

A Note on Quantifier Scope in Japanese Passive Sentences *

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This squib discusses a piece of potential counterevidence against Kuroda's (1979) and Hoshi's (1991, 1999) dichotomy of *ni* and *ni yotte* passive sentences in Japanese, and shows that a slight modification of the apparent counterexample does provide a piece of supporting evidence for Kuroda's and Hoshi's claim that the subject in these two types of passive is derived in different ways.

Keywords: *Ni* passive, *Ni yotte* passive, Quantifier scope

1. *Ni* and *Ni Yotte* Passives in Japanese

In direct passive sentences in Japanese the NP denoting the agent is expressed either in the form of NP-*ni* or NP-*ni yotte*. The agent-denoting NP *Yamada-sensei-ga* in the active sentence in (1), for example, corresponds to the *ni*-marked phrase *Yamada-sensei-ni* in (2a) or to the *ni yotte* phrase *Yamada-sensei-ni yotte* in (2b):

- (1) *Yamada-sensei-ga Taroo-o home-ta*
Yamada-teacher-Nom Taro-Acc praise-Past
'Professor Yamada praised Taro.'
- (2) a. *Taroo-ga Yamada-sensei-ni home-rare-ta*
Taro-Nom Yamada-teacher-by praise-Pass-Past
'Taro was praised by Professor Yamada.'
- b. *Taroo-ga Yamada-sensei-ni yotte home-rare-ta*
Taro-Nom Yamada-teacher-by owing praise-Pass-Past

Though the surface subject *Taroo-ga* in both (2a) and (2b) is understood to correspond to the object of the verb *home-ru*, as these sentences' active counterpart in (1) suggests, Kuroda (1979) and Hoshi (1991, 1999) have argued that (2a) and (2b) involve different derivations of the surface subject.

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Specifically, they have shown that while the subject of *ni yotte* passives, as in (2b), has undergone movement from the object position to the surface subject position, the subject of *ni* passives, as in (2a), is base-generated and is assigned the theta role Affectee in its surface subject position. These two different modes of derivation of the subject are illustrated in (3):¹

- (3) a. *ni* passive: Taroo_i-ga [_{VP} Yamada-sensei-**ni** [*PRO*_i home]] –rare-ta
 b. *ni yotte* passive: Taroo_i-ga [_{VP} Yamada-sensei-**ni yotte** [*t*_i home]] –rare-ta

As a piece of evidence for this derivational difference, Kuroda and Hoshi point out the following example:

- (4) a. *Kaikai-ga gityoo-**ni** sengens-are-ta
 opening-Nom chairperson-by announce-Pass-Past
 ‘The opening of the meeting was announced by the chairperson’
 b. Kaikai-ga gityoo-**ni yotte** sengens-are-ta
 opening-Nom chairperson-by owing announce-Pass-Past

(Kuroda (1979), Hoshi (1991, 1999))

The NP headed by the abstract noun *kaikai* cannot be the subject of the *ni* passive sentence in (4a) while its *ni yotte* counterpart allows the same NP as its subject. This is accounted for since the NP headed by an abstract noun is incompatible with the Affectee role assigned to the subject position, while the subject position in *ni yotte* passives does not involve the Affectee role and thus may accommodate such abstract nouns as *kaikai*.

2. An Apparent Counterexample

In addition to the above evidence for the derivational difference between these two types of passive, one may attempt to support Kuroda’s and Hoshi’s claim by a consideration of quantifier scope. As has been widely observed, a sentence involving two quantified NPs (henceforth, QPs) may or may not exhibit interpretive ambiguity depending on the syntactic relation between the two QPs.

¹ The claim that the subject of *ni* passives allows only a certain type of nominals and thus is a theta-marked position is also made by Kitagawa and Kuroda (1992), who provide extensive arguments for their analysis along these lines.

