PIMPing Up Implicit Control

Iva Kovač

1. Introduction

This paper presents a new generalization about control by the implicit agent in the passive (building on Pitteroff & Schäfer 2019): *iff a type of passive can be construed as impersonal passive with unergative verbs, then it also allows implicit control*. Passives are thus split into two types: those that allow impersonal construals and implicit control (hereinafter Type A passives), and those that do not (Type B). Type A is illustrated by German in (1). Example (1a) shows an impersonal construal with an unergative verb, and (1b) is an instance of implicit control: the implicit agent of the matrix passive (the 'avoider') controls the understood subject (PRO) of the embedded infinitive (the 'talker'). Type B passive is exemplified by English in (2): neither an impersonal construal with an unergative (2a) nor implicit control (2b) is possible.

(1) a. Die ganze Nacht lang wurde getanzt.
the whole night long was danced
lit.: 'It was danced all night long.' (German; Pitteroff & Schäfer 2019: (67b))

b. Es wurde vermieden, über die Vergangenheit zu reden.
it was avoided over the past to talk
lit.: 'It was avoided to talk about the past.' (German; Aron Ludwig, p.c.)

(2) a. *There/it was danced. (English; Pitteroff & Schäfer 2019: (71b))

b. *It was managed to find a solution to this problem. (English; Pitteroff & Schäfer 2019: (17d))

The two-way split is derived from the featural makeup of the passive implicit agent (PIMP) in the different types of passive (in line with the extensive literature which shows that implicit arguments may vary in their internal composition; e.g., Landau 2010, Legate 2014, Bhatt & Pancheva 2017, Akkuş 2021, Michelioudakis 2021). In particular, I propose that the featural composition of PIMP has consequences for its ability to enter an agreement dependency with T. The relation with T in turn enables PIMP to control PRO (cf. Van Urk 2013), indicating that agreement is a crucial component of (implicit) control. I further discuss cases of apparent implicit control in which the infinitive is opaque for *wh*-extraction and suggest that this is due to the infinitive being associated with a placeholder pronoun (cf. Pitteroff & Schäfer 2019), which gives rise to a non-complementation configuration.

2. The generalization

Pitteroff & Schäfer (2019) connect the availability of impersonal construals with unergative verbs in a language (as in (1a), (2a)) to the availability of implicit control with *nonattitude* matrix verbs (*avoid, begin, manage*; see (1b) and (2b)).[1] As illustrated in (3), implicit control with *attitude* verbs (*decide, promise*) appears to be possible not only in languages such as German (3a), which license the impersonal use of the passive with unergative verbs, but also in languages such as English, which do not (3b).

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[1] Their sample includes eight languages. Dutch, German, Icelandic, and Norwegian allow impersonal construals and implicit control, while English, French, Hebrew, and Russian do not.

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(3) a. Es wurde beschlossen, das Land zu verlassen.
it was decided the country to leave
'It was decided to leave the country.' (German; Pitteroff & Schäfer 2019: (32b))
b. It was decided to leave the country immediately. (English; Pitteroff & Schäfer 2019: (79a))

Pitteroff & Schäfer's (2019) generalization can thus be stated as follows: *iff a language allows impersonal passive of unergative verbs, then it also allows implicit control with nonattitude verbs*. They consider implicit control with attitude verbs to be available universally.

In the remainder of this section, I show that this generalization is in need of a twofold refinement. First, it needs to be stated at the level of passives, rather than entire languages, since there are languages with two passives which follow the two different patterns. Second, the generalization holds not only for implicit control with nonattitude verbs, but extends to attitude verbs as well. That is, contrary to appearances, the English example in (3b) does not involve (syntactic) implicit control: the infinitival clause is an island for *wh*-extraction, indicating that it is not a complement and that implicit control is thus only apparent.

