

# THE EMERGENCE OF ‘GIVE’ PASSIVES IN EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN LANGUAGES

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## 0 Introduction

It has been noted that in some languages the same morpheme is used to express both causative and passive meaning. Several linguists have suggested that passive constructions can arise from causative constructions via the permissive and reflexive context (e.g. Keenan 1985; Haspelmath 1990; Knott 1995). Among the languages known to reflect this causative-passive link via the reflexive are Korean (Keenan 1985:262) and Manchu-Tungusic (Knott 1995:57-58). In this paper, we will examine this phenomenon in a number of East and Southeast Asian languages, including a number of Chinese dialects, some Tai and Austroasiatic languages, and colloquial Malay. In particular, we will focus on the causative-passive link involving the morpheme ‘give’.

## 1 Background

We begin with a brief review of the arguments posed for the causative > passive development via the permissive and reflexive contexts in two groups of languages: one that does not involve the ‘give’ morpheme, and one that does.

Korean shows this causative-passive development with the suffix *-I-*, which is realized as *-ki-* in (1) below. The etymology of this suffix is not known.

(1) Korean (Keenan 1985:262<sup>1</sup>)

- a.    *Nuna-ka*        *emeni-eke*    *ai-lil*            *an-ki-ess-ta*  
sister-NOM    mother-DAT   child-ACC    embrace-CAUS-PAST-IND  
‘Sister had Mother embrace the child.’
- b.    *Ai-ka*            *emeni-eke*    *caki*    *mom-lil*        *an-ki-ess-ta*  
child-NOM    mother-DAT   self    body-ACC    embrace-CAUS-PAST-IND  
‘The child had Mother embrace him.’
- c.    *Ai-ka*            *emeni-eke*        *an-ki-ess-ta*  
child-NOM    mother-DAT    embrace-PASS-PAST-IND  
‘The child was embraced by Mother.’

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<sup>1</sup> We have slightly modified the glosses for the sake of consistency throughout the paper. Specifically, we have chosen the case markers NOM, DAT and ACC in place of Keenan’s SUBJ, IO and DO, and we use the term IND(icative) in place of DECLAR(ative).

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Note that both (1a) and (1b) are causative. The latter, of course, is also reflexive (hence, the term “reflexive-causative”). (1c) has passive meaning. Keenan (1985) suggests that the causative suffix *-ki-* in (1a) can come to be associated with the passive meaning in (1c) through the deletion of the reflexive direct object in (1b), and through “the reinterpretation of the subject *child* as an Experiencer rather than an Agent” (p. 262). Keenan further points out that this causative-passive development is possible because of the availability of a permissive or non-interventive ‘let’-type interpretation for the *-ki-* suffix. We summarize this causative-passive development as follows:

causative > reflexive permissive causative > passive

The Manchu-Tungusic languages provide evidence of a similar development involving the suffix *-bu-* (for Manchu) or *-v(u)-* (for the Tungusic languages), which is claimed to be etymologically derived from a verb meaning ‘give’ (e.g. Gabelentz 1861:518, cited in Haspelmath 1990:48 and I. Nedjalkov 1993:194; I. Nedjalkov 1978:73 and Sunik 1962:130, both cited in Knott 1995:58).

The causative and passive uses of the *-bu-* suffix in Manchu are illustrated in (2a) and (2b) respectively. Note that a causative interpretation emerges when the subject is construed as agentive, and a passive interpretation emerges when the subject is construed as an affected patient.

(2) Manchu (I. Nedjalkov 1993:194)

a. *i*                      *bata-be*                      *va-bu-ha*  
he-NOM              enemy-ACC      kill-CAUS-PAST  
‘He made (somebody) kill the enemy.’

b. *i*                      (*bata-de*)                      *va-bu-ha*  
he-NOM              (enemy-DAT)              kill-PASS-PAST  
‘He is/was killed (by the enemy).’

Zaxarov (1879, cited in Knott 1995:57) reports that in classical Manchu the suffix *-bu-* was also used to convey permissive meaning. As discussed in V. Nedjalkov (1964:301-310; 1971:165-171, cited in I. Nedjalkov 1993:193-194), this allows us to posit a causative > reflexive causative > passive development, again via a permissive or non-interventive ‘let’-type causative, as follows:

- (i) *He caused/let somebody kill somebody else* (causative)
- (ii) *He let somebody kill him (by his own negligence)* (reflexive-causative)
- (iii) *He was killed* (passive)

In Evenki (Northern Tungusic), the cognate for *-bu-* is expressed as *-v-/p-/b-/mu-/vuv-/muv-/mup-* (these variants being phonologically conditioned) (I. Nedjalkov 1997:218). These suffixes can also be used to express causative and passive meanings, as illustrated in (3a) and (3b) respectively.

