'

While this phenomenon is primarily typical of *have*-languages, it may also develop in other languages due to linguistic contact. In his study, however, Isačenko did not even mention this possibility.

1. Language Contact and Grammatical Change

Bernd Heine and Tania Kuteva, who have written about structural changes in European languages from a typological perspective using grammaticalization theory, identified two sociolinguistic reasons for the

⁸ Alexandr V. Isačenko, "On *have* and *be* Languages: A Typological Sketch," in Michael Flier, ed., *Slavic Forum: Essays in Linguistics and Literature* (The Hague-Paris: Mouton, 1974), pp. 66–67.

“Europeanization” of language structures.⁹ On the one hand, a *lingua franca* like Latin and (to a lesser degree) Greek is likely to serve as a replication model. On the other hand, contacts between geographically adjacent communities that speak different languages can prove decisive. It means that, while religion or schools play some role, it is, in fact, daily linguistic contact which becomes the driving force behind the replication of particular language structures.

With the second possibility in mind, Heine and Kuteva introduced the grammatical replication as well as the grammaticalization of the German passive construction with the auxiliary *bekommen* (*kriegen/erhalten*) ‘to get’.¹⁰ The latter is found in Slavic minority languages within the German-speaking world such as Sorbian, Kashubian, and Slovincian.¹¹ The following Sorbian sentences can be adduced as examples:

- (8) Pón... jo krynył ten młyn zapisany.
‘Then... he got the flour-mill registered for him.’
- (9) Ta holca... hłowu wotćatu dósta.
‘That girl... got beheaded.’

While the auxiliary verbs used in (8) and (9) differ in that *kry(d)nyć* is borrowed from German and *dóstać* is etymologically Slavic, both sentences correspond structurally to the so-called *bekommen*-passive (nominative subject + auxiliary verb *bekommen* + accusative complement + passive past participle [hereafter PPP]), as found in (10). In the passive sentence (11), the dative noun complement (*dem Jungen*) in the active

9 Bernd Heine and Tania Kuteva, *The Changing Languages of Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 253–257.

10 Also known as the “recipient passive” or the “dative passive.” This paper uses the former term.

11 For the Kashubian and Slovincian material, see Motoki Nomachi “The Recipient-Passive Construction and its Grammaticalization in Kashubian,” in Andrii Danylenko and Serhii Vakulenko, eds., *Studien zu Sprache und Literatur der Slaven. Gedenkschrift für George Y. Shevelov zum 100. Geburtstag*. Munich: Otto Sagner Verlag (forthcoming).

sentence (12) is promoted to nominative subject.¹² With this promotion, the original lexical meaning of the verb *bekommen* gets weakened. The lexical verb therefore turns into an auxiliary.

Example (11) is a typical passive construction in which the accusative complement of (12) is promoted to nominative subject.

(10) *Der Junge* bekam (vom Vater) einen Ball geschenkt.
'That boy was given a ball (by his father).'

(11) *Dem Jungen* wurde (vom Vater) ein Ball geschenkt. (passive voice)

(12) Der Vater schenkte *dem Jungen* einen Ball. (active voice)

Similar changes arising from linguistic contact between German and Slavic are not limited to Sorbian, Kashubian, and Slovincian. For instance, Czech has long been a part of the German-speaking world and heavily influenced by its bilingual experience. As a result, the construction in question exists in Czech too,¹³ a phenomenon considered to be “grammatical Germanism.”¹⁴

2. Previous Studies of the Slovenian Recipient Passive

Like Czech, Slovak, Lower and Upper Sorbian, Slovincian and Kashubian, the Slovenian language has belonged to the German-speak-

12 This construction is not fully grammaticalized in German. Although opinions differ, most scholars agree that the construction is undergoing grammaticalization, cf. Gabriele Diewald, *Grammatikalisierung: Eine Einführung in Sein und Werden grammatischer Formen* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1997), pp. 32–33.

13 František Daneš, Miroslav Grepl, and Zdeněk Hlavsa, eds., *Mluvnice češtiny 3, Skladba* (Prague, 1983), pp. 246–251.

14 Markus Giger, “Die Grammatikalisierung des Rezipientpassivs im Tschechischen, Slowakischen und Sorbischen,” in Patrick Sériot, ed., *Contributions suisses au XIIIe congrès mondial des slavistes à Ljubljana, août 2003* (Bern: Peter Lang Verlagsgruppe, 2003), pp. 79–101.

ing cultural world for several centuries. German-language instruction (though intermittent) continued until the end of World War II, and German remained the language of business, culture, and education. As a result, the region has a long history of bilingualism. A similar situation can be observed to this day among Slovenians within the Austrian borders, in Carinthia.¹⁵ Thus the construction in question is likely to exist in some form within the Slovenian grammatical system, although no special mention has been made of it.

