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CHOPPING THE FUZZY LOGIC OF THE ACTIVE ↔ PASSIVE OPPOSITION IN ENGLISH VERBS¹

With a plethora of factors at work blurring the notoriously tenuous distinction between active and passive interpretations of verb constructions, one might with good reason express doubt as to whether establishing hard and fast principles for differentiating them is at all a sensible task.

After a brief survey of *passivum tantum*- and basically passive verbs, as well as of chameleon-like, statal and dynamic passives, the author of the present contribution takes it upon herself to closer investigate the verbal or adjectival status exhibited by a series of *-ed* forms – as cited by various linguists (Stein, Quirk et al, Downing & Locke, Dixon) – with a view to advancing a more rigorous classification of *-ed* forms based on the syntactico-semantic description of their individual behaviour in the various combinations analysed. The table submitted shows *-ed* forms located on an imaginary scale spanning passiveness from *bona fide* dynamic passives to copular complementation, with four further partitions in between.

In the concluding section the author further glosses the subcategorization proposed, in that she provides the semantico-pragmatic motivation underlying the rather difficult choices made in the process.

Discrepancy of opinions on the issue at stake is most probably due to the fact that analyses of such cases are cast in terms of different, sometimes even opposite, sets of typological parameters, i.e. either theoretically or pragmatically based ones.

¹ The present research is part of an ongoing project, “Lexico-Morphological Idiosyncrasies of Romanian as Compared with European Romance and Germanic Languages. Similarities and Contrasts”, sponsored by the Romanian National Council for Scientific Research in Academic Education.

1. *Passivum Tantum*² and Basically Passive Verbs

One of the first to attempt making an inventory of *passivum tantum* verbs is Robson in his doctoral dissertation (1972). Regrettably, he avoids laying down tenable criteria underlying his arguable classification. That also accounts for the sad fact that the listed items make up a rather motley collection including, besides *bona fide* past participles, modified ones and denominal adjectives (s. for instance, forms like *unknown*, which cannot be traced back to an existing full verb **to unknow*).

A decidedly more feasible classification originates with Stein (1979), who distinguishes between obligatorily passive (i.e. genuine *passivum tantum*) verbs and basically passive ones. Of the former group, *repute* seems to be the only representative (s. Quirk et al 1985: 804, Stein 1979: 163, Dixon 1992: 146). Besides *verba dicendi* such as *say*, *rumour* (Stein 1972: 163), *report* (Downing & Locke 1992: 95), the latter has been assumed to include specimens like *abash*, *addict*, *aggrieve* (Stein 1979: 163), *certify*, *label* and *presume* (Downing & Locke 1992: 95).

2. Chameleon-Like Passives³

Certain verbs can easily change their semantics to match the grammatical context, but not without dramatically narrowing down their range of meanings. Thus the following verbs, when assuming the bracketed meaning(s), can only be construed as passives (cf Stein 1979:163):

be attached to sb/sth [=like sb or sth very much], *be bound to* [=certain or extremely likely to happen; having a moral or legal duty to do sth], *be confined to somewhere/sth* [=to exist only in a particular area or group of people], *be damned* [= refuse to do sth: *I'll be damned if I'(ll) do that; I'll be/I'm damned* (infml) I am astonished], *be delivered of* [=give birth to], *be devoured by sth* [= feel an emotion, especially a bad emotion, very strongly so that it strongly influences your behaviour], *be ill or well/ favourably, etc disposed to/ towards sth/sb* [= like or approve of sth or so], *be done for* = 1) be about to die or suffer greatly because of a serious difficulty or danger 2) (infml) very tired; *be done in* [= (infml) too tired to do any more], *be engaged* [= having formally agreed to marry].

To Stein's mind, verbs developing such a chameleon-like streak are of particular interest because they show "that a great number of copula verbs + past participle combinations are lexicalized" (cf 1979: 163).⁴ Along similar lines, the

² , and

³ I am more than willing to take both the blame and the credit – if any – for these labels I took the liberty to coin.

