



Stative Passives and Event Kinds*

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Abstract. Motivated by particular restrictions on event-related modification with German stative passives, this paper proposes that stative passives instantiate a consequent state kind of an event kind. The participle in such constructions has to be derived from a verb whose event structure contains a consequent state, represented by an event-semantically interpreted BECOME component. Event-related modifiers with BE-passives modify either the event kind argument or the state itself, and are therefore semantically licensed.

1 Introduction

German morphologically distinguishes between so-called eventive (or verbal) and stative (or adjectival) passives (Kratzer 1994, 2000; Rapp 1996; Maienborn 2007a: among others). In particular, a past passive participle combines with *werden* ‘become’ in eventive passives (1a) and with *sein* ‘be’ in stative passives (1b) (examples after Kratzer 2000).

- (1) a. Die Reifen werden aufgepumpt.
the tires become up-pumped
‘The tires are (being) inflated.’
- b. Die Reifen sind aufgepumpt.
the tires are up-pumped
‘The tires are inflated.’

The semantics of sentences like (1b) is the main topic of this paper, and throughout, I will employ the descriptive labels BECOME- and BE-passives to distinguish between these two constructions in German.

According to the traditional view, going back to at least Wasow (1977), stative passives are copula-adjective constructions, eventive passives periphrastic verb forms. Nevertheless, an underlying event is still accessible in BE-

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passives, given the (albeit restricted) availability of event-related modifiers (2).

- (2) a. Der Brief ist mit roter Tinte geschrieben.
the letter is with red ink written
 b. Das Haar war schlampig gekämmt.
the hair was sloppily combed

Kratzer (1994, 2000) and Rapp (1996) therefore propose that it is possible to adjectivise not just verbs but also verb phrases (VPs). Schlücker (2005) and Maienborn (2007a), in contrast, argue that such modifiers are merely pragmatically licensed. In this paper, I will argue, contra the latter, that the particular modifiers available with BE-passives are semantically licensed.¹

The paper is organised as follows. In section 2, I will outline the general semantics associated with BE-passives, its input requirements, as well as the more restricted availability of event-related modification with this construction. Section 3 proposes a semantic account of BE-passives based on the difference between event kinds and tokens. Section 4 addresses the availability of one type of event-related modifier, *by*-phrases, and shows how the facts are accounted for by the proposal. Finally, section 5 concludes.

2 German BE-Passives

In the literature on German, the view prevails that the participle in BE-passives is adjectival (Kratzer 1994, 2000; Rapp 1996; von Stechow 1998; Maienborn 2007a), and that it expresses the result or outcome of an event. If BE-passives are copula-adjective constructions, their semantics has to be the one commonly assumed for such constructions: A stative property is ascribed to an individual.

However, BE-passives co-exist with ‘true’ copula-adjective constructions that employ primary adjectives (3) (examples from Maienborn 2009).

- (3) a. Die Schublade ist geöffnet / offen.
the drawer is opened / open
 b. Die Schublade ist geleert / leer.
the drawer is emptied / empty

This suggests that there has to be some difference between the two, and it is natural to assume that the difference is to be found in the nature of the underlying verb in BE-passives. The following sections discuss the contribution of

¹ For reasons of space, this paper will leave aside issues concerning the syntax-semantics interface, including whether or not phrasal adjectivisation of VPs exists. It can also not provide a deep comparison to existing approaches, but see Gehrke (to appear).

the verb in BE-passives, their input requirements and semantic peculiarities, as well as restrictions on the availability of event-related modification.

2.1 The Role of the Underlying Verb in BE-Passive Constructions

The stative property, as a rule, is ascribed to the internal (theme) argument of the underlying verb. The external argument, on the other hand, is completely absent, as illustrated by the unavailability of purpose clauses and depictives (4).²

- (4) a. ??? Der Reifen war aufgepumpt, um die Fahrt
 the tire was inflated in order the journey
 fortzusetzen.
 to continue
- b. ??? Das Buch war mit Absicht / betrunken geschrieben.
 the book was with purpose / drunk written

A first attempt at stating the input requirements for a BE-passive is based on the assumption that the stative property has to be recovered from the event structure licensed by the underlying verb. This means that only verbs which license an event structure with a stative component should be able to derive BE-passives. This is basically the hypothesis defended in Rapp (1996).

