

## 5 The Ainu Passive Construction

**Summary** 5.1 Background Information and Observation. – 5.2 Research. – 5.3 Analysis and Description.

### 5.1 Background Information and Observation

Among the uses of the HA fourth person Tamura (2000, 71-2) discusses that of cross-referencing the starting point of the action in a passive construction. A sentence like (1) is regarded as a passive sentence by virtue of the fact that the actual performer of the event is expressed in a noun phrase with *’orowa*, an oblique. The performer of the action is referenced to by the fourth person prefix on the verb. This is different from the impersonal construction (2) where the indefinite agent is still marked via the fourth person on the verb but it is not overtly expressed.

- (1) *Hapo-’oro-wa a-en-koyki.*  
mother-place-from 4S-1SO-scold  
‘I was scolded by mother’ (Tamura 2000, 72)
- (2) *Neno e-i-ki yak a-e-koyki na.*  
like.this 2SS-AP-do if.FUT IP-2SO-scold FP  
‘If you do that, someone will scold you [= you will be scolded].’ (Tamura 2000, 71)

In the active version of sentences like (1) the agent is no longer marked by *’orowa* and it is cross-referenced to via third person null agreement on the verb.

- (3) *Hapo en-koyki.*  
 mother ISO-3SS/scold.  
 'Mother scolds me.'

Murasaki (1979), on the other hand, does not report any analogous passive construction in SA. In this variety of the language only the impersonal construction is reported, where the indefinite agent is cross-referenced to via the third person plural suffix *-hci* (4). This construction may be read as passive depending on context.

- (4) *Taa cise-'oh-ta 'i-'ama-hci 'anah pirika kusune ya.*  
 that house-place-in 4O-put-3PS if 3SS/be.good INTN FP  
 'It would be good if someone left us at that house [= if we were left at that house]' (Murasaki 1979, 51)

If the third person agent is overtly expressed the construction is no longer impersonal and the passive reading is cancelled.

→ Consider this additional information...

We can trace four important stages in the development of the HA passive (Bugaeva 2011), that resulted in the construction attested in the textual sources:

- It all started in the existential construction with the verb *'an* 'exist' that takes a noun as its sole argument.
- (Zero-)nominalisation of an intransitive verb happens and this nominalised verb functions as the sole argument of *'an* 'exist'. The verb *'an* begins to be regarded as a suffix or, better yet, a post-clitic. The general situation described by this construction soon develops an impersonal reading.
- The impersonal construction with an intransitive verb is transferred also to transitive verbs. At this stage we have the switch from the suffix *-'an* to the prefix *'an-*, then *'a-* in Southern Hokkaidō Ainu dialects, due to the preference of the Ainu language to have prefixes instead of suffixes. The HA *'a-* is therefore clearly a cognate of the SA *'an-*.
- Finally, the impersonal construction with a transitive verb, by virtue of its essentially passive semantics, allows for actant expression with an oblique phrase marked with *'orowa*.

→ Dataset 1 - Constituent structure

Consider the following sentences (\* marks ungrammatical examples, ? marks dubious examples). What is the typological order of constit-

uents in the passive construction? What additions and amendments can you make to the information you started from? What syntactic status do the constituents in the construction have (argument/oblique)? Justify your answer. Is the passive construction of HA and SA analytic or synthetic? Motivate your answer. What differences do you notice between HA and SA?

**Set 1.1** (Hokkaidō Ainu)

1. *Toan kurorowa aenkik.*  
'I was hit by that man.'
2. *Rera ani cikuni akekke.*  
'The tree was broken by the wind.' (Bugaeva 2004, 41)
3. \**Kamuy ene aiyaynure.*  
'I was taken in such consideration by a god.'
4. *Suci matkaci omap.*  
'Her grandmother loves the girl.'
5. *Toan nispaorowa taan kur akusa a ruwe?*  
'Has this man been taken across [the river] by that noble man?'  
(Satō 1995 in Bugaeva 2011, 535)
6. *Nispa seta kik.*  
'A noble man hits a dog.'
7. \**Toan orowa kur aenkik.*  
'I was hit by that man.'
8. *Seta kuipere.*  
'I let the dog eat.'
9. \**Toan kurorowa akukik.*  
'I was hit by that man.'
10. *Aiipere katu ka isam.*  
'There was no sign [that] someone [would] let me eat [= I would be given food].'  
(Tamura 1985, 2)
11. \**Toan nispaorowa taan kur kusa a ruwe?*  
'Has this man been taken across [the river] by that noble man?'
12. *Kamuyorwa ene aiyaynure.*  
'I was taken in such consideration by a god.' (Tamura 1985, 46)
13. *Matkaci suciorowa aomap.*  
'The girl is loved by her grandmother.' (Bugaeva 2004, 42)

