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Case alternations in Icelandic 'get'-passives

Einar Freyr Sigurðsson & Jim Wood

The analysis of 'get'-passives across Germanic poses a number of challenges to our understanding of valency alternations: they exhibit surprising case alternations and recalcitrant thematic properties (Alexiadou 2012, Alexiadou, Anagnostopoulou & Sevdali to appear). In this article, we present novel data on 'get'-passives in Icelandic; while Icelandic has played an important role in our understanding of case marking and valency alternations, 'get'-passives have not, to our knowledge, been studied in this language before. By situating 'get'-passives within the landscape of well-established case patterns of Icelandic, we are able to argue in favor of the following conclusions: (i) Icelandic 'get'-passives involve unambiguously verbal passives; (ii) the surface subject of recipient 'get'-passives ('I got a letter sent to me') does not originate as the dative indirect object of the passive participle, but rather originates as an (external) argument of 'get'; and (iii) at least some intransitive 'get'-passives ('This got changed') involve anticausativization of the corresponding causative 'get'-passive ('I got this changed'), as proposed for English by Haegeman (1985).

Keywords anticausatives, applicatives, case-marking, 'get'-passives, Icelandic, middle voice, passive

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1. INTRODUCTION

In this article, we discuss 'get'-passives in Icelandic, with some comparison to other Germanic languages.¹ By 'get'-passive, we refer broadly to constructions where a word translating to English *get* is followed by a verb phrase headed by a verb in its passive participial form. While Icelandic has played an important role in our understanding of case marking and valency alternations, 'get'-passives have not, to our knowledge, been studied in this language before. The present study presents the empirical landscape of Icelandic 'get'-passives with a special focus on how their case-marking patterns shed light on the structures generating them. It has been shown that Icelandic case-marking patterns can distinguish, among other things, (i) verbal passives from adjectival passives and (ii) direct object datives from indirect object datives. These properties of the Icelandic case system make Icelandic an ideal testing ground for the analysis of 'get'-passives. While it goes beyond the scope of the

present article to develop a full analysis of ‘get’-passives across all of Germanic, we hope that the data and analysis presented in this article can be used to inform their analysis in other Germanic languages, and will provide some suggestions for this along the way.

In this section, we provide a brief overview of several classes of ‘get’-passives, along with an analysis of them, before turning to a more detailed discussion in subsequent sections. The first class of ‘get’-passives is the ‘recipient “get”-passive’ (RGP). At first sight, RGPs seem to be derived from ditransitive verbs with dative indirect objects, such as *senda* ‘send’. The surface subject is interpreted as a goal or recipient, and the object is the theme. However, while dative indirect objects retain dative case under canonical passivization in Icelandic, as illustrated in (1b), dative arguments of verbs like *senda* ‘send’ seem to change from dative to nominative in ‘get’-passives, as illustrated in (1c).²

- (1) a. Jón sendi **Mariú** bókina.
 Jón.NOM sent María.DAT book.the.ACC
 ‘Jón sent María the book.’
 b. **Mariú** var send bókin.
 María.DAT was sent.PASS.F.SG.NOM book.the.F.NOM
 ‘María was sent the book.’
 c. **María** fékk bókina senda.
 María.NOM got book.the.F.ACC sent.PASS.F.SG.ACC
 ‘María got the book sent to her.’

Like the canonical passive, the passive participle agrees with its derived subject in number, gender and case when the latter is nominative or accusative, but takes default agreement (which is the same as the 3rd singular neuter form) when its derived subject is some other case, such as dative. In this introduction, we will fully gloss all passive participles, but in the remainder of the article, we will simply gloss them as ‘passive’ whenever agreement is not relevant. An analogous class of ‘get’-passive can be found in German, Dutch, and the other Scandinavian languages.

We take this ‘get’-passive to correspond to English sentences of the sort in (2a) rather than (2b). In the English construction in (2a), in order to get a recipient reading for the subject, a PP like *to her*, with *her* coreferential with the subject, is almost obligatory. In Icelandic, a PP is allowed, but not obligatory, as shown in (3).

- (2) a. *Mary_i got the book sent ??(to her_i).*
 b. *Mary got sent the book.*
 (3) *María_i fékk bókina senda (til sín_i).*
 María.NOM got book.the.F.ACC sent.PASS.F.SG.ACC to REFL.GEN
 ‘María got the book sent to her.’

The robustness of the recipient reading can be illustrated with a ‘pick-up line’ that exists in both English and Icelandic, but as a ‘get’-passive only in Icelandic.

- (4) Fyrirgefðu, ég hef týnt símanúmerinu mínu,
excuse.me I have lost phone.number.the my
má ég fá þitt lánað?
may I.NOM get yours.N.ACC loaned.PASS.N.SG.ACC
 'Excuse me, I've lost my phone number. Can I borrow yours?'
 (<http://www.visir.is/ekki-thetta,-strakar/article/200661220026>)

In this case, a 'get'-passive is very awkward in English; *borrow* is used instead (?'I've lost my phone number, can I get yours loaned to me?'/?'I've lost my phone number, can I get loaned yours?'). We discuss the properties and analysis of RGPs in Section 2.

The second class of 'get'-passive, the 'causative "get"-passive' (CGP), involves a causative and/or agentive reading of the surface subject; this class seems to closely resemble English CGPs, except that it seems to be lexically somewhat more restricted, and the range of verbs which may appear in the CGP varies across speakers. Note that the case pattern of (5a) is like (1c). In (5b), the dative case assigned by the verb *breyta* 'change' is preserved; this case pattern is found in RGPs as well, as will be shown in Section 2.

- (5) a. Ég fékk hurðina opnaða fyrir mig.
I got door.the.F.ACC opened.PASS.F.SG.ACC for me
 'I got the door opened for me.'
- b. Ég fékk þessu breytt.
I.NOM got this.DAT changed.PASS.DFLT
 'I got this changed.' (H.Á. Sigurðsson 2012a:206)

The participle agreement facts are the same with the CGP as with the RGP. As for interpretation, the subject in the sentences in (5) is interpreted as a causer, or as an agent of the causing event. As far as we have been able to tell so far, Icelandic typically resists the purely benefactive reading that frequently shows up in English and other Germanic languages (including Scandinavian languages), and very strongly resists the maleficiary reading. Despite the 'for'-phrase in (5a), the interpretation is that the subject is the agent and/or causer, not just the beneficiary. We discuss CGPs and the resistance to pure benefactive/malefactive readings further in Section 3.

Both RGPs and CGPs alternate with 'anticausative "get"-passives' (AGPs). AGPs involve the verb *fá* 'get' marked with the *-st* clitic that marks anticausatives (along with other varieties of the 'middle voice'; see H.Á. Sigurðsson 1989:259–263, Anderson 1990, and Wood 2012:64–77 on the various classes of *-st* verbs).³ The thematic object of the embedded verb is then promoted to the matrix subject position.

- (6) a. María fékk bókina senda.
María.NOM got book.the.F.ACC sent.PASS.F.SG.ACC
 'María got the book sent (to her).'
- b. Bókin fékkst ekki send (fyrir jólin).
book.the.F.NOM got.ST not sent.PASS.F.SG.NOM before Christmas
 'The book didn't get sent (before Christmas).'

- (7) a. **Ég fékk þessu** breytt.
I.NOM got this.DAT changed.PASS.DFLT
 ‘I got this changed.’
- b. **Þessu fékkst** ekki breytt.
this.DAT got.ST not changed.PASS.DFLT
 ‘This didn’t get changed.’

Note that as in (5b)/(7a), the dative case assigned by *breytt* ‘changed’ is preserved in the AGP in (7b). Once again, the participle agreement facts are the same for AGPs as for RGPs and CGPs. AGPs are discussed further in Section 4.

For the final class of ‘get’-passive, which we will call ‘manage “get”-passives’ (MGPs), the term ‘passive’ might be a misnomer (though see Taraldsen 2010). This construction differs from the others in three ways. First, the verb form is that of a perfect participle rather than a passive participle, as evidenced by the fact that it never agrees in case, number and gender with the theme. Second, the meaning is active and agentive; that is, the surface subject is understood as the external argument of the participial verb. The meaning often comes close to English infinitival sentences headed by the verb *manage*, as in (8a), or has an ability modal reading, as in (8b). Third, the thematic object generally occurs to the right of its selecting participle, unlike the case with the other ‘get’-passives, where the object generally moves to the left of the participle.⁴ Some attested examples of this construction are given in (8).⁵

- (8) a. Munkarnir fengu forðað sér á síðustu stundu
monks.the.NOM got saved.PRF REFL.DAT at last moment
 og bjargað helstu helgigripum.
and rescued.PRF most.important religious.items
 ‘The monks managed to save themselves at the last minute and rescue the most important religious items.’ (mim.hi.is)
- b. Þessi skotgleði gengur út í öfgar að mínum dómi
this trigger.happiness goes out to extremes in my judgment
 og ég fæ ekki skilið hana.
and I.NOM get not understood.PRF it.F.ACC
 ‘This trigger-happiness goes to the extreme in my view and I can’t understand it.’ (<http://www.althingi.is/altext/gomulraeda.php4?lthing=97&rnr=2585>)

MGPs allow unergative intransitives, as shown in the following examples. (9a) is from a poem by Margrét Lóa Jónsdóttir.

- (9) a. Draumey fær ekki sofið um nætur.
Draumey.NOM gets not slept.PRF at night
 ‘Draumey can’t sleep at night.’
 (http://bokmenntir.is/desktopdefault.aspx/categories-1371,1947/RSkra-89/tabid-3397/5787_read-3556/)

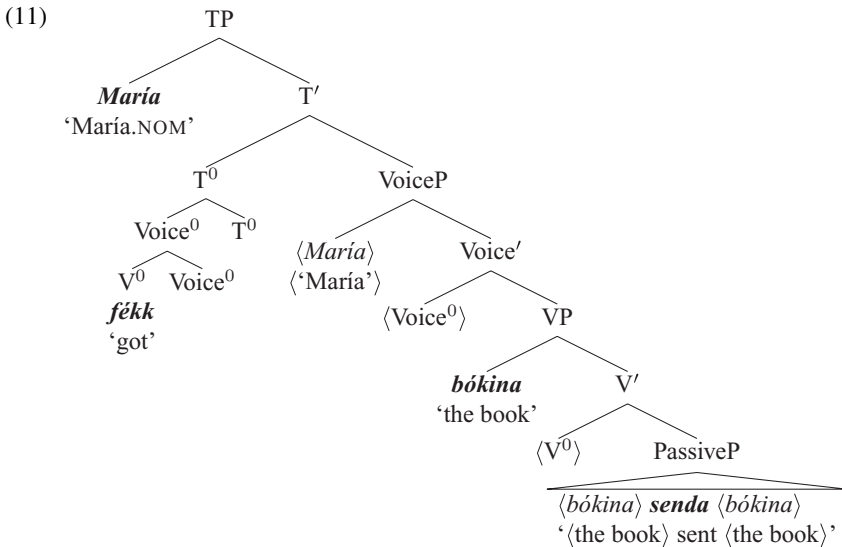
- b. Loksins létti mér, er ég fékk grátið.
finally lightened me.DAT, as I.NOM got cried.PRF
 'Finally I felt relieved as I managed to cry.'
 ([http://timarit.is/view_page_init.jsp?pageId=4634327](http://timarit.is/view_page_init.jsp?pageId=4634327&issId=304856&lang=da)
 &issId=304856&lang=da

The interpretive difference can be seen clearly when a verb like *senda* 'send' is used. Unlike in the RGP example in (10a), the subject of the MGP in (10b) cannot be construed as a recipient, but can only be the agent of the sending event.