⁴ 'Lexicalization' in Stein's view implies a more restricted or specialized use of the items (cf 1979:163).

German linguist argues that lexicalization of such passives is accounted for by the fact that the extralinguistic subject – which in the case of *passivum tantum* verbs representing lexicalized passives is as a rule not the same as the syntactic subject – will more often than not be left unspecified or unknown, cf:

She was attached to her father.

? *attached her to her father* (Stein 1979: 64).

At this particular juncture I shall refrain from making any comments on Stein's theory as outlined in her study (1979)⁵, and confine my remarks to an item on her list of verbs in the passive with a specific meaning, namely *to be extended*. The bracketed explanations accompanying the verbs cited above have been extracted mainly from *CALD*, which, unfortunately, provided no such illuminating information on *to be extended*. That is why I turned to a dictionary aimed at "getting to the heart of the language", *LDELIC*, which enters the following indication, definition and example on page 455 under **extend 5**: "[*T usually passive*] to cause to use all possible power : *The horse won the race easily without being fully extended*". Further reference to this lexical entry as it stands in *CALD* will be made in section 4 below, where I resume discussion of the topic being investigated.

3. Statal vs. Dynamic Passives

Greenbaum & Quirk (1991: 45) describe the statal passive as a construction including an *-ed* form which refers to a state resulting from an action. Stein (1979: 164), too, maintains that a resultative semantic feature is by definition associated with the statal passive. To Dixon's mind (1992: 307), on the other hand, passive constructions in general normally describe the result of an activity.

Yet the real problem begins to loom larger than ever when trying to tell the two apart, i.e. the statal from the dynamic passive. Other languages have weaseled out of the dilemma by employing two different passive auxiliaries: one for the statal and one for the dynamic passive (cf German *sein* vs. *werden*). With English, unfortunately, ambiguities are at their wildest in this area of grammar. Thus, a sentence like

The building was demolished

is ambiguous between a statal reading [= it was in ruins, in a state of decay] and a dynamic one [= they were demolishing it].

As a possible disambiguating device Trask (1993: 259) suggests in such cases the expansion of the sentence by adverbials, which are supposed to force one or the other reading. And, indeed, if appended to the above sentence, an agent *by*- phrase such as *by the German building company*, or a final clause like *so that*

⁵ This will be referred to in more illuminating detail in section 4 below after a brief analysis of statal vs. dynamic passives.

the supermarket could be built definitely render the feature [+dynamic] explicit. Likewise, the feature [+statal] can as easily be clarified by addition of a durative adjunct such as *for more than a decade*.

The possibility of substituting ‘actionalizers’ *get* or *become* for *be* can also be viewed as a further linguistic testing device with dynamic passives (cf Stein 1979: 164).

Last but not least, availability of the verb for use in the progressive – which is notorious for playing up the [+dynamic] feature – could be regarded as an equally reliable disambiguator (s Măciucă 2004: 106-112 for fuller discussion of the topic), e.g.:

The building was being demolished.

4. Author’s Own View on the Topic

4.1. A Closer Investigation of Stein’s ‘Basically Passive’ Verbs and other -Ed Forms

The unavailability of a unified typological approach and, above all, of a consolidated conceptual and analytic framework covering the active-passive dichotomy practically challenges the legitimacy of any new assumptions formulated in this area of research.

It is, however, precisely this diversity of approach that prompted me to inspect more closely the examples adduced in section 1 above, particularly those listed by Stein as ‘basically passive’. Since certain infinitival forms resorted to by the German linguist for exemplification (s. *to abash, to addict, to aggrieve*) struck me as rather unusual, I decided to start investigating them on my own.