## Set 1.2 (Sakhalin Ainu)

1. *'Ohkayo [...]'iso'ohta kupapa.*  
'The young boy was bitten by a bear.' (Dal Corso 2021)
2. [*'Okhaya]'onahcin'orowa'ikoro'ankohohpahci.*  
'[The young boys] were given short swords by their father.' (Dal Corso 2021)
3. \**Neya'orowa'ohacisuye'annospa.*  
'He was chased by that empty-house-devil.'
4. *Hemata ka kamuy'orowa'annukareraye.*  
'They were stared at by some kind of animals.' (Dal Corso 2021)
5. \**Seta'iso'ankupapa.*  
'The dog was bitten by a bear.'
6. *'Ona'ohkayo'emus kohohpa.*  
'The father gave the young boys swords.'
7. *Neya'ohacisuyeorowa'annospa.*  
'He was chased by that empty-house-devil.' (Pilsudski 1912, 100)
8. *'Ekasi'orowa'aneokoytahkara.*  
'I was told by grandfather.' (Dal Corso 2021)
9. *Kamuyorowa mah kayki'anekontehci.*  
'You were given even a wife by the gods.' (Pilsudski 1912, 23)
10. ? *'Onahahcin'orowa'okhaya'ikoro'ankohohpahci.*  
'The young boys were given short swords by their father.'
11. \**'Ekasi'orowa'an'eneokoytahkara.*  
'I was told by grandfather.'
12. *Pon tohkori tuh'enkontehci.*  
'They gave me two small cups.' (Dal Corso 2021)
13. \**Neya'ohacisuyeorowa nospa.*  
'He was chased by that empty-house-devil.'

## 5.2 Research

Now look at this other dataset and also read the examples from other languages given after it, which you will need for the third and last activity of this lesson.

## → Dataset 2 – Syntactic tests

Consider the following clauses paying particular attention to ungrammatical examples (marked with \*). Only HA examples are provided for this dataset. The passive construction is here used in combination with three other constructions – what are they and how are they expressed morphosyntactically? Why do you think ungrammaticality arises?

## Set 2 (Hokkaidō Ainu)

1. *Tane nupuri osmak cup rari.*  
'Eventually the sun set behind the mountain.' (UK 1986, line 125)
2. *Nea wenkur okkaypo [...] kor wa okay pe opitta rurapa.*  
'That poor young man [...] carried all the things he possessed.' (Tamura 1985, 42)
3. \**Nispa wen kamuyutarorowa siosmakwa akik.*  
'The noble man was hit from (his own) behind by evil gods. (Satō 1995, 9)
4. *Pon menoko utar ka uwehopunpa wa horippa.*  
'Even the young women stood up together and danced.' (Tamura 1985, 72)
5. *Seta kam e hi eki rusuy.*  
'You want the the dog to eat the meat.'
6. *Huciorowa aenomap hi kuki rusuy.*  
'I want to be loved by grandmother.' (Satō 2008, 206)
7. *Ne menokopo kor rusuy kuni ye.*  
'He said that he wanted to have that young girl.' (Tamura 1985, 58)
8. *Suma rura.*  
'He carried back a stone.'
9. *Henke utar inawneni tuye wa...*  
'The elders cut the *inaw* wood and...'
10. *Nispa wen kamuyutarorowa osmakwa akik.*  
'The noble man was hit from (his own) behind by evil gods. (Satō 1995, 9)
11. *Unu patek akor.*  
'I only had a mother.' (Tamura 1984, 36)
12. \**Huciorowa aenomap rusuy.*  
'I want to be loved by grandmother.'
13. *Siosmakun kuinkar.*  
'I looked behind myself.' (Satō 1995, 9)
14. *Horipian kor...*  
'While I danced...'. (IH 1985, line 287)
15. *Eper [...] nimakihi ka [...] amihi ka nispaorowa atuypa.*  
'The bear's nails and teeth were cut off by the noble man.' (adapted from Bugaeva 2011, 536)

## Examples from Other Languages...

### Japanese (Japonic, Japan)

*Sensei-ga gakusei-o yob-u. Gakusei-ga sensei-ni yob-a-rer-u.*  
 teacher-NOM student-ACC call.NPST student-NOM teacher-by call-INFL-PASS-NPST  
 ‘The teacher calls the student.’ ‘The student is called by the teacher.’

