Strategies for Translating the Passive Structure in Scientific Discourse

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Abstract

The high frequency of passives in scientific writing is also substantiated by Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman's (1983: 228) frequency continuum. It is their high frequency in scientific writing that renders passive structures unignorable for scientific translators as well as indispensible enough for this paper to revisit these constructions. From the perspectives on translating the passive structure from English to Vietnamese, strategies for translating the passive structure in scientific writing were proposed to guide scientific translators on how to translate the passive structure without actor, translate the English nominalizations following the verbs of experience, and translate the English passive structure in the relative clause of place as well as when to retain the actor in the translated text.

Keywords: Passive structure, Scientific writing, Theme-rheme structure, Nominalization, Source-oriented translation, Source-independent translation

1. The passive structure at a glimpse

In English and the other European languages, the passive voice is defined in terms of morphorlogy, syntax, and semantics. According to traditional descriptive grammar, the term "passive voice" refers to the placement of the object at the subject's position, together with the emergence of the passive morphemes (Radford 1981). Givón (1990: 566) portrays the subject function of non-agent roles in the passive sentences in contrast with roles of subjects in the active sentences via the subsequent illustration:

Active: (Actor) > Beneficient > Patient > Other roles

Passive: Beneficient > Patient > Other roles

Keenan views the passive as "a common structure in the world languages" (1985: 243). The passive voice is not common in the spoken language unless the speaker wishes to highlight something. The written discourse, on the contrary, contains the stricter devices to link the clauses than those in the spoken utterance. The passive occasionally emerges in the discourse to deal with the need for linking clauses. Siewierska points out that the necessity for the use of the passive varies from language to language, hinging on internal linguistic features of the passive and available strategies to express the above functions (1984: 217-8). "The above functions" Siewierska refers to are topic identification, impersonalization and detransitivisation.

There are numerous reasons for the use of passive voice, the first of which is to serve topicalizing function. Givón contends that passivization is the process by which a non-agent gets promoted up to the subject of the sentence (1979: 186). Givón defines promotional passive voice as the structure where the subject of the passive structure goes through the complete promotion up to subjecthood. This type of structure tends to embrace the subsequent properties:

- enabling the agent of the passive voice to emerge optionally;

- coding the passive verb in the more stative and intransitive grammatical form; and

- confining the range of non-agent case-roles which can become the subject of the passive structure. (1990: 575)

In view of the cognitive framework, Rudzka-Ostyn lists specific parameters employed to analyze a particular situation: "vantage point, figure-ground alignment, levels of specificity/schematicity, backgrounding, foregrounding, and other parameters" (1993: 15). All these aspects need to be looked through in the analysis of the passive voice. Passive voice is used as a foregrounding device underscoring the participant that should be prominent in the readers' awareness of the reality the writer intends to convey. In the passive structure, the

patient tends to have higher topicality than the agent, and the agent is exceedingly non-topical or demoted (Givón 1994: 9).

The passive is a marked structure. Givón contrasts the active with passive construction and notes that "(the) neutral, less presuppositional main, active, declarative, affirmative clause-type is also the most frequent in discourse" (1979: 50) as well as contends that a structure will be deemed as syntactically more intricate if it deviates from the common speech-processing strategies established by the norm (1979: 74). Thus, the author regards the active construction as a non-marked one, but the passive construction as a marked one, implying a certain degree of accentuation conveyed by the writer/speaker. As the writer/speaker desires to accentuate an element, he is prone to lay it in a prominent position in the sentence – the beginning of the sentence.

Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman's (1983: 228) frequency continuum demonstrates that the highest frequency of passives is encountered in scientific writing, but the lowest frequency in spoken discourse.

Least number of passives		*Highest number of passives*
per number of words		*per number of words*
conversation	journalistic	scientific
fiction	writing	writing

A content analysis by Banks (1994) on 11 researches in the field of oceanography reveals that the frequency of the passive construction is 31%. This finding advocates the contention that the passive construction is a feature of the scientific text due to its impersonal nature. In Banks's (1994) view, except for the type of adjectival passives, the passive structure is composed of copula and complement. In other words, the passive voice is chiefly a relational process in which past participle is the second participant of the process. Banks employs the term "relational process" in a sense that systemic functional linguistics does (see Berry 1975, Downing & Locke 1992, Halliday 1994, Eggins 1994).

