Get-passives, Raising, and Control

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1 Introduction

In spite of superficial appearances to the contrary, the standard generative analysis, since Haegeman (1985), of the *get*-passive (1a) is that it is an unaccusative variant of an ECM *get*, which Haegeman labels causative *get* (1b). As in (2) if this analysis runs, it may also cover uses of *get* with other complement types (*to*-infinitive, gerund, PP, AP, DP, relative clause).

(1) a. Arthur$_i$ got [t_i arrested]
    b. Susan got [Arthur arrested]

(2) a. Arthur$_i$ got [t_i {to eat the cake/working/into the car/ready for bed/a book/whatever he needed}]
    b. Susan got [Arthur {to eat the cake/working/into the car/ready for bed/a book/whatever he needed}]

The fundamentals of Haegeman's analysis are:

I. *Get* in the *get*-passive is not a variant of the passive auxiliary *be*, but is a full lexical verb as in its other uses (2).

II. Causative *get* is an ECM verb taking a participial small-clause complement, passive *get* an unaccusative variant of the same structure.

Point (I) is empirically well supported: *get* fails every test for auxiliary status (3); like other main verbs it requires *do*-support (4).

(3) a. *Arthur gotn't arrested
    b. *Got Arthur arrested?
    c. *Susan got arrested and Arthur got too

(4) a. Arthur didn't get arrested
    b. Did Arthur get arrested?
    c. Susan got arrested and Arthur did too

Point (II) is much less well supported. While causative *get* seems to behave like an ECM verb, treating passive *get* as its unaccusative variant derives essentially a raising analysis for the *get*-passive, as schematized in (1a). However, the data used to support this in the literature is very weak — we will address this in detail in sections 3 and 4.

Haegeman's analysis is followed in the majority of subsequent literature (see Taranto 2000; McIntyre 2005 for discussion and references), though recently Alexiadou (2005) has proposed a treatment somewhere between the genuine passive analysis and Haegeman's analysis, wherein *get* is a semi-lexical head (see e.g. Corver & van Riemsdijk 2001 for discussion of this concept) in the extended verbal projection. This approach still retains the essential raising character of the *get*-passive, though, since the subject is still assumed to raise out of the small-clause like complement.

In this paper, we put forward an analysis of *get*-passives in which they are not raising but control constructions. An approach along these lines has previously been put forward by Huang (1999), on analogy with the analysis given to the Japanese direct passive by Hoshi (1991), extended by Huang also to the Chinese long passive. After first setting the scene regarding the general behavior of the *get*-passive by looking at the status of the complement of *get* and more specifically the status of the participle, we provide arguments in section 3 against the raising analysis, and in section 4 we argue in favor of the control analysis. In section 5 we show that a control analysis easily extends to other uses of *get*. Section 6 concludes the paper.

2 The status of *get*'s complement

As seen in (1) and (2) above, *get* can take pretty much the gamut of syntactic complement types, with the possible exception of finite clauses. Since this paper is about the *get*-passive, we primarily look at (1), but the null assumption would be that the analysis for *get* in this context should carry over to its other uses. Whether or not this is so is of course an empirical question, and empirically *get* does seem to pattern uniformly in terms of its argument structure, as (1) and (2) go some way towards showing. We return to this in section 5. Focusing just on the *get*-passive, though, there are still things to be said about *get*'s complement. For concreteness, we define *get*-passives as *get* with a participial complement as in (1). The syntactic question is then what kind of participle this is, and the semantic question is what interpretations it can receive.

2.1 The status of the participle

As to the first question, some discussion is found in Taranto (2000), who claims that the participle in a *get*-passive is always adjectival. The evidence she gives is based on three properties of adjectival passives as distinct from verbal passives, taken

from Levin & Rappaport-Hovav (1986): *un*-prefixation is possible with adjectival but not verbal participles; there is a particular set of English verbs that accept adjectival but not verbal participles as complements; and adjectival participles may appear prenominally, while verbal participles may not. Some of Taranto's data, along with the judgments she gives, is in (5–8).[1]

(5) a. (√)Uninvited guests are always a drag
b. (*)An unfollowed spy is a successful spy

(6) a. (√)Although nervous parents protested, the gothic rock star remained invited to the prom
b. (*)Although he tried to discourage [the groupies], Marilyn Manson remained followed

(7) a. (√)The invited guests
b. (*)The followed rock star

(8) a. (√)Several first year students got invited
b. (*)Agent Mulder got followed by the Cigarette Smoking Man
c. (*)Mary got followed by a little lamb
d. (*)Harry got seen at Terry's barbecue
e. (*)Terry's package got received by Larry

(Taranto 2000, 10–12)