- (10) a. Ég fékk bókina senda.
I.NOM got book.the.FACC sent.PASS.F.SG.ACC
 'I got the book sent to me.'
 b. Ég fékk ekki sent bókina.
I.NOM got not sent.PRF book.the.F.ACC
 'I didn't manage to send the book.'
 (E.F. Sigurðsson 2012:24–25)

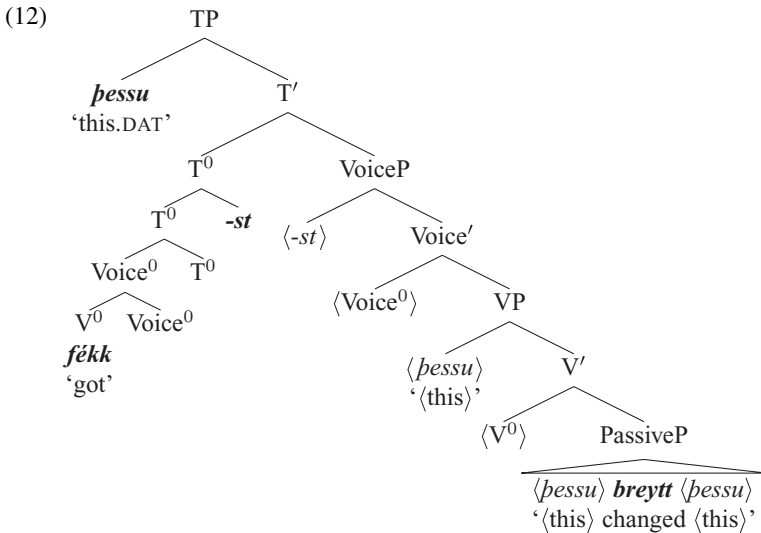
For the purposes of the present study, we set aside the MGP, focusing instead on the cases where the participle is in the passive form, such as the recipient, causative, and anticausative 'get'-passives.

We propose that RGPs and CGPs have a structure like (11), which illustrates (1c).⁶ This structure is simplified in a number of respects, but it serves to illustrate some of the basic points we want to make about the analysis of 'get'-passives. In Section 6, we make one kind of refinement to this structure, where we treat *fá* 'get' as a semi-lexical light verb rather than as a lexical verb. But the simplifications we make should not affect the main points in this article.



In this structure, the DP *María* is externally merged as the external argument of the verb *fá* ‘get’, which means that it starts in SpecVoiceP (following Kratzer 1996 and much subsequent work). SpecTP, the subject position, is filled when T⁰ attracts the closest DP to its specifier; in this case, this is *María*, so *María* moves to (or internally merges in) SpecTP. The verb *fá* head-moves to Voice⁰ and to T⁰, just as any verb in Icelandic does (and probably further, in most cases; see Angantýsson 2011 for a recent overview and empirical study). *Fá* ‘get’ is treated as an ECM verb, and its complement is a passive VoiceP, which we call ‘PassiveP’. The internal argument of the passive verb moves to the edge of PassiveP and then raises to SpecVP, as in Chomsky’s (2008) analysis of ECM as raising-to-object.

AGPs are derived by anticausativizing the transitive structure in (11). According to the analysis in Wood (2012), building on Schäfer (2008) and H.Á. Sigurðsson (2012a), this is done by merging an expletive clitic *-st* in the specifier of VoiceP, which prevents an external argument from merging there. The structure of (7b) is shown in (12). Here, for simplicity, we illustrate cliticization as simple right adjunction to the finite verb complex in T⁰.⁷



Since the *-st* clitic occupies the external argument position, but cliticizes to the verb complex instead of moving to an argument position, the closest DP to T⁰ is the thematic object of the passive verb *þessu* ‘this’, so *þessu* moves to the subject position, SpecTP. We assume that this cliticization allows the internal argument to move past the SpecVoiceP position, similar to what is seen in the following French examples discussed by Chomsky (1995:305). The cliticization of French experiencer arguments, as in (13b), has been taken to license otherwise illicit A-movement of an embedded infinitival subject to the matrix subject position, as in (13a):

- (13) a. *Jean_i semble à Marie [t_i avoir du talent]
Jean seems to Marie to.have of talent
 b. Jean_i lui_j semble t_j [t_i avoir du talent]
Jean to.her seems to.have of talent
 'Jean seems to her to have talent.'

(Chomsky 1995:305)

Richard Kayne (p.c.) reminds us that the French facts are more complicated than (13) alone indicates (as also mentioned in note 79 in Chomsky 1995:388). We assume that the basic phrase-structural assumption is sound. That is, since *-st* does not distribute like (or is not licensed as) a full DP, it is not an intervenor for movement of full DPs; see McGinnis (1998:174ff.) and Anagnostopoulou (2003) for a more detailed discussion of A-movement past clitics.

In the next section, we look in more detail at the RGP construction, and defend the proposal that *María* in (1c) is externally merged as an argument of the matrix verb *fá* 'get', but that *bókina* 'the book' is merged lower, as the thematic object of the embedded passive verb.

2. THE RECIPIENT 'GET'-PASSIVE

The recipient 'get'-passive (RGP) has played a prominent role in cross-Germanic work on 'get'-passives. In recent work, Alexiadou, Anagnostopoulou & Sevdali (to appear) studied case alternations between datives and nominatives, discussing German and Dutch alternations such as the German sentences in (14). This alternation resembles the Icelandic alternation seen earlier, repeated in (15).

- (14) a. Sie hat **dem Mann** das Buch geschenkt. (German)
she.NOM has the.DAT man the.ACC book given.PASS
 'She has given the man the book.'
 b. **Der Mann** bekam ein Buch geschenkt.
the.NOM man got a.ACC book given.PASS
 'The man was given a book.'

(Alexiadou et al. to appear)

- (15) a. Jón sendi **Maríu** bókina. (Icelandic)
Jón.NOM sent María.DAT book.the.ACC
 'Jón sent María the book.'
 b. **María** fékk bókina senda.
María.NOM got book.the.F.ACC sent.PASS.F.SG.ACC
 'María got the book sent (to her).'

Alexiadou et al. (to appear) propose that the nominative recipient subject in sentences like (14b) is base-generated in the same position as the dative indirect object in sentences like (14a).⁸ Taraldsen (2010) proposes an analysis for Norwegian 'get'-constructions which is similar in this respect. These analyses differ in the mechanisms invoked to account for the change in case from dative to nominative. Alexiadou et al. (to appear) propose that German dative is licensed by a feature of the

external-argument-introducing Voice head, and that it is at the VoiceP level that dative case is absorbed in the ‘get’-passive. Taraldsen (2010), invoking case ‘peeling’ in the sense of Caha (2009) and Medova (2009), proposes that the dative case feature is stranded by movement; this feature stranding is then responsible for the verb spelling out as ‘get’.

However, there are several arguments supporting our proposal that the DP *María* in (15b) is not externally merged as an indirect object, followed by some mechanism that prevents it from being realized as dative. The first argument comes from a closer look at how case-alternations work in Icelandic. Under canonical passivization, dative objects remain dative when they move to the subject position (Andrews 1976, Thráinsson 1979, Zaenen, Maling & Thráinsson 1985, H.Á. Sigurðsson 1989, Jónsson 1996).

- (16) a. Jón splundraði rúðunni.
Jón.NOM shattered window.the.DAT
 ‘Jón shattered the window.’
- b. Rúðunni var splundrað (af Jóni).
window.the.DAT was shattered.PASS by Jón
 ‘The window was shattered (by Jón).’
- (17) a. Þeir buðu mér peninga.
they.NOM offered me.DAT money.ACC
 ‘They offered me money.’
- b. Mér voru boðnir peningar.
me.DAT was offered.PASS money.NOM
 ‘I was offered money.’

(Thráinsson 2007:290)

However, while this is true of both dative direct objects, as in (16), and dative indirect objects, as in (17), there are important differences between direct object datives and indirect object datives (see Wood 2012:131ff. for an overview and references). One difference involves the *-st* morphology seen above in (6)–(7). Accusative objects become nominative with both passive, as in (17b) and *-st*, as in (19b). However, when *-st* prevents a dative-assigning verb from merging an external argument, a direct object dative becomes nominative, as illustrated in (18), while indirect objects stay dative, as illustrated in (19) (H.Á. Sigurðsson 1989:270, 2012a:220; Jónsson 2000:89; Thráinsson 2007:290–292).⁹

- (18) a. Jón splundraði **rúðunni**.
Jón shattered window.the.DAT
 ‘Jón shattered the window.’
- b. **Rúðan** splundraðist.
window.the.NOM shattered.ST
 ‘The window shattered.’
- (19) a. Þeir buðu **mér** peninga.
they.NOM offered me.DAT money.ACC
 ‘They offered me money.’

- b. **Mér** buðust peningar.
me.DAT offered.ST money.NOM
 'I got offered money.'

In fact, for ditransitive verbs such as *úthluta* 'allocate' and *skila* 'return', which take two dative objects, only the direct object dative becomes nominative; the indirect object remains dative. This is illustrated with the attested examples in (20b) and (21b), which would correspond to the constructed transitives in (20a) and (21a).

- (20) a. Þeir úthlutuðu **okkur velli** til 12:00.
they.NOM allocated us.DAT field.DAT until 12:00
 'They allocated a field to us until 12:00.'
- b. **Okkur** úthlutaðist **völlur** til 12:00.
us.DAT allocated.ST field.NOM until 12:00
 'We got allocated a field until 12:00.'
 (http://vu2043.ispcp-01.zebra.is/gamli/frettir.php?id_teg=13&cmd=eldri&start=2009-10-01)
- (21) a. En þeir hefðu skilað **fólki þessu** aftur til baka í betri vegum.
but they.NOM had.SBJV returned people.DAT this.DAT again to back in better roads
 'But they'd have returned this back again to people in better roads.'
- b. En **þetta** hefði skilast **fólki** aftur til baka í betri vegum ...
but this.NOM had.SBJV returned.ST people.DAT again to back in better roads
 'But this would've gotten returned back again to people in better roads ...'
 (http://www.althingi.is/altext/109/r_txt/4376-01.txt)

To account for this, Alexiadou et al. (to appear) propose that indirect object datives in Icelandic are assigned dative differently from both direct object datives in Icelandic and indirect object datives in German; specifically, they propose that indirect object datives in Icelandic are assigned dative inherently, such that the dative case cannot be manipulated by the Voice/v system.¹⁰ It should now be clear why this analysis cannot extend directly to Icelandic 'get' passives: it would involve some part of the Voice system making an indirect object dative into a nominative, to account for (15) above, but this possibility has just been ruled out to account for (19)–(21).

Moreover, we can show that direct object datives can actually stay dative in the 'get'-passive, again by looking at verbs which take two dative objects in the active form, such as *úthluta* 'allocate' in (22a). In the canonical passive, both datives remain dative, as illustrated in (22b). In the 'get'-passive, however, the recipient surfaces in the nominative, but the theme retains its dative case, as shown in (22c). (22d) illustrates a simplified version of the example in (20b) (to facilitate comparison of the case patterns across constructions).

- (22) a. Þeir úthlutuðu mér þessu.
they.NOM allocated me.DAT this.DAT
 ‘They allocated this to me.’ (active) DAT–DAT
- b. Mér var úthlutað þessu.
me.DAT was allocated.PASS this.DAT
 ‘I was allocated this.’ (‘be’-passive) DAT–DAT
- c. Ég fékk þessu úthlutað.
I.NOM got this.DAT allocated.PASS
 ‘I got this allocated to me.’ (‘get’-passive) NOM–DAT
- d. Mér úthlutaðist þetta.
me.DAT allocated.ST this.NOM
 ‘I got allocated this.’ (-*st* middle) DAT–NOM

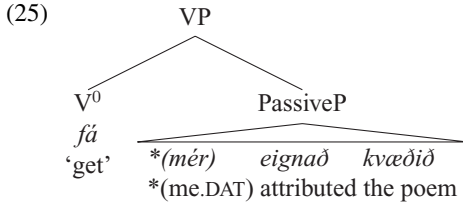
In order to maintain the analysis that the recipient and theme are merged in the same positions in (22a) and (22c), we would have to say that ‘get’ somehow absorbs indirect object datives but not direct object datives, while the anticausative middle in (18b)–(19b) absorbs direct object datives but not indirect object datives. This might be possible. However, there are at least two more arguments that the surface subject of RGP’s and the indirect object of the corresponding active are not merged in the same position.

