

# ***Otjiherero Passive Sentence Constructions***

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## ***Abstract:***

A passive sentence construction is a grammatical process in which an object noun phrase of an active verb becomes the subject noun phrase of the passive verb, while the subject noun phrase of the active verb is degraded to a prepositional phrase or totally omitted for various reasons such as emphasis and focus. An in-depth investigation of passive sentence construction in Otjiherero has received very little attention so far, as many scholars have concentrated on passive extensions only without explaining how passivization works in Otjiherero. Thus this article focuses on providing a detailed description of Otjiherero passive grammatical features from a descriptive perspective.

## ***Introduction***

'The passive is typically understood as a construction by which the subject of an active clause is demoted to an oblique or remains unexpressed, while the object is promoted to the subject status.' (Kula and Marten nd:1) The promoted subject takes control of the agreement system.

Transforming an active sentence into a passive sentence involves the following five criteria:

- The subject noun phrase (NP<sub>(s)</sub>) in the active sentence is placed at the end of the passive sentence. This criterion is optional.
- The object noun phrase (NP<sub>(o)</sub>) of the active sentence is placed at the beginning of the passive sentence.
- The subject agreement changes in order to agree with the new 'subject' (i.e. now NP<sub>(o)</sub>)
- Passive extension is suffixed to the verb root or a passive verb is used (see section 4).

- A passive preposition *i* is inserted between the verb and NP. (see section 2)

Although the Otjiherero does not have the *ba-* passive like in other Bantu languages, it employs the *-EW-* passive extension, the neutro-passive constructions and inherent passive verbs for passive expressions.

### ***Passive Prepositions***

In standard Otjiherero the passive preposition *i* 'by' is used while the new generation adopted the Oshiwambo passive preposition ***ku***. The passive constructions in Otjiherero differ in passive prepositional phrase according to the speech of the older and younger generation, in the sense that the older generation uses *i* 'by' as the passive preposition while younger generation makes use of ***ku*** 'by'. The older generation considers the ***ku*** preposition to be ungrammatical, but the younger are still using it in their passive constructions and it seems that in certain areas in which Otjiherero is spoken as a native language it became acceptable to certain extent, as few members of the older generation started using it.

In many circumstances the use of the 'foreign' preposition ***ku*** 'by' makes a sentence ambiguous, e.g.

- (1) a. Tate w-e ndji hind-i.  
C1a.My father SM1-PAST OM1ps send-VH.  
'My father sent me.'
- b. Ami mb-a hind-w-a i tate.  
PRON1ps SM1ps-PAST send-PASS-FV by C1a.my father.  
'I was sent by my father.'
- c. Ami mb-a hind-w-a ku tate.  
PRON1ps SM1ps-PAST send-PASS-FV by/to 1a.my father.  
'I was sent by/to my father'
- d. Ami mb-a hind-w-' i tate.  
PRON1ps SMd1ps-PAST send-PASS by 1a.my father.  
'I was sent by my father.'
- e. Ami mba hindu tate.  
PRON1ps SMd1ps-PAST send-PASS 1a.my father.  
'I was sent by my father.'

In quick speech or in the northern Otjiherero dialects the final vowel after the passive extension may be elided as shown in (1d) and the passive preposition

may also be dropped as in (1e).

For the older generation (1c) means 'to my father' because they use *i tate* to mean 'by my father' and *ku tate*. The younger generation uses (1c) to mean either 'by' or 'to my father'. Therefore (1c) is only ambiguous in the speech of the younger generation. The origin of (1c) is assumed to be ascribed to contact with the Oshiwambo speakers who use *ku* to mean both 'by' and 'to', e.g.

- (2)
- a. Onda tumwa **ku** tate  
'I was sent by my father.'
  - b. Onda tumwa **ku** tate.  
'I was sent to my father.'
  - c. Onda tumwa **ku** tate ndi ye ku mama.  
'I was sent by my father to go to my mother.'

In Oshiwambo (2a) and (2b) are identical and make the sentence ambiguous. In order to remove ambiguity they prefer (2c). Therefore it is assumed that the origin of **ku** to mean 'by' in Otjiherero is derived from Oshiwambo.

The older generation jokingly laughs when the younger generation transforms (3a) into passive as in (3b) below, because for them it sounds as if the child was taken and hit against the father.

- (3)
- a. Tate            w-a        ton-o    omu-atje.  
C1a.my father SMd1-PAST beat-VH C1.child.  
'My father beat the child.'
  - b. Omu-atje    w-a        ton-w-a        ku    tate.  
C1.child    SMd1-PAST beat-PASS-FV to C1a.my father.  
'The child was beaten to my father.'

The intention of younger generation by transforming (3a) into (3b) was to mean 'by my father'.

