

## Implicit Control and Impersonal Passives

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### 0. Introduction

- Long-standing claim: implicit external arguments of passives (IA) cannot function as controller in contexts of obligatory control (OC).

- (1) a. John<sub>i</sub> promised Maggie [PRO<sub>i</sub> to do the shopping].  
 b. \*Maggie was promised IA<sub>i</sub>/by John<sub>i</sub> [PRO<sub>i</sub> to do the shopping].

- (2) **Visser's Generalization** (VG; Visser 1973, Bresnan 1982)

Subject control predicates cannot passivize.

- Important revision of VG by van Urk (2013); cf. data in Koster (1984, 1987).

- (3) a. It was promised IA<sub>i</sub>/by John<sub>i</sub> [PRO<sub>i</sub> to do the shopping]. (English)  
 b. Ihr wurde IA<sub>i</sub>/von John<sub>i</sub> versprochen [PRO<sub>i</sub> einzukaufen]. (German)  
 her.DAT was by John promised to.do.the.shopping

- (4) **Revised Visser's Generalization** (RVG; van Urk 2013: 172, (12))

Obligatory control by an implicit subject is impossible iff an overt DP agrees with T.

- Most recent generalization about implicit control by Landau (2015):
  - Implicit control is **possible with matrix attitude predicates** (former class of Partial Control (PC) predicates; see Landau 2000, et seq.)
  - Implicit control is **impossible with matrix non-attitude predicates** (former class of Exhaustive Control (EC) predicates).

- (5) a. It was planned/promised/decided to renovate the building. (attitude verb)  
 b. \*It was begun/continued/finished to spend money on these things. (non-attitude verb)

**Side remark:** A quick - though imprecise - way to distinguish the two verb classes is whether matrix and embedded clause allow for independent time specification (cf. 6a, b) (or partial control):

- (6) a. John planned *yesterday* to raise the taxes (*tomorrow*). (attitude verb)  
 b. John began *yesterday* to raise the taxes (*\*tomorrow*). (non-attitude verb)

### Goals of this talk:

- Clarify the empirical picture of implicit control (**sections 1&2**).
  - **Implicit control with non-attitude verbs** (i.e. (5b)) will be shown to be **unacceptable only in some languages** (*English, Russian, Hebrew, French*), while **others do allow this type of implicit control** (*German, Dutch, Norwegian, Icelandic*).
- Evaluate these results within Landau's (2015) *Two Tiered Theory of Control* (**section 3**).
  - Reject the idea that implicit arguments cannot enter predication.

- Reject the idea that implicit agents enter predication only in some languages (e.g. because they are projected as Strong Implicit Arguments; Landau 2010, Legate 2012, 2014).
- Show that there is a **correlation between languages that disallow implicit control with non-attitude verbs and languages that lack (strict) impersonal passives.**

**Conclusion:** It is not the case that **implicit control with non-attitude verbs is unacceptable** (in certain languages) because of a failed control relation (pace Landau 2015), but **because passivization could only be construed as an impersonal passive (section 4). Implicit control with attitude verbs can be construed as a personal passive, and is thus licit across languages.**

## 1. Landau's generalization

- Landau (2015): The semantic difference between **attitude** and **non-attitude predicates** correlates with a difference in how the control relation is established:
  - Control with **non-attitude predicates** involves **predication** between the controller DP and a FinP denoting a property, the latter derived by movement of PRO from TP to FinP (**Predicative Control, (7)**).

(7) [TP **DP** T [VP ~~DP~~ [VP V<sub>non-attitude</sub> [FinP **PRO** Fin [TP ~~PRO~~ T [VP ...]]]]]]]  
 DP ---- *predication* ---- FinP<sub><e<s,t>></sub>

- Control with **attitude predicates (Logophoric Control, (8))** is decomposed into two parts:
  - predication** between a (function of a) variable in SpecCP of the infinitival complement and FinP<sub><e<s,t>></sub>, the latter derived by movement of PRO.
  - variable binding** between the controller DP and the variable (*pro*) in SpecCP (which is the projected coordinate of the embedded context of evaluation).

(8) [TP **DP** T [VP ~~DP~~ [VP V [CP **pro** C [FinP **PRO** Fin [TP ~~PRO~~ T [VP ...]]]]]]]<sup>1</sup>  
 DP -- *variable binding* -- pro -- *predication* -- FinP<sub><e<s,t>></sub>

- The empirical splits in (9) are claimed to follow from this structural difference between Predicative and Logophoric control. The most relevant one to us: **implicit control**.

(9)	<b>Predicative Control (non-attitude verbs)</b>	<b>Logophoric Control (attitude verbs)</b>
Inflected complement	ok	*
[-human] PRO	ok	*
Control Shift	*	ok
Partial Control	*	ok
Split Control	*	ok
<b>Implicit control</b>	*	<b>ok</b>

<sup>1</sup> The projected coordinate in the embedded SpecCP is, strictly speaking, not *pro*. Landau assumes that both PRO and *pro* in the structure in (8) are minimal pronouns in the sense of Kratzer (2009).

(10) **Landau’s Generalization**

Logophoric control, but not predicative control, can be exerted by an implicit controller (Landau 2010, 2015; cf. Roberts 1987).

- Why should (10) hold? (10) is just one out of a number of the supposedly related empirical phenomena illustrated in (11). The more general claim is formulated as in (12).

- (11) a. John ate \*(the meat) raw.  
b. I am now hiring \*(people) for John to work with.  
c. The room was left (\*angry at the guests).

(12) **Condition on Syntactic Predication** (Landau 2015a: 69)

The argument predicated of must be syntactically represented.

- Predicative control (7) would require direct predication over the implicit agent, and is therefore predicted to be unacceptable.
- Since Logophoric control (8) involves a “mediating” element in the embedded SpecCP, implicit control is predicted to be licit.

## 2. Revisiting Landau’s Generalization

- Implicit control in **English, Russian, Hebrew, and French** appears to **conform to Landau’s generalization in (10)** (section 2.1).
- However, **German, Dutch, Icelandic, and Norwegian allow implicit control with non-attitude matrix verbs**, contrary to Landau’s generalization in (10) (section 2.2).