The data in (5–7) is not controversial: these tests are generally accepted to be able to pick out adjectival elements. Taranto's *get*-passive data, though, is controversial. (8a) is of course okay, but according to all of our informants, (8b–d) are good also. (8e) is judged ungrammatical, but it is possible to find analogous examples which are fine (9), which means its deviance must be due to something else.[2]

(9) a. If the film gets received well enough, I'm thinking of creating a "directors commentary"

(forums.ubi.com/eve/forums/a/tpc/f/65710358/m/4601090164/r/2251051164)

[1]Note that throughout the paper, we cite data from the literature, including the original judgments given in those citations. However, sections of our argument rest partly on the question of how valid, or otherwise, those judgments are. Wherever we cite judgments direct from the literature, we parenthesize the grammaticality marker; where we give original data with judgments from our own informants, we don't parenthesize the judgments.

[2]Note that the good examples that can be found are mainly present tense. A similar restriction seems to hold of *get*-passives formed from subject experiencer verbs (??*this monster got feared* vs. *this monster gets feared*). From the examples we have collected (via Google), it appears these constructions are used when the speaker wants to use an eventive passive in the present tense. With the verbs under discussion, a *be*-passive doesn't give a good result: *this monster is feared* strongly prefers a stative, copula reading. This would explain why the examples with present tense are good; it doesn't obviously explain why those in past tense are bad. Given that *get*-passives are available built on these verb types, though, this is orthogonal to the issue.

b. No matter what signal/slot combination I try, no signal ever gets received

(lists.trolltech.com/qt-interest/2005-07/thread01373-0.html)

c. If you responses via email then you bear the burden of making sure the email gets received

(www.techdirt.com/articles/20060524/0228229.shtml)

d. etc...

If we take into account the judgments we have collected, then, these tests don't tell us that we are dealing with an adjectival participle. However, nor do they tell us definitely that we aren't, because they assume only a binary adjectival/verbal (basically stative/eventive) split. More detailed discussion of the status of the participle is found in Alexiadou (2005), where the verbal/adjectival distinction is assumed not to be sufficient to distinguish participles properly. Rather, a three-way cut is assumed: eventive participles, resultative participles, and stative participles, the second and third being distinct types of adjectival passive (Kratzer 2001; Embick 2004). These can be shown to pattern differently by various tests, and for some cases have distinct morphological forms as in (10).

(10)

Root	**Stative**	**Resultative**	**Eventive passive**
$\sqrt{}$	bless-èd	bless-ed	bless-ed
$\sqrt{}$	ag-èd	ag-ed	ag-ed
$\sqrt{}$	rott-en	rott-ed	rott-ed
$\sqrt{}$	sunk-en	sunk-Ø	sunk-Ø
$\sqrt{}$	(clean-)shav-en	shav-ed	shav-ed
$\sqrt{}$	open-Ø	open-ed	open-ed
$\sqrt{}$	empty-Ø	empti-ed	empti-ed
$\sqrt{}$	dry-Ø	dri-ed	dri-ed

(Embick 2004, 358)

Note that the morphology here distinguishes only between stative and 'other' participles. This means that even for the cases that are morphologically distinguished, we still have to test whether we are looking at an eventive (verbal) participle or a resultative adjectival one. Both of these involve eventivity, but to different degrees: verbal participles are straightforwardly eventive, in that they describe an event; resultative participles are stative, in that they describe a result state, but they also necessarily imply the event that state is the result of. To take an example like *open(ed)* from (10), a door can be open without any opening event having taken place, if it was built that way and has never been closed. This is not true of the resultative participle: an opened door is also one that is in an open state, but necessarily as a result of having undergone an opening event. The difference between this and the eventive participle boils down to the presence or absence of agentivity: eventive passives imply an agent, resultative participles don't. This means the three-way distinction derives from the interaction of two elements: an agentive

(verbal) participle is both agentive and eventive; a resultative participle is eventive but not agentive; and a stative participle is neither (11).[3]

(11)

	Stative	**Resultative**	**Eventive passive**
Agentivity	×	×	√
Eventivity	×	√	√

Alexiadou points out that *get*-passives allow both morphological forms (12).[4] The question is then whether the participle in (12b) is eventive or resultative.

(12) a. Susan got dry
b. Susan got dried

As noted, a number of tests exist to distinguish the two participles. Not all of these are applicable to the *get*-passive since they rely on configurations in which the participle appears in a configuration with other elements, which is impossible when it is already in a different configuration with *get*.[5] However, a number of them are.