### **3. Passive Extensions**

#### 3.1        -**EW**- extensions (Allomorphs -w- and -iw-)

The use of passive extension (-ew-, -w- or -iw-) promotes the object of an active transitive sentence to its subject position, while the demoted subject, or agent, is omitted or expressed as a passive prepositional phrase introduced by the preposition, as explained above in section 2, although the naming of the agent is obligatory (Möhlig and Kavari 2008:147).

Passive extension -**ew**- is the basic passive morpheme because it is used when the non-high vowels (i.e. **a**, **e** and **o**) occur in the preceding syllable while -**iw**- is used when the high vowels (i.e. **i** and **u**) appear in the preceding syllable.

In many circumstances, the *-e-* or *-i-* in *-ew-* or *-iw-* may be elided because *-w-* is preferred in normal speech, but this elision does not happen in certain combinations of extensions; in contrast to Möhlig and Kavari (2008:147) as well in contrast to Booysen (1982:166). In combination with other extension(s), either *-ew-* or *-iw-* is preferred, depending on the vowel in the preceding syllable, e.g.

- (4) a. ton-asan-ew-a  
beat-REC-PASS-FV  
'beat one another'
- b. ton-is-iw-a  
beat-CAUS-PASS-FV  
'cause to be beaten'
- c. tung-is-iw-a  
build-CAUS-PASS-FV  
'cause to be built'

### 3.2 *Passives of monosyllabic verbs*

Passive in monosyllabic verb stems is formed either by *-ew-*, *-iw-* or *-w-*; without an additional vowel as inaccurately stated by Möhlig and Kavari (2008:147) and correctly illustrated by Booysen (1982:166).

- (5) a. pa 'give' > pewa 'given'
- b. nwa 'drink' > \*nwiwa > nuwa 'drunk'
- c. rwa 'fight' > \*rwiwa > ruwa 'fought'
- d. rya 'eat' > \*ryiwa > \*riiwa > riwa 'eaten'

The above examples show that in verb stems with glides the original high vowel is preserved and the vowel of the passive extension is elided.

In Otjiherero, in certain circumstances the glides *y* and *w* are respectively formed when a high vowel *i* or *u* is followed by another vowel. Therefore the *-i-* in *-iw-* is elided in (5b) to (5d), and in the absence of following vowel the glides fall back to their original form, i.e. *i* and *u* respectively.

## 4. Neutro-passives

In Otjiherero, like in many other Bantu languages, in a neutro-passive construction the demoted subject is never expressed, except in cases when it is combined with the *-EW-* passive extension, as shown in section 6 below in example (10). In certain literature such as in Cole (1955:196) it is called just the neuter, and according to him the neuter signifies that the subject thereof

enters into or is in some state or condition, without indicating the agent of the action, i.e. the thing which brings about that state. In other words the agent is never expressed. The reason for the absence of the agent seems to be that it is probably unknown or just kept a secret. There are two types of neutro-passives as discussed in the subsections below.

#### 4.1 -ek- extension (allomorphs -ik- and -k-)

Möhlig and Kavari (2008:153) and Booyesen (1982:198) incorrectly classify some examples of neutro-passive extension as intransitive extensions. I assume that they were under the impression that because of the fact they do not allow the oblique phrase, they are intransitives. In this article the so-called intransitive extensions are considered to be neutro-passive extensions that do not allow the passive prepositional phrase, because they are semantically and functionally a type of passive extensions as the object of the active form becomes its subject without mentioning the subject of the active form in an oblique phrase. The -ek- is used when preceding syllable contains a non-high vowel while -ik- is used with the high vowels, and -k- results when -e- or -i- is elided.

- (6) a. E-runga r-a mun-ik-a (muna > munika)  
C5.thief SM5-PAST see-NEUT-FV  
'The thief is found/seen.'
- b. O-ndana y-a twi-k-a (twiya > twika)  
C9.calf SM9-PAST blind-NEUT-FV  
'A calf is blinded.'
- c. Oka-ti k-a te-k-a (teya > teka)  
C13.stick SM13-PAST break-NEUT-FV  
'A stick is broken.'
- d. O-mbwa y-a ko-k-a (koza > koka<sup>1</sup>)  
C9.dog SM9-PAST die-NEUT-FV  
'The dog has died.'
- e. Omu-atje w-a seu-[e]k-a (seura > seuka<sup>2</sup>)  
C1-child SM1-RCPAST loose consciousness-NEUT-FV  
'The child lost his/her consciousness.'
- f. O-mbuze y-a zuv-a[r]-[e]k-a (zuv-a > zuvara > zuvaka)  
C9-news SM9-RCPAST hear-NEUT-NEUT-FV  
'The news is heard.'
- g. Ovi-ŋa vy-a zun-ŋ-a[r]-[e]k-a (zun-ŋ-a > zun-ŋ-ara > zun-ŋ-aka)  
C8-thing Sm8-RCPAST mistake-NEUT-NEUT-FV  
'Things are mistaken.'

