Semantics of the Passive and Causative Suffixes in Japanese

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0. Introduction.

The passive and causative constructions have been widely analyzed in syntax, semantics and pragmatics. In semantics, Comrie (1981) discusses the degree of "control" retained in the causative situation by the causee. He argues that the relations among agent, force, instrument, and patient is not a set of discrete semantics relations, but rather a continuum as a whole, which can be regarded as a continuum of control. Thus, he considers one's deliberate falling down "full control", one's careless falling down "potential control" and one's being pushed down "no control." My analyses of the suffixes of the causatives and passives in Japanese show that the semantics of the causative suffix -(s)ase indicates the full or potential control and that of the passive suffix -(r)are no control in the part of the referent of the subject. In this paper, I focus on the conceptual domain of the Japanese passive suffix and causative suffix, demonstrating that these suffixes exhibit an interesting dichotomy in terms of the concept of "control." Our analysis shows that the inherent semantic nature of the passive suffix -(r)are is "no control" and that of the causative suffix -(s)ase is "control." With this semantic analysis, the complicated use and interpretations of the passive, causative and passive-causative sentences in Japanese have become much simpler than that with the traditional and recent analyses of these constructions.

Since we use a term "external control" which is defined in a much narrower sense than Comrie's term "control.", the term "external control" will be defined in section 1. In section 2, our analysis of the inherent semantic nature of the Japanese passive suffix and in section 3, that of the Japanese causative suffix will be demonstrated. In section 4, degree of control in Japanese passive-causatives will also be examined. The last section will conclude the paper.

1. Definition of the concept of Control.

Comrie (1981) discusses the totality of semantic roles such as agen force, instrument, experiencer and patient in a universal inventor According to him, these semantic roles are a continuum along which characterized as a continuum of control and there is a degree of control suc as full control, potential control and no control, as exemplified in (1).

(1)a. Full control: I broke the vase on purpose.
   b. Potential control not exercised: I carelessly broke the vase.
   c. No control: I was pushed down to the concrete and broke the vase.

The notion of control discussed in Comrie is related to a cause and i resultant effect: How the resultant effect is brought about and whether tl agent's intentionality is involved. If the agent's intentionality is a part of tl definitional meaning of control, a lexical decomposition approach must l applied. However, the Japanese passive and causative suffixes are bour mophemes which cannot function as lexical items independent of their ste verbs. Therefore, it is not possible to take the lexical decompositic approach to the analyses of the suffixes.

For the above reason, Comrie's definition of "control" cannot apply it is to the current study. We will only consider a notion of "extern control" as defined in an extremely narrow sense in (2).

(2) It should be said that there is "external control" when a resultant effect brought about, through force, order, or permission of the referent of tl subject, by an agent who is not the referent of the subject. Conversely, should be said that there is "no external control" when the resultant effect brought about without any cause on the part of the referent of the subject.

Thus, the sentences in (1) are not examples of the term "external control" the sense of (2), since all the sentences denote that the agent of the dire causer of the action (i.e. the person who broke the vase) is the referent of t

subject. I will explain our definition of "external control" with the examples in (3).

(3)a. I made my brother do the homework.
   b. The sky became clear.
   c. Bill was told not to come to the office any more by the manager (and he did not come/ but he came).

The resultant effect of (3a) is that 'my brother' did the homework. The doer of the action of doing homework is not the referent of the subject, 'I'. That is, 'my brother' did the homework because of the controller 'I': The controller made his brother do the action by order, or some sort of physical or psychological force, manipulation and so forth. In this case, as Comrie claims, there is a degree of control: The degree of control in the case of (3a) may be full control or potential/partial control, depending on how the controller made his brother do the homework. The brother might have had no choice but to do the homework, or he might have been able not to do it. As for (3b), it is not stated that how the sky became clear. In fact, it would be difficult to imagine that someone can possibly clear the sky or that someone prevents the sky frombecoming cleared. According to our definition of "external control", the referent of the subject must have control or power over the situation. It is difficult to claim that the sky in (3b) has the power to make itself clear the clouds: The cause is most likely the winds. Thus, it should be said that (3b) indicates "no external control." In (3c), the manager, who is not the referent of the subject, is the controller. he possesses only potential control over Bill's coming to the office. As seen in the parentheses, Bill could listen to the manager or does not have to listen to him. In either case, the referent of the subject has no control over the action of the manager having told him to come to the office. Therefore, according to our definition of "external control", it should be said that (3c) indicates "no external control."