First, ditransitive verbs with obligatory indirect objects, as in (23a), do not form ‘get’-passives, as shown in (23b).¹¹ The examples in (24a–b) show that *eigna* ‘attribute’ may be passivized, but only if the indirect object dative is retained. Taraldsen (1996:211) and Lødrup (1996:80) report the same facts for verbs with very different meanings in Norwegian, including *bebreide* ‘reproach’, *frata* ‘confiscate’, *nekte* ‘refuse’, and *pålegge* ‘impose on’; what these verbs share with Icelandic *eigna* ‘attribute’ is that their indirect object is obligatorily overt (and not any clear aspect of their meaning).

- (23) a. Þeir eignuðu *(mér) kvæðið.
they attributed me.DAT poem.the.ACC
 ‘They attributed the poem to me.’
- b. *Ég fékk kvæðið eignað.
I.NOM got poem.the.ACC attributed.PASS
 INTENDED: ‘I got the poem attributed to me.’
- (24) a. Mér var eignað kvæðið.
me.DAT was attributed.PASS poem.the.NOM
 ‘The poem was attributed to me.’
- b. *Kvæðið var eignað.
poem.the.NOM was attributed.PASS

If ‘get’-passives like (15b) above involved A-movement from the indirect object position of the passive verb, it should be able to do so in (23b). If the surface subject of (15b) is an argument of *fá*, (23b) is ungrammatical because the obligatory argument of *eigna* ‘attribute’ is not projected. That is,

the PassiveP is ungrammatical before *fá* 'get' is even merged, as schematized in (25).



In fact, as expected, given (25), 'get'-passives are possible under the causative reading if the dative is expressed overtly. For example, let's imagine we know a poet very well. However, we dislike or even hate her. We know about an unpublished poem by her, but no one else knows that she wrote it. After she dies, it gets very popular, and then we lie and say it was written by another poet (also dead). In this scenario, it is possible to say (26).¹²

- (26) Ég fékk kvæðið eignað öðru skáldi.
I.NOM got poem.the.ACC attributed.PASS another poet.DAT
 'I got the poem attributed to another poet.'

Thus, as long as the dative is expressed, the argument structure of *eigna* 'attribute' inside the PassiveP is satisfied, and a 'get'-passive is possible. However, since there is a distinct recipient expressed within the PassiveP, it has a causative reading.¹³

Second, certain ditransitives, in the passive, allow either the indirect object or direct object to move to the subject position, as shown in (27a) and (27b).

- (27) a. Konunginum voru gefnar ambáttir.
king.the.DAT was given.PASS.F.PL.NOM maid.servants.F.NOM
 'The king was given female slaves.'
- b. Ambáttin var gefin konunginum.
maid.servant.the.F.NOM was given.PASS.F.SG.NOM king.the.DAT
 'The female slave was given to the king.'
- (Zaenen, Maling & Thráinsson 1985:460)

If 'get'-passives simply involved A-movement with a distinct case-marking pattern, the recipient or theme should be able to move to the subject position; in fact, however, only the recipient may move there. In illustrating this, the expected pattern depends somewhat on one's analysis of case. However, no manipulation of case, word order, or agreement morphology results in a grammatical 'get'-passive sentence with the theme in the subject position.¹⁴

- (28) a. Nú skal konungur fá ambáttina gefna.
now shall king.NOM get maid.servant.the.F.ACC given.PASS.F.SG.ACC
 'Now the king will get given the female slave.'

- b. *Nú skal ambáttina fá {konungur} gefna
now shall servant.the.F.ACC get king.NOM given.PASS.F.SG.ACC
 {konungur}.
king.NOM
 INTENDED: ‘Now the servant will get given to the king.’
- c. *Nú skal ambáttin fá {konungur} gefin
now shall servant.the.F.NOM get king.NOM given.PASS.F.SG.NOM
 {konungur}.
king.NOM
- d. *Nú skal ambáttin fá {konunginum} gefin
now shall servant.the.F.NOM get king.the.DAT given.PASS.F.SG.NOM
 {konunginum}
king.the.DAT
- e. *Nú skal ambáttina fá {konunginum} gefna
now shall servant.the.F.ACC get king.the.DAT given.PASS.F.SG.ACC
 {konunginum}.
king.the.DAT

This would require an independent explanation if the nominative in (15b) were first-merged in the position of the dative in (15a), but follows from locality if the nominative is first-merged higher than the passive participle, as in (11) above. Locality conditions in a ditransitive structure can be devised such that either an indirect object or a theme can move to the subject position (see McGinnis 1998, Platzack 1999, Anagnostopoulou 2003, and Wood & H.Á. Sigurðsson to appear for distinct proposals), but such conditions cannot extend to the configuration in (11) to make the embedded theme able to move past the matrix external argument.¹⁵

Note that this second argument does not extend in the same way to the proposal in Taraldsen (2010), where in order for the verb to spell out as ‘get’, it must be the dative argument that moves, stranding its [DAT] feature through case peeling. However, the problem is that the peeling analysis of case has not, to our knowledge, been reconciled with the Icelandic facts showing that morphological case is in general dissociated from licensing position (see H.Á. Sigurðsson 2012a for recent discussion and references). For example, in the passive sentence in (27a) above, the dative indirect object A-moves to the subject position for (‘Case’-)-licensing without stranding any dative feature; the nominative stays low, without any need to move and peel off case layers. In order for the analysis in Taraldsen (2010) to extend profitably to explain the data in (28), we need an account of when movement peels off case layers, when it does not, and why.

In sum, case alternation patterns in Icelandic make it difficult to maintain that the derived subject of a RGP is derived by A-movement from the indirect object position. Moreover, RGPs of ditransitives which take direct and indirect object datives show that *fá* ‘get’ has no problem occurring with a dative DP. The facts strongly suggest that the theme is merged as the object of the embedded passive verb, while the recipient is merged as an argument of the matrix verb *fá* ‘get’. We provide further arguments

below that this is an external argument. First, however, we turn to a brief discussion of the CGP.

3. THE CAUSATIVE 'GET'-PASSIVE

As mentioned earlier, the causative 'get'-passive (CGP) also has the structure in (11) above. However, speakers vary somewhat as to which verbs may occur in the PassiveP complement of *fá* 'get'. All speakers we have talked to find *breytt* 'changed' acceptable. Some speakers find the verb *drepinn* 'killed' odd or ungrammatical, while others find it acceptable; an attested example with *drepinn* 'killed' is given in (29a). Further attested examples of the CGP are given in (29b–c).

- (29) a. svo hún fékk hann drepinn og fékk allan peninginn.
so she.NOM got him.ACC killed.PASS and got all money.the.ACC
 'so she had him killed and got all the money.'
 (<http://www.hugi.is/rokk/korkar/292405/kurt-cobain-drepinn/>)
- b. Kona fékk fyrrverandi eiginmann sinn dæmdan
woman.NOM got former husband.ACC REFL.POSS convicted.PASS
 fyrir nauðgun.
for rape
 'A woman got her former husband convicted of rape.'
 (http://www.mbl.is/frettir/innlent/2012/01/07/daemd_fyrir_ummaeli_a_frettavefsidu_og_facebook/)
- c. Ég fékk svo athugasemdina birta
I.NOM got then comment.the.ACC published.PASS
 á „felustað“ í blaðinu.
in hidden.place in paper.the
 'I then got the comment published in a "hidden place" in the paper.'
 (<http://stinastina.is/bersogli.html>)

The structural properties of the CGP are much like (if not identical to) those of the RGP discussed in the previous section. For example, direct object datives are preserved if the embedded verb assigns dative; (30c) is thus like (22c).

- (30) a. Ég breytti þessu.
I.NOM changed this.DAT
 'I changed this.'
- b. Þessu var breytt.
this.DAT was changed.PASS
 'This was changed.'
- c. Ég fékk þessu breytt.
I.NOM got this.DAT changed.PASS
 'I got this changed.'
 (H.Á. Sigurðsson 2012a:206)

If the verb assigns accusative in the active, then the object is accusative in the CGP; (31c) is thus like (15b).

- (31) a. Ég opnaði hurðina.
I.NOM opened door.the.ACC
 ‘I opened the door.’
- b. Hurðin var opnuð.
door.the.NOM was opened.PASS
 ‘The door was opened.’
- c. Ég fékk hurðina opnaða fyrir mig.
I.NOM got door.the.ACC opened.PASS for me
 ‘I got the door opened for me.’

As far as we have been able to tell, Icelandic seems to lack the so-called ‘adversity’ reading of ‘get’-passives seen cross-linguistically, such as English *I got my car stolen*, where the subject is not a cause or a recipient, but an adversely affected participant, or ‘maleficiary’. The sentence in (32) only has the odd, marginally available reading that the subject got someone to steal his/her own car. It does not have the most salient reading of the English sentence *I got my car stolen*, which is similar to ‘My car got stolen on me’.¹⁶

- (32) ??Ég fékk bílnum mínum stolið.
I.NOM got car.the my.DAT stolen.PASS
 ??‘I got someone to steal my car.’
 *‘My car got stolen on me.’

It is less clear how robustly Icelandic lacks a purely beneficiary interpretation of the subject of a ‘get’-passive. In most examples we have looked at, it seems to be absent. In (31c), for example, the subject is clearly an agent or causer, whereas its English counterpart can easily have a reading where the subject simply benefitted from the door opening. However, there are contexts which may involve a beneficiary reading, such as in the following example:

- (33) Mig hafði lengi grunað að Jón væri vondur maður.
me.ACC had long suspected that Jón was bad man
Ég fékk þann grun staðfestan
I.NOM got that suspicion.ACC confirmed
 þegar ég las viðbjóðslega grein hans um Sigurð.
when I read repulsive article his about Sigurður
 ‘I had always suspected that Jón was a bad man. I got that suspicion confirmed when I read his repulsive article about Sigurður.’

The characterization and source of the restrictions on beneficiary and maleficiary readings will have to be left for future work.¹⁷

It is worth pointing out that while many verbs strongly bias toward either a causative or a recipient reading, it is often possible to manipulate elements of the structure to bring out readings other than the most salient one. For example, *senda* ‘send’ can have a causative reading, especially if a different goal is named


within the participle, as in (34); see also the discussion surrounding example (26) above.

- (34) Við fengum loksins tilkynninguna senda
we.NOM got finally notice.the.F.ACC send.PASS.F.SG.ACC
 út til félagsmanna.
out to club.members
 'We finally got the notice sent out to club members.'

The biggest difference between the CGP and the RGP is their interpretation, as well as the fact that there is no argument of the active (such as an indirect object) which intuitively corresponds to the subject of the CGP. However, if the proposal in the previous section is on the right track, then the apparent correspondence between the indirect object of the active in (15a) and the subject of the 'get'-passive in (15b) is an illusion. The RGP is structurally just like a CGP, the difference being that the external argument is understood as a recipient. We discuss a possible explanation for this interpretive relation between the external argument of 'get' and the semantics of its PassiveP complement in Section 6.

4. THE ANTICAUSATIVE 'GET'-PASSIVE

In previous sections, we have proposed that the surface subject of recipient and causative *fá*-passives is externally merged as an argument of 'get'. In this section, we argue that the anticausative 'get'-passive (AGP) supports the claim that this argument is an external argument. Haegeman (1985) proposed that English *get*-passives as in (35b) were derived as unaccusative or anticausative variants of *get*-causatives such as (35a).

- (35) a. John got [Mary arrested].
 b. Mary_i got [_{t_i} arrested].


Icelandic AGPs will be shown to support this analysis, but only when supplemented with the claim that English *get*-passives are ambiguous (Brownlow 2011, Reed 2011, Alexiadou 2012), so that (35b) is not the only way to derive an English *get*-passive.