1 Cf. rambuza > rambuka

2 Cf. pepura > pepuka, haha > hahaura > hahauka, paturura > paturuka

- |    |         |            |          |   |
|----|---------|------------|----------|---|
| h. | O-ndana | y-a        | koto-k-a | (*kota > katora > kotoka <sup>3</sup> ) |
|    | C9-calf | SM9-RCPAST |          | return-NEUT-FV                          |

In example (6b) and (6c) it is very difficult to determine which vowel has been omitted, because *twiya + ika > \*twiika > twika* and *teya + eka > \*teeka > teka*. Therefore determining whether the root vowel or the extension vowel has been omitted is very difficult, but in other cases such as the ones shown in examples (6d) and (6e) above the extension vowel is elided. Thus by implication, it is assumed that in other two cases the extension vowel is deleted in order for the neutro-passive verbs to result in *twika* and *teka* respectively.

Example 6 reveals two structural patterns of the –ek- neutro-passive extension. In some instances (i) it replaces the original extension of the verb as in example (6b) to (6e) and (6h) but the vowel of the original extension is retained in order for it to restrict the meaning of the original extension as well, while in other instance (ii) it is inserted between verb root and the final vowel as in example (6a). The second instance is straightforward, while the first needs further explanation. When the two extensions are combined, the first extension loses its consonant and the second its vowel and the combination of the two will be –ak- or –uk- that on surface looks like a single extension, but it is resulted from –ar- + –ek- > –ak- or –ur- + –ik- > –uk- respectively. This confirms the fact that the neutro-passive extension is not derived from the basic verb stem, but from the extended stem of the particular verb.

The neutro-passive extension renders passive constructions without mentioning the agent. When the agent is needed two possibilities exist; (i) the active form of verb is passivized with –EW- passive extension or (ii) the –EW- is added and the verb is double passivized: both neutro-passive extension and –EW- passive extension occur on the verb root and then followed by the passive prepositional phrase.

#### 4.2 ***-ar- extension***

This neutro-passive extension differs from the –EK- neutro-passive extension in the sense that –ar- expresses the notion that something done or known far and wide while –EK- expresses that something is done or known to just a few people.

- |     |    |                                |            |         |          |
|-----|----|--------------------------------|------------|---------|----------|
| (7) | a. | Ova-natje                      | v-a        | zu-u    | o-mbuze. |
|     |    | C2-child                       | SM2-RCPAST | hear-VH | C9-news. |
|     |    | 'The children heard the news.' |            |         |          |

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. *yora > \*yorora > yoroka*

- b. O-mbuze y-a      zuv-ar-a (zuva > zuvara)  
C9-news SM9-RCPAST      hear-NEUT-FV
- (8) a. Omu-ndu      w-a      zund-a      ovi-na.  
C1-person      SM1-RCPAST wrong-FV      C8-thing.  
'The person did things wrongly.'
- b. Ovi-na vy-a zund-ar-a.      (zunda > zundara)  
C8-thing SM8-RCPAST wrong-NEUT-FV  
'Things are done wrongly.'

## 5. Gender passives

In Otjiherero certain verbs are only used with male nouns as subjects of the active sentences, and never as objects in active sentences; and vice versa for female nouns in passive transformation only, as illustrated in example (9):

- (9) a. Omu-rumendu      w-a kup-a      ova-kazendu      ve-vari  
C1-man      SM1-RMPAST marry-FV      C 2-woman  
NUMPr2-two  
'The man married two wives'
- b. Ova-kazendu      ve-vari      v-a      kup-w-a  
C2-woman      NUMPr2-two      SM2-RMPAST      marry-Pass-FV  
'Two women are married.'
- c. Ova-kazendu vevari      v-a      kup-w-a      i      omu-rumendu.  
C2.woman      (2-two SM2-PAST marry-Pass-FV      by C1-man.  
'Two women are married by a man.'
- d. \* Ova-kazendu ve-vari v-a kupa      omu-rumendu.  
C2-woman      NUMPr2-two      SM2-PAST marry 1.man.  
'Two women married a man.'
- e. \* Omu-rumendu      w-a      kup-w-a      i  
C1-man      SM2-PAST marry-PASS-FV      by      ova-kazendu ve-vari .  
C2-woman      NUMPr 2-two.  
'A man is married by two wives.'

In these constructions a female noun will never act as a subject of an active sentence such as in (9d) and never an agent in a prepositional phrase of a passive sentence such as in (9e). In our culture a woman will never marry; but she will always be married (obviously by a man); and a man will never be married.

This type of passive construction is not restricted to gender nouns only, but certain nouns do not act as subjects of active sentences, e.g.

## **6 Combinations with Passive Extensions**

The combination of passive extensions is already touched above in passing. In this section the combinations of passive extensions will be dealt with in two subsections: combination of neutro-passive and –EW- passive extension and the combination of passive with other extensions.

