

Processes that change grammatical relation

- Grammatical relations between a verb and its arguments can be changed via the processes of **promotion** and **demotion**.

Main topics

- Passive construction
- Antipassive construction
- Applicative construction
- Causative construction

Passive

Pat ate the apples.

Active

The apples were eaten (by Pat).

Passive

- The active sentence has a transitive verb, while the verb in the passive sentence has become intransitive.
- Subject is **demoted** to a *by*-phrase or deleted.
- Object is **promoted** to subject.
- The verb form is changed (auxiliary *be* + past participle).

Subject of a passive sentence

The apples were eaten (by Pat).

- Subject/verb agreement
- Pronominal case

- Why do we passivize?
 - Remove focus from the agent

Basic passive constructions

- Transitive → intransitive
- The core arguments of a transitive verb (subject and object) change in their grammatical relations.
 - Subject is demoted (oblique argument or deleted).
 - Object is promoted.
- Changes in the morphology of the verb to signal passivization

Changes in verb morphology

- Combinations of existing forms
- Morphological passive
 - The main verb has a specific passive form.

Classical Greek

Epauthe-n.

'I was stopped.'

Antipassive

- Occurs in ergative languages
- Similarities to passive
 - Transitive verb → intransitive
 - Promotion and demotion of NPs
 - Changes in verb form
- Differences
 - Ergative NP → Absolutive
 - Absolutive NP → Oblique or deleted
 - Focus removed from the original absolutive NP (object)

Antipassive

Greenlandic Eskimo

arna-p niqi-∅ niri-vaa
woman-ERG meat-ABS eat-3SG:3SG
'The woman (A) ate the meat (O).'

arna-∅ niqi-mik niri-**NNig**-puq
woman-ABS meat-with eat-ANTIP-3SG
'The woman (S) ate some of the meat.'

- Former O has a partitive reading.

Antipassive

Gjarra

cikse ja nikRa ka zaci kijksej ya nikra ka zakji
eat-IMPERF. the-(ANIM.) mouse-ERG. the-(INANIM.) cheese
'The mouse is eating the cheese.'

cikvis ja nik kijkvis ya nik
eat-ANTIPASS.-IMPERF. the mouse-(ABS.)
'The mouse is eating.'

cikvis ka zacie ja nik kijkvis ka zakji'ei ya nik
eat-ANTIPASS.-IMPERF. the cheese-GEN. the mouse-(ABS.)
'The mouse is eating the cheese.'

Antipassive

- Former object is in some way less affected by the action of the verb.
 - O in oblique case
 - Delete O

Passive and antipassive

- Create a new S argument
 - Passive: O → S
 - Antipassive: A → S
- S is a primary grammatical relation. It is unmarked formally and functionally.
- So, passive and antipassive create a primary NP.

Antipassive

- Ellipsis in co-ordination

Chrisi disturbed Lee and \emptyset i complained bitterly.
Chrisi woke up and \emptyset i complained bitterly.

Subject pivot: S and A

- S and A can be omitted and can control the omitted subject in the 2nd clause.

Leei was disturbed (by Chris) and \emptyset i complained bitterly.

Antipassive

- Ellipsis in co-ordination

Object pivot: S and O

- S and O can be omitted and can control the omitted subject in the 2nd clause.

Dyirbal

[ngumai yabu-nggu bura-n] [øi banaga-nyu]
father:ABS(O) mother-ERG(A) see-PAST ø(S) return-PAST
'Mother (A) saw father (O) and [he](S) returned.'

Mother saw father and [she] returned.

Antipassive

[yabui bural-nga-nyu nguma-gu] [øi banaga-nyu]
Mother:ABS(S) see-ANTIP-PAST father-DATIVE ø(S) return-PAST
'Mother (S) saw father and [she](S) returned.'

- The absolutive NP can control the omitted subject of the 2nd clause.
- Antipassive makes ellipsis possible.

Applicative

I gave an apple to Mary.

I gave Mary an apple. **Dative movement**

- Oblique NP or indirect object → object
- Object → oblique or second object
- Changes may occur in the morphology of the verb.

Applicative

- English: recipient, goal

I gave an apple to Mary.

Sam kicked a ball to Pat.

- Other languages: locative and instrumental, too

Applicative

- An object that has been promoted by the applicative construction can undergo another promotion by the passive construction.

I gave an apple to Mary.

I gave Mary an apple.

Mary was given an apple (by me).

*Mary was given an apple to.

- Kinyarwanda: both direct object and second object can be promoted by the passive construction.

Causative

The students left.

We **made/let** the students leave. *causative*

- $\emptyset \rightarrow$ subject (introduce a new subject)
- Subject \rightarrow object
- Verb adding causation
- Simple sentence \rightarrow complex sentence

Causative

- 'cause' verb + 'effect' verb
- Morphological causative
- Lexical causative
 - I broke the bottle.
 - ฉันหักกั๊งไม้

Causative

- $\emptyset \rightarrow$ subject (introduce a new subject)
- Subject \rightarrow object, oblique argument, deleted
- 'cause' verb, causative morphology