



Relational Grammar of Passive in Japanese



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Abstract

This article examines the Japanese passives through the study of relational grammar. Japanese passive construction could be divided into three types, namely Chokusetsu Ukemi 'direct passive', Mochinushi no Ukemi 'possessive passive', and Daisansha no Ukemi 'third person passive'. An analysis of the passive grammatical relation based on the Relational Grammar (RG) theory indicates a change of grammatical relation has the same revaluation on the type of Chokusetsu Ukemi, the direct object of active construction becomes the subject of the passive and the subject of active construction becomes chomeur. In Japanese, Mochinushi no Ukemi, and Daisansha no Ukemi can be handled by the RG with its own constraints.

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1. Introduction

A passive sentence is a sentence construction in which the subject becomes the target of an actor goal of the sentence. In Japanese, there are terms of direct and indirect passive sentences. The form of Japanese passive, as far as I know, is not as complicated as other languages. The Japanese grammarians, Iori (2001), Tsujimura (1996), and Nitta (1997) consider passive on the syntactic category and divide it into two Japanese passive sentence structure, the structure of the 'direct passive' sentence (chosetsu ukemi) and 'indirect passive sentence structure '(kansetsu ukemi).

Relational Grammar theory is known as a grammatical relation (grammatical function), such as subject, direct object, indirect object, and oblique. Oblique relations are limited in terms of semantic because its presence is usually marked by prepositions or postpositions. Data were collected from newspapers, novels, textbooks, and Japanese journals. This article has already been published in the national journal "Jurnal Ilmiah SOSHUM" issued by the State Polytechnic of Bali.

The core issue to be addressed in this study is how the relational grammar of the Japanese passive?

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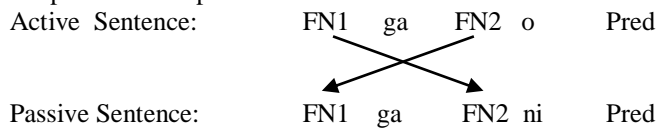
2. Research Method

2.1 The construction of Japanese passive sentences

Japanese linguists [Tsujimura \(1996\)](#), [Nitta, \(1997\)](#) and [Iori, et al \(2001\)](#) categorize passive syntactically into two structures, namely *chokusetsu ukemi* 'direct passive sentence' and *kansetsu ukemi* 'indirect passive sentence'. [Soichi Iwasaki \(1999\)](#), indicates that Japanese passive sentences can be formed by transitive and intransitive verbs.

2.2 Chokusetsu Ukemi construction (direct passive sentences)

[Iori \(2000\)](#) explains the meaning of *chokusetsu ukemi* 'direct passive sentence' as passive sentences that are formed by way of transposing the objects on the active sentence to become the subject in the passive sentence filler and filler of subject of the active sentence becomes an agent on passive. The formation of *chokusetsu ukemi* 'direct passive' in Japanese is shown below.



The formation stage of *chokusetsu ukemi* construction is as follows:

- a) interchange the filler object (FN2) in the active sentence into the subject position (FN1) in the passive voice:
- b) add agent marker *ni* behind FN2 that has been the subject filler in the active sentence:
- c) change the active verb to passive verb by adding a prefix - (*r*) *areru*.

Examples:

(2-1) *Taroo ga jiroo o nagutta*(active)

Name NOM name Ak hit –past

‘**Taroo hit Jiroo**’

(2-1a) *Jiroo ga Taroo ni nagur-are-ta* (passive)

Name NOM name DAT hit – past passive

‘**Jiroo was hit by Taroo**’

The filler of direct object *Jiroo* is marked by *o* is moved into the subject in the passive voice, which is marked with *ga*. The Subject *Taroo* of the active sentence appears in the passive voice with an agent marker *ni* 'by' filling the position of complement.

2.3 Kansetsu Ukemi Construction (Indirect Passive Sentences)

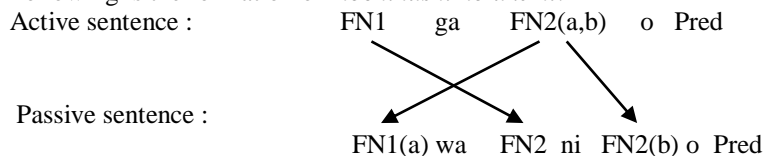
[Iori \(2001\)](#) describes that in the *kansetsu ukemi* 'indirect passive sentence' there is a mismatch between the active sentence with a passive, even if traced from the active sentence there are a different number of argument elements forming an active sentence with a passive sentence.