Therefore, I did a more thorough search for these verbs in two state-of-the-art dictionaries of contemporary current usage: *LDEL*C and *CALD*. A synopsis of the quite relevant results which this investigation yielded is presented below. Thus, the good news is that all three lexemes illustrating, in Stein’s view, ‘basically passive’ verbs, can be found listed in both dictionaries as separate entries. The bad news, however, is that none is entered as any genuine verb would be, i.e. in their infinitival form. On the contrary, all three of them appear in their *-ed* form and, moreover, are assigned full adjectival status, as clearly indicated in the following excerpts:

1)”**abashed** [...] *adj* [F] uncomfortable and ashamed in the presence of others, especially when one has done something wrong or stupid – opposite **unabashed**” (*LDEL*C: 1).

1’)” **abashed** [...] *adj* [**after verb**] embarrassed: *He said nothing but looked abashed*” (*CALD*: 1).

2)”**addicted** [...] *adj* [F (**to**)] dependent on something, especially a drug; unable to stop having or taking: *It doesn’t take long to become addicted to these drugs* (fig.) *My children are hopelessly/ absolutely addicted to television*” (*LDEL*C: 13).

2')"addicted [...] *adj*: *By the age of 14 he was addicted to heroin.* • *I'm addicted to (= I very often eat/ drink) chocolate/lattes* • *I know that if I start watching a soap opera I immediately become hopelessly addicted* "(CALD: 15).

3')"aggrieved [...] *adj* **1.** showing hurt, angry and bitter feelings, especially because one has been unfairly treated; **2** especially law having suffered as a result of the illegal actions of someone else: *The allegations of fraud were proved and the court awarded the aggrieved parties substantial damages* "(LDELC: 21).

3')"aggrieved [...] *adj* unhappy and angry because of unfair treatment: *He felt aggrieved at not being chosen for the team.* • *One aggrieved customer complained that he still hadn't received the book he had ordered several weeks ago* "(CALD: 24).

The above findings induced me to extend my investigation to further examples of the ones cited in section 1 above. This second phase of the analysis adduced additional evidence in favour of the adjectival status of certain *-ed* forms, as plainly shown by the entry definitions of *reputed* and *rumoured* below – two more lexical items cited by Stein as obligatorily and basically passive verbs respectively, which both dictionaries consulted thought fit to enter only as *-ed* forms, cf :

4')"reputed [...] *adj* generally supposed or considered (to be), but with some doubt: *the reputed father of her baby* [F+ to v] *She is reputed to be extremely wealthy*" (LDELC: 131).

4')"reputed [...] *adj* said to be the true situation although this is not known to be certain and may not be likely: *She is reputed to be 25 years younger than her husband.* • *They employed him because of his reputed skill in dealing with the press*" (CALD: 1078).

5')"rumoured [...] *adj* reported unofficially: *The rumoured marriage between the prince and the dancer did not in fact take place* [F+ to v] *He is rumoured to have left the country* [+ that] *It's rumoured that there'll be an election this year*" (LDELC: 1181).

5')"rumoured [...] *adj* describes a fact that people are talking about, which might be true or invented: *The rumoured stock market crash has yet to take place* • [+ to infinitive] *The president is rumoured to be seriously ill*" (CALD: 1112).

Now then, though at first blush all five *-ed* forms defined and exemplified above look very much alike in that they are listed by both LDELC and CALD as adjectives – with a lexically related verb nowhere in evidence –, on closer inspection a sharp eye will not be slow in detecting at least one major difference between the *a-* set (*abashed, addicted, aggrieved*) and the *r-* one (*reputed, rumoured*). Thus, with the former, insertion of an agent *by*-phrase – in sentences including *be* + *a*-item combinations – would render the examples blatantly deviant, cf :

**My children are hopelessly / absolutely addicted [by X] to television*

**By the age of 14 he was addicted to heroin [by X],*

whereas deployment of a similar strategy in the latter case would leave them, in theory at least, not entirely unacceptable, if slightly awkward in terms of intrinsic meaning of the lexical items under discussion, cf:

? *She is reputed [by X] to be 25 years younger than her husband*

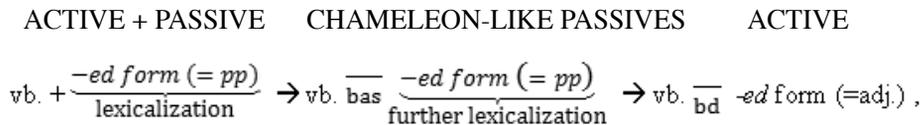
? *He is rumoured [by X] to have left the country.*