2.2 Diagnostics

2.3 Basic tests

Since we follow Embick's analysis in taking the distinction between the eventive and resultative participles to boil down to the presence or absence of agentivity, the relevant tests are those that diagnose whether an agent is implied. A genuine verbal (eventive) passive, for example, licenses agent-oriented adverbs (13a), adverbs of intent (14a), and *by*-phrases (15a), and allows control into a purpose clause (16a). Resultative participles allow none of these (13b, 14b, 15b, 16b). Note that the distinction between the eventive and resultative readings is obtained by switching between past and present tense. In general, in English, past allows the eventive reading, whereas present disallows it.[6] This will be returned to in section 2.3.4.

[3]Note that the fourth logical possibility — agentive but not eventive — is ruled out in Embick's system since agentivity is parasitic on eventivity.

[4]Actually according to the definition we gave above, (12a) may seem not to be a *get*-passive, since it looks like it contains just a straight adjective. However, this definition is too simplistic as stated: in the stative–resultative–eventive system being considered here, it is not so simple to say that something *is* a straight adjective, since the distribution and behavior of the participles boils down to different levels of structure, and the morphology boils down to different affixes, including a null affix -Ø for *dry* etc. As the issue here now relates more to whether we can have eventive participles in *get*-passives, this is a side-issue.

[5]For example, as we saw in the discussion of Taranto's data, the complement of a verb like *remain* must be stative: *the door remained opened* must therefore contain the resultative, not the eventive, passive. Clearly we can't use this test on the participle in a *get*-passive, since there the participle is already the complement of *get*, and we cannot simultaneously make it the complement of *remain*.

[6]This isn't quite true: present tense in principle allows the genuine passive reading, but as with other eventive predicates, it forces a (frequently somewhat implausible) generic or habitual reading. In the examples under discussion, this reading is particularly implausible, since it suggests the teapot regularly undergoes breaking, so these show the distinction pretty clearly.

(13) a. The teapot was carefully broken (into one hundred pieces)
b. The teapot is (*carefully) broken (into one hundred pieces)

(14) a. The teapot was broken on purpose
b. The teapot is broken (*on purpose)

(15) a. The teapot was broken by Reuben
b. The teapot is broken (*by Reuben)

(16) a. The teapot was broken [PRO to vent frustration]
b. The teapot is broken (*[PRO to vent frustration])

What this means is that if *get*-passives allow these things too, they must contain eventive passives. Again, this is an area where we want to take issue with the judgments that are to be found in the literature. Alexiadou (2005, 18) gives (17). Fox & Grodzinsky (1998, 327) give (18,19).

(17) ($^{??}$)The manuscript got carefully destroyed

(18) a. ($\surd$)The ship was sunk [PRO to collect insurance money]
b. (*)The ship got sunk [PRO to collect insurance money]
c. ($\surd$)The ship got sunk for John to collect insurance money

(19) a. ($\surd$)The book was torn on purpose
b. (*)The book got torn on purpose

The problem again is that all of our informants disagree with these judgments: either the supposedly bad examples, and variations on them in (20), are considered very mildly degraded,[7] or not degraded at all. Again, this suggests that the complement of *get* may be verbal participle.

(20) a. The minister got sacked [PRO to avoid a scandal]
b. The sheep got killed [PRO to stop the spread of foot and mouth disease]
c. The teapot got broken on purpose

2.3.1 The *By-phrase*

With regard to (15), it is generally accepted that *by*-phrases are indeed possible with *get*-passives. Again this seems to be pretty straightforward evidence that *get*-passives can be built with the eventive participle. However, it has been argued that this is not so: Fox & Grodzinsky (1998) claim that *by*-phrases cannot reliably be used as diagnostics for the presence of structural agentivity. Their argument rests on two basic assumptions: (i) in nominals, if *by*-phrases are possible (which depends on the nominal), there is no possibility of θ-transmission (Jaeggli 1986), i.e. the transmission of a suppressed argument's θ-role to another element such as

[7] By only one informant, who suggested 'half a question mark' as a marker.

the DP inside a *by*-phrase; (ii) in these cases, *by* may in fact assign a θ-role independently of usual argument structural considerations. Specifically, the idea is that in nominals, the only θ-role that can be realized by a *by*-phrase is an -role (agent, instrument, creator, or possessor). There is no such restriction on *by*-phrases in verbal passives. The suggestion is then that there must be two kinds of *by*-phrase here: one, in verbal passives, licensed by θ-transmission; and a second, thematically restricted, found in nominals and licensed by *by* itself. This is intended to account for the data in (21-23).