- (5) a. dareka-ga daremo-o home-ta
 someone-Nom everyone-Acc praise-Past
 ‘Someone praised everyone.’
 [some > every, *every > some]
- b. daremo-o_i dareka-ga t_i home-ta
 someone-Nom everyone-Acc praise-Past
 ‘Lit. Everyone, someone praised.’
 [some > every, every > some]

When two QPs are in their canonical order as in (5a), where the subject QP precedes the object QP, only the subject QP takes wide scope. On the other hand, when the object QP is moved over the subject QP, either QP may take wide scope over the other, as in (5b). This restriction on scope interpretation in Japanese is schematized in (6):

- (6) a. [... QP_A ... [... QP_B ...]] [QP_A > QP_B, *QP_B > QP_A]
 b. [... QP_B ... [... QP_A ... [t_{QP_B} ...]]] [QP_A > QP_B, QP_B > QP_A]

With this restriction in mind, let us consider the following *ni* passive sentences involving two QPs:

- (7) a. dareka-ga daremo-**ni** home-rare-ta
 someone-Nom everyone-by praise-Pass-Past
 ‘Someone was praised by everyone.’
 [some > every, ?*every > some]
- b. Taroo-ka-Hanako-ga subete-no sinsain-**ni** home-rare-ta
 Taro-or-Hanako-Nom every-Gen judge-by praise-Pass-Past
 ‘Taro or Hanako was praised by every judge.’
 [or > every *every > or]

These sentences involve a QP in the subject position and another as the agent-denoting *ni* phrase, and are interpreted unambiguously: the subject QP obligatorily takes wide scope over the *ni*-marked QP. This unambiguity is expected by Kuroda’s and Hoshi’s analyses of *ni* passives.² Since the

² Examples to the same effect have also been pointed out in Kitagawa and Kuroda (1992) to support their claim that the subject of *ni* passives is base-generated in the subject position.

subject QP is base-generated in the subject position, which is structurally higher than the *ni*-marked QP, it is only the subject QP that may take scope over the other QP.

(8) *dareka_i-ga* [_{VP} *daremo-ni* [*PRO_i* home]] –rare-ta

If Kuroda's and Hoshi's analyses are on the right track, it is predicted that the following sentences in (9) involving two QPs both allow the *ni yotte*-marked QP to take wide scope over the subject QP, since in their analyses the subject has undergone movement from the VP-internal object position over the *ni yotte*-marked QP, as in (10):

- (9) a. *dareka-ga daremo-ni yotte home-rare-ta*
 someone-Nom everyone-by owing praise-Pass-Past
 [some > every, *every > some]
- b. *Taroo-ka-Hanako-ga subete-no sinsain-ni yotte home-rare-ta*
 Taro-or-Hanako-Nom every-Gen judge-by owing praise-Pass-Past
 [or > every *every > or]

(10) *dareka_i-ga* [_{VP} *daremo-ni* [*t_i* home]] –rare-ta

This prediction is not borne out, however, as the subject QP in both (9a) and (9b) is interpreted to take obligatory wide scope over the *ni yotte*-marked QP, as with the subject in (7). If this is a fact, a plausible analysis of *ni yotte* passives would be to say that the subject is base-generated in the surface subject position, contrary to the analyses in Kuroda (1979) and Hoshi (1991, 1999), and that the subject of *ni yotte* passives is assigned a theta role distinct from the Affectee role in the subject position.

3. The Structure of the Agentive *Ni Yotte* Phrase

In this section I show that the interpretive unambiguity in (9) is ascribed to a factor quite unrelated to the derivational property of the subject, and thus does not constitute a counterexample to the analyses in Kuroda (1979) and Hoshi (1991, 1999) and that the obligatory wide scope of the subject QP in (9) is due to the structure of a *ni yotte* phrase in which the other QP is embedded.