The impersonal nature of the scientific text renders cognitive process significant. By nature, the cognitive process requires conscious subject in the active form, a senser (Halliday 1994, Eggins 1994), or experiencer (Downing & Locke 1992). Thus, to evade referring to personal agent, metaphors emerge in the active sentences:

(1) Figure 1a shows depths …

(2) A redetermination of the slope … would cast light on these problems.

A figure can not demonstrate anything. It is the scientist who uses the figure to show that to the audience. Similarly, the act of redetermination does not substantiate anything, but rather, the scientist illuminates the problems via a redetermination of the slope.

The passive structure is an expression of the cognitive process implying conscious subject and metaphorical grammar in Halliday's (1994) perspective.

2. Perspectives on the passive structure in Vietnamese language

The passive construction currently occurring in Vietnamese language like "Trong phản ứng kết hợp hạt nhân, năng lượng được sản sinh bởi sự kết hợp các nguyên tử" ("In the nuclear fusion, energy is produced by the combination of atoms"), as Clark (1971) claims, is the copying of the passive structure in French and English languages. Clark (1971) points out that the concept "passive" can not apply to Vietnamese language, but rather, Vietnamese language has submissive or adversative verbs which Alves (2001) addresses as affective verbs with their implications displayed in Table 1.

Alves maintains that "bị" and "được" in Vietnamese language can not be the morphemes of the passive, and are unequivalent to the morphemes of the passive in English language since "bị" and "được" can be pursued by transitive verbs, intransitive verbs, and even nouns, as encountered in the respective sentences: "Nó bị đánh." ("He was beaten.": "bị" is followed by a transitive verb "đánh"), "Nó bị ngã." ("He fell.": "bị" is followed by an intransitive verb "ngã"), and "Nó được điểm tốt." ("He got a good mark.": "được" is followed by a noun). In contrast, merely transitive verbs can involve in the English passive constructions. Furthermore, whereas the morphemes of the English passive carry the neutral implication, "bị" and "được" in Vietnamese language convey the negative and positive implications respectively. Sharing this view with Alves, Nguyen (1977), Nguyen (1986), Nguyen (2000), and Cao (2001) claim that "bị" and "được" are not function words operating as the passive construction markers, but modality verbs or even predicate verbs.

Nonetheless, if predicated on the perspective that in the passive construction, the beginning position of the beneficient or patient and the semantics of "receiving" outweight the passive morpheme, then both Clark and Alves did not "master" Vietnamese language as well as Thompson (1965), who contends that even though certain obscurity entails the existence of active/passive forms in Vietnamese language, the verb "bị" or "được" pursued by the descriptive complement builds the logical passive in Vietnamese language. Siding with Clark and Alves, Hoang (2002) does not view "bị" and "được" as the passive morphemes since both can emerge in two forms of transitivity (see Figure 1):

Examples: 1) Nó bị ngã (He fell) (inwards)

2) Nó bị mất một chiếc ô trắng (He lost a white umbrella)

 (outwards/active)

3) Nó bị tôi đánh (He got beaten by me) (outwards/passive)

Hoang (2002), however, acknowledges the passive function of "bị" and "được", and distinguishes "bị" with "indesirable" implication from "được" with "desirable" implication. Keenan (1985: 257-261) alleges that, in the languages where periphrastic passive occurs, at least four types of verbs are employed as passive predicate markers: (1) verbs of being (such as *be* in English, *byt'* in Russian, and *être* in French), (2) verbs of reception (for instance, the passive with *get* in English), (3) verbs of motion (such as the verb *gayee* in Hindi), and (4) verbs of experience (such as "bị"/"được" in Vietnamese).

In a nutshell, Thompson's (1965) the logical passive is a generalization of the passive structure, not bound by the three criteria: the beginning position of the beneficient – the passive morpheme – the reception of external action.

