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Two Types of Verb Particle Constructions

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1 Introduction

Swedish Verb Particle Constructions (VPCs) are often claimed to be constrained in such a way that the particle must precede the object (Taraldsen 1991, Holmberg & Platzack 1995, Svenonius 1996 etc.). Therefore, (1a) and (2a) are well formed, whereas (1b) and (2b) are ill formed.

- (1) a Kalle satte **på** *TVn*. V **Prt** *Obj*
Kalle switched **on** *TV.the*
'Kalle switched on the TV.'
b *Kalle satte *TVn* **på**. *V *Obj* **Prt**
Kalle switched *TV.the* **on**
'Kalle switched the TV on.'
- (2) a Kalle smutsade **ner** *tröjan* V **Prt** *Obj*
Kalle dirtied **down** *shirt.the*
'Kalle made the shirt dirty.'
b *Kalle smutsade *tröjan* **ner** *V *Obj* **Prt**
Kalle dirtied *shirt.the* **down**
'Kalle made the shirt dirty.'

However, closer examination reveals that (1) and (2) differ in various fine points of syntactic distribution. In (3) and (4) the full DP objects of (1) and (2) are replaced with pronouns. In contrast to (1b), (3b) is well formed, even though the object precedes the particle. However, (4b) is just as bad as (2b).

- (3) a Kalle satte **på** *den*. (cf. 1a) V **Prt** *Pron*
Kalle switched **on** *it*
'Kalle switched on it.'
b Kalle satte *den* **på**. (cf. 1b) V *Pron* **Prt**
Kalle switched *it* **on**
'Kalle switched it on.'

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- (4) a Kalle smutsade **ner** *den*. (cf. 2a) V Prt Pron
 Kalle dirtied **down** *it*
 'Kalle made it dirty.'
 b *Kalle smutsade *den* **ner** (cf. 2b) *V Pron Prt
 Kalle dirtied *it* **down**
 'Kalle made it dirty.'

Notice that the particle in (1) and (3) denotes a resulting state, while the particle in (2) and (4) does not. This distinction is also manifested by the fact that the particle in (1) and (3) can occur in a copula construction like (5), while the particle in (2) and (4) can not, as seen in (6). That is, (6) can not mean that the shirt is dirty. On the basis of this contrast, I will call the particle in (1) **predicative**, and the particle in (2) **non-predicative**.¹

- (5) TVn är **på**. Predicative
 TV.the is **on**
 'The TV is on.'
 (6) *Tröjan är **ner**. Non-Predicative
 shirt.the is **down**
 ≠ 'The shirt is dirty'

Analytic passives provides another point of contrast. In this type of passive, a predicative particle can occur postverbally, (7). A non-predicative particle, however, cannot, as (8a) illustrates. Instead, a non-predicative particle must appear as a prefix on the passivized verb, (8b):²

- (7) TVn blev satt **på**. Predicative
 TV.the became switched **on**
 'The TV was switched on.'
 (8) a *Tröjan blev smutsad **ner**. Non-Predicative
 shirt.the became dirtied **down**.
 'The shirt was made dirty.'
 b Tröjan blev **ner-smutsad**. Non-Predicative
 shirt.the became **down-dirtied**
 'The shirt was made dirty.'

¹A similar distinction was made for English in Aarts (1989) and Zoerner (1996), and more recently for German in Wurmbrand (1998). See also the descriptive works by Bolinger (1971), Fraser (1976) and Gleitman (1965).

²Also speakers that do not readily accept (3b) and (7), nevertheless agree that those sentences are much better than (4b) and (8a). Thanks to J. Bobaljik for further confirming this fact with Anders Holmberg and Ida Toivonen.

In short, a D-structure object can occur in an A-position to the left of a free standing particle, iff the particle is predicative. This restriction holds in active sentences, (3) and (4), as well as in passive sentences, (7) and (8).³

So far we have seen that different particles have different properties. However, depending on what type of particle we are dealing with, also the verbs that go along them have different properties. Consider (9). When the particle is predicative, the main verb can often be replaced by the light verb *ha* 'have', without changing the basic interpretation of the sentence. Both (9a) and (9b) mean that Kalle caused the TV to become on. However, a light verb may never occur in a non-predicative construction, as shown in (10). That is, (10b) does not describe an event where a shirt is made dirty.