2.1. Granularity: Types of passive

Starting with the first refinement, the two-way split between availability vs. unavailability of impersonal construals and implicit control may be observed *within* a single language if that language has more than one passive. Croatian, for instance, is such a language, as it has two types of passive (Belaj 2004). The regular Croatian passive, illustrated in (4), behaves like English and disallows both impersonal construals with unergative verbs (4a) and implicit control with nonattitude verbs (4b). This classifies it as a Type B passive. The Croatian *se*-passive, on the other hand, behaves like a Type A passive in that it is compatible with both of these configurations; see (5).[2]

(4) a. *Plesano je cijelu noć.
dance.PTCP.PASS.SG.N AUX.3SG whole night
lit./intended: 'It was danced the whole night long.'
b. *Jučer je uspjeto riješiti tu tešku zagonetku.
yesterday AUX.3SG manage.PTCP.PASS.SG.N solve.INF that difficult riddle
lit./intended: 'It was managed to solve that difficult riddle yesterday.' (Croatian passive)

(5) a. Plesalo se cijelu noć.
dance.PTCP.ACT.SG.N SE whole night
lit.: 'It was danced the whole night long.'
b. Jučer se uspjelo riješiti tu tešku zagonetku.
yesterday SE manage.PTCP.ACT.SG.N solve.INF that difficult riddle
lit.: 'It was managed to solve that difficult riddle yesterday.' (Croatian *se*-passive)

Giurgea & Cotfas (2021) show that the very same split can be observed in Romanian. The generalization thus needs to be stated as applying to types of passive, rather than entire languages.

2.2. Generality: Implicit control in general

Based on examples such as (3), Pitteroff & Schäfer (2019) conclude that implicit control with attitude verbs is possible in all languages. However, a contrast with respect to the availability of *wh*-extraction shows that this is only apparent. Type A passives, which license impersonal construals with unergative verbs and implicit control with nonattitude verbs, allow *wh*-extraction in implicit control configurations with attitude verbs. This is shown in (6) for German and in (7) for the Croatian *se*-passive (*wh*-extraction is possible in Dutch as well; Gert-Jan Schonmakers, p.c.).

[2] Even though the *se*-configuration includes the active participle and allows for usages that cannot be classified as passive (e.g., reflexive or middle), it may be used as a passive as well, in the sense that there is an implicit agent (in contrast to anticausatives) and promotion of the object to subject (see also Belaj 2004: 37–53 for discussion).

(6) a. Es wurde beschlossen, Käse zu essen.
it was decided cheese to eat
'It was decided to eat cheese.'
b. Was wurde beschlossen, zu essen?
what was decided to eat
lit.: 'What was it decided to eat?' (German; Aron Ludwig, p.c.)

(7) a. Odlučilo se pozvati Juditu i Marina.
decide.PTCP.ACT.SG.N SE invite.INF Judita.ACC and Marin.ACC
'It was decided to invite Judith and Marin.'
b. Koga se na kraju odlučilo pozvati?
who.ACC SE on end decide.PTCP.ACT.SG.N invite.INF
lit.: 'Who was it decided to invite in the end?' (Croatian *se*-passive)

In contrast, Type B passives, which allow neither impersonal construals with unergatives nor nonattitude implicit control, do not allow *wh*-extraction in the context of attitude implicit control either, illustrated in (8) for English and (9) for the regular Croatian passive.

(8) a. It was decided to meet the dean.
b. *Who was it decided to meet? (English; Jonathan Bobaljik, p.c.)[3]

(9) a. Odlučeno je pozvati Juditu i Marina.
decide.PTCP.PASS.SG.N AUX.3SG invite.INF Judita.ACC and Marin.ACC
'It was decided to invite Judith and Marin.'
b. ??Koga je na kraju odlučeno pozvati?
who.ACC AUX.3SG on end decide.PTCP.PASS.SG.N invite.INF
lit./intended: 'Who was it decided to invite in the end?' (Croatian passive)

The embedded clause in Type B (but not Type A) passives is thus opaque for *wh*-extraction, which indicates that it is in fact not a complement clause and, consequently, that implicit control (*qua* syntactic obligatory control) in these cases is only apparent. The Romanian regular passive is even more limited: it is "severely restricted with clausal themes" (Giurgea & Cotfas 2021: 87).