(3) Evenki (I. Nedjalkov 1993:195)

- a. *mit*            *homoti-va*        *eme-v-re-p*  
 we-NOM    bear-ACC        come-CAUS-NONFUT-1PL  
 'We brought the bear with us.'
- b. *mit*            *homoti-du*        *eme-v-re-p*  
 we-NOM    bear-DAT        come-PASS-NONFUT-1PL  
 lit. 'We are come by the bear.' =  
 'We were affected by the bear's coming.'

I. Nedjalkov (1993) reports that whereas in Manchu the causative use of the suffix *-bu-* is more productive than the passive use, the reverse situation holds in Evenki, such that the passive use of the suffix *-v(u)* and its variants is more productive than the causative use. Indeed, the causative use of the suffix *-v-* and its phonological variants is found only in archaic and non-productive causatives (i.e. "fossilized" forms), with productive causatives being formed with the suffix *-vkAn/-mukAn/-pkAn*, as illustrated in (4) below.

(4) Evenki (I. Nedjalkov 1997:231)

- Nungan*    *min-du*    *sulaki-l-ve*    *iche-vken-e-n*  
 he-NOM    I-DAT    fox-PL-ACC    see-CAUS-NONFUT-3SG  
 'He showed me foxes.'

Knott (1995:57, citing Sunik 1962:130) points out that this productive causative suffix *-vkAn* consists of the suffix *-v-* and an element *-kAn*, which is etymologically derived from a verb meaning "say". It appears therefore that Evenki has recruited the newer causative suffix *-vkAn* because the older causative suffix *-v-* has lost much of its semantic specificity.<sup>2</sup>

Evidence that the causative suffix *-v-* has become semantically generalized (and thus highly grammaticized) can be seen in its great versatility, or multifunctionality. I. Nedjalkov (1997:233-235) reports that in Evenki the suffix *-v-* functions as a valence-extender in a variety of constructions, namely certain causatives, instrumentals and resultatives. In these contexts, use of the suffix *-v-* allows for the introduction of an additional argument in the form of an agent, instrument, or location. At the same time, I. Nedjalkov (1997:226-228) also reports the productive use of *-v-* as a valence-reducer, particularly as a passive marker, and with a restricted set of transitive verb stems as an anticausative marker as well. These different uses of the suffix *-v-* may represent instances of homophony, as pointed out in I. Nedjalkov (1997). At the same time, it is in fact possible and highly likely that they point to a diachronic development in which a lexical verb meaning 'give' has evolved multiple functions in the following direction:

<sup>2</sup> Li and Whaley (forthcoming) also report a similar conclusion, based on reconstructive analyses of *-w(u)* constructions in a cluster of Oroqen dialects, which also form part of the Manchu-Tungusic language family.

<u>Lexical source</u> >>	<u>Valence-extenders</u> >>	<u>Valence-reducers</u>
Verb meaning 'give'	<b>causative suffix -v-</b>	anticausative suffix -v-
(i.e. <i>bu</i> )	resultative + suffix -v-	<b>passive suffix -v-</b>
	etc.	etc.

Indeed, I. Nedjalkov (1978:73, cited in Knott 1995:58), has posited that the passive suffix -v- in Evenki developed from a verb meaning 'give' via the permissive-causative. This development is similar to the one proposed by Keenan (1985) discussed above. We reiterate this causative-passive development as follows:

causative > reflexive permissive-causative > passive

In support of this proposed diachronic development, Knott (1995) offers corroborating examples from two Tungusic languages that are closely related to Evenki. Citing Novikova (1968), Knott points out that in Even, "the cognate suffix can have either passive or permissive meaning; moreover, in its permissive function it specifically denotes 'unwilling permission' as a result of negligence, or inability to prevent the action" (1995:58; see also Malchukov 1993:378-383<sup>3</sup>). It is interesting to note that the passive uses of the suffix -v- in Even likewise tends to be associated with adversative contexts, usually denoting an action that is unfavorable to the subject (e.g. Malchukov 1993:378; 1995:14).

Furthermore, citing an example from I. Nedjalkov (1978:73), Knott also points out that in Solon, "the cognate suffix -u:- has the meaning 'let something happen to oneself', without being accompanied by any overt reflexive marker" (1995:58). The Solon example is illustrated in (5) below:

- (5) Solon (I. Nedjalkov 1978:73)  
*zaw-u:-sa*  
 catch-**PERMISSIVE**-RECENT PAST  
 'He let himself be caught.'