Keeping in line with Stein's principle claiming that "Combinations of a copula + past participle which are lexicalized passives display a further characteristic: the more they are lexicalized, the less they can be expanded by an agent phrase" (1979:166), it follows from the above that the former set of *-ed* forms, which defy insertion of an agent phrase, can be viewed as constituents of fully lexicalized combinations, while the *-ed* forms in the latter set as part of semi-lexicalized ones. As a matter of fact, Stein herself admits that "Lexicalization as such is a general process and this implies that we will find more or less lexicalized combinations" (1979:164), and even feels the need to enlarge on the complexity of the phenomenon: "The set of combinations consisting of a copula + a past participle which occur only in the passive is thus increased through lexicalization processes" (1979: 165).

In an effort to mitigate the 'fraught-with-the-unknown' effect which such assertions might have on the reader by stressing the fact that the demarcation line between the active and the passive can sometimes be frustratingly dynamic, Stein then immediately qualifies her statement and adds that the relationship between past participles and adjectives is best viewed in the light of their assumed status. More precisely, if a verb and the *-ed* form derived from it have been bonded into a closely-knit team, the latter constituent is regarded as passive in combination with a copula but still a passive which has no corresponding active version. If, however, the bond between verb and *-ed* form is no longer felt as being alive synchronically – i.e. not so strongly present as to allow the feature [+ motivated] to be included in the latter's semantic description –, then the *-ed* form is considered to be a primary adjective and as a result unavailable for the passive past participle function (cf. Stein, op. cit.).

4.2. Final Assessment of Stein's View

I have given so much space to Stein's view because I regard it as one of the most discerning on the topic under research. In the light of the facts presented, I am now in a position to summarize her theory in the following diagram:



where *bas* = bond alive synchronically and *bd* = bond disrupted (through additional lexicalization).

Perfectly articulated as it may look at first glance, there emerge certain incongruities which inevitably invite criticism, the more so as the new evidence amassed seems to be lending support to complementary insights.

(a) For openers, Stein considers as basically passive *abash*, *addict* and *aggrieve*. This assumption logically implies, according to her theory, that the *-ed* forms derived from them function as lexicalized past participles, not as primary adjectives⁶. Which – as made abundantly clear previously from the cited excerpts – is not exactly what we found them to be listed as in the two dictionaries consulted.

Moreover, the very fact that *aggrieved*, for instance, can be used attributively (cf the *aggrieved parties* and *one aggrieved customer* cited above) is a clear indication of its adjectival status, a status which is also strongly reinforced by its availability for collocating with *feel* (s. 3') above: *He felt aggrieved at not being chosen by the team* or of *abashed* with *look* (s. 1') above: *He said nothing but looked abashed*) to form what can be safely viewed as typical copular complementation patterns (s. Măciucă 2000a:190-206 and Măciucă 2000b: 103-108 for further details on copular complementation patterns). On the other hand, their reluctance to accept expansion by an agent phrase also speaks volumes for their adjectival function.

A similar treatment to *abash*, *addict* and *aggrieve* receive *repute* and *rumour* from both quarters. More precisely, they are labelled by Stein as obligatorily and basically passive respectively, while both *LDEL* and *CALD*, as already shown above, enter them, too, as adjectival *-ed* forms, again with no mention at all of a *repute* or *rumour* infinitive attesting to their verbal status in standard contemporary English. In addition, both dictionaries feature their attributive employment (s. 4): *the reputed father of her baby*, 4'): *They employed him because of his reputed skill...*, 5): *The rumoured marriage...* and 5') *The rumoured stock market crash...* above).