The ability of a type of passive to be construed as impersonal passive thus has ramifications not only for the availability of implicit control with nonattitude verbs, but for implicit control in general, including attitude verbs (*pace* Pitteroff & Schäfer 2019). The empirical findings are summarized in Table 1, with novel contributions in gray. The generalization that emerges is the following: *iff a type of passive can be construed as impersonal passive with unergative verbs, then it also allows (syntactic) implicit control.*

	Type A Du, Ge, Cr-*se*, Ro-*se*	Type B En, Cr	Type B′ Ro
Impersonal passive (unergatives)	✓	✗	✗
Implicit control (nonattitudes)	✓	✗	✗
Implicit control (attitudes)	✓	apparent	✗
Wh-extraction (attitudes)	✓	✗	N/A

Table 1: The distribution of implicit control

3. Deriving the generalization

This section provides a syntactic account of the proposed generalization. Similarly to Pitteroff & Schäfer (2019), I link the two-way split (between Type A and Type B passives) to the (un)availability of a

[3] Such examples appear to be subject to speaker variation; however, a preliminary Google search supports the generalization, yielding 180 hits for 'it was decided to' and none for either 'what was it decided to' or 'who was it decided to' that correspond to the configuration under discussion (e.g., 'And who was it decided to raise Cthulhu from his eternal slumber?'; https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Quotes/LovecraftLite, accessed on 09/16/2022).

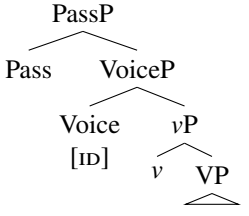
source of ϕ-features for T in the configurations under scrutiny. However, Pitteroff & Schäfer connect the split to the (in)existence of a ϕ-complete expletive or a rule of default valuation in a language. Since these are properties that hold at the level of entire languages, they cannot derive the split *within* languages such as Croatian and Romanian. I propose instead that the availability of ϕ-features for T is closely linked to the presence (in Type A passives) or absence (in Type B passives) of ϕ-features on the passive implicit agent (PIMP), a factor which may vary within languages as well (see, e.g., Akkuş 2021). I address the control relation itself as well as cases of apparent implicit control with attitude verbs in section 4.

3.1. Passives and their PIMPs

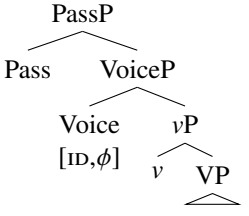
The analysis is rooted in a decomposed Voice domain and adopts the assumption that the external argument is introduced by the Voice head (Kratzer 1996). In contrast to the active, where the external argument is merged as the specifier of VoiceP, the external argument in the passive is implicit; it is encoded in the Voice head itself (Embick 2004, Schäfer 2008, Alexiadou et al. 2006, 2015, Legate 2014, Legate et al. 2020). The proposal developed here thus sides with approaches in which PIMPs are represented in the syntax and not merely interpreted by the semantic component (e.g., Baker et al. 1989, Landau 2010, Legate 2014, Michelioudakis 2021; *pace*, e.g., Bruening 2013, Pitteroff & Schäfer 2019).

In particular, I assume that PIMPs consist minimally of a numerical index feature which functions as an individual variable (represented here as ID; see Embick 2004, Kratzer 2009, Pietraszko 2021) and gets existentially closed (Bruening 2013). I propose that the crucial difference between Type A and Type B passives lies in the featural makeup of their implicit argument: PIMP in Type A but not in Type B passives includes ϕ-features in addition to the individual variable. This yields the typology in (10), where the Pass head is responsible for passive morphology (Bruening 2013, Alexiadou et al. 2015).[4]

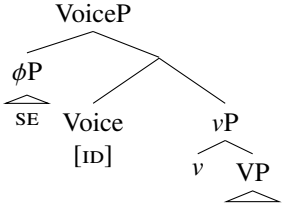
(10) Type B: e.g., Cr, En



Type A: e.g., Du, Ge



Type A: e.g., Cr-*se*



One might wonder whether there is morphological evidence for the existence of ϕ-features in Type A passives (cf. Legate 2014 for Acehnese). While I am not aware of such direct evidence for Dutch or German, note that in languages which have two types of passive (e.g., Croatian, Romanian), it is invariably the *se*-passive which acts as a Type A passive. Since elements such as *se* have been proposed to include ϕ-features (even though they might be deficient; see Reuland 2011), it seems plausible to assume that it is the presence of ϕ-features (however deficient) that distinguishes the *se*-passive from the regular one. Extending this analysis to the difference between Type A and Type B passives in general allows for a uniform treatment of Type A passives in syntactic terms. At the same time, it raises the question whether there are other parallels between *se*-passives and other Type A passives that may be connected to the presence of ϕ-features. I leave this question to future research.