The concept of control, thus, includes human capability to affect someone's state or action or change of a situation. Through this paper, we will use the term "control" in the narrow sense of "external control" as stated

in (2): When there are two agents, the doer of an action is not the referen[t] of the subject and the referent of the subject is the controller. This controller possesses either full or potential controlling power over the "doer". When the agent is not the referent of the subject who is not the causer of the agent's action, the sentence indicates that the referent of the subject possesses "no control" over the situation.

In the following section, passives in Japanese will be discussed. I demonstrates that the Japanse passive suffix -(r)are indicates "no control" in the part of the referent of the subject over the agent's action which affects the referent of the subject, the speaker or both.

2. The Japanese Passive Suffix -(r)are.

The analyses of the Japanese passives have been extensively done in syntax, semantics and pragmatics. Kuno (1976) classifies the passives into two categories: the pure passives and the adversity passives. According to the traditional analysis of the passives like the one proposed by Kuno, the pure passives represent a neutral description of an event, while the adversity passives produce connotations that the referent of the subject has been affected by the agent's action. The typical examples of the pure passives and the adversity passives are illustrated in (4) and (5).

(4) The Pure Passives.

a. Sono tatemono wa 1940-nen ni tate-rare-ta.
   that building Top. -year in build-pass-pst.
   "The building was build in 1940."

b. Hiroshi wa sensei ni shikar-are-ta.
            teacher agnt scold-pass-pst.
   "Hiroshi was scolded by the teacher."

(5) The Adversity Passives.

a. Hiroshi wa chichi-oya   ni   shin-are-ta.
      father-parent agnt die-pass-pst.
  "As for Hiroshi, his father died on him."

b. Tanaka-san   wa sensei   ni   kodomo o   home-rare-ta.
   -Mr/Ms.   teacher agnt child   acc. praise-pass-pst.
  "Mr/Ms. Tanaka had her child praised by the teacher."

Syntactically speaking, either the object is simply promoted to subject in the pure passives in (4), or an extra NP is added in the adversity passives in (5). The extra NP in (5a) is Hiroshi and that in (5b), Tanaka. However, this analysis is problematic in the semantic and pragmatic point of view since (4b) could be interpreted as being adversative because of the meaning of the verb shikaru 'scold' and (5b) does not connote any adversiveness because of the meaning of the verb homeru 'praise'.

  Kamio (1989) takes a pragmatic approach to the passives. He claims that there are two kinds of -(r)are in terms of the pragmatic functions: One is the -(r)are which is used in the ni yotte passives, and the other is the -(r)are which is used in the ni passives as exemplified in (6) and (7), respectively. (the interpretations are Kamio's, 1989) According to him, the ni yotte passives express that the referent of the subject which is typically non-animate is structurally affected. That is, the referent of the subject undergoes structural or essential change such as being killed, created, written, discovered, etc. The ni passives express that the referent of the subject or the speaker is phenomenally or structurally affected. The phenomeral affectedness is that the affectee is emotionally affected or non-essentially.

(6) The ni yotte passives.
(i) Teikoku Hotel wa Raito   { (a) *ni   } sekkeis-are-ta. (K's 19)
  Imperial Hotel Top Wright { (b) ni yotte }
            by   design-pass-pst.
   "The Imperial Hotel was designed by F.L. Wright."

(ii) Han'nin   no shootai   wa mikkokusha { (a) *ni }
     criminal gnt identity Top informer   { (b) ni yotte }

   akirakani s-are-ta.   (K's 25)
   clearly   do-pass-pst.