3. Perspectives on translating the passive structure from English to Vietnamese

3.1 Using two-layered theme-rheme structure

Thompson's (1965) view on the passive in Vietnamese language is more manifestly portrayed via two-layered theme-rheme structure where rheme is descriptive complement Thompson refers to. The translated text "Các vi khuẩn và mô chết bị thực bào nuốt" from the source text "Bacteria and dead tissues are swallowed by phagocytes" illustrates the two-layered theme-rheme construction of the passive in Vietnamese language (see Figure 2).

The interesting thing Nguyen (1977: 208) explores in the Vietnamese passive is that in certain cases, the moving of the noun phrase functioning as an object to the position of the subject sufficiently marks the passive structure without the passive marker prowling about:

Active: Pha   bưng   mâm   lên. (1)

              Pha   carries the tray.

              NP1   V   NP2

Passive: Lúc mâm cơm bưng   lên. (2)

              When the tray carries

                        NP2   V

As Nguyen (1977) explains, in the structure (1), the coincidence of the actor and the subject indicates that the verb *bưng lên* conveys the active implication. By contrast, the sentence (2), where the beneficient plays the role of the sentential subject, contains the passive implication. According to Nguyen (1977), the passive implication in the structure (2) is not confined to the verb, but disseminates through the whole sentence. This notion of the passive structure in Vietnamese language tends to interpret the growing trend in the ellipsis of verbs of experience "bị"/"được" in modern Vietnamese language (Nguyen 2001: 178).

Thus, the new trend to translate such a scientific text as "Protein *found* in urine to be more than 3.5 gm/day suggests the nephrotic syndrome." is to hide the passive markers "bị"/"được" and produce such a translation as "Lượng đạm *tìm thấy* trong nước tiểu lớn hơn 3.5 gam/ngày là dấu hiệu hội chứng thận hư".
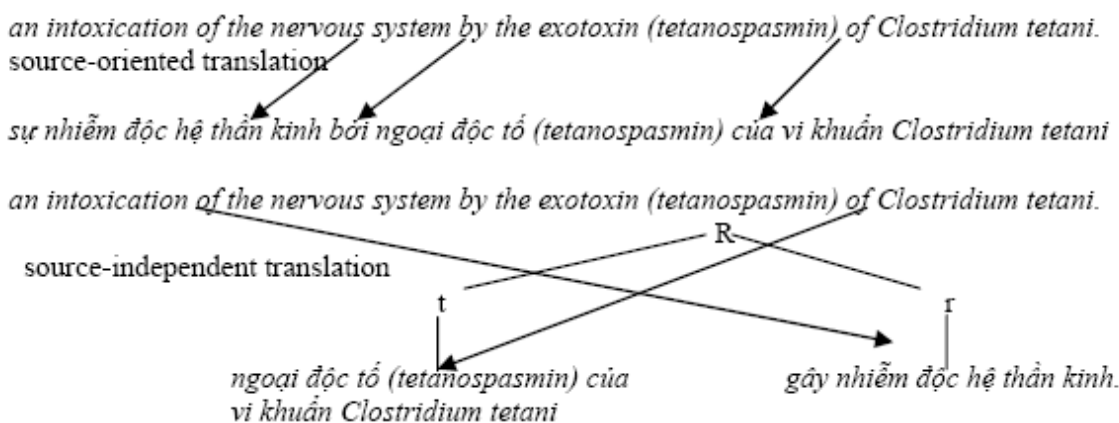
The above analysis suggests the translation of the English passive structure into Vietnamese language can resort to two-layered theme-rheme structure (see Figure 3).

The translated text "Lượng đạm *tìm thấy* trong nước tiểu lớn hơn 3.5 gam/ngày là dấu hiệu hội chứng thận hư" indicates that both the verb of experience and the actor are concealed. Verbs of experience "bị"/"được" don't simply take "an object", but also "an event" represented by a theme-rheme structure, so such a word-for-word translation of English passive construction into Vietnamese as "bị/được + verb + bởi (by) + actor" inverts the theme-rheme sequence and diminishes its readership.