3.2. Deriving the two-way split

Returning to the generalization, recall that Type A passives license impersonal construals with unergative verbs and implicit control, while Type B passives do not; compare the grammatical Dutch (Type A) examples in (11) with their ungrammatical English (Type B) translations.

(11) a. Er werd gedanst.
there was danced
*'There/it was danced.' (Pitteroff & Schäfer 2019: (48a) vs. (71b))

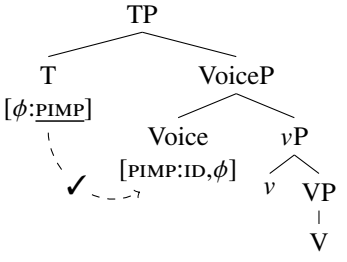
[4] The structure for the Croatian *se*-passive corresponds to Legate's (2014) impersonal passive. The active form of the participle may then be due to the absence of a PassP or, alternatively, to the presence of an element (*se*) in Spec,VoiceP.

b. Er werd geprobeerd (om) de analyse te begrijpen.
there was tried (for) the analysis to understand
*'It was tried to understand the analysis.' (Pitteroff & Schäfer 2019: (35b) vs. (17a))

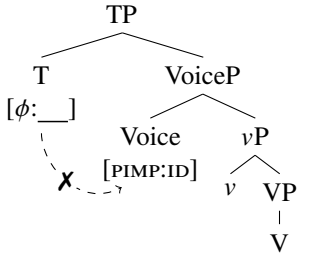
I propose that this split is derived from the different types of PIMP given in (10). In a nutshell, a PIMP that has ϕ-features can agree with functional heads in the clausal spine and provide them with ϕ-feature values; a PIMP lacking ϕ-features is unable to do so. Since neither impersonal construals with unergative verbs nor implicit control configurations include DP arguments in the probing domain of T, PIMP is the only potential source of ϕ-features, and different PIMPs lead to different outcomes.

Impersonal construals with unergative verbs are illustrated in (12). There is no DP in the configuration, leaving PIMP as the only potential goal for the ϕ-probe on T. Since only Type A passives have a PIMP that can furnish T with ϕ-feature values, only Type A passives, but not Type B passives, yield a grammatical result (the lack of default agreement is addressed below). The Croatian *se*-passive as depicted in (10) is in principle compatible with two options: either PIMP is associated with ϕ-features originating on *se* and then values T or *se* itself serves as a goal for the ϕ-probe on T.

(12) ✓ Type A

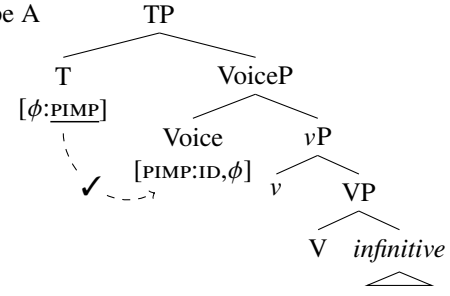


✗ Type B

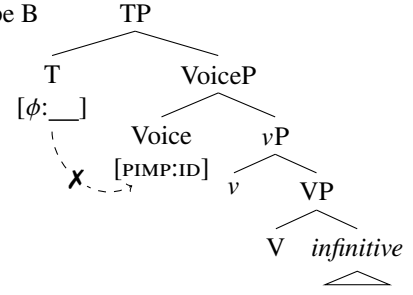


Implicit control configurations give rise to a comparable situation: the only difference between impersonal construals (12) and implicit control (13) is that the latter involves a clausal complement. Assuming that this embedded clause is not part of T's probing domain, the success or failure of implicit control configurations tracks the success or failure of impersonal construals.[5]