While most of the arguments we provided in Sections 2 and 3 show that the surface subject must be an argument of *fá* 'get', they do not necessarily show that this argument is an external argument. For English, it has been proposed that *get* is the unaccusative of *give* (Pesetsky 1995, Harley 2002; the structure given in Richards 2001:188 is much closer to the one we propose in Section 6). This is supported by the fact that it is difficult or impossible to passivize many uses of *get*; see Section 5 for further discussion of passives with *fá* 'get'. That *give* and *get* share structure is supported by shared idioms, such as *They gave me the boot* 'They fired me' and *I got*

the boot ‘I got fired’. In Icelandic as well, *gefa* ‘give’ and *fá* ‘get’ share idioms, such as in the following examples:

- (36) a. Sigurður gaf höggstað á sér þegar
Sigurður gave opening on REFL.DAT when
 hann neitaði að svara spurningum fundarmanna.
he refused to answer questions.the of.committee.members
 ‘Sigurður left himself vulnerable when he refused to answer committee members’ questions.’ (Sveinsson 1995:127)
- b. Fundarmenn fengu höggstað á Sigurði.
committee.members got opening on Sigurður.DAT
 ‘The committee members got an opening on Sigurður.’

The idea that English *get* is unaccusative, however, faces some challenges, including the fact that it can occur as a ditransitive (*He got me a present*) and that it can pass agentivity tests. Icelandic *fá* ‘get’ can be agentive as well, in simple transitive and even some RGP readings, as illustrated in (37a–b). It can also be ditransitive, as illustrated in (37c).¹⁸

- (37) a. Fá-ðu ókeypis aðstoð.
get-you free assistance.ACC
 ‘Get free assistance.’
- b. Ég fékk bókina lánaða
I.NOM got book.the.ACC loaned.PASS
 til þess að ég gæti klárað verkefnið.
for it that I can.PST.SBJV finish work.the
 ‘I got the book loaned to me so that I could finish the work.’
- c. Hún fékk sér öllara.
she.NOM got REFL.DAT beer.ACC
 ‘She got herself a beer.’ (adapted from Eythórsson 2008:187)

In Section 6, we will propose a structure which captures the intuition that ‘give’ and ‘get’ share structure, but in which ‘get’ does take a structural external argument (and is thus not unaccusative). In this section, we discuss the relevance of the AGP to this claim.

In (38), we see an alternation similar to (35) above, except that the *-st* clitic is added to the verb *fá* ‘get’ in (38b). (39) presents attested versions of these kinds of examples.

- (38) a. Ég fékk þessu breytt.
I.NOM got this.DAT changed.PASS
 ‘I got this changed.’
- b. Þessu fékkst ekki breytt.
this.DAT got.ST not changed.PASS
 ‘This didn’t get changed.’
- (39) a. Það var árið 1986 að nafni kennslugreinarinnar
it was year.the 1986 that name.DAT of.the.education.sector

fékkst breytt úr bókasafnsfræði í bókasafns- og
got.ST changed.PASS from library.science to library- and
 upplýsingafræði ...
information.science

'It was in 1986 that the name of the education sector got changed from library science to library and information science.'

(<http://listar.hi.is/pipermail/katalogos-l/2004-December/000400.html>)

- b. ... að ekki hafi fengist gerðar ýmsar kannanir.
that not have gotten.ST done.PASS various surveys.NOM
 'that several surveys didn't get done.' (mim.hi.is)
- c. ... slíkt fengist aldrei samþykkt af aðildarþjóðunum.
such.NOM got.SBJV.ST never approved.PASS by participating.nations.the
 'something like that would never get approved by the participating nations.'
 (mim.hi.is)

The *-st* clitic is also involved in deriving anticausatives from transitives, as shown in (40a–b).

- (40) a. Ég opnaði hurðina.
I.NOM opened door.the.ACC
 'I opened the door.'
- b. Hurðin opnaðist.
door.the.NOM opened.ST
 'The door opened.'

Dative case is assigned to *þessu* 'this' in (38) by the passive verb *breytt* 'changed', and is preserved under A-movement to the object position; this is just as in canonical ECM configurations, as illustrated in (41a). Eliminating the external argument with *-st* morphology for such verbs, as shown in (41b), has the same effect as in (38b), with the embedded argument moving to the matrix subject position.

- (41) a. Jón **taldi þeim** hafa verið fullnægt.
Jón.NOM believed them.DAT have been satisfied.PASS
 'Jón believed them to have been satisfied.'
- b. **Þeim taldist** hafa verið fullnægt.
them.DAT believed.ST have been satisfied.PASS
 'They were believed to have been satisfied.'

Dative case is preserved in (41b) in the same way that it is preserved in (38b).

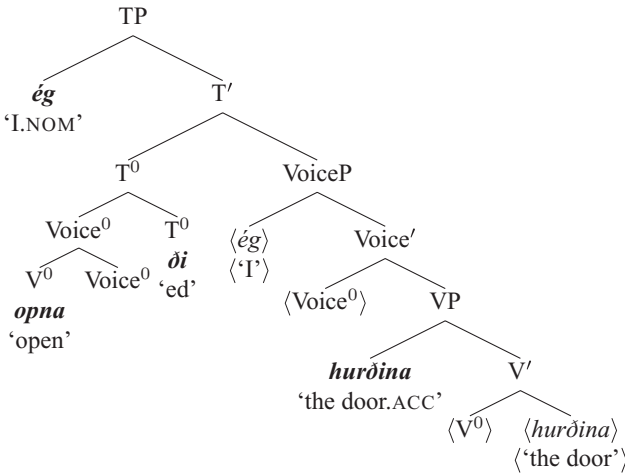
While it is true that *-st* morphology appears in a variety of syntactic configurations, the alternation such as in (38) is quite systematic, and clearly reflects the elimination of the external argument to derive a 'raising-to-subject' verb. As mentioned in the introduction, the same alternation can appear on RGPs as well.

- (42) a. María fékk bókina senda.
María.NOM got book.the.ACC sent.PASS
 'María got sent the book.'

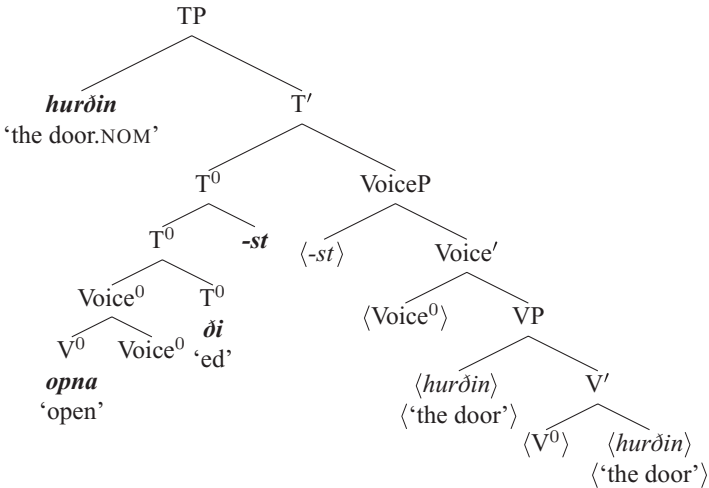
b. **Bókin fékkst ekki send.**
book.the.NOM got.ST not sent.PASS
 ‘The book didn’t get sent.’

Wood (2012), building on Julien (2007:226–232), Schäfer (2008) and H.Á. Sigurðsson (2012a), proposes that the *-st* clitic in anticausatives is a thematic expletive occupying the external argument position syntactically, which prevents an external argument role from being assigned. This is illustrated for the sentences in (40) above in the tree diagrams in (43) (which are again simplified to some extent).¹⁹

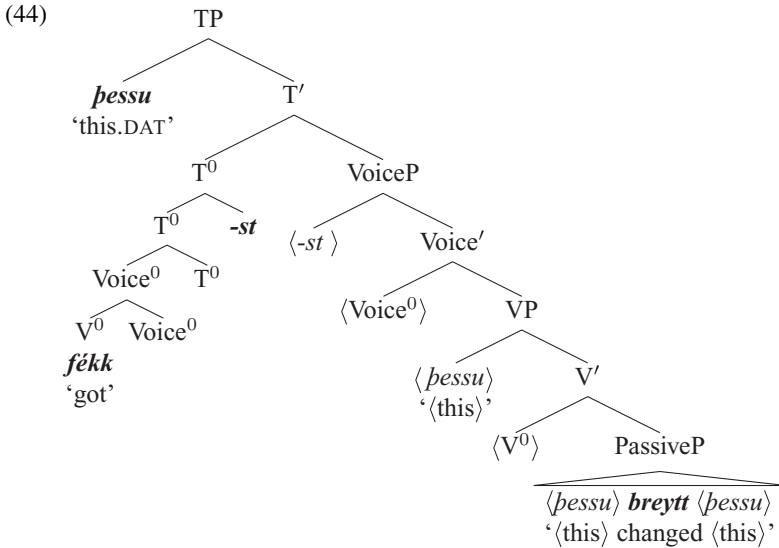
(43) a.



b.



Combining the analysis of RGP and CGP in the previous sections with this analysis of the *-st* clitic results in the structure in (12) above, repeated here in (44).



The dative case and *-st* morphology in (38b) straightforwardly supports the notion that intransitive ‘get’-passives can be derived as anticausatives of causative ‘get’-passives: *-st* appears in the absence of an external argument, and the dative case shows that the surface subject has A-moved from the complement of the participle, just as in Haegeman’s (1985) analysis.²⁰

Agentive ‘by’-phrases are possible in these constructions, but are, in many cases, better in the anticausative *fást*-passive than in the recipient or causative *fá*-passive; see, for example, (39c) above for an attested example. This seems to hold in English as well, again suggesting a relationship between the two constructions. Even in (45a), where a by-phrase is quite bad, the dative case on the theme shows unambiguously that we are dealing with a verbal passive, as will be discussed further below. Given this, the oddness of a ‘by’-phrase in the English CGP should not be taken as evidence against analyzing it as a verbal passive; rather, something about the interaction of the passive with the causative ‘get’ structure must be to blame; see also (46).

- (45) a. Ég fékk þessu breytt (??af kennaranum).
I.NOM got this.DAT changed.PASS by teacher.the
 ‘I got this changed by the teacher.’
 b. Þessu fékkst breytt af kennaranum.
this.DAT got.ST changed.PASS by teacher.the
 ‘This got changed by the teacher.’
- (46) a. Ég fékk manninn dæmdan af öllum fimm dómurum.
I.NOM got man.the.ACC convicted.PASS by all five judges.the
 ‘I got the man convicted by all five of the judges.’

- b. Maðurinn fékkst dæmdur af öllum fimm dómurinum.
man.the.NOM got.ST convicted.PASS by all five judges.the
 ‘The man got convicted by all five of the judges.’

However, thematic differences between Icelandic *fást*-passives and English *get*-passives are now in need of an explanation. For example, the surface subject of Icelandic *fást*-passives, unlike English *get*-passives, cannot be construed as an agent (examples adapted from McIntyre 2011).

- (47) a. Mary got fired on purpose.
 b. Mary got arrested by smoking weed.
- (48) a. María fékkst rekin (*viljandi).
María.NOM got.ST fired.PASS intentionally
 ‘María got fired (*intentionally).’
 b. *María fékkst handtekin með því að reykja gras.
María got.ST arrested with it to smoke weed
 INTENDED: ‘María got arrested by smoking weed.’

This can be explained by the proposal of Alexiadou (2012), who, drawing on work by Fox & Grodzinsky (1998), Reed (2011) and others, proposes that English *get*-passives are ambiguous (see also Brownlow 2011). They have a causative structure which embeds a null PRO, as in (49a), and a verbal and adjectival passive as in (49b) and (49c), respectively.²¹ She suggests in note 3 that the causative structure in (49a) might alternate with causative *get*-passives like *Samantha got John hurt*, but otherwise does not discuss the causative *get*-passive. Our proposal, of course, is that the causative *get*-passive is a variant of (49b) rather than (49a).