(21) a. (√)The refugees were imprisoned by the government
b. (√)The imprisonment of the refugees by the government

(22) a. (√)Harry was feared by John
b. (√)The fear of Harry (*by John)

(23) (√)A book/article/painting by John
(Fox & Grodzinsky 1998, 325)

(21) shows that an affector θ-role is fine in a *by*-phrase in a nominal. (22) shows that a non-affector θ-role is fine in a verbal passive (22a), while it is out in the corresponding nominal (22b). (23) is intended to show that even in structures where 'there is no suppressed θ-role to transmit' (Fox & Grodzinsky 1998, 326), a *by*-phrase can still appear.

While it would be possible to argue against the account presented, we don't go through any such arguments, since in fact Fox & Grodzinsky (1998, 327, fn.21) admit that *get*-passives and nominals don't pattern alike with regard to the *by*-phrase anyway:

> 'We would like to show that the θ-role that *by* assigns is limited in *get*-passives in the same way that it is in nominals. In other words, we would like to show that the *by*-phrase in a *get*-passive must be an affector. Unfortunately, it is impossible to show this.'

This being so, Fox & Grodzinsky's conclusion is very weak. This is not to say it must be incorrect, but given that *get*-passives are not based around nominal but verbal elements, and given that they do allow *by*-phrases, apparently more productively that Fox & Grodzinsky's data suggest (see the discussion of (18, 20) above), and that these do not pattern like the restricted *by*-phrases in nominals, a simpler explanation of the data would be that the participle in a *get*-passive can be an eventive participle, which licenses its *by*-phrase in the usual way. This would also explain why resultatives don't allow *by*-phrases quite generally (15b), repeated here as (24) which seems to be something Fox & Grodzinsky's account would predict.

(24) The teapot is broken (*by Reuben)

2.3.2 Goal externalization

Two further arguments in favor of the view that the participle in a *get*-passive can't be eventive are given by Alexiadou (2005). The first is that there are some double-object verbs which freely allow externalization of either goal or theme in a verbal passive (25), but do not allow goal externalization with the adjectival participle (26). She notes that if the participle in a *get*-passive is adjectival, we should expect that goal externalization is impossible there too, and cites (27) from Siewierska (1984, 132) to support this. Again, though, we want to take issue with the data, or rather in this case, the specific datum in (27b). There is at least for some speakers some kind of (possibly rather weak) interpretive restriction on *get*-passives, which Taranto (2000) describes as of the subject: 'a -argument ... needs to undergo some sort of change [of condition or state], but [also] this change must be the result of an action (volitional or not) of another argument' (Taranto 2000, 14); Taranto formalizes this notion as a conventional implicature. If (27b) is bad, then perhaps it is because being sold a car is pretty neutral with regard to causal affectedness, because (28), which has a rather more adverse effect on the customer, was judged fine by all our informants. In any case, it can't be that a bad judgment of (27) arises from the impossibility of goal externalization, because this would rule (28) out too.

(25) a. (√)The salesman sold the customer a car
b. (√)The car was sold to the customer
c. (√)The customer was sold a car

(26) a. (√)The recently sold car
b. (*)The recently sold customer

(27) a. (√)The car got sold to the customer
b. (??)The customer got sold a car
(Alexiadou 2005, 16)

(28) The customer got sold a forgery

2.3.3 Reflexive action

A second argument Alexiadou gives is that unlike *be*-passives, *get*-passives are compatible with reflexive action (29). Alexiadou notes the parallelism between this contrast and that demonstrated by Kratzer (2001) between stative and eventive participles in German (30).

(29) a. (√)I got dressed (by my mother or by myself)
b. (√)I was dressed (only by my mother)

(30) a. (√)Das Kind war gekämmt
the child was combed
Stative: compatible with reflexive action

b. (√)Das Kind wurde gekämmt
the child was combed
Eventive: incompatible with reflexive action

(Alexiadou 2005, 15-16)

At face value, this parallel could be explained by assuming the participle in a *get*-passive is not an eventive one. However, anticipating our discussion in section 4, it can also be explained by assuming that *get*-passives instantiate control structures as in (31a). It is frequently possible to paraphrase control structures with a reflexive pronoun in place of PRO (31b), as expected if PRO is given its interpretation by the matrix subject.[8]

(31) a. I_i got [PRO_i dressed]
b. I got [myself dressed]

This is also reminiscent of Chierchia (1989) who argues that control structures and PRO are essentially used to express attitudes *De Se*.

2.3.4 Eventivity and present tense

As a final argument against the idea that the participle in a *get*-passive can't be eventive, recall from the discussion of (13) above that past tense allows the eventive reading, whereas present disallows it: (32) are perfectly good as present tense copula sentences, describing a watch or mushrooms that are in certain states. They are not very good as present tense eventives except as generics (e.g. *these are a type of mushroom that people often dry*), just like eventive verbs in English generally (32c). This means that if we find *get*-passives with complements that aren't allowed in present tense copula contexts, they aren't best analyzed as resultatives. This is in fact very easy to do: (33–35) are all bad on the present copula reading. They therefore behave exactly like eventive verbs in English, but unlike resultative participles. This is strong positive evidence that the participle in a *get*-passive can be an eventive participle.