As regards their theoretical availability for expansion by an agent phrase, the feature may be attributed, in my view, to their affiliation to the *verba dicendi* group, where the agent is the instigator of a speech act, not of an action as such, and therefore much easier to pinpoint with no serious consequences for the extralinguistic subject, since words in turn are much easier to disclaim than deeds. Viewed the other way round, it is precisely the reluctance of rumour-mongers to reveal their sources that induces them to use the passive. This contradiction-in-terms accounts for the awkward-looking or -sounding effect of any inserted agent phrase, which is rightfully felt as intruding upon both the secrecy assumed and the internal logic of the sentence as such.

Intensification of meaning and gradability helps to further clarify their position on an imaginary scale distinguishing between different degrees of verbhood and adjectiveness. Thus, whereas the *a*-set is open to both strategies (s. 2): *My children are hopelessly/absolutely addicted to television*; cf also *He said nothing but looked rather abashed* and *He felt even more aggrieved at not being chosen for the team*), the *r*-set deploys neither (cf **She is rather/very/more reputed to be*

⁶ Cf. Stein 1979, p. 163: “[...] the following verbs [italicized by me] are basically passive: *to abash*, *to addict*, *to aggrieve* [...]”

extremely wealthy and **The president is rather/very/more rumoured to be seriously ill*).

Taking into account the compelling evidence amassed in favour of their adjectival status, I deem it safe to suggest that *-ed* forms in the *a*-set should best be considered separate lexemes, i.e. primary adjectives, not passive past participles, as Stein does⁷.

As for the latter set, though listed as adjectives in both *LDELC* and *CALD*, *reputed* and *rumoured* – in sharp contrast to *abashed*, *addicted* and *aggrieved* – obviously retain too many participial features to be labelled as such. To my mind, they can be regarded as idiosyncratic past participles displaying at least one adjectival trait.

(b) Secondly, Stein cites *to be extended* in her list of verbs which “can be used in the active as well as in the passive voice but are *restricted to the passive* [italicized by me] if the verb has a specific meaning” (1979: 163). This specific meaning which she has in mind for *to be extended* is “tax or use the powers of a person, horse, etc. to the utmost” (Stein 1979: 156). However, if – as intimated in section 2 above – the authors of *LDELC* list the meaning under scrutiny as “usually”, but not exclusively, passive, those of *CALD* make no such specification. To compound the confusion, the only use indicated and exemplified of the verb in this meaning is the active one, cf: “**extend** [...] verb [T] to cause someone to use all their ability: *she feels that her job doesn’t extend her enough*” (*CALD*: 439).

All things considered – i.e. taking into account the findings revealed in commentaries (a) and (b) above – , I would like to qualify my criticism of Stein’s few incongruities by admitting that, in addition to exploring several controversial issues of passive use, the semantic journey I undertook through *LDELC* and *CALD* helped reinforce the possibility that language usage could actually have induced the observed changes in the area investigated, since the publication of her study.

(c) Thirdly, there is one more business which the German linguist, to my eye, left unfinished: she failed to make a clear statement on the respective positions that the various types of *-ed* forms exemplified are most likely to assume on an imaginary scale of passiveness.

4.3. Classification of *-Ed* Forms: a Modest Proposal

The table I submit below – inspired by Stein’s view complemented in turn by my own personal insights – is merely intended to suggest a more accurate partitioning of the scale in question, accompanied by an equally rigorous classification of the *-ed* forms based on the syntactico-semantic description of their individual behaviour in the various combinations analysed.

⁷ Cf also Stein 1979, p. 164: “Most of these lexicalized *passives* [italicized by me] are statal passives”.