The formation of indirect passive sentences are of two kinds, namely:

- a) *Mochinushi no ukemi* ‘possessive passive sentences’ and
- b) *Daisansha no ukemi* ‘third person passive sentences’

2.4 Mochinushi no ukemi Construction (Possessive Passive Sentence)

Following is the formation of *mochinushi no ukemi*:



Formation stages of *mochinushi no ukemi* construction are as follows:

- a) interchange the filler of object (FN2 (a) in the active sentence to the position of subject filler (FN1 (a), while the position of FN2 (b) remains:
- b) add the agent marker *ni* in front of FN2 that has been the filler of subject in the active sentence
- c) change the active verb into a passive verb by adding a prefix - (*r*) *areru*.

Examples:

(2-2) *Doroboo ga chichi no okane o nusunda*(active)
 Thief NOM father GEN money Ak steal- past
 ‘The thief stole father’s money’

(2-2a) *Chichi wa doroboo ni okane o nusum-are-ta*(passive)
 Father TOP thief DAT money AK steal-past passive
 ‘Father’s money was stolen by the thief’

The filler of direct object *chichi Okane no* marked *byo* in the active sentence is moved to the position of the subject filler, but in this case, there is a separation in the *chichino* and *okaneo*. The one moved into the passive subject is *chichi* and particles *no* turning into *wa* (subject marker), while *okaneo* is not moved. The Subject *doroboo* in the active sentence turns into the filler complement marked with agent marker *ni* 'by'

The formation of passive voice *mochinushi no ukemi* above has its own characteristics, which is a separation of direct object filler consisting of two significant lexicons with possessive meaning.

Consider the following other examples:

(2-3) *Buchoo ga watashi no shigoto o homemashita*(active)
 Head of division NOM I GEN work Ak praise – past
 ‘Head of division praised my work’

(2-3a) **Watashi no shigoto wa buchoo ni home-rare-ta*(passive)
 I GEN work TOP head of division DAT praise-past passive
 ‘My work was praised by the head of division’

(2-3b) *Watashi wa buchoo ni shigoto o home-rare-mashita*(passive)
 I TOP head of division DAT work Ak praise – past passive
 ‘My work was praised by the head of division’

The active sentence (2-3) when converted into the passive voice, only the passive voice (2-3b) is acceptable, whereas the passive sentence (2-3a) is not acceptable, the reason is that the passive voice (2-3a) reveals events that arise from the position of objects *shigoto* 'work', whereas the passive sentence (2-3b) reveals the event that appears on *shigoto* 'work' from the position of *watashi* 'I'. In this case, the passive sentence construction (2-3b) in Japanese is more acceptable. Iori (2001:118) explains that the construction of *mochinushino ukemi* in its formation there are similarities with the construction of *okansetsu ukemi* 'indirect passive', but in nature has in common with the construction *chokusetsu ukemi* 'direct passive'.

2.5 *Daisansha no ukemi* Construction (third-person passive sentences)

The formation of *daisanshano ukemi* sentence is shown below:

Active Sentence: FN1 ga Pred



Passive sentence: (X wa) FN2 ni Pred

The formation stages of *daisansha no ukemi* construction are as follows:

- a) Interchange FN1 the subject filler in an active sentence into the position of FN2 as the filler of complement having the role as an agent;
- b) Add an agent marker *ni* in front of FN2 that has been the filler of subject of the active sentence;
- c) Change the active verb into a passive verb by adding a prefix - (*r*) *areru*.
- d) Add an extra argument in the passive voice

Examples :

(2-4) *Kodomo ga shinda* (**active**)
 Child NOM die-past
 ‘The child died’

(2-4a) *Taroo (X)wa kodomo ni shin-are-ta* (**passive**)
 Name TOP child DAT bereave-past passive
 ‘Taroo (sad) was bereaved by his child’

The sentences (2-4) consist of *kodomo ga* 'child' as a subject and *shinda* 'die' (past intransitive verb) as a predicate. The subject of the passive voice (2-4a) is Taroo and the extra argument of its active sentence does not appear. Indirect passive sentence of *daisansha ukemi* type shows no difference in the number of elements of the argument, namely in the active sentence there is one argument, but in the passive voice, the argument becomes two. What is interesting about the type of *daisansha no ukemi* sentence is the verb forming passive not only from a transitive verb, but can also be formed from an intransitive verb.

