The Comparative Syntax of Passive Structures
in Chinese and Vietnamese

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Building on previous research on the *bei* construction in Chinese and similar
forms in other East Asian languages in Huang (1999) and other works, this paper
offers a further comparative perspective on Chinese-type passives and their
parametric variation with a consideration of passive structures in Vietnamese, an
Austroasiatic language which has received much historical influence from
Chinese. The paper indicates how Chinese and Vietnamese passive forms are in
many ways very similar, and also shows how passive-type forms in the two
languages may diverge in significant ways, leading to a re-examination of hypo-
theses seeking to identify fully universal properties of passive constructions.

0. Introduction

Much interesting research has been carried out on the syntactic structure of Mandarin
passive constructions in recent years, with significant results described in Ting (1998),
Huang (1999), and Tang (2001). Huang (1999), in particular, places modern Mandarin
bei-constructions in a broad comparative perspective, incorporating insights from the
diachronic development of *bei* passives, and the synchronic realization of passive in non-
Mandarin varieties of Chinese (Cantonese and Southern Min) as well as other East Asian
languages such as Japanese and Korean. The present paper adds a further comparative
perspective on Chinese-type passives and their parametric variation in East Asia with a
consideration of passive structures in Vietnamese, a language which has been consider-
ably influenced by Chinese due to earlier, prolonged Chinese dominance of the northern
part of the country during the formative years of the language. Sections 1 and 2 of the
paper establish how passive structures in Vietnamese show many clear similarities to
those in Mandarin, and are closer to Chinese in surface structure than the passive in
Japanese and Korean. Section 2 also introduces certain initial differences between
Chinese and Vietnamese passive constructions which relate to the degree to which
indirect passives are available in the two languages. Section 3 focuses more squarely on
ways in which Vietnamese and Chinese passive constructions may be significantly
different and highlights both the use of different passive 'auxiliary' verbs and the occur-
rence of intransitive passives in Vietnamese. This leads on to a re-consideration of
properties that may be taken to be universal to the passive in section 4, and how the

patterns in Vietnamese impact on cross-linguistic characterizations of the passive. Section 4 also speculates further on certain syntactic factors that may be responsible for the variation between Chinese and Vietnamese, and why the range of forms found in Vietnamese are not all permitted to occur in Chinese.

1. Passive in Chinese

The Mandarin *bei* construction has been well described in a number of works in recent years, for example Shi (1997), Ting (1998), Huang (1999), and Tang (2001). Huang (1999) in particular identifies a number of important syntactic properties of sentences such as (1) which support a bi-clausal analysis of Chinese passives, in which *bei* occurs as a predicate embedding a second clause.

(1) Zhangsan bei [Lisi da-le].
Zhangsan BEI Lisi hit-ASP
'Zhangsan was hit by Lisi.'

First, it is noted that a subject-oriented adverb such as 'deliberately' can occur preceding *bei* and be construed as referring to the action of the initial NP in the sentence ('Zhangsan' in (1)), identifying this NP as an Agent. This is taken to suggest that the initial NP may be base-generated as the Agent subject of a higher clause, rather than being raised to this position from a lower object position, where it would receive a Patient theta role. Movement between two independent theta positions is assumed to be unavailable due to restrictions imposed by the Theta Criterion.

(2) Zhangsan shi guyi   bei Lisi da-de.
Zhangsan BE deliberately BEI Lisi hit-DE
'Zhangsan deliberately got hit by Lisi.'

Second, it is observed that either the NP preceding *bei* or the NP following *bei* can bind the subject-oriented anaphor *ziji* in sentences such as (3). The interpretations available in (3) therefore suggest that both the NPs *Zhangsan* and *Lisi* are in subject positions, and hence that (3) contains two clauses, each with its own subject.

(3) Zhangsan$_i$ bei Lisi$_k$ guan zai ziji$_{i/k}$-de-jia-li.
Zhangsan BEI Lisi shut in self's house
'Zhangsan was locked up by Lisi in his/her own house.'