Ronald Löttsch, who has written pioneering papers on the recipient passive in Slavic, is skeptical about the existence of this construction in Slovenian.¹⁶ In her typological study of the passive voice in Slavic, Francesca Fici Guisti acknowledges the existence of the aforementioned recipient passive in Sorbian, but refutes it with respect to Slovenian.¹⁷

In contrast, Donald Reindl, a specialist in the field of linguistic contact between German and Slovenian, pays attention to the “indirect passive” as an analytic formation and mentions the existence of the recipient passive in Slovenian. However, he offers no concrete analysis of this passive leaving aside an excerpt of short passages, without example sentences, from Anton Murko’s 1843 grammar.¹⁸

15 Donald F. Reindl, *Language Contact: German and Slovenian* (Bochum: Universitätsverlag Dr. N. Brockmeyer, 2008), pp. 2–13.

16 Ronald Löttsch, “Zum indirekten Passiv im Deutschen und Slawischen,” in W. Krauss, Z. Stieber, J. Bělič, and V. I. Borkovskij, eds., *Slawisch-deutsche Wechselbeziehungen in Sprache, Literatur und Kultur* (Berlin: Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Slawistik, 1969), p. 109.

17 Francesca Fici Giusti, *Il passivo nelle lingue slave: tipologia e semantica* (Milano: FrancoAngeli, 1994), p. 33.

18 Anton Murko calls expressing the passive voice through verbs such as *gratam*, *gračujem*, *postanem* etc. a “barbarism.” See his *Theoretisch-practische windische Grammatik der Slowenischen Sprache in Steiermark, Kärnten, Krain und dem illyrischen Küstenlande* (Vienna, 1843), p. 91. Pleteršnik’s German dictionary, however, will confirm that the verbs *gratati* and *gratovati* are not used in the meaning of *bekommen* but rather in the meaning of *werden*. See Maks Pleteršnik, “Slovensko-nemški slovar,” accessed Dec 10, 2010, <http://bos.zrc-sazu.si/pletersnik.html>. These verbs are also used in the Carinthian dialect in the function of *werden*. See Stanislaus Hafner and Erich Prunč, eds., *Thesaurus*

But as sentences (13) to (18) below show, even in Slovenian there are sentences which parallel structurally the German *bekommen*-passive, that is, where *dobiti/dobijati* (the equivalent of the German verbs *bekommen/kriegen/erhalten*) is combined with PPP. Even though the construction under consideration occurs mainly in speech, it is used in various contexts in standard Slovenian.¹⁹

- (13) Kar so nam siloma vzeli, za kar so nas ogoljufali in opeharili, bomo *dobili povrnjeno* in *poplačano* s stoterimi obrestmi! (Ivan Cankar)
‘For that which has been taken from us by brute force, for being deceived and betrayed, we will be reimbursed, repaid a hundredfold!’
- (14) Tudi to boš *dobila plačano*. (Sonja Koranter)
‘You’ll get paid for that too.’
- (15) Glede na odločbo, ki smo jo danes *dobili razdeljeno*... (National Assemle of the Republic of Slovenia)
‘In view of the decision we had distributed to us today...’
- (16) Pa *dobite dostavljeno* na dom za manj kot šestdeset jurjev. (magazine *Mladina*)
‘And you can get it delivered to your home for less than 60,000 (tolar).’
- (17) Denar bodo *dobili izplačan* prej ali slej. (newspaper *Delo*)
‘Sooner or later he will get paid.’

der slowenischen Volkssprache in Kärnten, Band 4 (Vienna: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1994), pp. 98–99. Accordingly, it is difficult to treat the verbs mentioned by Reindl as auxiliary verbs of the “indirect passive.” It is more plausible that they were used as a replication of the German *werden*-passive construction.

19 Although the construction under consideration may be formed with either the perfective *dobiti* or the imperfective *dobivati*, the differences in aspect will not be addressed in this paper. All further references to the verb (aside from example sentences) will use the perfective *dobiti*.

- (18) Tudi jaz sem to vino *dobila šenkano*. (from daily conversation)
'I too was given that wine (as a gift).'

As is the case of German, all of the PPPs in the above examples are derived from the verbs governing the dative in the corresponding active voice constructions. Passive constructions that promote oblique complements other than the accusative in the active voice are relatively rare from the typological perspective. Even in Slavic, they can be found in those languages that have had especially significant linguistic contact with German.²⁰ Thus, there is a high probability that in Slovenian, we are dealing with a replication of the German *bekommen*-passive.