- (49) a. [Samantha_i got [_{CP/TP} PRO_i hurt]] (causative control)
 b. [Samantha_i got [_{PartP} hurt t_i by another cat]] (verbal passive)
 c. [Samantha_i got [_{PartP} t_i (very) hurt]] (adjectival passive)

The structure in (49a) allows the subject to be interpreted as an agent, as in (47). Here, Alexiadou (2012) is citing Lakoff (1971) and Lasnik & Fiengo (1974) for sentences like *I think that John deliberately got hit by that truck, don't you?*

While sentences of the sort in (49a) can have an agentive interpretation of the overt subject, Alexiadou (2012) notes that ‘get’-passives of the sort in (49b) tend to be judged unacceptable with purpose clauses and agentive adverbials identifying the implicit external argument, as in (50a). Reed (2011) and Alexiadou (2012) propose that this is not because they lack an implicit external argument; rather, it is because the *get* of *get*-passives is an achievement verb, and achievement verbs tend to be incompatible with agentive adverbials and purpose clauses; see (50b) below. Given the right context, adverbs and purpose clauses are, in fact, possible with *get*-passives,

as shown in (50c); the same goes for many achievement verbs, as in the example in (50d).

- (50) a. *The book got torn on purpose.
 b. *Mary deliberately won the race today.
 c. Professor A: Well, from what you're saying, that sounds like one long and boring meeting.
 Professor B: Yes, and what really irks me is what intentionally didn't get discussed just to preserve the illusion that we all agree.
 d. Secondly they deliberately won the world cup by maliciously playing better football than us.
 (http://webspaces.webring.com/people/lb/blackadderhomepage/specials_army_script.html)

This proposal, if correct, removes empirical barriers to the analysis of *get*-passives as involving a passive, verbal complement with an understood external argument. This is a welcome result, since the case-marking patterns in Icelandic indeed suggest that the complement is a verbal passive, as discussed further below.

At this point, we may note that Icelandic lacks the control structure in (49a). It cannot take a passive complement with a null subject and an agentive reading, as shown in (51) (where we test both nominative and accusative forms of the passive participle, given that we are testing a potential control structure; see H.Á. Sigurðsson 2008). We are not testing the *-st* version here since we have already shown that it cannot be an instance of the control structure in (49a).

- (51) *María fékk {rekin / rekna}.
María.NOM got fired.PASS.NOM fired.PASS.ACC

So far, then, we can explain the difference between English sentences like (47) and Icelandic sentences like (48) by appealing to the ambiguity of English *get*-passives which is not shared by Icelandic *fá(st)*-passives. Icelandic *fá* 'get' does not have the control structure in (49a), and *fást*-passives such as in (48) are anticausatives and would be expected to correspond to the structure in (49b). That is, Haegeman's (1985) analysis is not wrong, it just does not apply to all strings of *get* plus a passive participle in English.

However, we can show that Icelandic also does not allow adjectival passive complements as in (49c). One very clear way to tell the difference between adjectival passives and verbal passives in Icelandic is to use a verb which assigns dative (or genitive) case to its object. Verbal passives preserve this dative and use a non-agreeing passive participle (referred to as the 'default' form, which is 3rd person singular neuter), whereas adjectival passives do not preserve the dative and use a passive participle which agrees with the derived subject in case, number, and gender

(Benediktsson 1980:115–117; Þráinsson 1986:44, 1999:42; Friðjónsson 1987:79; H.Á. Sigurðsson 1989:334–335, 2011; Svenonius 2006).

- (52) a. Heiminum var ekki breytt (af hippunum).
world.the.DAT was not changed.PASS.DFLT by hippies.the
 ‘The world wasn’t changed (by the hippies).’ (verbal passive)
- b. Heimurinn var breyttur (*af hippunum).
world.the.M.NOM was changed.PASS.M.SG.NOM by hippies.the
 ‘The world was (in a) changed (state).’ (adjectival passive)

The contrast between (53) and (54) shows that only the verbal passive is possible as a complement of *fá(st)* ‘get’.

(53) *Adjectival passive*

- a. *Hipparnir fengu heiminn breyttan.
hippies.the.NOM got world.the.ACC changed.PASS.M.SG.ACC
- b. *Heimurinn fékkst breyttur.
world.the.NOM got.ST changed.PASS.M.SG.NOM

(54) *Verbal passive*

- a. Hipparnir fengu heiminum ekki breytt.
hippies.the.NOM got world.the.DAT not changed.PASS.DFLT
 ‘The hippies didn’t get the world changed.’
- b. Heiminum fékkst ekki breytt.
world.the.DAT got.ST not changed.PASS.DFLT
 ‘The world didn’t get changed.’

This is possibly related to the fact that Icelandic, again unlike English, does not allow adjectival complements of any kind, whether they are adjectival passives or not.²²

- (55) a. *Jón fékk mig reiðan.
Jón.NOM got me.ACC angry.M.ACC
- b. *Ég fékkst reiður.
I.NOM got.ST angry.M.NOM

Drawing on work by Doron (2003) and Alexiadou & Doron (2012), Alexiadou (2012) proposes that the difference between (49b) and (49c) above is not structural, but arises from the underspecified interpretation of a middle voice head, μ^0 , which can be either medio-passive, resulting in (49b), or anticausative, resulting in (49c); the verbal *be*-passive uses an entirely distinct passive voice head, π^0 . The choice between the two interpretations of μ^0 is governed by several factors, including an interaction between properties of the verbal root and the middle voice head μ^0 ; μ^0 attaches directly to the verbal root and determines this interaction. For example, she proposes that the passive interpretation becomes available when an ordinary, canonical passive is not available (either for a particular verb or for an entire language).²³

This analysis does not seem to be available for Icelandic *fást*-passives. First, Alexiadou (2012) proposes that the middle head attaches directly to the verbal root,

and that the root plus the μ^0 head spell out as the participle. In Icelandic, the morphology of the participle seems to suggest that more structure is present. In Distributed Morphology (adopted by Alexiadou 2012), a verb consists of a category-neutral root attached to a category-determining v^0 head (see Arad 2003, 2005 for a thorough overview). In Icelandic, in addition to the participle morpheme, there are overt realizations of the v head (including *-a*, *-ka*, and *-ga*, among others), as well as one or more agreement morphemes spelling out case, number and gender. The case, number and gender morphemes could conceivably be added post-syntactically (McFadden 2004, Bobaljik 2008), but overt instances of v suggest that participles are built on verbs rather than roots.²⁴ Second, the verb *fá* 'get' itself occurs in the anticausative middle form (i.e. with the *-st* clitic). It seems implausible to say that *fást* spells out a light verb in the context of a middle voice head, especially since it is the middle *-st* form on its own that seems to have the 'middle voice' properties Alexiadou discusses (see, for example, (56b) below). *Fást* 'get', unlike English *get*, is not a good candidate for the spellout of a middle voice light verb, since it is so restricted in its uses; in fact, the limited scope of *fást*+participle in comparison to *get*+participle is what makes it an especially useful probe into the possible structures of 'get'-passives, and the results of investigating its behavior seem to show that 'get'-passives can be generated separately from the middle voice structures discussed by Alexiadou (2012). Third, as mentioned above, the *fást*-passive does not have the adjectival passive ambiguity that English *get*-passives do; it only takes verbal passives as complements.

There are some reasons to think, however, that Alexiadou's main insight – that certain English *get*-passives share a structure with middle voice structures – is on the right track. This would explain the fact that some verbs occurring with the middle *-st* clitic, such as those in (56b), are naturally translated into reflexive *get*-passives in English. Such cases are reflexive in interpretation, not in morphology: *John gets dressed* is interpretively similar to *John dresses himself*. As shown in (56a), these roots cannot form 'get'-constructions in Icelandic. Note that all of the Icelandic examples (56a) involve adjectival passive participles except for *vanur* 'used to', which is a simple adjective sharing a root with the verb; note also that several cases correspond to English participles that do not form active verbs at all (with the same meaning) (e.g. *get engaged*, *get used to it*).

- (56) a. *Ég fékkst {klæddur / meiddur / giftur / trúlofaður / vanur því}.
 I.NOM got.ST dressed hurt married engaged used.to it
 b. Ég {klæddist / meiddist / giftist / trúlofaðist / vandist því}.
 I.NOM dressed.ST hurt.ST married.ST engaged.ST used.to.ST it
 'I {got dressed / got hurt / got married / got engaged / got used to it}.'

This supports Alexiadou's view that English *get* is a semi-lexical verb which, in English, can spell out structures that other languages spell out with the middle voice

morphology. Crucially, however, the overall picture seems to suggest that there exist verbal *get*-passives which are structurally distinct from middles.

The simplest analysis of the Icelandic *fást*-passive is that it is the anticausative of the causative or recipient *fá*-passive: it involves merging *-st* in the external argument position (preventing an external argument from merging there), thus prompting the promotion of the internal argument of the passive verb to the subject position. For this account to go through, we must accept that the surface subject of RGP and CGP originates as an external argument of *fá* ‘get’. This analysis suggests that in English, too, an AGP derivation should be among the legitimate *get*+participle constructions. That is, the Haegeman analysis was correct, but only for a subset of English *get*-passives. In the next section, we address a question that arises under the proposal that the surface subject of RGP and CGP originates as an external argument: can ‘get’ be passivized in such structures, and if not, why not?

5. PASSIVES AND THE ‘NEW IMPERSONAL PASSIVE’

The appearance of *-st* in sentences like (38b) supports the analysis of RGP and CGP as involving an external argument, since it is the external argument that is removed by *-st* in causative alternations. What remains unexplained is why it is impossible (or highly degraded) to form a personal passive, as in (57).

- (57) ?*Bókin var fengin send.
book.the.F.NOM was gotten.PASS.F.SG.NOM sent.PASS.F.SG.NOM

In this section, we note that (i) this is not limited to ‘get’-passives, (ii) there is some variation in the acceptability of examples like (57), and (iii) there are other constructions which do suggest an external argument for RGP and CGP.

Turning to the first point, the problem of passivization seems to be a general one for ECM verbs with very small complements. For example, the verbs *help*, *let*, *have*, *see*, and *hear* resist passivization with bare infinitive (possibly VoiceP-sized) complements.

- (58) a. I helped him attack his friend.
 b. *He was helped attack his friend
- (59) a. I let him attack his friend.
 b. *He was let attack his friend.
- (60) a. I had him attack his friend.
 b. *He was had attack his friend.
- (61) a. I saw him attack his friend.
 b. *He was seen attack his friend.

- (62) a. I heard him attack his friend.
 b. *He was heard attack his friend.

These verbs (with the notable exception of *have*, which, however, may passivize in idioms such as *A good time was had by all*) generally allow passivization in other contexts, often with similar meanings and/or similar θ -roles assigned to their subjects, so something other than the base-generated position of the subject is presumably at issue.²⁵

- (63) a. He was helped by his mother.
 b. He was let into the club by the bouncer.
 c. He was seen by everyone.
 d. He was heard by everyone.

Second, there is variation in the acceptability of passives of 'get'-passives. In mainland Scandinavian languages, -s passives are possible on *fá* 'get'-passives (though not analytic 'be/become'-passives).²⁶

- (64) a. Per **fár** utbetalt **peng**er/pengene i kassen. (Norwegian)
Per gets paid money/money.the in register
 'Per gets paid out money/the money at the cash register.' (Lødrup 1996:87)
 b. **Penger fás** utbetalt i kassen. (Norwegian)
money gets.PASS paid in register
 'Money gets paid out at the cash register.' (Lødrup 1996:83)

Halldór Sigurðsson (p.c.) responded to (57) by saying that it was not necessarily fully out for him. He provided the following example:

- (65) **Bókin fékkst ekki keypt í Reykjavík og þess vegna**
book.the.NOM got.ST not bought in Reykjavík and for this reason
var hún fengin send með skipi frá Kaupmannahöfn.
was it.NOM gotten.PASS sent.PASS by ship from Copenhagen.
 'The book didn't get bought in Reykjavík and for this reason, it was gotten sent by ship from Copenhagen.'

Not all Icelandic speakers agree on the judgment of this example. However, in English too, there turns out to be speaker variation; there are attested examples, such as those in (66), which improve in acceptability quite a bit, especially when *be* is itself in the perfect participle form.

- (66) a. In the past 50 years, no student had died in a fire but in the past 20 we know how many have been gotten killed in school shootings.