This leads to an analysis in Huang (1999) in which the 'gap' position present in examples such as (1-3) results from movement of an empty operator base-generated in the object-of-verb position to a clause-initial position, where it converts the subordinate clause into a secondary predicate construed as referring to the subject of *bei*, through co-indexation of this NP and the empty operator, as schematized in (4):

(4) Zhangsan$_i$ bei [$_{IP}$ Op$_i$ Lisi da-le t$_i$]

The operator-trace dependency posited in passive sentences such as (1-3) is argued to be potentially unbounded and able to span multiple clauses, as illustrated in (5). It is also constrained by syntactic islands, as shown in (6). Both of these observations support the view that passive sentences may involve A'-movement – for Huang (1999) the A'-movement of an empty operator.

(5) Zhangsan bei Lisi pai   jingcha zhua-zou-le.
Zhangsan BEI Lisi send police grab-away-ASP
'Lisi sent the police to seize Zhangsan and take him away.'

(6) *Zhangsan bei wo tongzhi Lisi ba [$_{RC}$ zanmei _ de shu dou mai-zou-le].
 Zhangsan BEI I   inform   Lisi BA   praise   DE book all buy-off-ASP
'I told Lisi to buy up all the books that praised Zhangsan.'

Such a conclusion receives further support from two other patterns. First, the particle *suo* which otherwise only occurs in relative clauses (and hence is associated with A'-operator movement) may occur in *bei* sentences of the form considered so far, where *bei* is followed by an overt NP agent. This is illustrated in (7).

(7) zhe-xie shiqing bu neng bei ta suo   liaojie.
these   thing   not can BEI he SUO understand
'These things cannot be understood by him.'

Second, it is possible for a resumptive pronoun to occur in the position of the object gap, when a frequency adverbial also appears, as shown in (8). The potential occurrence of resumptive pronouns is a property which is cross-linguistically associated with instances of A'-movement rather than A-movement.

(8) Zhangsan bei Lisi da-le   ta yi-xia.
Zhangsan BEI Lisi hit-ASP him one-time
'Zhangsan was hit by Lisi once.'

The above-noted patterns all characterize *bei* sentences in which an agent subject of the main descriptive verb is overtly present in the sentence. In addition to such forms, Mandarin also allows for there to be no overt realization of the agent of the main verb, as illustrated in (9):

(9) Zhangsan bei da-le.
Zhangsan BEI hit-ASP
'Zhangsan was hit.'

Interestingly, such agentless passives, which Huang (1999) refers to as the 'short passive' form, have certain different syntactic properties from the 'long passive' where an agent is present. These differences, observed in Huang (1999), are summarized in (10), and are argued to call for a somewhat different analysis from that of the long passive:

PROPERTIES OF THE MANDARIN SHORT PASSIVE (Huang 1999)

a. No resumptive pronouns (even when frequency phrases appear)
b. No particle *suo* possible.
c. No unbounded dependencies possible.

Because subject-oriented agentive adverbs are possible in the short passive, as in the long passive, Huang concludes that the pre-*bei* NP is base-generated as a subject in a higher clause and related to the gap position by an occurrence of A-movement (hence no resumptive pronouns, *suo*, or unbounded dependencies). In the short passive, *bei* is suggested to select for a VP construed as a secondary predicate of the pre-*bei* NP through co-indexation of a PRO which undergoes movement from the object gap position to SpecVP, as indicated in (10):

(10) Zhangsan$_i$ bei [$_{VP}$ PRO$_i$ da-le t$_i$]

Both long and short passive constructions are consequently analyzed as having bi-clausal structures, with a simple difference in the size of the constituent that occurs as the secondary predicate combined with *bei* – either a full clause with an overt subject and the occurrence of A'-operator movement, or a VP with A-movement of a PRO.

2. Passive structure in Vietnamese

Turning now to consider Vietnamese, sentences with a passive meaning similar to the Chinese examples in section 1 are in many cases constructed with the morpheme *bị*, possibly borrowed from Chinese *bei*. As in Mandarin, there are both 'long' and 'short' passive patterns, and the appearance of the agent NP associated with the main verb is quite optional:

(11) Nam bị (Nga) đánh.
     Nam BI Nga hit
     'Nam was hit (by Nga).'