   "The identity of the criminal was made known by an informer."

(7) The ni passives.

(i) Taroo wa   haha-oya   { (a)   ni   } shikar-are-ta. (K's 5)
                mother-parent   { (b) ?? ni yotte }
                                                  by   scold-pass-pst.
   "Taroo was scolded by his mother."

(ii) Hanako wa Taroo { (a)   ni   } kisus-are-ta. (K's 7)
                        { (b) *ni yotte }
                                          kiss-pass-pst.
   "Hanako was kissed by Taroo."

(iii) Taroo wa teki   no   hei   { (a)   ni   } koros-are-ta. (K's 15)
                enemy   gnt soldier { (b) ni yotte }
                                                        kill-pass-pst.
   "Taroo was killed by an enemy soldier."

(iv) Yoogisha wa eki   de keiji   { (a)   ni   } taihos-are-ta.
     suspect   station in detective { (b) ni yotte }
                                                            arrest-pass-pst.
   "The suspect was arrested by a detective at the station."

Kamio's analysis is extremely interesting and has made a significant
contribution to the pragmatic analysis of the Japanese passives when syntactic
analyses of the passives gave little light to the area. However, it seems that
his analysis indicates that the choice between the two -(r)are depends on
animacy of the referent of the subject and context, whether the situation or
the agent's action affects the referent of the subject structurally or
phenomenally.

Our analysis of the passive suffix seems to provide a simpler solution to the question. In our analysis, there is only one -(r)are, which inherently indicates that there is "no control" in the part of the subject NP, whether it is a human NP or a non-human NP. The choice between the two agentive markers, ni and ni yotte, is not directly related to the passive construction. The choice is made according to how the speaker perceives the passive situation which he describes: If he feels affected by the situation, he would choose ni because the particle ni indicates primarily an animate agent or source as seen in (8).

(8) Kinoo   ⎰(a) toshokan   kara/*ni ⎱   hon   o
     yesterday   library   from/agnt   book   acc.
           ⎱(b) Tanaka-san   kara/ni ⎰
                 -Mr/Ms.

    karite-kita   yo.
    borrow-came   emph.

"I borrowed (checked out)the book from   ⎰(a) the library   ⎱   yesterday."
                                    ⎱(b)Tanaka-san ⎰

(8a) shows that ni cannot take the inanimate NP, toshokan 'library', while (8b) shows that both kara and ni can take the animate NP, Tanaka-san 'Mr/Ms. Tanaka'. The difference in the usage between the ablative kara 'from' and the agentive ni seems to indicate the similarity in the difference between ni yotte and ni in the passive constructions.

Remember that we have claimed that suffix -(r)are semantically indicates no control in the part of the referent of the subject and the choice between the agent markers ni yotte and ni has nothing to do with the passive construction. I shall explain this claim by examining Kamio's examples of the two types of passives.

Both examples of the ni yotte passives in (6) indicate that the referent of the subject has no control over the situations: The suffix -(r)are in (6i) indicates that the Imperial Hotel has no control over Wright's having designing the building. In the same manner, the suffix in (6ii) indicates that the criminal has no control over the situation where the informer revealed

his identity. Both subjects, the Imperial Hotel and the criminal's identity, are inanmate. Therefore, it is natural to describe the situations as the facts with the agentive marker <u>ni yotte</u> which denotes the speaker's impersonal relation to the referent of the subject. However, it is also acceptable to mark the agent with <u>ni</u> in (6) when the situation could affect the speaker as seen in (9) in which the speaker feels regretful about the fact.

(9) Teikoku Hoteru   o   sekkeishite na   o   ageyoo to   omotte-ita
    Imperial Hotel   acc. design   name acc. spread cmp   was thinking

   noni,   Raito   <u>ni</u> sekkeis-are-te   shimatta.   (K's 41)
   though Wright   by design-pass-grnd   finished.

   "Although I wanted to spread my name by designing the Imperial
   Hotel, it has been designed by Wright."

