

Principles and Parameters in Natural Language
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Lecture – 33
Passives and NP Movement

See we are looking at movement these days, let us take a moment and backtrack and contextualize what we are looking at. We are looking at abstract principles of language, we are looking at the principles that became foundation for this theoretical framework which is known as principles and parameter and it goes without saying the moment we start talking about principles and parameters and abstract rules and underlying patterns stuffs like them are part of I language automatically. So, let us a, let us keep these terms in mind as a fresh reminder that we are looking at I language we are looking at deep structure we are looking at abstract principles we are looking at how these principles operate in human mind.

We are also trying to look at possibly these are the principles which operate when we are learning language, when we say we are acquiring language these are the underlying principles which get triggered with the help of natural input from immediate environment. So, these are the broader things that we need to keep in mind while looking at principles of the kinds that we are looking at.

Now, coming back to the idea of movement what is it that we are looking at in the idea of movement, there are two parts of that first how do we believe that even for the matter of abstract representation.

Even at the level of underlying representation how do we believe that we are compelled to look at what we call what we can call displacement what we can call movement right. We have seen some examples of that the how is it that we must believe and believe probably is not the right word we must see the reasons behind movement and then once the reasons are apparent we have seen some examples of them am I right.

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So far ...

- We have looked at the evidence and motivations for movement?
- Wh-movement?

Questions

- Passivization
- What is NP-movement?



So, when we see such examples we are looking at evidence and motivations together right, we have already looked at one particular kind of evidence which is movement right.

Now, we are going to look at one more one more evidence of that type which is called which comes from the a particular structure in natural language called passivation and this becomes an example of NP movement. Now, keep in mind that WH movement is also an example of mp movement, what WH words eventually; question in a question sentence in language like English is a noun phrase. So, when we are moving the WH phrase to this specifier position of a CP in a way that is also an example of MP movement, but with the help of passivization we are going to see some examples of actual NP movement that is movement of an element not in the form of WH questions movement of an NP directly from one position to the other position. That is what we will look at.

And again before we say or while we are saying a particular noun phrase moves from one position to the other position there must be a compelling reason for that. So, we are we are going to look at both of them together.

So, before that let us look at this question of passivization or passives. Have you heard this word before passives? Everybody must have heard can someone give me an example of a passive sentence or for that matter both, anytime we talk about passives what comes

to our mind is active does it. So, can you give an example of both an active sentence and a passive sentence?

Student: He drove the car is a active sentence.

He drove the car let us say Hari Prasad drove the car is an example of an active sentence, hold on before you give the example of a passive sentence what makes it active and why do we call it active.

Student: (Refer Time: 07:00).

In the sense that hold on, hold on, hold on; understand the question fully. What is the meaning of the word active in this sentence or in which sense do we understand the term active.

Student: The subject is doing the action then it is active.

The subject is doing the.

Student: Action.

Action hold on, go ahead go ahead.

Student: (Refer Time: 07:24) active. If the subject does not doing the action then its passive.

Absolutely correct you understand this thing. So, the example of the passive sentence will be.

Student: The car was driven by him Hari Prasad.

By him by Hari Prasad understand this, very nice example, very precise example. Hari Prasad drove the car bring in your mind the questions that we discussed when we are talking about thematic relations remember thematic relations, while discussing thematic relations we talked about agents and patient and theme that that we discussed before talking about cases. Though there is no one to and relationship between thematic relations and cases still they are let not, let us not good yeah they are let us not mix them together.

What we said about thematic relations was it does not seem to be completely syntactic phenomenon which is to say it brings in certain semantic notions in it that is a syntactic phenomena is the subject and object therefore, we call them syntactic relations. In a sentence Hari Prasad drove the car the noun phrase Hari Prasad and the noun phrase car the car one is the subject and the other is the object.