Similar to Chinese (as pointed out by Huang 1999), the passive morpheme and the following agent NP cannot undergo any repositioning as a sequence (12), hence do not pattern like a PP constituent, unlike English passive 'by-phrases'. Combined with the observation that the NP following *bị* is able to bind an anaphor (13), this would seem to favor a bi-clausal analysis of *bị*-sentences in which *bị* embeds a subordinate clause (at least in cases of overt-agent long passive structures). Anaphors in Vietnamese such as *mình* are regularly only bound by subjects, as shown in (14). The post-*bị* NP in passive sentences like (13) therefore patterns like a subject, similar to its Chinese counterpart::

(12) *Bị Nga Nam đánh.
      BI Nga Nam hit
      Intended: 'Nam was hit by Nga.'

(13) Nam_i bị Nga_k nhốt trong phong ngủ của mình_{i/k}.
    Nam BI Nga lock in   room sleep of self
    'Nam was locked by Nga in his/her own room.'

(14) Nga_k nhốt Nam_i trong phong ngủ của mình_{k/*i}.
    Nga   lock Nam in   room sleep of self
    'Nga locked Nam in her own (Nga's) room.'

Long passive sentences in Vietnamese are also characterized by A'-dependency-like restrictions on the possible embedding of a Patient gap position, as in Mandarin. Long-distance dependencies similar to those in the *bei*-passive are possible, but only in long-passive structures (i.e. where the Agent is overt), and never into island constituents.

(15) Nam bị *(Nga) bảo cảnh sát đến   bắt.
    Nam BI Nga   call police come arrest
    'Nga called the police to come and arrest Nga.'

With regard to a range of passive-like sentence forms, Vietnamese therefore shows patterns which clearly parallel those found in Chinese. This seems to suggest that the analysis of passive phenomena in Vietnamese and Chinese should be similar, and a bi-clausal treatment of both Vietnamese and Chinese appears to be warranted, at least in the instance of overt agent long passive structures.

Parallels between Vietnamese and Chinese also extend further, with the occurrence of 'indirect passive' sentences in both languages. The term 'indirect passive' is commonly used to refer to instances of passive in which the 'passivized' surface subject does not correspond to any direct argument NP of the main descriptive verb such as the direct object, or indirect object. In both Chinese and Vietnamese, it is found that the subject of *bei/bị* may correspond to the possessor of the object of the main verb, when the action of the verb clearly affects the possessor through action being applied to the object, which is frequently a body-part or some item closely associated with the subject:

(16) Lao Zhang bei da-diao-le ya-chi.
    old Zhang BEI hit-lose-ASP teeth
    'Zhang had his teeth knocked out.' (Shi 1997)

(17) Ta bei jingcha mo-shou-le zhi-zhao.
    he BEI police confiscate-ASP driving license
    'He had his driving license confiscated by the police.' (Shi 1997)

(18) Zhangsan bei tufei   da-si-le   fuqin.
    Zhangsan BEI bandit hit-dead-ASP father
    'Zhangsan's father was killed.' (Huang 1999)

(19) Tôi bị Nga làm gẫy một ngón tay.
    I   BI Nga make snap 1 finger
   'Nga broke one of my fingers.'

(20) Nga bị Nam giật tóc.
    Nga BI Nam pull hair
   'Nga had her hair pulled by Nam.'

(21) Nam bị cảnh sát tịch thu ra đô của Nam.
    Nam BI police confiscate radio of Nam
   'Nam had his radio confiscated by the police.' (Le 1976)

The full distribution of indirect passives in Vietnamese is, however, rather more restricted than that in Mandarin (and Taiwanese - Huang 1999), in two distinct ways. First, where the object of the main verb is a kin term and refers to a relative of the subject (e.g. 'son', father' etc), an indirect passive structure is licensed in Chinese (ex. 18) but not in Vietnamese (even with a resumptive possessor):

(22) *Nga bị một người găng xtọ giết ba (của Nga).
     Nga BI 1 CL gangster   kill father (of Nga)
    Intended: 'A gangster killed Nga's father.'

Second, Chinese permits the occurrence of certain 'adversity passives' in which the subject of *bei* does not appear to correspond to any obvious argument or possessor gap position in the clause following *bei*, as for example in:

(23) Lisi you bei Wangwu jichu-le yi-zhi quanleida
     Lisi again BEI Wangwu hit-ASP 1-CL home-run
    'Lisi again had Zhangsan hit a home run on him.' (Huang 1999)

(24) wo bei ta zheme yi zuo, jiu sheme dou kan-bu-jian-le
      I   BEI he thus   one sit then everything all cannot-see-ASP
    'As soon as he sat this way on me, I couldn't see anything at all.' (Huang 1999)

This kind of passive structure licensed purely by the adverse effect of the action on the subject does not seem to be possible in Vietnamese:

(25) *Cảnh sát bị tên sát nhân trốn thoát.
      police   BI murderer escape
    Intended: 'The murdered escaped from the police (and this adversely affected the police).'