From the explanation of *chokusetsu ukemi* 'direct passive' and *kansetsu ukemi* 'indirect passive' the Japanese passive construction can be summarized as below:

Table 1
 Construction of Japanese Direct and Indirect Passives

ACTIVE	A-ga/wa		P-o(-ni)	Verb-active
DIRECT PASSIVE	P-ga/wa	A-ni		Verb-passive
INDIRECT PASSIVE	X-ga/wa	A-ni	P-o	Verb-passive

Explanation: A = Agent, P = Patient, X = Extra argument

[Shoichi Iwasaki \(1999:130\)](#)

3. Results and Analysis

3.1 Grammatical relation of Japanese passive construction

To answer how is the grammatical relation of Japanese passive sentence, a little review about the passive version proposed by Relational Grammar (TRG) needs to be done, as a leading theory to analyze the grammatical relation of Japanese passive voice in this paper. RG launched the passive version through grammatical relation with the criteria:

- a) The object directly becomes the subject, (2) active Subject becomes *chomeur* (subject lose grammatical relation to the verb), [Blake \(1990\)](#). Changes of relation in the passivation process are exciting to be discussed to get a generalization.

3.2 Constituent order

The main principle underlying relational theory (RT) is the grammatical relations (such as 'subject', 'object'), therefore, the function of the subject and the object becomes the main point in the study of grammatical relations. Syntactic function in the sentence includes the subject, predicate, object, complement, and an adverbial, but in a sentence it is not always that the fifth syntactic functions are filled, at least there should be a filler constituent of subject and predicate. Associated with the filler constituents of syntactic function, in this section, the general pattern of the word order of constituents of Japanese will be described. As has been explained in advance, Japanese has word order of S-O-P. The explanation of this constituent sequence pattern becomes an introduction to the understanding of the relation changes.

Japanese has a change of word order of the same rank (J.Poser, ed, 1986: 1). For example, the canonical sentence by order of Subject-Object-Predicate can be converted into Object- Subject - Predicate. Consider the examples below:

(3-1) *Ken ga Naomi o ai shite iru.*
 Name NOM name Ak love TE ASP
 ‘Ken loves Naomi’

- (3-1a) *Naomi o Ken ga ai shite iru.*
 Name Act name NOM cinta TE ASP
‘Ken loves Naomi’

Sentence (3-1) with an order of subject-object - predicate if converted into a sentence (3-1a) with the order of object - subject-predicate remains acceptable. Although the word order of the filler of subject and object is inverted, but still grammatical and does not change the meaning of the same sentence. Therefore, in Japanese, the more complete the fillers of syntactical functions, such as complement, adverbial, the more varied derivative sentence can be formed.

Consider the following example:

- (3-2) *Ken ga Naomi ni Tomi o shokai shita*
 Name NOM name DAT name Ak introduce- past
‘Ken introduced Tomio to Naomi’
- (3-2a) *Ken ga Tomi o Naomi ni shokai shita*
 Name NOM name Ak name DAT introduce- past
‘Ken introduced Tomio to Naomi’
- (3-2b) *Naomi ni ken ga Tomi o shokai shita*
 Name NOM name Ak name DAT introduce- past
‘Ken introduced Tomi to Naomi’
- (3-2c) *Naomi ni Tomi o Ken ga shokai shita*
 Name NOM name Ak name DAT introduce- past
‘Ken introduced Tomio to Naomi’
- (3-2d) *Tomi o Naomi ni Ken ga shokai shita*
 Name NOM name Ak name DAT introduce- past
‘Ken introduced Tomio to Naomi’

Sentence (3-2) up to the sentence (3-2c) above are acceptable in Japanese and express the same meaning, whereas the orders are removable, basic sentence (3-2) has the order of S-Pel-OP, sentence (3-2a) has the order of SO-Pel-P, sentence (3-2b) Pel-SOP, sentence (3-2c) Pel-OSP, and sentence (3-2d) O-Pel-SP. The change of a constituent order in the above Japanese sentences does not change the meaning of the sentence. All sentences of (3-2) to (3-2d) have the meaning of *Ken Tomi introduced to Naomi*

So the order for Japanese constituents have low resilience, the evidence in the sentence is that the fillers constituent can be interchanged with each other. Each constituent has a function marker, namely subject (topic) marker *wa / ga*, object marker *o*, adverbial marker *ni*, complete marker *to*, so that every constituent has its own identity respectively, and consequently wherever the location of the constituents or in other words even if the order is inverted, it remains recognizable. In addition to the reason that Japanese has a marker for each constituent, Japanese is also known as the no configurational language, meaning there is no hierarchy between subject and object. Thus, both the subject and object have the same relationship to the predicate, no element controls and is controlled.

