

ON THE WORLD OF IMPERSONAL PASSIVE TYPES: A DISCOURSE CORPUS-BASED APPROACH

The present discussion presents the challenge of introducing the insights gained from an intense and systematic examination of impersonal passives in English discourse. We attempt to offer a comprehensive overview of the process of passivization and the use of impersonal passive types in actual texts and examples from the International Corpus of English, in its British component (hereafter ICE-GB) and we try to explore the phenomenon of discourse with a view to examining the relation between syntax and discourse analysis following studies in the literature (D. BIBER ET AL 1999; T. GIVÓN 1993; A. HEWINGS 2005; M. HEWINGS 2006; R. HUDDLESTON and G. PULLUM 2002; P. UR 2001.). It is our contention to identify and characterise the three different types of structures that can form impersonal passives and point out their behaviour in both spoken and written texts because both speech and writing make up for communication, the major aim of language use. Suggestions are given on the reasons why certain impersonal constructions are used in particular cases. We shed light on conclusions resting on the assumption that every syntactic construction has a binary discursive one.

Key words: Passivization, impersonal passive types, discourse analysis, syntax, communication