FOUR YEARS
THREE DEPARTMENTS
TWO EMPTY CATEGORIES
ONE CHANCE TO TIE IT ALL TOGETHER

Swarthmore College
Swarthmore, Pennsylvania
April 15, 1991
"What's this you're writing?" asked Pooh, climbing onto the writing table.
"The Tao of Pooh," I replied.
"The how of Pooh?" asked Pooh, smudging one of the words I had just written.
"The Tao of Pooh, I replied, poking his paw away with my pencil.
"It seems more like the ow/ of Pooh," said Pooh, rubbing his paw.
"Well, it's not," I replied huffily.
"What's it about?" asked Pooh, leaning forward and smearing another word.
"It's about how to stay happy and calm under all circumstances!" I yelled.

Benjamin Hoff *The Tao of Pooh*
Staying happy and calm under all circumstances has been a serious challenge these past few months. For their support, advice, patience, smiles, hugs, and inspiration, I would like to thank the following people: Marion Faber, SJ Hannahs, and Lisa Smulyan for advising me; Donna Jo Napoli for Syntax 50; Noam Chomsky for syntax at all; Ed Dixon and Inge Langacker for the interviews; the Beardsley computing consultants for their expertise; Will Whitman, Tami Kellogg, and Scott Lock for ling talk; Stephanie, Christina, Bernhard, Sarah, Matt, Elena, Little Sarah, Erin, and Peter for smiles and patience; Dena for sharing; Little Kate for fruit and flowers; Lisa for surprises; Peter and Mark for spontaneous relief and perspective; Mom, Dad, Briana, Michael, and Luci for long-distance support.; and Grandma for making all these things possible.
I. An Introduction

The beginning point of the syntactic enterprise as conceived of currently is the question "What do we know when we know a language (say English)?" The answer given by Noam Chomsky in his book *Syntactic Structures*, published in 1957, brought about a whole new discipline within the larger field of linguistics. (Sells, p.2)

Thirty-four years ago, the study of language structures, known as syntax, was revolutionized by Chomsky. Beginning with *Syntactic Structures*, he introduced the idea of transformational grammar to linguistics, an idea which has dominated the field ever since. Although it is still a relatively young field, it has already gone through many changes and transformations in its problems, solutions, and theories. The question "What do we know when we know a language?" has spurred the life's work of many academics, Chomsky being the most famous; however, it leads us to many other questions as well. A native speaker demonstrates knowledge of his or her language because he or she can produce and interpret an infinite set of sentences, but what it means to "know" a language is an issue currently being tackled by linguists and philosophers alike. Regardless of whether one believes language acquisition is a biological or social process, it is still the case that "the person who knows the language has no consciousness of having mastered these rules or of putting them to use, nor is there any reason to suppose that this knowledge of the rules can be brought to consciousness." (Chomsky 1972, p.103-104.) This phenomenon of native language acquisition is one of the most fascinating aspects of humans' language capacity.

In dealing with the issue of second language acquisition, a different set of circumstances applies. In the case of foreign language learning done outside of a community where the language is spoken, such as in a classroom, the speaker must learn the rules which govern the language. When this is done in a formal teaching environment, the question is no longer what do we know when we know a language, but how do we go about teaching the student to know the language, or at least to use it and understand it correctly? This paper looks at these questions with respect to foreign language instruction at the secondary level.
Linguistic theory attempts to define what controls a language, by determining what constitutes a well-formed sentence. The theories provide explanations which allow a person to predict what is or is not allowed in the language, as determined by the native speaker. Because a language is so flexible and capable of infinite possibilities, the theories attempt to explain what controls these infinite numbers of combinations. If the theories are successful and accurate in their analysis of the language, it is possible that they could be applied to foreign language instruction. The foreign speaker must learn, after all, what constructions are acceptable, and why this is so, and the syntactic theories set out to explain this.

The question of how syntactic theory and second language instruction relate to one another has long been, and continues to be, an area of great interest among linguists and educators. At this point in time, there is strong support for both sides of the debate. One side claims that foreign language acquisition is basically the same process as native language acquisition and therefore syntactic explanations of language are useful and necessary in foreign language pedagogy. The other side claims that foreign language acquisition is a separate process from first language acquisition and must be approached as a conscious learning process.

This paper will examine the relationship between theoretical linguistics and foreign language pedagogy by looking at the passive voice in German in order to show to what extent these fields are, could, and should be related. The passive voice is interesting to an endeavor like this one because it is an important construction in syntactic theory. The passive is crucial to Chomsky's Government and Binding Theory (Chomsky 1981)--now the most widely accepted and widely known syntactic theory--because it explains the need for movement, one of the main tenets of the theory. The specifics of this idea will be explained below.

This paper is divided into six sections, including this section, the introduction. Section II provides an overview of the presentation of the passive construction in language textbooks as well as how it is presented in the classroom. Section III explains the basic ideas of Government and Binding Theory, as well as its explanation of the passive. Section IV
looks at the goals of syntactic theory and foreign language pedagogy and draws conclusions about their relationship in teaching a foreign language. Section V examines the uses of the passive voice in German literature through specific examples, and Section VI provides a conclusion to this thesis.
II. Presenting the German Passive to Foreign Language Learners

In this country, teaching grammar explicitly has become less of a priority for both teachers of foreign languages and teachers of English. While our parents struggled to diagram sentences with relative clauses, today's children furrow their brows when asked to give an adjectival phrase. In recent years, many new methods for foreign language instruction have been introduced which do not concentrate on formal grammar. In methods such as the conversational approach, the idea seems to be that the way to help someone acquire a language is to teach it as much like the way they learned their mother tongue as possible. Students are expected to get used to speaking and understanding the language without translating or even relating it to their first language.

Grammar books have been replaced by books which introduce a set of characters and a dialogue in the first chapter, but these conversational methods are mostly valuable at the beginning levels, or when someone is trying to learn the basics of a language in a short amount of time. In most curricula, a grammar book becomes part of the instruction somewhere along the way, if not from the onset. Here grammatical terms like "subject", "object", and "prepositional phrase" are introduced, terms which eventually help explain the passive voice. Presentation of the passive usually occurs after the five tenses (present, past, future, present perfect, and past perfect) have been introduced in the more common mood, the active voice, and the construction is usually one of the last issues covered in the first year of language study.

The passive is an issue to be dealt with after the student has become somewhat familiar with the language because it is such a difficult concept to master. Not only must students learn about the construction in German, but they often have a weak understanding of the construction in English. This lack of conscious knowledge of the construction may be one reason students find this grammar lesson hard to learn. This seems to be support for those people who believe that foreign language acquisition is a conscious learning process.
Supporters of the other side would say that with enough stimulation and exposure, a student would "pick up" an ability to use the construction, much the way he or she learned to use the English passive. My experience with foreign language methodology, however, has shown that conscious knowledge of grammar--both in the native and the learned language--makes the acquisition of the new language and easier process, implying that at least some conscious learning is taking place. This issue will continue to be addressed in this paper.

The passive voice is somewhat marginalized in comparison to other grammar lessons because of its rarity in spoken language. This makes it a less essential construction to master, especially if the focus of the language instruction is a conversational approach. In addition, German passives can be replaced by four other types of constructions, some which are much simpler to use. This makes the true passive less common in the literature, in the spoken language, and therefore less vital to the foreign language instruction.

The presentation of the passive in books for English speakers learning German as a foreign language includes, in most cases, four elements: 1) an explanation of the passive, 2) examples of the passive construction in German, 3) a section on the formation of the passive, and 4) a description of the alternatives to the passive, that is, different ways to express the same idea. Following this is usually a section of exercises where the students can practice translating, forming, identifying and using the construction, and some books included a reading passage.

The biggest decision for the textbook author is how to approach the presentation of the passive. Fifteen textbooks were examined for information about how they chose to present the passive. Fifteen textbooks for secondary and college German classes were examined for information about how they chose to present the passive, with special attention to the initial exposure. In seven of the fifteen textbooks, the author chooses to begin with an explanation of the passive voice. (Clyde; Crean; Lohnes 1980; Lohnes 1989; Sparks; Terrell; Van Schmidt) The other eight textbooks give examples of the passive first, followed by an explanation. (Briggs; Dollenmayer; Griesbach; Haas; Hall, Inge; Helbling; Moeller 1979;
Moeller 1991) These two sections always appear very close together, but the choice to present examples of the language first or the explanation first sets the tone for the lesson. In the texts for English speakers, four (Dollenmayer; Haas; Lohnes 1980; Sparks) of the thirteen books choose to explain their point by giving examples of English passives. In presenting the passive this way, the student is immediately asked to associate the construction with something familiar from English. This indicates that these authors believe the language learning process is a conscious one, since they explicitly ask the student to make associations.

The explanations of the passive deal mainly with the difference between active and passive sentences. The books point out that the passive voice allows the speaker to shift attention away from the agent of the action. All the books use the word agent to describe the thematic role of the noun phrase (NP) in question. In these passive sentences, the NP is an agent because it is a person or thing performing the action. The books then relate the agent to its grammatical function in the sentence to explain the difference between active and passive sentences. The following example demonstrates this type of explanation:

Most sentences are in the active voice, which means that the subject performs the action or is the topic of the sentence. This passive voice subject plays a passive, not an active, role in the sentence. The subject is not the agent but is acted on by the agent, located in a prepositional phrase. (Crean, p.496)

Four of the texts (Briggs; Crean; Dollenmayer; Lohnes 1989) offered a diagram depicting the relationship between the subject and object of active and passive sentences, showing that the object of the active sentence becomes subject in a passive sentence, and that the active subject is ejected from its position to show up in a prepositional phrase, or often completely omitted.