(9) *Predicative Construction:*

- a Kalle **satte** på TVn.
Kalle **switched** on TV.the
'Kalle switched on the TV.'
- b Kalle **hade** på TVn. Light Verb Substitution OK
Kalle **had** on TV.the
'Kalle switched on the TV.'

(10) *Non-Predicative Construction:*

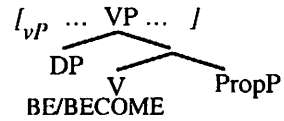
- a Kalle **smutsade** ner tröjan.
Kalle **dirtyed** down shirt.the
'Kalle made the shirt dirty.'
- b *Kalle **hade** ner tröjan. *Light Verb Substitution
Kalle **had** down shirt.the
≠ 'Kalle made the shirt dirty.'

This paper argues for a structural distinction between predicative and non-predicative VPCs, based on a proposal by Baker (1997), shown in (11). Baker argues that the lower VP in a layered VP should be decomposed into a VP and a property denoting argument of V, Prop(erty)P.⁴ According to Baker, all verbs start out as heads of the property denoting argument. Notice that the lower V corresponds to a lexical operator BE or BECOME.

³We will set aside the issue why the word order V-Obj-Prt in active clauses is restricted to cases where Obj=pronoun.

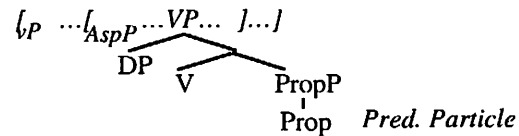
⁴Baker (1997) claims that the property denoting argument is an AP. However, I refer to this argument as PropP, hence making no claim concerning its category name.

(11) Baker (1997):

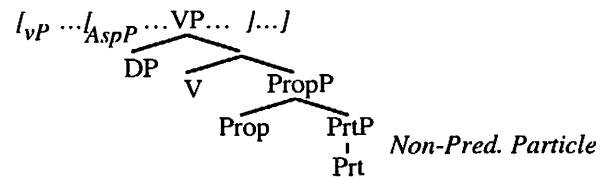


This paper proposes that a predicative particle corresponds to the PropP, as in (12). Non-predicative particle, on the other hand, will be analyzed as complements of Prop, as shown in (13).⁵ These structural differences along with language specific properties of the Aspect Phrases in (12) and (13) provide the basis for our analysis.

(12) Predicative Verb Particle Construction



(13) Non-Predicative Verb Particle Construction



The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 deals with the phenomenon of light verb substitution. Section 3 discusses active VPCs and in section 4, we treat passivized VPCs. Section 5 concludes the paper.

2 The Verb in Verb Particle Constructions

The verb in predicative VPCs can fluctuate between various manner-oriented verbs and the light verb *ha* 'have', without affecting the meaning of the basic event.

- (14) a Kalle knäppte på radion.
 Kalle flipped on radio.the
 'Kalle switched on the radio by flipping the on/off button.'

⁵We leave the question open what the exact categorial status of PrtP is.

- b Kalle vred på radion.
Kalle twisted on radio.the
'Kalle switched on the radio by twisting the on/off button.'
- c Kalle hade på radion.
Kalle had on radio.the
'Kalle switched on the radio.'

In their discussion of resultative constructions, Levin & Rapoport (1988) introduced Lexical Subordination (LexSub), which "takes a verb in its original, basic, sense and subordinates it under a lexical predicate" (ibid:282). Hence, a resultative sentence like (15a) derives its meaning from the LCS (15b):

- (15) a Jag målade huset rött.
I painted house.the red
'I painted the house red.'
- b [x CAUSE [y BECOME 'red'] by [x 'paint' y]]

Levin & Rappaport (1995) reject (15b) by pointing out that the verb *måla* 'paint' is expected to behave differently depending on whether it occurs in a resultative construction or not. However, the different LCSs stipulated for (15) and (16) have no such effects; both express events of house-painting.

- (16) a Jag målade huset.
I painted house.the
'I painted the house.'
- b [x CAUSE [y BECOME 'painted']]

While the absence of a resultative adjective may have consequences for the telicity of an event, the omission of a predicative particle has a deeper impact on interpretation. Consider the pair of sentences in (17), both of which involve the main verb *vrida* 'twist/turn'. (17a) means that Kalle caused the radio to become on. (17b), however, can only mean that Kalle turned the radio so that it faced another direction. Hence (17a) and (17b) do not express the same basic event.

