

DISCOURSE FACTORS AFFECTING TYPES OF TRANSITIVE VERBS IN PASSIVIZATION

The foregoing study reports on the discourse factors that affect the choice of the various types of transitive passivizable structures, laying special emphasis on the difference between them. The perspective adopted is a synchronic one that exploits a collection of spoken and written British English in Present-Day English (PDE) texts: the International Corpus of English in its British component (hereafter ICE-GB). First, we will clarify the concepts of monotransitive, ditransitive and complex-transitive verbs following main studies in the literatura (Biber et al. 1999, Halliday 1967-8, Huddleston and Pullum 2002). The study will continue with illustrative examples of such structures as well as percentages on their use to indicate the discursive reasons regarding the preference of one over the others. In this way, in an instance such as “He was given drugs in lieu”, which appears in the ICE with the reference LCE S1B-063#113:1:C, we will explain the changes that the direct and indirect objects undergo in the change to passive voice, adduce reasons for the low percentages of ditransitive passives in discourse as well as be critically reflective about the fact that constructions with the verbs demonstrate, describe, explain, introduce, mention, report and suggest (Hewings 2000) are not ditransitive passives as it is sometimes believed.

Key words: discourse factors, monotransitive, ditransitive, complex-transitive, preference.