

## Sharing Light Verbs between Passive and Active Transitive Verbs

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### 1. Introduction

#### Main question

- Active transitive clauses are assumed to involve a light verb (to be represented as  $v$ ) that makes available to the verbal root: (i) accusative Case and (ii) external argument position.
- Do we need to posit other types of verbal heads to account for the behaviors of various types of passives, unaccusatives and so on?
- Yes: Hasegawa (2001, 2004), Hoshi (1999, 2011), i.a. assume several types of the passive morpheme *rare* consisting of the binary features pertaining to (i) and (ii).
- No: I will argue that *rare* is non-distinct from *s(ururu)* and its phonetically null counterpart with respect to (i) and (ii).

My claim: an extension of the approach by Jaeggli (1986) and Baker, Johnson and Roberts (1989)

- The 'absorption' of Case and external  $\theta$ -role is due to a designated nominal element available in each language. Specifically, it is the past participial ending (to be represented as  $-EN$ ) in English and an empty pronominal (*pro*) in Japanese.

### 2. Transitives with a Non-thematic Subject (Tr-NS)

- If *rare* and *s(ururu)* share properties (i) and (ii), why do they typically constitute distinct constructions?
- Specifically, *rare* always has a non-thematic subject, while *s(ururu)* and its phonetically null counterpart typically have a thematic subject. BUT a non-thematic subject is also possible with the latter under certain conditions.
- (1a) and (2a) are typical transitive sentences with a thematic/agentive subject, while (1b) and (2b) are normally interpreted as: someone/something other than the subject undertook the action (Inoue 1976, Oehrle and Nishio 1981, Miyagawa 1989, Kageyama 1993).

(1) a. John-ga Mary-no komaku-o yabu(k)-i-ta. [agentive transitive]

NOM GEN eardrum-ACC rupture-TR-PAST

'John ruptured Mary's eardrum.'

b. John-ga komaku-o yabu(k)-i-ta. [Tr-NS]

NOM eardrum-ACC rupture-TR-PAST

'John had his eardrum ruptured.'

(2) a. Isha-ga kanzya-no keccho-o tekishutu-si-ta. [agentive transitive]

doctor-NOM patient-GEN colon-ACC removal-DO-PAST

'The doctor removed the patient's colon.'

b. Kanzya-ga keccho-o tekishutu-si-ta. [Tr-NS]

patient-NOM colon-ACC removal-DO-PAST

'The patient had his colon removed.'

- In the Tr-NS construction, the subject needs to be ‘included’ in the event expressed by the verb, typically being the (inalienable) possessor of the object: John's eardrum in (1b) and the patient's colon in (2b).
- The verbal root is native Japanese *yabuk* in (1b) and (4a), and Sino-Japanese *tekishutu* in (2b).
- If the root is native Japanese, the Tr-NS construction is possible if it allows the transitivity alternation as shown in (3) and (4b).

(3) John-no komaku-ga yabuk-e-ta. [intransitive]  
GEN eardrum-NOM rupture-INTR-PAST ‘John’s eardrum ruptured.’

(4) a. John-ga ie-o ya(k)-i-ta. [Tr-NS]  
NOM house-ACC burn-TR-PAST ‘John had his house burnt down.’

b. John-no ie-ga yak-e-ta. [intransitive]  
GEN house-NOM burn-INTR-PAST ‘John’s house burnt down.’

- Pure transitives like *hum* (step-on) cannot form a Tr-NS construction as in (5c); the subject is interpreted as agentive irrespective of the presence of the possessor as shown in (5a,b).

(5) a. John-ga Mary-no asi-o hum-da.  
NOM GEN foot-ACC step-on-past ‘John stepped on Mary foot.’

b. John-ga asi-o hum-da.  
NOM GEN foot-ACC step-on-PAST ‘John stepped on his own foot.’

c. \*John-no asi-ga hum-da. [no intransitive counterpart]  
GEN foot-NOM step-on-past

- The Sino-Japanese roots in the Tr-NS constructions in (2b) and (7a) lack the intransitive counterparts as in (6a) and (7c) (Tsuji-mura 1990). Instead, they can form ‘passive’ nominals without overt passive morphology as in (6b) and (7b) (cf. Ono 1997).