It is unclear, however, what position this construction occupies in the Slovenian morphology and syntax, what grammatical and semantic features it has, or under what conditions it is employed. This paper therefore is aimed at describing and analyzing the degree of grammaticalization of the recipient-passive construction in Slovenian.

We will begin with a discussion of the theoretical framework, followed by an outline of cases and passive syntactic patterns in Slovenian. Finally, our analysis will look into this passive construction from the grammatical and semantic points of view.

3. Methods and Corpus of Analysis

3-1. *Methods and Parameters*

According to Heine and Kuteva, grammaticalization is “the development from lexical to grammatical forms, and from grammatical to even more grammatical forms.”²¹ Whether or not general grammaticalization has occurred, may then be determined with the help of the following 4 interrelated parameters (or mechanisms).²²

20 Heine and Kuteva do not mention Burgenland Croatian here, but it surely may be added as an example. See Nomachi, “The Recipient-Passive Construction.”

21 Bernd Heine and Tania Kuteva, *The Genesis of Grammar: A Reconstruction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 32.

22 Heine and Kuteva, *The Genesis of Grammar*, pp. 32, 34.

1. Extension: the rise of new grammatical meanings when linguistic expressions are used in new contexts
2. Desemanticization (or “semantic bleaching”): loss in meaning content (or generalization)
3. Decategorialization: loss in morphosyntactic properties characteristic of lexical or other less grammaticalized forms
4. Erosion (or “phonetic reduction”): loss of phonetic substance

These parameters (pragmatic, semantic, grammatical, and phonetic respectively) show that grammaticalization entails a comprehensive change in linguistic structures, but it does not mean that all parameters are necessary and sufficient conditions for grammaticalization.²³

However, reanalysis is also a valid mechanism. As Hopper and Traugott argued,²⁴ reanalysis is an important concept with respect to grammaticalization parameters, and refers to the remodeling of syntactic, morphological and semantic structures. As a result of the redrawing of structural boundaries, the relationships between linguistic elements become redistributed. For instance, an {(A, B) C} language structure may turn into {A (B, C)} after reanalysis.²⁵

23 For example, phonetic reduction is not evident in auxiliary verbs in the Kashubian periphrastic perfect using *miec*, or in the Macedonian *ima* construction. In the Slovenian/Sorbian conflation of the instrumental case, which has no prepositions, and the comitative case (the instrumental case with the addition of prepositions *s* and *z*), parameters 3 and 4 are not observable. Therefore they are not necessary conditions for grammaticalization.

24 Paul Hopper and Elizabeth Traugott, *Grammaticalization*, trans. Sukenari Hino (Fukuoka: Kyushu University, 2003), p. 43. At the same time, reanalysis can hardly serve as a necessary condition for grammaticalization. For instance, Macedonian and Bulgarian employ post-positive articles, which are results of the grammaticalization of referent pronouns, although no reanalysis has occurred in this case. Grammaticalization is known to proceed unidirectionally, whereas reanalysis may proceed in multiple directions. See Bernd Heine, Ulrike Claudi, and Friedrike Hünnermeyer, *Grammaticalization: A Conceptual Framework* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 219.

25 Heine et al., *Grammaticalization*, p. 216.

with PPPs, as in (20), and (P2) the use of reflexive verbs with the clitic particle *se*, as in (21).³⁰

(20) Hiša je bila pregledana (od policije).
'The house has been searched (by the police).'

(21) Knjiga se tiska v Ljubljani.³¹
'The book is printed in Ljubljana.'

Although this article does not deal with passive constructions as a whole, in particular with the distinction between the above-mentioned two types, some salient features are nevertheless discussed below.

To begin with, morphologically, the passive meaning could be rendered in both (P1) and (P2) by using either the perfective or imperfective verb. Yet the perfective is typical in (P1), whereas (P2) typically employs the imperfective.³²

Slovene Language (Ohio: Slavica Publisher, 1982), p. 249; Jože Toporišič, *Slovenska slovnica* (Ljubljana, 2000), pp. 357–359; Peter Herrity, *Slovene: A Comprehensive Grammar* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 162–163; Janez Orešnik and Donald F. Reindl, eds., *Slovenian from a Typological Perspective* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2003), p. 155. Also, some authors consider sentences with the 3rd person plural form of the verb in the predicate such as *Udarili so me po glavi* “they hit me in the head” to be a type of passive construction, see Tom Priestly, “Slovenian,” in Bernard Comrie and Greville G. Corbett, eds., *The Slavonic languages* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 417.

30 Examples excerpted from Orešnik and Reindl, *Slovenian*, p. 156.

31 Using the subject *knjiga* in the accusative (*Knjigo se tiska v Ljubljani*) is also possible, although it is considered a colloquial form. See Orešnik and Reindl, *Slovenian*, p. 156; Toporišič, *Slovenska slovnica*, p. 357.