The Japanese passive is a synthetic construction since passive voice is expressed on the verb via the suffix *-(ra)rer*. In the (direct) passive construction what was the object in the active sentence is **promoted to subject** and it gets assigned subject morphology (i.e. the NOM postposition *-ga*), while the subject of the active sentence is **demoted to an oblique role** and marked by *-ni*. The passivised verb is now grammatically **intransitive**. These characteristics make the Japanese *-(ra)rer* construction a prototypical passive.

### Nivkh (Isolate, Russia)

(data from Nedjalkov, Otaina 2012, 255)

*ətək p’su-ɖ.*  
 father REF-wash-IND  
 ‘Father washes himself.’

*ətək p’ōla-du-ɖ.*  
 father REF-child-wash-IND  
 ‘Father washes his own son.’

*umgu ŋivx-ŋřə-r p’ōla-du-ɖ.*  
 woman man-see-CONV.NAR.3SG REF-child-wash-IND  
 ‘The woman sees the man and washes \*his / her own son.’ (constructed example)

*ətək ōla-aχ p’su-gu-ɖ.*  
 father child-DAT/ACC REF-wash-CAUS-IND  
 ‘Father has his son wash him(= father) / himself(= son).’

The personal/possessive reflexive pronoun  $p^{\prime}/p^{\prime}i$  in Nivkh can only refer to the subject. This is the rule of **reflexive binding** in Nivkh and in the majority of languages. In the third sentence given here *umgu* ‘woman’ is the subject of both coordinate clauses (implied for the verb ‘wash’), while *ñivx* ‘man’ and *ōla* ‘child’ are objects respectively of the first and second clause. Although it could be contextually possible for the the child to be the man’s, this reading of the sentence is ruled out by the use of the possessive reflexive  $p^{\prime}$ - which can only bind the subject of the sentence (i.e. the woman). In order to express the meaning ‘his (= the man’s) son’ a third person possessive pronoun would be needed. The last sentence shows a causative construction. Causativisation results in the promotion of an originally (more) peripheral argument to a (more) core argument. Here what is marked as the indirect object (with the suffix  $-a\chi$ ) of the causative verb ‘make wash’ is actually the logical subject of the non-causative verb ‘wash’. That is, despite its morphological marking the noun *ōla* also functions as a subject in this case. Therefore reflexive binding becomes ambiguous and the double reading of the reflexive pronoun is possible.

### Kalaallisut (Inuit, Greenland)

(data from and adapted from Bjørnum 2012, 86-8)

*Qimmi-a*                      *sinip-poa*.  
 dog-POSS.ABS.3SG      sleep-3SG  
 ‘His dog sleeps.’

*Qimmi-ata*                    *kiiva-anga*.  
 dog-POSS.ERG.3SG      bit-3SG>1SG  
 ‘His dog bit me.’

*Piita-p*      *qimmi-a*                      *nerukkar-paa*.  
 Peter-ERG    dog-POSS.ABS.3SG      fed-3SG>3SG  
 ‘Peter fed his (= someone else’s) dog.’

Kalaallisut (West Greenlandic) has morphological **ergative-absolutive alignment**. Besides being evident in the marking of verbal arguments, the ergative-absolutive alignment also concerns possession that is expressed with suffixes on the possessed noun. These suffixes agree in number and person with the possessor and they are also marked for ergative or absolutive case according to the grammatical function covered by the possessee.

Gude (Chadic, Nigeria and Cameroon)

(data from Hoskison 1983, 107)

<i>Kə</i>	<i>digə</i>	<i>ənji</i>	<i>tə</i>	<i>ci.</i>
COMP	beat.p	people	DEF	he

‘He was beaten up / Someone beat him up.’

Paamese (Oceanic, Vanuatu)

(data from Crowley 1982, 180)

(* <i>kaile</i> )	<i>a-munumunu</i>	<i>Vauleli.</i>
*they	3PL.REAL-drink	Vauleli

‘There is drinking going on at Vauleli.’

Impersonal constructions are defined as such due to the **lack of reference** to a specific agent. In some languages like Gude a generic noun or pronoun can be used to refer to an **unspecified agent** (e.g. *ənji* ‘(some) people’) and it functions as the subject of the active sentence, which may also have a passive reading. In other languages like Paamese, the expression of the agent (even an unspecified one) via a separate noun phrase is not possible and impersonality is solely expressed by verbal morphology (in Paamese, third person agreement).

**5.3 Analysis and Description**

With the data at hand do you think Ainu has a passive construction? Why/why not? Justify your answer in no less than 400 words making reference to the examples given in the sections above. If you would not call the construction under investigation ‘passive’, how else would you call it? Why?