(6) a. \*Kanzya-no keccho-ga tekishutu-si-ta. [no intransitive counterpart]  
patient-GEN colon-NOM removal-DO-PAST ‘\*The patient’s colon removed.’

b. Isya niyoru keccho-no tekishutu [passive nominal]  
doctor by colon-GEN removal ‘removal of a colon by a doctor’

(7) a. Isya-ga John-no ha-o chiryo-si-ta. [agentive transitive]  
doctor-NOM GEN tooth-ACC treatment-DO-PAST ‘The doctor treated John's tooth.’

b. John-ga ha-o chiryo-si-ta. [Tr-NS]  
NOM tooth-ACC treatment-DO-PAST ‘John had his tooth treated.’

c. \*John-no ha-ga chiryo-sita. [no intransitive counterpart]  
GEN tooth-NOM treatment-DO-PAST ‘\*John's tooth treated.’

d. Isya niyoru ha-no chiryo [passive nominal]  
doctor by tooth-GEN treatment ‘treatment of a tooth by a doctor.’

• **Descriptive Generalization on Tr-NS**

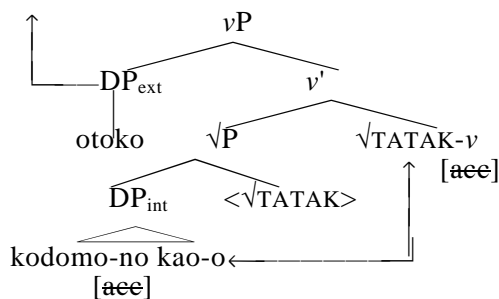
The Tr-NS construction is possible with those verbal roots that need not syntactically realize an external argument: native Japanese verbs forming transitive/intransitive pairs and Sino-Japanese roots allowing the ‘passive’ interpretation.

### 3. Transitives and Indirect Passives

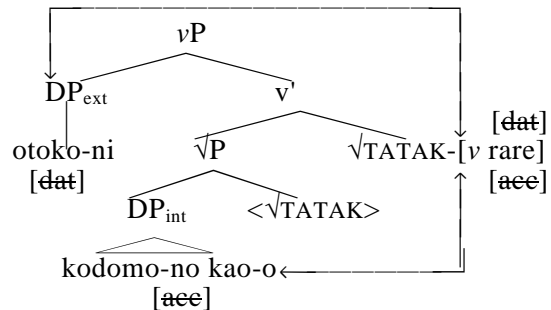
- The existence of Tr-NS shows that the subject of a transitive predicate headed by *s(urui)* and its phonetically null counterpart can be non-thematic just like the subject of a passive.
- Another similarity is that *rare* in indirect passives exhibits properties (i) accusative Case and (ii) external argument.

- (8) a. Otoko-ga kodomo-no **kao-o** tata(k)i-ta. [transitive]  
 man-NOM child-GEN face-ACC slap-PAST  
 'The man slapped the child's face.'
- b. Hanako-ga otoko-ni kodomo-no **kao-o** tatak-(r)are-ta [Indirect passive]  
 Hanako-NOM man-DAT child-GEN face-ACC slap-PAST  
 'Hanako had her/the child's face slapped by the man'

(8a) [transitive]



(8b) [Indirect passive]



- In (8a,b), the root  $\sqrt{\text{TATAK}}$ , being categorized as verbal by *v* and incorporated into it, licenses [acc] on the internal argument  $\text{DP}_{\text{int}}$ .
- $\text{DP}_{\text{ext}}$  in (8a) is  $\theta$ -marked in  $\text{Spec},v\text{P}$  but Case-licensed in  $\text{Spec},\text{TP}$ .
- It is a standard assumption in Japanese generative grammar (Inoue 1976, McCawley 1972, Kuno 1973, Kuroda 1979, i.a.) that  $[v \text{ rare}]$  by its intrinsic property can license [dat] optionally. In (8b)  $[v \text{ rare}]$  licenses [dat] on the external argument  $\text{DP}_{\text{ext}}$ . Given the absence of overt expletive elements in Japanese,  $\text{Spec},\text{TP}$  hosts an argument DP that is not  $\theta$ -related to the root  $\sqrt{\text{TATAK}}$ .
- The extra DP in  $\text{Spec},\text{TP}$  of indirect passive is interpreted as **being indirectly affected** by the event expressed by  $v\text{P}$ . Similarly, a non-thematic subject in  $\text{Spec},\text{TP}$  of Tr-NS is interpreted as **being responsible** for the event expressed by  $v\text{P}$  (Inoue 1976:61). Unlike direct passives and transitives, indirect passives and Tr-NSs are marked in that they require these extra semantic interpretations.