The following facts tell us that a *ni yotte* phrase such as *Yamada-sensei-ni yotte* is in fact a subordinate clause, thereby the NP preceding *ni yotte* does not c-command any constituent outside NP-*ni yotte*. In fact, the form *yotte* is considered to consist of the verb *yoru* 'owe' and the gerundive ending *-te*, which means that NP-*ni yotte* corresponds to the participial clause *owing to* NP. If so,

this in turn means that NP-*ni* is the object of the gerundive verb *yotte* and thus unable to c-command any element outside the *ni yotte* phrase. This is supported by the following two pieces of evidence. First, a QP in a *ni yotte* phrase cannot take wide scope over a QP in a VP-internal position as in (11b), while a QP in the form of QP-*ni* in (11a) is allowed to take wide scope. Compare:

- (11) a. Taroo-ga subete-no soodan'in-**ni** huta-ri-no zyosei-o syookais-are-ta
 Taro-Nom every-Gen consultant-by 2-Cl-Gen woman-Acc introduce-Pass-Past
 'Taro was introduced two women by every consultant.'
 [every > 2, *2 > every]
- b. Taroo-ga subete-no soodan'in-**ni yotte** huta-ri-no zyosei-o syookais-are-ta
 Taro-Nom every-Gen consultant-by owing 2-Cl-Gen woman-Acc introduce-Pass-Past
 [??every > 2, *2 > every]

The structure of these examples is represented as below:

- (12) a. [Taroo-ga [_{VP} subete-no soodan'in-**ni** [hutari-no zyosei-o syookai-]]]
 b. [Taroo-ga [_{VP} [_{TP} [_{VP} subete-no soodan'in-**ni yot**]-te [[hutari-no zyosei-o syookai-]]]]]

While the quantified *ni*-phrase c-commands the object QP *hutari-no zyosei-o* and thus is able to take wide scope over it in (12a), the QP *subete-no soodan'in* does not c-command the object QP since it is embedded in a subordinate clause. Thus the agentive QP cannot take scope over the object QP in (12b).

The proposed structure for the *ni yotte* phrase in (12b) is also supported by the following facts involving pronominal binding. Consider:

- (13) a. Taroo-wa subete-no tomodati-**ni** soitu-_i-no koibito-o syookais-are-ta
 Taro-Top every-Gen friend-by his-Gen girlfriend-Acc introduce-Pass-Past
 'Lit. Taro was introduced his girlfriend by every friend.'
- b. *Taroo-wa subete-no tomodati-**ni yotte** soitu-_i-no koibito-o syookais-are-ta
 Taro-Top every-Gen friend-by owing his-Gen girlfriend-Acc introduce-Pass-Past

In (13a) it is possible to interpret the pronominal *soitu* in the object as bound by the QP-*ni*: the sentence may describe the situation where Ziro introduced Ziro's girlfriend to Taro, Syoohei introduced Syoohei's girlfriend to Taro, and the same is true of the other members in *subete-no*

tomodati. On the other hand, the bound variable reading of *soitu* is not possible in (13b). This can be accounted for with the structure in (12b). The QP *subete-no tomodati* is embedded in a subordinate clause and thus does not c-command the pronominal in (13b).

One might argue that the above facts in (11) and (13) could be accounted for by assuming that *ni yotte* is a postposition. This is not tenable, however, since the postposition is ‘transparent’ to c-command and thus the object of a postposition behaves as if it c-commands elements outside the postpositional phrase with respect to scope taking and pronominal binding. This is shown by the possibility of wide scope taking and pronominal binding by the object of a postposition.³ Consider:

- (14) Taroo-wa subete-no soodan’in-kara huta-ri-no zyosei-o syookais-are-ta
 Taro-Top every-Gen consultant-from 2-Cl-Gen woman-Acc introduce-Pass-Past
 ‘Lit. Taro was introduced two women from every consultant.’
 [every > 2, 2 > every]
- (15) Taroo-wa subete-no tomodati_i-kara soitu_i-no koibito-o syookais-are-ta
 Taro-Top every-Gen friend-from his-Gen girlfriend-Acc introduce-Pass-Past
 ‘Lit. Taro was introduced his girlfriend from every friend.’

In (14), where the agent takes the form of a postpositional phrase headed by the postposition *kara*, the agentive QP *subete-no soodan’in* does take wide scope over the object QP, on a par with the QP-*ni* in (11a), but unlike QP-*ni yotte* in (11b). Moreover, in (15) the QP *subete-no tomodati* in the postpositional phrase may bind the pronominal in the object position, unlike the QP followed by *ni yotte* in (13b).