(13) ✓ Type A



✗ Type B



[5] The exact size of the complement clause is orthogonal to the main point; it may be reduced (Wurmbrand 2001, Wurmbrand & Lohninger 2019; see Wurmbrand et al. 2020 for Croatian) or include layers of the operator domain (Landau 2000, 2015). Still, note that the lack of a source of ϕ-features for T in Type B passives would at least in principle be solved in a configuration involving a radically reduced complement clause where T could agree with, and receive ϕ-features from, the embedded object, resulting in so-called long passive (e.g., German *Die Traktoren wurden zu reparieren versucht*, lit.: 'The tractors were tried to repair'; see, e.g., Wurmbrand 2001). However, long passive has only been attested in Type A passives (Croatian *se*-passive, Dutch, German, Norwegian; see, e.g., Wurmbrand 2014, Wurmbrand & Shimamura 2017, and Kovač & Schoenmakers 2022 for Dutch) and appears to be unavailable in Type B passives (Croatian, English, but also French (Roberts 1997), Hebrew (Ziv Plotnik, p.c.), and Russian, which are shown to pattern with English by Pitteroff & Schäfer 2019). In fact, this split provides further support for the proposal developed in this paper, at least under Wurmbrand & Shimamura's (2017) analysis of long passive as involving a dependency between the matrix and embedded Voice heads. If, as they propose, this dependency is established via ϕ-features, then then the impossibility of long passive in Type B passives follows from the lack of ϕ-features on PIMP. That is, the (un)availability of long passive may be tied to the presence vs. absence of ϕ-features on PIMP as well.

Two questions immediately come to mind. First, why is default agreement in Type B passives not possible? And second, if T is able to agree with PIMP in Type A passives, why does PIMP not block agreement with the underlying object in simple passives? I propose that both questions can be answered in Deal's (2015) *interaction vs. satisfaction* framework, under the assumption that DPs are more suitable goals for T than PIMP.

Deal (2015), building on Preminger (2009, 2014), proposes that probes come with instructions about which features they can interact with (*interaction* features) and which features they are looking for (*satisfaction* features). In her framework, interaction is obligatory, but satisfaction is not. Returning to the question about default agreement in Type B passives, it seems safe to assume that the probe on T has ϕ-features as its interaction features. This means that in order for the derivation to converge, T needs to interact with an element bearing ϕ-features. In Type B passives, T will find no element with ϕ-features in either implicit control or an impersonal passive configuration, leading to an ungrammatical result. In Type A passives, on the other hand, T will be able to interact with PIMP due to the presence of ϕ-features on the latter. This then ensures a grammatical outcome even if T is unable to find a goal bearing its satisfaction features. I remain agnostic as to the exact satisfaction features on T (in fact, they may vary from language to language), but note that it is those features that should ultimately derive the assumption that DPs are more suitable goals for T than PIMP—possibly because they have richer ϕ-featural specifications or, alternatively, due to the lack of a D-layer on PIMP. If T indeed prefers to agree with a DP, then the fact that PIMP does not intervene for agreement between T and the underlying object in simple passives is explained: T might interact with PIMP, but it will ultimately agree with the underlying DP object. T will agree with PIMP only if no (other) DP is present in the structure, which is the case precisely in the two configurations under investigation—impersonal construals and implicit control.

To summarize, the availability of implicit control and impersonal construals with unergative verbs are connected because they fail or succeed for the very same reason. Neither configuration includes a DP in the agreement domain of T. In Type A passives, PIMP has ϕ-features and is a viable goal for T; T can thus receive ϕ-feature values even in the absence of a DP in its probing domain. In Type B passives, on the other hand, PIMP has only an ID feature and cannot provide T with ϕ-features, which causes ungrammaticality. These considerations, however, only concern the matrix portion of the clause, and I have not yet said anything about the control relation itself nor about apparent implicit control with attitude verbs in Type B passives. The remainder of the paper is dedicated to these two points.

4. Control and the placeholder strategy

4.1. Agreement and implicit control

The previous section established that implicit control configurations with Type A passives involve an agreement dependency between matrix T and PIMP, which satisfies the basic requirement for the derivation to converge: T's ϕ-features get valued. This dependency, however, not only attends to the needs of T but also plays a crucial role in licensing implicit control.