Sometimes the parallels drawn between the active and passive sentences were a bit confused. For example, two of the texts set up the agent and the direct object as being the two categories which switched places in the transformation from active to passive. But actually, the direct object of the active sentence never becomes the agent; it is assigned the grammatical case which the agent formerly filled. The important distinction when showing the relationship between active and passive sentences is that the active object becomes the passive subject and...
Despite the change from subject to prepositional phrase, the agent remains the agent, i.e. the agent does not lose its thematic role, even though it does lose its grammatical role. This fact points out the interesting relationship between active and passive sentences, but it shouldn't be confused in presenting this relationship.

In discussing the passive, most books made it clear that this aspect of the language is not one which is commonly heard or used. It is seen mainly in the written language, and "is used very often in technical and scientific writing, where an impersonal style is frequently preferred." (Moeller 1991, p.357) In some of the teacher's editions, a note is made to the effect that because this construction appears so irregularly, the teacher may want to examine his or her expectations for the unit. For example, should the students simply be able to recognize a passive sentence in German? Should they be able to translate a passive sentence from German into English? Should they be able to translate an English passive to German? Should they be able to create their own passive sentence in German? The teacher's answers to these questions determine how he or she will present the passive.

Two high school German teachers were interviewed about their approach to teaching the passive construction. One teacher mentioned (personal communication) that by the end of the unit on the passives, she expected her students be able to recognize the passive, but not necessarily be able to form it on their own. Her justification for this was that the construction is such a small part of colloquial German that it does not warrant a major commitment---on her part and on the part of her students. On the other hand, another teacher I spoke with said that the goal of all language instruction is to make the student capable of using the language independently. He therefore expects students to be able to form the passive for themselves.

Whatever the teacher decides he or she most likely relies on the textbook to guide the instruction. Following the explanation and/or examples of the passive, the books go on to the third section, formulating the passive. This section, which explains how to create a passive sentence, is the biggest section of the unit on the passive. The passive mood is expressed...
through the verb, which consists of a conjugated form of *werden* (to become) and the past participle of the main verb. In some books, the passive is presented completely as a transformation of the active sentence and the explanation relates everything to the active verb, the active subject, the active object, etc. However, other books choose to explain the construction on its own and do not refer back to active sentences once the initial explanation has been made.

The description of passive sentence formation may include a description of any number of the following details: the tenses of the passive voice, expressing agent and means, dative verbs in the passive voice, modal verbs in the passive voice, the impersonal passive construction, and the difference between actional and statal passives. Some books cover all these areas, others only briefly mention some topics, and others leave out some of these details completely.

One thing that all the books cover is the tenses of the passive. There are five basic tenses, all of which the students have become familiar with in the active voice. The tenses, the verb forms which correspond to the tenses, and their translations are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1a) Present</th>
<th>1b) Present</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Past</td>
<td>Past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>Future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present Perfect</td>
<td>Present Perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Perfect</td>
<td>Past Perfect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Der Hund</th>
<th>The dog</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wird</td>
<td>is (being)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wurde</td>
<td>was (being)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wird</td>
<td>will be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ist</td>
<td>has been</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>war</td>
<td>had been</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>gefüttert.</th>
<th>gefüttert.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gefüttert werden.</td>
<td>gefüttert worden.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Der Hund wird gefüttert.</td>
<td>Der Hund wird gefüttert werden.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Der Hund ist gefüttert worden.</td>
<td>Der Hund wurde gefüttert worden.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Der Hund wurde gefüttert.</td>
<td>Der Hund wurde gefüttert werden.</td>
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<td>Der Hund wurde gefüttert worden.</td>
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<td>Der Hund wurde gefüttert worden.</td>
<td>Der Hund wurde gefüttert worden.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the perfect tenses, the student should note that the past participle of *werden* is *worden*, not *geworden*. Also, some books present the active counterparts to these tenses as well, to relate the new forms to ones which are already familiar. The parallel active forms are:
offered a very weak description of how to handle the agent (used here to refer to the active
However, because a parallel has been set up between the active and the passive sentences, the
natural question is how to take care of this element in the sentences. Some of the
books offered a very weak description of how to handle the agent (used here to refer to the active
subject, not the NP which has been identified to have the thematic role of agent): "The subject
of the active sentence is replaced by von + dative object." (Sparks, p.156) This description
ignores the fact that a different preposition must be used for different types of agents and is
therefore misleading. If the agent is mentioned, the three possible categories are:

1) von (+ dative object) if the agent is a person
2) mit (+ dative object) if the agent is an instrument
3) durch (+ accusative object) if the agent is an abstract or impersonal cause,
or an impersonal means of destruction. (Lohnes, p.567, Helbling, p.353)

Von is the most common preposition because the active subject is usually a person, but the
other possibilities point out a difference in the types of agents, and begin to give an idea of
why some agents would be left out and others included in passive writing.

Next, some of the books make mention of the fact that verbs which take dative objects
are handled specially in the passive. With dative objects, the object must remain dative in the
passive, and either the dummy subject es (it) is used to fill the first position, or the dative
object fills the first position and there is no subject. The books do not refer to es as the
dummy subject, as the linguists do, but as a filler. They also do not draw attention to the fact
that when the dative object is in the first position, there is no subject in the sentence. Usually,
they just give an example of how a verb with a dative object may be passivized:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2) Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
<th>Future</th>
<th>Present Perfect</th>
<th>Past Perfect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The baby feeds the dog.</td>
<td>The baby fed the dog.</td>
<td>The baby will feed the dog.</td>
<td>The baby has fed the dog.</td>
<td>The baby had fed the dog.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second most important topic in presenting the passive is explaining what to do
with the active subject which is ousted from its position when the active object moves into
subject position in the passive sentence. Most passive sentences do not express the subject,
since, in many cases, the point of using the passive is to avoid mentioning the agent.
However, because a parallel has been set up between the active and the passive sentences, the


The textbook *Deutsche Gegenwart* explains: "In contrast to English, only the direct object of an active sentence may become the subject of a passive sentence." (Helbling, p. 354) It goes on to explain that verbs with dative objects retain the dative object in the passive, even if this object is in the first position, which is normally filled by subjects in the nominative case.

Modal verbs also require a special note in the presentation of the passive because the presence of another verb form makes the conjugation of the passive verb a slightly more complicated issue. However, the modals are not extremely difficult since they don't require any special form, and the main verb is expressed through the infinitival form.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3) Active</th>
<th>Meine Schwester</th>
<th>hilft</th>
<th>mir</th>
<th>oft.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>my sister</td>
<td>helps</td>
<td>me</td>
<td>often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[DATIVE]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4a) Passive</th>
<th>Es wird mir oft geholfen.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>it</td>
<td>is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>me</td>
<td>often helped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[DATIVE]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4b) OR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mir wird oft geholfen.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>often helped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[DATIVE]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The impersonal passive construction is the next issue in the textbooks' units on passive, and it was covered in all but four of the texts. The books make note of its existence because it does occur with some frequency, even though it is a somewhat odd construction.1

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1This construction poses many problems for syntactic theory, and is therefore widely studied by linguists, but this issue will be taken up in Section III. In the textbooks, the syntactic problems with this construction are ignored.
In this construction, the filler *es* occupies the subject position of the passive sentence, but this *es* is not related to anything from the active sentence. *Es* can even occur in sentences where there is already another noun phrase present to act as the passive subject. "The filler *es* is a kind of undefined x, a mere structural prop. Therefore, if there is a potential passive subject, the latter and not *es* governs the verb." (Helbling, p.355) This rule refers to sentences like:

6) *Es wurden viele Bomben abgeworfen*  
   *it were many bombs dropped*

The verb is plural because the "potential passive subject" *viele Bomben* is plural; the verb is not at all affected by the fact that *es* is singular. In such sentences, the presence of *es* is merely a stylistic choice, for the sentence could stand without it:

7) *Viele Bomben wurden abgeworfen*  
   *many bombs were dropped*

This construction is unusual, but the textbooks do not spend much time on them, so the students probably do not even think about the problems this brings up.

The books point out that impersonal passive constructions often occur in two other situations. The first situation is with verbs that take dative objects, as seen in example 4a repeated here:

8) *Es wird mir oft geholfen.*  
   *it is me often helped*

The second situation involves passive sentences with intransitive verbs. Passive sentences formed from intransitive verbs often occur on signs and notices and express a human activity.

9) *Es wird hier getrunken.*  
   *it is here drunk*

The books point out that *es* is not a "real" subject, as it has no meaning in the sentence, which makes an English translation of the construction problematic. The books state that there is no accurate English translation of impersonal passive sentences because the activity described is not really passive in meaning, just in form. The activities described by these kinds of sentences are designated human activities which avoid mentioning who performs them. To
translate these sentences, the books suggest using "there is/there are" or translations with active verbs.