3.3 Grammatical Relation Changes in the Construction of Japanese Passive Sentence

Change of relation in the passive voice can occur through revaluation on both core relations, namely the advancement and demotion. This relation can be described through a multilevel, including initial level and final level. The initial level is an active sentence and the final level is a passive sentence. Determination of the semantic role is done at the initial level and grammatical relation at the final level.

Followings are an explanation about the changes of grammatical relation contained in Japanese passive sentence construction. Based on the previous description there are three types of Japanese passive sentence construction, namely 1) *Chokusetsu Ukemi* (direct passive sentence), 2) *Mochinushi no Ukemi* (the possessive passive sentence), and 3) *Daisansha no Ukemi* (third-person passive)

3.4 Chokusetsu Ukemi (Direct Passive Sentence)

Consider the following data:

(3-3) *Ani ga ootoo o shikaru.* (active)

Elder brother NOM little brother Ak angry

‘The elder brother is mad at the little brother’.

(3-3a) *Ootoo ga Ani ni shik-are-ru* (passive)

little brother’NOM **elder brother** DAT angry– passive

‘the little brother was scolded by the elder brother’.

(3-4) *Sentachoo ga gakusei ni shuuryoshoo o watasu.* (active)

Head of centre NOM student DAT certificate Ak submit

‘The head of centre submit the certificate to the students’

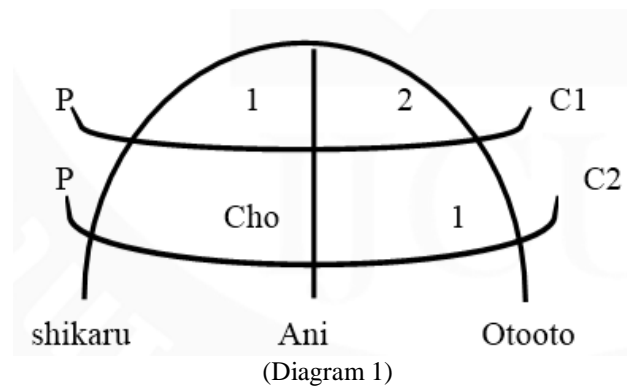
(3-4a) *Shuuryoshoo ga sentachoo kara gakusai ni watas-are-ru*(passive)

Graduation certificate NOM center ABL student DAT submit – passive

‘Graduation certificate is submitted by the center head to the students’

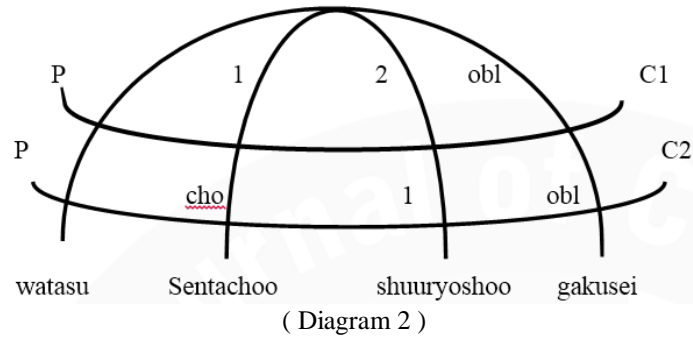
Changes in relation to the sentence (3-3a) and (3-4a) in the relation 1 (subject) *ani* in (3-3) and *Sentachoo* in (3-4) are both turned into *chomeur* in the passive construction (3-3a) and (3-4a). Relation 2 (object) *otooto* in (3-3) and *genjimonogatari* in (3-4) turned into one sentence relation of (3-3a) and (3-4a). The verb *shikaru* in (3-3) and *watasu* in (3-4) bear P relation.

Consider the following diagram 1



In diagram 1, the relation *ani* in level 1 (C2) motivated chomagne law (MCL) undergoes revaluation of relation 1 *ani* at level 1 (C1) into CHO at level 2 (C2). The relational law governing this passivation process other than the MCL is also SUL law and Final 1 Law, the law that governs the core relation of and a law that governs and necessitates the final level at least to have subject

For sentenced data of (3-4) and (3-4a), the representation can be seen in diagram 2, as well as changes in the grammatical relation with the data (3-3) and (3-3a).