In particular, Van Urk (2013) observes that implicit control is impossible if an overt DP agrees with T (this has become known as Revised Visser's Generalization). Dutch, recall, is a Type A passive; it allows impersonal construals and implicit control (see (11) above). In example (14a), however, implicit control is disrupted (a parallel example with matrix active and subject control is grammatical; see Van Urk 2013). Van Urk argues that this is due to the DP 'the teachers' agreeing with T (apparent from plural marking on the auxiliary) and thereby intervening for agreement between T and PIMP. That it is indeed agreement that blocks implicit control as opposed to the mere presence of a DP is evident from (14b), where a dative DP in the matrix clause has no influence on the availability of implicit control. Since dative DPs are cross-linguistically invisible for agreement, nothing stands in the way of an agreement dependency between T and PIMP, and PIMP can act as a controller.

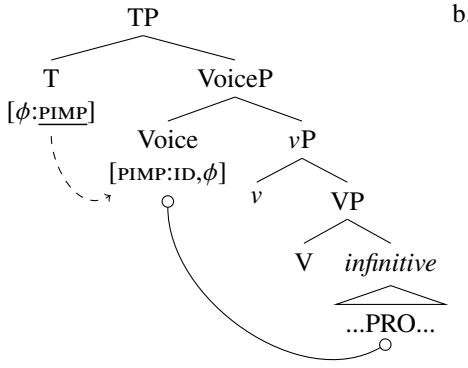
(14) a. *De leraren werden overtuigd om ze te mogen kietelen.
the teachers were convinced for them to may tickle
lit.: 'The teachers were convinced to be allowed to tickle them.' (Van Urk 2013: (10a))

b. Er werd mij beloofd om me op de hoogte te houden.
there was me.DAT promised for me on the height to keep
lit.: 'It was promised to me to keep me informed.' (Van Urk 2013: (8))

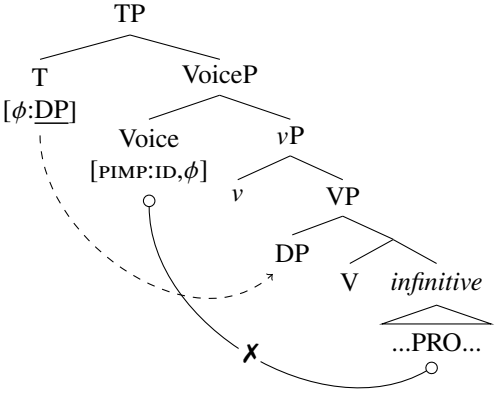
Van Urk (2013) thus concludes that PIMP can only control PRO if it agrees with T. A possible reason why this dependency might be necessary is that PIMP has no D-layer. If, following Wiltschko (2014), the DP and the TP domain fulfill a parallel function, *viz.*, anchoring to the utterance, and a kind of anchoring is needed for control of PRO, the relation with T might anchor PIMP to the context and license implicit control (see also Wurmbrand 2021). The dependency between T and PIMP, then, can be described as 'symbiotic': it both attends to the ϕ-feature probe on T and enables PIMP to control.

A full derivation of an implicit control configuration with a Type A passive is illustrated in (15a). Following Van Urk (2013), PIMP needs to agree with T in order for implicit control to be established. If the matrix clause contains another DP which is visible to T (as in (14a)), T agrees with this DP, as shown in (15b). Note that this is predicted by the analysis proposed in section 3, which assumes that DPs are more suitable goals for T than PIMP: just like in a simple passive configuration, T might interact with PIMP but it eventually agrees with the DP. As a consequence, the requirements for T are met, but PIMP is unable to control, leading to an ungrammatical outcome in examples such as (14a)/(15b).[6] Dative DPs as in (14b), on the other hand, being cross-linguistically invisible for agreement, do not prevent T from agreeing with PIMP and do not block implicit control.

(15) a.



b.



4.2. The placeholder strategy and its limits

Turning to Type B passives, I proposed in section 3 that the impossibility of impersonal construals and (nonattitude) implicit control is tied to the absence of ϕ-features on PIMP, which causes the matrix T to remain unvalued and leads to ungrammaticality (see also Pitteroff & Schäfer 2019). At the same time, Type B passives appear to allow implicit control in configurations involving an attitude matrix verb (see (16a), repeated from (8a)), but *wh*-extraction from the embedded clause is blocked (16b). Since complement clauses are normally transparent for *wh*-extraction, this indicates that the infinitive is not a complement clause, but that the configuration involves a more complex underlying structure.