10) *Es wird hier getrunken.*
   There is drinking (going on) here.
   or
   They drink here.¹

The final issue in the presentation of the passive is the difference between actional and statal passive. The passive constructions spoken of above are examples of actional passives, which refer to a performed action. However, it is also possible in German to form passive sentences with *sein* (to be) and express a state resulting from the action of a verb. German in *Review* explained the difference as a passive action versus a passive condition (Sparks, p.158). The statal passive is constructed with a conjugated form of *sein* and an adjective (the past participle). The result is:

11) *Das Haus ist verkauft.*
   the house is sold

The action is already complete and implies that the house is off the market. The actional counterpart to this sentence is:

12) *Das Haus wird verkauft.*
   the house is (being) sold

¹Deutsche Sprache und Landeskunde mentioned in the teacher's edition that the teacher should remark how often the impersonal passive construction is heard in colloquial conversation, which makes it worthwhile to learn. (Crean p.498) However, in my semester in Germany I only heard the construction in the following two instances:

   *Es wird nicht weit gelaufen.*
   it is not far walked

This sentence was said as we parked the car and someone complained that we were too far away from the movie theater. The impersonal passive was used to say something like, "We won't have to walk that far." The second instance overheard was in a huge department store where there were many shoppers.

   *Hier wird nicht viel gekauft.*
   here is not much bought

This sentence was used to express the observation that although there were many people in the store, not many of them were actually buying anything. The textbook seemed to want to indicate that this construction is fairly common, but in my experience, it was not heard very often.
This action is still going on, and if you want to look into buying the house, you still have the opportunity.

Following the explanation of the passive, seven of the books (Clyde; Crean; Haas; Helbling; Lohnes 1989; Moeller 1979; Moeller 1991) went on to deal with the fourth section on the passive: the constructional alternatives to the passive. These four alternatives to the passive are not of primary interest here because the linguistic theory does not look at these constructions, but rather at true passive constructions. However, it is interesting that German allows these possibilities, and they are therefore worth mentioning. With the first alternative, a passive sentence can be replaced by an active sentence with *man* (one) as the subject.

13a) Active:  
*Die Frau schließt die Tür.*  
the woman closes the door

13b) Passive:  
*Die Tür wird geschlossen.*  
the door is (being) closed

13c) Alternative 1:  
*Man schließt die Tür.*  
one closes the door

The second alternative is to use *sein* (to be) + *zu* (to) + an active infinitive form of the verb.

14) Alternative 2:  
*Die Tür ist zu schließen.*  
the door is to close

This sentence indicates an obligation, that the activity should take place. However, the construction is commonly found with an adverbial phrase, such as:

15) *Die Tür ist schwer zu schließen.*  
the door is hard to close

This sentence, both in English and in German is much less awkward. The third alternative to the passive uses a reflexive form of the verb, which makes the verb an activity performed on itself without much emphasis or attention to the agent.

16) Alternative 3:  
*Die Tür schließt sich schwer.*  
the door closes itself hard

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1 Interestingly enough, such active sentences, with *man* as the subject, are often given as the active counterparts to the troublesome impersonal passive, since these sentences express an activity without concentrating on the agent. These types of sentences are not possible in English because the language doesn't have a widely accepted neuter pronoun like *man.*
The fourth option is to use the construction *sich lassen* (let itself) + the active infinitive.

17) Alternative 4: *Die Tür lässt sich schließen.*

The door lets itself close

This construction is sort of weird because the subject of the *sich lassen* seems almost to be giving permission, even though it is usually an inanimate object. This construction admits the possibility for the event to occur, rather than saying that it already has occurred or should occur. These types of alternatives to the passive show what a versatile language German is, for each of the five options gives the idea a slightly different meaning.

In the textbooks for foreigners learning German in Germany, (Hall, Inge; Griesbach) the passive is presented with little explanation, indicating that students are expected to learn the construction by example. These texts are usually used in classrooms made up of students who speak many different native languages. This fact puts a constraint on how the passive can be presented because not all the students have a common native language, and therefore the passive can only be explained through the German. These explanations are much simpler in comparison to the presentations in the textbooks for English speakers. First of all, they do not offer an explanation of the passive, but just present it as a list of rules. These rules explain the passive through the active voice, stating that in the passive the accusative object of the active sentence becomes the subject, and in the case where the active sentence does not have an accusative object, the subject of the passive sentence is *es*. The books note that this element falls away if another element fills the first position. The texts cover how to handle the active subject in a prepositional phrase and the verb forms for the different tenses. It is also mentioned that if the active sentence has an object which is not accusative, it remains in its dative, genitive, or prepositional case in the passive sentence.

This survey has shown that the texts which teach the German passive construction to non-native speaker vary somewhat in their presentation of the passive and in their choice of depth concerning the passive. However, they basically all cover the same material. The choices made in how to present the passive include the initial presentation of the issue as well
as how much theoretical language to use to explain the situation. All of these texts present the rules for forming passive sentences. The issue is presented to the student as a process, often a process which connects the sentences to something already learned—either the active voice, or the passive in English. Such an approach treats the acquisition of grammar as a learned knowledge rather than something innate. Foreign language acquisition which is approached in this way has proven to be at the least mildly successful, often very successful. This supports the idea that language acquisition is a conscious learning process. With this in mind, Section III will now present the linguistic theories which study these structures to see how they explain language acquisition and the passive construction in particular.
III. The German Passive in Linguistic Theory

Linguistics is the scientific study of language. The field consists of three core areas: semantics, the study of meaning; phonetics, the study of sound; and syntax, the study of sentence structures. This third area, syntax, applies directly to foreign language teaching because it examines the grammar of language. Syntax looks at sentences and formations which are allowed in a language and attempts to explain and categorize observations made about the language. In order to connect the discoveries of the syntacticians to the foreign language pedagogy, it is important to identify and explain the theories these academics have identified.

Although people have been studying languages for centuries, it is only in this century that linguistics has developed as the field it is today. Specifically syntax is an extremely young field compared to other disciplines, and even other areas of this discipline. In 1957 Noam Chomsky published Syntactic Structures, a book which gave rise to the issue of syntax in saying that people could study language structures and identify constant characteristics which could explain the grammar of a language and ultimately of human language in general. The syntactic theory presented in the early years was known as Transformational Grammar (TG). Although TG remained the main theory for many years, other syntactic theories were developed from it and in response to it. One of these recent syntactic theories is Chomsky's own revision of TG, known as the Government and Binding Theory (GB). Since its conception in 1981, it has become the most widely studied and widely accepted syntactic theory. Because of its prominence in the field of syntax, and its connections to the roots of syntactic theory, GB will be examined here.

The main goal of syntax is to present an explanation of a language which not only describes what things a speaker of the language can or cannot say, but allows one to predict which constructions are allowed in the language. In order to develop these theories, linguists examine the speech of native speakers. This is important because while native speakers are
able to identify acceptable and unacceptable sentences, they can rarely explain why one sentence sounds good and another does not.

This ability to speak a language flawlessly, with no concept of why or how one does it, has led Chomsky to propose a theory of language acquisition which involves the Language Acquisition Device. This "device" is a capacity for language learning which is innate and characteristic of being human. Humans do learn language from the people speaking around them, and yet this alone cannot explain language acquisition. Because humans can form, understand, and use an infinite number of sentences, even if they have never heard that combination before, a genetic explanation—the Language Acquisition Device—is necessary. When a child is exposed to a language, certain connections are made which tell the brain which types of constructions are allowed in that language. The speaker never has to memorize or consciously learn any rules about which constructions are acceptable; she or he simply forms these sentences intuitively.

Linguists—specifically syntacticians—are concerned with identifying the rules which are a model of the native speaker's competence. This model they call a grammar, and the theories of syntax seek to explain a particular language's grammar. "Thus, what we mean by saying that a grammar is a model of the native speaker's competence is that a grammar tells us what we need to know in order to be fluent in a language." (Radford, p.3) Grammar is used here to refer to something separate from the grammar discussed in the language pedagogy sections. While pedagogical grammar refers to rules and exceptions, a linguistic grammar refers to language patterns and overall characteristics. The discoveries made by syntacticians have the potential to apply directly to foreign language teaching, since the ultimate goal of teaching a foreign language is to make every student fluent in the language. If the linguists are successful in identifying "what we need to know in order to be fluent in a language", then these specific characteristics could be taught to the foreign language learner to assist/encourage/produce proficiency in the language.
To take this even one step further, linguists do not just attempt to identify the grammar of a particular language, but believe that there is something called Universal Grammar. If a human is genetically coded with the capacity to learn language, then there must be many shared aspects of all the world's languages. Linguists identify the shared aspects of language as *options*, and the certain options which are associated with a language make it unique in the world. The language-particular properties of each language are exposed to the learner by his or her language community, and eventually the child acquires the ability to communicate in this language. Language acquisition remains a mysterious process for linguists, but grammatical theories such as GB are the result of their attempts to define UG.

One of the working assumptions of GB is that there are three levels of grammar in a language:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{D-Structure} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{S-Structure} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{cc}
\text{Phonetic Form} & \text{Logical Form}
\end{array}
\]

The names D- and S- structures have their roots in the notions of deep-structure and surface-structure of TG (Transformational Grammar). However, to avoid the association of D-structure with the "true" sentence and S-structure with the "superficial" sentence, GB uses the new terms D- and S-structure. D-structure is the underlying structure of a sentence, and S-structure is essentially the result of syntactic rules applied to D-structure. Phonetic Form and Logical Form are the levels of phonetic interpretation (i.e. sounds) and semantic interpretation (i.e. meaning) associated with a given D-structure and S-structure.

D-structure and S-structure are related by a concept called move-alpha. This means that between the D-structure and S-structure of a language, some component of the sentence is
moved to get a sentence that is grammatically acceptable. This concept is left over from TG, a theory which explained all aspects of grammar through numerous transformational rules. However, GB has abandoned these specific rules, identifying some of them as illegal within the abilities of language and explaining the others through the general rule move-alpha. For this paper, the move-alpha rule is extremely important because it is the key to the relationship between D-structure and S-structure, which must explain the connection between active and passive sentences. In an attempt to understand these linguistic ideas, especially those which apply to passive constructions, one must have a slight understanding of GB theory. What follows is (hopefully) a painless introduction to these ideas.