As for the <u>ni</u> passives exemplified in (7), the suffix <u>-(r)are</u> again indicates that there is no control in the part of the referent of the subject over the agent's actions: In (7i), Taroo had no control over the situation where his mother scolded him. In (7ii), the suffix also indicates that Hanako had no control over Taroo having kissed her. (7iii & iv) can be explained in the same manner. The difference between (7i & ii) and (7iii & iv) is that the former may not be acceptable with the agents marked by <u>ni yotte</u>, while the latter are perfectly fine. This is because it is hard to interpret that the speaker as describing the situations of (7i & ii) as if they are some objective news. The interpretational difference between the sentences with <u>n</u> and <u>ni yotte</u> can also be explained by the semantic differences between the markers: (7iiia) with <u>ni</u> indicates that the speaker is also affected by Taroo' death, while (7iiib) with <u>ni yotte</u> states only the description of the fact. Similarly, (7iva) with <u>ni</u> seems to indicate that the speaker feels affected by the fact that the suspect has been arrested, while (7ivb) with <u>ni yotte</u> indicate the description of the fact.

In short, our analysis shows that there is one semantic nature of <u>(r)are</u>: It indicates "no control" on the part of the referent of the subject. The semantic characteristics of the agent markers, <u>ni</u> and <u>ni yotte</u>, are to b dealt with separately from the passive constructions. When the speaker feel

affected by the agent's action, he would choose ni. If he wishes to state the fact neutrally, he would choose ni yotte to mark the agent. This analysis syntactically allows to take any possible combinations without any constraints on the animate/inanimate subject and/or agent. Instead, it gives a much simpler device to make a choice between the two agent markers and to interpret the situations described with the passives in Japanese.

In the following section, the causative suffix -(s)ase will be discussed.

3. The Japanese Causative Suffix -(s)ase.

In the discussion of the notion of control, Comrie claims that the causatives indicate that there is potential for the causee's retention of control when the causee is an animate. According to him, however, when the causee is an inanimate entity such as a tree or a pen, which has no potential for exercising any control over the situation, the question of control does not arise. His definitional meaning of "control" seems to be different from ours stated in (2). According to (2), the follwoing sentences indicate that the referent of the subject has "control" over the situations although the subjects are inanimate:

(10)a. The earthquake forced us to leave our home.
   b. The strong wind made the boat go back to the harbour.
   c. The nice breeze let us sleep well in a hot mid-summer night.

(10a) indicates that the inanimate subject, earthquake, had almost full control over the situation where "we" had no choice but leave the house. (10b) indicates that the inanimate subject, the strong wind, had potential control over the situation: it is not clear whether the boat had no other choice but went back to the harbour. However, it is clear that the boat would have continued heading to its destination if the captain had decided to do so. (10c) indicates that the inanimate subject, the nice breeze, had a power to give "us" a condition under which "we" were able to sleep well in the hot night.

In our analysis, the semantic nature of the Japanese causative suffix -(s)ase is "control" in the part of the referent of the subject, whether or not the subject is animate. The suffix indicates either full, potential or permissive power, namely, a controlling power over a given situation in the range of full to permissive. Let us examine the Japanese causative sentences in terms of "control."

(11) Haha-oya   wa Taroo ⌈(a) o   ⌉ juku   e ik-ase-ta.
     mother-parent Top.   acc.   cram school to go-caus-pst.
                                ⌊(b) ni ⌋
                                   dat.
     "His mother ⌈(a) made ⌉ Taroo go to the cram school."
                 ⌊(b) let   ⌋

  c. Oya   ga kodomo ni   gohan o   tabe-sase-ta.
     parent   nom child   agnt meal acc eat-caus-pst.
     "The parent(s) ⌈made/had/let   the child eat the meal."
                    ⌊fed the child.

