Givenness in discourse via passive constructions: An analysis of applied linguistics articles in Scopus Quartile 1 (Q1) and Thai-Citation Index (TCI) Tier 2 Journals

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Abstract

This study examined givenness in discourse via passive constructions in research articles. While it is commonly held in grammar books and grammar classes that the passive voice is the counterpart of the active voice, the present study argues that Argument movement in passive constructions can act as a syntactic device contributing to sound semantic relations between sentences and to a smoothe flow of discourse. The data collected to support this view consisted of 12 applied linguistics articles. The first dataset was from the international journal *System*. It included 6 research papers whose authors were affiliated with USA or UK higher education institutions. The second dataset was from *Pasaa Paritat Journal*, a Thai academic journal. It included 6 research papers whose authors were Southeast Asian scholars, affiliated with Southeast Asian higher education institutions. A total number of 144 tokens of passive constructions was collected. The data analysis went through three stages: a syntactic identification and quantification of passive sentences, an inferential statistical analysis, and a close reading of illustrative excerpts, mainly from the Thai Journal. The syntactic identification of passive constructions was based on transformational generative grammar. The inferential statistical analysis used *Pearson Correlation*. The results of the statistical analysis showed a significant relation between passive constructions and givenness in international applied linguistics research articles where the *p*-value was 0.010. No statistically significant relation was found between passive constructions and givenness in the Southeast Asian applied linguistics research articles, where the *p*-value was 0.064. The study also revealed that international academic writers used raised DP in passive

constructions as a syntactic cohesive device more often and with more variation than academic Southeast Asian writers. The close reading of excerpts from the Southeast Asian data revealed substantive aspects of indirectness, misconnection, and circularity in the development of ideas. The paper contends that the study of passive constructions realising intersentential giveness can contribute to the improvement of learners' and novice academics' writing skills. It can also open up fresh paths for applied linguistics research.

Introduction

Writing an effective piece of research requires writers to have a solid knowledge of their area of specialisation, a satisfactory mastery of academic genres specificities, and a good mastery of the language they write in (McCutchen, 2011). A pragmatic competence, which includes the ability to link information between sentences and across larger components of discourse, is also required to convey meaning and stance smoothly, appropriately, and effectively.

The field of applied linguistics has expanded over the last forty years or so to cover various manifestations of and attitudes to language use in social contexts, so much so that its boundaries have become fuzzy and its subdomains inderterminable. Linguistics applied, which was tightly linked to the traditional conception of language as a system, idealised and decontextualised (Widdowson, 2000), seems to have gradually lost the appeal it had had throughout most of the twentieth century. We contend that research which uses linguistics, in its restricted sense, (the sentence and its components), and in its extended sense, (above and beyond the sentence), represents, and ought to represent, the core of applied linguistics. We believe that research such as that on the benefits of using smartphones in learning languages, learners' reactions to teachers' corrections, or job prospects for translators or teachers, is peripheral to applied linguistics.

This paper takes, as its starting point, the syntactic analysis of passive constructions to deal with cohesion between sentences. It adopts a transformation

generative approach to passivisation where the Determiner Phrase (DP) is raised to first position in the sentence. The raised DP functions as the sentence Theme, according to Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday & Mathiessen, 2014, chapter 3), and carries and points back (i.e. anaphorically) to information that precedes it. It preserves givenness and ushers in newness in the rest of the sentence (its Rheme) where it occurs. The present study examines intersentential givenness via passive constructions in applied linguistics research articles published in an international journal and in a regional journal. It compares data in a Scopus Quartile 1 (Q1) Journal and in a Thai-Citation Index (TCI) Tier 2 Journal.

Background

Cohesive devices are lexical and grammatical (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). Singchai and Jaturapitakkul (2016) reported that both lexical and grammatical cohesion devices are a major problem for Thai learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Tangkiengsirisin (2010) found that the contrastive connector *although* is preferred by intermediate level Thai EFL learners, while the contrastive connector *even though* is much used by advanced learners. Chanyo's (2018) study revealed that reiteration, reference, conjunction and ellipsis are the cohesive ties frequently used by Thai undergraduate students of English.