The noun phrase that is the subject is the subject of the sentence and the car is the object which is the object of the verb and we have we have seen these things in great details completely inside out with the help of x bar representation, phrase structure, nature of verbs, all kinds of things where we can clearly see what we mean by subject of the sentence and object of the verb nice. Then, that kind of a description subject of a sentence and object of the verb becomes part of grammatical relations and description of grammatical relations; whereas, when we say agent it has very little to do with grammaticality.

The whole notion of agency is a semantic notion in this sentence the subject appears to be the agent of the verb is a semantic notion; nonetheless it is an important aspect for dealing with such kind of phenomena get the point. So, I am trying to now bring in or I am trying to put what I termed as semantic phenomena slowly into semantic syntactic (Refer Time: 10:59), how it makes a difference in syntax then. So, in that kind of a sentence the subject appears to be the agent of the; agent in this sentence that is agent of the verb the action that is represented by verb gets carried out by the agent and that is another relationship between the subject and the verb.

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Passives

- Sri Lanka beat India in the T20 World cup final.
- India were beaten in the T20 World Cup final (by Sri Lanka).

- Police caught the thief.

 Thief was caught.

You have just seen that the passive sentence does not give such type of a phenomena. What happens in a passive sentence? The example that Hari Prasad gave you what happens in a passive sentence.

If you just look at two examples Hari Prasad drove the car, the car was driven by Hari Prasad. Let us not look at the verb right now, let first just look at the agent the question of agent what is the; what is happening with the agent in the passive sentence I think you should be able to see that right I have a different sentence here you may not like these sentences, but these are the factual details right. So, I thought I will not have to write these sentences I had written it differently, but then last night I had to change them. Now what is happening to agent let us let us talk about passives what is happening to agent.

Student: (Refer Time: 12:56) subject one (Refer Time: 12:57).

No, no, no, that is not subject and object we will mix them we come to that, but let us talk about agent in the active sentence we just finished talking about that the subject appears to be the agent of the action carried out in the sentence in the passive sentence and through which through this discussion we are also trying to establish connection between the two sentences what we what we say active and passive. At one level one can always argue that probably there is no relationship between the two sentences they are two independent sentences remember the object of a study for syntactic purposes is a sentence ok.

The sentence is a minimal unit of the study of syntax. So, we can say look these are different sentences let us treat them differently that is an all that is also an argument which I am not bringing in right now. Right now what I am trying to do is I am trying to with this discuss and I am also trying to establish a connection between the two sentences that active and passive sentences are related. So, with that we when we establish agent and verb agent of the action right and then the passive sentence the immediately when you look at the passive sentence my question is what happens to that agent do you see that agent in the passive sentence.

Do you see that sentence that agent in the passive sentence? Number one the answer is yes. The second question is, do you see the agent in the same place? No. So, if someone, so look at that look at the logical development of this argument and this is where the answer lies and this is where we are going to build on. The point is the whole idea of a passive sentence is to remove agent that is let me bring in one more point as a small detour.

You know we have had a lot of discussions about subject we started our discussions and we talked wherever necessary about the subject in terms of its function and its definitions and understanding the whole notion of subject as a whole. And we have looked at it from various perspectives we have looked at it from the perspective of agreement that is agreement between the subject, noun, phrase and the predicate subject and verb we looked at the subject the representation of subject in x bar theory. Then we looked at subjects do not necessarily have to be a noun phrase it could be any big chunk or anything we have looked at all kinds of things about subject.

We are going to add one more thing to subject which is the one of the function of the subject and the reason why it becomes the why it becomes the specifier position is because anything that you put in the subject position automatically becomes the focus position the focus position why, what do we mean by focus position? It immediately attracts your attention that is, when I was discussing the motivation for movement I know I am digressing a little bit I am coming back to this in a moment, but it is important to relate these things when we were discussing the motivation for a movement there was a question and I was trying to argue that probably the subject originates in the lexical layer in the specifier position of the VP and then it moves again back to the specifier position of either IP or the agreement phrase. Remember this argument.