### 2.1 Languages without implicit predicative control

- **English complies with (10):**

(13) **Non-attitude verbs/predicative control: English** (scale from 1-7)<sup>2</sup>

- a. It was tried to understand the analysis  
1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 5, 1 (**arithmetic mean: 1,5**)
- b. It was begun to raise the taxes again.  
1, 2, 1, 1, 1, 1, 2, 1 (**mean: 1,25**)
- c. It was managed to find a solution to this problem.  
1, 3, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1 (**mean: 1,25**)
- d. It was dared to question her authority.  
2, 6, 1, 2, 1, 1, 1, 4 (**mean: 2,25**)

(14) **Attitude verbs/logophoric control: English**

- a. It was decided to leave the country immediately.  
4, 7, 6, 5, 6, 5, 7, 6 (**mean: 5,75**)

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<sup>2</sup> At least some of these verbs can take theme DPs and, then, allow passivization.

- b. It was agreed to raise the taxes again.  
5, 7, 5, 5, 4, 5, 7, 7 (**mean: 5,6**)
- c. It was preferred to leave the country as quickly as possible.  
2, 6, 5, 5, 4, 3, 5, 4 (**mean: 4,25**)
- d. It was arranged to welcome the guests in the garden.  
6, 7, 7, 4, 6, 5, 7, 7 (**mean: 6,1**)

● **French complies with (10):**

(15) **Non-attitude verbs/predicative control: French**

- a. Il a été commencé à augmenter à nouveau les impôts.  
it has been begun to raise again the taxes  
'People began to raise the taxes again.'  
1, 1, 2, 1, 1, 1 (**mean: 1,15**)
- b. Il a été commencé à nettoyer la salle de séjour.  
it has been begun to clean.up the living room  
'People began to clean up the living room.'  
3, 1, 2, 1, 1, 1 (**mean: 1,5**)
- c. Il a été réussi à trouver une solution à ce problème.  
it has been managed to find a solution to this problem  
'People managed to find a solution to this problem.'  
1, 1, 1, 1, 2, 1 (**mean: 1,15**)

(16) **Attitude verbs/logophoric control: French**

- a. Il a été décidé de quitter le pays immédiatement.  
it has been decided to leave the country immediately  
'People decided to leave the country immediately.'  
7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7 (**mean: 7**)
- b. Il était prévu de rénover la cuisine le mois prochain.  
it was planned to renovate the kitchen the month following  
'People planned to renovate the kitchen next month.'  
7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7 (**mean: 7**)
- c. Il a été promis de sortir les poubelles très bientôt.  
it has been promised to take.out the garbage very soon  
'People promised to take out the garbage very soon.'  
6, 7, 6, 6, 5, 3 (**mean: 5,5**)

● **Hebrew complies with (10)**

(17) **Non-attitude verbs/predicative control: Hebrew**

- a. \*hufsak lištot alkohol  
was.stopped to.drink alcohol  
'People/someone stopped drinking alcohol.'
- b. \*hutxal lesader et ha-xeder  
was.begun to.arrange ACC the-room  
'People/someone begun cleaning up the living room.'
- c. \*nusa lehavin et ha-nituax  
was.tried to.understand ACC the-analysis  
'People/someone tried to understand the analysis.'

- (18) **Attitude verbs/logophoric control: Hebrew**
- a. huvtax lehorid et ha-zevel  
was.promised to.take.down ACC the-trash  
'Someone/people promised to take out the garbage'
- b. hutsa laasot kniot  
was.offered to.do shopping  
'Someone/people offered to do the shopping.'
- c. tuxnan leʃapets et ha-mitbax  
was.planned to.renovate ACC the-kitchen  
'Someone/people planned to renovate the kitchen.'

• **Russian complies with (10):**

- (19) **Non-attitude verbs/predicative control:**
- a. \*Bylo poprobavano ponjat analiz.  
was.NEUT.SG tried.NEUT.SG to.understand analysis  
'People/someone tried to understand the analysis.'
- b. \*Bylo načato ubirat' gostinuju.  
was.NEUT.SG begun.NEUT.SG to.clean.up living.room  
'People/someone begun cleaning up the living room.'
- c. \*Bylo zakončeno pit' alkol' .  
was.NEUT.SG stopped.NEUT.SG to.drink alcohol  
'People/someone stopped drinking alcohol.'

- (20) **Attitude verbs/logophoric control:**
- a. Bylo obeščano vysnesti musor.  
was.NEUT.SG promised.NEUT.SG to.take-out garbage  
'Someone/people promised to take out the garbage'
- b. Bylo predloženo sxodit' za pokupkami.  
was.NEUT.SG offered.NEUT.SG go for shopping  
'Someone/people offered to do the shopping.'
- c. Bylo rešeno pokinut' stranu.  
was.NEUT.SG decided.NEUT.SG to.leave country  
'Someone/people decided to leave the country.'

## 2.2 Languages with implicit predicative control<sup>3</sup>

- Unlike the claim in Landau (2015), **German does not comply with (10).**
  - **Evidence #1:** A google-search provides **hundreds of examples of implicit control with non-attitude verbs**; most of them sound totally acceptable to us.

<sup>3</sup> We would like to stress at this point that, without further ado, the behavior of these languages is problematic for analyses that essentially treat non-attitude/EC-verbs as raising predicates (e.g. Grano 2015). If they were raising predicates, they would not be expected to passivize.