In section 4, we will return to consider how such differences might be accounted for in an extension of the analysis of indirect passives in Huang 1999. First, though, we will present two other sets of differences between Vietnamese and Chinese passive forms, one which is primarily lexical and not difficult to accommodate in existing treatments of East

Asian passives, and another which is clearly syntactic, and which has more serious consequences for characterizations of the passive as a cross-linguistic construction.

3. Lexical and syntactic variation in Chinese and Vietnamese passives.
3.1 Negative and positive effect passives in Vietnamese
An interesting lexical difference between Vietnamese and Chinese is that Vietnamese regularly makes use of two different functional morphemes in its 'passive' structures. In addition to the morpheme *bị*, present in all of the Vietnamese examples thus far, a second verbal element *được* also frequently occurs in fully parallel sentence forms. The key semantic difference between *bị* and *được* is as follows:

(26)   a. *bị* is used in sentences where the event depicted by the main verb is understood as affecting the subject in a generally negative way.
      b. *được* occurs in parallel sentence forms where the event depicted by the main verb is understood to affect the subject in a generally positive way.

Được itself appears to be cognate with Chinese *de* 得 'to get' (Cantonese *dak*), and has a main verb use 'to get/receive', as well as a post-verbal use as a modal meaning 'to be able to' (similar to Cantonese *dak*; Simpson 2001). Example (27) illustrates the use of *được* in a passive frame parallel to *bị*.

(27) Nam bị thầy giáo phạt.
    Nam BI teacher   punish
    'Nam was punished by the teacher.'

(28) Nam được thầy giáo khen.
    Nam DUOC teacher praise
    'Nam was praised by the teacher.'

Structurally, *được* 'passives' correspond fully to *bị* passives and allow for the same kinds of syntactic patterns. *Bị* and *được* therefore seem to simply be two (semantically different) values of the same functional verb type used to encode passive in Vietnamese. Example (29) shows how *được* can occur in an indirect passive-type use (with beneficial effect), similar to the use of *bị* in (21):

(29) Tôi được Nga đọc lá thư của tôi.
    I   DUOC Nga read letter of I
    'I had Nga read my letter.'

In terms of meaning and patterns of use, *bị* most commonly occurs with verbs which encode an obviously unpleasant action on their objects, hence verbs such as 'criticize', 'hit' etc, rather than verbs indicating a positive effect on their objects, e.g. 'praise', which naturally occur with *được*. However, verbs such as 'praise' can in fact occur with *bị* if the effect of the action of the verb is contextually understood as being negative (e.g.

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creating embarrassment for the subject), and verbs such as 'punish' may occur with *được* if the action of 'punishing' is somehow contextually understood to be positive for the subject:

(30) Nam bị thầy giáo khen.
　　　Nam BI teacher　praise
　　　'Nam was praised by the teacher.'

(31) Nam được thầy giáo phạt.
　　　Nam DUOC teacher punish
　　　'Nam was punished by the teacher.'

Consequently, interpretations of the subject being negatively or positively affected by the action of the verb in the Vietnamese passive are primarily a function of the choice of *bị* and *được*, and not principally dictated by the content of the main descriptive verb.

3.2 Passives of intransitive verbs
　　　A second, particularly striking syntactic property of Vietnamese *bị* passives, which distinguishes them from Chinese *bei* sentences and passives in most other languages is the occurrence of *intransitive verbs* in the *bị* passive frame. This is frequently found with intransitive verbs referring to unpleasant states or actions. Examples (32) and (33) below refer to sickness:

(32) Nga bị ốm/bệnh.
　　　Nga BI sick/ill
　　　'Nga got sick.'

(33) Nga bị bệnh ung thư.
　　　Nga BI ill　cancer
　　　'Nga got cancer.'