Thus these considerations tell us that *ni yotte* is not a postposition. Rather, it is part of a subordinate clause where QP-*ni* serves as the object of the verb *yoru*.

4. Scope Reconstruction in *Ni Yotte* Passives

The two facts that we observed in the preceding section help us explain why the QP preceding *ni yotte* cannot take wide scope. But if the subject of *ni yotte* passives does move from a VP-internal object position, as Kuroda (1979) and Hoshi (1991, 1999) argue, then there should be a scope reconstruction effect with the subject of *ni yotte* passives. Below we observe two cases where we can observe the scope reconstruction effect of the subject of *ni yotte* passives.

³ The argument developed in this paragraph has been suggested to me by Masaharu Shimada and Mikinari Matsuoka (personal communication).

The first such case involves an indeterminate phrase (a Wh-phrase) and the particle *mo* in the *ni/ni yotte* phrase. Consider the following examples:

- (16) a. Taroo-wa dono-soodanin-**ni-mo** huta-ri-no zyosei-o syookais-are-ta
 Taro-Top which-consult-staff-by-also two-Cl-Gen woman-Acc introduce-Pass-Past
 ‘Taro was introduced two women by every consultant.’
 [every > 2, *2 > every]
- b. Taroo-wa dono-soodanin-**ni yotte-mo** huta-ri-no zyosei-o syookais-are-ta
 Taro-Top which-consultant-by owing-also two-Cl-Gen woman-Acc introduce-Pass-Past
 [every > 2, *2 > every]

Both these examples involve an indeterminate phrase *dono-N* and the particle *mo* attached to the *ni yotte* phrase. What is noteworthy is the fact that (16b) has the reading where *dono-soodan'in-ni yotte-mo* takes wide scope over the object QP, unlike (11b) where the clausal status of *ni yotte* prevents the QP embedded in it from taking wide scope.

Likewise, the attachment of particle *mo* makes it possible for the agentive QP to bind a pronominal in the object:

- (17) a. Taroo-wa dono tomodati_i-ni-mo soitu_i-no koibito-o syookais-are-ta
 Taro-Top every-Gen friend-by-also his-Gen girlfriend-Acc introduce-Pass-Past
 ‘Lit. Taro was introduced his girlfriend by every friend.’
- b. Taroo-wa dono tomodati_i-ni yotte-mo soitu_i-no koibito-o syookais-are-ta
 Taro-Top every-Gen friend-by owing-also his-Gen girlfriend-Acc introduce-Pass-Past

Unlike the QP-*ni yotte* in (13b) *dono tomodati-ni yotte-mo* may bind a pronominal in the object.⁴

Now that we know the *ni yotte* phrase in the form of Wh-*mo* serves as a QP on a par with the Wh-*mo ni* phrase, we expect to detect the presence/absence of scope reconstruction effect of the subject in *ni* and *ni yotte* passives. Consider:

- (18) a. Huta-ri-no gakusei-ga dono-sensei-ni yotte-mo sikar-are-ta
 2-Cl-Gen student-Nom which-teacher-by owing-also scold-Pass-Past

⁴ The property of the Wh-*mo* construction with respect to binding is extensively discussed in Nishigauchi (1986, 1990).

‘Two students were scolded by every teacher.’

[2 > every, every > 2]

- b. Taroo-ka-Hanako-ga dono-sinsain-ni yotte-mo home-rare-ta
 Taroo-or-Hanako-Nom which-judge-by owing-also praise-Pass-Past
 ‘Taro or Hanako was praised by every judge.’
 [or > every, every > or]

Unlike the QP-*ni yotte* in (9), the agentive QP *dono-sensei/sinsain-ni yotte-mo* in (18) may take wide scope over the subject QP. This means that the subject QP has been moved from a VP-internal position to its surface subject position. Note that the subject QP of a *ni* passive does not reconstruct for scope with respect to the *mo*-attached *ni*-phrase, which means that the subject of *ni* passives is base-generated in its surface position:⁵