It is easy to see how this type of construction comes to be chiefly associated with inadvertent contexts such as 'He inadvertently let himself be caught' and from thence to passive interpretations such as 'He was caught'. Crucial to this type of permissive-causative > passive development is an inherent reflexive meaning, regardless of whether overt co-referential marking is obligatory or optional. In the case of Solon, as shown in (5), reflexivity can be morphosyntactically realized via "zero anaphora" (i.e. omission of a

<sup>3</sup> Malchukov (1993) briefly presents a causative > reflexive > passive analysis, among others, then goes on to advocate a functionally (i.e. semantically and pragmatically) motivated account for the observed correlations between factitive causatives, permissive causatives, and passives. (Included among the factitive causatives are the manipulative, coercive and directive type causatives.) Given that permissive-causatives in Even involve non-volitional subjects, Malchukov views both permissive causatives and passives as subsets of adversative constructions, with permissive causatives occupying one end of the continuum and prototypical passives the other. In our view, the diachronic account (i.e. the causative > reflexive > passive analysis) that is being highlighted in this paper is not incompatible with Malchukov's functional account.

reflexive pronominal; see Malchukov 1993:384) in the sense of ‘He let (someone) catch (him)’. The prevalence of zero anaphora in the form of non-overtly expressed reflexive pronominals could then easily pave the way for the emergence of passive reanalyses such as ‘He was caught’.

It is significant that in Even, even though overt co-referential marking involving a reflexive pronoun is obligatory in the case of factitive (i.e. manipulative, coercive, directive) causatives, a reverse situation tends to hold in the case of permissive-causatives, in that the use of “zero anaphora” (i.e. co-referential deletion) is very common among permissive-causatives. It appears that, since semantic reflexivity need not be syntactically realized, the structure of these Tungusic languages can easily facilitate the emergence of passive interpretations. That is, a passive interpretation can easily emerge when the subject is construed, not as the agent, but as the affected patient.

Comparative evidence from the Manchu-Tungusic languages thus provides us with some important insights into how the causative > passive development could have evolved via the permissive and reflexive context, in this particular case involving a suffix that is claimed to have been etymologically derived from the lexical verb ‘give’. In the following section, we will examine if, and to what extent, a similar development is attested in languages beyond the Manchu-Tungusic borders. We will first focus on the causative-passive relationship of ‘give’ constructions in some Chinese dialects and in colloquial Malay, and will then account for the absence of a similar phenomenon in Thai, Khmer and Vietnamese.

## 2 Causative-passive link in the ‘give’ constructions of other East and Southeast Asian languages

It has also been noted that among the Chinese dialects, verbs meaning ‘give’ are frequently used as an agent marker in passive constructions. According to Norman (1982:245), this is attested in most Min, Hakka and Yue dialects, and also in Mandarin dialects, including the dialect spoken in the Beijing area. Indeed, Norman considers the use of a ‘give’ verb to express passive meaning to be “pan-Chinese”.

Xu (1994) identifies twenty-three Chinese dialects which make use of verbs meaning ‘give’ to express agent marking in passive constructions. Hashimoto (1988) also points out that many southern Chinese dialects use ‘give’ verbs as passive markers, and that these ‘give’ verbs closely resemble the most common forms for the verb ‘to give’ or ‘to give back’ in the southern minority languages” (p.347, emphasis added). Matthews, Xu and Yip (2005:270) provide additional examples from a number of southern Min dialects, namely, Shantou *puŋ*, Chao’an *k’ɿʔ*, Chaoyang *k’iʔ* and Jieyang *k’eʔ*. Table 2 lists some examples for ease of reference.

**Table 1:** *Passive markers derived from ‘give’ verbs in various Chinese dialects (data from Hashimoto 1988:347-348; Matthews, Xu & Yip 2005:270; Xu 1994:366).*

Chinese dialects	verbs meaning ‘to give’		passive markers derived from ‘give’ verbs	
Min (Chaoshan: Shantou)	𠵿	<i>puŋ</i>	𠵿	<i>puŋ</i>
Min (Hainan)	𠵿		𠵿	
Hakka (Meixian)	𠵿	<i>pun<sup>1a</sup></i>	𠵿	<i>pun<sup>1a</sup></i>
Yue (Cantonese)	𠵿	<i>pei<sup>2a</sup></i>	𠵿	<i>pei<sup>2a</sup></i>