Verbs of this type often occur with *bị*, but it is important to note that they also can occur without *bị* in non-passive clauses:

(34) Tôi nghe nói là Nam ốm/bệnh lắm.
　　　I　hear say　C Nam sick/ill much
　　　'I heard that Nam is very ill.'

(35) Nam đang ốm/bệnh (lắm).
　　　Nam PROG ill/sick much
　　　'Nam is very sick.'

Examples (36-40) provide further illustration of intransitive passives referring to bodily conditions and actions which are viewed as negative. Both new, long-term states such as 'blindness' and 'becoming crippled' as well as short-term physical experiences such as

'coughing' and 'vomiting' occur naturally in these passive-of-intransitive verb structures, and terminal negative events such as 'drowning' may also be represented with a passive structure:

(36) Nam bị mù.
    Nam BI blind
    'Nam is/became blind'

(37) Nam bị tàn tật.
    Nam BI crippled
    'Nam is/became crippled.'

(38) Nam bị ho.
    Nam BI cough
    'Nam coughed.'

(39) Nam bị ói.
    Nam BI vomit
    'Nam vomited.'

(40) Nam bị chết đuối.
    Nam BI drown
    'Nam drowned.'

This kind of passive structure embedding intransitive verbs is not at all possible in Chinese, as illustrated in (41) and (42), and represents a very clear difference between Chinese and Vietnamese:

(41) *Ta bei bing-le.
    he BEI sick-ASP

(42) *Ta bei kesou-le
    he BEI cough-ASP

Presently, it will be seen that the occurrence of intransitive passive forms in Vietnamese also has significant consequences for any characterization of 'passive' in terms of universal, cross-linguistic properties.

4. Significance of the patterns for functional and theoretical approaches to passive
    The Vietnamese patterns presented above, and particularly those in section 3.2, are significant for both formal and functional analyses of the passive as a construction having clearly definable, cross-linguistic properties. Functional descriptions of the passive frequently claim that passive constructions exist to fulfill either one or both of the following manipulations of perspective/viewpoint:

AGENT DEMOTION - removal of the Agent from prominent subject position and demotion to a less salient role in the syntactic structure (or full elimination of the Agent from the sentence)

PATIENT PROMOTION – promotion of the Patient from object to subject position

In the Vietnamese passive of intransitive verbs, however, there is neither any agent demotion, nor any patient promotion, and the prominence of the single argument of the verb is not changed by the use of a passive structure. The function of the use of passive morpheme *bị* in such sentences is to signal and emphasize the negative impact of the event on the subject of the verb. The extension of passive *bị* to such intransitive verbs thus poses a clear challenge to current, heavily restrictive classifications of passive morphology and syntactic structure in terms of their functional use.

With regard to the formal, generative modeling of the passive within Government and Binding Theory and various of its 'Principles and Parameters' successors, the surface syntactic properties of passive sentences in European languages such as Italian, English and German have been suggested to be due to two common underlying features of passive (Burzio 1986, Haegeman 1991):

(43) a. Passivization eliminates the accusative case assigning potential of the verb

b. Passivization eliminates the external theta role of the verb

The interaction of (43a) and (43b) is suggested to cause the Patient/Object argument of a passivized verb to undergo movement to the subject position of a finite clause to be assigned/check case. As pointed out by Huang (1999), however, the patterning of passive constructions in Chinese and other East Asian languages necessitates a re-assessment of (43a/b) when considered as putative cross-linguistic properties of the passive.[1] In Chinese-type passives, there is no evidence that any accusative case assigning potential of the verb is lost, and overt NP objects may still occur in canonical post-verbal positions in passive sentences. This is illustrated in the 'retained object' indirect passive examples (16-18). In Chinese long passives, the Agent argument of the verb is also not eliminated, and may surface overtly, as in examples (1-3, 5, 7, 8). Neither of the core properties of passive identified on the basis of Romance and Germanic languages seem to be relevant for languages such as Chinese. While East Asian languages therefore clearly question the validity of (43a/b) as potentially definitive, cross-linguistic properties of passive structures, Huang (1999:67) suggests that it may still be possible to identify certain basic shared features of passive constructions across typologically diverse languages:

(44) '..there is nevertheless a universal notion of passivization that can be maintained, namely that all passives involve intransitivization and a dependency relation between the surface subject and underlying object position..'

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[1] See also Simpson (1990) for similar conclusions based on Thai.