The move-alpha rule is described as "move anything anywhere", as opposed to situation specific rules, such as those found in TG. But the "move anything anywhere" idea is actually much more restricted than it sounds. What can be moved and where it can be moved to are dictated by independent principles of grammar, principles which constrain the movement of an element. A constraint is "something which is part of the grammar which disallows certain logical possibilities in the data." (Sells, p.25) The details of GB describe these constraints.

The biggest issue controlling movement in a language has to do with case-marking of nouns. On the surface, English has little case-marking, as opposed to a language like German, where nouns are strongly marked for case. However, whether the case-marking is superficially obvious or not, it is still extremely important for syntactic theory, and is as much a part of English as it is a part of German. Case includes, in most languages, nominative, accusative, dative and genitive, terms which were frequently found in the educational literature. The issue now is not so much which case when and where, but the relationship between case marking and nouns in grammatical sentences--or, how nouns get case.

In GB, as in traditional grammars, case can be assigned only by specific elements in a sentence. The condition for assigning case must be met in order to produce a well-formed sentence, and in many instances, movement is necessary between D- and S-structure to
establish these conditions. The following conditions summarize the possible environments for case-assignment to a noun phrase (NP) in English:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Case-assigner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>subject of tensed clause</td>
<td>nominative</td>
<td>tensed VP (verb phrase)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possessive NP in an NP</td>
<td>genitive</td>
<td>noun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>object of verb</td>
<td>accusative</td>
<td>verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>object of preposition</td>
<td>accusative</td>
<td>preposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subject of tenseless clause</td>
<td>*--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Van Riemsdijk, page 229)

* Note here that tenseless clauses, i.e. clauses whose verb is an infinitive, cannot assign case at all.

This chart does not give all the possibilities, however, because in German certain verbs take dative or genitive objects; likewise, certain prepositions assign dative or genitive case. Nevertheless, one can see the possible case assigners in a language. Verbs are, by far, the most powerful case assigners, for they can assign case to their internal arguments (such as objects) as well as to their external argument, the subject. Prepositions often take the responsibility for assigning case, and as seen above, nouns can only assign case in the instance of possessives (the kid's nostril).

One helpful way to visualize concepts like case assignment is through tree diagrams, which depict another element of GB--X' (pronounced X-bar) Theory. This theory deals with the structure of a sentence with respect to groups of words and their "head". The head of a linguistic constituent is that word or category which controls its related elements and becomes especially important in complex sentences. For example, the head of a noun phrase (NP) is the noun, the head of a verb phrase (VP) is the verb. These ideas are often represented in tree diagrams of the phrase or sentence, as seen below:
Det stands for determiner, and refers to words like the, a, and an. The N, disaster, is the head of this NP, and the NP is the maximal projection (i.e. the highest node of the constituent) for this phrase. The case for this NP would be assigned depending on its location within the rest of the sentence. The prepositional phrase (PP) is part of the NP constituent, and the N' node (from X' Theory) is simply a level between the phrase and the head, which allows for branching of other constituents.

The tree diagrams and the ideas of control and government are especially important with respect to verb phrases (VP). In English, an important element of the VP is the category INFL, which stands for inflection. This category shows whether the verb is marked for tense, which ends up determining how much power the verb has for assigning case. Verbs which are +TENSE (i.e. finite verbs) assign case to their subjects, which allows a sentence like:

```
S
  NP
    VP
      INFL
        V'
          V
  my dog [+ tense] escape(d)
```

1The S at the maximal projection in this sentence stands for Sentence, and under syntactic theory, S breaks down into an NP and a VP.
In contrast to the tensed, finite sentence above, a sentence with an verb which is -TENSE (i.e. an infinitive) cannot assign case to its subject.

1)*My dog to escape.

Ungrammatical sentences (commonly marked in linguistic literature with an asterisk) occur, as seen in this case, when the subject is not being assigned case.

Another issue in GB is theta-theory. Theta-theory (theta for "thematic role") deals with the arguments of a verb, and is concerned, like case assignment, with how and why elements are related the way they are. Theta-theory labels NPs in a sentence according to their semantic role in the sentence. The following are some commonly assumed theta-roles:

(a) THEME (or PATIENT)=Entity undergoing the effect of some action
   (Clara fell over)
(b) AGENT (or ACTOR)=Instigator of some action
   (Sam bit Michael)
(c) EXPERIENCER=Entity experiencing some psychological state
   (Mary was disgusted)
(d) BENEFACTIVE=Entity benefitting from some action
   (Jim bought some flowers for Ora)
(e) INSTRUMENT=Means by which something comes about
   (Catherine sprayed the parade with a hose)
(f) LOCATIVE=Place in which something is situated or takes place
   (Briana sat down in a puddle)
(g) GOAL=Entity towards which something moves
   (Dave passed the kaleidoscope to Will)
(h) SOURCE=Entity from which something moves
   (The girlfriend returned from Germany)
   (Radnor, p.373)

Each NP in a grammatical sentence bears only one theta-role, and each theta-role is assigned to only one argument in a sentence. Take the following sentence:

Christina destroyed her brussel sprouts.

In this sentence "Christina" is the agent and only the agent. She cannot be anything besides the agents, and she cannot be anything in addition to the agent. This principle is known as the Theta Criterion (Chomsky 1981, p.36), which also says that between the different grammatical levels in GB (D- and S-structure), theta roles remain constant.
Theta-roles are special precisely because they remain constant even if the constituent structure of the sentence changes. That is, even when movement occurs, the arguments retain their semantic relationship to the sentence. For this reason, it can be argued that thematic roles of an argument are defined before the argument is realized in the sentence, either at the D- or S-structure. Linguists explain this phenomenon as something which happens at the lexical level. Thus, another principle is identified, known as the Projection Principle: Syntactic representations, or syntactic structures, must be projected from the Lexicon, in that they observe the subcategorization properties of lexical items.

These subcategorization properties refer to various characteristics of a lexical item, in addition to identifying the thematic roles of its arguments. Most basic of all, the lexical entry for a word specifies its categorial information, i.e. whether the word is an N (noun), A (adj or adv), P (preposition), V (verb), etc. Second, in the lexicon a word is specified for its subcategorization information, i.e. the categories which an item requires as its complements. Every word requires specific elements to be grammatical, as demonstrated by the following examples, illustrating verbs and the kinds of constituents they require:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Subcategorizes for:</th>
<th>Example:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>watch</td>
<td>NP</td>
<td>He watched the race.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*He watched yesterday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>take</td>
<td>NP, PP (optional)</td>
<td>Mani took the brownies up the stairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mani took his final.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>put</td>
<td>NP, PP</td>
<td>I put your tooth in the orange juice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*I put your tooth.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, it is obvious that grammatical sentences are affected by elements that precede even the first combination of words into sentences.

As mentioned above, assigning case to all NPs is the most important requirement, which often leads to movement. The passive construction, under the explanation of GB, is formed by a movement rule because the NP following the verb cannot receive case in its position at the D-structure. If this NP could receive case, then English would allow sentences like:

2)*Was eaten the cake.
One might argue that this sentence is ungrammatical because it lacks a subject, but even with a dummy subject, the sentence is ungrammatical:

3)*There was eaten the cake.

These problematical sentences indicate that something about the passive participle prevents it from assigning case to its object. There is a theory that the passive participle behaves more like a noun or adjective than a verb, and as mentioned above in the case-theory section, nouns and adjectives cannot, under normal circumstances, assign case. The passive participle has lost its case assigning power, and therefore, the NP following the verb in D-structure must find somewhere else to receive case.

The best possibility for this is in the subject position. First of all, the subject position is empty, and therefore available to receive the NP if it is moved. Second of all, the subject position CAN be assigned nominative case by the verb, even if it has lost its power to assign case to the internal arguments. The only requirement for a verb 'to assign case to its external argument is that it be tensed, which passive verbs are. The following sentence demonstrates the situation at the D-structure:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
S \\
\downarrow \\
NP \\
\downarrow \\
[ EC ] \\
\downarrow \\
[+TENSE] \\
\downarrow \\
AUX \quad \downarrow \\
\quad \quad \downarrow \\
be \quad \quad \downarrow \\
\quad \quad \quad \downarrow \\
stolen \quad \quad \quad \downarrow \\
\quad \quad \quad \quad \downarrow \\
the cake \quad \quad \quad \quad \downarrow \\
\quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \downarrow \\
by me
\end{array}
\]

The [EC] under the first NP stands for Empty Category. Under the move-alpha rule, the NP "the cake" moves from object position into the empty category NP at the beginning of the sentence, rendering an S-structure like this:
Thus, the problem of case assignment in passive sentences is taken care of through the move-alpha phenomenon.

Although the passive verb loses its ability to assign case to its object, the object, by the Projection Principle, is still very much a part of the verb. The verb *stolen*, in the lexicon, subcategorizes for an NP agent and an NP theme, as seen in the active sentence:

4) I stole the cake.

\[\text{AGENT} \text{stole} \text{ THEME} \]

Under the Projection Principle, these thematic arguments remain with the verb, whether it is passive or active. In the following sentence, the NP "the cake" remains the theme, even though the move-alpha rule has been applied to the sentence.