(32) a. This watch is broken
b. These mushrooms are dried
c. John opens the door
= John has the job of opening the door (e.g. at a posh hotel)
≠ John is currently opening the door

(33) a. Susan got awarded the school trophy

[8] As to the non-reflexive interpretation of (29a), we argue in section 3 below that *get* shares with a number of verbs, including other control verbs, the property of having a variably more or less agentive reading for the subject. A more agentive reading will lead to the reflexive interpretation; a less agentive one will lead to the non-reflexive interpretation.

b. *Susan is awarded the school trophy

(34) a. I got knocked over by a car

b. *I am knocked over by a car

(35) a. Small Change got rained on with his own .38

b. *Small Change is rained on with his own .38

2.4 Summary

It appears, then, that *get*-passives can be formed with the whole range of participle types. The next question is what is the argument-structural status of *get*'s complement. Like Haegeman, we take it that *get*-passives are assimilable to causative *get* structures, as in (36): that is, there is a basic structural equivalence between the two forms, but the *get*-passive has what we for now neutrally describe as an empty category for its subject. Also like Haegeman, we will label the complement simply a small clause, although it appears from the discussion above that the structure will actually vary somewhat depending on what kind of participle a particular *get*-passive is built on.[9]

(36) a. Susan got [$_{SC}$ Arthur arrested]

b. Arthur got [$_{SC}$ *ec* arrested]

3 Against a raising analysis of *get*

In this section, we argue that the evidence presented for treating *get*-passives as raising constructions is based on poor data. There are basically three types of evidence used, all of them pretty standard tests for raising.

1. The possibility of expletive *there* as the subject of *get*.
2. Thematicity: the subject of a *get*-passive has been argued to bear no thematic relation to *get*.
3. Idiom chunk subjects: *get*-passives allow idiom chunk movement out of the complement into the subject position of *get*.

The possibility of expletive *there* as the subject of *get* is discussed by Fox & Grodzinsky (1998, 315), who give the examples in (37).[10]

[9] And assuming that the small clause can contain a real verbal passive, possibly the *ec* in (36b) should have moved up from the complement position of *arrested*. This depends to some extent on what we believe the precise structure of the participial phrase to be, but it isn't relevant for our purposes right now so for simplicity we leave it aside.

[10] Note that these are not in fact *get*-passive structures as we have defined them here, since the complement is a *to*-infinitive rather than a participle. If we are right to assume that *get* behaves similarly across its uses, then this evidence is still relevant. If we are wrong to think this, then the evidence tells us nothing about *get*-passives anyway.

(37) a. (√)There (finally) got to be a lot of room in this house
b. (√)(After we left the faucet on for an hour) there (finally) got to be enough water to take a bath

(38) a. There seems to be a lot of room in this house
b. There seems to be enough water to take a bath

The point is, of course, that if the sentences in (37) are grammatical, *get* is patterning like raising here, as in (38). The problem once more, though, is that the sentences in (37) are uniformly judged by our informants not to be grammatical, but strongly degraded, crucially patterning much more like control violations than raising constructions. This will be returned to in the next section.

The thematicity of the subject of *get* is more interesting. For causative *get*, it is clear that the subject is, whether intentionally or not, the causer of situation described by the small clause. So in (39a), it is clear that Susan caused Arthur's arrest, whether she did this by deliberately going to the police station with the intention of having the arrest take place, or by accidentally letting slip some information that brought about the arrest (in which case she might even be unaware of it), etc. In (39b), again a causative reading is perfectly possible, where Arthur deliberately behaves in a way that brings about his arrest, perhaps because he is a gangster in jeopardy who feels he would be safer in police custody. A non-intentional causative reading is also possible, where the *get*-passive implies that Arthur brought his arrest on himself, though not intentionally – possibly he was drunk and disorderly. These two readings can also be expressed by (39c), with a reflexive in the subject position of the small clause; they are not expressible by a *be*-passive, which doesn't imply anything about the cause(r) of Arthur's arrest, but simply reports the event.

(39) a. Susan got Arthur arrested
b. Arthur (deliberately) got arrested
c. Arthur got himself arrested

This is much like the thematic behavior of a number of other verbs, where the subject can be more or less agentive, in terms of the degree of intention on the part of the subject. *Find*, for example, behaves similarly: (40a) can be understood to mean either that Arthur was intentionally searching for a book, and succeeded, or that he came across a book by chance. In the latter case his finding is unintentional, but nevertheless he clearly bears some kind of 'finder' role. Other examples include, *make*, *mark*, *introduce*, verbs of certain bodily functions, etc.