Indeed, the data show that BE-passives are fully acceptable with transitive verbs that have a lexically specified consequent state (in the sense of Moens & Steedman 1988) ((1b), (5)), i.e. with accomplishments and achievements.

- (5) a. Die Tür ist geöffnet / geschlossen.
 the door is opened / closed
- b. Der Antrag ist eingereicht.
 the application is submitted
- c. Die Lampe ist repariert.
 the lamp is repaired

With other verbs, BE-passives are acceptable only in certain contexts ((6)-(8), b. examples from Maienborn 2009) (see also Kratzer 2000). With activities ((6), (7)), this is to be expected: The event structure does not contain a state.

- (6) a. #Die Katze ist gestreichelt.
 the cat is petted

² This contrasts with BECOME-passives, where the external argument is syntactically active, even when it remains implicit (see also Gehrke & Grillo 2009; and literature cited therein).

- b. Anna hat ihre Nachbarspflichten erfüllt: Der Briefkasten ist
Anna has her neighbour-duties fulfilled the mail-box is
 geleert, die Blumen sind gegossen, und die Katze ist gestreichelt.
emptied the flowers are watered and the cat is petted
 ‘Anna has done her neighbourly duties: the mailbox is emptied,
 the flowers are watered and the cat is petted.’

The BE-passive of a semelfactive verb³ like *streicheln* ‘stroke’ in (6a) is rather bad out of context. However, if we create a context under which someone promised his or her neighbour to take care of things while the neighbour is on holiday, and one of the chores is to stroke the cat, the construction becomes acceptable (6b).

Similarly, the performative verb *zitieren* ‘cite’ out of context, as in (7a), is not a good candidate for the construction because it does not license an event structure with a stative component. In the right context, in this case adding the *by*-phrase *by Chomsky* (7b)⁴, the sentence becomes acceptable again.

- (7) a. #Das Manuskript ist zitiert.
the manuscript is cited
 b. Das Manuskript ist von Chomsky zitiert.
the manuscript is by Chomsky cited

What is not expected if all we needed were a stative component to license the construction, is the fact that there are also restrictions on deriving BE-passives from some stative predicates ((8), though see (10), below).

- (8) a. #Die Antwort ist gewusst.
the answer is known
 b. Ist die Antwort gewusst oder geraten?
is the answer known or guessed

The BE-passive of *wissen* ‘know’ out of context is rather bad but gets better when embedded under the question in (8b). It is important to note, however,

³ The terms activity, accomplishment, and achievement are used in the sense of Rothstein (2004). It could be debated whether semelfactives (or performatives, as in (7b)) are activities, but there is general agreement that semelfactives and performatives do not lexically specify a consequent state.

⁴ A German PP headed by *von* ‘of, from’ in these contexts is commonly translated into English with a *by*-phrase. However, since it is generally claimed for English that *by*-phrases are not possible with stative passives, it is not fully clear whether (a) this claim is simply wrong (exceptions for English exist; German data are discussed in more detail in section 4); or (b) whether German *von*-phrases are not fully equivalent to English *by*-phrases. Given the facts in (4) (which extend to combinations with acceptable *by*-phrases), we have to assume that these *by*-phrases are still different from the *by*-phrases with eventive passives, which introduce true external arguments.

that many speakers do not even accept (7b) and (8b), whereas (6b) is accepted by everyone. A more restrictive hypothesis, then, is the one in (9).

- (9) Only verbs that lexically specify a consequent state derive BE-passives.

It follows from (9) that accomplishment and achievement verbs, whose internal argument undergoes a change of state and as a result is the bearer of a consequent state, are the perfect candidates for this construction. In addition, state verbs that allow an inchoative (re-?)interpretation (see also Gehrke & Grillo 2009) are also fine, as evidenced by the acceptable BE-passives of the psych predicates in (10), in contrast to (8a).

- (10) Marie ist genervt / verärgert / amüsiert.
Marie is annoyed / angered / amused

This hypothesis also makes sense of the fact that the subject is always the theme argument of the underlying verb: Changes of state, as a rule, affect theme arguments.