Tran (2004: 296-297) points out that the second layer in the two-layered theme-rheme structure is *the active structure inside the passive structure,* and adds that the active structure lends itself to the introverted and subjective cognitive process (attached to the speaker) underlying Oriental culture whereas the passive structure corresponds to the extrovert and objective cognitive process (detached from the speaker) found in Western culture.

3.2 Translating the nominalizations with passive implications

Assuming no passive morphemes, nominalizations with passive implications can be translated in the same way as passive structures are. Table 2 displays the source-oriented translation and the source-independent translation of the nominalization "an intoxication of the nervous system by the exotoxin (tetanospasmin) of Clostridium tetani" carrying no passive morphemes, but passive implication.

3.3 Replacing the verb in passive form by a synonymous verb in active form

The two-layered theme-rheme structure can not apply to all cases of translating English passive structure into Vietnamese. Another tactic is to supplant the verb in passive form with a synomous verb in active form. The translation "Hạt nhân, *tạo bởi* neutron và proton, nằm giữa nguyên tử và có các electron quay xung quanh" is the loan translation of the source text "The nucleus, which *is composed of* neutrons and protons, is in the middle of the atom and has electrons revolving around it"; however, the replacement of "is composed of" (passive construction) by "bao gồm" (meaning "consists of") (active construction) will produce source-independent translation "Hạt nhân, *bao gồm* neutron và proton, …"

3.4 Nominalizing the verb in the passive form

In order to create source-independent translation, the passive construction can be decomposed and its verb gets nominalized. In the subsequent translation, the verb phrase *is characterized by* is converted into the noun phrase *có đặc trưng là* (has such characteristics as) (see Table 3).

3.5 Simulating the English passive construction (loan translation)

In Nguyen's (2001: 176-178) view, language contact has brought new lexicons into Vietnamese language, and to some extent, influenced its syntax. The simulation of the English passive construction "bị/được … bởi" ("passive morpheme … by") as in the TV commercial "Chương trình này được tài trợ bởi …" (This program is sponsored by …) apparently creates a special effect attracting the audience's attention to the sponsor company's name, so this loan translation does not highlight the beneficient at the beginning of the sentence, but shifts the focus to the actor at the end. The calque of the English passive structure creates the wait time for the audience, and thereby, enhances their excitement on the path from the beneficient to the actor at the destination of the utterance.

This perspective is worth consideration and application. Nonetheless, even though the loan translation "bị/được … bởi" ("passive morpheme … by") produces certain special effects in some cases, it should not be abused, especially in scientific translation. Vietnamese culture is open, but highly selective. Notwithstanding a

growing trend in the loan translation of English passive construction, the loan translation should be adapted. Contrast the two diachronic translations of the definition of "Nephrotic syndrome" (Table 4).

The current translation containing the loan translation of English passive construction "được đặc trưng bởi" makes the definition rather heavy, but if the passive marker "được" is deleted, its remainder "Hội chứng thận hư đặc trưng bởi …" sounds more harmonious and more tolerable in Vietnamese language.

4. Strategies for translating the passive structure in scientific writing

4.1 Translating the passive structure without actor

Upon translating the passive structure without the actor, the translator needs to explore if the discourse has advisability implication, or if there is any impact of intersentential theme-rheme string on the passive structure.

4.1.1 The passive structure has advisability implication

$$\{N, (be + PP (V))\} \xrightarrow{translate} \{V, N\}(active)$$

where N refers to noun and PP(V) refers to past participle of the verb (see an illustration in Table 5).

Since impersonal sentences are a feature of the scientific texts, English passive structure with advisability implication should be translated as impersonal active structure to attain higher communicative quality in the translated text. This translation tactic should be employed especially for the passive structures with advisability implication highlighted in the source texts (see Table 6).