(16) a. It was decided to meet the dean.
b. *Who was it decided to meet? (English; Jonathan Bobaljik, p.c.)

There are two main points that need to be addressed under the proposed analysis. First, if impersonal construals and implicit control with nonattitude verbs are ruled out because T remains without ϕ-feature values, then the configuration in (16a) needs to involve a source of ϕ-features for T. Second, the impossibility of *wh*-extraction needs to be accounted for.

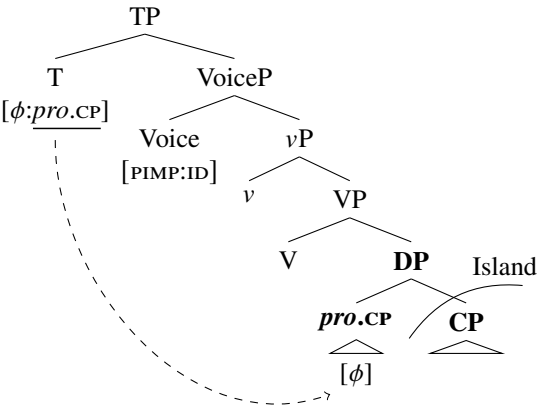
I follow Pitteroff & Schäfer's (2019) claim that the *it* in these configurations is not an expletive but a placeholder pronoun merged as the complement of V and associated with the infinitival clause (in Croatian, a *pro*-drop language, the element would be a silent *pro*). This analysis accounts for both points

[6] I assume that control by the DP is blocked by whichever mechanism is responsible for control shift in general.

raised above. First, the placeholder pronoun is able to agree with matrix T and provide it with ϕ-features. As for the impossibility of *wh*-extraction, note that if the placeholder pronoun is merged as complement to V, then the infinitival clause cannot be the complement as well, but has to be merged elsewhere. I propose that this causes it to become opaque for extraction. In fact, Pitteroff & Schäfer (2019) acknowledge that clausal associates normally block extraction (see also Koster 1978 on subject clauses), but do not make the connection to the (apparent) implicit control cases at hand.

A derivation involving the placeholder strategy is given in (17). The infinitival clausal associate is depicted as forming part of a complex DP headed by the placeholder pronoun (labeled as *pro*.CP), but the infinitive might just as well be merged as an adjunct of a projection higher in the clausal spine. What is important is that the placeholder strategy gives rise to a non-complementation configuration, which makes the clausal associate behave like an island for *wh*-extraction.[7]

(17)



The placeholder pronoun strategy, however, is not always available. To begin with, Type B passives allow apparent implicit control only with attitude verbs, which indicates that the strategy cannot be employed with nonattitude verbs. Pitteroff & Schäfer (2019) argue that this is the case because placeholder pronouns can only be associated with clauses denoting propositions. Since, in control contexts, attitude verbs take proposition-denoting complements, and nonatitude verbs require property-denoting ones (see Landau 2015), a placeholder pronoun cannot be used with nonattitude verbs.

Further, placeholder pronouns do not seem to exist in all languages that have Type B passives. For instance, recall that the Romanian Type B passive disallows even apparent implicit control with attitude verbs, which, as argued by Giurgea & Cotfas (2021), indicates that it simply does not have the placeholder strategy available. On the other hand, Pitteroff & Schäfer (2019) themselves observe that this strategy is not limited to Type B passives, but may in principle be used in Type A passives as well. As illustrated in (18), German may use the element *es* 'it' as a clausal associate with matrix attitude verbs (German does not allow TP-internal (non-argumental) expletives; see, e.g., Haider 2010).

(18) Mehrmals schon wurde (**es**) beschlossen, den Roman zu lesen.
multiple.times already was (**it**) decided the novel to read
'It has been decided to read the novel already multiple times.' (Aron Ludwig, p.c.)

The account developed here predicts that once the placeholder strategy is employed, *wh*-extraction should become impossible. As shown in (19), this prediction is borne out: *wh*-extraction is only possible in the absence of the placeholder pronoun (see also Haider 2010: 75). The same state of affairs can be observed with the Dutch pronoun *het* 'it' (vs. the expletive *er* 'there'; see Bennis 1986).