5) The cake was stolen by me.

\[\text{THEME} \text{was stolen} \text{ AGENT} \]

Luckily, a verb which cannot assign case to its object can also not assign a thematic role to its subject, which satisfies the theta criterion: each argument bears only one theta role. (Van Riemsdijk, p.248)

The principles which form the passive construction in English also apply to the passive construction in German. At the D-structure the object of the passive verb is in a position
where it cannot receive case. Therefore, it must move to the available and empty position of subject, where it can be assigned the nominative case. At the D-structure, a German passive sentence might look like this one:

\[
\begin{align*}
S &\
  \quad NP &\
  \quad [\text{EC}] &\
  \quad +\text{INFL} &\
  \quad [+\text{TENSE}] &\
  \quad \text{AUX} &\
  \quad \text{werden} &\
  \quad \text{V'} &\
  \quad \text{NP} &\
  \quad \text{der Maler} &\
  \quad \text{V} &\
  \quad \text{gerettet} &\
  \quad [\text{be} \quad \text{the painter} \quad \text{saved}] &\
\end{align*}
\]

The combination of the AUX *werden* and the past participle *gerettet* mark the sentence as being a passive one, leaving *der Maler* in a position which is unmarked for case. As in English, the ability of the verb to assign accusative case to its object is lost when the verb becomes passive. But the subject position in German plays the same role as it does in English, and is therefore available to receive the object when it moves under the move-alpha rule. Because the subject position is an external argument, the constituent can still receive nominative case, making a well-formed sentence when the object lands there. After the move-alpha rule has been applied, the S-structure looks like this:
Here we have a well-formed sentence where the D-structure object receives case and is able to retain its theta-role from the active sentence.

A major difference between English and German passives concerns verbs which take double objects, an indirect object and a direct object. These verbs were discussed in Section II as verbs which take dative objects. Some examples of these types of verbs in English are: give, bring, take, teach, show. The following sentence gives an example of a verb which takes two objects:

6) They offered me a reward.

When sentence 6 is passivized, the first person pronoun goes through a case change, from dative to nominative case, and is allowed to become the subject of the passive sentence. A perfectly acceptable passive sentence can then be formed with the indirect object as the subject.

7) I was offered a reward.

If there was no case change of the indirect object, the sentence would be ungrammatical:

8) *Me was offered a reward.

However, a passive sentence cannot be formed with the accusative object in the subject position.
9) A reward was offered me.

In English, a passive verb, although it is able to internally assign case to its accusative argument if the verb is a double object verb, it cannot internally assign case to its dative object. So something special about GB explains that the constraint on case assignment is not just that the passive voice takes away the verb's ability to assign case to one of its objects, but precisely to its dative object in a double object construction.

In German, dative verbs pose something of a problem for GB because of the restraints of case marking. As mentioned, when a verb is passivized, it loses its ability to assign case to its object. Therefore, the object must move into subject position where it can receive nominative case. But in German, the dative object can move into subject position and continues to receive case from the verb as an internal argument, even though the verb is passive.

10) Mir wurde geholfen.
    me was helped

There are many puzzling aspects of this type of sentence. First of all, there appears to be no subject in this sentence even though it is usually assumed that German sentences must have a subject. Secondly, even though the word is in the external object position, it receives dative case instead of nominative case. A final problem with this construction is that it can be given a dummy subject to form an impersonal passive.

11) Es wurde mir geholfen.
    it was me helped

This type of sentence challenges GB because es has no theta-role in the sentence, and it also appears to be receiving case from the passive verb. This means that the passive verb can assign case to both its external argument and its internal argument. This does not fit any of the observations made about passive verbs and remains a problem for GB theorists to work on.

The questions concerning impersonal passives are further complicated by the fact that a passive sentence in German allows a dummy subject es as well as a regular subject:
In this sentence, there are two NPs in the nominative case, which is not supposed to be allowed in a grammatical sentence. Obviously the second NP *viele Bomben* is the external object of the NP because this NP which determines whether the verb is singular or plural. But this leaves nothing to assign case to *es*, a problematic circumstance. At this point in time, there is plenty of discussion and research being done in an attempt to explain these constructions, but no definitive explanation has been presented.

In the past three decades, revolutionary changes have occurred in the field of syntax, leading up to the development of many syntactic theories, including that of GB, the leading theory. Despite the fact that certain constructions pose a problem for it, the theory does seem to offer many accurate explanations of language structure. Ultimately, syntacticians may be able to prove that these theories of grammatical competence do indeed characterize the genetic aspect of language, enabling humans to characterize the process of language acquisition. Although many people still challenge these proposals, the observations made by linguists can, and have been, applied to other fields in the world. One such field is that of foreign language teaching, and Section IV will now examine the potential for the application of this syntactic theory.
IV. Comparing Linguistic Theory and Educational Theory

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, following the exponential development of Transformational Grammar in linguistic theory, linguistics and educational theory became closely connected in the area of language teaching. The developments in the linguistic theory were thought to be the key to unlock the questions of foreign language teaching, and an attempt was made to bring the linguistic theory into the classroom to aid language teachers. This approach followed two major foreign language teaching methods from the previous century. The oldest method, dating back to the seventeenth century, was known as the grammar-translation method. (Higgs, p.2) This method involved teaching rules, which students were expected to memorize and apply to exercises in order to master a language. However, this method limited proficiency in a language merely to grammar and translation and never taught students any verbal skills.

This limitation in students' abilities became acutely obvious during World War II, when people realized the advantages of being able to communicate in a foreign language. This concern, in addition to the prominent behaviorist theories in psychology at the time, led to the development of the audiolingual method. Under this approach, students spent their time doing verbal drills with the teacher, attempting to form habits based on mimicry. (Krashen 1982, p. 3) This theory, according to Krashen, failed because it was not a theory of language acquisition that developed the pedagogical methods, and therefore could not achieve results concerning language acquisition.

When syntactic theory began to gain popularity, teaching methodologies soaked it up in an attempt to fill the void in foreign language pedagogy.

Language teachers as well found transformational generative grammar to be relevant to their concerns. Disillusioned with behaviorist-inspired teaching methods like the audiolingual method and programmed instruction, many welcomed Chomsky's theory, whose emphasis on the creative aspect of language and its freedom from stimulus control seemed to encourage a more active role for the learner. (Newmeyer 1986, p.53)
The theory was commonly used in textbooks, which applied the TG rules to explanations of
the grammar, often through very technical language. The following passage was found in the
introduction chapter of a language textbook from the 1960s:

Grammar is a set of phrase structure rules for the derivation of simple active
declarative sentences, combined with a set of transformational rules which,
when applied to the sentences derived by the phrase structure rules, add to,
subtract from, or modify the order within them, or combine them in complex
ways. (Stockwell, p.13)

Supporters of this approach to foreign language learning claimed that this type of learning
would provide the student with a broad and solid base for learning the new language, and
extend even to the study of literature.

There is, therefore, no ground for the apprehension often manifested by
teachers of foreign literatures, that the linguistic approach will in some way
impair their students' ability to read, understand, and appreciate literary works,
or will prejudice their students against literature. On the contrary, a student
who has been given a completely linguistically oriented training in the target-
language will have a greater ability to appreciate the foreign literature than any
other. (Hall, p. 126)

However, incorporating TG into language teaching made great demands on the
teachers who were expected to be able to present the theory as well as its application. Most of
them did not have training in TG, which made it extremely difficult to pass on to students. In
addition to the teachers' lack of training in TG, Krashen also claims that "TG failed because it
was a theory of the product, the adult's competence, and not a theory of how the adult got that
competence. It is not a theory of the process of language acquisition." (Krashen 1982, p.6)

During the 1970s, new approaches were introduced which focused on the different
learning patterns of students and allowed more for individuality among teachers and students.
(Higgs, p.21). Through all of this, grammar has remained an identifiable aspect of foreign
language, and is often a part of the discussion on how to teach a foreign language. Therefore,
the basic question concerning linguistic theory remains: how are the advances made in
theoretical linguistics to be applied to the area of teaching a foreign language?

There is an amazingly wide field of linguistics that can be studied and developed
without regard to practical application, and OB is, in many ways, one of these areas. But it is
the practical application that actually affects people and their lives. Presumably, if linguists were concerned with the process of language acquisition in the classroom, then they would look there for the data to make their claims about language competence. But linguists look not at the classroom, they look at the native speaker as their subject. This is because they want to form a model of linguistic competence, and the language skills in the foreign language classroom are often far from competent. The fact that second language learners make even more mistakes than children learning their first language suggests that second language acquisition is a conscious learning process, not an innate one like first language learning. The difference between the processes of first and second language learning is further demonstrated by the fact that the "experience" of learning one's first language does not make learning the second language any easier. Thus, the two types of language learning must be separate events. This means then that there are severe limitations to how much linguistic theory can be applied to foreign language teaching. An examination of the goals and specifics of both linguistic and educational theory shows that linguistic theory can only be applied to education up to a certain point.

Linguistics is in many ways a seriously intellectual pursuit. Syntax, in particular, aims to define something that most people take for granted. However, the linguist's definition of this language competence does not spell out grammatical rules, it spells out language potentials and generalizes characteristics over many rules and options. In second language learning, being able to identify grammatical rules is important since people who are just learning a language need that kind of access to the new language. So the closer GB gets to identifying UG—the more distant from classroom applications it becomes. The following description of GB begins to point out where the theory departs from being useful in the classroom:

A very important aspect of GB is that it assumes that there are no construction-specific rules...So, for example, Passive essentially moves objects to make them subjects; it does not move objects and make them prepositional objects. Exactly the wrong thing to do, as far as GB is concerned, is to set up a rule, which you call Passive, which says to make an object a subject. The GB point of view is not that movement to the subject must be specified, but rather that movement to any other position must be prevented. (Sells, p.22)
If adolescents--or even adults--are presented with rules for learning languages, the rules must be kept simple. The rules are used by the student at the beginning of the foreign language acquisition to process very simple sentences, especially when speaking. The students must be able to call up these rules quickly and easily and combine them to express thoughts. The GB rule for the German passive given above is far from explaining the operation through the simplest and most accessible means. Rather, as Sells mentions, it deals with the lack of other options, and includes details about case assignment and theta criterion, thus explaining how and why the object moves into subject position. But this kind of rule is inaccessible when a novice language learner is creating his or her simple sentences. GB explains why grammatical rules work the way they do, but foreign language learners do not need to be concerned with why constructions work the way they do, just that they exist.