4.1.2 The passive structure is parallel to the active structure

When the passive structure is parallel to the active structure in the sentence, it tends to be translated as the active structure in the target language:

$$\{(be + PP (V_1)) \text{ AND } V_2\} \xrightarrow{translate} \{active\ equivalent\ (V_1)\ V\grave{A}\ V_2\}$$

In the sentence in Table 7, the subject "Gastrointestinal discomfort and bleeding" is pursued by parallel predicates with "and" as the connector. Thus, if the first predicate is translated into the active structure: "Thường gặp rối loạn và xuất huyết tiêu hóa" (Often encounter gastrointestinal discomfort and bleeding), then "gastrointestinal discomfort and bleeding" has to be repeated in the translated text "và rối loạn và xuất huyết tiêu hóa có thể trầm trọng" (and gastrointestinal discomfort and bleeding may be severe). The parallelism in the source text may limit the effectiveness of the use of active structure to translate parallel predicates; however, the ellipsis of the passive marker "được" which reduces the loan transition into "thường gặp", instead of "thường được gặp" (be often encountered), as discussed in the section 3.1, appears to work. The translator can also translate the English passive structure as the active structure, as discussed in the section 3.3, with the replacement of "thường được gặp" (be often encountered) by its synonymous active verb "thường xảy ra" (often occur).
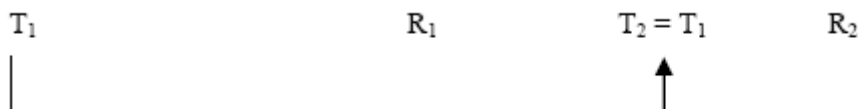
4.1.3 The passive structure is a ring of the theme-rheme chain

When the passive structure in the source text is a ring of the theme-rheme chain $\{T_1, R_1 \rightarrow T_1, R_2 (passive)\}$, its translation should retain the passive structure to sustain the theme-rheme chain:

$$\{T_1, R_1 \rightarrow T_1, R_2 (passive)\} \xrightarrow{translate} \{T_1, R_1 \rightarrow T_1, R_2 (passive)\}$$

As displayed in Table 8, since the source text contains the parallel theme-rheme chain:

Aspirin và acetaminophen là các thuốc được chọn dùng. Các thuốc này nên dùng đều đặn …

$$T_1 \qquad\qquad R_1 \qquad\qquad T_2 = T_1 \qquad\qquad R_2$$

the subject "Các thuốc này" (These drugs) in the second sentence should not be placed after the active verb "Nên dùng" (Please give), but rather, the translation of this sentence should retain the passive structure with the ellipsis of the passive marker "được": "Các thuốc này nên (được) dùng đều đặn …"

4.2 Retaining the actor in the translated text

When the passive structure in the source text carries "by + agent", the translator needs to observe the semantic interaction between "agent" and the main verb of the sentence to explore if

● {Agent = Doer of Verb}: the translation involves the use of two-layered theme-rheme structure as seen in an illustration presented in Table 9 (as discussed in the section 3.1).

However, in case the agent following *by* is a noun or noun phrase which is pursued by a relative clause, the translation should retain the passive structure (see Table 10).
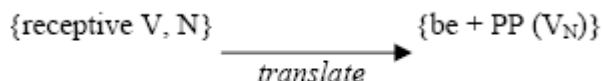
● {Agent = Medium of Verb}: "by + agent" then will be translated as {ở/qua + môi trường} (in/through + medium)

"By" in the the structure "by + agent" should not be always translated as *bởi*, especially when it manifests itself in the scientific text, but rather, the translations "chuyển hóa *ở* gan, và bài tiết *qua* thận" (metabolized *in* the liver, and excreted through the kidneys) are more common as illustrated in the subsequent example:

Source text	Source-oriented translation (loan translation)	Source-independent translation
Circulating salicylates are 80% bound to plasma proteins, *metabolized by the liver, and excreted by the kidneys.*	80% salicylate lưu hành gắn kết với protein huyết tương, được chuyển hóa *bởi* gan, và bài tiết *bởi* thận.	80% salicylate lưu hành gắn kết với protein huyết tương, được chuyển hóa *ở* gan, và bài tiết *qua* thận.