(19) Was wurde (*__es__) mehrmals schon beschlossen, zu lesen?
what was (*__it__) multiple.times already decided to read
lit.: 'What did people decide to read already multiple times?' (Aron Ludwig, p.c.)

[7] Note that if PIMP needs to agree with T in order to control (the conclusion reached in section 4.1), then the control-like interpretation in these cases cannot arise by means of a syntactic mechanism. I tentatively suggest that it is established pragmatically instead (cf. Reed 2020), possibly in a way similar to non-obligatory control.

However, the prohibition on *wh*-extraction does not hold in all configurations that would require using the placeholder strategy under the proposed analysis. Russian, for example, behaves like a Type B passive in disallowing impersonal construals and implicit control with nonattitude verbs (see Pitteroff & Schäfer 2019). As expected, implicit control with attitude verbs is nevertheless possible, as shown in (20a)—but so is *wh*-extraction (at least in the absence of a by-phrase); see (20b). Hebrew is another example of a Type B passive that allows *wh*-extraction in these contexts (Idan Landau & Ziv Plotnik, p.c.).

(20) a. (?Direktorom) bylo rešeno vstretit' Petju.
director.INST was decided meet.INF Petja.ACC
'It was decided (?by the director) to meet Petja.'
b. Kogo (??direktorom) bylo rešeno vstretit'?
who.ACC director.INST was decided meet.INF
lit.: 'Who was it decided (??by the director) to meet?' (Russian; Irina Burukina, p.c.)

While the present analysis does not immediately account for these data, the difference between Russian (and Hebrew) and English (and Croatian) may be captured by manipulating the positions in which the placeholder pronoun and the clausal associate are merged; an aspect of the analysis that Pitteroff & Schäfer (2019: 175) leave open as well. For instance, the infinitive in Russian might be merged as the complement to V, with the (covert) pronoun base-generated higher up in the clause. The infinitive would then be a simple complement clause and allow *wh*-extraction, and T would get its ϕ-features valued by the placeholder pronoun. Ideally, the different positions would follow from other properties of these languages, leading to a more explanatory account. I leave a thorough investigation of this challenge to future research.

5. Conclusion

This paper presented a novel generalization stating that a type of passive can only participate in implicit control configurations if it can be construed as impersonal passive with unergative verbs. The findings, together with the analysis, are summarized in Table 2. I proposed that the split between Type A passives, which allow the two configurations, and Type B passives, which do not, follows from the different featural makeup of the passive implicit agent (PIMP) in these two types of passive, notably the presence vs. absence of ϕ-features on PIMP. The main portion of the work happens in the matrix clause. Neither implicit control configurations nor impersonal passives of unergative verbs include a DP in the agreement domain of T. In Type B passives, PIMPs have no ϕ-features; T will remain unvalued in the configurations at hand and the result will be ungrammatical. In Type A passives, in contrast, PIMPs do have ϕ-features and are viable goals for T. Apart from furnishing T with ϕ-features, the agreement dependency between T and PIMP is crucial in order for PIMP to be able to control, as evident from contexts where implicit control is blocked if another DP agrees with T. Finally, configurations involving attitude matrix verbs in both types of passive are compatible with a placeholder pronoun strategy, which allows for (apparent) implicit control even in Type B passives. In these cases, the infinitive gets associated with a pronoun, which provides T with ϕ-features. However, this may lead to a non-complementation configuration, where the embedded clause acts like an island for *wh*-extraction, in Type A and Type B passives alike.

	Type A Du, Ge, Cr-*se*, Ro-*se*	Type B En, Cr	Type B′ Ro
Impersonal passives of unergative verbs	✓	✗	✗
Implicit control with nonattitude verbs	✓	✗	✗
PIMP	[ID,ϕ]	[ID]	[ID]
Implicit control with attitude verbs	✓	apparent	✗
Wh-extraction with attitude verbs	✓	✗	N/A
Configuration	PRO-control by PIMP (+T)	*pro*.CP	**pro*.CP

Table 2: Implicit control—summary

To conclude on a more general note, the proposed analysis sides with approaches assuming that passives and their PIMPs may come in various forms and sizes and provides support for the view that agreement plays a crucial role in (at least implicit) control.

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