3.5 Mochinushi no Ukemi (Possessive Passive Sentence)

Consider the following data:

(3-5) *Buchoo ga watashi no shigoto o homemashita.* (active)

Head of division NOM I GEN work Ak praise- past
 ‘The head of division praised my work’

(3-5a) *Watashi wa bucho ni shigoto o home-rare-mashita.* (passive)

I TOP head of division DAT work Ak praise- passive- past
 ‘My work was praised by the head of division’

(3-6) *Haruko wa Taroo no tabako o sutta.* (active)

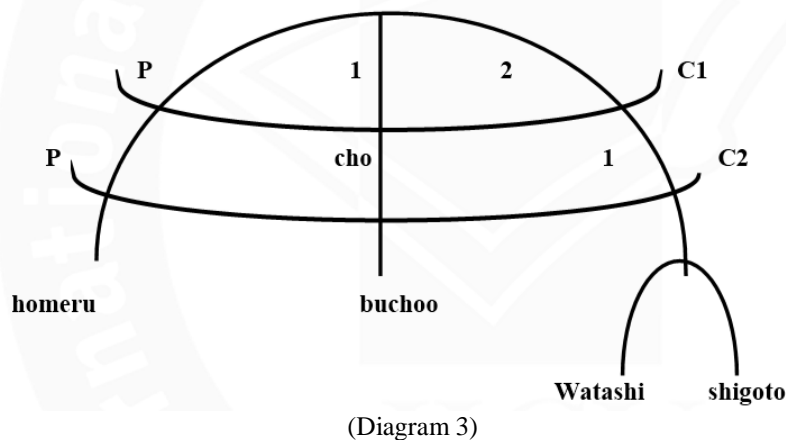
Name TOP name GEN cigarette Ak smoke- past
 ‘Haruko smoked cigarette Taroo’.

(3-6a) *Taroo wa Haruko ni tobako o suw-are-ta.* (passive)

Name TOP name DAT cigarette Ak smoke-passive- past
 ‘Taroo was smoked by diisap Haruko’

Relational change in the sentences (3-5a) and (3-6a) i.e the relation 1 (subject) *buchoo* in clause (3-5) and *Haruko* in (3-6), both turned into *chomeur* the passive construction (3-5a) and (3-6a). Relation 2 (object) *watashi no shigoto* changes into relations 1 (subject). Similarly, the relation 2 (object) *taroo no Tabako* in the passive voice (3-6a) turns into the relation 1 (subject). The verbs *homeru* and *suu* bear relation P.

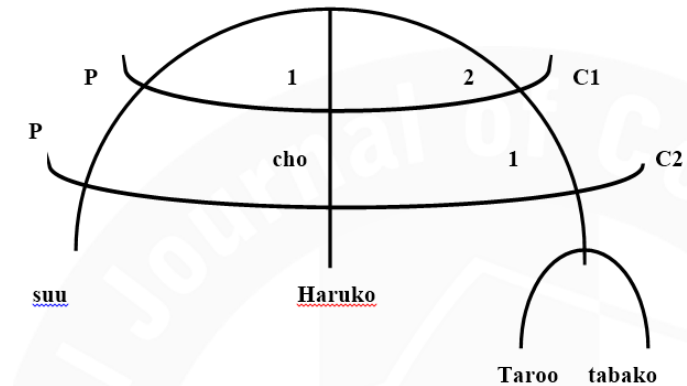
Consider the following diagram



In the third diagram, MCL law operates resulting relation 1 *buchoo* is demoted to the position of *chomeur* in level 2 (C2). In level 2 (C2) the relation 1 is occupied by *watashino shigoto* undergoing advancement from the relation

2. In the passive construction of *mochinushi no ukemi* (the possessive passive voice), structurally, the element that has a possessive meaning is separate, but semantically, a phrase that has possessive meaning is not separate. This is due to the fact that Japanese passive sentence of this type of structure *mochinushi no ukemi* requires separation between the possessor and possessed. In accordance with the opinion of Iori (2001) *mochinushi no ukemi* has properties like the direct passive voice (*chokusetsu ukemi*).