4.3 Translating the English nominalization as the passive structure in the target language

Nominalizations that pursue verbs of experience should be translated as the passive structures of the verbs from those nominalizations:
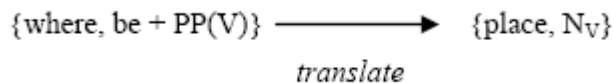
$$\{\text{receptive V, N}\} \xrightarrow{\text{translate}} \{\text{be + PP (V}_N)\}$$

where:

    V_N: verb from the nominonalization N

As displayed in Table 11, the nominalization "oxidation" in the active structure "undergo oxidation" where "undergo" is a verb of experience should be translated as the passive structure of the verb from that nominalization. In this case, the passive marker "bị" is employed due to the negative semantics underlying the phenomenon of converting benzodiazepines into active metabolites in the liver. Similarly, "undergo hepatic metabolism" in the subsequent sentence is translated as the passive structure, but in this case, the passive marker "được" is resorted to due to the neutral semantics of the phrase "hepatic metabolism" (see Table 12).

4.4 Translating the English passive structure in the relative clause of place as the nominalization

The passive structure in the relative clause of place tends to be translated as the nominalization (see an illustration in Table 13):

$$\{\text{where, be + PP(V)}\} \xrightarrow{\text{translate}} \{\text{place, N}_V\}$$

where:

    N_V: nominalization of the verb V

5. Concluding remarks

"The passive voice is weak and colorless. It is also wordier than the active voice, and tends to hedge. Nevertheless, it is often used in technical writing because it promotes impersonality and restraint ..." (Turner 1971: 53). This high frequency of passives in scientific writing is also substantiated by Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman's (1983: 228) frequency continuum. It is their high frequency in scientific writing that renders passive structures unignorable for scientific translators as well as indispensible enough for this paper to revisit these constructions. In Thompson's (1965) view, even though certain obscurity entails the existence of active/passive forms in Vietnamese language, the verb "bị" or "được" pursued by the descriptive complement builds the logical passive in Vietnamese language. From the perspectives on translating the passive structure from English to Vietnamese, strategies for translating the passive structure in scientific writing were proposed to guide scientific translators on how to translate the passive structure without actor, translate the English nominalizations following the verbs of experience, and translate the English passive structure in the relative clause of place as well as when to retain the actor in the translated text.

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Table 1. Submissive verbs in Vietnamese language and their implications

Submissive verbs in Vietnamese language	Their implications
bị	adversely affected
được	favorably affected

Table 2. Translating the nominalizations with passive implications

Source text	Source-oriented translation (word-for-word translation)	Source-independent translation
Tetanus is characterized by generalized (occasionally localized) muscle spasm resulting from *an intoxication of the nervous system by the exotoxin (tetanospasmin) of Clostridium tetani.*	Bệnh uốn ván có đặc trưng là co giật cơ toàn thân (có khi co giật khu trú), do *sự nhiễm độc hệ thần kinh bởi ngoại độc tố (tetanospasmin) của vi khuẩn Clostridium tetani*	Bệnh uốn ván có đặc trưng là co giật cơ toàn thân (có khi co giật khu trú), do *ngoại độc tố (tetanospasmin) của vi khuẩn Clostridium tetani gây nhiễm độc hệ thần kinh.*

Table 3. Nominalizing the verb in the passive form

Tetanus *is characterized by* generalized (occasionally localized) muscle spasm *resulting from an intoxication of the nervous system by the exotoxin (tetanospasmin) of Clostridium tetani.*	Bệnh uốn ván *có đặc trưng là* co giật cơ toàn thân (có khi co giật khu trú), *do ngoại độc tố (tetanospasmin) của vi khuẩn Clostridium tetani gây nhiễm độc hệ thần kinh.*

Table 4. The two diachronic translations of the definition of "Nephrotic syndrome

Old translation	Current translation
Hội chứng thận hư *là danh từ để chỉ* tình trạng tiểu đạm hơn 3,5g/ngày … (Nephrotic syndrome *is the term denoting* proteinuria of more than 3.5 g per day)	Hội chứng thận hư *được đặc trưng bởi* tiểu đạm hơn 3,5g/ngày … (Nephrotic syndrome *is characterized by* proteinuria of more than 3.5 g per day)

Table 5. An illustration of translating the passive structure with advisability implication

Source text	Source-oriented translation	Source-independent translation
Fever *should not be treated* until the cause *is considered.*	Sốt *không nên được điều trị* cho đến khi nguyên nhân *được xác định.*	*Không nên điều trị* sốt cho đến khi *xác định được* nguyên nhân.