Such a revised perspective on the passive needs a little further explanation before we consider the relevance of the patterns found in Vietnamese. Specifically, with regard to indirect passives, where the direct object of the verb is overtly present and not directly linked to the surface subject position (examples 16-18), Huang (1999) suggests that the surface subject is actually linked to an 'outer object' position in the embedded clause. It is proposed that an empty operator originates in a higher object position within VP, raises to a clause-periphery position as in other instances of long passive, and binds a pro in the possessor position of the direct object/Patient NP, as illustrated in (45).

(45) Zhangsan bei [Op$_i$ tufei [$_{VP}$ t$_i$ da-si-le [pro$_i$ fuqin]].

The possible occurrence of such structures is attributed to the ability of Chinese to case-license the outer object base position of the empty operator, which in turn is argued to correspond with the occurrence of overt NPs in outer object positions introduced by *ba*:[2]

(46) tufei ba Zhangsan da-si-le baba
     bandit BA Zhangsan hit-die-ASP father
     'The bandits killed Zhangsan's father.'

Huang notes that similar outer objects in Korean are clearly case-marked, and only possible where the outer object is affected by the action of the verb, as in Chinese:

(47) Mary-ka John-ul tali-lul cha-ess-ta/*po-ess-ta.
     Mary-NOM John-ACC leg-ACC kick-PAST-DEC/see-PAST-DEC
     'Mary kicked/*saw John in the leg.'

Concerning those *bei* sentences referred to as adversity passives (examples 23 and 24), Huang (1999) suggests that these are similarly derived by the movement of an empty operator from a *higher* outer object position. NPs base-generated in such a position are

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[2] Similar suggestions that such indirect passives may be related to *ba*-constructions are given in Shi (1997), who points to the parallelisms between many 'retained object' indirect passives and *ba*-forms:

(i)   hua bei wo jiao-le shui   (ii) wo ba hua jiao-le shui
      flower BEI I add-ASP water   I BA flower add-ASP water
      'The flowers were watered by me.'   'I watered the flowers.'
(iii) na kuai di bei tamen zhong-le gua   (iv) tamen ba na kuai di zhong-le gua
      that CL land BEI they plant-ASP melon   they BA that CL land plant-ASP melon
      'They planted melons in that bit of land.' 'They planted melons in that bit of land.'

suggested to receive a theta role with the meaning of 'entity adversely affected by the action of the verb'.[3]

Such an analysis of indirect and adversity passives has two immediate consequences, both of which seem to be positive. First, Huang is able to maintain that passive sentences in Chinese uniformly incorporate a dependency between the surface subject position and some underlying object position – either the direct object position, or one of the two outer object positions. This subsequently allows for the statement of (44) as a putatively general property of passive both in Chinese and other languages. Second, the case-theoretic approach to indirect passives allows for a principled way to describe and possibly even predict cross-linguistic variation in the occurrence of such structures. Earlier it was noted that 'non-gap' adversity passives do not occur in Vietnamese, unlike Chinese. This difference between Chinese and Vietnamese might now be attributed to differences in the availability of abstract case in the two languages. The objective case which is suggested to license higher outer objects in adversity passives in Chinese may be suggested to be unavailable in Vietnamese, accounting for the unacceptability of forms such as (23) and (24) in Vietnamese.[4]

Having clarified the status of indirect passive 'retained object' passives, we are now in a position to reflect on how Vietnamese and certain of its passive structures may impact on (44). This redefined, cross-linguistic characterization of passive as minimally and necessarily involving a dependency between a surface subject and an underlying object position, inspired by differences between languages such as Chinese and English, Italian etc, would seem to require further reconsideration as a result of the Vietnamese data presented in section 3.2. Vietnamese significantly seems to extend the use of passive structures from the canonical linking of a subject with an underlying object position to other dependencies which connect a surface subject and a second underlying *subject* position. This highly distinctive use of the passive was illustrated in section 3.2, where it was shown that the subjects of intransitive verbs may participate in passive constructions in a way parallel to the objects of transitive verbs. The occurrence of such patterns therefore calls into question whether a restriction can be placed on characterizations of the passive limiting it to cases where the surface subject of a passive

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[3] Due to this theta-related restriction on interpretation, indirect passives with no clear meaning of adversity implied by the predicate are not possible in Mandarin:

(i)   *Zhangsan bei Lisi pao hui jia qu le.
       Zhangsan BEI Lisi run return home go ASP
       Intended: 'Zhangsan had Lisi run away home on him.'