(<http://www.newswest9.com/story/14925643/school-shooting-training-at-misd?clienttype=printable>)

- b. The thing is, if the 17 year old had been gotten killed by someone speeding and texting everyone would be crying on his facebook saying that the driver deserves the death penalty or something.
(<http://facepunch.com/showthread.php?t=1175959&page=4>)
- c. Sorry to say this, but religion has been and always will be a source of business to get money. In the medieval times, you would have been gotten killed if you didn't want to get turned to god's side, now the situation is gladly different.
(<http://forum.esforces.com/archive/index.php/t-68971.html>)
- d. it's not that i don't trust guys but i've just been gotten hurt so many times, that i think i kinda give up with guys.
(http://nutsyriri.blogspot.com/2011/05/girl-just-speak_22.html)

Since these are examples from the web, some caution is of course warranted; however, what is striking about these examples is that for the second author and a number of other English speakers we have consulted, they are surprisingly natural. Other speakers judge them as unacceptable. This kind of variation suggests that we do not want to analyze 'get'-passives in a way that rules out 'double passives' in principle; whatever is responsible for the general unacceptability of passives with sentences such as in (58)–(62) above could be behind the frequent unacceptability of passivizing CGPs and RGPs. Note that some of the paradigms in (58)–(62) are also subject to speaker variation; in particular, according to Johnson (2011), examples like (61b) are acceptable in his Appalachian English.

Third, it is possible to form a 'New Impersonal Passive' (NIP) of the RGP/CGP, as shown in (67b).²⁷ The NIP is a recent syntactic innovation of modern Icelandic (though see H.Á. Sigurðsson 2011:153 fn. 5 for some skepticism of its recency) in which a passive-like construction has several clustering properties distinguishing it from canonical passives, such as lack of A-movement to subject position even for definite pronominal DPs (often resulting in a first-position expletive *það*), preservation of structural accusative case, and lack of agreement on the participle. (The percentage sign indicates speaker variation.)

- (67) a. %Það var kosið hana í gær.
EXPL was elected.PASS.DFLT/PRF her.ACC yesterday
'She was elected yesterday.' (H.Á. Sigurðsson 1989:355)
- b. %Það var fengið bókina senda í pósti.
EXPL was gotten.PASS.DFLT/PRF book.the.ACC sent.PASS in mail
'People got the book sent in the mail.'

According to one line of analysis, the NIP is not really a passive construction at all, in the sense that there is a syntactically active null *pro* argument (Sigurjónsdóttir & Maling 2001; Maling & Sigurjónsdóttir 2002, 2013, in press; Maling 2006). If this is correct, then the NIP facts do not say anything about the present proposal one way or another. However, H.Á. Sigurðsson (2011) and E.F. Sigurðsson (2012) propose that

this null argument is generated as a syntactic external argument as part of the Voice system, which, if correct, would support the present analysis of RGPs and CGPs in the same way that *-st* morphology does (see also Ingason, Legate & Yang 2012 and Schäfer to appear).²⁸ According to another line of analysis, there is no null argument in the NIP, the idea being that the NIP is just like canonical passives in this respect (Eythórsson 2008, Jónsson 2009). If so, then (67b) still supports the present analysis, since it shows that passivization is possible in principle (as expected if there is an external argument), and that it is (57) that is in need of an independent explanation. For now, we will leave (57) unexplained and note that for a variety of analyses of the NIP, (67b) supports the present analysis of *fá* 'get' as taking an external argument.

In sum, there are three reasons that (57) does not undermine the analysis of RGPs and CGPs as taking an external argument. First, there are other ECM constructions with external arguments that do not allow passives. Second, there is variation in the acceptability of passivizing recipient and causative 'get'-passives. Third, there are other constructions, including anticausative 'get'-passives and the NIP (under at least two analyses), which support the external-argument analysis.

6. WHAT IS 'GET'?

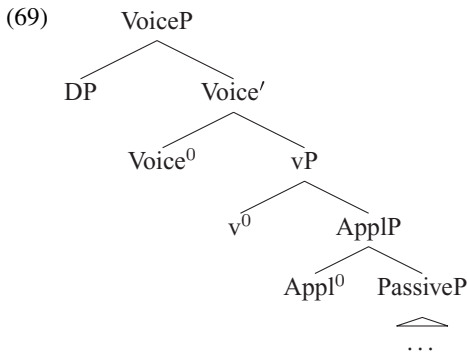
The analysis presented so far has treated *fá* 'get' as a lexical verb that can take a passive verb phrase complement. This, however, would be a rather exceptional property for a lexical verb. In addition, it has trouble explaining the fact that idioms are shared by 'get' and 'give', as discussed in Section 4 (see the examples in (36)). It also treats as an accident the fact that 'get', cross-linguistically, has similar multiple uses; it is presumably these multiple uses which at least in part lead us to translate verbs like *fá* as 'get' (rather than 'receive', etc.). The uses of *fá* 'get' in (68) all have analogues in English, for example. (The labels used here are informal.)²⁹

- (68) a. Ég fékk {bréf / gjöf / verðlaun}.
I.NOM got letter.ACC gift.ACC prize.ACC
 'I got a letter/gift/prize.' (come to have – concrete)
- b. Ég fékk {leiðbeiningar / hjálp / leyfi}.
I.NOM got instructions.ACC help.ACC permission.ACC
 'I got instructions/help/permission.' (come to have – abstract)
- c. Ég fékk að vera úti allan daginn.
I.NOM got to be outside all day
 'I got to be outside all day.' ('benefactive' infinitive)
- d. Anna fékk Ólaf til að tala.
Anna.NOM got Ólafur.ACC for to talk
 'Anna got Ólafur to talk.' (causative infinitive)

This range of uses suggests that *fá* 'get' should be treated as a semi-lexical light verb. Within the framework of Distributed Morphology, this means that it

is the spellout of a little *v* head in some context, rather than the spellout of a root attached to a little *v* head. Drawing in part on the work of Freeze (1992) on possessive ‘have’, an influential proposal by Kayne (1993) argues that various uses of ‘have’ verbs cross-linguistically are derived by the assumption that the verb ‘have’ is the spellout of a verb like ‘be’ with an incorporated determiner or preposition.³⁰ Taraldsen (1996, 2010) has extended this idea to Scandinavian ‘get’, proposing that it spells out a functional complex including a light verb ‘become’ and a preposition or applicative head.³¹ Here, we will propose, like Taraldsen (2010), that the surface subjects of (transitive) ‘get’-passives are thematic arguments of an Appl(icative)⁰ head in the sense of Pykkänen (2002, 2008), Cuervo (2003) and Schäfer (2008), among others. Unlike Taraldsen, however, we take this to be essentially a ‘high’ Appl⁰ in the ‘get’-passive construction, one which takes the PassiveP as its complement directly.

The proposal is as follows. Paying attention only to the functional structure, and ignoring lexical roots, the syntactic structure for both the CGP and RGP is as in (69). Here, Appl⁰, *v*⁰ and Voice⁰ form a morphosyntactically complex head, and one of the terminals will spell out as ‘get’ in this context (see Svenonius 2012 and H.Á. Sigurðsson 2012b:379 for related alternatives).



When this structure is interpreted, *v*⁰ introduces the eventive interpretation; following Reed (2011) and Alexiadou (2012), the relevant ‘flavor’ of *v* will be/yield a causative achievement verb. Appl⁰ may introduce an applied θ -role, the interpretation of which is determined on the basis of the PassiveP complement. Voice⁰ may introduce an agent role, or may be semantically null. When Appl⁰ and Voice⁰ both introduce a role, the result will be an interpretation where the external argument is both the agent of the causing event, and the bearer of the applied role. This is the case for sentences like (37b), repeated in (70), where the purpose clause shows that the recipient is also understood as an agent.

- (70) Ég fékk bókina lánaða
I.NOM got book.the.ACC loaned.PASS
 til þess að ég gæti klárað verkefnið.
for it that I could finish job.the
 'I got the book loaned to me so that I could finish the assignment.'

When only Appl⁰ introduces a role, the interpretation will be that the subject in SpecVoiceP bears only the applied role, and is not an agent. This is the case for pure recipient readings of sentences like (1c), repeated in (71).

- (71) María fékk bókina senda.
María.NOM got book.the.ACC sent.PASS
 'María got the book sent to her.'

The most salient reading of (71) is that María is just a recipient, and not an agent (though some speakers do find the agentive reading natural). When Appl⁰ introduces a beneficiary role and Voice⁰ introduces an agent role, the result is the causative reading: the subject in SpecVoiceP is understood as the agent of the causing event, but also a beneficiary of the caused event. This is the case for causative readings with no recipient such as (5b), repeated in (72).

- (72) Ég fékk þessu breytt.
I.NOM got this.DAT changed.PASS.DFLT
 'I got this changed.' (H.Á. Sigurðsson 2012a:206)

In this analysis, the puzzle mentioned in Section 3, namely why Icelandic is so restrictive in the availability of the non-agentive beneficiary/maleficiary reading, amounts to the question: Why does Voice⁰ have difficulty being semantically null when the applied role is benefactive/malefactive?³² Finally, in the anticausative, when *-st* is in SpecVoiceP, neither Voice⁰ nor Appl⁰ introduces a role, since there is no DP to bear it. This is not possible when a full DP occupies SpecVoiceP because something has to integrate the interpretation of that DP into the interpretation of the structure.³³

We turn now to some consequences of implicating a high Appl⁰ in the analysis of RGP and CGP. First, Appl⁰ generally has the property that the thematic role it introduces is a relation dependent on the properties of the complement. High Appl, for example, often introduces beneficiaries or maleficiaries in transitive sentences. Very often, however, the applied argument is construed as a possessor if possible.

- (73) a. Der Arzt reinigte **dem Patienten** die Wunde. (German)
the doctor cleaned the.DAT patient the wound
 'The doctor cleaned the patient's wound for him/her.'
 b. Er hat **seiner Mutter** der Brille zertreten. (German)
he has his.DAT mother the glasses stepped.on
 'He stepped on his mother's glasses on her.'
 (Tungseth 2007a:195)

In (73a), the applied dative is a beneficiary as well as a possessor of the wound, and in (73b) the applied dative is the possessor of the glasses as well as the maleficiary. This is exactly what has been reported for recipient ‘get’-passives and causative ‘get’-passives. In (74b), the nominative subject is the possessor of the eyes as well as the beneficiary.

- (74) a. Ich habe **dem Kind** die Seife aus den Augen gewaschen.
I.NOM have the.DAT child the.ACC soap out the eyes washed
 ‘I washed the soap out of the child’s eyes.’ (German)
- b. **Das Kind** kriegt die Seife aus den Augen gewaschen.
the.NOM child gets the.ACC soap out the eyes washed
 ‘The child gets the soap washed out of his eyes.’ (German)
- (Cook 2006:177)

In Cook’s (2006) LFG analysis, such ‘free datives’ are added via an argument structure operation in the lexicon. She takes it to support her analysis in that the embedded lexical item must be adjusted in order to match and fuse with the argument structure of ‘get’, since ‘get’ needs a beneficiary. In the present proposal, if the analysis of Icelandic extends to German, the element used to add the extra dative in (74a) is present in (74b), so it is expected to share thematic properties across constructions.³⁴

Second, high Appl does not combine well with unergatives. Thus, it is ungrammatical to add an applied dative to an unergative intransitive as in (75a). This also holds for ‘get’-passives, which are not acceptable with plain impersonal passives of unergatives.

- (75) a. *Er hat seiner Schwester gelachen. (German)
he has his.DAT sister laughed
 INTENDED: ‘He has laughed for/on his sister.’ (Tungseth 2007a:197)
- b. *Ég fékk dansað. (Icelandic)
I.NOM got danced
 INTENDED: ‘I caused there to be dancing.’