There were the question which was a question before this argument if a lexical item that is a word not supposed to be in the functional domain then why does it begin there remember why does it begin there and then we gave this argument that probably it does not begin there it originates somewhere else and then it goes back there. Before people gave this argument the logic was this, it originates in the functional domain outside the predicate and lexical layer because it becomes a focus position some therefore, sometimes subjects are called focus and beach all right.

So, bringing back to passives one of the notions of passive before it got analyzed under the notions of principles and parameters one of the treatment of passive was to say we remove focus in the passive. Take any example and anytime you find people not talking about people trying to remove focus from the agent they use the passive sentence. Pay attention to people when we are when people use such things in day to day language. Things like yeah look at this, thief was caught we do not want to say by whom people it is it is said who says is the idea that has to be removed, when we someone says it is said the idea is we do not want to clean who said the whole purpose of a passive sentence is to remove agent that was one of the description early description given to passive sentence.

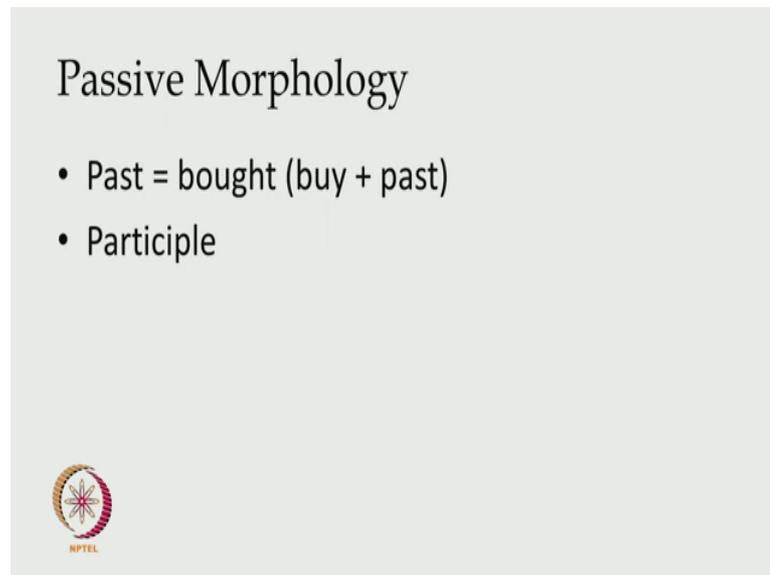
Which is still remains an important aspect of a passive sentence that the whole idea of agent is out there is no agent in the passive sentence or if at all you can raise the question what happens to argent them and nothing happens to agent look at that, look at the example that you have nothing happens to agent a what big what happens actually to agent it becomes an agent it becomes a PP, an a agent. You can retain that if you are generous you can drop it does not matter do the grammaticality of a sentence I know I am spending little bit time here, but this is an important aspect remember the significance of a subject in a sentence.

Remember the significance of a subject in a sentence it is such a significant element in a sentence that no language of the world allows the sentence without a subject it is that kind of a robust principle that we cannot have a sentence without a subject such an element, such a significant element becomes an agent. And in a passive sentence whether that agent is present in the sentence or not does not make any difference to the grammaticality of a passive sentence right. We cannot say the sentence police caught the

thief without the noun phrase police can we say that sentence can we say active sentence without the subject we cannot can we say the sentence that Hari Prasad gave you.

Hari Prasad drove the car can we say drove the car the sentence is not good, but in a passive sentence that same important subject agent is out that is the function of a passive sentence all right. Now, let us move ahead and see how this kind of notion is accommodated and explained under theoretical framework of principles and parameters.

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Passive Morphology

- Past = bought (buy + past)
- Participle



For that these sentences are clear, we understand. For that we need to look at passive morphology now, now we focus on verb what happens to the verb, oh ok wait a minute wait a minute wait a minute before that we talked agent and subject we did not talk about the object.