(40) a. Arthur found a book
b. Reuben made a mess
c. Susan marked the floor with her shoe
d. The Conquistadors introduced fatal diseases to the Americas
e. Arthur blinked/jumped/coughed/cried out/etc.

The subject of a *get*-passive certainly *can* bear a very clear thematic relation to *get*, then. This argues against the raising analysis. Sometimes the thematic relation is not obvious, but again this is so with the other verbs. The thematic relation the subject of the unintentional interpretation of *find* bears to the verb isn't very obvious either, but this shouldn't lead us to analyze *find* as a raising verb.

The evidence based on idiom chunks is closely tied to thematicity too, since the usual explanation given for the acceptability of raising idiom chunks is that they are thematically tied into the embedded clause, and this relation is not disrupted by raising since raising does not alter or add any thematic relations. Examples of idiom chunk subjects of *get*-passives are in (41), from Fox & Grodzinsky (1998, 315).

(41) a. Tabs always get kept on foreigners in the U.S.A.
b. In the end, advantage always gets taken of John
c. No expense gets spared when Rich Eddie is in town

On this occasion we don't have any argument with the data, but in the next section we argue that idiom chunks aren't in fact good evidence for treating *get*-passives as raising constructions, nor in fact for diagnosing raising in general.

4 *Get* as a control verb

Since the evidence we saw for treating *get*-passives as raising constructions isn't very strong, it is reasonable to suppose that they may not be raising constructions. It has already been proposed that this is the case, and that they are in fact control constructions, by Huang (1999). Here we take the same line, adopting the structure in (42).

(42) Arthur_i got [PRO_i arrested]

First, note that the idea of an unaccusative ECM verb, leading to a raising structure, is very uncommon. It is not clear that any other such verb exists in English. Haegeman (1985, 76) suggests one other case, *prove*, showing that they seem to pattern similarly (43–45). However, she does not give evidence that *prove* has the structure she suggests for *get*, and we know that, for example, raising constructions superficially seem to pattern with control constructions, but this doesn't tell us they are equivalent.

(43) a. I proved them to be wrong
b. I got them to be careful

(44) a. They were proved to be wrong
b. They were got to be careful

(45) a. They proved to be wrong

b. They got to be careful

An ECM verb may be passivized leading to a raising structure, of course (46). Though this may make the Haegeman-style analysis seem plausible, this is only if we assume passives and unaccusatives are analogous. We know that unaccusatives and passives do share certain features, but they cannot be considered equivalent. The similarity is there at a superficial level, but again a superficial similarity doesn't tell us anything.

(46) a. I expected [them to arrive]
b. They$_i$ were expected [t$_i$ to arrive]

More generally, note that although unaccusative ECM verbs are extremely hard to think of, ECM verbs with a control variant are very common (47a, 47b). Note moreover that in these cases it is possible to express the control interpretation with the ECM construction if we use a reflexive as the embedded subject (47c), as we saw for *get* in (39c).

(47) a. I expected [Susan to win]
b. Susan$_i$ expected [PRO$_i$ to win]
c. Susan expected [herself to win]

Much of the data that argues against a raising analysis for *get*-passives argues for a control analysis, as is usual. As we saw in the previous section, the sentences in (37) do not seem to pattern with the grammatical raising examples in (38), contra Fox & Grodzinsky. Rather, the judgments we have place them pretty much on a par with attested control violations like (48). In fact, control violations with *manage* were consistently judged equivalent to or better than (37). The fact that *get* actually patterns with control rather than raising in these contexts is, then, an argument for analyzing it as such.

(48) a. It is not as if there is trying to be an equal sharing of responsibility between all of those who have benefited from the workers' compensation system
(www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/hansard/han56-1/19.htm)
b. There manages to be a cinematic flare that is uncommon in many licensed products
(gameboy.ign.com/articles/681/681697p1.html)
c. There managed to be two whole issues devoted to the questioning of trial witnesses
(comicfacts.blogspot.com/2005_05_01_comicfacts_archive.html)
d. We're living in a time where there pretends to be a lot of consensus
(www.smart.co.uk/dreams/tgoct98.htm)

e. And then there decided to be no sun so they didn't dry for ages
profile.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=user.viewprofile&friendid=38518178

As we saw, the argument based on thematic relations between *get* and its subject also didn't provide strong evidence for treating *get*-passives as raising. Where *get* clearly does have a thematic relation to its subject, then treating it as a control verb is very plausible. Where the relation is not so clear, this still doesn't rule out such an analysis. One reason for this we already saw in (40): this is the case with a number of verbs, none of which seem to warrant a raising analysis. Moreover, we also see cases of control verbs whose thematic relation to their subject is less than clear. Good examples of these are *promise* and *threaten*, as in (49).[11]