Wu (Jiangsu: Suzhou)	撥	<i>pe</i> <sup>2a</sup>	撥	<i>pe</i> <sup>2a</sup>
<b>Hubei (Hankou)</b>	捋		捋	
Mandarin (Hankou)		<i>pa</i> <sup>3a</sup>		<i>pa</i> <sup>3a</sup>
Mandarin (numerous dialects)		<i>gei</i> (& variants)		<i>gei</i> (& variants)
Min (Chaoshan: Chao'an)		<i>k'ɿ?</i>		<i>k'ɿ?</i>
Min (Chaoshan: Chaoyang)		<i>k'i?</i>		<i>k'i?</i>
Min (Chaoshan: Jieyang)		<i>k'e?</i>		<i>k'e?</i>
Wu (Pingyang: Zhejiang)		<i>k'a</i> <sup>4a</sup>		<i>k'a</i> <sup>4a</sup>
Wu (Jiangsu: Yangzhou)	給		給	
Anhui (Hefei)	給		給	
Gan (Yumen)	給		給	
Gan (Anxi)	給		給	
Wu (Wenzhou)	𪛗		𪛗	
Min (Amoy or Xiamen)	𪛗	<i>ho</i> <sup>3b</sup>	𪛗	<i>ho</i> <sup>3b</sup>
Min (Yongchun)	𪛗	<i>ho</i> <sup>3b</sup>	𪛗	<i>ho</i> <sup>3b</sup>
	乞		乞	
Min (Fuzhou)	乞		乞	
Gan (Gao'an)		<i>hou</i> <sup>3a</sup>		<i>hou</i> <sup>3a</sup>
Wu (Wenzhou: Zhejiang)		<i>ha</i> <sup>3a</sup>		<i>ha</i> <sup>3a</sup>
Wu (Jiangsu Nantong)		<i>ha</i> <sup>3a</sup>		<i>ha</i> <sup>3a</sup>
Anhui (Shexian)		<i>xe</i>		<i>xe</i>
Anhui (Jixi)		<i>xã</i>		<i>xã</i>
Anhui (Taihu)		<i>t'ai</i>		<i>t'ai</i>
Qinghai (Xining)		<i>tɛ</i> <sup>4</sup>		<i>tɛ</i> <sup>4</sup>
Wu (Jiangsu: Rugao)		<i>te</i> <sup>3a</sup>		<i>te</i> <sup>3a</sup>
Xiang (Hengyang)	𪛗		𪛗	

Minority dialects verbs meaning 'to give' or 'to give back'

Yao	<i>pa</i> <sup>2</sup>	
Maonan	<i>poi</i> <sup>2</sup>	
Zhuang	<i>poi</i> <sup>2</sup>	
Dong	<i>pəi</i> <sup>3</sup>	<i>sa:i</i> <sup>1</sup>
Miao	<i>pɛ</i> <sup>33</sup>	<i>kang</i> <sup>42</sup>
	<i>pəi</i> <sup>55</sup>	
Zhuang	<i>haw</i> <sup>3</sup>	
	<i>hu</i> <sup>3</sup>	
Dai (Dehong)	<i>haw</i> <sup>3</sup>	<i>sa:i</i> <sup>3</sup> ('give back')
Dai (Xishuangbanna)	<i>hu</i> <sup>3</sup>	<i>sa:i</i> <sup>3</sup> ('give back')
Buyi	<i>haw</i> <sup>3</sup>	
	<i>hai</i> <sup>3</sup>	
Sui	<i>ha:i</i> <sup>1</sup>	

It is thus not surprising that Chinese linguists often note that the verb 'give' is a "favorite candidate" for agent marking in passive constructions (e.g. Xu 1994; Yuan 1983; Zhan 1981). The question that interests us here is how the verb 'give' comes to acquire an agent marking function. Xu (1994:366) claims that the crucial link between the lexical use of 'give' and its passive use is the causative. Xu presents four arguments for her position, two of which are discussed here. First, it is noteworthy that some Chinese dialects also make use of the verb 'give' to convey causative meaning. Second, diachronic data suggest that the early uses of *gěi* 'give' in eighteenth century Chinese texts have more of a causative nuance, while more clear-cut passive uses appeared later in texts from the

nineteenth century onward. Based on both synchronic and diachronic evidence, Xu posits the following grammaticization pattern for the 'give' passive in Chinese:

lexical 'give' > causative 'give' > passive 'give'

Chappell and Peyraube (2001) make similar claims for southern Min dialects. This development is also noted in Matthews, Xu and Yip's (2005) discussion of passive and unaccusative constructions in the Jieyang dialect of Chaozhou. Zhang (2000) also posits a similar development, not only for Chinese but for other languages as well.