What happens is if you talk to people in general one of the very generic description that people give you is object becomes the subject and subject becomes the.

Student: Object.

Object. We need a caution here we need a caution that subject does not become an object can you see here, can you see that in the sentence. Subject what we mean by subject is agent it becomes completely insignificant thing it is not an object because we understand the technical distinction between object and an agent I am sorry object and an.

Student: Adjunct.

Adjunct, all right. So, if at all anything happens to that agent it becomes an agent on unnecessary thing. So, let us correct that part. Now subject becomes object I am sorry object becomes subject what do we see here in the active sentence the verb is beat it is a transitive verb right, it has an object which is India in a sentence like yours the verb is drive it is a transitive subject the object of the transitive sentence is the car, get this thing.

Now in the third sentence catch is a transitive verb, the object of catch is the thief the NP and that that becomes that comes in the subject position this is what people say people mean when they say object becomes the subject. If we take that statement for its truth value can you now on the basis of whatever you know about the structure of language and the theoretical apparatus underlying it do you see the danger of this kind of a statement. Object becomes the subject there is no situation in a sentence where an object can possibly become a subject understand my point. That in a sentence if you have a noun phrase which is an object and then we say it becomes the subject basically we are saying we are saying something like I mean I do not mean to give you a ridiculous example, but it becomes something like from tomorrow or all of a sudden somebody walks with how do humans walk.

Student: Leg.

With legs we will see in in the evening we walk with our feet I am sorry we walk with our head is that possible it is something like that. If the object becomes the subject then what happens to the object position what happened to everything that we have been giving so much significance to we said we have a transitive verb transitive verbs must have an object what happened to those things and how come such a thing is allowed to become the subject, see the point. So, the objects are part of the part of the verb and how would a transitive verb leave the object an object is an important part for the grammaticality of the sentence particularly when we are talking about a transitive verb.

While talking about the verb let me talk about one more thing here and then when I go to passive verbs. A language like English take a note of this thing we will not have enough time to have a discussion on this thing a language like English does not allow passivization of intransitive verbs. If you have an intransitive verb in English then you do not have a passive. Can you give me an example of an intransitive verb?

Student: (Refer Time: 27:23).

Or give me a sentence.

Student: He ran.

He ran. What will be the passive of that? Any idea no, such a simple thing, I am not telling you anything new you already know that. Again bringing in the idea of the knowledge of language right I mean every day you can take ten examples of knowledge of language and reinforce your understanding of the concept that we discussed in the beginning I said something as in a statement, English does not allow passivization of intransitive verbs. You understand this sentence very well now because in this sentence we have discussed everything now the term passivization, the transitive verb and everything else.

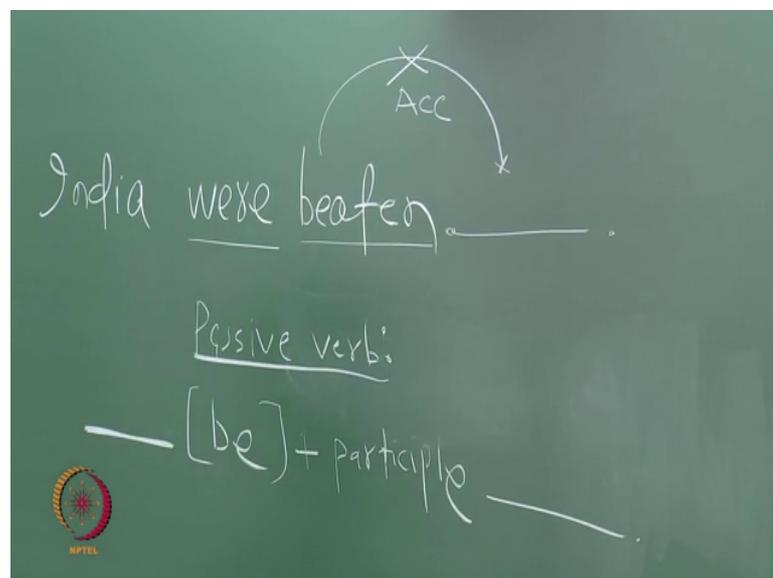
We know what transitive verbs mean right which means no objects. So, the sentence is very clear to you now, but the whole idea is not something new that I am telling you, you already knew that he ran cannot be made a passive I ran by him can we run some I we cannot say. I was sleeping last night when you called right, can I make a passive of this sentence; no. I was going home at 5 pm, can we make a passive of this sentence; no. So, the two points, one information the other the reinforcement of knowledge of language you knew this because you have never made a passive of an intransitive verb right. So, get the point.