(49) a. Reuben$_i$ promised [PRO$_i$ to become a fine young man]
b. Arthur$_i$ threatened [PRO$_i$ to become dangerous]

(49a, 49b) do have an interpretation where the thematic relation between the subject and the control verb is strongly agentive, which is where Reuben or Arthur actually make a promise or threat to someone. There is another reading, though, where the subjects do not actively make such a promise but simply display certain character traits. This seems to follow the pattern we already saw in (40), but this time specifically with control constructions.

The idiom chunk evidence for treating *get*-passives as raising structures ((41), repeated here as (50)) does seem to be based on sound data. This may now seem like the biggest problem for a control analysis.

(50) a. Tabs always get kept on foreigners in the U.S.A.
b. In the end, advantage always gets taken of John
c. No expense gets spared when Rich Eddie is in town

However, using idiom chunk evidence for raising is a flawed strategy generally. The idea behind using it as a test is that if the idiomatic reading requires thematic locality of the arguments inside the idiom, raising won't disturb this locality since although the argument is moved, it is assigned its thematic role inside the embedded clause. Control will disturb it, because the idiom chunk in the matrix clause will be assigned its thematic role by the control verb, not the embedded verb, and so the idiomatic reading will no longer be possible. The problem with the test is simply that, if we look outside the examples commonly presented in the literature, it doesn't work. We know that not all raising predicates treat the same idiom chunks the same way (51a vs. 51b), and that not all idioms like their chunks to be raised (51a vs. 51c). Idiom chunking is restricted by something more than raising, at least.

(51) a. The cat seems to have his tongue

[11]Thanks to Tibor Kiss for bringing such examples to our attention in another context.

b. *The cat is likely to have his tongue

c. *A bird in the hand seems/is likely to be worth two in the bush

But if this is true for raising, we may also wonder if it is true for control, and we simply aren't usually presented with the right examples. That is to say, if the standard examples of idiom chunks with raising were like (51b) and (51c), we wouldn't be so inclined to use this as evidence for raising. This is exactly the situation with control: if we manage to find the right idioms in the right contexts, we can see that in fact, idiom chunk subjects are perfectly possible with control verbs after all (52). The grammaticality of (50), then, can tell us nothing about the raising or control status of *get*.

(52) a. But I do wonder whether the leopard is trying to change her spots
(mikesamerica.blogspot.com/2005_01_01_mikesamerica_archive.html)

b. Unless the leopard decides to change its spots, any future terrorist acts will now have state sponsorship.
(www.raptureready.com/nm/78.html)

c. The leopard isn't promising to change its spots
(news.scotsman.com/politics.cfm?id=2021232005)

d. But sometimes the blind try to lead the blind
(bluereign.blogspot.com/2006/06/how-effective-is-your-blog-post.html)

e. Gorilla Snot is Non-Toxic, just in case curiosity tries to kill the cat, and it won't harm clothing or instruments!
(www.gorillasnot.com/qa.htm)

f. Was the early bird trying to catch some worms? He had been taking BBs directive to keep all the mirrors clean very seriously
(www.bigbrothernigeria.com/articles/display.asp?id=115)

A further piece of evidence that *get*-passives instantiate control comes from pseudoclefts. It is well known that raising verbs can't appear in pseudocleft constructions like (53a), whereas control verbs can (53c). Note that this applies not just to raising verbs proper, but also to passivized ECM verbs (53b), which as mentioned are the closest analogy to Haegeman's analysis of the *get*-passive. Again, *get* patterns like control in this context, not like raising (53d).

(53) a. *To leave is what he'll seem

b. *To leave is what they'll be expected

c. To leave is what he'll promise

d. Broken is what the teapot will get

Our final piece of evidence is semantic, relating to the well known *de re* vs. *de dicto* ambiguities found in raising vs. control constructions. Namely, a raising

construction like (54a) allows both a *de re* and a *de dicto* reading for *a goblin*, while a control case like (54b) only allows the *de re* reading – i.e. (54a) doesn't necessarily entail the existence of goblins, whereas (54b) does.

(54) a. A goblin seemed to be hiding in the attic (*de dicto*/*de re*)
b. A goblin tried to climb into the attic (*de re* only)

Get-passives pattern with control rather than raising constructions in only allowing *de re* readings for their subjects: (55), like (54b), entails that goblins exist.