Below we illustrate the causative and passive uses of a 'give' morpheme in a northern as well as a southern Chinese dialect, namely an example from Mandarin involving *gěi* and an example from Cantonese involving *béi* respectively.<sup>4</sup>

(6) Mandarin (Xu 1994:368, 374)

- a. *wǒ gěi nǐ cāi ge míyǔ* (permissive-causative)  
 I GEI you guess CL riddle  
 'I (will) let you guess a riddle.'
- b. *wǒ gěi zhèi wèi ... yě nǚzǐ jiǒngzhu le* (passive)  
 I GEI this ... wild woman embarrass ASP  
 'I was embarrassed by this wild woman ...'

(7) Cantonese

- a. *léih dimgaai mh béi ngóh zou zau ne?* (permissive-causative)  
 you why NEG BEI me early leave Q  
 'Why won't you let me leave early?'
- b. *kéuih chamjat yauh béi yàhn laau* (passive)  
 s/he yesterday again BEI people scold  
 'S/he got scolded again yesterday.'

Haspelmath (1990:48) has suggested the possibility of a reflexive link between the causative and the passive uses of the 'give' morpheme in Chinese, noting however that no overt signs of reflexive morphology appear to be involved. The example he used is reproduced in (8) below.

(8) Mandarin (Haspelmath 1990:48)

*Lìsì gěi Zhāngsān kànjiàn-le.*  
 Lisi give Zhangsan see-ASP  
 lit. 'Lisi gave Zhangsan see (him).' =  
 'Lisi was seen by Zhangsan.'

<sup>4</sup> Whereas Hashimoto (1988) transcribes the Cantonese 'give' morpheme as *pei*<sup>2a</sup>, here we follow the transcription convention used in Matthews and Yip (1994).

Semantic reflexivity is syntactically more transparent in the Cantonese dialect, however, where co-referential pronominals are sometimes used in reflexive-causative constructions, as in (9).

- (9) Cantonese  
 (léih) chinkei mhou **béi** yàhn ganjung (léih) aa  
 you make.sure don't BEI people follow you SFP  
 'Make sure you don't let anyone follow you.' (reflexive-permissive)  
 'Make sure you are not followed.' (reflexive-passive)

This suggests the following grammaticization path for the emergence of passive 'give' in the Chinese languages:

lexical 'give' > causative 'give' > reflexive-causative 'give' > passive 'give'

A similar development can be seen in colloquial Malay spoken in peninsular Malaysia.<sup>5</sup> Below we illustrate some constructions in Malay involving the morpheme *bagi* 'give'. These include the following range of functions: lexical verb, causative, reflexive-causative, reflexive-passive, and passive uses.<sup>6</sup>

- (10) Malay
- a. *Cikgu selalu bagi kita banyak kerjarumah.* (lexical verb)  
 teacher always GIVE us a.lot.of homework  
 'The teacher always gives us a lot of homework.'
- b. *Cikgu akan bagi kita pulang awal esok.* (permissive-causative)  
 teacher will LET us go.home early tomorrow  
 'The teacher will let us leave early tomorrow.'
- c. *Cikgu tak bagi kita tanya (dia).* (reflexive-causative)  
 teacher NEG LET us ask him/her  
 'The teacher won't let us ask him/her (any questions).'
- d. *Kereta kita habis bagi dia rosak.* (passive)  
 car us completely PASS he wreck  
 'Our car was completely wrecked by him.'

<sup>5</sup> Our field reports indicate considerable variation in the use of passive *bagi* among native speakers of Malay. Those familiar with the northern dialects of peninsular Malaysia (e.g. Kedah and Perak), for example, generally accepted constructions showing permissive/passive uses of *bagi*, while some of our consultants from the southern part of the county (e.g. Johor) tend to reject such constructions, preferring instead to recast the examples shown to them with alternative passive constructions.

<sup>6</sup> The morpheme *bagi* is also used to express other functions, such as dative, benefactive, purposive, and stance marking; we discuss these uses elsewhere (e.g. Yap & Iwasaki 1998; Yap 1999; 2001, 2002).



A passive interpretation readily emerges in (10d) above when a non-agentive (and non-volitional) argument appears in subject position. An erstwhile causer gets reinterpreted as the demoted agent, while the erstwhile (and semantically bleached) causative verb *bagi* gets reanalyzed as a case marker of a demoted agent (typically referred to as a passive marker in many languages, including the Chinese dialects discussed earlier).