### 4. Direct and Possessor Passives

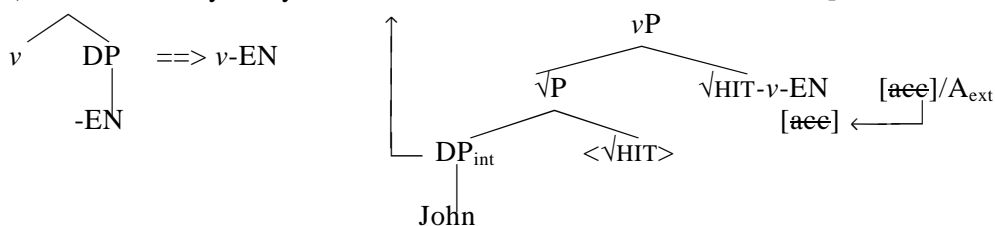
- All languages have direct passives. Indirect/exclusive passives are cross-linguistically rarer than possessor passives, the latter being attested in Mandarin, Cantonese, Taiwanese and Korean (Shibatani 1990: 328-329, Huang 1999, Washio 1993, 1995).
- Possessor passives are like direct passives and unlike indirect passives (Shibatani 1990:326-328, Hasegawa 2007, Kubo 1990) in that:
  - the adversative meaning is absent
  - an agent *ni*-phrase is not necessary and interchangeable with *niyotte*: (9a), (10a), (11a)
  - an agent *ni*-phrase cannot be the antecedent of *zibun*: (9b), (10b), (11b)

- (9) a. John-ga (Mary-ni/niyotte) hidoku tatak-(r)are-ta. **[Direct passive]**  
 NOM by violently slap-PASS-PAST  
 'John was slapped violently by Mary.'
- b. John<sub>i</sub>-ga Mary<sub>j</sub>-ni zibun<sub>i/\*j</sub>-no heya-de tatak-(r)are-ta.  
 NOM by self-GEN room-at slap-PASS-PAST  
 'John<sub>i</sub> was slapped by Mary<sub>j</sub> in his<sub>i</sub>/\*her<sub>j</sub> room.'
- (10) a. John<sub>i</sub>-ga \*(Mary-ni)/\*niyotte Tom-o tatak-(r)are-ta. **[Indirect passive]**  
 NOM DAT/by ACC slap-PASS-PAST  
 'John had Tom slapped by Mary.'
- b. John<sub>i</sub>-ga Mary<sub>i</sub>-ni zibun<sub>i/j</sub>-no heya-de Tom-o tatak-(r)are-ta.  
 NOM DAT self-GEN house-at ACC slap-PASS-PAST  
 'John<sub>i</sub> had Tom slapped by Mary<sub>j</sub> in his<sub>i</sub>/her<sub>j</sub> house.'
- (11) a. John<sub>i</sub>-ga (Mary-ni/niyotte) kao-o tatak-(r)are-ta. **[Possessor passive]**  
 NOM by face-ACC hit-PASS-PAST  
 'John was slapped in the face by Mary.'
- b. John<sub>i</sub>-ga Mary-ni zibun<sub>i/\*j</sub>-no heya-de kao-o tatak-(r)are-ta.  
 NOM by self-GEN room-in face-ACC hit-PASS-PAST  
 'John was slapped in the face by Mary in his<sub>i</sub>/\*her<sub>j</sub> room.'