- (17) a Kalle vred på radion.
Kalle twisted on radio.the
'Kalle switched on the radio by twisting the on/off button.'
- b Kalle vred radion.
Kalle twisted radio.the
'Kalle turned the radio.' (≠(17a))

Another difference between resultative constructions like (15) and predicative VPCs like (17a), is that the verb in (15) can not be replaced by a light verb, as shown in (18), which is mere gibberish.

- (18) *Jag hade huset rött.
 I had house.the. red
 'I had the house red.'

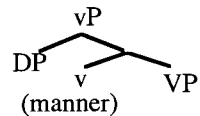
The failure of light verb substitution in (18) further supports Levin & Rappaport's (1995) criticism of LexSub for resultatives. However, LexSub yields the right results for predicative VPCs.

Let us reconsider the sentences in (14) in the light of LexSub, as illustrated in (19). The basic meaning is determined by the lexical operators in combination with their arguments. In (19a), we find a subordination specified for flipping or twisting, hence corresponding to examples (14a) and (14b). If no manner is specified, (19c), then CAUSE is spelled out simply as a light verb, (14c).

- (19) a [x CAUSE [y BECOME 'on'] by [x 'flipping/twisting' y]]
 b [x CAUSE [y BECOME 'on']]

We can take (19) one step further by following Hale & Keyser (1993), who proposed that the higher v in a layered VP-structure may be associated with a manner tag, which gives us the representation in (20). Let us now assume that the manner tag in (20) is equivalent to the subordination in (19a). That is, the manner tag is subordinated under the upper v, whose semantic content is closely related to the lexical semantic operator CAUSE. As a consequence, the lexical verb in a predicative VPC is generated in the upper, parallel to what the LCSs in (19) above illustrates. And again, if no manner is specified in (20), the upper v will be spelled out as a light verb.

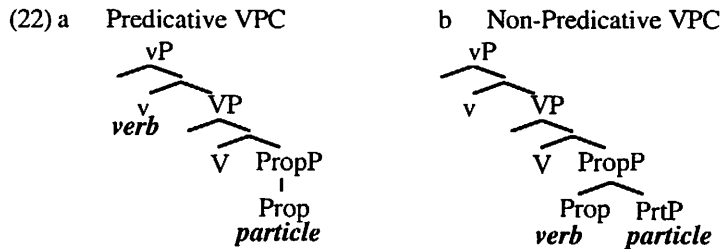
(20)



If verb replacement is a reliable diagnostic for LexSub, then we conclude that non-predicative VPCs have a different representation than predicative VPCs. In this sense non-predicative VPCs resemble resultative constructions. The verb in a non-predicative VPC can not be replaced by another verb, whether it be a lexical verb, (21b), or a light verb, (21c).

- (21) a Kalle plattade till metallen.
Kalle flattened to metal.the
'Kalle flattened the metal.'
- b *Kalle slog till metallen
Kalle hit to metal.the
* 'Kalle flattened the metal by hitting.'
- c *Kalle hade till metallen.
Kalle had to metal.the
* 'Kalle flattened the metal.'

We accommodate these findings into a verb phrase based on Baker (1997) in the following way. To begin with, notice that in a predicative VPC, the particle itself carries a heavy semantic burden, since it denotes the resulting state of the whole event. As shown in the LCS (19a), the particle is the property denoting argument of BECOME, which means that the particle corresponds to the head of the PropP in (22a), while the verb originates high up. In a non-predicative VPC such as (21), it is the verb rather than the particle that denotes the property that the object is related to. Thus, the verb in a non-predicative VPC does the same job as the particle in a predicative VPC. Therefore, let us assume that the verb in a non-predicative VPC originates in the head of PropP, as shown in (22b).



In this section we have examined the properties of the verbs in Swedish VPCs. We have argued that the verb in predicative VPCs is in effect a light verb that is generated in the upper v. The verb in a non-predicative VPC, however, originates down low in the VP.