It should be noted here that Malay, like many other languages, has a number of ways to express passive meaning. The prototypical (and most productive) passive in Malay, both in the standard written and colloquial registers, is the passive prefix *di-*. Another fairly productive passive marker in colloquial speech is the periphrastic passive marker *kena* '(be) hit, come in contact with', equivalent to Thai passive marker *thùuk* (Iwasaki & Ingkaphirom 2005). Passive meaning is also occasionally conveyed through the prefixes *ter-* and *ber-*, and the circumfix *ke-...-an*.<sup>7</sup> A noticeable difference between passive *bagi* and these other means of expressing passive meaning is that passive *bagi* requires the overt expression of an agent, as shown in (11). In this regard, passive *bagi* is semantically more similar to the English *get*-passive rather than the *be* + *V-en* passive, in that both have a reflexive sense in which the affected patient (especially if animate) is often viewed to be to some extent responsible for his/her/its adversative consequence.

- (11) Malay  
*Ayah* { *bagi*    *\*(orang)* } *tipu*.  
           *di-*     *(\*orang)*  
           *kena*    *(\*orang)*  
           *ter-*    *(\*orang)*  
 father    PASSIVE    people       cheat  
 'Father was deceived.' / 'Father got cheated.'

This constraint against agent deletion applies not only to passive *bagi* in colloquial Malay, but also to passive *béi* in colloquial Cantonese (e.g. Hashimoto 1972; Matthews & Yip 1994), as well as passives in Chaozhou such as Jieyang *k'e?* (Matthews et al. 2005). Passive *gěi* in colloquial Mandarin, on the other hand, permit agent deletion in certain

<sup>7</sup> The prefix *ber-* and the circumfix *ke-...-an* have other functions, and only occasionally convey passive meaning, as illustrated in the examples below:

- (i) *Baju itu masih belum ber-jahit*  
 dress that still not BER-sew  
 'That dress is still not sewn yet.'
- (ii) *Kalau kita tak tahu bahasa Inggeris, kita akan ke-tinggal-an.*  
 if we not know language English we will KE-leave.behind-AN  
 'If we do not know English, we will be left behind.'

It is also important to note that the prefix *ter-* is primarily a marker of unintentionality or lack of controllability, and a passive interpretation emerges when the subject is an affected patient instead of a volitional agent, as illustrated in (iii) below.

- (iii) *Basikal-nya ter-humban ke tepi jalan.*  
 bicycle-GEN TER-throw DIR side road  
 'His/her bicycle was thrown off to the side of the road.'

constructions, as illustrated in (12). This may be an indication that passive *gěi* has grammaticized further as a passive marker.

- (12) Mandarin  
*Fángzi gěi shāo-le.* (agentless passive)  
 house GEI burn-ASP  
 ‘The house was burned down.’

It should also be pointed out that passive *bagi* constructions occur rather infrequently in colloquial Malay, and some native speakers of Malay have pointed out to us that the use of passive *bagi* appears to be more widespread in speech to non-native speakers of Malay. This would suggest that the passive uses of *bagi* may to some extent be influenced by language contact, particularly from the Chinese dialects. Nevertheless, there is sufficient evidence to indicate that the interpretations of certain reflexive *bagi* constructions are ambiguous between a permissive-causative meaning and a passive reading. Much depends on whether the subject is interpreted as a volitional agent or an affected patient. This is highlighted in (13) below.

- (13) Malay  
*Aku tak suka bagi orang marah.*  
 I NEG like give people scold  
 ‘I don’t like to let people scold (me).’ (permissive-reflexive reading)  
 ‘I don’t like to be scolded.’ (passive reading)

In a sense, one could argue that passive interpretations of *bagi* are highly context-dependent, unlike the case for the prototypical prefix *di-*. Nevertheless, the evidence from colloquial Malay shows that the language is structurally equipped to facilitate the emergence of passive uses of *bagi*. Moreover, the evidence further indicates that the causative-passive relationship involving the ‘give’ morpheme is linked via the reflexive. Based on our observations of *bagi* constructions in colloquial Malay, we obtain the following slightly modified grammaticization path as follows:

lexical ‘give’ > causative ‘give’ > reflexive-causative ‘give’ >  
 (reflexive-)passive ‘give’

The reflexive link becomes less transparent as the passive uses of ‘give’ morphemes become more productive and extend to more contexts where the affected subject no longer need to be animate and volitional. In the case of colloquial Malay, the use of passive *bagi* is still fairly restricted, and the constraint that the subject be animate is still fairly strong, such that passive constructions with inanimate subjects are often not acceptable, though not always, as illustrated in (14a) and (14b). In colloquial Cantonese and Mandarin, on the other hand, this constraint appears not to hold, and affected patient subjects need not be volitional, as illustrated in (15) and (16) respectively.

(14) Malay

- a. *Rumah kita HABIS bagi api jilat!*<sup>8</sup>  
 house we finish give fire lick  
 ‘Our house was completely licked by the fire!’
- b. *?Duit tu bagi orang ambe!<sup>2</sup>(=ambil)!*  
 money that give people take  
 ‘The money was taken (i.e. stolen) by someone!’