ACTIVE + PASSIVE	PASSIVE ONLY	PASSIVE ONLY	ACTIVE + PASSIVE	ACTIVE + PASSIVE	ACTIVE ONLY
<p>a) DYNAMIC PASSIVES</p> <p><i>regarded</i> [=considered] E.g. <i>She has always been regarded by her parents as the cleverest of their children.</i> -ed form: past participle</p> <p><i>Syntactico-Semantic Description</i> [+attributive] [+agent phrase] [-ICC collocability] [-modification by intensifiers] [-gradable] [+] Active Counterpart: <i>Her parents have always regarded her as the cleverest of their children.</i></p>	<p>b) PASSIVUM TANTUM</p> <p><i>reputed, rumoured</i> E.g. <i>She is reputed/rumoured to be extremely wealthy.</i> -ed form: idiosyncratic past participle</p> <p><i>Syntactico-Semantic Description</i> [+attributive] [? agent phrase] [-ICC collocability] [-modification by intensifiers] [-gradable] [∅] Active Counterpart: <i>*They repute/rumour her to be extremely wealthy.</i> <i>*They repute/rumour that she is extremely wealthy.</i></p>	<p>c) BASICALLY PASSIVES</p> <p><i>reported, said</i> E.g. <i>He's reported/said to be the richest man in the world.</i> -ed form: idiosyncratic past participle</p> <p><i>Syntactico-Semantic Description</i> [+ attributive] [? agent phrase] [-ICC collocability] [-modification by intensifiers] [-gradable] [-] Active Counterpart: <i>*They report/say him to be the richest man in the world.</i> But: <i>They report/say (that) he's the richest man in the world.</i></p>	<p>d) CHAMELEON-LIKE PASSIVES</p> <p><i>engaged</i> [= having formally agreed to marry] E.g. <i>Mary is engaged.</i> -ed form: past participle & adjective</p> <p><i>Syntactico-Semantic Description</i> [-attributive] [-agent phrase] [?? ICC collocability] [?? modification by intensifiers] [?? gradable] [-] Active Counterpart: <i>*They engaged Mary.</i> But: <i>They engaged [=arranged to employ] Mary.</i></p>	<p>e) STATAL PASSIVES</p> <p><i>demolished</i> E.g. <i>The building is demolished.</i> -ed form: past participle & adjective</p> <p><i>Syntactico-Semantic Description</i> [+ attributive] [-agent phrase] [? ICC collocability] [? modification by intensifiers] [? gradable] [∅] Active Counterpart: <i>They have demolished the building.</i></p> <p>& PASSIVE The building has been demolished (by them).</p>	<p>f) COPULAR COMPLEMENTATION</p> <p><i>abashed, addicted, aggrieved</i> E.g. <i>I'm addicted to chocolate.</i> -ed form: adjective</p> <p><i>Syntactico-Semantic Description</i> [?/+ attributive] [-agent phrase] [+ ICC collocability] [+ modification by intensifiers] [+ gradable] [+ coordination with adjectives] <i>Active in Itself:</i> <i>*They addicted/abashed/aggrieved me => NO Active Counterpart of supposedly passive construction.</i></p>

where ICC = intensive-complementation copula.

Concluding the present research are several brief remarks on the subcategorization proposed.

Subcategory b) Since none of the dictionaries consulted (s. also *MEDAL*, *OALDCE*, *CULD*, *DOED*) provided examples of *rumour* employed in the active (*Rumour has it that...is* the set phrase usually resorted to instead), and furthermore, Dixon, in his semantically based research, clearly points out that “The verb *rumour* [...] is seldom (or *never* [italicized by me]) found in anything but the passive” (1992: 315) – i.e. it may be in principle, but seldom is in practice – , I took the liberty to class the verb under discussion together with *reputed* as *passivum tantum* verbs.

Subcategory c) *Said* is only used attributively with its semantic spectrum dramatically narrowed to “already mentioned”. As additional evidence supporting the past participle status of verbs included in this slot I adduced the availability of *report*, as well as of *certify*, *label* and *presume* – of which “the passive is more common than the active, particularly when the Agent is unexpounded” (Downing 82 Locke 1993: 95) – for combination with certain adjectival *-ing* forms or adjectives to form collocations such as *to be reported missing*, *to be certified insane*, *to be labelled dangerous* or *to be presumed dead*, which, in my view, are best considered copular/intensive complementation patterns made up of passive verb plus subject complement.