The causative sentences in (11) indicate that the referent of the subject have control over the agents' actions: In (11a), Taroo's mother made Taroo go to the cram school by some way shich Taroo could not say no. The accusative o indicates that the mother's controlling power denoted by the suffix was directed to Taroo. The agentive ni in (11b) indicates that Taroo is the agent who primarily initiated his action and the suffix indicates that his mother possesses the controlling power to give him permission. (11c) is an ambiguous sentence which indicates only that the parent possesses a controlling power. The degree of the power can be force, suggestion, permission or aid to eat. It cannot be correctly interpreted without context, since the causative suffix indicates only the inherent meaning of the suffix, namely, "control" in the part of the referent of the subject.

We have seen that the suffix -(r)are indicates that there is "no control" and -(s)ase, "control" in the part of the referent of the subject. The dichotomy may be illustrated as in the following diagram.

Diagram#1

	-(r)are	-(s)ase
Control of refrnt of subj.	--	+
Direction of the power w/ respect to the subj.	to Subj.(wa/ga) Subj. <-------	from Subj.)wa/ga) Subj. -------->

4. The Passive-Causatives.

There has been little linguistic analysis of the Japanese passive-causative sentences. Following our analysis, the relation between a controller and controllee becomes quite clear. Examples in (12) illustrate the above statement:

(12)a. Taroo   ga   gohan   o   tabe-ta.
         nom   meal   acc.   eat-pst.
     "Taroo ate the meal."

   b. Haha-oya   ga   Taroo ni   gohan   o   tabe-sase-ta.
      mother-parent nom.   agnt   meal   acc. eat-caus-pst.
     "His mother forced/made/let Taroo eat the meal."

   c. Taroo ga haha-oya ni gohan o tabe-sase-rare-ta.
                              eat-caus-pass-pst.
     "Taroo was forced/made to eat the meal by his mother."

(12a) is a simple sentence which denotes that Taroo ate the meal. (12b) is a causative sentence which indicates that Taroo's mother has the controlling power over Taroo's eating the meal. The power can be a force or a permission as indicated in the translation. However, the passive-causative sentence (12c) indicates only the power as a force but not a permission. This is because the suffix -(r)are indicates no control in the part of the referent of the subject, Taroo in (12c), and the suffix -(s)ase indicates that the agent of the VP with -(s)ase, which is the referent of the subject of the causative clause, possesses the controlling power over the situation where Taroo eats the meal. Diagram #1 has shown that the direction of "control" in the

sentence with -(s)ase is from the referent of the subject to the non-suject agent of an action denoted by the verb, whereas the direction of "control" in the sentence with -(r)are is to the referent of the subject from the non-suject agent (by-agent in English). Diagram#2 illustrates the above explanations:
Diagram#2:

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[C        [B          [A                    ]    ]    ]
[Taroo wa [haha-oya ga [Taroo ga   gohan  o tabe] -sase ]-rare ]
         Top   mother nom        nom meal acc eat   caus. pass.
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Bracket A: [Taroo eats the meal]
Bracket B: [His mother force/makes/lets [Taroo eats the meal]]
Direction of "control" with -(s)ase: Mother -----> Taroo eating the meal

At this stage, the causative sentence indicates that Taroo's mother has a certain degree of the controlling power, either force or permission, over the situation where Taroo eats the meal. However, bracket C shows that the interpretation of "permission" of the suffix disappears because of the inherent meaning of the passive suffix, namely, non-controllness of Taroo, the referent of the subject.

Bracket C: Taroo   is forced/made to eat the meal by his mother.
Direction of "control" with -(r)are: Taroo <----------[B: Mother's control]

In (C), the whole meaning denoted by the causative sentence is directed to Taroo because of the suffix -(r)are. In other words, it indicates that Taroo has no control over the situation where his mother has a controlling power over his eating the meal. In the passive-causatives, the interpretation of permission, which could be denoted by the suffix -(s)ase, is blocked because of the inherent semantic nature of -(r)are, namely, no control: The controlling power of the referent of the subject of the -(s)ase is directed to the referent of the subject of the -(r)are. That is, the passive-causative indicates that the referent of the subject has no choice over the controlling power of the referent of the subject of the -(s)ase. This eliminates a possible semantic interpretation that the referent of the subject had a wish to eat the

meal and asked for the permission of the referent of the subject of the -(s)ase.