However, it is a parametric thing in the sense that other languages allow passivization of intransitive verbs in English it is not allowed. But when I say other languages our language is allow passivization of intransitive verbs and this is where I said we probably may not have enough time to discuss all at least some examples from our languages. It is not that I do not want to give you an example of that to understand that example from our languages we will need to understand passive morphology in our languages.

So, I leave that question for you I cannot even ask that question in the final exam without discussing the passive morphology of our languages. But I leave that question for you to think about and if you have a question related to that you can always ask me that question tomorrow or later or anytime I will be more than happy to discuss that, but let me first discuss what I am what I am planned to discuss with you.

So, look at the passive verb now what is happening in the passive sentence it is not that only agent or subject is something is happening to agent and subject it is not just that object is in a different position now. So, what we can say about object we are not saying object becomes the subject, we can only say objects are in a different position now they still may be the or may not be the object, but they are in a different position. So, look at the passive verb. What happens to English passive verb is this see, in when we talk about past tense we have just discussed that last week in a in a verb like bought what do we have we have by and past tense right.

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What do we have in a in a verb like when we say when we have a sentence like India were beaten what do we have here? You may have in the traditional grammar terms you may have been told that there are three forms of the verb, and what are those forms? Anybody knows that those forms first of all, do people know that there are three forms of the verb have, have you heard this term there are three forms of the verb some of you have heard do you remember what those three forms are give it a try.

Student: Simple continuous (Refer Time: 32:26).

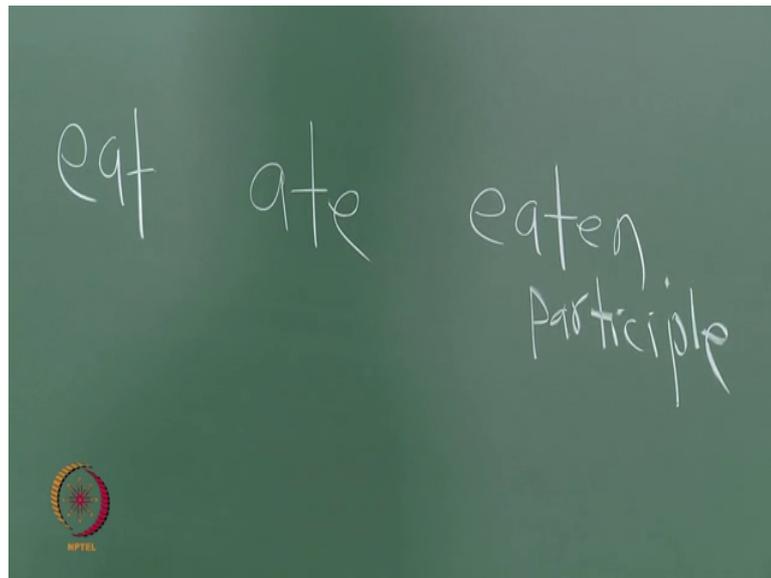
Now you know that you need to use these terms carefully. So, simple we can take it as simple right for example, we have a if you want to like let us take eat, we can say this is simple form then we have a form called.

Student: Ate.

Ate and then we have the form verb.

Student: (Refer Time: 32:52).