Subcategory d) Attributive employment of *engaged* in this particular meaning is highly unusual. As expected, contrastive use alone could do the trick, and even so, considerable contextualization is needed in order to render it nearly acceptable, cf *the engaged Mary (as opposed to the still unengaged one) of the two Maries present at a party*.

On the other hand, highly informal styles can on occasion readily accommodate more fastidious semantic features such as ICC collocability, modification by intensifiers and gradability of chameleon-like passives such as *to be engaged*, as illustrated by: *Mary looks totally/very much engaged to me* (said jocularly by a prospective suitor while looking at the dazzling engagement ring on Mary’s finger).

Subcategory e) Even if completely disregarding the fact that *demolished* – unlike *engaged* above – is not to be found listed as a separate adjectival lexeme in *LDEL* and *CALD*, the *-ed* forms in this slot will still be felt as hovering halfway between adjectives and past participles, mainly because they are also available for use in dynamic passives or, better yet, because statal passives can be actionalized.

Acceptability of the last three features in their syntactico-semantic description varies considerably with individual native speakers (cf also Stein 1979: 165). Thus sentences like *The building looks/is utterly/totally demolished* or *This building is less demolished than the one over there* will be given a nod by some, while raising a frown from others (particularly when compared to similar sentences employing *derelict* in place of *demolished*).

As regards the active counterpart of statal passives, they unfortunately boast none. *The building is demolished* is, admittedly, a state brought about by the activity performed in, say, the active *They have demolished the building*, but the latter

can be viewed merely as the opposite pole of the logical nexus cause-effect, with a corresponding deep-structure dynamic passive lexicalized as *The building has been demolished by them*.

However, considering the fact that they can be as easily employed in statal as they are in dynamic passives, I decided to group the *-ed* forms in this slot together with those in chameleon-like passives under ACTIVE + PASSIVE.

Subcategory f) The set of *-ed* forms in this slot have already been copiously glossed and thoroughly investigated in the present section above. Still mention must be made of the fact that *abashed* is listed in *CALD* as predicative only (cf p 1: “[after verb]”), while *addicted*, like *engaged*, requires contrastive focus for inclusion of the first feature in its syntactico-semantic description.

The ICC collocability of *abashed* and *aggrieved* has already been documented above. As a matter of fact, I daresay, it is rather copulas like *look* and *feel* that must be regarded as their regular companions, not the prototypically passive *be*. As for *addicted*, this can be without difficulty highlighted by citing a simple example such as *He became/grew addicted to her*.

In order to better clarify their adjectival status, I included an additional feature in their description, unanimously regarded as a most reliable indicator of adjectivhood: coordination with *bona fide* adjectives. *Abashed* and *aggrieved* posed absolutely no problem in this respect, cf

He looked abashed and sad

He felt aggrieved and helpless.

At first blush *addicted* seems to repel such company. To my mind, it usually does so because of the syntactic constraint imposed by inherent preposition *to* (s. Dixon 1992: 270-4 for a detailed investigation of inherent prepositional verbs). The example adduced below – where *addicted* adroitly loses its steady companion – just goes to prove my assumption right:

I know that if I start watching a soap opera I immediately become sentimental and hopelessly addicted.

Subcategories d) + e) + f): The major difficulty encountered when proceeding further down this imaginary scale from top-end verbhood to bottom-end adjectivhood – through various degrees of one or the other captured in between – was which came first: the statal passives or chameleon-like ones?

To begin with, since most of the *-ed* forms cited by Stein as pertaining to this category are not listed as adjectives in the dictionaries consulted, I chose to disregard the fact that *engaged* is. Nevertheless, the decision was still a tough one to make, for their syntactico-semantic descriptions differ mainly in terms of type of contextualization resorted to. Thus, statal passive *-ed* forms are much easier to contextualize, both with respect to attributive use (cf also *The window is broken* © *The broken window*) and to the last three features included in the description. By contrast, chameleon-like-passive *-ed* forms – as previously shown – require either contrastive focus – when used attributively – or a shift of style from formal to informal plus considerable contextualization when the other three syntactico-semantic constraints are applied.