Despite these rifts, linguistics has successfully contributed to the area of foreign language learning in many ways. First of all, in order to write the grammar books which present the passive, and other constructions, to beginners, someone must first sit down and identify the passive construction in German. This means establishing correct word order, categorizing the verb tenses, and explaining the semantic distinctions between active and passive sentences. The linguist can take these observations and apply them to GB to test the theory, explain the theory or demonstrate the theory, but the language learner can take them alone to help him or her form passive sentences.

The decision of how much GB theory to include in the presentation of the passive to a non-native speaker falls on the textbook author, and perhaps the curriculum designer. These people must act as a filter, deciding how much information to present so that the greatest number of students learn the most appropriate amount of material. In order to identify the paradigm that describes the verb conjugations, someone must organize the tenses. In order to note the exceptions, someone must realize that one verb form does not follow the pattern, so that the students, who apply the rules as widely as possible, know when to alter this process. In order to correctly use the different prepositions that go with different agents, someone must
identify the semantic classes that affect the choice of preposition. These types of
classifications and observations of the language are exactly what linguists are needed to do.
Native speakers often cannot determine these characteristics of the language they speak
fluently, so someone who can classify and organize examples into generalized rules can then
explain the language to someone who has no familiarity with it.

As mentioned in the review of the textbooks, many linguistic terms are useful in
presenting a foreign language. The most basic classification of lexical categories—nouns,
verbs, adjectives, etc.—is widely used to discuss language. The distinction between these
elements of language is extremely important because their classification helps know how to
treat them in the foreign language. Syntactic theory takes these classifications much further
than the educational literature does, but being able to identify their existence is key to
beginning to understand how a language is put together. For many language learners, their
understanding of these lexical categories first comes when they study a foreign language. Just
as it is hard for a native speaker to identify governing rules in his or her language, so is it
harder to notice and understand lexical distinctions in a native language than in a foreign
language, where one must consciously think about the differences.

The same phenomenon occurs with grammatical categories. Sometimes students are
introduced to grammatical categories in English classes (or native language classes), but
learning about subjects and objects and prepositional phrases in language classes often makes
the distinction easier to identify. Foreign language instruction cannot get by without these
terms, since case endings, pronouns, relative clauses, and passive sentences, among other
things, can only be described using these concepts. The identification of these terms is to the
credit of linguistics. Through linguistics, people have been able to state that there are things
called cases, and describe how they work. However, linguists working with GB theory go
on to explain these concepts in terms of their relationship to government by X' nodes. These
are concepts that never make it to the educational level, and should not because they require
another type of language processing to understand. But the basic notions of grammatical case
are important and useful in foreign language presentation.

In the description of the passive, thematic roles also become valuable. Once again, it
is only the simple/elementary ideas of thematic roles and theta criterion which apply to the
presentation of the language in a language classroom, but as seen in the literature review, these
terms are helpful in explaining the passive. The ability of linguists to identify and classify
different theta roles can be applied to foreign language presentation, even if the reasons and
particulars of thematic roles do not enter the discussion.

The void between linguistic theory and educational theory in foreign language
presentation becomes quite clear when one looks at the roots of the passive construction. In
both the textbooks for German and GB theory, the passive is compared and explained through
other "underlying" sentences. In the language textbooks, the passive is compared to the active
voice. The explanations of the passive incorporate the active sentences, and a connection is
drawn. This assists the student in his or her semantic understanding of the construction, since
the sentences express almost the same idea, but focus on different aspects and provide
different interpretations. This comparison to the active sentence also gives the student
somewhat of a base for understanding a complex and uncommon construction, which he or
she often may not really grasp in the native language. Drawing a parallel between the active
and the passive sentence also helps the student see what element gets the nominative case, and
how to learn the passive verbs.

This type of comparison appears to be an application of theoretical linguistics since it
discusses the relationship between two grammatical constructions. But the GB explanation of
the passive has actually nothing to do with this relationship. In GB, the underlying sentence
for a passive sentence is not an active sentence, but a passive sentence with its object in an
illegal position. The movement which occurs, the transformation of the sentence into
something recognizable and acceptable, has nothing to do with the parallel active sentence.
This fundamental difference between the linguistic approach to the passive and the educational
approach to the passive points out that these two areas deal with grammar on very different levels.

Although GB, and other syntactic theories, cannot be applied to language learning directly, linguistics does contribute a great amount to foreign language instruction. Grammar, along with vocabulary and pronunciation, makes up a foreign language, and a concept of grammar must be a part of the conscious language learning process. While a person can speak his or her native tongue without a single idea about that language's grammar, when a person learns a language in a classroom, grammar provides the initial boundaries, supports and possibilities for using the language. For some students, their understanding of the grammar will become the most important foothold throughout the language acquisition process. For other students, it will only be used in the beginning, and they will eventually learn that other concepts help them more. But the initial approach into the language must be presented methodically for the student to feel grounded. When complicated constructions, such as the passive, are presented, the grammatical terms and rules become especially important.

In the classroom, it is most important that the teacher understand the grammar of the language and the rules that establish this grammar. He or she needs this partly because it will be the most successful way to teach some of the students. But the teacher also needs to understand the grammar because grammar answers the "Why?" questions which some students are bound to ask. A teacher needs to know that a passive sentence will always be ungrammatical if the student attempts to use an accusative object with a passive verb. Being able to point out these characteristics enables students to understand why a sentence is incorrect, and provides an understanding that can be applied to the next sentence. Foreign language teachers who are native speakers and have not had training in the grammar of their language are for this reason often at a disadvantage in their classroom. Their inability to identify these rules means that the students have nothing to grasp onto except the teacher's intuitive, wired-in linguistic competence, represented by GB. But the teacher cannot pass that on to the class, not through GB, not through examples, not through ESP.
It is important for teachers to know and understand grammar, and it is important for textbooks to present the grammar of the language. To understand the grammar, however, one does not need to understand the linguistic models of how language accounts for its many grammatical rules. The students can learn to use a language simply by memorizing rules and practicing applying those rules, and the teachers can teach the grammar without knowing how Chomsky represents this grammatical competence. For some people, grammar is a fascinating subject matter. These are the teachers and the students for whom GB might explain more than it confuses and assist foreign language learning. "It should be clear, however, that teaching complex facts about the second language is not language teaching, but rather is 'language appreciation' or linguistics." (Krashen, p.120)
V. Uses of the Passive Voice

Language is a powerful tool. Because languages offer options, people have the potential to affect and manipulate others through conscious decisions about how they present their thoughts and ideas. In writing, as well as in speech, people choose how they want to express themselves, usually because they want to be understood or interpreted in a certain way. With respect to possibilities in language, the passive voice can be a loaded option because it is so rarely used. Thus, when it is used, it is for a specific, meaningful reason—especially when it is consciously chosen to allow the speaker or writer to avoid mentioning the agent. The construction can be used in other circumstances, but the instances where it is consciously chosen to affect the presentation of material are the most interesting.

People are often taught to avoid the passive voice because it is a less exact, less articulate way to express themselves. In evaluating writing, people often look for passive verbs as something to correct, thus improving the paper. However, the passive is commonly accepted and widely used in certain types of writing, as this textbook explains: "The passive is used very often in technical and scientific writing, where an impersonal style is frequently preferred." (Moeller 1991, p.357) In contrast, the active voice is almost always used in everyday conversation. This is probably one of the reasons the textbooks downplay the importance of learning the passive. Another reason is that the construction is difficult to learn, and might become frustrating to students. By stating from the beginning that the construction is not very common, the textbook sets the students up for success: either they will be able to master the construction, or if they cannot, they won't get upset about it. Some textbooks preface the unit on the passive with such a statement: "You will only be expected to recognize and understand passive verb phrases now, not to form them." (Moeller, 1979, p.375) This guarantees that students will not give their full attention to the issue, but if the teacher has determined this as the goal of the unit, then there will not be any conflict in the unit, and the students will simply learn only certain aspects of the passive voice.
The passive is, however, very much a part of the German language, appearing in many different types of written works. Being able to read, understand, interpret and evaluate writing in a foreign language is a major accomplishment for the non-native speaker, and as will be shown, familiarity with the passive can be applied to many areas of German literature. The Duden Taschenbuch Wie Schreibt Man Gutes Deutsch? [How Does One Write Good German?] explains: "Unsere Sprache stellt nun noch ein anderes, bequemes Mittel bereit, die Nennung des Ichs zu umgehen: das Passive." (Seibicke, p.17) [Our language provides yet another convenient method for avoiding naming the I: the passive.] This implies that in certain circumstances, the construction is valuable, meaningful, and appropriate. Ruth Brend in her article "Passive Functions" suggests the four following abilities of this mood:

1. to avoid or absolve ambiguity with reference to the agent;
2. to place emphasis on the action or on the goal of an action, rather than on the agent;
3. to maintain thematicity of the principle participant in a narrative (to keep the participant in focus); and
4. to give prominence to a secondary participant. (Brend, p.63)

In order to examine how the passive is actually used in written German, I chose to look at newspapers, non-fiction, and poetry. As mentioned previously, the passive is often found in technical and scientific writing, but since this is widely known, I chose not to investigate the area. I also chose to examine poetry over fiction because poems are shorter than works of fiction, thus each word and each sentence in a poem carries more meaning than it would in a longer work. The lack of examples from prose and drama should not give the impression that there are no examples of passives in these types of works, but rather that they were not included in this study. It should also be noted that I looked only for true, actional passives. I have not included examples of statal passives, nor examples of alternatives to the passives, although there were many in all the works I looked at.