2.2 BE-Passives Involve Event Kinds

We saw in (2) and (7b) that the underlying event can be modified by event-related modifiers, such as instrumentals, manner modifiers, and *by*-phrases. However, it has often been observed that such modification is only possible if it pertains to the consequent state; cf. the contrast between (11) and (12) (examples after Rapp 1996).

- (11) Der Mülleimer ist (* von meiner Nichte / *langsam) geleert.
the rubbish bin is by my niece / slowly emptied
- (12) a. Das Haus ist von Studenten bewohnt.
the house is by students in-lived
 b. Er ist von der Musik beeindruckt.
he is by the music impressed

The modifiers in (11) are out because they refer to an event participant or the manner of the event that (could have) brought about the particular state described by the sentence without having an impact on or being ‘visible’ during the consequent state. In contrast, the event participants described by the *by*-phrases in (12) clearly belong to the state described (see section 4).

Similarly, the modifiers in (13) have an impact on the underlying event that is still visible during the consequent state.

- (13) a. Die Zeichnung ist von einem Kind angefertigt.
the drawing is by a child made
 b. Der Brief war mit einem Bleistift geschrieben.
the letter was with a pencil written
 c. Das Haar war ziemlich schlampig gekämmt.
the hair was rather slopp(il)y combed

In section 3, I will propose that BE-passives only allow modifiers that either modify an event kind (as in (13)) or that modify the state directly (as in (12)).

Another important restriction on the modification of BE-passives is that the underlying event cannot be temporally or spatially modified.⁵ For example, a modifier like *recently* can only modify the state (14).

- (14) Die Tür war kürzlich geöffnet.
the door was recently opened.
 ‘The door was in the opened state recently, but probably is no longer.’
 (NOT: The door is in the opened state, the opening took place recently.)

BE-passives are also incompatible with temporal frame adverbials (15) (examples from von Stechow 1998) (see also Rapp 1996, 1997).

- (15) a. *Der Computer ist vor drei Tagen repariert.
the computer is before three days repaired
 (‘The computer is repaired three days ago.’)
 b. Der Computer ist seit drei Tagen repariert.
the computer is since three days repaired

This has to do with the fact that BE-passives with a present tense copula are statements about the present (in contrast to present perfect BECOME-passives, which - at least in German - are statements about the past⁶).

Furthermore, spatial modifiers that pick out the location of the event that brought about the consequent state are also generally bad (16).

- (16) a. ??? Die Reifen sind in der Garage aufgepumpt.
the tires are in the garage inflated

⁵ The incompatibility of spatial and temporal modifiers with (many or most) stative predicates is discussed extensively in Maienborn (2007b) and literature cited therein.

⁶ See also Rapp (1996); Kratzer (2000); Maienborn (2007a) and literature cited therein for arguments against treating BE-passives as an ellipsis of an eventive passive perfect construction. (German *werden* ‘become’ forms the perfect with the auxiliary *be*.)

- b. ??? Das Kind war im Badezimmer gekämmt.
the child was in the bathroom combed

From these data I conclude that the event associated with the underlying verb lacks spatiotemporal location. To capture this fact, the account outlined in the next section crucially builds on the assumption that BE-passives involve event kinds, not event tokens.

3 The Proposal

Based on the discussion in the previous section, I propose that a BE-passive refers to the instantiation of a consequent state kind of an event kind (17).

- (17) a. Die Tür ist geschlossen.
the door is closed
 b. $\exists e_k, s_k, s [\text{BECOME}(e_k, s_k) \wedge \text{THEME}(e_k, \mathbf{door}) \wedge \mathbf{closed}(s) \wedge \text{THEME}(s, \mathbf{door}) \wedge \mathbf{R}(s, s_k)]$

R is Carlson's (1977) realisation relation whereas **BECOME** should be understood as an event semantic version of Dowty's (1979) **BECOME**-operator, associated with accomplishment and achievement predicates; e.g. (18).

- (18) *Informal event semantics of BECOME (von Stechow 1996)*
 $[[\text{BECOME}]] (\text{P})(e) = 1$ iff e is the smallest event such that **P** is not true of the prestate of e but **P** is true of the target state of e .