Cohesive devices contribute to coherence, but their presence is not sufficient to achieve it. Other contributors to coherence include purpose, text structure,

propositional progression, field of discourse, cultural specificities, and writer-reader relations (Waller, 2015).

Earlier studies focused on lexical cohesion and syntactic cohesion across registers (e.g. Biber & Hared, 1992). More recent research dealt with syntactic cohesion within and across genres. The use of the passive voice was one of its main topics. Lu (2013) compared the use of the passive voice in two journals, *Language* and *Applied Linguistics*. He found that the passive voice was used more frequently in applied linguistics articles than in theoretical linguistics articles. Subagio et al (2019) compared the use of the passive voice in the research methods chapter produced by graduate students between two periods, 1985-2000 and 2002-2015. They found that the passive voice was less used in the latter period. Di Ferrante (2023) compared the use of the passive voice in formal scientific journals and their respective popularised versions published as press releases on university websites. She found that the passive voice was less frequent in the popularised versions.

Writer presence and responsibility is often manifest through the active voice and the use of the first person pronoun. It is increasingly perceivable in academic discourse (Hyland, 2004), especially discourse in the humanities and social sciences. This encroachment on the passive voice seems to indicate a growing admission that science is human and scientific discourse is interpersonal.

The passive voice in academic discourse is mainly associated with formality, objectivity, and focus on process. It can be signalled by, among other indicators, the

presence of the auxilary "be", the absence of the auxiliary "be" in bare passives, and the substitution of "be" by "get". It can be at the level of the sentence, the clause, or the phrase. Such different manifestations of the passive voice make the quantification of its occurrence difficult and they represent a challenge for concordance programmes designers or users.

The present study concentrates on Argument movement, or A-movement, in passive constructions across sentences. Passive construction is the syntactic structure in generative linguistics where the DP argument is moved and then landed at the Spec T position. This movement is technically known as A-movement (Radford, 2009).

> (1) A-movement
>
> (a) *James* bought ***a new car*** yesterday.
>
> *(b)* ***A new car*** was bought *t* by *James* yesterday.

The DP arguments, referring to someone or something, are exemplified by the DP *James* and the DP *a new car*. When the DP argument *a new car*, is moved and then landed at the Spec T position, this is called *A-movement*. Once the DP is moved, it leaves a trace as symbolized by *t* to indicate the DP's original position. Even though the active and passive voice sentences, as in (1a) and (1b), are the same semantically (i.e. they have the same proposition), the difference between the two is at the levels of form and, as shall be elucidated presently, function in discourse.

Traditional grammarians dealt with the passive voice as the counterpart of the active voice (Bielak, Pawlak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2013; Swan, 2015), and so did the diehard Chomskians. This study looks at the passive voice from an additional perspective, i.e. in terms of cohesion contributing to givenness-newness across sentences and in discourse.

> (2) (a) John assigned *the final project.* Students must submit *it* at the end of the semester.
>
> (b) John assigned *the final project. It* must be submitted at the end of the semester.

Example (2a) has two sentences in the active voice. The information across the two sentences does not follow a strict contiguous given then new order. In 2b, the first sentence is in the active voice and the second sentence is in the passive voice. The pronoun *it* initiates the sentence in the passive voice; it replaces the DP *the final project* with which the first sentence ends, realising thus contiguous given then new information.

This paper seeks to explore the role raised DP in passive constructions has in maintaining given information and in ushering new information between sentences. *Givenness in Discourse* can be extratextual and intratextual. We deal in this paper with one restricted aspect of intratextual givenness. We adopt a combination of a thin approach -quantitative and decontextualised- and a thick approach -qualitative and context-oriented.

Different genres of writing have different preferences of syntactic structures (Lu, 2013; Wongkittiporn, 2022). The functions and frequency of passive

constructions differ according to field and genre (Amdur & Morris, 2010). Often, universities offer opportunities for their undergraduate students to conduct mini-research projects in their respective specialisms. Students are introduced to research methodology with particular emphasis on data collection, data analysis, and formulating and answering research questions effectively and efficiently. However, few departments in different faculties and universities provide academic writing courses to their graduate students (e.g. Saudi universities, Al-Zumor & Abdesslem, 2022, p. 92). The implicit assumption may be that graduate students have already developed the skill of writing. When it comes to scholars who supervise students and publish research work in peer-reviewed journals, our assumption is that they have developed adequate research skills and writing skills (Hypotheses 1&2, below). However, we presume that scholars who publish in high-tier journals are more dexterous and resourseful than their peers who publish in lower-tier journals when it comes to weaving their ideas in discourse (Hypothesis 3, below). Using applied linguistics research articles to study academic discourse is therefore beneficial to academics and to novice researchers who would like to challenge themselves into seeing their work accepted for publication.

Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate the relation between givenness in discourse and passive constructions in Scopus Q1 applied linguistics research articles.

2. To investigate the relation between givenness in discourse and passive constructions in Thai-Citation Index (TCI) Tier 2 applied linguistics research articles.

3. To compare givenness in discourse via passive constructions in Scopus Q1 and Thai-Citation Index (TCI) Tier 2 applied linguistics research articles.

Research question

Are there significant differences related to intersentential givenness in discourse via passive constructions in Scopus Q1 and Thai-Citation Index (TCI) Tier 2 applied linguistics research articles?

Hypotheses of the study

1. There is a statistically significant relation between givenness in discourse and passive constructions in Scopus Q1 applied linguistics research articles.

2. There is a statistically significant relation between givenness in discourse and passive constructions in Thai-Citation Index (TCI) Tier 2 applied linguistics research articles.

3. Givenness in discourse through passive constructions is more frequent and more varied in Scopus Q1 applied linguistics articles than in their Thai-Citation Index (TCI) Tier 2 counterparts.

Research design

To answer the research question and to test the research hypotheses formulated above, a quantitative method of analysis was adopted and an inferential statistical

analysis was employed. In addition, illustrative examples, predominantly from the Tier 2 data, were presented and closely discussed.

Data collection

Purposive sampling of data relevant to the study was the method adopted (Dornyei, 2007; Woodrow, 2014). The applied linguistics research articles in this study were published in journals indexed in Q1 and in Tier 2. They were published between 2021 and 2024. To avoid any bias in data collection, the articles were selected irrespective of the subgenre they belonged to. The Q1 journal selected was *System* and the Tier 2 journal was *Passa Paritat Journal*, published by the Language Institute at Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. We refer to the Q1 journal authors as international academic writers, as their papers indicate their affiliations to either USA or UK higher education institutions. We refer to the Tier 2 journal authors as regional academic writers, as they are Southeast Asian scholars affiliated with public universities in Thailand, Indonesia, and other countries in the same region.

Twelve applied linguistics research articles were selected: six international research articles and six regional research articles. The number, though small, is in line with the recommendation made by Khani and Tazik (2013), stating that it is adequate to collect twelve research articles for an applied linguistics study. And since the data was analysed manually, a larger corpus would have been difficult to manage.

Data analysis

The data analysis in this study was divided into three major parts. The first part consisted of a syntactic identification and quantification of sentences, the second was an inferential statistical analysis, and the third was a close reading of short excerpts mainly from the Thai journal. The syntactic identification expanded on Radford's (2009) and Kean's (2009) categorisations of intersentential cohesion via DP movement in passive constructions. The inferential statistical analysis followed *Pearson Correlation* via SPSS 29. According to Woodrow (2014), if the *p*-value is equivalent or less than 0.05, there is a statistically significant relation between the two variables under study. The close reading focused on Southeast Asian writers' degrees of success in maintaining givenness in discourse. As this study testifies, whether thick (qualitative) analyses are conducted independently of or in conjunction with thin (computerised or manual quantitiative) analyses, they reveal authors' idiosyncratic ingenuities and provide insights that defy artificial intelligence (AI) programmes, such as ChatGPT, which produces information based on what it was fed.