Newspapers often use the passive voice in their presentation of news stories, as well as in editorials. The use of the passive allows journalists to protect sources, avoid mentioning ambiguities, and focus on actions, rather than those who performed the actions. I looked at
two German newspapers, the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* and the *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, beginning with issues from January, 1991, the month the Persian Gulf War began. In looking at the front pages of these newspapers from the last three months, I found passive constructions in every issue. This proves that even though the passive construction is known to occur less often than active constructions, it is nonetheless a part of many Germans' daily life. The following examples demonstrate some of the occasions where the passive voice was used.

In the January 12/13, 1991, issue of the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* an article on the activities of Soviet troops in Lithuania appeared.

Sowjetische Truppeneinheiten sind am Freitag nachmittag massiv in der litauischen Hauptstadt Vilnius aufmarschiert. Nach bisherigen Berichten wurden das Pressehaus und das im Aufbau befindliche litauische Verteidigungsministerium besetzt...Inoffiziell werden sechs Verletzte und, nach einer anderen Quelle, ein Todesopfer gemeldet..

[On Friday afternoon, Soviet troop units were massively deployed¹ in the Lithuanian capital city of Vilnius. According to present reports, the Press Center (?) and the Department of Defense, which is under construction, were occupied. Unofficially, six wounded, and according to another source, one casualty are reported...]

The author of this article chooses to use the passive, it appears, to protect sources and/or to shift the focus of the statements. The article mentions these ambiguous sources ("nach bisherigen Berichten" and "nach einer anderen Quelle"), but the reader is not granted the privilege of knowing who or what these sources are. This leaves certain questions unanswered, such as: Are the sources in a position to know what actually happened? Can they be trusted? Why might they need to be protected? The passive construction *wurden besetzt* [were occupied] is also a loaded choice of presentation. Who has actually occupied these departments? Is the newspaper trying to avoid laying blame on some party, or is it

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¹ This is an example of the statal passive, which was not included in this study. The difference between statal and actional passives is that in the statal passive the activity has already occurred and has been completed. The actional passive, on the other hand, is used when the event is still in the process of happening.
actually unknown who has called for this invasion? In addition to focussing on the events, the passive constructions in this passage leave many questions about the event unanswered.

In examining the front pages of newspapers from the last few months, it became very obvious that the passive voice is a big part of wartime. The sentences referring to the war sounded like things I heard all during January, February and March. The following are a few examples of such language:

Zudem soll ein weitere Pilot der alliierten Streitkräfte **gefangengenommen worden sein.** *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, January 26/27, 1991

[In addition, another pilot of the allied armed forces **has supposedly been taken prisoner.**]

Seit Tagen schon **wird der Krieg am Golf nicht mehr nur in der Luft geführt.** *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, February 23, 1991

[Since a few days ago the war in the Gulf is no longer **being fought** only in the air.]

In reference to Saddam's 1977 political program publication *(Programmschrift)*:

Mit anderen Worten: Israel muß **zerstört werden.** *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, February 23, 1991

[In other words, Israel must be **destroyed.**]

In the military and political worlds, the passive is an extremely useful, and used, construction. Especially in times of conflict, the passive can be used by officials, reporters, and newspapers to present facts cautiously and to focus on safe issues rather than potentially upsetting ones.

The second area examined for uses of the passive was non-fiction. For this section, I chose to use Hitler's autobiography *Mein Kampf*, particularly the section on the roots of his anti-semitism. Of all the people in German history, Hitler has most affected the country's history, identity, literature, music, and philosophy, among many areas. In fact, his influence and impact reaches beyond Germans and Germany to the rest of the world. Because of the incredible manipulation and control which this man was capable of, examining his language.

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1 This is an interesting sentence when viewed next to President Bush’s political program for the Gulf War: “Kuwait must be liberated.”
particularly the use of the passive, reveals the most important examples in history where passive constructions might be found in German literature.

In the twelve-page passage which I examined, of the 781 which make up the book, there were nine examples of passive constructions. As previously discussed, the passive can, like all language, be a manipulative device, as well as be used to concentrate on certain topics over others. The most meaningful examples in this passage of Mein Kampf show the passive being used to create images, to avoid blame, and to avoid responsibility. Whether or not Hitler intended to achieve these impressions is not known. Nevertheless, carefully examining the passive language has led to these observations.

In this passage Hitler describes his early contact with Jews which led to his anti-Semitic feelings. He writes about a young Jewish boy he knew in high school, and his choice of passive creates a meaningful image.

In der Realschule lernte ich wohl einen jüdischen Knaben kennen, der von uns allen mit Vorsicht behandelt wurde... (Hitler 1938, p.55)

This passage is translated in a Reynal & Hitchcock edition as follows:

At the Realschule I became acquainted with a Jewish boy whom we all treated with circumspection...(Hitler 1939, p.66)

However, this translation loses the passive construction der von uns allen mit Vorsicht behandelt wurde. Literally, this clause says: "who was handled with circumspection by all of us". In preserving the passive, this sentence creates the image that the schoolboys did not consider the Jewish boy to be at the same level as them. The verb wurde behandelt (was handled) sounds like someone handling an animal rather than a human. These types of images allow one to see an underlying--and even sometimes explicit--conviction of Hitler's which is especially relevant with hindsight of the events of World War II.

The second example of the passive shows the construction being used to avoid placing blame. At this point in the text, Hitler is writing about his evaluation of the situation of the Jews after he moved to Linz. He writes, "Daß sie deshalb verfolgt worden waren..." (Hitler 1938, p.55) [That they had been persecuted for that reason...]. The reason
referred to here is the Jews' religion, and Hitler goes on to say that he began to reexamine the reasons for their persecution in his own mind once he determined that religion was not the only thing separating Jews from himself. It is important to notice that the passive allows Hitler to think, write, and discuss a persecution without mentioning who is doing it. Whether this was due his denial of the situation or a conscious decision to present the facts this way, the passive language allows him to express the thought this way.

The third interesting use of the passive in this section occurs when Hitler describes the influence of outside forces on his thoughts and beliefs.

**Bestärkt wurde** ich in dieser meiner Meinung durch die, wie mir schien, unendlich würdigere Form, in der die wirklich große Presse auf all diese Angriffe antwortet oder sie, was mir noch dankenswerter vorkam, gar nicht erwähnte, sondern einfach toschwieg. (Hitler 1938, p.56)

[My own opinion was strengthened\(^1\) by what seemed to me the much more dignified manner in which the really great press replied to all these attacks, or, what I thought even more worthy of respect, it did not mention them or ignored them completely.] (Hitler 1939, p.68)

Wie viele meiner vorsätzlichen Anschauungen wurden aber durch eine solche Änderung meiner Stellungnahme zur christlich-sozialen Bewegung umgeworfen! (Hitler 1938, p.59)

[How many of my deliberate opinions were thrown over by my change of attitude towards the Christian Socialist movement!] (Hitler 1939, p.72)

These passages show how little responsibility Hitler took for the formation of his ideas. He presents the situation as if to say there was no alternative to the way he thought because of what he saw and experienced. These decisions in the presentation of his thoughts determine how the reader reacts to what he is saying. In certain instances where this book might have been used for propaganda, the passive constructions were probably successful in manipulating the thoughts of the readers. Seeing the uses of the passive in such a major work by such an influential man demonstrate the importance of this construction, and language construction in general, on impacting the past, the present, and the future.

\(^1\)Strengthened is my word choice, replacing supported.
The final area I looked at for examples of passive constructions was poetry. I chose to look for examples in modern poetry, which ended up being quite appropriate and in keeping with the developing themes of politics and war. After World War II, the national identity of Germany was destroyed. As the country and the culture attempted to stand up again after the shame and disillusion following the Holocaust, aspects of the culture such as literature were affected at every level by the war. I have chosen a few of the many poems where passive constructions were found to explore the meaning of this construction through poetry.

The first poem I will look at deals with the issues already mentioned with respect to journalism and newspapers. Written by Heinz Kahlau, it is called "Zeitungen". (See Appendix 1) Kahlau's poem takes one line, "Der Mann wurde verurteilt" [the man was convicted], read in a newspaper, and asks the biggest question formed by a passive sentence: "Wer sprach das Urteil?" [Who pronounced the verdict?] The questions this poem raises go beyond the issue of an agent, but it is interesting that the thought which instigates the issues in the poem is a passive sentence. The author points out that not only does the passive style leave many issues unanswered, but that such a style is typical of newspapers. Although we might ask all of the relevant questions that a passive sentence does not answer, the poem suggests two problems: 1) why are the facts kept from us and what if we can never find out the answers? and 2) what happens if we never ask these questions?