3 The Structures of VPCs and Word Orders in Active Clauses

This section discusses word order possibilities in active clauses with pronominal objects. Such an object may occur on either side of predicative particle, (23), while it must follow a non-predicative particle, (24):

(23) Kalle sparkade (*den*) **sönder** (*den*). Predicative

Kalle kicked (*it*) **broken** (*it*)

'Kalle broke it, by kicking it.'

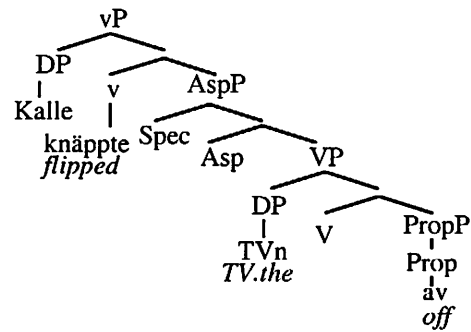
(24) Lisa plattade (**den*) **till** (*den*). Non-Predicative

Lisa flattened (*it*) **to** (*it*)

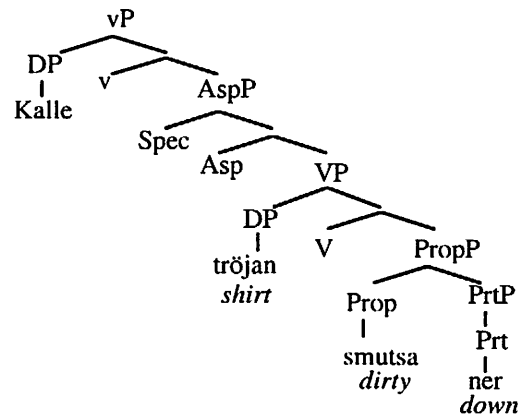
'Lisa flattened it.'

The structures of predicative and non-predicative VPCs are given in (25a) and (25b) respectively, ignoring higher functional projections:

(25) a *Predicative Particle*



b *Non-Predicative Particle*



Consider the Aspect Phrase (Travis 1991) that intervenes between the two verbal projections. Tenny (1994: 148) notes that "The class of verb particles have the semantic property of imposing delimitedness on the event described by a verb phrase." Since particles are intimately related to aspect, I propose

in the spirit of Travis (1991) that a particle must raise into AspP to check an aspectual feature of Asp°, as stated in (26a). We also assume that this feature is strong in Swedish, (26b).

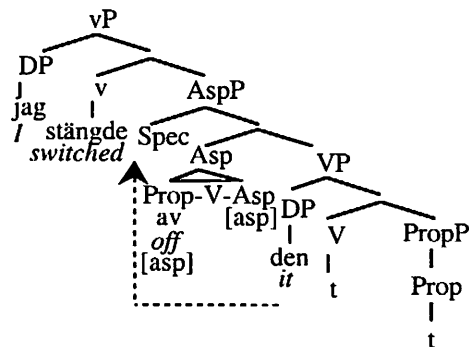
- (26) a The feature [aspect] of Asp° is checked by a particle.
- b The feature [aspect] of Asp° in Swedish is strong.

We shall now see how these assumptions can capture the properties of Swedish VPCs. Let us begin with a predicative VPC like (27), whose partial derivation is given in (28).

- (27) Jag stängde (den) av (den).
- I switched it off it
- 'I switched it off.'

I assume that the particle, i.e. Prop°, and the lower V conflates (Baker 1997:19) via head-movement (Hale & Keyser 1993:53-4). The complex lower V now raises into the head of Aspect. Notice that the particle is in a legitimate checking configuration with Asp°, hence the strong aspectual feature of Asp° is checked. Furthermore, since the particle in (28) is found in the head of Aspect, the pronominal object may optionally move into the Specifier of the Aspect Phrase, as indicated by the dotted arrow, perhaps to check case, or some other feature. This is in accordance with the definition of Attract, given in (29). Hence the pronominal object in can occur on either side of a predicative particle.

(28)



- (29) ATTRACT F (Chomsky 1995:297)
- K attracts F if F is the closest feature that can enter into a checking relation with a sublabel of K.

Let us now turn to a non-predicative VPC like (30).