The use of **BECOME** is motivated by the hypothesis in (9).⁷

The idea that BE-passives involve event kinds, in turn, is motivated by the restricted availability of event-related modifiers discussed in the previous section.⁸ The unavailability of spatial and temporal modifiers shows that the event in BE-passives has no spatiotemporal manifestation. Instrumental, manner modifiers and *by*-phrases, on the other hand, are only available if they can be interpreted as event kind modifiers, or if they modify the state (token) directly. Event kind modification will be discussed in this section, whereas state

⁷ Something like **BECOME** is also employed in Embick's (2004) account of one type of stative passive participles he identifies, namely the resultative one.

⁸ Event kinds are natural to expect if we assume that events form a subsort in our ontology of (token) individuals (Davidson 1967), kinds form another subsort in that ontology (Carlson 1977), and as a rule, any token in the ontology should be the realisation of some kind in that ontology. Event kinds have an analog in e.g. the Situation Semantics notion of event type (Barwise & Perry 1983), though the formal details are quite different. Under a Neo-Davidsonian view (e.g. Parsons 1990), events can be decomposed into subevent, which motivates the additional assumption about the existence of subevent kinds.

modifiers are addressed in section 4.

Empirical arguments for event kinds as an ontological category have been brought forward by e.g. Landman & Morzycki (2003); Ginzburg (2005); Gehrke & McNally (to appear). For example, Landman & Morzycki (2003) propose to model manner modification in terms of kinds. Since their line of argumentation provides additional independent support for my analysis of BE-passives, the following subsection will briefly recapitulate the relevant points.

3.1 Modeling Manner in Terms of Kinds (Landman & Morzycki 2003)

Landman & Morzycki observe semantic and syntactic parallels with *so*-anaphora in the nominal and verbal domain across various languages. Their examples from German are given in (19).

- (19) a. so ein Hund (wie dieser)
 so a dog (like this)
 ‘such a dog like this one’
 b. Er hat so getanzt (wie Maria).
 he has so danced (like Mary)
 ‘He danced like Mary.’

In (19) there is a direct semantic parallel in the adnominal and adverbial uses of *so*, which refers back to a particular kind of entity (a kind of dog or a kind of dancing event). There is furthermore a syntactic parallel in that both can occur with an additional clause of comparison introduced by *wie* ‘like’.

Given that elements like *so* under the adnominal use (19a), in particular English *such*, are commonly treated as kind anaphors, following Carlson (1977), Landman & Morzycki (2003) treat adverbial *so* analogously, as anaphor to event kinds. In particular, they propose that (adverbial) *so* denotes a property of events that realise a (particular contextually supplied) kind (20).

- (20) $[[so_i]] = \lambda e.e \text{ realises } k_i$

An additional argument that kinds are involved comes from the fact that temporal and locative adverbials generally cannot antecede adverbial *so* (21), unless they can be seen as creating a new (or sub-)kind (22) (examples from Landman & Morzycki 2003).

- (21) a. *Maria hat am Dienstag getanzt, und Jan hat auch so getanzt.
 Mary has on Tuesday danced and John has also so danced

- b. **Maria hat in Minnesota gegessen, und Jan hat auch so
Mary has in Minnesota eaten and John has also so
gegessen.
eaten*

- (22) *Maria schläft in einem Schlafsack, und Jan schläft auch so.
Mary sleeps in a sleeping bag and John sleeps also so
'Mary sleeps in a sleeping bag and John does so, too.'*

For example, the locative modifier in (22) does not serve to specify the location of a particular sleeping event, but rather serves to create a new sub-kind of sleeping event, namely the kind of sleeping in sleeping bags. Hence, it is not a proper spatial modifier but rather used as a kind of manner modifier.

Given facts like these, Landmann & Morzycki suggest to treat manner modifiers as event kind modifiers in general.

3.2 Relevance for this Paper

Returning to the topic of this paper, it is striking to see that the same kind of modifiers that are acceptable antecedents for *so* are also possible with BE-passives, namely and foremost manner modifiers, which modify an event kind. Spatial and temporal modifiers, on the other hand, modify an event token and are neither good antecedents of *so* nor acceptable with BE-passives, as observed in the previous section.