32 For example, the active sentence *Janez je pisal knjigo*, which employs the imperfective *pisati* (to write), may be passivized through pattern (P1) to give *?Knjiga je bila pisana od Janeza*. This sentence is not typically acceptable. Yet this does not mean that all imperfective verbs may not be passivized using pattern (P1). The sentence *Tedaj je bila zadeva obravnavana od policije* (At that time, the case was being investigated by the police), for instance, employs the imperfective *obravnavati* (to investigate) and sounds entirely natural.

Syntactically, one needs to take into consideration the following two particularities. First, while the agent of the verb may be realized in an optional prepositional phrase in (P1), it is absent in (P2) i.e. (**Knjiga se tiska od Janeza*). Second, if viewed through the semantic prism, (P2) realizes the passive meaning primarily when the subject is the third person; the passive meaning rarely depends on the verb's meaning or context only.³³

From the comparison of the two passive constructions, it becomes clear that the recipient passive has a certain level of formal and semantic correspondence to pattern (P1). To show this, suffice it to compare the following sentences.

(22) *On je dobil vrnjeno le puško (od policije).*
'He has been returned only his gun (by the police).'

(23) *Le puška mu je bila vrnjena (od policije).* (passive voice)

(24) *Policija mu je vrnila le puško.* (active voice)

The recipient passive (22) resembles the typical passive construction in (23) in that (a) passive verbs have one valency fewer than the active verb (the agent-identifying prepositional phrase is optional), and (b) the structure of the predicate is auxiliary + PPP. It may be added that the PPP in (22) is derived from the perfective as is the case in (23).³⁴

The two passive sentences differ in that (a) it is the dative complement in (22) and the accusative complement in (23) that gets promoted to nominative subject, and (b) the two sentences employ different auxiliaries.

33 As Jože Toporišič points out, the sentence *Fant se je tepel*, which combines the verb *tepti* (to punch) with the reflexive particle *se*, does not necessarily have to be interpreted as passive. The latter proves possible when it becomes contextually clear that *fant* is not the subject of the verb but rather a participant influenced by the verb's action. See Toporišič, *Slovenska slovnica*, p. 359.

34 In the material available, I did not find a single example of any PPP derived from the imperfective verb.

The relation between (22) and (23) appears reminiscent of the relation between (10) and (11) in German. In other words, (22) and (23) may be considered as sentences in which, respectively, the dative and accusative complements of (24) have been passivized according to syntactic pattern (P1).³⁵

This sort of correspondence, however, is not absolute, because while the auxiliary verb in (23) only provides grammatical information, the auxiliary verb in (22) undergoes an incomplete reduction of lexical meaning.³⁶ As I will show, not all the verbs governing the dative admit of this type of correspondence. With the understanding that there is ultimately only partial correspondence between these constructions, in this paper I am ready to treat the recipient construction as only partly passive.

5. Analysis of the Recipient Passive

5-1. Grammatical Features

5-1-1. Formal Agreement (*gender/number/case*) and Its Violation

The loss of formal agreement between PPP and complement as well as the use (decategorialization) of PPPs in all situations in the singular neuter form as a result of “reanalysis” (see section 2-1.) are typical features of the periphrastic formations. What follows is a comparison of predicative possessive constructions and periphrastic tenses in Macedonian and Kashubian.

35 In German, however, there are grammatical limitations on word order, and furthermore, adjectives and PPPs in the predicate do not exhibit formal agreement with the antecedent nouns/pronouns. Unlike German, Slovenian has conventions regarding word order but not grammatical limitations. Formal agreement between noun and PPP is also necessary. cf.

(25) Das Buch wurde geschenkt/*geschenkt.

‘The book was donated.’

(26) Ich bekam das Buch geschenkt/*geschenkt.

‘I was donated the book.’

36 To a different degree, this also applies to German (a donor language) where grammaticalization is also incomplete.

- (27) ja imashe prochitana knigata.
 ‘He/She had the book that he/she had finished reading.’
- (28) ja imashe prochitano knigata.
 ‘He/She had read the book.’
- (29) Jô móm przczëtóną ksążkã.
 ‘I have the book that I finished reading.’
- (30) Jô móm ksążkã przczëtóné.
 ‘I have read the book.’

Sentences (27) and (29) are premised on possessivity, in which there is a formal agreement between PPP and accusative complement. By contrast, the verbs in (28) and (30) are parts of the periphrastic tense form. This shows that the structural elements of (27) and (29) have been reanalyzed from {verb + (PPP + noun)} to {(verb + PPP) + noun}, at which point the PPP lost its formal agreement with the noun (that had been the complement of the verb) and became degrammatized in its neuter form.