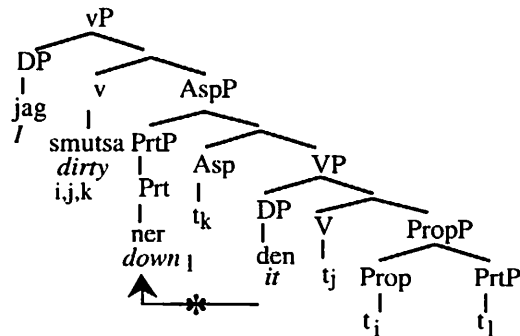
- (30) Jag smutsade (*den) ner (den).
 I dirtied it down it
 'I made it dirty.'

Consider the partial derivation in (32). The root 'dirty' originates in the head of PropP and the Particle Phrase is the sister of Prop. Again, Prop° conflates with V, whereupon the complex V raises into Asp°. However, Asp° has a strong aspectual feature that requires checking. The particle can not head-move into the Aspect phrase across the intervening heads in (32), as a consequence of the Head Movement Constraint (Travis 1984). It is also important to pay attention to the definition of Closeness, (31):

- (31) CLOSNESS (Chomsky 1995: 356)
 If β c-commands α and τ is the target of raising, then β is closer to K than α unless β is in the same minimal domain as (a) τ or (b) α .

Since the object lacks a aspectual feature, it will not prevent PrtP from being attracted by Asp°, so PrtP now XP-moves into SpecAspP. The particle phrase is now in a Spec-Head relation with Asp°, and consequently checking obtains. Since the Spec of Aspect is filled, it follows that the pronominal object can not target this position. And therefore we get a fixed word order in Non-Predicative constructions.

(31)



In this section, I have argued that Predicative and Non-Predicative VPCs are structurally distinct. The structural differences along with the strong

aspectual feature of the Aspect Phrase captures the asymmetric behavior of the two particle types.

4 Passivized Verb Particle Constructions

We will now turn to the formation of analytic passives. Recall that a Non-Predicative particle may never be separated from the verb in passives, but must surface as a prefix, (33).

- (33) a *Mjölken blev drucken **upp**.
 milk.the became drunk **up**
 'The milk was drunk up.'
- b Mjölken blev **upp**-drucken.
 milk.the became **up**-drunk
 'The milk was drunk up.'
- c *Tröjan blev smutsad **ner**.
 shirt.the became dirtied **down**
 'The shirt was made dirty.'
- d Tröjan blev **ner**-smutsad.
 shirt.the became down-dirtied
 'The shirt was made dirty.'

Predicative particles, however, can be separated from the verb, as shown in (34a). They may also be prefixed, as in (34b), but I set these aside. What important is that prefixation is NOT obligatory.

- (34) a Radion blev satt **på**.
 radio.the became switched **on**
 'The radio was switched on.'
- b Radion blev **på**-satt
 radio.the became **on**-switched
 'The radio was switched on.'

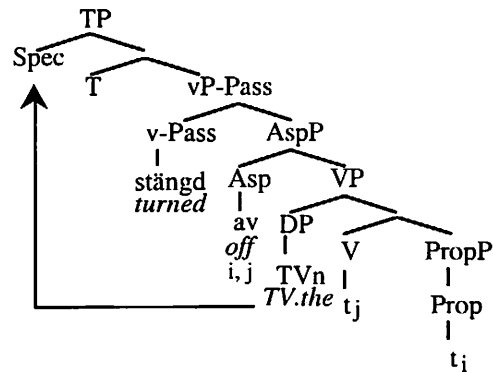
In both analytic passives and active clauses with pronominal objects, it is possible for the object in a predicative VPC to occur in an A-position to the left of a free standing particle. But if the particle is non-predicative, then this is impossible. This fact suggests that the account given in the previous section should carry over to passives as well.

Consider a passivized predicative VPC, like the one in (35), whose partial derivation is given in (36):

- (35) TVn blev stängd av.
 TV.the became switched off
 'The TV was switched off.'

In (36), the particle conflates with V and head-moves into Asp°, checking off the strong aspectual feature. Now, in accordance with Attract and Closeness, the object can be attracted by the strong EPP feature of T.