### **6.1 Combination of Passive Extensions**

The two types of passive extension may be combined but always the neutro-passive will be the first and the –EW- extension the last to be attached the verb root. This is done when the passive prepositional phrase is required, e.g.

- (10) a. E-runga r-a mun-ik-w-a i tate.  
C5-thief SM5-RCPAST see-NEUT-PASS-FV by C1a-father  
'The thief is seen by my father.'
- b. O-mbuze y-a zuv-a[r]-[e]k-w-a  
i ova-natje.  
C9-news SM9-RCPAST hear-NEUT-NEUT-PASS-FV by C2-child.  
'The news was heard by the children.'
- c. O-mbuze y-a zuv-ar-w-a.  
C9-news SM9-RCPAST hear-NEUT-PASS-FV  
'The news is agreed upon.'
- d. O-mbuze y-a zuv-ar-w-a i ova-natje.  
C9-news SM9-RCPAST hear-NEUT-PASS-FV by C2-child  
'The news is agreed upon by the children.'

The meaning of the example (10c) and (10d) differ from that of example (10a) and (10b) in the sense that the former means that someone or ovanatje 'children' have agreed with the news while the latter means that the thief has been found or seen and the news has been heard by the children.

## 6.2 Combination of Passive Extensions with Other Extensions

When the neutro-passive extension is combined with other any extension, the neutro-passive extension is the first to be fixed to the verb root while the normal –EW- passive extension appears as the second last morpheme before the final vowel, e.g.

- (11)
- a.       mun-ik-w-a  
          see-NUET-PASS-FV
  - b.       mun-ik-ir-w-e  
          see-NEUT-PERF-PASS-FV
  - c.       mun-ik-is-ir-w-e  
          see-NEUT-CAUS-PERF-PASS-FV
  - d.       zuv-ar-w-a  
          hear-NEUT-PASS-FV
  - e.       zuv-ar-er-w-e  
          hear-NEUT-PERF-PASS-FV
  - f.       zuv-a[r]-[e]k-er-w-e  
          hear-NEUT-NEUT-PERF-FV

## 7. Inherent Passive Verbs

The inherent passive verbs in Otjiherero always occur in pairs. One element of a pair expresses the active notion while the other on the other hand expresses the passive. Like in neutro-passives, passive verbs do not need an agent prepositional phrase, but certain passive verbs accept the passive prepositional phrase as in example (12) below. Whenever an agent is needed, then the active verb is passivised. Compare the following pairs:

okupya ‘to be burnt’ vs okunyosa ‘to burn’ (see example (12) below)  
okupya ‘to be died’ vs zepa ‘kill’ (see example 13 below)

- (12)
- a. Omu-riro   w-a                           nyos-a                    omu-atje.  
   C3-fire                                   SM3-RCPAST burn-FV       C1-child  
   ‘The fire burnt the child.’
  - b. Omu-atje   w-a                           nyos-*iw*-a            iomu-riro  
   C1-child   SM1-RCPAST           burn-PASS-FV   by           C3-fire  
   ‘The child is burnt by the fire.’
  - c. <sup>?</sup>Omu-atje   w-a                           nyos-*iw*-a.  
   C1-child   SM1-RCPAST           burn-PASS-FV  
   ‘The child is burnt.’
  - d. Omu-atje   w-a   p-i.  
   C1-child   SM1-RCPAST   burn-VH  
   ‘The child is burnt.’

- e. \*Omu-atje w-a p-i i omu-riro.  
C1-child SM1-RCPAST burn-VH by C3-fire  
'The child is burnt by the fire.'
- f. \*Omu-atje w-a p-i omu-riro.  
C1-child SM1-RCPAST burn-VH C3-fire  
'The child is burnt by the fire.'
- g. \*Omu-atje w-a p-omu-riro.  
C1-child SM1-RCPAST burn-C3-fire  
'The child is burnt by the fire.'
- (13) a. Ova-yev-e v-a zep-a o-ngoro.  
C2-hunt-AFV SM2-RCPAST kill-FV C9-zebra  
'The hunters killed a zebra.'
- b. \*O-ngoro y-a zep-ew-a i ova-yev-e.  
C9-zebra SM9-RCPAST kill-PASS-FV by C2-hunt-AFV  
'The zebra is killed by hunters.'
- c. \*O-ngoro y-a zep-ew-a.  
C9-zebra SM9-RCPAST kill-PASS-FV  
'The zebra is killed.'
- d. O-ngoro y-a t-u.  
C9-zebra SM9-RCPAST kill-VH  
'The zebra is killed.'
- e. O-ngor-o y-a t-u i ova-yev-e  
C9-zebra SM9-RCPAST kill-VH by C2-hunt-AFV  
'The zebra is killed by hunters.'
- f. O-ngor-o y-a t-u ova-yev-e  
C9-zebra SM9-RCPAST kill-VH C2-hunt-AFV  
'The zebra is killed by hunters.'
- g. O-ngor-o y-a t-ova-yev-e  
C9-zebra SM9-RCPAST kill-C2-hunt-AFV  
'The zebra is killed by hunters.'