At this stage, however, the formal and semantic changes are not perfectly in step with each other. While a reanalysis has already occurred at the semantic level, at the formal level one finds forms that are susceptible of reanalysis and forms that are not (stage 2). The distinction between the original form (A) and the new form (B) is usually resolved in a single form (stage 3) after passing through a context-dependent stage.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
(A)	(A)	
	(B)	(B)

For example, the Kashubian sentences (31) and (32) are semantically identical, but while the PPP in (31) formally agrees with the noun, such agreement is missing in (32). Sentences like (31) are relatively rare in Kashubian, while sentences of the type (32) are quite common. However, this implies that the recipient construction is completing its progression from stage 2 to stage 3.

(31) Kò òn ju miòl dostóna dërgòtkã. (agreement)

(32) Kò òn ju miòl dostóné dërgòtkã. (violation)
'He has already gotten a fever.'

Thus there are grounds for arguing that the formal agreement between PPP and noun is retained almost without exception in the recipient passive in Slovenian. In other words, the PPP and noun formally determine the complement of the main verb *dobiti*. The examples below are limited to nouns used in the singular accusative case.

(33) *Ta denar* sem dobila *podarjen* v celoti. (denar = masc. noun)
'I got all the money donated (to me).'

(34) *Mašino* sem dobil *popravljeno*. (mašina = fem. noun)
'I got the machine repaired (for me).'

(35) *Premoženje* smo dobili *vrnjeno*. (premoženje = neuter noun)
'We got the property returned (to us).'

What constitutes formal agreement in these examples is the fact that PPPs *podarjen* (given), *popravljen* (repaired), and *vrnjen* (returned) partially retain their formal attributive character, while being parts of the analytic constructions. On the other hand, sentences such as (37) and (38) reveal irregularities and may appear grammatically "unstable."

(36) doslej so dobili *vrnjenih 771 hektarov* kmetijskih površin. (agreement)
'So far 771 hectares of land have been returned.'

(37) doslej sta dobili *vrnjeno 146 hektarov* obdelovalne zemlje. (violation)
'So far 146 hectares of cultivated land were given back.'

(38) dočim obrtniki pa dobijo *plačano 1,950 tolarjev*... (violation)
'Whereas the artisans are paid 1,950 tolar...'

In terms of “grammatical correctness,” example (36), with formal agreement, is more appropriate than (37) or (38). “Violations” in (37) and (38), however, suggest that there is a weakening/loss of the syntactic relationship between PPP and noun, and that decategorialization as a result of reanalysis is taking place even at the formal level.³⁷

5-1-2. Genitive of Negation and Its Agreement Violation

Related to the issue of formal agreement, a partial loss of the negative genitive also points toward the grammaticalization of the construction in question. In cases where transitive verbs are negated in Slovenian, the direct object is used rather in the genitive case than the accusative, as in (40). This is also observed in the case of analytic verbal forms, as in (41) and (42).

(39) Berem knjigo. (knjigo = fem. sg. acc.)

‘I read a book.’

(40) Ne berem knjige. (knjige = fem. sg. gen.)

‘I do not read a book.’

(41) Ne bom bral knjige. (knjige = fem. sg. gen.)

‘I will not read a book.’

(42) Ne morem brati knjige. (knjige = fem. sg. gen.)

‘I cannot read a book.’

(43) *Ne berem/bom bral/morem brati knjigo.

As we have already seen, because formal agreement is obligatory in the Slovenian recipient passive, in the case where the verb *dobiti* is negated, the PPP as well as the noun complement take the genitive case instead of the accusative, as in (44) and (45). This occurs with both the

³⁷ There are few examples of such grammatical non-agreement in the corpus consulted, but 4 out of my 7 informants argue that both (37) and (38) are possible.

PPP and noun in (44), whereas in (45) the noun complement gets omitted and only the PPP is used in the genitive case.

(44) *Najemnin ne bodo dobili poplačanih.*
'They will not be reimbursed the rents.'

(45) *ker so pač to fizične osebe, ne bodo dobili vrnjenega nazaj.*
'Since they are individuals, they will not be returned to their original positions.'

There are cases, however, in which the expected negative genitive is not found even though the verb *dobiti* is negated. In (46a) the PPP takes a singular neuter form, and only the complement pronoun *nič* is realized in a genitive form, *ničesar*. There is no complement in (47a), corresponding to that in (45), but as in (46a), the PPP appears in the singular neuter form.

(46a) *V nasprotnem primeru morajo poleg tega, da ne dobijo plačano ničesar, plačati še prometni davek.*
'In the opposite case, you do not get paid anything; moreover, you will have to pay a transport tax.'