- (21) a. **German implicatives verbs with implicit control**  
 Jeder hat ihn geliebt, weil vermieden wurde über seine  
 everyone has him loved because avoided was about his  
 Vergangenheit zu reden.  
 past to talk  
 ‘Everyone loved him because people avoided talking about his past.’
- b. **German aspectual verbs with implicit control**  
 Obleich im postdramatischen Theater niemals gänzlich aufgehört  
 even.though in.the post-dramatic theatre never fully stopped  
 wurde zu erzählen.  
 was to narrate  
 ‘Even though people never fully stopped to narrate in the postdramatic theatre.’
- c. **German try with implicit control**  
 Es wurde versucht, eine Datei mit einem falschen Format zu laden.  
 it was tried a file with a wrong format to load  
 ‘Someone/something tried to load a file with the wrong format.’
- **Evidence #2:** An acceptability study did not show any differences.
    - 2 implicit control sentences with attitude verbs/non-attitude verbs
    - Total: 68 sentences; fully randomized
    - 58 subjects judge on a scale from 7 (acceptable) - 1 (unacceptable)
- (22) **non-attitude verbs/predicative control:**
- a. Es wurde angefangen, das Kinderzimmer aufzuräumen.  
 it was begun the playroom to.tidy.up  
 ‘People began cleaning up the playroom.’ (mean 5,72, st.dev. 1.74)
- b. Es wurde versucht, das Land zu verlassen.  
 it was tried the country to leave  
 ‘People tried to leave the country.’ (mean 6,10, st.dev. 1.32)
- (23) **attitude verbs/logophoric control:**
- a. Es wurde versprochen, das Kinderzimmer aufzuräumen.  
 it was promised the playroom to.tidy.up  
 ‘People promised to clean up the playroom.’ (mean 5,91, st.dev. 1.72)
- b. Es wurde beschlossen, das Land zu verlassen.  
 it was decided the country to leave  
 ‘People decided to leave the country.’ (mean 6,38, st.dev. 1.00)
- Unlike the claim in Landau (2015), **Dutch does not comply with (10).**
    - **Evidence #1:** Examples of implicit predicative control can be found in the literature:
- (24) Er wordt geprobeerd (om) de deur open te maken.  
 there is tried for the door open to make  
 ‘Someone tries to open the door.’ (Bennis & Hoeckstra 1989; see also van Urk 2013)
- **Evidence #2:** Small questionnaire study with 4 speakers

(25) **Non-attitude verbs/predicative control: Dutch**

- a. Er werd begonnen (om) de woonkamer op te ruimen.  
there was begun C the living room up to clean  
'People begun cleaning the living room.'  
3,4,3,4 (mean: 3,5)
- b. Er werd geprobeerd om de analyse te begrijpen.  
there was tried C the analysis to understand  
'People tried to understand the analysis.'  
7,6,6,6 (mean: 6,25)
- c. er werd vermeden vragen te stellen.  
it was avoided questions to pose  
4,7,4,7, (mean: 5,5)

(26) **attitude verbs/logophoric control: Dutch**

- a. Er werd beloofd om het afval op te ruimen.  
there was promised C the garbage up to clean  
'It was promised to clean up the garbage.'  
6, 7, 6, 7 (mean: 6,5)
- b. Er werd gepland om de keuken te verbouwen.  
there was planned C the kitchen to renovate  
'It was planned to renovate the kitchen.'  
3, 7, 4, 5 (mean: 4,75)
- c. Er werd besloten om het land te verlaten.  
there was decided C the country to leave  
'It was decided to leave the country.'  
7,7,6,7 (mean: 6,75)

• **Icelandic does not comply with (10).**

(27) **Icelandic non-attitude verbs with implicit control**

- a. Það er reynt að dansa hér.  
it is tried to dance here  
'People try/are trying to dance here.' (Sigurðsson 2011: 159, (22b))
- b. Það var byrjað að moka snjóinn.  
it was begun to shovel snow  
'People began to shovel snow.' (Sigurðsson 1989: 61, (9a))
- c. Það var hætt að moka snjóinn.  
it was stopped to shovel snow  
'People stopped shovelling snow.' (Sigurðsson 1989: 61, (10a))

• **Norwegian does not comply with (10).**

(28) **Non-attitude verbs/predicative control: Norwegian** (Terje Lohndal, p.c.):

- a. Det ble forsøkt å åpne vinduet.  
it was tried to open the window  
'People tried to open the window.'
- b. Først da ble det stoppet å røyke.  
first then was it stopped to smoke  
'Only then people stopped smoking.'

## 2.3 Conclusions

	Implicit logophoric control (attitude verbs)	Implicit predicative control (non-attitude verbs)
English	✓	✗
French	✓	✗
Hebrew	✓	✗
Russian	✓	✗
Dutch	✓	✓
German	✓	✓
Icelandic	✓	✓
Norwegian	✓	✓

Table 1: Acceptability of implicit logophoric and implicit predicative control

- If we stick to the idea that control with non-attitude predicates involves predication, **we must conclude that implicit agents can enter predication, at least in some languages.**
- **Why is implicit control with non-attitude verbs good in some and bad in other languages?**

## 3. Two potential ways of tackling the variation

### 3.1 Implicit arguments and predication

#### (10) Landau's Generalization

Logophoric control, but not predicative control can be exerted by an implicit controller (Landau 2015; cf. Roberts 1987).

#### (12) Condition on Syntactic Predication (Landau 2015a: 69)

The argument predicated of must be syntactically represented.

- Recall: The constraint in (12) is meant to hold for secondary predicates, too (29).

- (29)
- It is impossible [PRO to visit me together].
  - They expected [PRO to leave the room angry].
  - It is impossible [for me to be visited (\*together)].
  - The room was left (\*angry).

(Landau (2010), after Chomsky 1986)

- **Hypothesis 1:** (10/12) hold in **some, but not all languages.**
  - **Potential implementation:** Following Landau's (2010) classification of implicit arguments, **languages that defy (10) or (12) project the implicit agent syntactically as a 'strong implicit argument' (D; phi:val), i.e. as *pro*.**
  - **Prediction:** **Only in languages where secondary predicates can be predicated over implicit arguments is implicit predicative control acceptable.**



### 3.1.1 Evaluation

- **German** allows secondary predication over implicit agents:

- (30) a. <sup>(?)</sup>Der Patient wurde nackt untersucht.  
the patient was naked examined  
Intended reading: ‘The patient was examined and the examiner was naked.’
- b. Dieser Brief wurde sicherlich betrunken geschrieben.  
this letter was surely written drunk  
‘This letter was surely written drunk.’
- c. Es wurde betrunken/nackt getanzt.  
it was drunk/naked danced  
‘People danced naked/drunk.’
- d. dass das Buch nackt gelesen wurde.  
that the book naked read was  
‘that the book was read naked.’ (Müller 2008: 257, (3a))
- (31) a. <sup>(?)</sup>Der Mann wurde zusammen/gemeinsam besucht.  
the man was together visited  
‘The man was visited together.’
- b. Das Problem wurde zusammen/gemeinsam besprochen.  
the problem was together discussed  
‘People discussed the problem together.’
- c. Am Abend wurde zusammen/gemeinsam getanzt/musiziert  
at.the evening was together danced/music.made  
‘People danced/made music together in the evening’

- **Dutch** sometimes allows secondary predication over implicit agents (Marcel den Dikken, p.c.):

- (32) a. Er werd naakt gedanst.  
there is naked danced  
‘People danced naked.’
- b. \*De patient werd naakt onderzocht. (on the agent-modifying reading)  
the patient was naked examined  
‘The patient was examined naked.’
- (33) a. De deur werd naakt geopend  
the door was naked opened  
‘The door was opened naked’
- b. De kamer werd boos/kwaad verlaten  
the room was angry left  
‘The room was left angry.’
- c. De man werd gezamenlijk bezocht  
the man was together visited  
‘The man was visited together.’
- d. Het probleem werd gezamenlijk besproken/opgelost  
the problem was together discussed/solved  
‘The problem was discussed/solved together.’