The representation of data (3-6) and (3-6a) can be seen in Diagram 4, as well as the changes of its the grammatical relation with the data (3-5) and (3-5A)



(Diagram 4)

3.6 *Daisansha no Ukemi* (Third Person Passive Sentence)

Consider the following data:

(3-7) *Ame ga futta.* (**Active**)

Rain NOM fall : past

'The rain fall '

(3-7a) *Boku wa ame ni furareta.* (**passive**)

I TOP rain DAT fall-passive Past

'I was caught in the rain

(3-8) *Kingyoo ga shinda.* (**active**)

Goldfish NOM die: Past

'The goldfish died'

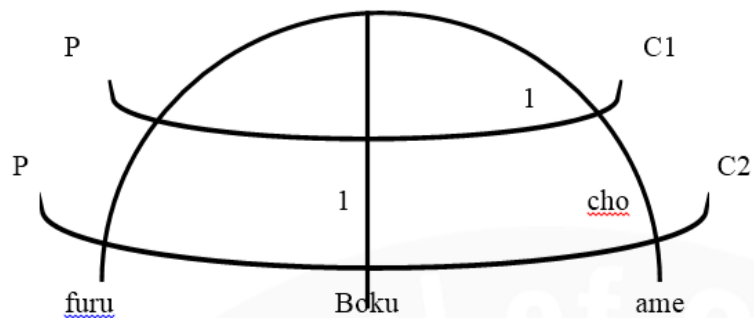
(3-8a) *Sono ko ga kingyoo ni shin-are-ta*(**passive**)

The boy NOM goldfish DAT-Passive-Past

'The boy was left today by his goldfish'

The changes of relation in (3-7a) and (3-8a) i.e the relation 1 (subject) *ame* in (3-7) and *kingyoo* in (3-8) are both turned into *chomeurin* in the passive construction (3-7a) and (3-8a). Relation 2 (object) in the active sentence construction is empty. While in level 2 (C2) the extra argument *boku* appears as a patient in (3-7a) and *sono ko* in (3-8a). The verbs *furu* and *shinu* bear relation P.

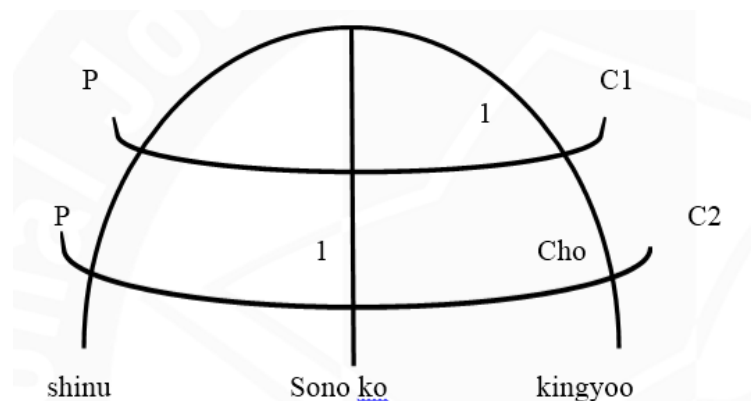
Note the diagram 5 as follows.



(Diagram 5)

In level 1 (C1) *ame* bears relation 1, while in level 2 (C2) is demoted to be *chomeur*. In level 2 (C2) an extra argument appears occupying the relation 1 (subject).

For data (3-8) and (3-8a), its representation can be seen in Diagram 6. Changes in the grammatical relation are as the same as data (3-7) and (3-7a).



(Diagram 6)

From the sixth diagrams above a conclusion can be made with the following scheme of passivation

[1] **Advancement**

2-1

Relation 2, namely *otooto*, *shuuryooo*, *watashino shigoto*, *taroo no tabako* (object) undergo advancement to the position 1 (subject)

PRO-1

Empty relation (active voice) shows additional arguments *boku*, *sono* undergoing advancement to occupy position 1 (subject)

[2] **Demotion**

1-cho

Relation 1, namely *ani*, *sentacoo*, *buchoo*, *haruko*, *ame*, and *kingyoo* are demoted to the position CHO

So, from the above analysis, it can be seen the changes of relation in the process of Japanese passivation, not all can be generalized to meet the criteria of universal passive for the types of passive sentences *mochinushi no ukemi* and *daisansha no ukemi* deviate from universal passive criteria, as described above.

4. Conclusion

From the above analysis of grammatical relations it can be concluded as follows:

- a) The construction of *chokusetsu ukemi* in Japanese passivation process shows an occurrence of advancement revaluation for the object (relation 2) to become the subject (relation 1) and the demotion of active subject (relation 1) into *chomeur*. Thus, the Japanese passive sentence *chokusetsu ukemi* meets the universal criteria.

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- b) The passivation process of passive construction of *mochinushi no ukemi* and *daisansha no ukemi*, meets the universal passive criteria endorsed by Relational Theory with the reasons that, the sentence *mochinushi no ukemi* undergoes separation between the possessor and possessed, and in *daisansha no ukemi* an extra argument appears.

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