(47a) *To pa zato, ker niso dobili plačano.*
'This is because they did not get paid.'

(46b) *Ne [dobijo plačano] ničesar.*

(47b) *Niso [dobili plačano].*

As evidenced in both (46a) and (47a) the PPP is not associated with the negative genitive complement and, along with the verb *dobiti*, forms an analytic construction. The fact that only the complement noun takes the genitive case in (46b) corroborates our assumption.

Compared to instances of formal agreement between PPP and noun, cases like (46) and (47) are fairly rare and may be considered as "deviations" typical primarily of spoken language. However, these cases also indicate that for the recipient passive construction, partial reanalysis

takes place at the formal level. At the same time, the realization of the PPP in its invariant neuter form suggests that the participle has lost its morphosyntactic quality, thus undergoing decategorialization.

5-1-3. Word Order and Reanalysis

In sentences where the agreeing complement follows immediately the PPP, it is not possible to determine whether the structure is {verb + (PPP + noun)} or {(verb + PPP) + noun}. By comparing two examples adduced below, however, one may conclude that the PPP is not completely attributive.

(48a) Dobil sem *podarjen* denar. (podarjen = PPP short form)

Interpretation 1. I received the money that was donated.

Interpretation 2. I got the money donated.

(49a) Vlagateljji bodo dobili *podarjeni* denar čez leta. (podarjeni = PPP long form)

‘Payers will receive the given money after some years.’

Two readings are possible for (48a): *dobiti* either functions as a main verb (Interpretation 1) or as an auxiliary verb in the recipient passive construction (Interpretation 2). This is an instance of “extension” as discussed in section 2-1., when a construction begins occurring in new contexts.³⁸ On the other hand, sentence (49a), which contains the masculine singular long form of the PPP, has only one possible reading with *dobiti* functioning as a main verb since long forms can only be used as attributives.

In addition, whether or not the complement can occur in the theme also makes the distinction clear. That is to say, the recipient passive interpretation comes about through the weakening of the syntagmatic

38 One should bear in mind a kind of simultaneity of the action indicated by *dobiti* resulting from reanalysis and the meaning of the PPP. In Interpretation 1 of (48a), “donating” takes place in the distant past, thus preceding the act of “receiving.” In contrast, “donating” and “receiving” occur simultaneously in Interpretation 2.

relationship between PPP and noun that results from the thematization of the complement. In this respect, of interest are (48b) and (49b), where the accusative noun complements in (48a) and (49a) have been placed in the position of the theme of a sentence.

(48b) Denar sem dobil *podarjen*.
'I got the money donated.'

(49b)*Denar bodo dobili *podarjeni*.

These examples show that even if PPP and noun were in formal agreement and the noun complement followed immediately the PPP, the PPP does not function as an attributive in the recipient-passive construction. Incidentally, such attenuations of the syntagmatic relationship between PPP and noun arising from reanalysis may also be confirmed by the use of particles and quantifiers.

(50) Priigrati mora 350 milijonov, da bodo studii dobili povrnjen *le* en dolar.
'For the studio to get repaid just 1 dollar, it is necessary to earn 350 million.'

(51) Doslej ni dobil izplačanega *niti* tolarja na račun.
'So far not even 1 tolar has been paid into the account.'

(52) Z januarsko plačo bodo dobili izplačane *tudi* odpravnine.
'The severance pay will be given together with January's salary.'

(53) Nekateri kmetje so...dobili plačano šele mleko.
'Several of the farmers... have only been paid for milk.'

(54) ...tako da je blagoviški župnijski urad dobil vrnjene vse predmete.
'...and so the Blagovica parish office was given back all the items.'

(55) ...da bi prevozniki... dobili vrnjen vsaj denar od kazni...
'...the transporters... in order to at least get the fines (they were made to pay) returned...'

(56) Morda boste dobili povrnjenega nekaj denarja.
'You will probably get some money returned to you.'

(57) ...dokler ne bodo dobili plačanih več kot 120 milijonov tolarjev...
'...till they get paid more than 120 million tolar...'

5-1-4. So-called "Orphan" Accusative

The weakening of syntagmatic relationships is also evidenced in the so-called "orphan" accusative. According to Herrity, when the accusative of a masculine adjective is used in the direct object position without an accompanying noun and refers to a previously mentioned inanimate object, it is treated as an animate and appears in the animate "accusative genitive" case.³⁹

(58) A: Kateri kruh hočeš, *belega* ali *črnega*?
'Which bread do you want, the white or the brown?'

B-a: Daj mi *črnega*.
'Give me the black.'