- e. Er werd gezamenlijk gemusiceerd  
It was together music.made  
'People made music together.'

• **English** sometimes allows secondary predication over implicit agents:<sup>4</sup>

- (34) a. The patient was examined naked. (Reading where examiner is naked)<sup>5</sup>  
1, 2, 4, 5, 2 (**mean: 2,8**)  
b. The letter was written drunk.  
4, 4, 6, 7, 7 (**mean: 5,6**)  
c. The door was opened naked  
1, 2, 2, 4, 2 (**mean: 2,2**)  
d. The room was left angry  
1, 1, 1, 4, 1 (**mean: 1,6**)

○ Müller (2008) provides **many corpus examples** of depictives predicated over implicit agents:

- (35) a. "We would like to eventually run a shuttle between Radford and Blacksburg. Price's Fork, the main route, is *an awful road to be driven drunk* - all are, but especially that one" he says.  
b. Later everyone got very drunk, *volleyball was played naked* in the mud.  
c. The sport of Rugby is almost identical to *an ancient Greek ball game, which was played naked*, for an audience composed entirely of elderly aristocrats.  
d. "*Recorded naked to be played naked.*"
- (36) a. The man was visited together  
1, 1, 2, 2, 1 (**mean: 1,4**)  
b. The problem was discussed/solved together  
5, 7, 5, 6, 6 (**mean: 5,8**)

• **French** sometimes allows secondary predication over implicit agents.

- (37) a. La lettre a sans doute été écrite saoul.  
the letter has without doubt been written drunk  
'The letter was clearly written drunk.'  
3, 6, 5, 4, 7, 3 (**mean: 4,65**)  
b. La porte a été ouverte nu.  
the door was opened naked  
'The door was opened naked.'  
3, 2, 4, 4, 2 (**mean: 2,5**)

<sup>4</sup> The picture in the literature is split. Chomsky (1986) and Landau (2010) claim that the implicit agent in passives cannot be accessed by secondary predicates. Yet, many other authors have provided counterexamples to this claim (e.g. Roeper 1987, Safir 1987, Baker 1988, Collins 2005, Kastner & Zu 2014). See section 3.1.2 for an explanation why judgments can vary so much.

<sup>5</sup> In addition, Kyle Johnson, David Embick, and Jim Wood (p.c.) also judged the relevant reading to be in principle available, although the patient-modifying one clearly is more salient.

- c. La porte d'entrée ne doit jamais être ouverte nu.  
the front door not should always be opened naked  
'The front door should never be opened naked.'  
5, 2, 3, 6, 6, 2 (**mean: 4**)
- d. La chambre a été quittée fâché.  
the room was left angry  
'The room was left angry.'  
2, 2, 2, 4, 3, 1 (**mean: 2,3**)
- (38) a. Le candidat a été examiné ensemble.  
the applicant was examined together  
'The applicant was examined together.'  
1, 1, 1, 1, 2, 2 (**mean: 1,3**)
- b. Le problème a été discuté / résolu ensemble.  
the problem was discussed/solved together  
'The problem was discussed/solved together.'  
7, 2, 5, 7, 6, 3 (**mean: 5**)

- **Norwegian** sometimes allows secondary predication over implicit agents:

- (39) a. Det blir danset naken.  
there is danced naked
- b. \*Pasienten ble undersøkt naken. (on the agent modifying reading)  
the.patient was examined naked
- c. Døren ble åpnet naken.  
the.door was opened naked
- d. Rommet ble forlatt \*sinne/i sinne.  
the.room was left angry/in anger
- (40) a. ??Mannen ble besøkt sammen.  
the.man was visited together
- b. Problemet ble diskutert/løst sammen.  
the.problem was discussed/solved together
- c. Det ble laget musikk sammen/Det ble danset sammen.  
there was made music together/there was danced together

- **Icelandic** adjectival depictives cannot target the implicit agent of passives (e.g. Jónsson 2009, Sigurðsson 2011, Legate 2014). However, our informant finds (41b,c) fully acceptable.

- (41) a. Var hún barin (\*fullur)? (Sigurðsson 2011: 157, (17a))  
was she hit drunk.Nom.M.SG  
Intended: 'Was she hit (by somebody who was drunk)?'
- b. Lagið var samið í drykkju.  
song was composed in drunkenness  
'The song was composed drunk.'
- c. Það var dansað í drykkju.  
it was danced in drunkenness  
'People danced drunk.'

**Comment 1:** One could argue that (41b,c) are not relevant (due to the PP-nature of the depictive). Yet, even if we concluded that Icelandic disallows secondary predication over implicit arguments, this would disconfirm the hypothesis above, as implicit predicative control is **possible** in this language.

**Comment 2:** Icelandic adjectival depictives inflect for gender, number and case of their antecedent. **If the implicit agent in passives is not syntactically projected, the ungrammaticality of (41a) follows from formal morpho-syntactic reasons** (agreement failure, unchecked features) and does not tell us anything about predication.

- **Hebrew** is like Icelandic: i) Adjectival depictives agree in gender and number; ii) implicit agents do not license adjectival depictives; iii) implicit agents license prepositional depictives:

- (42) a. ha-Sir ha-ze xubar (*be-hai/ be-gilufin /\*šiikor/\*sikorim*).  
the-song the-this composed.PASS in-high/in-intoxication/drunken.M.SG/M.PL  
'This song was composed high/intoxicated/drunken.'
- b. be-bet ha-xolim ha-ze nutxu xolim (??*be-erom*).  
in-house.of the-patients the-this operated.PASS.PL patients in-nudity  
Intended: 'Patients in this hospital were operated by nude doctors.'
- c. ha-misxak soxak (*be-erom/ \*erom/ \*eromim*)  
the-game played.PASS in-nudity / nude.M.SG/ nude.M.PL  
'The game was played nude.'