Table 1

Patterns of Givenness in Discourse

Pattern	Definition	Example
1. The same DP	The DP in the passive construction is the same as the DP in the preceding	*The self-practices* that TCs commonly referenced were mostly those introduced through the course material, especially those from the SIOP model. However, *the self-practices* that they praised and

	sentence.	imagined enacting as a teacher in each assignment were connected to and influenced by other axes of their identities in unique ways. (McConnell, Tian & Yazan, 2024, p. 10)
2. Replacement by a Pronoun	The DP in the passive construction is replaced by a pronoun.	We can still say that the intervention works as *the number of compliments* produced after treatment significantly increased and *they* were produced in a pragma linguistic and sociopragmatic appropriate manner. (Khairani, et. al., 2024, p. 8)
3. Replacement by a Referential Determiner	The DP in the passive construction is replaced by a referential determiner.	Within the educational system, the 'promotion of Bilingualism' is manifested in *a variety of bilingual education*, but *these* are based on a recognition of only two mediums of education as captured in Section 15/1 of the 1998 Education law. (Kuchah & Milligan, 2024, p. 2)
4. Antonym or Contrastive link	The DP in the passive construction is oppositely linked with the information in the preceding sentence.	*Previous L2 vocabulary research* also considered "time-on-target vocabulary" and "the amount of word-related activity" as potential factors contributing to vocabulary learning. *Several other alternatives* have been proposed and investigated to increase learners' involvement with glosses. (McConnell, Tian & Yazan, 2024, p. 3)
5. Synecdoche (Part of Whole)	The DP in passive voice is part of the information in the preceding sentence.	As noted above, *these 25 words* were chosen based on the authors' judgment and experience that the students at this level are not familiar with them. According to the students' performance in this test, *15 words unfamiliar to all the participants* were selected as the target words for this study (Rassaei & Folse, 2024, p. 3)
6. Shortening	The DP in the passive construction is shortened.	The first issue has to do with *pragmatic failures. Failures* were first observed in beginning learners of Spanish while engaging in synchronous

		conversations through an online platform in previous iterations of the course. (Khairani, et. al., 2024, p. 2)
7. Lack of Linking	Use of expletive, non-anaphoric "It"	Due to this limitation of class schedule, derivation of sample group in this study is limited to purposive sampling of an assigned intact group. Therefore, *it* was decided that the present study was to be conducted following the one-group pre-test and post-test design. (Anuwech & Sapsirin, 2023, p. 171)

The seven patterns were adopted to account for givenness via raised DP in passive constructions in the two corpora. Pattern seven, Lack of Linking, was extended to include passive voice sentences having no relation of given and new with their preceding counterparts. The vexed issue of defining and delimiting Discourse Unit (Abdesslem, 2020, p. 45) was not pursued in this study. Instead, the unit of analysis adopted was the sentence. It corresponded to Hunt's (1965) three types of "minimal terminal units,"(T-Units). For Hunt, a T-Unit can be (i) a complex sentence, (ii) an independent sentence, or (iii) a sentence in a compound sentence. For ease of reference, the term sentence and sentence type (simple, complex, compound) were adopted. Also, for ease of reference, a complex compound sentence, containing parenthetical phrases was considered a complex sentence.

The two corpora were carefully scanned to identify passive voice sentences. Givenness was accounted for across pairs and triads of sentences (T-Units) where the second sentence in the pair (e.g. 6, below) or the third sentence in the triad (e.g. 5

below) was in the passive voice and its raised DP was traceable back to a DP in the first sentence of the pair or the triad. Sentences in the passive voice which did not carry givenness were also identified and quantified. Tracing givenness in passive sentences outside pairs and triads, as defined above, could not be achieved with sufficient assuredness.

The analysis was conducted manually. It covered each article from Abstrat to Conclusion. Titles, section titles, titles of tables, titles of graphs, and lists within texts were discarded, as they were not senttences. Endnotes and footnotes were not included in the quantification. Passive constructions were codified as follows.

Table 2

Coding Scheme

Code 1	Code 2
C1 was given when a passive construction complied with givenness in discourse.	C2 was given when a passive construction did not comply with givenness in discourse.

The coding scheme in Table 2 was applied systematically to both datasets, i.e. Scopus Q1 and TCI Tier 2 applied linguistics research articles. In addition, the seven patterns were coded according to the order they are listed in Table 1 above: **1** (in bold) indicated "Same DP", **2** indicated "Replacement by a pronoun", … up to **7** "Lack of linking".

Passive constructions realising givenness across pairs or triads were highlighted and codified as C1. Passive constructions not realising givenness were codified as C2. Each passive construction was allocated to one of the seven patterns

defined and listed in Table 1. As said above, the coding scheme of patterns ran from

1 to 7.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the results of givenness in discourse via passive constructions

in Scopus Quartile 1 (Q1) and in Thai-Citation Index (TCI) Tier 2 applied linguistics

research articles.