Table 6. Translating the passive structure with advisability implication using impersonal active structure

Source text	Source-oriented translation	Source-independent translation (using impersonal active structure as highlighted)
Therefore, **aspirin should be avoided** in patients with bleeding disorders, severe liver or renal disease, and particularly in patients taking warfarin or corticosteroids. (bold as in original)	Do đó, **aspirin nên tránh sử dụng** ở những bệnh nhân có rối loạn chảy máu, bệnh gan hay thận nặng, và nhất là ở bệnh nhân đang dùng warfarin hay corticosteroid.	Do đó, **nên tránh sử dụng aspirin** ở những bệnh nhân có rối loạn chảy máu, bệnh gan hay thận nặng, và nhất là ở bệnh nhân đang dùng warfarin hay corticosteroid.

[Source: Dunagan, W.C., & Ridner, M.L. (1989)]

Table 7. An illustration of translating the passive structure parallel to the active structure

Source text	Source-oriented translation	Source-independent translation
Gastrointestinal discomfort and bleeding *are often encountered and may be severe.*	Rối loạn và xuất huyết tiêu hóa *thường được gặp và có thể trầm trọng.*	Rối loạn và xuất huyết tiêu hóa *thường xảy ra và có thể trầm trọng.*

Table 8. An illustration of translating the passive structure as a ring of the theme-rheme chain

Source text	Using the active structure	Using the passive structure
Aspirin and acetaminophen are the drugs of choice. These drugs *should be given* regularly (325-650 mg q3-4h) until the underlying disease process *has been controlled.*	Aspirin và acetaminophen là các thuốc được chọn dùng. *Nên dùng* các thuốc này đều đặn (325-650 mg mỗi 3-4 giờ) cho đến khi kiểm soát được tiến triển của bệnh nền.	Aspirin và acetaminophen là các thuốc được chọn dùng. Các thuốc này *nên dùng* đều đặn (325-650 mg mỗi 3-4 giờ) cho đến khi kiểm soát được tiến triển của bệnh nền.

Table 9. An illustration of translating the passive structure with agent as doer of verb

Source text	Source-oriented translation (loan translation)	Source-independent translation (using two-layered theme-rheme structure)
The patient's report of pain must be accepted by the physician.	Cơn đau bệnh nhân khai *phải được ghi nhận bởi thầy thuốc*.	Cơn đau bệnh nhân khai *phải được thầy thuốc ghi nhận*.

Table 10. An illustration of translating the passive structure with agent as doer of verb pursued by a relative clause

Source text	Using two-layered theme-rheme structure	Retaining "by + agent"
Thermoreceptive nociceptors *are stimulated by* temperatures that are potentially tissue damaging.	Thể tiếp nhận thống nhiệt *do mức nhiệt độ có thể gây tổn thương mô kích thích.*	Thể tiếp nhận thống nhiệt *bị kích thích bởi* mức nhiệt độ có thể gây tổn thương mô.

Table 11. An illustration of translating the English nominalization as the passive structure in the target language

Source text	Source-oriented translation (loan translation)	Source-independent translation
Most benzodiazepines *undergo oxidation* to active metabolites in the liver.	Đa số các thuốc benzodiazepine *trải qua sự ôxy hóa* chuyển thành chất chuyển hóa hoạt động tại gan.	Đa số các thuốc benzodiazepine *bị ôxy hóa* thành chất chuyển hóa hoạt động tại gan.

Table 12. An illustration of translating the neutral English nominalization as the passive structure in the target language using the passive marker "được"

Source text	Source-oriented translation (loan translation)	Source-independent translation
Although all of these compounds *undergo hepatic metabolism,* individual patients differ significantly in their metabolism of these drugs.	Mặc dù tất cả các thuốc này đều *trải qua sự chuyển hóa* ở gan, nhưng chuyển hóa rất khác biệt tùy từng bệnh nhân.	Mặc dù tất cả các thuốc này đều *được chuyển hóa* ở gan, nhưng chuyển hóa rất khác biệt tùy từng bệnh nhân.