- **Russian** is like Icelandic: i) Adjectival depictives agree in gender and number (optionally in case); ii) implicit agents do not license adjectival depictives; iii) implicit agents license prepositional depictives:

- (43) a. Pacient byl osmotren v golom vide /\*golym.  
the.patient was examined in naked state / naked.M.SG.INS  
'The patient was examined naked.' (Agent-modifying reading)
- b. Verojatno, pis'mo bylo napisano v pjanom vide /\*p'janym.  
arguably the.letter was written in drunk state / drunk.M.SG.INS  
'The letter was written drunk.'
- c. Dver' byla otkrita v golom vide/ \*golym.  
the.door was opened in naked state/ naked.M.SG.INS  
'The door was opened naked.'
- d. Komnata byla pokinuta v zlosti.  
the.room was left in anger  
'The room was left angry.'

### 3.1.2 Conclusions

	Implicit predicative control	Secondary predicates in passives
<b>English</b>	✗	✓
<b>French</b>	✗	✓
<b>Hebrew</b>	✗	✓ (with non-agreeing PPs)
<b>Russian</b>	✗	✓ (with non-agreeing PPs)
<b>Dutch</b>	✓	✓
<b>German</b>	✓	✓
<b>Icelandic</b>	✓	✓ (with non-agreeing PPs)
<b>Norwegian</b>	✓	✓

Table 2: Acceptability of implicit predicative control and agent-modifying secondary predicates in passives

**Conclusion: Hypothesis 1 did not prove true.** There is no correlation between implicit predicative control and the licensing of secondary predicates by implicit agents.

- **Across languages, implicit agents can license at least some secondary predicates.**<sup>6</sup>
- There are acceptable and rather unacceptable examples. Two aspects seem to be relevant:
  - A: There is an **accessibility hierarchy** so that the presence of a human subject DP<sub>NOM</sub> degrades predication over the implicit agent because this human DP attracts the depictive.
  - B: A non-human DP<sub>NOM</sub> sometimes degrades predication over the implicit agent (e.g. 34b vs. 34c,d). Since passives foreground a theme DP, the agent modifying depictive should have some **relevance** for the foregrounded theme.
    - Secondary predication over the implicit agent gives the best result in impersonal passives.
- Under Landau's bipartition of implicit arguments into strong and weak implicit arguments, German passives would involve a strong implicit argument (pro/PRO). Yet, this would render German passives comparable to Polish impersonal constructions (see, e.g., the analysis in Ingason et al. 2013), which has quite different properties.
  - Depictives/secondary predicates, unlike canonically assumed in the literature, are no evidence in favor of a syntactically projected implicit argument.
  - **In fact, the agreement data point to the opposite: if the implicit agent of passives was projected as a PhiP or something larger, it should license agreeing secondary predicates.** The situation in Icelandic, Russian, and Hebrew is expected if the implicit agent is not syntactically projected, leaving the phi-features on the secondary predicate unvalued.
- We conclude that **implicit agents across languages can enter predication**; the variation regarding implicit predicative control identified in section 2 needs a different explanation.

### 3.2 Implicit predicative control and (strict) impersonal passives

**Observation: The availability of implicit predicative control correlates with the availability of (strict) impersonal passives.**<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> This follows if we combine the semantics of depictives in Pylkkänen (2008) with Bruening's (2012) theory of passives. According to Pylkkänen, depictives are of type  $\langle e, \langle st \rangle \rangle$  and combine via Predicate Modification with constituents of the same type. Kratzerian (1996) active Voice is of type  $\langle e, \langle st \rangle \rangle$ . While for Kratzer, passive Voice is of type  $\langle s, t \rangle$ , because it comes with an existentially bound agent variable, for Bruening, Voice in passives is also of type  $\langle e, \langle st \rangle \rangle$ , and the agent variable is only bound later by a functional head *Pass*. Thus, under this analysis, passive Voice should be compatible with depictives.

<sup>7</sup> With impersonal passives, we mean passives of plain unergative predicates, not impersonal transitive passives. By *strict* we mean that the language has no restrictions on the formation of impersonal passives except that the verb be unergative.

### 3.2.1 Languages with implicit predicative control have strict impersonal passives

- (44) Er wordt gedanst. (Dutch)  
 there is danced  
 'People danced.' (Ruys 2010: 143, (4a))
- (45) Dort wurde dann die ganze Nacht getanzt. (German)  
 there was then the whole night danced  
 'People danced all night long.'
- (46) Það var flautað. (Icelandic)  
 it was whistled  
 'People whistled' (Maling 2006: 216, (22a))
- (47) I går ble det danset. (Norwegian)  
 in yesterday was it danced  
 'Yesterday, people danced.'

### 3.2.2 Languages without implicit predicative control lack strict impersonal passives

- (48) \*It/there was danced. (English)
- (49) \*Il a été bu. (French)  
 it has been drunk (where 'il' is not a drink)
- However, under certain conditions subjectless passives are possible (Dobrovie-Sorin 1994; Gaatone 1993, 1994; Hirschbühler & Labelle, ms.). In all these cases,
    - Spec,TP is filled with the pronoun 'il' and **some phrase has to show up inside the VP.**
    - The best cases involve VP-internal direct objects, dative objects and argumental PPs.
    - Sometimes even VP-internal adjuncts can improve an impersonal passive (50e).
- (50) a. Il a été vendu beaucoup de voitures japonaises l'an passé.  
 it has been sold many of cars Japanese the year last  
 b. ?Il a été beaucoup bu hier soir.  
 it has been a.lot drunk yesterday evening  
 c. Il sera répondu à chaque lettre.  
 it will.be answered at every letter  
 d. Il a été débattu de la question.  
 it has been discussed of the question  
 e. Il a été dormi ici récemment.  
 it has been slept here recently
- **Hebrew** patterns with French in also disallowing impersonal passives of plain unergative predicates (51a) (cf. Lappin & Shlonsky 1993). Yet, just as in French, one can find acceptable examples of impersonal passives if an argumental PP occurs inside the VP (51b, c)
- (51) a. \*nirkad be-beit ha-sefer kol yom.  
 dance.PASS.3.MS at-house of-book every day  
 'People danced in the school every day.'