B-b: Daj mi črn(i) kruh.
'Give me the black bread.'

B-c: *Daj mi črn(i).

The inanimate masculine noun *kruh* (bread) contextually omitted, the adjectives in A's question and B-a's reply become identified as animate adjectives, which obligatorily take the genitive case and not the accusative, rendering B-c impossible. Of interest is also the following sentence (59).

(59) *Ta denar* bo lahko zagotovil sam. Ker *ga* bo porabil za državno infrastrukturo, *ga* bo pozneje dobil *povrnjenega* iz vodnega sklada.
'He will be able to secure the money by himself. Since it will be used on the country's infrastructure, he will get it reimbursed from the water fund.'

39 Herrity, *Slovene*, p. 77.

The pronoun *ga* in (59) refers to *denar* (money) in the first sentence, which is an inanimate masculine noun. If the formal agreement between PPP and noun verified in section 4-1-1. were maintained, one would expect the PPP to be used in the form of the masculine singular nominative *povrnjen* (returned) (c.f. *Ta denar bo dobil povrnjen*). However, it is actually realized as the genitive *povrnjenega*, or the aforementioned “orphan” accusative.

Therefore, regardless of the existence of *ga* in the sentence as an accusative complement at the formal level, it is clear that it is being interpreted as “something that has been omitted.” This too indicates a formal realization of weakened syntagmatic relationships resulting from reanalysis.

5-1-5. “Absolute” Use of PPP

In the recipient passive, the PPP, which was formerly subordinated syntactically to the noun complement of *dobiti*, is reinterpreted as a “core verb” through reanalysis. Before reanalysis, the PPP functions as an optional attributive element, but when combined with the verb it gets promoted to a “non-omissible” element. At the same time, the noun complement, which is basically “non-omissible,” gets demoted to an optional element.

As a result, sentences which were originally inadmissible (i.e. without complements) become possible in cases where *dobiti* is the main verb. Sentences (13) and (47) fall under this category, as do the following examples.

(60) Čprav so Italijani dobili *plačano*...
‘Although the Italians got paid...’

(61) Jaz pa mislim, da prava ljubezen pomeni dajati, ne da bi pričakoval, da boš dobil *povrnjeno*.
‘I think that true love means giving without expecting anything to be given in return.’

(62) Tako sem dobil *napisano*.
‘I got it written out for me.’

- (63) Dobila sem *napisano*, katere knjige naj naročim.
'I got given a list of books to order.'

The above examples show that *dobiti* and PPP have become integrated into an analytic formation. Moreover, the use of the subordinate clause in (63) indicates the possibility of a formal extension, but such an extension is not always possible and brings with it certain semantic limitations (see section 4-2-2.).

5-2. Semantic Features

The analysis has thus far demonstrated how, from a grammatical perspective, the recipient passive has been partially grammaticalized, especially at the formal level. There are, however, various semantic limitations on the formation of the recipient-passive construction.

In order to explicate these limitations, the following structural elements will be examined: the grammatical subject, the verb *dobiti*, and the verbs from which PPPs are routinely derived.

5-2-1. The Grammatical Subject

The nominative subject of the recipient-passive construction corresponds to the dative complement, as used in the active sentence, which is most typically an animate noun (a person, in particular). Even when the noun complement is not a person, it may turn into grammatical subject if it undergoes personification. Sentences (50), (54), and (64) are exemplary in this respect

- (64) Ker je *Hrvaška* dobila vrnjenega več denarja kot Slovenija...
'Because Croatia has received more money as repayment than Slovenia...'

5-2-2. Desemanticization of the verb *dobiti*

The auxiliation of the verb *dobiti*, leading to its functioning in an analytic construction along with the PPP, signals a weakening of the main verb *dobiti*'s lexical meaning (see section 2-1.), and this partially auxiliated *dobiti* becomes a grammatical marker of the recipient passive.

For example, in Czech (65), Upper Sorbian (66), and Kashubian (67) recipient passive the semantic "transfer of concrete possession"

contained within the main verb is weakened, even disappeared and auxiliary verbs rather become grammatical markers as discussed above.⁴⁰

(65) Karel dostal (od otce) vyhubováno.⁴¹
'Karel was scolded (by his father).'

(66) Korla je přikazane dóstať so sčasom wrócić.⁴²
'Korla was told to come back on time.'

(67) Jonk dostôł nakôzóné, žebě sprzãtãc pòdwòrzé.⁴³
'Jonk was told to clean up the garden.'

Compared to other Slavic languages, the degree of desemantization of the verb *dobiti* in the Slovenian recipient passive is low, and the “transfer of possession” semantically implied by *dobiti* is largely retained.