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Eaten, just for discussing this one. So, we can we can say this is simple all right some people say this is present this one. So, there is nothing continuous about it as you can see and I do not mean to get a stuck with that. So, this is past. So, some people say this is present because this is past. Some people say this is simple and then this is past whatever this.

Student: Past participle.

Past participle I mean I do not see anything past here, but let me the let me not get into that the point is this is participle and I will not get into the term participle, if I ask you the meaning of this word participle say English word right you have been told you remember also so nicely. So, you see the example you remember one word without its meaning look at the passive verb all the passive verbs work this way. So, we cannot say things something like India beaten right, we cannot say something like that we have to say something like this which is the form of be in appropriate with appropriate tense and with appropriate agreement. So, this is past and what is the agreement that you see that is singular or plural.

Student: Plural.

Plural do you know why we have a plural agreement here, I think that should be pretty simple for you to understand why do we say India were beaten why do not we say India was beaten.

Student: (Refer Time: 34:58) Indian team (Refer Time: 34:59).

Absolutely correct with this we mean a plural entity that is the whole bunch all right. So, the plural past, the point is this is b you add anything to this. So, this is a verb form b you add present to this it becomes something like is then you keep adding agreement if you had present and plural then it becomes.

Student: Are.

Are if you add present and singular this becomes.

Student: Is.

Is if you add past and singular it becomes.

Student: Was.

Was, so you we know we know these things right. So, this is the verb be now and again it is important to mention, but will not have time to get into the details of it how this verb b acquires different forms like is, are, am, was, were, it is a development of development of English language from its ancient time to the modern time there is a whole route to trace how this happened. But since we are not discussing the development of English historical development of English language let us just leave it there. So, its verb be with its appropriate tense and agreement and then we have participle then we have participle this is how we get a passive sentence in passive verb in English.

We never use simple form or past form here in any kind of passive we never use this let me let me delete this thing now just. So, that we have clarity. So, this is our this is our pas this is why we call it we can say either passive verbs passive verb form or passive morphology on the verb sentence that Hari Prasad gave you the car was oh what was the passive Hari Prasad.

Student: Driven by.

The car was driven by Hari Prasad. So, the important thing car was driven, India were beaten thieves were caught right, people are bought during elections right.

Now see both things here first passive morphology you never see a different kind of verb form coming here and see the function of that, anybody can say this sentence to blame someone, but they do not want to say who they want to blame. This is why we use passive form. I wanted to make a point, but I do not want to blame you or I do not want to take a responsibility that I am blaming you right they are, that is the function of the passive. So, let us separate the two things we have all I have already mentioned the function of passive I am talking about the form of the passive. So, this is the verb this is the how the verb works. So, now, I have shown you the complete transformation from active to passive.

Agent does not remain agent, verb does not verb becomes something else which is not exactly as India Sri Lanka beat India. So, the verb is no more beat right and the object is no more there. So, even though there is a semantic relationship between active and passive sentences syntactically at the level of form the whole passive sentence is a completely different one. Do you see my point the whole passive sentence is a completely different one and the feature of that different sentence is are the following, look at that. The features of a passive sentence or of a passive verb is completely different.

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Features of Passives

- Let's look at the verb morphology. Passive verb morphology gets affected. It becomes as follows:
 - be + past participle
- The external theta role is suspended as passive verbs do not assign theta roles. Therefore, the agent NP can be dropped.
- The passive verb does not assign case (structurally) to the internal argument of the verb. For passive verbs the capacity to assign case is ceased.



The feature is one of the features is this kind of a verb that is participle verb cannot have a noun phrase which can have a thematic role understand my point, it cannot allow a noun phrase which can have a traumatic role that is a noun phrase which had a thematic role of agent will not be allowed in this with this verb. Therefore, the subject which was agent is out please pay attention to this thing I am talking about the form of the sentence now the participial verb in English will not allow a noun phrase which has an thematic role, it can allow a noun phrase which does not have a thematic role or which basically that position the beginning position does not remain theta sensitive, any NP that comes in a subject position of an active verb probably gets an agent theta role right.