Table 13. An illustration of translating the English passive structure in the relative clause of place as the nominalization

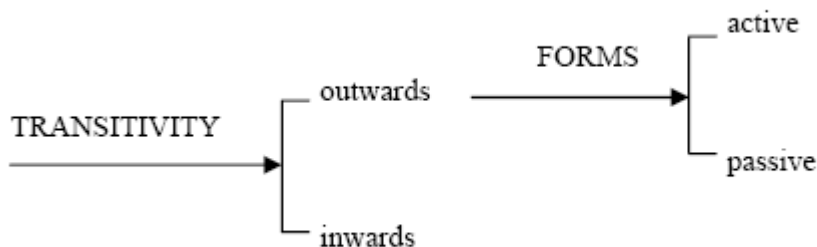| Source text	Source-oriented translation (loan translation)	Source-independent translation
If an injected drug like penicillin is not absorbed, it stays *where it was injected* and may cause enough irritation to generate a sterile abscess.	Nếu một loại thuốc tiêm như penicillin không được hấp thu, thì nó sẽ nằm nguyên *nơi nó được tiêm* và có thể gây kích thích đến mức sinh ra áp xe vô trùng.	Nếu một loại thuốc tiêm như penicillin không được hấp thu, thì nó sẽ nằm nguyên *nơi tiêm chích* và có thể gây kích thích đến mức sinh ra áp xe vô trùng.

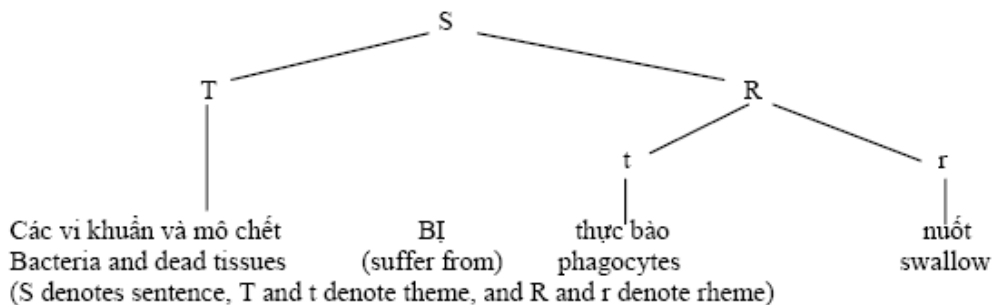Figure 1. "Bị" and "được" in two forms of transitivity

Các vi khuẩn và mô chết   BỊ   thực bào   nuốt
Bacteria and dead tissues   (suffer from)   phagocytes   swallow
(S denotes sentence, T and t denote theme, and R and r denote rheme)

Figure 2. The two-layered theme-rheme construction of the passive in Vietnamese language

beneficient or patient   +   (verb of experience)   +   (actor)   +   action
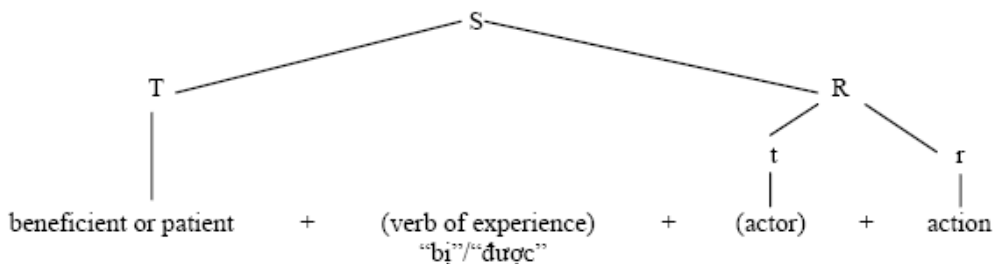"bị"/"được"

Figure 3. The two-layered theme-rheme structure in the translation of the English passive structure into Vietnamese language