In example (12) and (13) the verb stem *nyosa* and *zepa* are respectively the active elements of the two pairs while the *pya* and *ta* are the passive ones. Example (12b) and (12c) are the correct passive forms of example (12a), while examples (13d-g) are the correct passive forms of example (13a). A passive verb never accepts any passive extension as the passive meaning is already inherently included in its meaning, and they enter into vowel harmony instead.

Because of the fact that the two examples we could find are both monosyllabic, the vowel harmony process is not obvious. Underlyingly it is inferred that the root vowel of *ta* is *u* thus it is harmonized with *u* that appears at the end of that verb in its vowel harmonized form. Similarly but more obvious in this case the underlying root vowel of *pya* is *i* that is palatalized when it is followed by another vowel. Therefore these two verbs are harmonized as follows:

*pya* > \**pii* > *pi*  
*ta* > \**tuu* > *tu*

When one compares the examples (12) and (13), one may make the following observations:

- (12b) is grammatical while (13b) is ungrammatical;
- (12c) is incomplete while (13c) is ungrammatical;
- (12d) and (13d) are both grammatical, and
- (12e-g) do not accept agent prepositional phrase after the verb, although in certain areas (12f) is acceptable and being used, while (13e-g) do accept agent prepositional phrase after the verb.

## **8. Passives of Double Object Constructions and Locative Objects**

### **8.1 Passives of Double Object Constructions**

In Bantu certain verbs may take two objects at the same time.

“Passivisation of double object constructions in Bantu has often been observed to fall into two types: in some Bantu languages, either of a double object construction can become subject of a corresponding passive clause, while in other languages, only the benefactive object can be promoted to subject in a passive. The former languages are sometimes called symmetric, the latter asymmetric languages.” (Kula and Marten p.9)

In double object constructions, Otjiherero belongs to the symmetric type because both objects may be passivised, but not simultaneously. A sentence construction with double objects is triggered by two possibilities: First by certain verbs themselves as in example (14), and secondly by applicative extension as in example (16) below.

- (14) a. Omu-atje w-a            p-e    ihe        ovi-mariva            ovi-ngi.  
          C1-child SM1-RCPAST give-VH C1a-father C8-money        C8-many.  
          ‘The child gave his father much money.’

- b. Ihe w-a p-ew-a ovi-mariva ovi-ngi  
 C1a-father SM1a-RCPAST give-PASS-FV C8-money  
 C8-many. i omu-atje.  
 by C1-child.  
 'His father was given much money by the child.'
- c. Ovi-mariva ovi-ngi vy-a p-ew-a ihe  
 C8-money C8-many SM8-RCPAST give-PASS-FV 1a-father  
 i omu-atje.  
 by C1-child.  
 'His father was given much money by the child.'
- d. \*Ihe n-ovi-mariva ovi-ngi vy-a p-ew-a  
 C1a-father and-C8-money C8-many SM8-RCPAST give-PASS-FV  
 i omu-atje.  
 by C1-child.
- e. Ihe n-ovi-mariva ovi-ngi vy-a  
 yandj-ew-a  
 C1a-father and-C8-money C8-many SM8-RCPAST give-  
 PASS-FV  
 i omu-atje.  
 by C1-child.  
 'His father and much money were given by the child.'

Example (14d) is ungrammatical because a native speaker of Otjiherero never says that and whenever he/she says that he/she will mean that both the father and the money are given, but the passive form needs an object, i.e. a person to whom they were given. This will have a totally different meaning with example (14a). Thus this is not a true passive reflection of example (14a).

Again example (14e) is grammatical but it is not a true passive reflection of example (14a) as it means that both father and much money were given by the child, but now with another verb yandja 'give' which is a synonym of pa 'give'. The difference between these two verbs lies in the fact that pe 'give' many take two objects and yandja 'give' will never take two objects. It takes one object and a prepositional phrase as shown in example (15) below.

- (15) a. Omu-atje w-a yandj-a ovi-mariva ovi-ngi  
 C1-child SM1-RCPAST give-FV C8-money C8-many  
 Ku ihe.  
 C17 C1a-father  
 'The child gave much money to his/her father.'
- b. Ovi-mariva ovi-ngi vy-a yandj-ew-a (i omu-atje) ku ihe.  
 Ovi-mariva ovi-ngi vy-a yandj-ew-a (i omu-atje)  
 C8-money C8-many SM8-RCPAST give-PASS-FV (by C1-  
 child)  
 ku ihe.  
 C17 C1a-father  
 'Much money was given (by the child) to his/her father.'