When we say John runs is the John agent it is an agent right. So, most of the time the subject NP depending upon the nature of the verb becomes the agent the participle form of the verb does not like NPs with theta roles particularly with agent. And one more thing we have in in two minutes we will we will stop, but one more thing. This verb were beaten this verb does not have the capacity to assign accusative case remember the sentence inactive was India beat Sri Lanka beat India, Hari Prasad drives the car the subject NP the object NP agent theme and the object of the verb gets case accusative case a structurally, and therefore, the sentence is fine.

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- D-Structure
 - [Spec, IP ----- were beaten India (by Sri Lanka)]
 - Spec, IP (Sri Lanka) does not remain an agent, therefore, it can be dropped or can be retained in a sentence as an adjunct - 'by India'.
 - Spec, NP is therefore unoccupied/vacant.
 - The passive morphology on the verb [be+en (participle)] cannot assign accusative case to the internal argument, *India*.



The active sentence, the passive sentence does not allow rather the one of the features of the passive verb is such that the verb is still transitive, but the verb does not have the capacity to assign accusative case to it. See the problem with a passive verb the passive verb does not allow a subject which has a theta role, it cannot have an object because it cannot it has an object I am sorry it has an object, but it cannot assign a passive, it cannot assign accusative case understand the problem. The problem is it does not have a subject it does not have an object and this is coming out of the features of the passive verb and I am trying to show you that passive verb does not remain beat passive verb is were beaten see the problem, see the complexity; hold on.

So, the point is the spec of IP in the look at the active sentence the specifier position of the IP which was Sri Lanka does not lean in an agent therefore, it can be dropped from this either it can be dropped from the sentence or can be retained in the sentence as an adjunct. Because this verb, participle verb, passive verb, will not have will not allow an NP with an agent here agent theta role out. Remember I am not I am trying to show you the contradiction, but I am not trying to say that an active sentence will not have a subject that is not what we are saying here is the contradiction now an active a passive verb will not allow an NP with a theta role ok.

A passive verb will not allow an NP with a theta role, but it must have the subject. The other principle of the sent the language says you cannot have a sentence without a

subject see the problem do you do you see the contradiction and the problems coming out of this contradiction it says I have an NP, but I will not allow you because you have a theta role with you out, but the requirement is you must have an NP there. Now, look at the look at the object the verb is transitive it must have an object, but it cannot remain there because the verb does not have the capacity to assign accusative case. See this thing this problem contradiction becomes the motivating factor for the object NP to physically dislocate itself to the subject position, this becomes the motivation.

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Case Filter

- No NP in a sentence is allowed with a proper case.
- Following Case Filter, the D-structure of a passive results ungrammaticality.



See there is another problem which is called case filter I have discussed that with you its it means very it is very simple any NP which does not have a case is not allowed in a sentence the verb is transitive it has an object, but this verb cannot assign accusative case therefore, this NP India cannot remain here in this position. If we leave this here the sentence is not good can we do we have a sentence were beaten India by Sri Lanka can we say something like this, no, because of two reasons we cannot say were beaten India by Sri Lanka because it needs a sentence subject and this NP remains with no case.

Therefore, the solution is this physically dislocates to the initial position where it full fills the subject position. This is what people mean when they say object becomes subject. So, it full fills the subject position, now it is not violating the theta role think this verb does not like something, this world does not allow anything theta here this already has a theta role. So, that problem is out. It gets new theta role here. So, this is allowed there and then

it becomes the subject what we mean by that is it receives nominative case through the infill through the I head I it receives the nominative case therefore, it is called object becomes the subject and then this NP is allowed under case filter that now it is no more without case there is a head to assign case to it therefore, the sentence becomes India were bitten by Sri Lanka.

I need to stop here I want you to reflect on this problem. We continue with this NP movement and one more example of this type of NP movement tomorrow.