(15) Cantonese

*kéuih béi lousi fat lau tong*  
 s/he PASS teacher punish stay.back class  
 ‘S/he was punished (by the teacher) and made to stay back after class.’

(16) Mandarin

*Fángzi gěi (huǒ) shaō-le.*  
 house give fire burn-ASP  
 ‘The house was burned down (by the fire).’

In addition to animacy and agent volitionality (hence controllability), aspectual and modal cues also play an important role in disambiguating between causative and passive interpretations (see also Matthews et al. 2005). Consider (14a) and (14b) above. In (14a), the availability of completive aspect marker *habis* (‘finish’) yields a telic and change-of-state reading that is highly compatible with the resultative state interpretation of passive constructions. In (14b), further expanded as (14b’) below, a passive interpretation emerges in the context of a realis interpretation (i.e. entailment of loss of money), while a ‘let’-type permissive/causative interpretation emerges in the context of an irrealis interpretation (i.e. there is no entailment that someone has taken the money).

- (14b’) (i) *Duit ’tu bagi orang ambe!<sup>2</sup>(=ambil)!*  
 money DEF give people take  
 ‘The money was taken (i.e. stolen) by someone!’
- (ii) *Duit ’tu, bagi orang ambe!<sup>2</sup>(=ambil)!*  
 money that give people take  
 ‘That money, let someone have it!’

Note that there is also a more prominent pause (indicated by a comma) in the causative construction in (14b’:ii) above, compared to the passive counterpart in (14b’:i). This pause indicates that the theme *duit ’tu* (‘that money’) is more loosely associated with the rest of the sentence, functioning more as a topic NP. It is thus possible to construe of an implicit causer preceding the verb *bagi* (‘let’) in the main clause. For example, we can obtain the reading: ‘That money, (we/you) (just) let someone have it!’ In the passive *bagi* construction, on the other hand, the theme *duit ’tu* (‘that money’) is much more tightly

<sup>8</sup> (14b) would be unacceptable, or far less acceptable, without the adverbial *habis* ‘completely’.

integrated into the sentence, appearing in subject position, and conveying a strong sense of affectedness as a result of the action expressed by the verb.

It is interesting to note that while passive uses of ‘give’ morphemes are attested in many Chinese dialects and some of the Tai and Austroasiatic languages, as well as to some degree in colloquial Malay as it is spoken in parts of West Malaysia, the passive use of the ‘give’ morpheme does not show up in Thai, Khmer and Vietnamese.<sup>9</sup> This is significant because the ‘give’ morpheme in these languages is used to express a variety of functions, including the causative-permissive (see Table 2 for some examples). In terms of a causative > passive development, we thus see the following grammaticization path for these languages:

lexical ‘give’ > permissive-causative ‘give’ > \* passive ‘give’

The absence of passive uses of the ‘give’ morpheme in these languages permit us to examine the effects of language-specific constraints on the ‘give’ constructions of areally contiguous languages in East and Southeast Asia. In a recent crosslinguistic comparison of Malay, Thai and Chinese ‘give’ constructions, Yap and Iwasaki (1998) highlighted how the ‘give’ morpheme *hây* in Thai is semantically more restricted in the range of causer and causee arguments that it can take. More specifically, in a causative construction, *hây* is restricted to a volitional causer and a volitional causee; hence it is strongly associated with an agentive subject. This then prevents *hây* from developing into an agent marker to convey passive meaning. That is, since *hây* does not accept non-volitional (and thus adversely affected patient) subjects, an adversative passive interpretation cannot emerge. The contrast in (17a) and (17b) below highlight this volitional causer (i.e. agentive subject) constraint on causative *hây* constructions which blocks the development of passive uses of *hây*.

**Table 2:** *Absence of passive ‘give’ constructions in Thai, Khmer, and Vietnamese*

<u>Lexical GIVE</u>	<u>Permissive-causative GIVE</u>	<u>Passive GIVE</u>
<b>Thai</b>		
<i>kháw hây nɔn chán</i> 3SG GIVE money 1SG ‘S/he gave me money.’	<i>mêe hây lɔuk pay duu naɲ</i> mother GIVE child go watch movie ‘Mother let her child go and see a movie.’ (Newman 1996:189)	NONE
<b>Khmer</b>		

<sup>9</sup> Ruetaivan Kessakul (personal communication Aug 31, 1998), however, provides the following sentence as an example of a passive use of *hây* ‘give’ in Thai.

