

## **A parameter hierarchy for passives**

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Assuming Chomsky's (2008) feature inheritance, the passive arises, we propose, where Voice withholds its phi-features from *v*, so that *v* fails to assign accusative Case and Voice licenses the external argument in SpecvP, giving rise to either *pro* (the implicit argument in short passives) or the *by*-phrase. In some languages this option is never taken, resulting in a lack of passives (Yoruba, etc.). In many languages this happens only in transitive contexts (Hebrew, French, English etc.), but in others it is generalised to all little *vs*, giving rise to passives of unergative verbs (Turkish, Dutch, etc.). In other languages, this operation is restricted to a subset of little *vs*, agentive *vs* in Hebrew, for example (Doron 2003). Other parameters concern the order between V and O in passives, which can be observed in expletive-associate constructions: while English permits only OV order (as in *there were several students arrested*, with *several students* in SpecvP), Swedish has both OV and VO (with different agreement patterns) and Spanish and French have only VO (Svenonius 2000, Holmberg 2001).