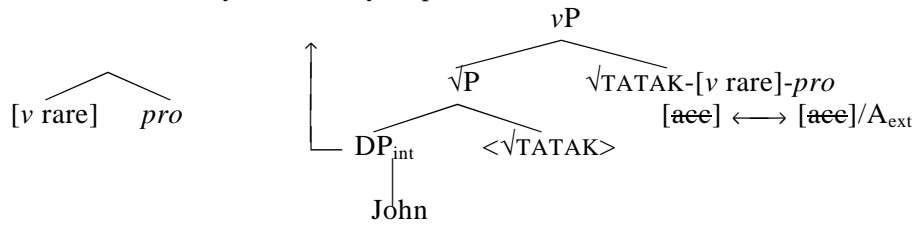
- Following Jaeggli (1986) and Baker, Johnson, and Roberts (1989)), I claim that unmarked passives (i.e., direct and possessor passives) involve *v* with properties (i) accusative Case and (ii) external argument position, and one designated nominal that functions to cancel out (i) and (ii): the past participle ending *-EN* in English and empty pronominal *pro* in Japanese.
- An important question has been why the designated nominal 'absorbs' accusative Case and external  $\theta$ -role, which are canonically assigned to distinct elements (Bowers 2010, Collins 2005).
- *v* canonically selects a verbal root phrase ( $\sqrt{P}$ ) by 1st Merge and  $DP_{ext}$  by 2nd Merge.
- *-EN* needs to merge with *v* as early as or prior to its introduction into syntax due to its morphologically bound nature. Since it is nominal rather than verbal, it counts as *v*'s external argument even if it merges with *v* before the verbal root ( $\sqrt{P}$ ).
- *-EN*, being part of the verbal amalgam, is syntactically invisible, allowing  $DP_{int}$  to move into Spec,TP via the edge of  $vP$  (cf. m(orphological)-merger in Matushansky 2006):  $vP$  of English passive is a weak phase.
- Since *-EN* is an external argument, a *by*-phrase should be an adjunct; the so-called  $\theta$ -transmission between *-EN* and a *by*-phrase is on a par with clitic doubling (c.f. Anagnostopoulou 2006 and references cited therein).

(12) John was hit by Mary.

**[Direct Passive in English]**



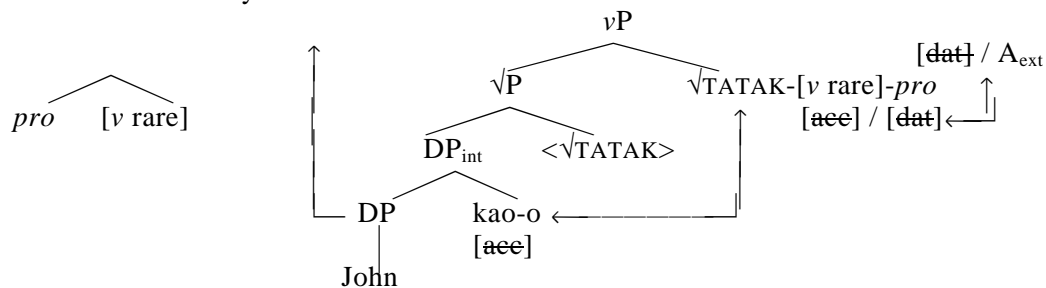
(9a) John-ga Mary-ni/niyotte hidoku tatak-(r)are-ta. [Direct Passive in Japanese]  
 NOM by violently slap-PASS-PAST



- DP<sub>int</sub> in (9a) is  $\theta$ -marked within vP but Case-licensed in Spec,TP.
- The accusative and external  $\theta$ -role of the root-*v* amalgam are assigned to (or absorbed by) *pro*.
- Since *pro* is the external argument in (9a), the *ni/niyotte* phrase is an adjunct, being optional and unable to antecede the reflexive *zibun*.
- Like *-EN*, *pro* is m-merged with *rare* and syntactically invisible, allowing DP<sub>int</sub> to move into Spec,TP; vP of Japanese direct passive is a weak phase.

- The amalgam of the root and *rare* can license [acc] and [dat]. *Pro* 'absorbs' [acc] in the direct passive (9a), and [dat] in the possessor passive (11a).
- In (11a), the head of DP<sub>int</sub> bears [acc], and the non-head moves into Spec,TP for Case/EPP reasons.

(11a) John<sub>i</sub>-ga (Mary-ni/niyotte) kao-o tatak-(r)are-ta. [Possessor Passive in Japanese]  
 NOM by face-ACC hit-PASS-PAST



- Since *pro* is an external argument, the *ni/niyotte* phrase is an adjunct, being optional and unable to antecede the reflexive *zibun*.
- Like *-EN*, *pro* m-merged with *rare* is syntactically invisible, allowing DP<sub>int</sub> to move into Spec,TP; vP of Japanese possessor passive is a weak phase.

### 5. Transitives with a Non-thematic Subject (Tr-NSs) and Passives

- Tr-NSs like (13) are quite close in meaning to possessor passives like (14), but are different in disallowing an agent-phrase.
- Tr-NSs resemble indirect passives like (15) in the extra semantic interpretations on Spec, TP.