(55) A goblin got arrested in the attic (*de re* only)

It seems then that evidence from a host of sources consistently points towards a control analysis of *get*. In the next section we show that this conclusion is not only plausible for the so-called *get-passive* construction but naturally extends to other uses of *get*.

5 Extensions: Other uses of *get*

We mentioned in section 2 that the null hypothesis would be that any analysis for *get*-passives which treats *get* as a main verb should treat other uses of *get* uniformly; the same assumption is made by Haegeman (1985). In this section we follow up this idea, showing that *get* can uniformly be treated as taking a complement with either a controlled PRO or an exceptionally case marked subject, analogous to the causative and passive uses of *get* in (1), repeated here as (56). The basic cases to which we intend to apply the analysis are those we gave in (2), repeated here as (57).

(56) a. Arthur$_i$ got [t$_i$ arrested]
b. Susan got [Arthur arrested]

(57) a. Arthur$_i$ got [*ec*$_i$ {to eat the cake/working/into the car/ready for bed/a book/whatever he needed}]
b. Susan got [Arthur {to eat the cake/working/into the car/ready for bed/a book/whatever he needed}]

When *get* appears with an infinitival or gerundival complement we will assume that we have standard control/ECM structures as in (58); this is straightforward.

(58) a. Arthur$_i$ got [{PRO$_i$ / Susan} to eat the cake]
b. Arthur$_i$ got [{PRO$_i$ / Susan} working on the paper]

For the cases where *get* takes a PP or an AP complement we propose that *get* takes a small clause complement, and again instantiates a control/ECM structure (59). Again, apart from the question of what exactly a small clause is (which we here have to leave to one side), this is not controversial.

(59) a. Arthur$_i$ got [$_{SC}$ {PRO$_i$ / Susan} into the car]
b. Arthur$_i$ got [$_{SC}$ {PRO$_i$ / Susan} ready for bed]

Finally we consider the more interesting cases, where *get* takes a plain DP or relative clause as its complement. We follow Szabolcsi (1983), among others, in assuming a structural parallelism between clauses and DPs. The structure of *Arthur got a book* will involve a controlled PRO subject sitting in the specifier of the object DP which is interpreted as a possessor (60). The relation between Arthur and his possessing a book is then mediated by whatever *get* means, which we examine in the next section.

(60) Arthur$_i$ got [$_{DP}$ [PRO$_i$] a book]

As with the other cases above, we take the ditransitive equivalent also to involve an ECM structure, with the indirect object sitting in the specifier of the whole DP (61).[12]

(61) Susan got [$_{DP}$ [Arthur] a book]

It may be noted that for these cases, the relation between the subject of the DP (*Arthur*) and the possessum (*a book*) is not necessarily one of direct possession: (61) is compatible with a wide range of situations, from one where Susan has obtained a book and given it into Arthur's possession, through cases where she has obtained it with the intention of giving it into his possession, but hasn't yet done so, cases where she has obtained it with that intention then lost it, so in fact it will never come into his possession, to ones where she has obtained the book as a favor for Arthur, with no implications about whether Arthur will directly posses the book or not; etc. etc. However, it is very well-known since at least Williams (1982) that the semantics of possessive constructions varies widely in just this kind of way, from very direct possession to much more abstract concepts: (62) can be interpreted, for example, as *the book that Reuben owns*, *the book that Reuben wrote*, *the book that Reuben is in charge of editing/reviewing/designing/displaying in-store*, *the book that someone got for Reuben*, *the book that Reuben was telling me about*, etc. etc.[13]

The fact that the cases under consideration show a similarly wide range of interpretations lends support to the analysis proposed.

(62) Reuben's book

[12]Plausibly the structure is more complex than just a DP with a filled specifier: there is a long-standing discussion on whether double object constructions should also be treated in terms of small clauses (Kayne 1984; Hoekstra 1988; Johnson 1991; Pesetsky 1995; etc.). If they should, this would bring these cases even closer into line with the other cases above. For simplicity we don't go into this here, but stick with the clausal–DP parallelism hypothesis.

[13]Williams expressed this in terms of his *Det-Rule* which states 'The relation between the possessive NP and the following N' can be any relation at all'.

6 Conclusion

In this paper we examined the so-called *get*-passive construction. We have shown that unlike what is usually assumed *get*-passives can be formed with the whole range of participial types, including eventive participles, contrary to what has been claimed in the past. We also established that a number of generally accepted claims regarding this construction are based on spurious or flawed data. When the right array of data is examined different generalizations emerge. Our main analytical points are, first that characterizing *get*-passives as passives is erroneous, second, that viewing them as raising constructions is also incorrect since they seem to pattern more like control constructions, and finally that a control analysis seems best suited to the range of data that we examined. Empirically we hope to have established a more accurate basis for the study of this construction.

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