- b. Nixtav                                   ʔal-av       ba-ʔiton.  
wrote.PASS.3.MS       about-him in.the-paper  
'It was written about him in the paper.' (Shlonsky 1990)
- c. Bekarov yuxlat                                   ʔal haxzarat ha-staxim       ha-kvusim.  
soon will.decide.PASS.3MS on return the-territories the-occupied  
'The return of the occupied territories will soon be decided upon.' (Shlonsky 1990)

- In **Russian** only transitive predicates encoding a resultant state passivize, i.e. passivization of unergative predicates is not possible (e.g. Babby 1973, Paslawska & von Stechow 2003, Kiparksy 2013, Borik 2013, 2014). Although this is the received wisdom, we came across examples such as (52b), where the acceptability of an impersonal passive depends on the presence of an argumental PP, similar to French and Hebrew.

- (52) a. \*Tut bylo natanzovano.  
here was danced
- b. Bylo napisano ob ètom v gazete.  
was written about this in the.newspaper

### 3.2.3 Summary

	Implicit predicative control	(Strict) Impersonal passives	Secondary predicates in passives
<b>English</b>	✗	✗	✓
<b>French</b>	✗	✗	✓
<b>Hebrew</b>	✗	✗	✓ (with non-agreeing PPs)
<b>Russian</b>	✗	✗	✓ (with non-agreeing PPs)
<b>Dutch</b>	✓	✓	✓
<b>German</b>	✓	✓	✓
<b>Icelandic</b>	✓	✓	✓ (with non-agreeing PPs)
<b>Norwegian</b>	✓	✓	✓

Table 3: Overview – Acceptability of (i) implicit predicative control, (ii) impersonal passives, (iii) agent-modifying secondary predicates in passives

#### Hypothesis 2:

The variation we saw in section 2 does not follow from a successful or failed control relation (pace Landau 2015), but is due to the availability of impersonal passives.

**Non-attitude verbs in control contexts form only impersonal passives. Such a passive is therefore disallowed in languages that lack impersonal passives.**

**Implicit logophoric control in languages without impersonal passives can be construed as a kind of *personal passive* due to a subject-pronoun which is cataphorically bound by the infinitival clause (“placeholder pro-form”).**

#### 4. Towards an analysis

- We submit that whatever renders impersonal passives unacceptable in languages underlies the unavailability of implicit predicative control.
- Why are impersonal passives (im-)possible? Two formal explanations are conceivable (also in combination):

**A: EPP** (operative in some but not all languages): **If an EPP-language has a *suitable* expletive**, passives of unergatives are possible (53a); otherwise, they are not (53b):

- (53) a. I går ble \*(det) danset (Norwegian)  
in yesterday was it danced  
'Yesterday, people danced'
- b. \*It/There was danced

**B: Valuation of phi-features on T:** Languages with impersonal passives have a rule of default phi-valuation (54).

- (54) **Default phi-valuation** (Ruys 2010: 143, (5))  
Dutch, Danish, [German], ... have a rule of default valuation [3, sg] and deletion of phi on T.

**Languages without impersonal passives:**

Either the EPP is violated, or the phi-features on T aren't valued (or both).

**Languages with impersonal passives:**

Either the EPP is inactive or it is checked by a *suitable* expletive.

Either T's phi-features are valued by (54) or the expletive has valued phi-features.

#### 4.1 *It* in implicit control is not a dummy expletive merged in Spec,TP

- (55) a. \*It / there was danced  
b. It was decided [<sub>CP</sub> that .... ]

Bruening (2011) proposes that English expletives are dummies that must agree with an element with feature [F] (notated as [dummy:F]).

- (56) a. English *there*  
Has the feature [dummy:N] (requires an Agree relation with an NP)
- b. English *it*  
Has the feature [dummy:C] (requires an Agree relation with a CP)
- c. French *il*  
Has the feature [dummy:C/N/P] (requires an Agree relation with a CP/NP/PP)



**Question:** Could this derive our attitude/non-attitude contrast?

Landau (2015): The infinitival complement of a non-attitude predicate denotes a **property**.  
The infinitival complement of an attitude predicate denotes a **proposition**.

- (57) a. \*It was tried [<sub>CP</sub> to solve the problem] (non-attitude verb: CP<sub><e<s,t>></sub>)  
b. It was decided [<sub>CP</sub> to solve the problem] (attitude verb: CP<sub><s,t></sub>)

-> **We would have to add s-selection in the lexical entry of *it***

- (56) b'. English *it*  
Has the feature [dummy:CP<sub><s,t></sub>]

**Problem 1:** Why should a dummy s-select?

**Problem 2:** Our generalization (languages without plain impersonal passives lack implicit control with non-attitude verbs) would lack a principled explanation as nothing is inherently wrong with [dummy:CP<sub><e<s,t>></sub>].

**Problem 3:** The non-finite complements of non-attitude verbs are also bad as subject clauses.<sup>8</sup>

- (58) a. \*It has been tried [<sub>CP</sub> to solve the problem] (non-attitude verb: CP<sub><e<s,t>></sub>)  
b. \*[<sub>CP</sub> To solve the problem] has been tried several times.

- (59) a. It has been promised [<sub>CP</sub> to solve the problem] (attitude verb: CP<sub><s,t></sub>)  
b. [<sub>CP</sub> To solve the problem] has been promised several times.

=> The explanation should not depend on formal properties of *it*.

## 4.2 *It* in implicit control is a CP-placeholder pro-form

Observation: The infinitival complement CPs of attitude verbs make good subjects in Spec,TP.  
The infinitival complement CPs of non-attitude verbs make bad subjects in Spec,TP.

Landau (2015): The infinitival complement of an attitude predicate denotes a **proposition**.  
The infinitival complement of a non-attitude predicate denotes a **property**.

**Claim:** => Only propositions but not properties qualify as subjects in Spec,TP.

**Proposal:** In languages lacking plain impersonal passives, *it* is a cataphoric pronoun whose antecedent is provided by the complement CP.