(36)

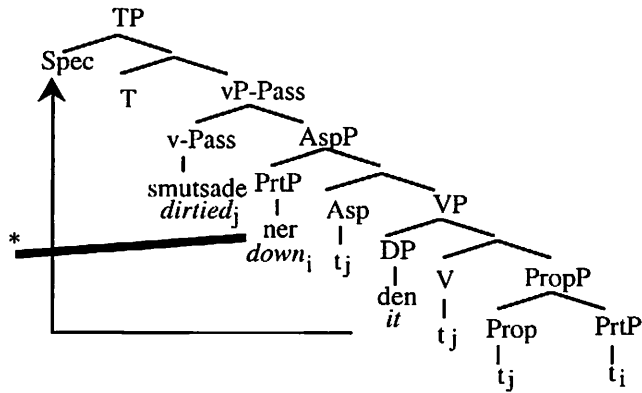


But what about a passivized non-predicative construction like (37)?

- (37) *Tröjan blev smutsad ner.
 shirt.the became dirtied down
 'The shirt was made dirty.'

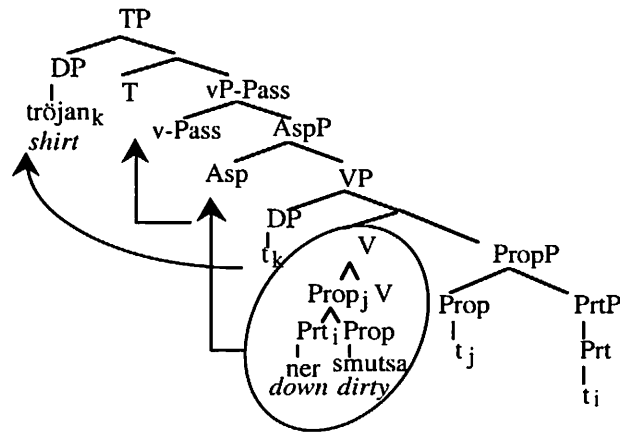
AspP has a strong aspectual feature in Swedish, which forces the particle to move overtly into SpecAspP, (38). But we wish to say that (38) is bad since the particle is in SpecAspP. Collins (1997) speculates that the EPP feature of T might have the property that it can attract essentially any categorial feature. If this is correct, then the particle in SpecAspP in (38), counts as closest for the purposes of Attract, hence preventing the theme from raising into the matrix subject position. Moreover, we may assume along the lines of McGinnis (1998), that although the non-predicative particle in (38) can block movement, it itself lacks the right features for satisfying the EPP.

(38)



We can now provide an account why non-predicative VPCs in Swedish require the particle to surface as prefix. Since the aspectual feature is strong, it must be checked before the application of Spell-Out. But if the particle raises into SpecAspP, then it blocks movement of the theme into the subject position, and the derivation crashes. This is the situation in (38). The situation can be resolved if the particle incorporates into the head Prop°, as in (39). The complex Prop conflates with the lower V whereupon it raises into Asp°. Now the particle and Asp° are in a head-head configuration, which enables checking of the feature. Moreover, now the strong EPP feature of T can attract the object, which counts as closest for the purposes of Attract.

(39)



In this section I have claimed that free standing predicative particles can occur in analytic passives, since they do not interfere with A-movement of the object. On the other hand, a free standing Non-Predicative particles does interfere with A-movement of the D-structure object, and therefore the particle must undergo head-movement in the formation of analytical passives, thus surfacing as prefixes.⁶

5 Concluding Remarks

This paper has shown that there is good empirical motivation that at least two types of VPCs must be recognized, namely predicative and non-predicative VPCs. In this paper we have concentrated on two types of evidence. On the one hand, it has been shown that the verbs in different VPCs have different properties. On the other hand, we have also been concerned with the effects particles may have on A-movement of objects. In particular, predicative particles are transparent to A-movement in Swedish. Non-predicative particles, however, have the capacity to block A-movement.

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⁶A residual problem is found in morphological, so called s-passives, where both predicative and non-predicative particles can be separated from the verb:

- (i) a Fönstret slog-s sönder. Predicative
 window.the hit-PASS broken
 'The window was broken.'
- b Tröjan smutsade-s ner. Non-Predicative
 shirt.the dirtied-PASS down
 'The shirt was made dirty.'

I set these aside, assuming that they should fall out from an analysis of the s-passive, which is problematic from many perspectives, not only for VPCs

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