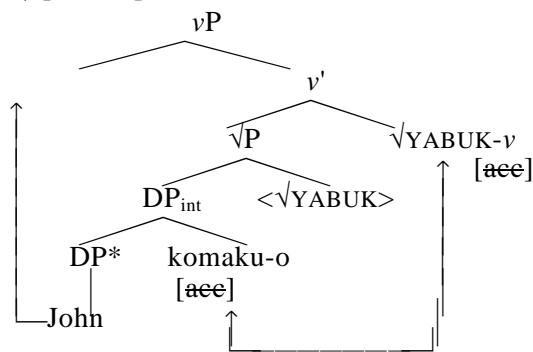
(13) John-ga (\*Mary-ni/niyotte) komaku-o yabu(k)-i-ta. [Tr-NS] =(1b)  
 NOM by eardrum-ACC rupture-TR-PAST 'John<sub>i</sub> had his<sub>i</sub> eardrum ruptured.'

(14) John-ga (Mary-ni/niyotte) komaku-o yabuk-(r)are-ta. [Possessor Passive]  
 NOM by eardrum-ACC rupture-PASS-PAST  
 'John<sub>i</sub> had his<sub>i</sub> eardrum ruptured by Mary.'

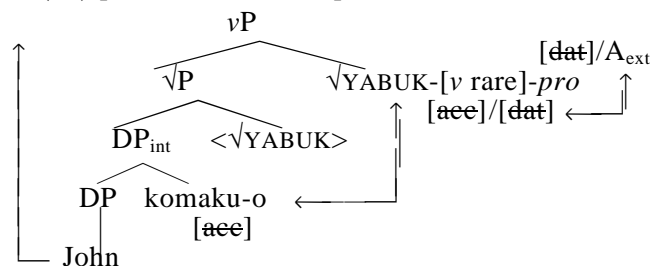
(15) John-ga Mary-ni Tom-no komaku-o yabuk-(r)are-ta. [Indirect Passive]  
 NOM DAT GEN eardrum-ACC rupture-PASS-PAST  
 'John had Tom's eardrum ruptured by Mary.'

- The head of DP<sub>int</sub> in (13) is Case-licensed by the root-*v* amalgam. Since the root itself does not require an external argument (Descriptive Generalization on Tr-NS on page 1), the non-head of DP<sub>int</sub> (DP\*) can move into Spec,*v*P, where it picks up a non-thematic interpretation ascribable to the functional head *v*. The non-head ends up in Spec,TP for Case/EPP reasons.
- In (14), the head and non-head of DP<sub>int</sub> are Case-checked in the same manner. Since the external  $\theta$ -role is 'absorbed by *pro*, the non-head does not pick up any semantic role within *v*P other than the possessor of the head of DP<sub>int</sub>.
- In (15), both the internal and external  $\theta$ -roles are discharged within *v*P, and an extra DP that will fill Spec,TP (DP\*) picks up a non-thematic interpretation ascribable to *rare*.
- DP\*s in (13) and (15) are interpreted as being responsible for and affected by the event expressed by *v*P, respectively.

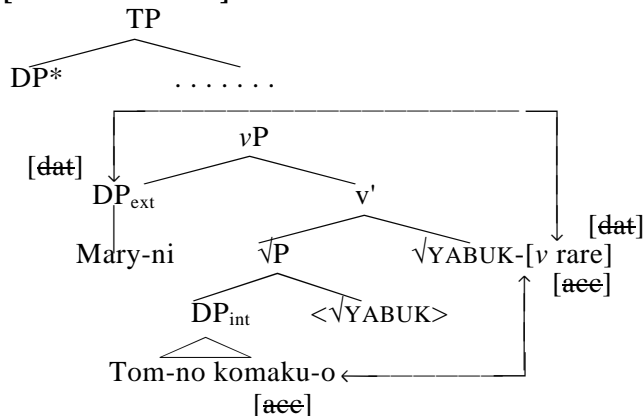
(13) [Tr-NS]



(14) [Possessor Passive]



(15) [Indirect Passive]



## 6. Concluding Remarks

- The passive morpheme *rare* and the transitive light verbs in Japanese constitute parallel constructions under certain conditions since they share properties (i) and (ii) stated in Introduction.
- They constitute distinct constructions since *rare* in its unmarked usages (i.e., direct and possessor passives) involves the designated nominal *pro*, which is on a par with *-EN* in English passives.
- The marked usages of the passive morpheme *rare* (i.e., indirect passive) and of the transitive light verbs (i.e., Tr-NS) require a non-thematic interpretation ascribable to them.
- It is predicted that Germanic and Romance languages, which use past participles for passives, allow unmarked passives but disallow marked passives since their passives necessarily involve the nominal *-EN*.

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