



# TRANSLATING PASSIVE VOICE FORMS



**English and Russian passive forms are different both in type of form constructions and in frequency.**

**English passive voice is classified into three types of construction.**

- a) **direct passive:** *A book was given to him.* It has a corresponding Russian passive voice form:  
- *Книга была дана ему.*
- b) **indirect passive:** *He was given the book.* This form is translated by the corresponding Russian active voice verb in the impersonal sentence:  
- *Ему дали эту книгу.*
- c) **prepositional passive:** *The article was not referred to.*  
- *На эту статью не ссылались.* The corresponding Russian impersonal sentence is also with the active verb.

Care should be taken when translating English parallel passive verbs, since they may correspond in Russian to the verbs of different cases: *He was trusted and respected.* –

- *Ему доверяли и его уважали.*
- In this case the Russian sentence requires repetition of the pronominal object (*ему – его*);
- otherwise, the sentence would sound grammatically incorrect (*\*Ему доверяли и уважали*).



- One challenge of translating is the English “double passive”. It takes place when the main predicate is used in the passive voice and the following infinitive is also passive: *The treaty is reported to have been signed by both parties.*
- In translation, the predicate can be substituted by the active verb: *Сообщают, что договор уже подписан обеими сторонами.*
- The principal clause can also be substituted by a parenthetical one: *Как сообщают, договор уже подписан обеими сторонами.*



- Or the passive infinitive can be substituted for the active one, so that the sentence subject turns into the sentence object:
- *The prisoners were ordered to be shot.*
- *Было приказано расстрелять пленников.* Finally, there might be a substitution by the noun: *The music is intended to be played on the piano.* –
- *Музыка предназначена для игры на фортепьяно.*



Translate the sentences paying attention to passive voice:

- 1. He is always asked many questions.
- 2. America was discovered by Columbus.
- 3. The research was done a few years ago.
- 4. Their conclusions can be relied on.
- 5. How is this phenomenon accounted for?
- 6. The eclipse was watched by millions of people.
- 7. A new computer has been recently bought for the lab.



- 8. He was followed by the whole detachment.
- 9. “He will be well taken care of”, said Loomis.
- 10. The danger of flooding is believed to be over.
- 11. The amendment was rejected by the majority of the Security Council.
- 12. He rose to speak and was warmly greeted by the audience.
- 13. People are often judged by their actions.
- 14. People must be met, they must be faced, talked to, smiled at.





## correct / incorrect: correct by yourself those sentences which are not correct

- **1. The teacher made the students responsible for failure to do the homework.**  
• Ответственность за невыполненное задание было возложено на студентов.
- **2. During the last days of the session the chief assigned us some overtime work.**  
• В последние дни сессии нам была дана сверхурочная работа.
- **3. *Only then could* really free trade be developed.**  
• Только в этом случае может развиваться действительно свободная торговля.
- **4. They insisted on the question being re-considered.**  
• Они пожелали рассмотреть снова этот вопрос.



5. In recent years important international construction projects *have been started* among the countries.

- **За последние годы многие страны *начали* строительство крупных государственных объектов.**
- 6. *Original samples of Paris clothing have been flown to London to illustrate lectures to the fashion industry.*
- *Новые модели парижских туалетов были доставлены самолетом в Лондон для показа во время лекций представителям английских домов моды.*
- 7. *The Iran earthquake was followed by tremors lasting a long time.*
- *Продолжавшиеся довольно долго в Иране последовали толчки предшествовали землетрясению.*
- 8. *The door at the end of the corridor sighed open and sighed shut again.*
- *Дверь в конце коридора еле слышно открылась и снова также еле слышно закрылась.*



- *He could not say anything unless he was prompted. (Taylor Caldwell).*
- *Он не смог ответить, даже если ему и подсказывали.*