If manner modification is taken to be kind modification, one type of restriction on event-related modification with BE-passives is straightforwardly accounted for under the current proposal (abstracting away from state modifiers for the time being). Since BE-passives involve event kinds, only kind-related event modification is possible, including modifiers that serve to create a new or a subkind. It should also be clear, then, that the particular modifiers are semantically and not just pragmatically licensed, *contra* Maienborn (2007a, 2009).

To illustrate how the kind-based approach captures the restrictions on event-related modification with BE-passives, let us come back to the contrast between (11) and (13) (I will return to the stative examples in (12) in section 4). The example in (11) without the modifier describes the state the rubbish bin is in as a result of an emptying event kind. Combining event-related modifiers with the BE-passive should only be allowed either if these modify the (consequent) state (token) or if they create a new subkind, by narrowing down the event kind of emptying rubbish bins. The particular modifiers in (11), however, do not do either, since they do not relate to the consequent state itself and since there are also no common or established subkinds of rubbish-bin-emptying by

my niece or slowly.⁹ The modifiers in (13), in turn, pick out particular subkinds of the events in question, namely childish drawings, pencil-writings or sloppy combings.

In the following section, I will take a closer look at restrictions on the availability of *by*-phrases and show that some *by*-phrases modify a state whereas others should be treated as event kind modifiers.

4 Different Types of *by*-Phrases with BE-Passives

Schlücker (2005) observes that there are two types of *by*-phrases that can combine with BE-passives. She argues that one type constitutes VP-adjuncts (23), which do not form a prosodic unit with the participle.

- (23) a. weil Peter von dem GeJAmmer genervt ist
because Peter by the lamentation annoyed is CONTRASTIVE
 b. weil Peter von dem GeJÁmmer geNÈRVT ist
because Peter by the lamentation annoyed is NEUTRAL

Neutral stress with these phrases is on the participle, secondary stress on the modifier (the latter point is not noted in Schlücker, but see Hoekstra 1999; Gehrke 2008 for similar facts from Dutch).

The second type of *by*-phrases is argued to be V-adjuncts, which form a prosodic unit with the participle, with neutral stress on the modifier (24), (25).

- (24) a. weil die Wände von FEUer geschwärzt sind
because the walls by fire blackened are NEUTRAL
 b. weil die Wände von Feuer geSCHWÄRZT sind
because the walls by fire blackened are
 CONTRASTIVE
- (25) a. weil seine Töchter von der SANGesemuse geküsst sind
because his daughters by the muse of singing kissed are
 NEUTRAL
 b. weil seine Töchter von der Sangesemuse geKÜSST
because his daughters by the muse of singing kissed
 sind
are
 CONTRASTIVE

⁹ The question remains how to determine whether a subkind is common or established. Ultimately, a pragmatic account should answer such questions, and this is where the current proposal meets pragmatic accounts like Schlücker (2005) and Maienborn (2007a).

Schlücker observes that the intonation facts with her ‘V-adjuncts’ match those with other event-related modifiers that are allowed with BE-passives (26), (27).

- (26) a. weil die Birnen in ROTwein gedünstet sind
because the pears in red wine steamed are NEUTRAL
 b. weil die Birnen in Rotwein geDÜNSTet sind
because the pears in red wine steamed are CONTRASTIVE
- (27) a. weil der Brief mit WACHS versiegelt ist
because the letter with wax sealed is NEUTRAL
 b. weil der Brief mit Wachs verSIEgelt ist
because the letter with wax sealed is CONTRASTIVE

She concludes that these latter event-related modifiers, as well as *by*-phrases which behave like V-adjuncts, are pragmatically licensed in line with the account proposed by Maienborn, by forming a complex ad hoc property with the stative property denoted by the verbal participle.¹⁰

In addition, Schlücker notes that the two types of *by*-phrases further differ with respect to the nature of their complements. With her VP-adjuncts, the *by*-phrase is stated to denote the agent or direct cause of the underlying event. Animate entities are commonly expressed by proper names or members of a group denoted by a collective noun, e.g. *Polizist* ‘police-man’. Inanimate entities are referred to by definite uses of mass nouns, e.g. *vom Feuer* ‘by the fire’, or by appellatives used definitely, e.g. *von der Bombe* ‘by the bomb’.