[4] The fact that Vietnamese permits indirect passives with retained objects that are possessed body-parts but not kin terms, unlike Chinese, may call for a finer understanding of the hypothesized case-licensing of outer objects. It may be that 'kin term' retained object passives are licensed in the same way as adversity passives, both as *higher* outer objects, hence the availability of the former may be linked to that of the latter: both licensed in Chinese, neither possible for speakers of Vietnamese.

structure is connected (by movement or operator-mediated secondary predication) only to underlying *object* positions. Rather, it would seem that the possible boundaries of what is commonly referred to as passive may need to be recognized as less narrowly defined, and may in theory also connect a surface subject to other syntactic/argument positions located in the same clause or alternatively an embedded clause in various East Asian languages.

The 'subject passive' patterns found with *bị* and intransitive verbs denoting an unwelcome outcome/experience for their subjects can additionally be noted to extend further in Vietnamese, in two directions. First, there are instances where the surface subject of a *bị* sentence can form a dependency with the subject gap position of a *transitive* verb, when the latter describes an action that is obviously unpleasant and which may involve suffering on the part of the subject, as illustrated in (48) and (49):

(48) Nam bị xem một phim kinh dị.
    Nam BI watch one film horror
    'Nam watched a horror film (and this was unpleasant for Nam).'

(49) Sắp bị lọt vào miệng con quái vật thì …
    ASP BI fall enter mouth animal odd creature then
    'He was about to fall into the monster's mouth when…' (Daley 1998:92)

Second, the 'positive experience passive' verb counterpart to *bị* in Vietnamese - *được* - also regularly occurs with its subject linked to a lower subject position:

(50) Nam được đi Pari.
    Nam DUOC go Paris
    'Nam went/got to go to Paris'.

Therefore with both *bị* and *được* both subject-to-object and subject-to-subject dependencies are possible in structures which are built with these negative/positive passive morphemes. This is schematized in (51), where square brackets around an NP in the embedded clause indicate the gap position linked to the subject of the sentence.

(51) **subject-to-object dependencies**

    NP_i bị/được NP_k verb $[NP_i]$ transitive passive

    subject-to-subject dependencies

    NP_i bị/được $[NP_i]$ verb   intransitive passive
    NP_i bị/được $[NP_i]$ verb NP_k transitive passive

Vietnamese thus makes use of an extensive array of linking options in the projection of passive-related structures, challenging assumptions about the necessary limits of such forms and raising new questions for both the formal and functional modeling of the passive. Previously, initial cross-linguistic characterizations of the passive based on patterns in European languages have been modified by the observation of non-

prototypical (though robust) forms such as the passive of unergative intransitives in German, illustrated in (52), where agent demotion occurs but no patient promotion:

(52) Es wurde getanzt.
    it became danced
Lit: 'There was danced.'

East Asian languages, such as Chinese (also Japanese, Korean, Thai) have forced a further re-consideration of universal properties of the passive, as noted above and discussed at some length in Huang (1999). Vietnamese with its bi-clausal subject dependency passives now indicates an additional limit of variation which needs to be factored into and acknowledged in global descriptions of the passive. Given what is observed in Vietnamese, a universal set of 'minimal required properties' of the passive may need to acknowledge that prototypical passive constructions may be stretched to incorporate (and be licensed by) dependencies between two subject positions, bringing the passive syntactically close, in this instance, to the set of constructions otherwise referred to as 'Control structures', where the reference value of the covert subject of an embedded clause is provided ('controlled') by the subject of a higher clause, as in (53):

(53) John$_i$ wanted [PRO$_i$ to leave].

The potential similarity of subject dependency passives such as (48-50) to Control structures raises interesting questions about the syntactic distinctions between passive and Control structures, and whether it is possible to predict the presence/absence of subject dependency passives in any principled way. Such issues are taken up in greater length in Simpson and Ho (in preparation). Before closing the present overview of passive in Vietnamese, however, we will note a final set of patterns which offers a potential further clue to understanding differences in the availability of passive forms in Vietnamese and Chinese.