The prepositional phrase in example (15b) is optional that is why it appears between brackets.

- (16) a. Omu-atje ma tjang-er-e ina  
 o-mbapira.  
 C1-child PRES write-APPL-FV C1a-mother C9-letter.  
 'The child write his/her mother a letter.'
- b. Ina ma tjang-er-w-a  
 o-mbapira i omu-atje.  
 C1a-mother PRES write-APPL-PASS-FV C9-letter  
 by C1-child.  
 His/her mother is being written a letter by the child.'
- c. O-mbapira ma-i tjang-er-w-a ina  
 i omu-atje.  
 C9-letter PRES-SM9write-APPL-PASS-FV C1a-  
 mother by C1-child.  
 A letter is being written to his/her mother by the child.'
- d. \*Ina n-o-mbapira ma-vi tjang-w-a / tjang-er-w-a i omu-atje.  
 C1a-mother and C9-letter PRES-SM8 write-PASS-FV/write-APPL-  
 PASS-FV by C1-child.  
 'The mother and letter are being written by the child.'

## 8.2 *Passives of Locative Complements*

In Otjiherero, locatives, that serve as adverbial phrases of place, may be made the subject of a passive sentence depending on the particular verb, but not simultaneous with the object as shown in (17) below.

Although locatives semantically serve as prepositional phrases or adverbial phrases of place, they behave as nouns in all. This is proved in subsection 8.3 below. Before we go to that subsection let us consider the following examples.

- (17) a. Omu-atje w-a hit-i m-otj-unda.  
 C1-child SM1-PAST enter-VH C18-C7-kraal.  
 ??The child entered into the kraal.  
 'The child entered the kraal.'
- b. Motjunda mw-a hit-i omu-atje (locative  
 inversion)  
 C18-C7-kraal SM18-PAST enter-VH C1-child  
 ?In the kraal entered child.  
 'The child entered the kraal.'
- c. M-otj-unda mw-a hit-w-a.  
 C18-C7-kraal SM18-PAST enter-PASS-FV ? In the kraal  
 entered.  
 'The kraal is entered.'

- d. Otjunda tj-a hit-w-a.  
C7-kraal SM7-PAST enter-PASS-FV  
'The kraal is entered.'
- e. Otj-unda mw-a hit-w-a.  
C7-kraal SM18-PAST enter-PASS-FV  
'The kraal is entered into.'
- f. \*M-otj-unda tj-a hit-w-a.  
C18-C7-kraal SM7-PAST enter-PASS-FV ?In the kraal entered.
- g. Motjunda mw-a hit-w-a i omuatje.  
C18-C7-kraal SM18-PAST enter-PASS-FV by C1-child ?  
In the kraal entered by the child.  
'The child entered the kraal by the child.'
- h. Otj-unda tj-a hit-w-a i omuatje.  
C7-kraal SM18-PAST enter-PASS-FV by C1-child  
The kraal entered by the child.
- i. \*Omu-atje w-a hit-i otj-unda.  
C1-child SM1-PAST enter-VH C7-kraal  
'The child entered the kraal.'
- (18) a. Omu-atje w-a mun-u o-nyoka m-o-ndjuwo.  
C1-child SM1-RCPAST see-VHC9-snake C18-C9-house  
'The child saw a snake in the house.'
- b. O-nyoka y-a mun-ik-a m-o-ndjuwo  
C9-snake SM9-RCPAST see-NEUT-FV C18-C9-house  
'The snake is seen in the house.'
- c. \*O-nyoka y-a mun-ik-a m-o-ndjuwo i omu-atje.  
C9-snake SM9-RCPAST see-NEUT-FV C18-C9-house by  
C1-child  
'The snake is seen in the house by the child.'
- d. M-o-ndjuwo mw-a mun-ik-a o-nyoka.  
C18-C9-house SM18-RCPAST see-NEUT-FV  
C9-snake  
'In the house a snake is seen.'
- e. \*M-o-ndjuwo mw-a mun-w-a o-nyoka.  
C18-C9-house SM18-RCPAST see-PASS-FV  
C9-snake  
'In the house a snake is seen.'
- f. M-o-ndjuwo mw-a mun-ik-w-a o-nyoka  
C18-C9-house SM18-RCPAST see-NEUT-PASS-FV C9-snake  
i omu-atje.  
by C1-child

Example (17c) and (17d) may be used exchangeably as both convey identical meaning. It is allowed for otjunda 'kraal', a class 7 noun in this case, to take the class 18 subject marker as in shown in (17e), but it is ungrammatical for motjunda 'in kraal', a class 18 noun, to take the class 7 subject marker as illustrated in (17f).

Example (17g) indicates that the expression of the agent prepositional phrase makes the proposition ungrammatical. Therefore this indicates that locatives do not allow oblique constructions when they serve as 'true' promoted subject in the passive constructions with passive extension(s).