To adduce a further example, while the verbs *napisati* (to write) in (63) and *reči* (to say) in (68) are both able to govern the dative complement in the active voice, only (63) is premised on a valid recipient-passive model. Example (68) semantically resembles (63) in that “information is obtained,” but considering that (63) is validated by a situation in which the information is channeled through a physical piece of writing such as a letter or an e-mail, it becomes clear that some concrete “transfer of possession” is connoted by (63). Needless to say, no such “transfer of possession” is implied by (68).

For the same reason, recipient-passive forms cannot be derived from such verbs as *prepovedati* (to prohibit) and *ustreči* (to accommo-

40 This is, however, a question of degree, and does not mean that the auxiliary verbs have been completely semantically bleached.

41 This example is taken from František Daneš, *Věta a text* (Prague, 1985), p. 33.

42 This example was provided by Professor Sonja Wölke, a native Upper Sorbian speaker.

43 This example was provided by Krystyna Lewna, author and a native Kashubian speaker.

date), which do not suggest any “transfer of possession” even though they govern the dative case.

(63) Dobila sem *napisano*, katere knjige naj naročim.
'I got written out for me which book I should order.'

(68) *Dobila sem *rečeno*, katere knjige naj naročim.

(69) *Dobil sem *prepovedano* kaditi v javnih prostorih.

(70) *Dobil sem *ustreženo*.

Even without any transfer of concrete possessions, there are cases such as (60) and (61) in which the recipient passive may be formed. In these sentences, however, the premise is clear that concrete objects such as money is being transferred, and thus (60) and (61) are essentially different from examples (65) to (67).

5-2-3. The Meaning of the PPP (main verb in the active voice)

The usage frequency of the recipient-passive construction in Slovenian is not high. Moreover, since the informants expressed varying degrees of acceptance, it is difficult to define strictly the domain of verbs from which this construction may be derived.

As all the corpus examples used in this research show, the common features include a valency of 3, perfective aspect, and simultaneous governing of the dative and the accusative cases. The recipient-passive construction is likely to be derived from such verbs. As a further criterion, the main verb must imply the transfer of concrete possessions, in alignment with the basic meaning of the verb *dobiti*.

Recipient-passive sentences are routinely derived from the following verb groups, where the first two groups have relatively numerous examples with high usage frequency.

- 1) Transfer of monetary possessions: *plačati, poplačati, izplačati...*
- 2) Return/restoration of possessions: *vrniti, povrniti, zavrnuti...*
- 3) Sharing of possessions: *razdeliti, podeliti...*

- 4) Donation: *podariti, obdariti, šenkati...*
- 5) Sending/delivery: *poslati, dostaviti...*
- 6) Writing (suggesting the transfer of physical documents): *napisati, zapisati...*

The list, to be sure, is tentative, as there must be numerous verbs that do not fit into these groups. Individual and geographical variations in usage do surely exist.

6. Concluding Remarks

The results of the foregoing analysis of the Slovenian recipient passive can be summed up as follows:

1) Grammatical level: in the recipient passive, the agreement in gender, number and case between PPP and an object in the accusative case (or the genitive of negation) is, in principle, always maintained, although in some cases, grammatical non-agreement and the absolute use of PPP may also be observed. This kind of violation (innovation) can be treated as a result of reanalysis of the recipient-passive construction, thus indicating the decategorialization of PPP and the paradigmization of the verb *dobiti* together with PPP, which is a step forward in the process of its grammaticalization.

2) Semantic level: the lexical verb *dobiti* tends to turn into an auxiliary through desemanticization. However, since the primary meaning of the verb *dobiti* should be the “transfer of possession,” the degree of desemanticization is low. Moreover, not all perfective verbs governing the dative case can be used as a PPP in the recipient passive. Only verbs which connote the transfer of possessivity, and whose grammatical subjects refer to possessor, may be used in the construction in question.

One can assume that the degree of grammaticalization of the Slovenian recipient passive is lower than in other languages with reminiscent constructions, such as Upper Sorbian, Czech and Kashubian. At present, German is no longer used as an official language in Slovenia, and its

direct influence on Slovenian is therefore far less significant than it once was. Thus it is not clear whether the grammaticalization of the construction continues to advance internally within Slovenian, or whether it has stopped at the partial adoption of some phraseological expressions.

This paper does not deal with the diachronic aspect of the recipient-passive construction. Given that this construction is typical of spoken language and that it has a low usage frequency, a diachronic research would be seemingly problematic. However, Ivan Cankar's usage of it implies that at least by the late 19th – early 20th century readers were familiar with such expressions. In other words, there is a need to investigate the ways in which the construction was used in literary texts (especially those that reflected vernacular language) at that time. But this is a topic for future research.