Note that the complement of Appl⁰ need not always have a structural thematic object; that is, the ungrammaticality of (75b) cannot be attributed to the need for the embedded verb to take an overt object. This is shown by verbs where, as Lødrup (1996:85) points out for Norwegian, ‘an implicit object is enough to get the passive interpretation’. Lødrup (1996) gives (76) as an example:

- (76) Når får vi servert? (Norwegian)
when get we served
 ‘When do we get served?’ (Lødrup 1996:85)

The same holds in Icelandic, where a very common example is with the verb *borga* ‘pay’; note that while the implicit object of (77a) can be mentioned explicitly, as in (77b), it does not seem to be syntactically active, in that the participle takes the

default agreement form rather than an agreement form betraying the properties of the implied object. (See Wiese & Maling (2005) for relevant phenomena.) Note that the recipient of the verb *borga* 'pay' can be an applied indirect object, as in (77c), but that the theme is optional here as well.

- (77) a. Ég fékk borgað.
I got paid.PASS.DFLT
 'I got paid.'
- b. Ég fékk peningana borgaða.
I got money.the.M.PL.ACC paid.PASS.M.PL.ACC
 'I got the money paid to me.'
- c. Hann borgaði mér (peningana).
he.NOM paid me.DAT money.the.ACC
 'He paid me (the money).'

The data in (77) show that the explanation for (75b) cannot have anything to do with some requirement for overt syntactic transitivity. Instead, it seems to amount to the evaluation metric of Appl^0 on its complement: for some reason, Appl^0 is not able to add an applied role to unergatives, and this holds in (75a) as well as (75b); for *borgað* 'paid', on the other hand, the semantics of PassiveP makes it straightforward for Appl^0 to be interpreted as introducing a recipient role.

In this section, we have proposed that Icelandic *fá* 'get' is a semi-lexical light verb, a complex predicate which consists of a Voice^0 head, a v^0 head, and an Appl^0 head. The v^0 head introduces eventive semantics (making 'get' a causative achievement verb). The fact that 'get' and 'give' can share idioms stems from the presence of Appl^0 in both. Moreover, at least two aspects of 'get'-passives can be explained on the hypothesis that they involve an Appl^0 head attached directly to the PassiveP complement. Like with high applicatives, there is a strong bias toward a possessive/recipient interpretation and attachment to unergative activities is ungrammatical. The fact that a recipient is not always entailed, as in the CGP, suggests that this bias, rather than a low applicative structure, is responsible for recipient semantics in RGP. However, we presented in previous sections evidence that the argument of 'get' is an external argument. This is explained by taking Voice^0 to be present to introduce the external argument syntactically and add the possibility of an agentive interpretation for the subject as well. The properties of 'get'-constructions thus emerge from the interaction of independently-needed functional elements, rather than from stipulated properties of a lexical verb.

7. SUMMARY

In this article, we have used the following two properties of the Icelandic case-marking system to probe the structure of 'get'-passives: (i) dative objects remain

dative in the verbal passive, but not the adjectival passive; and (ii) indirect object datives do not become nominative under middle *-st* morphology, while direct object datives do (see especially (20) above). The first property shows that Icelandic ‘get’-passives are verbal passives and the second raises difficulties for the possibility of analyzing ‘get’-passives as involving A-movement from an indirect object position. We provided further support for the view that the nominative subject of RGP and CGP is an argument of ‘get’. The availability of the ‘New Impersonal Passive’, under some analyses, further suggests that the nominative is an external argument. The appearance of the *-st* clitic on AGPs supports the external argument analysis as well, and moreover supports the analysis of intransitive ‘get’-passives as unaccusatives of transitive ‘get’-passives (provided we accept that English *get*-passives are ambiguous, so that this is not the only analysis of them). Finally, we provided an outline of how the present analysis might be linked to a decompositional view of verbs like ‘get’ which treats them as semi-lexical light verbs consisting of several functional heads which form complex predicates in the semantics.

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NOTES

1. When referring generally to verbs glossed as ‘get’, we write ‘get’ in single quotation marks; when referring to a particular word in a particular language, we write that word in italics.
2. The glosses in this article use the following abbreviations: ACC = ‘accusative’, DAT = ‘dative’, DFLT = ‘default form’, EXPL = ‘expletive’, F = ‘feminine’, M = ‘masculine’, N = ‘neuter’, NOM = ‘nominative’, PASS = ‘passive participle’, PL = ‘plural’, POSS = ‘possessive’, PRF = ‘perfect participle’, PST = ‘past’, REFL = ‘reflexive’, SBJV = ‘subjunctive’, SG = ‘singular’, ST = ‘middle *-st* clitic’.
3. See Wood (2012) for arguments that *-st* is a clitic, a view also taken by Kissonock (1997), Svenonius (2006), Julien (2007:226–232), and H.Á. Sigurðsson (2012a:217 fn. 38). For a different view, see Andrews (1982, 1990), Ottósson (1986) and Anderson (1990).

4. The movement to the left of the passive participle in recipient, causative and anticausative 'get'-passives is subject to general A-movement properties in Icelandic, so the object may stay low if it is, for example, indefinite or in some cases heavy (see E.F. Sigurðsson 2012:24–25). Exceptions to the generalization that objects of MGPs occur to the right of the participle tend to have an archaic or poetic flavor to them. An example is given in (i) from lyrics for the song *Gúanóstelpan* by the artist Mugison (with Rúna Esradóttir and Ragnar Kjartansson):

(i) Þarna fékk ég þig kysst.
there got I.NOM you.ACC kissed.PROF
 'That's where I finally got to kiss you.'

5. For attested examples taken from internet searches, we cite the URL under the example. Examples which say 'mim.hi.is' are taken from searches of the tagged corpus at <http://mim.hi.is>.
6. See Lundin (2003) for a similar analysis of Swedish. In our tree structures, we adopt the following notational conventions. Silent copies or occurrences of moved elements are notated with angle brackets '()'. Heads are marked as X^0 , maximal projections as XP, and intermediate projections as X'. The pronounced locations of terminals are in boldface. While the structures we present are somewhat conservative from the perspective of minimalist phrase structure, this is for expositional clarity only; as far as we know, these structures are completely compatible with standard assumptions within the Minimalist Program (Chomsky 1995, 2001, 2007, 2008, paper published online 6 January 2013). We continue to assume that verb positioning is derived by head-movement, but remain agnostic as to which is the best of the available solutions to the problem that head-movement does not obey the Extension Condition (Marantz 1995:361); see Matushansky (2006) and Roberts (2010) for some discussion.
7. Note that *-st* will cliticize to the right of the lexical verb, wherever the lexical verb should end up; in perfective contexts, *-st* ends up to the right of the participle; see examples (21b) and (39b). It can also, however, end up to the right of a weak subject pronoun in imperative contexts in non-standard varieties of Icelandic. See Wood (2012:102–115) for further discussion of the analysis of the *-st* clitic.
8. There has been a long-standing debate regarding the question of whether 'get'-passives such as in (14b) involve movement from an indirect object position, usually within the context of trying to understand the nature of 'inherent case'; see Anagnostopoulou (2003:71) as well as Alexiadou et al. (to appear) for further references. Here we will focus primarily on the variant of the movement analysis presented in Alexiadou et al. (to appear).
9. Anticausatives of ditransitives such as (19b) are somewhat difficult to translate into English; we translate them here as *get*-passives of ditransitives, but this is not a perfect translation. According to Florian Schäfer (p.c.), there exist similar examples in German, with the anticausative marked with *sich*.
- (i) a. Sie boten mir die Gelegenheit.
they offered me.DAT the opportunity
 'They offered me the opportunity.'
- b. Mir bot sich die Gelegenheit.
me.DAT offered REFL the opportunity
 'I got the opportunity.'

German evidently does not have same sort of dative direct objects that Icelandic has, so the contrast is not exactly the same (see McFadden 2004, who argues that dative objects in German are either concealed PPs or indirect objects; see Maling 2001 on some relevant differences between Icelandic and German dative objects). In the text, we take the term ‘indirect object’ to refer to objects introduced by an Appl(icative) head (in the sense of Pylkkänen 2002, 2008). Icelandic may also have some dative objects which are concealed PPs (Wood 2012:304–305). The claim that direct object datives are not preserved under anticausative *-st* is intended to cover direct arguments of the verb, such as those that may correspond to the genitive argument of a nominalization.

10. It is worth emphasizing that the facts discussed in this article were not available to Alexiadou et al. (to appear).
11. Note that unlike for most uses of English *give* (with the exception of examples like *John didn't give a damn/an explanation*, as Joan Maling reminds us), the indirect object is not obligatory for Icelandic *gefa* ‘give’ (Thráinsson 1999:145). Lødrup (1996) uses such verbs to make the same argument that we are making here. Taraldsen (1996:211) provides one Norwegian verb, *tilsende* ‘send’, which is claimed to have an obligatory indirect object but still allow the RGP. However, the status of this verb is unclear; Terje Lohndal (p.c.) points out that for many speakers, it only occurs in the passive, a fact noted by Lødrup (1996:81), who did not take *tilsende* ‘send’ to be a problem for the view (defended here) that the surface subject was an argument of ‘get’. A reviewer points out that Norwegian ‘get’-passives with *tilsende* ‘send’ often contain an overt reflexive:

- (i) Anna_i fekk boka tilsendt (seg_i).
Anna got book.the sent REFL
 ‘Anna got the book sent to her.’

One possibility is that *tilsende* ‘send’ may exceptionally license a null reflexive, a possibility that would have to be severely constrained to prevent it from extending to other verbs with an obligatory indirect object; at any rate, *tilsende* ‘send’ should arguably be treated as the exception, rather than the rule. Taraldsen’s (1996:223–226) account, which takes the subject to originate within the participle, involves a transderivational economy condition preventing the derivation of ‘get’-passives with *tilsende* ‘send’ from applying to other verbs.

12. Thanks to Hlíf Árnadóttir for discussing this with us.
13. A reviewer suggests that (26) seems like an instance of the agentive, ‘manage’ reading discussed in the introduction. In fact, however, word order and interpretation suggest that this is a CGP. The ‘manage’ reading entails that the agent of ‘get’ is the agent of the participle, but the sentence in (26) does not entail the sentence *Ég eignaði kvæðið öðru skáldi* ‘I attributed the poem to another poet’. The reading in (26) is that the speaker caused the poem to be attributed to another poet by creating a community consensus that another poet wrote the poem.
14. Here, we use curly brackets { } to indicate a choice of multiple possible positions; the examples in (28b–e) are ungrammatical no matter which position is chosen. The only way to come close to passivizing the theme would be to use a *fást*-passive (AGP) as in (i), which is derived from a causative example such as (ii) (see example 26 in the main text).

- (i) Ambáttin fékkst gefin konunginum.
maid.servant.the.F.NOM got.ST given.PASS.F.SG.NOM king.the.DAT
 ‘The female slave got given to the king.’

- (ii) Hann fékk ambáttina gefna konunginum.
he.NOM got maid.servant.the.F.ACC given.PASS.F.SG.ACC king.the.DAT
 'He got the female slave given to the king.'

15. For Postal (2004:243), English *get*-passives of ditransitives are apparently impossible. He cites *Mike got sold the books*, *Mike got told several stories*, and *Nobody wants to get sent threatening letters* as ungrammatical; in the judgment of the second author, and several other native English speakers we have consulted, these are all basically fine, and the third in particular is perfect. Web searches also reveal plenty of *get*-passives of ditransitives, such as the following, which are also perfectly natural to the second author:

- (i) I disagree with that and still liken it to the idea, that if 10% of customers don't know they got sold a bad car or even defrauded, it still matters.
 (<http://www.dslreports.com/forum/remark,21519155>)
- (ii) yeah I heard on the news that 14 people got sold the book on like Tuesday or something. But some judge ordered them to not leak any details.
 (http://forums.majorleaguegaming.com/topic/12841-harry-potter-the-half-blood-prince/page__st_40)
- (iii) The shoe Gods must be smiling on me because I just got given the book I'd been lusting after.
 (<http://crazychicblog.tumblr.com/post/22184990104/the-shoe-gods-must-be-smiling-on-me-because-i-just>)
- (iv) I also got told several stories of fellow bus drivers who have done way worse to buses, including one who bent an entire front fender off a brand new bus while backing.
 (http://talesofaschoolbusdriver.blogspot.com/2008_09_01_archive.html)
- (v) I've had a couple of sites in the past that used trademarked names and I got sent threatening letters from their attorneys.
 (<http://www.warriorforum.com/warrior-special-offers-forum/532728-2000-sold-earn-100-300-per-site-crush-other-affiliates-easily-proof-inside-5.html>)

However, Neil Myler (p.c.), who accepts sentences like *Several books were given him by the teacher*, agrees with Postal's judgment that sentences like **Several books got given him by the teacher* are impossible. Further examples provided by Neil Myler are shown in (vi). The ungrammaticality of such examples is expected on the present proposal, since sentences like (vi) would be derived as the anticausatives of sentences like (vii), which are also ungrammatical.