5. Conclusion.

The analysis of the passive-causative sentences verifies that the concept of control is the key to the semantic analyses of the Japanese passive and causative suffixes. It gives a simple analysis of the constructions: The inherent semantic nature of the causative suffix -(s)ase is full, partial or potential control and that of the passive suffix -(r)are is no control in the part of the referent of the subject. This type of linguistic dichotomy is also observed in other structures of Japanese. For example, the dichotomy between the active verb suru 'do' and the inchoative verb naru 'become' conceptually parallels the dichotomy between the suffixes -(s)ase and -(r)are, as observed in the examples in (13):

(13)a. (Watashi wa) Tanaka-san   o   o-sewa   shi-mash-ita.
        I   Top   -Mr/Ms. acc. hon-take care   do-plt-pst.
       "(I) took care of Mr/Ms. Tanaka."

   b. (Watashi wa) Tanaka-san ni   o-sewani   nar-imash-ita.
                                 agnt hon-take care become-plt-pst.
      "(I) was taken care of by Mr/Ms. Tanaka./(Lit.) The situation has
      become such that Mr/Ms. Tanaka took care of me."

Example (13) is related to expressions of politeness in Japanese. Tokunaga's analysis (1988) shows that there is a clear structural dichotomy in the honorific structures in Japanese: A humble form, which indicates that an action is done by the speaker or a member of his inside group, contains the do-verb, namely, suru in Japanese. On the other hand, a respectful form, which indicates that an action is done by a non-speaker or a member of an outside group, either contains the become-verb, namely, naru in Japanese, or is provided in lexicon. This is something to do with the notion of respect that the Japanese possess, according to Araki (1980), Hashimoto (1969), Makino (1974) and Ikegami (1981). In fact, the passive suffix -(r)are is used

to form the respectful form as well as the inchoative verb <u>naru</u>, as seen in (14).

(14)Tanaka-sensei   ga   kono   hon   o   ⎧(a) kak-<u>are</u>-mash-ita.
     -teacher nom this   book   acc ⎪   write-pass-plt-pst.
                                  ⎨(b) o-kakini   <u>nar</u>-imash-ita.
                                  ⎩   hon-writing become-plt-pst
     "Prof. Tanaka wrote this book."

According to Araki and Ikegami, both the suffix <u>-(r)are</u> and the inchoative verb <u>naru</u> 'become' indicate that an incident happens by itself from an unknown source. The use of the linguistic items which semantically indicate "no control" is an indication of the conceptual attitude that the Japanese possess for a respectable existence, whether the respectable existence is human or non human: The Japanese value on a natural occurrence rather than human force. This conceptual attitude can be observed in a classical expression for the situation when the Lord is appearing in front of people as in (15).

(15) Otono-sam no o-<u>nari</u>. (Ikegami's 138, p.252: Araki, p.39)
     Lord
     "Lord has arrived/appeared/come to existence."

Ikegami explains that <u>naru</u> in (15) indicates that the Lord was non-existent and now has appeared by a superhuman power. In other words, a matter described with <u>naru</u> is perceived as what is beyond one's "control." Araki also explains that an honorable entity would never come by a human power but appears or come to existence by a power beyond human control.

     We will not discuss further the notion of respect in Japanese here. The point to be made here is that the notion of "control" seems to underlie not only in the semantics of the passive and causative suffixes but also in the honorific structures in Japanese. This paper has shown that our semantic analysis of the suffixes in terms of the concept of "control" provides the simple device in the choice in pragmatics and explanations of the interpretations of the passive, causative and passive-causative sentences.

Abbreviations:

Top= topic marker	nom= nominative	dat=dative
acc= accusative	agnt=agentive	gnt=genitive
grnd=gerundive	cmp=complimentizer	pst= past
hon=honorific marker	pass=passive	caus=causative
plt=polite		

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