With her V-adjuncts, on the other hand, a *by*-phrase is argued to denote the theme of the underlying event or an indirect cause. It is supposed to have an instrumental character and to provide information about the manner or reason of the event. Animate entities are referred to by collective nouns, e.g. *von der Polizei* ‘by the police’, inanimate entities by generic uses of mass nouns (*von Feuer* ‘by fire’) or indefinite uses of appellatives (*von einer Bombe, von Bomben* ‘by a bomb, by bombs’).

In the following, I will make some qualifications with respect to the data discussed in Schlücker and relate the facts to the current proposal.

4.1 Some Qualifications

A first observation is that the V-adjuncts discussed by Schlücker are parts of fixed expressions and idioms. For example, there is no literal ‘verbal’ meaning in (25), in the sense that the muse of singing actually kisses or kissed the

¹⁰ This is basically what I called a common or established subkind above. Her account of the syntax of ‘VP-adjuncts’ remains unclear, given that she rejects the possibility of phrasal adjectivisation.

daughters.¹¹ A second type of *by*-phrases behaving like V-adjuncts is found in examples already discussed in previous sections, such as (7b) and (13a), repeated in (28) with the additional neutral stress pattern identifying them as V-adjuncts.

- (28) a. Das Manuskript ist von CHOMsky zitiert.
the manuscript is by Chomsky cited
 b. Die Zeichnung ist von einem KIND angefertigt.
the drawing is by a child made

The ‘VP-adjuncts’ discussed by Schlücker, on the other hand, are fully acceptable only with stative predicates. An example from previous sections, which displays this intonation pattern, is the stative one in (12b), repeated in (29) with the relevant intonation pattern.

- (29) Er ist von der MuSÍK beËINDruckt.
he is by the music impressed

For the other alleged ‘VP-adjuncts’, i.e. those that do not combine with stative predicates, I do not find them very good and I do not share the judgments about the intonation identifying them as VP-adjuncts. If acceptable at all, they rather behave like V-adjuncts, e.g. there is no secondary stress ((30), Schlücker’s examples, my judgments about stress).¹²

- (30) a. ?? weil der Saal von der Heinrich-BÖLL-Stiftung gemietet
because the hall by the Heinrich-Böll-foundation rented
 ist.
is
 NEUTRAL
 b. ?? weil der Saal von der Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung geMIETet
because the hall by the Heinrich-Böll-foundation rented
 ist
is
 CONTRASTIVE

¹¹ Similarly, the combination ‘von Feuer geschwärzt’ in (24) appears rather fixed. A preliminary google-search revealed very few instances of ‘geschwärzt’ in combination with a *by*-phrase. These were limited to *von Feuer*, *von Rauch* ‘by smoke’, and *von Ruß* ‘by carbon black’.

¹² Other native speakers agreed with my judgments. Further syntactic tests to distinguish between V- and VP-adjuncts, mentioned by Schlücker (2005), such as the relative placement (with respect to modifier and participle) of sentence negation, sentence adverbials and floating quantifiers, yield the same results.

I conclude from these facts, then, that *by*-phrases that behave like VP-adjuncts are fully acceptable only with states.¹³ Given observations in previous sections, this makes sense, since only with these predicates, the entity denoted by the *by*-phrase modifies the state (which is interpreted as an inchoative state).

4.2 Rapp (1996)

A similar modification restriction to stative predicates with BE-passives is already observed in Rapp (1996). Rapp notes that *by*-phrases that relate to the action or the process itself (as opposed to a stative component) are generally incompatible with *un*-prefixation (31), while this combination is more acceptable with stative verbs (32) (examples due to Lenz 1993).

- (31) a. Die Suppe ist (*von Maja) ungewürzt.
*the soup is (*by Maja) unseasoned*
 b. Der Brief ist (*von Maja) ungeschrieben.
*the letter is (*by Maja) unwritten*
- (32) a. Die Dresdner Bürger sind von solchen Problemen
the Dresden- citizens are by such problems
 unbeeindruckt.
unimpressed
 ‘The citizens of Dresden are not concerned with such problems.’
 b. ... weil sie von ihrer Arbeit unbefriedigt ist.
because they by their work unsatisfied are
 ‘... because they are not satisfied by their work’

She concludes that the *by*-phrases with these verbs do not relate to an activity or action but express arguments of the adjective (i.e. of the state): The construction expresses the attitude of an experiencer with respect to his stimulus.