The second poem "Alle Tage" by Ingeborg Bachmann (see Appendix 2) is the opening poem in the anthology Deutsche Lyrik: Gedichte seit 1945. The first line caught my attention, for it is an actional passive blatantly setting the tone for the whole book. "Der Krieg wird nicht mehr erklärt/ sondern fortgesetzt" [the war is no longer being explained/but rather continued]. Immediately, Bachmann sets up a situation where we know that a passive activity has changed, but what it has changed to is equally passive and equally unsatisfying. The passive construction tells the reader that the world of this poem is one where explanations for war have previously been given. However, these explanations have not come from a personal, reliable source, but rather from an unidentifiable authority. This authority has now
ceased to offer the perhaps unconvincing explanations for war, but not because there is no war. The war continues...and the explanations end. The author calls for Geduld [patience] to survive these times. This patience implies a willingness to put up with the lack of information, the unending war, the missing heroes, and the actions which the poor man must suffer with. The opening line of the poem gives the entire first stanza a feeling of passiveness. Not only does the information come to the listener passively, but the listener appears to have resigned himself or herself to accepting the situation passively.

The second and third stanzas both begin with a passive sentence: "Er wird verliehen" [he will be loaned out]. As mentioned in the footnote of the translation, this sentence is somewhat problematic. It appears to refer to the former practice of shipping off professional soldiers to fight other battles, but the referent of Er [he] is ambiguous. The first stanza does not mention a soldier, although it does speak of the hero who is away at battle. However, the pronoun could just as well refer to der Schwache [the poor man/one], mentioned one line after the hero. In any case, this man will be sent away when the drums stop and the enemy disappears, presumably because there is another enemy somewhere else to be fought. Once again, the activity is a passive one. We realize from the passive presentation that the soldier (or whoever) has no say in what happens to him, and no concept of who is responsible for sending him. It becomes simply an activity, the thing to do, rather than the result of a relationship and communication which affects people.

By the end of the third stanza, the passive action taken on this Er have become more of a problem. The poem says that he will be sent away, ultimately and finally (in the last two lines) for failing to follow orders. The impersonal authority suddenly demonstrates its power, its expectations, and its inflexibility. Obviously, the Er can do nothing but passively live under the authority, for any challenge to it will lead to his removal. The poem comments on the world of the speaker, where one is expected to live passively. The reward is minimal, for the country stays at war, the soldiers are never home, and "der Schatten ewiger Rüstung/ den Himmel bedeckt." [the shadow of eternal armament covers the sky]
The final poem with an example of a passive construction is Wolf Biermann's "Nachricht". (See Appendix 3) This poem begins and ends with the following stanza:

Noch findet er statt
der Sonnenaufgang
Die dunkle Nacht, noch
wird sie veranstaltet
[Still it is taking place
the sunrise
The dark night, still
it is being performed]

The position of this passive sentence next to an active sentence with a related theme gives the stanza its powerful message. The author builds up a relationship between these two sentences by using as his topic the beginning and end of the day. The sunrise, he tells us, is still occurring. This thought he expresses with an active sentence. The active verb is one which simply states an activity without implying that anyone is in control of it. The night, however, is described through a passive sentence which immediately makes one question who is performing the activity.

The question of agent with reference to the night is an important aspect of this poems' message. First of all, the sunrise is compared to the night, not the sunset, the usual counterpart for the sunrise. This implies that perhaps the night is not necessarily just the end of the day or the opposite of the sunrise, but another event all together. From the other stanzas in the poem, we learn that the speaker spent the day hearing about wars, persecution and violence, events which "reassured" him that the human species had not ceased to exist. The events that lead him to make this discovery are ones of hatred and destruction--"die dunkle Nacht" [the dark night]. The second, third and fourth stanzas answer the question of who is responsible for these dark nights--the human species. By positioning this thought in the first and last stanza directly after a comment on the beautiful, natural, promising event of the sunrise, the author creates, warns, and provokes thoughts about the situation of our world and us in it.
The passive voice appears in many different kinds of German literature, serving many purposes. The construction can be manipulative, and it can be used for emphasis or imagery. In certain instances, it provides the author with the best possible alternative for presenting the material accurately. The passive also comes in useful when an author wants to concentrate on something besides the agent, or when the agent is ambiguous or general. Whatever the situation, being able to read and understand this construction gives the non-native speaker command of an advanced, meaningful, and valuable construction of German.

These types of examples point out the value of the passive and give everyday examples of its use in the language. Including these types of examples in the foreign language curriculum make the language come alive. Students can see, through newspaper articles, historical documents, and poetry how the construction is used and where it can be used instead of an active sentence. This makes the learning relevant to the world, and at the same time introduces the student to issues in German culture. A unit on the passive can be strengthened through real-world examples even if the language is advanced beyond the student's ability. Simply seeing that the constructions being presented in a textbook exist outside of the textbook makes language learning a more meaningful and probably successful experience for the student.
VI. Conclusion

By looking at the German passive in syntactic theory, foreign language instruction, and German literature, the interconnectedness between these three areas has been demonstrated, and observations and suggestions concerning their relationship have been presented. Foreign language instruction has been influenced and developed through linguistics, and the improvements which linguistics has made in the field will always be appreciated. This paper has shown that the theoretical endeavors of linguists are noble pursuits, but pursuits which cannot be applied directly to foreign language teaching. In the classroom, the presentation of grammatical rules, such as the passive, must be kept simple because second language learning is an active process and must be approached as such. Students of German can be further influenced in their language development by incorporating examples of passive constructions in the curriculum. Although the construction is not used as much as the active voice, it can be found in many primary sources, even when least expected. My four years, three departments, two empty categories and one chance to pull it all together have been well served by the passive, providing an opportunity for the interdisciplinary nature of a liberal arts education to be demonstrated. Let it not be said that the passive should be avoided. While it may not always be chosen well, its role should be appreciated in language. Without it, how would this thesis have been begun? Without it how could this thesis be ended?
APPENDICES
Appendix 1

Zeitungen
von Heinz Kahlau

Am Morgen stand in der Zeitung:
Ein Mann wurde verurteilt.
Für wen und gegen wen?
Wer sprach das Urteil?
Für wen und gegen wen?
In der Zeitung stand nur:
Der Mann wurde verurteilt.
Wem gehörte die Zeitung--
und wem der Mann?

Newspapers
translated by Michael Hamburger

This morning we read in the newspaper:
A man was convicted.
For whom and against whom?
Who pronounced the verdict?
For whom and against whom?
The newspaper only reported;
The man was convicted.
Who owned the newspaper--
and who owned the man?

Notes on the translation: The last two lines
Wem gehörte die Zeitung--
und wem der Mann?
have a different meaning in German for me than the translation offers. I read these lines to mean in English
To whom does the newspaper belong--
and to whom the man?
Appendix 2

Alle Tage
von Ingeborg Bachmann

Der Krieg wird nicht mehr erklärt,
sondern fortgesetzt. Das Unerhörte
ist alltäglich geworden. Der Held
bleibt bei den Kämpfen fern. Der Schwache
ist in die Feuerzonen gerückt.
Die Uniform des Tages ist die Geduld,
die Auszeichnung der armelinge Stern
der Hoffnung über dem Herzen.

Er wird verliehen,
wenn nichts mehr geschieht,
wenn das Trommelfeuer verstummt,
wenn der Feind unsichtbar geworden ist
und der Schatten ewiger Rüstung
den Himmel bedeckt.

Er wird verliehen
für die Flucht von den Fahnen,
für die Tapferkeit vor dem Freund,
für den Verrat unwürdiger Geheimnisse
und die Nichtachtung
jeglichen Befehls.

All the Days
translated by

The war isn't being explained any more,
but continued. The unheard-of
has become everyday. The hero
stays away at the battles. The weak man
is moved into the firezones.
The uniform of the day is patience,
the marking is the poor star
of hope over the heart.

He'll be loaned out,¹
when there's nothing else happening,
when the drumfire falls silent,
when the enemy becomes invisible
and the shadow of eternal armament
covers the sky.

He'll be loaned out
for the flee from the flags
for the bravery before the friend,
for the betrayal of unworthy secrets
and the disregard
of every command.

¹This line was difficult to translate. After discussing it with a native speaker, I learned that
this is a reference from centuries ago, when soldiers were 'rented' out to fight other wars
for other leaders. They were employed as soldiers, and therefore their fighting never came to
an end. However, the last stanza makes me wonder if this interpretation is correct.
Nachricht
von Wolf Beirnann

Noch findet er statt
der Sonnenaufgang
Die dunkle Nacht, noch
wird sie veranstaltet

Erstaunlich! Auch diese Früh fand ich mich wieder
am Leben. Erleichtert auch merkte ich auf den Atem
dicht neben mir: die Erde ist also noch immer bevölkert

Den Radiomeldungen über die neuesten Fortschritte
der kleineren Kriege kann ich beruhigt entnehmen:
Noch dauert an die Existenz der Gattung Mensch

Ausgerottet, lese ich in der Abendzeitung
hat sich heute noch nicht, was da alltäglich
nach Frieden schreit

Noch findet er statt
der Sonnenaufgang
Die dunkle Nacht, noch wird sie veranstaltet

News Item
translated by Michael Hamburg

Still it is taking place
the sunrise
The dark night, still
it is being performed

Astonishing! Early this morning too I found myself
Alive. And relieved I grew aware of the breath
close to me: so the earth is inhabited, still

From the radio reports on the latest progress
of minor wars reassured I can gather:
The species Man has not ceased to exist

Not today, I read in the evening paper
have they exterminated themselves, those who daily
cry out for peace

Still it is taking place
the sunrise
The dark night, still
it is being performed
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