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<sup>8</sup> The structures are simplified. It has been argued that English subject clauses are satellites attached to the CP and Spec,TP is filled by a covert NP which is semantically co-indexed with the subject clause (Koster 1978, Alrenga 2005, Moulton 2013, Lohndal 2017, Ott to appear). Under this update, Spec,TP in (58) would be filled by a covert NP denoting a property. The same semantic question arises - whether properties can appear in Spec,TP.

(60)  $it^i \dots CP^i$

-> The meaning of the CP, i.e. its semantic type, enters the semantic computation via Spec,TP.

(61) a.  $It^i$  was promised [<sub>CP</sub> to solve the problem]<sup>i</sup> (attitude verb)  
 b. [<sub>TP</sub>  $it_{\langle s,t \rangle}$  T [<sub>VP</sub> ...]]

(62) a. \* $It^i$  was tried [<sub>CP</sub> to solve the problem]<sup>i</sup> (non-attitude)  
 b. [<sub>TP</sub>  $it_{\langle e \langle s,t \rangle \rangle}$  T [<sub>VP</sub> ...]]

- The kernel of a proposition is a **predication relation** (Rothstein 1983, 1995, 2001, Heycock 1994, 2013, Eide & Áfarli 1999, Áfarli 2017, a.o.), and a sentence potentially involves **different layers of predication**, mediated via functional heads (v, T, C, etc.; Heycock 1994).
- T establishes a predicative relation between its specifier and its complement.

**Claim:** The specifier of TP cannot be of type  $\langle e \langle s,t \rangle \rangle$ .

Properties cannot be the subject of the predication mediated by T.

In languages with plain impersonal passives, Spec,TP is either not projected (e.g. German Dutch (Haider 1993, 2010; Wurmbrand 2006)) or it is filled by a dummy expletive, which is not cataphorically related to CP. (We assume that covert expletives do not exist.)

(63) a. \* $[_{TP} It^i$  was [<sub>VP</sub> tried [<sub>CP</sub> to solve the problem]<sup>i</sup> ] ] (English/French)  
 b. [<sub>TP</sub> It was [<sub>VP</sub> tried [<sub>CP</sub> to solve the problem] ] ] (Norwegian)  
 c. [<sub>TP</sub>  $\emptyset$  was [<sub>VP</sub> tried [<sub>CP</sub> to solve the problem] ] ] (German)

### 4.3 CP-placeholder pro-forms are internal arguments

**Question:** How does the semantic relation between *it*, the CP and the matrix verb come about?

- The placeholder pro-form is base generated in the thematic complement position of the control-verb (e.g. Rosenbaum 1967, Bennis 1986, Zaring 1994, Vikner 1995, Müller 1995, Ruys 2010).
- The pro-form is a regular Case marked and theta-marked variable operator-bound by the CP (Ruys 2010). We represent this binding via superscript indices.<sup>9</sup>

(64) a. I regret [<sub>DP+ $\theta$</sub>   $it^i$ ] CP<sup>i</sup>  
 b. I count on [<sub>DP+ $\theta$</sub>   $it^i$ ] CP<sup>i</sup>

<sup>9</sup> We remain agnostic here wrt. to any details of the underlying and surface syntactic correlation between the pro-form and the complement clause. In Rosenbaum (1967), the CP is generated as a modifier of the NP headed by *it* and then extraposed. Bennis (1986) proposes that the CP is generated as an adjunct binding the pronoun.

For Icelandic, it can be shown that the associate-pronoun and the complement clause form a constituent (Wood 2012 building on Thráinsson 1979). In German, the corresponding data are ungrammatical. Blocking of extraction might suggest that extraposition takes place (e.g. Bennis 1986 for Dutch). However, Wood (2017) shows that the Icelandic associate pronoun blocks extraction even in cases where arguably no extraposition of the infinitival complement has taken place and Fischer (2016) shows the same for related German data. The cross-linguistic picture is complicated by French '*il*' that does not block extraction (Zaring 1994).

In passives, the pro-form moves from its theta-position to Spec,TP:

(65) [TP It<sub>i</sub> <sub>{[φ:3sg]}</sub> T <sub>{[uphi:3sg],[uN]}</sub> [PassP PASS [VoiceP Voice [<sub>vP</sub> Verb  $\#^i$ ] ... [CP .... ]<sup>i</sup> ...

-> **Implicit control structures with the derivation in (65)** are instances of **personal passives**.  
Hence, implicit logophoric control is acceptable even in languages without impersonal passives.

-> While the placeholder pro-form is overt in English/French, we must assume **a covert pro-form for Russian and Hebrew**, as these languages lack plain impersonal passives.<sup>10</sup>

#### 4.3.1 Evidence that placeholder pro-forms are merged low and have semantic content

- **Pseudo-passives:** Obviously, the proform A-moves from the complement position of P in (66b) and the complement position of P is a theta-position.

(66) a. They counted [<sub>PP</sub> on it] [that Peter would bring the cake].  
b. It<sub>i</sub> was counted [<sub>PP</sub> on t<sub>i</sub>] [that Peter would bring the cake].

- **Lexical case:** Lexical case is associated with thematic relations (Chomsky 1986; Woolford 2006; The Icelandic paradigm in (67a-c) is discussed in Thráinsson (1979), Wood (2012, 2017). (67b) shows that the placeholder pro-form can **bear lexical case**. (67c) shows that the dative pro-form is retained under passivization.

(67) a. Böðullin frestaði aftökunni  
the.executioner.NOM postponed the execution.DAT  
'The executioner postponed the execution.'  
b. Þeir frestuðu (því) að PRO hálshöggva fangana.  
they.MASC.NOM postponed (it.DAT) to execute the.prisoners.ACC  
'They postponed executing the prisoners.'  
c. Í gær var því frestað að hálshöggva fangana.  
yesterday was it.DAT postponed to execute the.prisoners  
'Yesterday, executing the prisoners was postponed.'

- **Obligatory Control into adjunct clauses:** Placeholder *pro-forms* can be controlled.