Using the class 7 noun without a locative prefix is also permissible as shown (17h), but (17i) that may serve as its direct active counterpart is ungrammatical. This means that (17h) is an alternative passive of (17a).

Example (17b) and all other locative inversion constructions may be considered to be passives, because they can take the neutro-passive extensions but not –EW- extension as shown in example (18) above. Example (18b), (18d) and (18f) are the true passive reflections of example (18a). The structures of example (18b) and (18d) only differ in the position of onyoka 'snake' and monduwo 'in the house' and in their agreements because they belong to different classes.

In the following examples we consider the passive possibilities (19b – l) of (19a) when the causative extension is used with a direct and a locative object.

- (19) a Omu-atje w-a hit-is-a ozo-ngombe m-otj-unda.  
 C1-child SM1-PAST enter-CAUS-FV C10-cattle C18-C7-kraal?  
 The caused enter cattle in kraal.  
 The child drove the cattle into the kraal.
- b. Ozo-ngombe z-a hit-is-iw-a m-otj-unda i omu-atje.  
 C10-cattle SM10-PAST enter-CAUS-PASS-FV C18-C7-kraal by  
 C1-child  
 The cattle are caused enter in kraal by child.  
 'The cattle are driven into the kraal by the child.'
- c. Ozo-ngombe z-a hit-is-iw-a m-otj-unda.  
 C10-cattle SM10-PAST enter-CAUS-PASS C18-C7-kraal  
 The cattle are caused enter in kraal.  
 'The cattle are driven into the kraal.'
- d. M-otj-unda mw-a hit-is-iw-a ozo-ngombe.  
 C18-7-kraal SM18-PAST enter-Caus-PASS-FV C10-cattle ?  
 In kraal caused enter cattle.  
 ?Into the kraal are driven cattle.  
 'The cattle are driven into the kraal.'

- e. M-otj-unda mw-a hit-is-iw-a ozo-ngombe i omu-atje.  
 C18-7-kraal SM18-PAST enter-Caus-PASS-FV C10-cattle by  
 C1-child  
 ?In kraal caused enter cattle by child.  
 ?Into the kraal are driven cattle by child.  
 'The cattle are driven into the kraal by the child.'
- f. Ozo-ngombe m-otj-unda z-a hit-is-iw-a.  
 C10-cattle C18-7-kraal SM10-PAST enter-CAUS-PASS-FV  
 ?The cattle in kraal caused enter.  
 'The cattle are driven into the kraal.'
- f. Ozo-ngombe m-otj-unda z-a hit-is-iw-a i omuatje.  
 C10-cattle C18-7-kraal SM10-PAST enter-CAUS-PASS-FV by  
 C1-child  
 ?The cattle in kraal caused enter by child.
- g. M-otj-unda ozo-ngombe z-a hit-is-iw-a.  
 C18-7-kraal C10-cattle SM10-PAST enter-CAUS-PASS-FV  
 ? In kraal the cattle caused enter.  
 'The cattle are driven into the kraal.'
- h. \*Ozo-ngombe m-otj-unda mw-a hit-is-iw-a.  
 C10-cattle C18-7-kraal SM18-PAST enter-CAUS-PASS-FV  
 ?The cattle in kraal caused enter.
- i. \*M-otj-unda ozo-ngombe mw-a hit-is-iw-a.  
 C18-7-kraal C1-cattle SM18-PAST enter-CAUS-PASS-FV  
 ?In kraal cattle caused enter.
- j. \*M-otj-unda ozo-ngombe mw-a hit-is-iw-a.  
 C18-7-kraal 10-cattle SM18-PAST enter-CAUS-PASS-FV  
 ?In kraal cattle caused enter.
- k. Otj-unda mw-a hit-is-iw-a ozo-ngombe.  
 C7-kraal SM18-PAST enter-CAUS-PASS-FV C10-cattle  
 ?Kraal caused enter cattle.
- l. Otj-unda mw-a hit-is-iw-a ozo-ngombe i omu-atje.  
 C7-kraal SM18-PAST enter-CAUS-PASS-FV C10-cattle by C1-child  
 ?Kraal caused enter cattle by the child.

## **9. Passives of sentences with object clauses**

- (20) a. Ova-natje v-a mun-u kutja ozo-  
 ndana ma-ze  
 C2-child SM2-RCPAST see-VH that C10-calf PRES-  
 SM10  
 nyam-u na-wa. suck-FV AdvPr-good  
 'The children saw that the calves are sucking well.'