Table 3.

Givenness via Passive Construction in TCI Tier 2 Linguistics Research Articles

Correlations			
		Passive Constructions	Givenness
Passive Constructions	Pearson Correlation	1	-.216
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.064
	N	74	74

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 displays the results of givenness in discourse via passive

constructions in the Southeast Asian applied linguistics research articles. The results

show that there is no statistically significant relation between givenness in discourse

and passive constructions where the *p*-value is 0.064. Therefore, givenness in

discourse via passive constructions is not a characteristic of the Southeast Asian

applied linguistics research articles. The following example illustrates this paucity of

givenness in discourse via passive constructions.

(3) On the other hand, the know-how of applying interactional concepts and spoken

language taught into constructing their own utterances to serve certain tasks as

prescribed in the instructional objectives were significantly emphasized. *This language

output* could be regarded as close to natural production and practically specific to their

communicative context. *Role plays* in this present study context could *therefore* be regarded as helpful methods to provide students with guidelines and instruments to elicit their language performance. (Anuwech & Sapsirin, 2023, p. 169). (Italics are added in all e.g.).

This example contains a succession of three sentences in the passive voice. The first two sentences seem to prepare the ground for the third sentence, which starts with the DP "Role plays". However, there is no obvious relationship between sentence one and sentence two, notwithstanding the use of the discourse proximal demonstrative deictic "*This*" (Huang, 2007, p. 172) heading the DP "*This language output*". Nothing indicates that sentence one dealt with "*language output*" to point back to it in sentence two. The given and new relation, as defined in this paper, between sentence two and sentence three is also manifestly absent. Sentence three has a new unrelated idea initiated by the DP "*Role plays*"; the term "role play", or its synonym, did not appear in sentences one and two. However, the resultative conjunctive adverb "*therefore*" in the middle of sentence three indicates that the idea in sentence three follows from the propositions in sentences one and two.

Though we do endorse the accusations of ethnocentricity levelled at Kaplan's (1966) typology of writing patterns across cultures, a circular and indirect reasoning seems to have taken place in example 3. Had the authors started with the proposition in sentence three then proceeded with the propositions in sentence one and in sentence two, their exposition might have been linear, orderly, and more reader friendly. But, coherence proceeded in a "background-before-main point

presentation of ideas" manner (Waller, 2015, p. 33), which is quite common in some East Asian and South Asian languages and cultures.

There were cases in the TCI Tier 2 applied linguistics research articles where the passive construction was used through the expletive, non-anaphoric "it", as defined in pattern **7**, Table 1, above.

(4) However, designing, implementing, and assessing pedagogically sound activities for teaching pragmatics is a challenge, as it is necessary that these activities consider cultural awareness and linguistic variation that exists in languages such as Spanish, which is characterized by pragmatic variation within and among its different varieties. *It* has been observed that compliments can be highly face-threatening acts when produced in the wrong context since variables such as relationship between interlocutors and/or power play a crucial role. (Khairani, et. al., 2024, p. 4)

This example contains two long and complex sentences (T-Units). The first sentence contains a main clause and four subordinate clauses initiated respectively by the subordinating conjunction "as" and the relative pronouns "that", "that", and "which". Givenness takes place within the same sentence via a shortening of the DP *"designing …sound activities for teaching pragmatics"* in the main clause into the DP *"these activities"* in the subordinate clause that follows the main clause. Since, we are concerned with intersentential givenness via raised DP in passive constructions, givenness inside sentences is not within the scope of this study. In sentence one, reasoning progressed from the challenges of teaching pragmatics to variation characterising the Spanish language. Sentence two moved, through the expletive

"it", to the inappropriate use of compliments in context, but not in Spanish. The idea about variation in the use of Spanish is unrelated to its adjacent idea on the use of compliments in general. The lack of linking in this example between sentence one and sentence two is threefold. It is syntactic, via the use of the non-anaphoric, expletive "it", semantic as the two adjacent propositions are hardly related, and discoursal as progression of ideas is (or appears to be, to say the least) non-linear and discontinuous.