- (vi) a. *Threatening letters got sent him.
 b. *A crappy present got given him.
 c. *A cursed ring got passed me.
- (vii) a. *They got threatening letters sent him.
 b. *They got a crappy present given him.
 c. *They got a cursed ring passed me.

16. See Bosse & Bruening (2011) on this use of the preposition *on* in English.

17. Given the analysis proposed in Section 6, it is tempting to connect the restrictions on the beneficiary/maleficiary reading to the supposed paucity of beneficiaries/maleficiaries in Icelandic, even in comparison to English, but also in comparison to Faroese and other

Scandinavian languages (Tungseth 2007a). For example, it is often not easy in Icelandic to add an indirect object beneficiary to a creation verb such as *prjóna* ‘knit’, unlike in English and many other languages, unless the beneficiary is coreferent with the subject (see also Holmberg & Platzack 1995:202).

- (i) a. **Amma prjónaði Ólafi nýja peysu.*
Grandma.NOM knitted Ólafur.DAT new sweater.ACC
 INTENDED: ‘Grandma knitted Ólafur a new sweater.’
- b. **Amma prjónaði honum nýja peysu.*
Grandma.NOM knitted him.DAT new sweater.ACC
 INTENDED: ‘Grandma knitted him a new sweater.’
- c. *Amma prjónaði sér nýja peysu.*
Grandma.NOM knitted REFL.DAT new sweater.ACC
 ‘Grandma knitted herself a new sweater.’

(Tungseth 2007a:199–200)

However, some caution is in order here, since Icelandic does have some beneficiary and maleficiary indirect objects, and not just with a subset of those available in English and the Scandinavian languages, as pointed out by Maling (2002a, b); see Wood (2012:231–233) for further discussion. Moreover, a reviewer points out that this cannot be the whole story, since there are varieties of Mainland Scandinavian that have verbs that behave like (17) in the main text but which do allow the beneficiary/maleficiary reading for ‘get’-passives. This is shown for Norwegian in (ii).

- (ii) a. *Eg baka meg ei kake.*
I baked myself a cake
- b. **Eg baka henne ei kake.*
I baked her a cake
- c. *Eg fekk bilen min stolen.*
I got car.the my stolen
 ‘My car got stolen on me.’

While there are many examples similar to (iib) reported for Norwegian in the literature (see Tungseth 2007a, b), according to the reviewer, paradigms like (ii) obtain for some dialects of Norwegian (especially in south-eastern Norway) and suggest that there may be no direct connection between the facts in (32) and (i).

18. For many speakers, in many contexts, ditransitive *fá* ‘get’ is inherently reflexive; this does not affect the point in the text, namely, that *fá* ‘get’ is able to take an agentive external argument.
19. On the *-st* clitic, see note 7 above. The movement of the object from the complement of V^0 to SpecVP, adopted from Chomsky (2008:148) for the transitive example in (43a), is a violation of anti-locality (Abels 2003), but would be licit on the assumption that this movement is driven by an [EPP] feature on V^0 (Den Dikken 2007:153). Movement to SpecVP in (43b) is suspect under this analysis if V^0 does not check features of the object in such intransitives (see however Marantz 2007:204ff.), but we assume this movement for the sake of consistency. For an analysis of EPP effects which does not invoke stipulative [EPP] features, see H.Á. Sigurðsson (2010). Here again we also do not show additional movements, for example for object shift; see Bobaljik & Jonas (1996),

Collins & Thráinsson (1996), Bobaljik & Thráinsson (1998), Sigurðsson & Holmberg (2008) and Angantýsson (2011) and references therein for a finer-grained cartography of Icelandic clauses.

20. In principle, it would be possible to imagine that (38b) is actually derived by anticausativizing the MGP construction discussed toward the end of the introduction (see the examples in (8) and (9) in the main text). One argument against this alternative, in addition to the fact that AGPs show participle agreement (which MGPs do not), comes from the dataset in (i). In (ia), we see that the verb *læra* 'learn' can form the active 'get'-construction, and in (ib) and (ic), we see that *læra* 'learn' cannot form a CGP. The crucial data point is in (id), which shows that *læra* 'learn' cannot form an AGP.

- (i) a. Ég fékk ekki lært nein ný tungumál
I.NOM got not learned.PRF any new languages.ACC
 eftir að ég varð 15 ára.
after that I became 15 years
 'I didn't manage to learn any new languages after I turned 15.'
- b. *Ég fékk ekki lærð nein ný tungumál.
I.NOM got not learned.PASS any new languages.ACC
 INTENDED: 'I didn't get anybody to learn any new languages.'
- c. *Ég fékk þau ekki lærð.
I.NOM got them.ACC not learned.PASS
 INTENDED: 'I didn't get anybody to learn them.'
- d. *{Þessi nýju tungumál / Þau} fengust ekki lærð.
these new languages.NOM they.NOM got.ST not learned.PASS
 INTENDED: '{These new languages/They} didn't get learned.'

If the AGP were derived from MGP examples like (ia), we would expect (id) to be possible. Assuming AGPs are derived from the CGPs and RGPs, the unacceptability of (id) is related to the unacceptability of (ib)–(ic).

21. Brownlow (2011) proposes a similar ambiguity, but argues that for the reading illustrated in (49a), instead of a null PRO, the structure involves a null reflexive.
22. If Lundquist (2012) is correct that even verbal passive participles are categorially adjectives, then this generalization would have to be restated. According to a reviewer, Norwegian allows 'get'-complements with adjectives and PPs but not adjectival passives, suggesting that (53) and (55) cannot be collapsed as the same phenomenon. The examples given by the reviewer, however, involve the verb 'open', and thus may have been a resultative adjectival passive in the sense of Embick (2004), rather than a stative adjectival passive. The reviewer's intriguing observation must be left for future research.
23. Alexiadou (2012) proposes that Greek lacks the passive voice head π^0 altogether, making the medio-passive interpretation of the middle head μ^0 more generally available.
24. Even in English, *get*-passives with an overt *v* head, such as the *-ize* in *The onion slice got caramelized*, would seem to be a problem for Alexiadou's claim that the middle voice head μ^0 attaches directly to the root. This does not seem to necessitate abandoning the whole analysis, but it seems to indicate that English *get*-passives are built on verbs rather than roots; see Harley (2009) for a similar issue involving overt v^0 heads in English. One way around this problem would be to assume that what appear to be overt instances of *v* are added post-syntactically as well.

25. The contrast in (58)–(63) is not easy to replicate in Icelandic. First, *láta* ‘let/make’ does form a passive. Second, *hjálpa* ‘help’ does not take a bare infinitive complement. Third, verbs like *sjá* ‘see’ and *heyra* ‘hear’ do not form very good passives even in simple transitive cases (Thráinsson 2007:255). However, to the extent that there is a contrast in Icelandic, it points in the same direction as the English facts (58)–(63):

- (i) a. Ég sá Hlyn.
I.NOM saw Hlynur.ACC
 ‘I saw Hlynur.’
 b. ?*Hlynur var séður.
Hlynur.NOM was seen.PASS
- (ii) a. Ég sá Hlyn ganga upp tröppurnar.
I.NOM saw Hlynur.ACC walk up stairs.the
 ‘I saw Hlynur walk up the stairs.’
 b. *Hlynur var séður ganga upp tröppurnar.
Hlynur.NOM was seen.PASS walk up stairs.the

26. If examples like (64b) are not interpreted as passive (i.e. with an implied external argument of *fá* ‘get’), then it may be that they simply show exactly what is shown by the availability of Icelandic *-st* with ‘get’-passives.

27. We adopt the term ‘New Impersonal Passive’ from Ingason, Legate & Yang (2012) (as opposed to ‘New Impersonal’ or ‘New Passive’) because the construction in question shares properties with both impersonal constructions and with passive constructions, as has been revealed in the debate on the nature of this construction. We gloss the participle in (67) as either default passive or perfect, since it could in principle be either. In addition to the main text references, which cite work more or less directly compatible with the present framework, see Barðdal & Molnár (2003) and Gísladóttir (2007) for analyses within Construction Grammar and Dynamic Syntax, respectively. Judgment of (67b) comes from the first author of the present article, who is a speaker of the NIP dialect of Icelandic.

28. H.Á. Sigurðsson (2011) analyzes this null argument as a bundle of φ -features which, unlike in the canonical passive, does not incorporate into the external-argument-introducing head. The example in (67b) also potentially supports the claim in Maling & Sigurjónsdóttir (2002) that the NIP is extending to verbs that do not undergo canonical passivization (though *fá* ‘get’ is not a non-agentive verb, which was the specific focus of that claim).

29. The examples in (68) are not intended to exhaustively cover all the uses of *fá* ‘get’ in Icelandic. Note, however, that in addition to not allowing adjectival complements, as shown earlier, Icelandic also differs from English in not allowing PP complements.

- (i) a. Ég {kom honum / *fékk hann} á sjúkrahús.
I.NOM came him.DAT got him.ACC to hospital
 ‘I got him to the hospital.’
 b. Hann {komst / *fékkst} á sjúkrahús.
he.NOM came.ST got.ST to hospital
 ‘He got to the hospital.’

This might suggest that English *get*, unlike Icelandic *fá*, does not always involve an Appl⁰ head. Either way, (i) supports the light verb approach to verbs like ‘get’, since a distinct

- syntactic configuration can result in 'syncretism' for one language, but distinct light verbs for another. See Wood (2011:13–20) for further discussion of this general idea.
30. See Levinson (2011) for a discussion of how the details of this kind of proposal relates to Icelandic possession; Harves & Kayne (2012) for an extension of this proposal to verbal 'need'; and Kayne (2012) for modal uses of *be*.
 31. More precisely, Taraldsen (2010) proposes that the applicative head introduces a DP with a dative case morpheme, and that this morpheme gets stranded by movement of the DP; this stranding leads to the spellout of 'get'. Similarly, Pesetsky (1995), Richards (2001) and Harley (2002) propose that the functional head introducing indirect objects is present in building 'get' (G for Pesetsky 1995, P_{HAVE} for Richards 2001 and Harley 2002).
 32. One possibility for such cross-linguistic variation that warrants investigation is whether there are different 'flavors' of Appl⁰ that may occur in this structure (see Cuervo 2003 and Boney & Sichel 2010, among others), and whether such flavors necessarily have a syntactic source; note that different flavors of Appl⁰ sometimes seem to correspond to different prepositions in overt PPs (Bosse & Bruening 2011, Wood to appear). For now, we have to set this important question aside.
 33. Another possibility is that the applied role is existentially closed over, yielding the implication that there was some bearer of the applied role.
 34. This should not be taken to imply that a language allowing a sentence like (74b) should necessarily allow a sentence like (74a), though we might expect a language allowing a sentence like (74a) to also allow a sentence like (74b). The reason that the expected correlation only goes in one direction is that in addition to being interpreted thematically, every DP added to the structure needs to be licensed (i.e. 'Case'-licensed or φ -licensed in the sense of H.Á. Sigurðsson 2012a). The invocation of a high Appl⁰ head in the construction of 'get'-passives is thus similar to the proposal in Taraldsen (2010:290), who claims that Norwegian has an Appl⁰ head, which is used to introduce arguments of 'get'-passives, but that in transitive contexts, 'Norwegian lacks the formal licensing resources needed to handle the "extra" applicative argument'.

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