She furthermore observes that there are word order differences between non-action-related *by*-phrases (33) and other event-related modifiers in the BE-passive (34).

- (33) a. Die Dresdner Bürger sind unbeeindruckt von solchen
the Dresden- citizens are unimpressed by such
 Problemen.
problems

¹³ The marginal acceptability of such *by*-phrases with BE-passives could be explained along the lines of Welke (2007), who assumes that there are a few instances where a BE-passive construction has to be interpreted as an elliptical BECOME-passive perfect construction.

- b. ... weil sie unbefriedigt von ihrer Arbeit sind.
because they unsatisfied by their work are
- (34) *... weil der Brief geschrieben von einem Experten / mit roter
because the letter written by an expert / with red
 Tinte war.
ink was

Only the former can be extraposed, whereas the latter have to remain within the VP (or the verbal cluster). From these facts she concludes that the modifiers in (33) modify the adjective, while those in (34) modify a VP.¹⁴

4.3 Taking Stock: The Licensing of *by*-Phrases

To take stock, we have different kinds of *by*-phrases with BE-passives that are licensed semantically (and possibly syntactically) in different ways. First, we have *by*-phrases that behave like V-adjuncts, diagnosed by intonation and word order possibilities. Such *by*-phrases are only possible with idioms or when they serve to create a new (sub-)kind (e.g. (13a)). Furthermore, they behave like other event-related modifiers of BE-passives with respect to intonation and word order, as the data discussed by Rapp and Schlücker show.

In contrast, there are *by*-phrases that behave like VP-adjuncts with respect to intonation and word order possibilities, and thus contrast with other event-related modifiers with this construction. Such *by*-phrases are fully acceptable only with stative predicates, in which case they modify a state token. It is possible that such phrases are really to be treated as arguments of the AP (along the lines of Rapp), rather than arguments of the underlying VP. *By*-phrases with stative predicates commonly do not refer to agents, i.e. they are not true external arguments. For example, with psych predicates, they rather refer to the stimulus of the state expressed.

Schlücker's observation, then, that the complements of V-adjunct *by*-phrases have more of a generic character fits these conclusions and the overall proposal. If the *by*-phrase modifies an event kind rather than an event token, the potential agent of such a kind naturally has a more generic character. With the VP-adjuncts, on the other hand, we have *by*-phrases modifying an actual state token, so they are prone to be less generic.¹⁵

¹⁴ Rapp takes the latter facts as an argument in favour of phrasal adjectivisation (along the lines of Kratzer 1994).

¹⁵ Recall that Schlücker notes that VP-adjunct *by*-phrases can also refer to agents or direct causers. I assume that these must be the *by*-phrases in the non-stative examples, which are not very good to begin with.

5 Conclusion

In this paper, I proposed an account of German stative passives (BE-passives), which employed the concept of kinds in the domain of eventualities. On the basis of the restricted availability of event-related modifiers, it was argued that BE-passives instantiate a consequent state kind of an event kind. The input requirements for this construction therefore involve a participle derived from a verb whose event structure contains a consequent state, which was represented by an event-semantically interpreted BECOME component. Event-related modifiers with BE-passives, in turn, were argued to be semantically licensed, since they modify either the event kind argument or the state itself.

It was briefly noted that in some cases (for some speakers), BE-passives can be derived from verbs which do not license an event structure with a consequent state component, and it was suggested that these cases have to be contextually (pragmatically) licensed. The precise mechanisms were not discussed, however (see Maienborn 2007a, 2009; Gese 2010: for issues concerning the pragmatics of BE-passives); we could also assume that such cases involve coercion of the underlying event type. Given that the event kind is not spatiotemporally located, it might also be possible to interpret the scale underlying BECOME in a non-temporal way. This could explain different readings ascribed to BE-passives that have been discussed in the literature under different labels, such as consequent state vs. characterisation readings (Brandt 1982; Rapp 1996), resultant state vs. target state readings (Kratzer 2000) or temporal vs. qualitative readings (Maienborn 2009; Gese 2010).¹⁶ This remains to be worked out in future research.

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¹⁶ A somewhat different division is found in Embick (2004), who differentiates between statives and resolutives in English (see also Gehrke to appear).

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