In addition to pairs where the second sentence is in the passive voice and series of sentences in the passive voice, the TCI Tier 2 applied linguistics articles investigated in this study contained triads where the third sentence is in the passive voice.

> (5). In preparation for the first exchange, in class, *students* created a list of questions. I curated the list and distributed it before the first exchange. *Students* were allowed to have these questions with them while having the conversations. (Khairani, et. al., 2024, p. 4)

This example has two sentences in the active voice, followed by a sentence in the passive voice. The DP *students* occurs in the middle of sentence one and the same DP *students* initiates the passive construction in sentence three. Givenness is not contiguous, but not too remote either.

Shifting from the active to the passive or from the passive to the active voice is frowned upon by composition teachers and reviewers of research papers, especially if the shift is abrupt and unwarranted. Indeed, the use of the active voice in sentence

two does not seem to be felicitous. The authors, Khairani et al, were giving an account on the data collection procedures they had adopted. The passive voice would have been more appropriate for sentence two. A more felicitous rendering of sentence two could have been: "The list was curated and distributed before the first exchange." It goes without saying that data collection procedures, if not done otherwise, were conducted by the authors themselves.

The use of the first person singular pronoun in sentence two does not match with the number of authors of the article from which example 5 is cited. The authors are three, not one. Like many of their peers, Khairani et al seem to have been "smitten with" Hyland's (2005) metadiscourse model. For Hyland and many of his docile disciples, self-mention, realised by the first person singular pronoun, is an interactive metadiscourse marker par excellence and a conspicuous manifestation of authorial presence. The numerous studies (or to be more precise replications) that applied Hyland's metadiscourse model and adopted a thin approach (quantitative, automatised and of large corpora) have revealed that academics and students in the periphery do not use interactional metadiscourse markers as frequently as their inner circle peers (e.g. Wei & Duan, 2019; Masliza et al, 2021). This large scale finding is interesting, yet superficial because it is rarely accompanied by a meticulous analysis of where, when, and why self-mention is used. This state of affairs seems to have induced academic writers into producing a sort of hypercorrection; a term we borrow from sociolinguistics (Labov, 1985).

The results of passive constructions in international applied linguistics articles revealed a significantly different picture, as Table 4 shows.

Table 4

Givenness via Passive Constructions in Scopus Q1 Applied Linguistics Research Articles

Correlations			
		Passive Constructions	Givenness in discourse
Passive Constructions	Pearson Correlation	1	-.307**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.010
	N	70	70

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 presents the results of givenness in discourse via passive constructions in Scopus Q1 applied linguistics research articles. The results show a statistically significant relation between givenness in discourse and passive constructions where the *p*-value is reported at 0.010. Accordingly, givenness in discourse via passive constructions is common in international applied linguistics research articles where information often follows the given then new pattern. An example from the international dataset is given here.

(6) Participants were enrolled in an *English as a Second Language (ESL) methods course* taught by Zhongfeng and Bedrettin. *This course* was designed to help TCs learn and apply effective classroom strategies for multilingual learners. (McConnell, Tian & Yazan, Bedrettin 2024, p. 5).

The DP "*This course*" in the passive construction, sentence two, is the given piece of information. It is a shortened version of "*English as a Second Language (ESL) methods course*" in sentence one. Pattern **6**, Table 1, is thus followed in example 6.

A comparison of frequencies of patterns of givenness in discourse via passive constructions in international applied linguistics articles and in regional applied linguistics articles reveals clear divergences.

Table 5

Frequency of Patterns of Givenness Across the Two Corpora

Patterns	Scopus Q1 articles (Frequencies)	TCI Tier 2 articles (Frequencies)
1 The Same DP	21	16
2 Replacement by referential determiner	11	5
3 Replacement by pronoun	7	6
4 Shortening	5	2
5 Antonym	5	0
6 Synecdoche (Part of Whole)	12	3
7 Lack of Linking	9	42
Total	70	74

Pattern 1, Same DP, was used most frequently in both datasets; 21 occurrences in the international articles and 16 occurrences in the regional articles. Absence of givenness, or Lack of Linking, Pattern 7, was most used by regional authors; 42 instances against 9 instances by international authors. This highly frequent use (of no link) by regional authors represented more than half their total number of givenness realisations, i.e. across patterns 1 to 6 (32 out of 74). International authors' score in each pattern, from pattern 1 to pattern 6, was nearly double (61) their regional counterparts' (32). Regional authors' realisation of givenness through Pattern 6, Synecdoche, was very small (3 occurrences) in comparison to international authors'

realisation (12 occurrences). Givenness via Antonym, Pattern 5, was not realised at all by regional authors. Pattern 5 was realised 5 times by international authors.