The *-ed* forms in slots d), e) and f) also differ in terms of marking for the Active counterpart. Thus d) is marked in a manner similar to c), with [-], for they both reveal availability for active in the indicative – d) in a different meaning, while with c) the meaning stays the same. On the other hand, the marking resorted to for *-ed* forms in e) is [0] – taken to mean that the Active they are semantically derived from is in reality the syntactic counterpart of a different passive construction – , which distinguishes them from those in b), marked with [Ø] – where there simply is no active construction at all. As for the *-ed* forms in f), since they are primarily adjectival constituents of copular complementation patterns which are active in themselves, it is rather the case that there simply is no corresponding passive construction, hence no verbal employment available of such forms in active clauses.

In view of the above, I finally decided – despite attributive employment of statal passives and the fact that, due to availability for use in the same meaning in both dynamic and statal patterns, they tend to be more closely associated with the former than are *-ed* forms in slot d) – that chameleon-like passive *-ed* forms should be placed further up on the scale, before their statal passive morphological equivalents. It is perhaps its proximity to intensive complementation – on my scale the two types are placed in adjacent slots – that induced Greenbaum & Quirk to claim that the statal passive “contains a copular verb and a subject complement” (1991: 45). I disagree with their view for reasons already indicated at e) above. Even if found to partially comply with the coordination-with-adjective criterion (cf ? *The building looks demolished and weird*), the very label attached to the construction under investigation, ‘statal passive’, still shows it to be a far cry from an ACTIVE ONLY, as intensive/copular complementation patterns most certainly are.

Subcategory g) In an attempt to resume discussion of *frightened* broached in previous research (s. *He grew increasingly frightened*, in Măciucă, “The Subtle Interplay of Syntax and Semantics in Passive-Like Constructions”(I), currently in press), I will quickly run through the features included in the syntactico-semantic description of *-ed* forms in slot f) to see to what extent they apply to the specimens in question:

The policewoman found a frightened child in the hut.

**He grew frightened by his father.*

He grew even more frightened on spotting the enemy.

He grew uneasy and frightened.

Features three and four needed no further illustration, since the example cited explicitly incorporates them. A closer look at the definitions and examples which *LDEL*C lists under *frightened*, however, reveals a most disquieting fact: the above syntactico-semantic description cannot be taken to apply to all occurrences of the *-ed* form being investigated. So, for instance, when combining with *be* in “(infml) *They were frightened to death/out of their wits* [=extremely frightened] *by the ghost*” (*LDEL*C: 525), an agent phrase insertion is perfectly acceptable. Applying additional constraints in the opposite direction, such as availability for use in the progressive, helps dispel further doubts:

They were BEING frightened [= being filled with fear] *to death/out of their wits by the ghost.*

That is as clear an indication as ever that facing us is a genuinely dynamic passive. Which in turn forces the conclusion on us that there are certain ‘multi-function’ *-ed* forms like *frightened* which can actually span the whole range from verbhood to adjectivehood without having to shuttle from one meaning to another (as is the case with chameleon-like passives). It is precisely this multifunctionality, to my mind, that accounts for the wider range of inherent prepositions which *frightened* can take =*by* (at its most verbal), *at* (at an intermediate stage) and *of* (at its most adjectival).

By way of a final remark on the proposed manner of partitioning, I deem it my duty to remind the reader that my main interest in this contribution lies in identifying the status of *-ed* forms included in various passive constructions. That accounts for the top-end position on the scale being occupied by dynamic passives, where according to their syntactico-semantic description the *-ed* forms are prototypical past participles, hence closest to verbhood, and not by PASSIVE ONLY combinations, featuring *-ed* forms with idiosyncratic participial behaviour.

As I also deem it appropriate to admit that, given the slowly, yet constantly, shifting borderline between the two provinces, active and passive – which faithfully reflect the ever-changing human psychology –, the scale type advanced above is by nature inviting criticism, stands open to debate and susceptible to subsequent improvement, if urged by rigorously documented arguments.

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