*chán mây yàak hây kháw duu thùuk*

I NEG want give him look down

‘I don’t want to let him insult (me).’

‘I don’t want to be insulted by him.’

Note that the above sentence also shows ambiguity between a causative and passive interpretation. It is possible that the causative > passive development is very restricted in Thai. Further work is needed to examine the extent of this development.

<i>koat baan aoy luy khñom</i> 3SG PAST GIVE money me ‘He gave me money.’	<i>kom aoy koat dyŋ ey</i> NEG GIVE 3SG know PRT ‘Don’t let him know.’	NONE
<b>Vietnamese</b>		
<i>Ông ấy va cho con gái chiếc xe</i> HON that just GIVE daughter CL car ‘He just gave his daughter a car.’ (Matisoff 1991:429)	<i>Ông ấy không cho tôi thôi</i> HON that NEG GIVE 1SG resign ‘He wouldn’t let me resign.’ (Matisoff 1991: 429)	NONE

(17) Thai

- a. *dèk khon níi hây dèk khon hùn yǐk tua kháw*  
child CL this LET children CL other pinch body her/him  
‘The child let the other children pinch her/him.’ (volitional causer)
- b. *dèk khon níi hây dèk khon hùn yǐk*  
child CL this LET children CL other pinch  
‘The child let the other children pinch (someone).’ (volitional causer)  
\* ‘The child was pinched by the other children.’ (non-volitional causer)

(17a) and (17b) also illustrate that reflexive-causative uses of *hây* require that the subject be a volitional (i.e. intentional) causer. This also accounts for the absence of (reflexive-)passive uses of *hây*.

The picture we get is that in Thai, *hây* is not generally used to convey reflexive meaning. This, however, would be perfectly consistent with what we know about the semantic constraint on *hây*, namely, that the subject associated with the morpheme *hây* is required to rank high in volitionality and agentivity. Reflexive actions involve a situation in which an agent performs an action that affects (or would affect) the agent itself; consequently, from a semantic perspective, the agentive argument is at the same time the affected patient. This means that the agent in a reflexive construction is not fully agentive (i.e. not a prototypical agent), and particularly in adversative contexts, where the subject acquires a strong “affected patient” role and hence invites a passive interpretation, morphemes other than *hây* are recruited instead, among these being *thiuk* ‘(be) hit, come in contact with’ and *doon* ‘hit forcefully’, with (*dây*) *ráp* ‘(get) receive’ being used for passive constructions with felicitous interpretations. We see then how the semantic constraints on *hây* block its emergence as a (reflexive-) passive morpheme.

A similar semantic constraint appears to account for the absence of the causative > passive development of ‘give’ morphemes in Khmer and Vietnamese, though the extent of the constraint for each language remains to be more closely examined. More detailed analysis of the ‘give’ constructions of individual languages will be necessary to help us identify the range of arguments the ‘give’ morpheme in a given language can take, as well as to identify other possible factors that may contribute to the grammaticization patterns of ‘give’ constructions within the language.

### 3 Conclusion

In this paper we have seen that a number of languages employ the same morpheme to convey both causative and passive meaning. In some of these languages (e.g. Manchu-Tungusic, Chinese, Malay), the common morpheme is derived from a verb meaning 'give'. Evidence from these languages suggests that passive meaning could evolve from permissive-causative 'give' constructions via the reflexive context. With examples from languages such as Thai, which show many other similar uses of the 'give' morpheme *and yet lack passive uses of 'give'*, we were also able to identify some language-specific constraints that restrict the further grammaticization of causative 'give' constructions into (reflexive-) passive contexts. A closer examination of other East and Southeast Asian languages will permit us to see more clearly the extent of the causative-passive relationship (or lack thereof) in the 'give' constructions in these areally contiguous languages, and to further ascertain if, and to what extent, the causative > passive development of 'give' morphemes is more than just an isolated phenomenon.

Another interesting area for further investigation is a broader typological comparison of languages that use morphological 'give' constructions and those that use periphrastic 'give' constructions. In this paper, we have discussed some Manchu-Tungusic languages as examples of the former, and some Chinese dialects as well as Malay and Thai as examples of the latter. For future research, it would be very useful to investigate the causative > passive development (along with other grammaticization patterns) of 'give' constructions in many more languages.

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### Abbreviations

ACC	Accusative	NOM	Nominative
ASP	Aspect marker	NON-FUT	Non-future tense
CAUS	Causative	PASS	Passive marker
CL	Classifier	PAST	Past tense
DAT	Dative	PL	Plural
DECL	Declarative	SFP	Sentence-final particle
DEF	Definiteness marker	SG	Singular

NEG                      Negation morpheme

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