**English:** Placeholder pro-forms in passives can be controlled.<sup>11</sup>

(68) It<sub>i</sub> was decided [without PRO<sub>i</sub> being announced] [PRO<sub>impl.ag</sub> to raise taxes next year]<sub>i</sub>

<sup>10</sup> At least for Hebrew, such a covert pronoun has been argued to be present also in other cases of sentential complementation, such as the ones in (i) (Shlonsky 1990).

(i) a. Nidme l-i še-ha-šemeš šokʔat. b. Barur še-hi balšanit tova.  
seem.MSto-me that-the-sun sinking clear.MS that-she linguist good  
'It seems to me that the sun is sinking.' 'It is clear that she is a good linguist.'

<sup>11</sup> Control into adjunct clauses can, in principle, be OC or NOC (Landau 2013, 2017). Landau (2017) argues that control in adjunct clauses can only be OC if the adjunct clause is passivized. Note further that since PRO in NOC must be [+human] (e.g. Landau 2013), the adjunct clauses in these examples must involve OC.

**Dutch:** Placeholder pro-forms in passives can be controlled.

- (69) a. Het<sub>i</sub> is [na PRO<sub>i</sub> tien keer uitgelegd te zijn] (Bennis 1986)  
it is after ten times explained to be  
eindelijk duidelijk geworden [dat de aarde rond is]<sub>i</sub>.  
at last clear become that the earth round is

**German:** German is a non EPP language. Impersonal passives disallow an expletive/pro-form.

- (70) weil (\*es) getanzt wurde  
as it danced became

With implicit control, the pro-form is optional, suggesting already that it is not just a dummy expletive:

- (71) weil (es) beschlossen wurde, dass die Steuern erhöht werden  
as it decided became that the taxes raised become

In the adjunct control structure, the version with pro-form is strongly preferred. This indicates that 'es' stands semantically for the embedded CP:

- (72) ?\*weil beschlossen wurde [ohne PRO<sub>i</sub> bekannt gemacht zu werden],  
as decided became without known made to become  
[dass die Steuern erhöht werden]<sub>i</sub>  
that the taxes raised become
- (73) weil es<sub>i</sub> beschlossen wurde [ohne PRO<sub>i</sub> bekannt gemacht zu werden],  
as it decided became without known made to become  
[dass die Steuern erhöht werden]<sub>i</sub>  
that the taxes raised become

#### 4.4 Are all CP-related expletives placeholder pro-forms?

The distribution of placeholder pro-forms in active clauses differs across languages, speakers and verbs (depending on factivity and other factors.)

Some verbs allow the placeholder pro-forms only in the passive, but not in the active.

Within this set of verbs, some do not select DP-complements at all, while others still allow DP complements (cf. Alrenga 2005, Takahashi 2010):

- (74) a. He hoped/felt/insisted (\*it) that the Giants would win the world series.  
b. It was hoped/felt/insisted that the giants would win the world series  
c. \*Most baseball fans hoped/ felt/insisted that.
- (75) a. He decided (\*it) that this paper will be rejected.  
b. It was decided that this paper will be rejected.  
c. The committee decided that.

**Possibility 1:** A placeholder pro-form can be inserted in the verb's complement position as a last resort or simply if the placeholder pro-form leaves this position via movement.

We believe this to be conceivable at least for verbs such as *decide* (75) that allow, in principle, for DP-complements.

It might even be the right analysis for verbs that select against DP-complements (cf. 74), as these verbs allow for a DP-traces under pseudo cleft formation (cf. also Ruys 2010).

(76) [What<sub>DP</sub> most baseball fans ?hoped/felt/insisted t<sub>DP</sub>] was [that the Giants would win the World Series.]

**Possibility 2:** Besides CP-placeholder pro-forms merged as the thematic object of the verb, English developed a last resort dummy pro-form that is merged in Spec,TP and c-selects for a CP (as proposed by Bruening 2011; cf. (56) above).

(77) It was hoped [CP ....]

If we assume that this dummy *it* can be inserted only if no placeholder pro-form is possible, we derive the unavailability of implicit control with non-attitude verbs, because all non-attitude verbs we are aware of allow DP-complements:

(78) This was begun/stopped/dared/tried.

**Prediction:** If there is still a non-attitude verb does not allow DP-complements, *it* should be a dummy expletive inserted in SpecTP as a last resort; consequently, implicit control should be possible even in languages that lack plain impersonal passives.

## 5. Conclusions

- **Implicit logophoric control** (with attitude verbs) is **possible** across all languages in our set.
- **Implicit predicative control** (with non-attitude verbs) is **possible in some languages** (German, Dutch, Norwegian, Icelandic) (pace Landau 2015) and **impossible in others** (English, Russian, Hebrew, French).
- This contrast does **not correlate** with the languages' ability to **predicate over implicit arguments**; implicit agents license secondary predication across languages (though there are restrictions). Therefore, we argued, that the **ungrammaticality of implicit predicative control is not due to a failed control-relation** (pace Landau 2015).
- In our data set, the languages licensing implicit predicative control are the languages licensing **'strict' impersonal passives** (passives of unergative verbs where no vP-internal DP/PP/CP must appear).
- This correlation was captured as follows:

**Implicit logophoric control** may be construed as a **personal passive**. The subject position is filled via A-movement by a placeholder pro-form (**English *it*, French *il*, Russian & Hebrew  $\emptyset$** ) that is base generated as the verb's thematic complement.

**Syntactically, the placeholder pro-form moves to Spec,TP where it saturates the EPP and values the -features on T.**

**Semantically, the placeholder pro-form** is anaphorically related to the embedded CP, which expresses a proposition (Landau 2015).

**Implicit predicative control** (unacceptable in English, French, Hebrew, and Russian) **cannot be construed as a personal passive with a placeholder pro-form moved to SpecTP, because the infinitival complement, and in turn the placeholder pro-form, denotes a property (Landau 2015); we suggested that properties cannot function as subjects of predication in T.**

Implicit predicative control is therefore acceptable only in languages with impersonal passives (i.e. OV-languages where SpecTP is not projected (German, Dutch), or VO-languages with true expletives/dummies (Norwegian, Icelandic)); in both cases, Spec,TP is not filled with a property.

- Our proposal suggests that the formulation of RVG in (2) is not correct (note that (2) must assume that dummy *it* lacks phi-features). In Pitteroff & Schäfer (in prep.) we discuss other passives with full DP-subjects that challenge the formulation of RVG in (2).

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