The total frequency of intersentential givenness realised via DP raising in passive sentences was way higher in Scopus Q1 than in TCI Tier 2 applied linguistics research articles; 61 occurrences vs. 32 occurrences. Scopus Q1 articles displayed more variation in the use of givenness patterns than their TCI Tier 2 counterparts. More than half of the quantified passive sentences in TCI Tier 2 articles did no link with the sentences that preceded them via DP raising. Pattern 7, Lack of linking, was realised 42 times while Patterns 1 to 6 were realised 32 times.

These findings tie in with the inferential statistical results (Tables 3 and 4, above). They indicate that there was no significant relation between givenness and passive constructions in the TCI Tier 2 articles (p-value 0.064) and significant relation in their Scopus Q1 counterparts (p-value 0.010).

The answer to the Research Question, whether there are differences related to intersentential givenness in discourse via passive constructions between Scopus Q1 and TCI Tier 2 applied linguistics articles, is positive. Hypothesis 1, there is a statistical relation between givenness in discourse and passive constructions in Scopus Q1 applied linguistics articles, is confirmed. Hypothesis 2, there is a statistical relation between givenness in discourse and passive constructions in TCI Tier 2 applied linguistics articles, is rejected. Hypothesis 3, givenness through passive constructions is more frequent and more varied in Scopus Q1 applied

linguistics articles than in their TCI Tier 2 counterparts, is partly confirmed. Passive constructions are roughly as frequent in Scopus Q1 (70 occurrences) as in TCI Tier 2 (74 occurrences) articles. But givenness through passive constructions is way more frequent and more varied in the Scopus Q1 articles. Furthermore, the close reading and discussion of the illustrative excerpts taken from the TCI Tier 2 articles showed that givenness through raised DP in passive sentences in pairs, triads, or successions of passive sentences often failed to contribute to discourse smoothe progression and fluidity.

Conclusion

This paper examined the cohesive role of raised DP in passive constructions in maintaining givenness and ushering newness between sentences, contributing thus to discourse coherence, progression, and fluidity. Givenness was studied in applied linguistics articles published in *System*, a Scopus Q1 journal, and *Passa Paritat Journal*, a Thai Tier 2 journal. The study revealed that givenness in the Tier 2 articles was less frequent, less regular, less varied, and less felicitous than in the Q1 research articles. The comparison was not of "like with like", an unsympathetic critic may object. Our pedagogical aim was to motivate the producers of the "unlike" towards producing "like", or at least, closer to "like". However, we caution them against falling prey to complacency and self-delusion often aggravated by money-grubbing journals that publish whatever they lay their hands on (Abdesslem, 2019, p. iii). By the same token, we invite reviewers and editors to accept cultural differences in exposition

and argumentation among academics from the periphery, as long as the research work they produce is innovative and worth disseminating.

Adel and Mauranen (2010, p. 1) asked "Is all sentential connectivity part of metadiscourse?". An overview of Hyland's (2004, p. 139) and Adel's (2010, p. 83) tables summing up their respective models shows that intersentential semantic connectivity is not listed as a manifestation of metadiscourse, i.e. it is not taken as a manifestation of "discourse about discourse". This paper represents a modest attempt at (i) rehabilitating research on content processing, by concentrating on propositional relations across sentences, (ii) reinstating the role of the reader instead of the machine, by promoting qualitative data scrutiny, and (iii) casting doubt on the definition of metadiscourse as "discourse minus content" as defined by Hyland (2017, p. 17), for discourse without content is meaningless and discourse without writer (speaker) and reader (hearer) or potential reader (hearer) presence and interaction is unimaginable. The sentential connectivity dealt with in this paper confirms the view that the interpersonal level is fundamentally inseparable from the ideational level and that the distinction between the study of discourse as content and the study of discourse minus content is at best a matter of division of labour in discourse analysis.

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