- b. Kutja ozondana ma-ze nyam-u na-wa  
 That C10-calf PRES-Sm10 suck-FV AdvPr-good  
 z-a mun-ik-w-a i ova-natje.  
 SM10-RCPAST see-NEUT-PASS-FV by C2-child  
 'That the calves are sucking well has been seen by the children.'
- c. Kutja ozondana ma-ze nyam-u na-wa  
 That C10-calf PRES-Sm10 suck-FV AdvPr-good z-a  
 mun-ik-w-a.  
 SM10-RCPAST see-NEUT-PASS-FV  
 'That the calves are sucking well has been seen.'
- c. Kutja ozondana ma-ze nyam-u na-wa  
 That C10-calf PRES-Sm10 suck-FV AdvPr-good z-a  
 mun-ik-a.  
 SM10-RCPAST see-NEUT-FV  
 'That the calves are sucking well has been seen.'
- d. \*Kutja ozondana ma-ze nyam-u na-wa  
 That C10-calf PRES-Sm10 suck-FV AdvPr-good z-a  
 mun-w-a.  
 SM10-RCPAST see -PASS-FV  
 'That the calves are sucking well has been seen.'
- e. \*Kutja ozondana maze nyamu nawa za munwa i ovanatje
- f. \*Kutja ozondana ma-ze nyam-u na-wa  
 That C10-calf PRES-Sm10 suck-FV AdvPr-good z-a  
 mun-w-a i ova-natje.  
 SM10-RCPAST see -PASS-FV by C2-child

Example (20) shows that object clauses behave exactly like an object noun.

## **10. Passive Extensions in the Formation Process of Nouns**

Passive extensions are also used in the formation process of nouns from verbs, as illustrated in the following examples.

- (21) omu-hong-w-a ' (lit. one to be taught)  
1-teach-PASS-FV  
learner' or 'student'
- (22) ovi-tjang-w-a (lit. things to be written)  
8-write-PASS-FV  
'written things'
- (23) ovi-ungur-is-iw-a (lit. things to be worked with)  
8-work-CAUS-PASS-FV  
'tools'
- (24) otjitjangerwa (lit. something to be written on)  
7-write-APPL-PASS-FV  
'writing board'
- (25) ovi-ha-mun-ik-a (lit. things not to be seen)  
8-NEG-see-NPASS-FV  
'invisible things'

## **11. Conclusion**

Contemporary Otjiherero passives use normal –EW- passive extension optionally followed by the passive prepositional phrase that is headed by the passive preposition i 'by', and two types of neutro-passive extensions that do not allow the prepositional phrase afterwards. The neutro-passive extensions only allow prepositional phrase when they are combined with the –EW- passive extension. Inherent passive verbs occur in Otjiherero, and they do not allow any passive extension to be attached to their roots because their passive meaning is inherently included in their original meaning. Thus they make use of vowel harmony instead.

Three possibilities exist where native speakers of Otjiherero make mistakes when they express themselves in passive voice. These are:

- They use ku preposition instead of i that is assumed to have been derived from Oshiwambo;
- They use intransitive passive verb pya 'burn' transitively; and

- They use hepa 'need' in its passive form hepwa 'be needed' in their active sentences.

In quick speech the passive preposition i 'by' and the final vowel of verb stem may be elided and as a result the -w- of the passive extension is pronounced together with the initial vowel of the following noun, e.g. wa rumatwa i ombwa > wa rumatw' ombwa 's/he is bitten by a dog'.

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## **ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS**

|                   |                                 |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| Adv               | adverb                          |
| AdvPr             | adverbial prefix                |
| AFV               | agent final vowel               |
| AM                | aspect marker                   |
| APPL              | applicative extension           |
| C                 | noun class                      |
| Conj              | conjunctive                     |
| COP               | copulative                      |
| DFUT              | definite future                 |
| FUT               | future                          |
| FV                | final vowel                     |
| H                 | high                            |
| HAB               | habitual                        |
| IND               | indefinite suffix               |
| INF               | infinitive                      |
| IFUT              | indefinite future               |
| KAM               | ka-movendi (directive particle) |
| Kapa              | kaparukaze                      |
| L                 | low                             |
| NEG               | negative                        |
| NEUT              | neutro-passive extension        |
| NP <sub>(o)</sub> | object noun phrase              |
| NP <sub>(s)</sub> | subject noun phrase             |
| NumPr             | numeral prefix                  |
| OM                | object marker                   |
| PAST              | past tense                      |
| PASS              | passive                         |
| PERF              | perfect extension               |

|       |                       |
|-------|-----------------------|
| POSSM | possessive marker     |
| pp    | person plural         |
| PRES  | present tense         |
| PRON  | pronoun               |
| ps    | person singular       |
| RC    | recent                |
| REFL  | reflexive particle    |
| REL   | relative marker       |
| RM    | remote                |
| SM    | subject marker        |
| SubPr | subordinating prefix  |
| SVO   | subject verb object   |
| TM    | tense marker          |
| V     | vowel                 |
| VH    | vowel harmony         |
| VV    | vowel vowel           |
| VCV   | vowel consonant vowel |