Although less frequent in occurrence than the combination of *bị* with a clause/verbal predicate, the 'passive' morpheme *bị* may actually be combined with a variety of non-verbal constituents, such as nouns/NPs, adverbs, and adjectives. This is illustrated in (54-58) below.

(54)   bị + an <u>adverb</u>

      bị chậm = be delayed   chậm = Adv: slowly (đi chậm = go slowly)

(55)   bị + <u>noun</u>

      bị hoang tưởng = be paranoid   hoang tưởng = N: delirium

      bị virus = get a virus; virus = N   bị nạn lụt = be flooded;
                                               nạn lụt = N: flood disaster

(56) a. Computer của anh ấy bị virus.   b. Mỹ bị nạn lụt.
     computer of he BI virus   USA BI flood
     'His computer got a virus.'   'The US was flooded.'

Note that the item 'virus' above can be modified by a quantifier and by adjectives or PPs, confirming its nominal status:

(57) Computer của anh ấy bị nhiều/mấy loại virus nặng lắm/ từ nước Đức.
     computer of he BI many/several type virus serious very from Germany
     'His computer got many/several types of very serious virus from Germany.'

(58)   bị + adjective
        bị nghèo đi = be impoverished   nghèo = Adj: poor
        bị hư = be damaged   hư = Adj: damaged

This ability of *bị* to combine with a range of complement types may possibly be connected with and underlie the marked occurrence of 'subject passives' in Vietnamese. If *bị* is able to select for a wider array of clausal and semi-clausal predicate constituents than Mandarin *bei*, this may open up different possibilities of passivization and the occurrence of subject-to-subject passive dependencies, with *bị* selecting a constituent type which will permit subject passivization (perhaps through licensing of the extraction-site of empty operator movement). This line of investigation will be pursued in future research.[5] For present purposes and reasons of space, however, we will restrict ourselves

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[5] A primary goal of future work on passive in Vietnamese and Chinese will actually be to account for why Chinese does NOT allow for subject passives in the way that Vietnamese does, i.e. why forms such as (41) and (42) are ill-formed in Chinese. It is difficult to see why an empty operator should not be able to move to a clause-peripheral position from the subject position of a clause embedded by *bei* and so create structures such as (41), (42), (48) and (49), yet these Vietnamese sentences would be completely ill-formed in Chinese. In English, a related question occurs with regard to *tough* sentences, which only seem to permit dependencies between embedded objects and the surface subject, and not subject-to-subject dependencies:

(i)   John$_i$ is easy [Op$_i$ PRO to please t$_i$].
(ii) *John is easy [Op$_i$ t$_i$ to be happy].

The English *tough* patterns can arguably be accounted for with reference to case – an empty operator may only undergo movement from a position that receives case, hence not from the subject of a non-finite clause. Such a straightforward explanation of the unacceptability of Chinese (41) and (42) is not available, however, as the subject position of clauses embedded by *bei* would seem to be a case position, supporting overt subjects in instances of long passive. The question why (41/42) are ungrammatical in Chinese is consequently non-trivial, and would also not seem to be attributable to any reasons of semantic ill-formedness - the subject of *bei* simply needs to be understood as undergoing an unwelcome mental/physical experience, and this should be satisfied by a subject-to-subject dependency in (41/42).

here to providing a simple summary of the principal similarities and differences between Chinese and Vietnamese passive structure thus far reported in the paper.

5. Summary of similarities and differences in Chinese and Vietnamese passives

Parallel patterning in Chinese and Vietnamese
- occurrence of short and long passives
- evidence for a bi-clausal structure in passives
- evidence for an A'-movement analysis of gaps in the lower clause linked to the surface subject in long passive structures
- retained object 'possessor-passives' in addition to simple object-gap passives, involving body-parts and certain other nouns

Differences between Chinese and Vietnamese
- Chinese permits pure 'adversity passives' with no gap corresponding to either the object of the verb or a possessor of the object; Vietnamese does not appear to license such structures.
- Vietnamese makes productive use of two different morphemes in passive structures, one for events with negative impacts/outcomes (*bị*), the other for positive impact events (*được*).
- Vietnamese permits subject-gap passive structures, both with intransitive verbs and transitive verbs.
- The Vietnamese passive morpheme *bị* can combine with a range of complement types with a similar passive-like meaning of being negatively affected.

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