- (19) a. Huta-ri-no gakusei-ga dono-sensei-ni-mo sikar-are-ta
 2-CI-Gen student-Nom which-teacher-by-also scold-Pass-Past
 ‘Two students were scolded by every teacher.’
 [2 > every, *every > 2]
- b. Taroo-ka-Hanako-ga dono-sinsain-ni-mo home-rare-ta
 Taroo-or-Hanako-Nom which-judge-by -also praise-Pass-Past
 ‘Taro or Hanako was praised by every judge.’
 [or > every, *every > or]

The above facts tell us that the dichotomy of the derivation of the subject in *ni* and *ni yotte* passives proposed in Kuroda (1979) and Hoshi (1991, 1999) can be maintained.

The presence/absence of scope reconstruction with the passive subject is also detected by consideration of scope relation between the subject QP and another internal argument QP. Firstly, Hoji (1985) observes that the two internal arguments of such ditransitive verbs as *syookaisuru* ‘introduce’ may or may not exhibit scope ambiguity depending on their surface order.

- (20) a. Taroo-ga dareka-ni daremo-o syookais-ita
 Taro-Nom someone-Dat everyone-Acc introduce-Past

⁵ Examples of QP scope to the same effect as (19) are also pointed out in Kitagawa and Kuroda (1992), who argue that the subject of *ni* passives is base-generated in its surface position.

‘Taro introduced someone everyone.’

[some > every, *every > some]

b. Taroo-ga daremo-o_i dareka-ni t_i syookais-ita

Taro-Nom everyone-Acc someone-Dat introduce-Past

[some > every, every > some]

(Hoji (1985))

Based on this restriction on QP scope of VP-internal argument QPs, Oka (1988) points out the following example:

(21) dareka-ga daremo-ni syookais-are-ta

someone-Nom everyone-Dat introduce-Pass-Past

‘Someone was introduced to everyone.’

[some > every, every > some]

(Oka (1988))

Note that the QP-*ni* should be taken as the goal argument of the ditransitive verb *syookaisuru*. Given this, Oka (1988) observes that the subject QP *dareka-ga* may take narrow scope under the goal QP *daremo-ni*, which means that the surface subject has moved from the object position below the goal QP as in (22):

(22) [dareka_i-ga [_{VP} daremo-ni [t_i syookais]]-are-ta]

Since Oka’s (1988) example does not involve the agentive *ni* or *ni yotte* phrase, it is interesting to ask if the subject can reconstruct for scope under the goal QP if the sentence has a *ni/ni yotte* phrase. We predict that the subject may take narrow scope under the goal QP only in *ni yotte* passives, but not in *ni* passives. This prediction is borne out:

(23) a. dareka-ga Yamada-sensei-**ni** daremo-ni syookais-are-ta

someone-Nom Yamada-teacher-by everyone-Dat introduce-Pass-Past

‘Someone was introduced to everyone.’

[some > every, *every > some]

b. dareka-ga Yamada-sensei-**ni yotte** daremo-ni syookais-are-ta

someone-Nom Yamada-teacher-by owing everyone-Dat introduce-Pass-Past

[some > every, every > some]

I find that only the *ni yotte* variant in (23b) can have the narrow scope reading of the subject QP with respect to the goal QP. If this is so, then this constitutes another piece of evidence for the dichotomy of *ni* and *ni yotte* passives.

5. The Subject of Possessor Passives

In the preceding sections we have diagnosed the derivational property of the subject of *ni* and *ni yotte* passives by appealing to the presence/absence of scope reconstruction of the surface subject QP under the *ni/ni yotte* QP or the goal argument QP. In this section we show that our diagnosis can also detect the derivational property of the subject of possessor passives in Japanese, as exemplified in (24):

- (24) a. Taroo-ga seiseki-o sikar-are-ta
 Taro-Nom relative-Acc scold-Pass-Past
 ‘Taro had his relative praised.’
 b. Hanako-ga sakuhin-o home-rare-ta
 Hanako-Nom art.work-Acc praise-Pass-Past
 ‘Hanako had her work of art praised.’

It is argued in Terada (1990), Kubo (1992), Homma (1995), Hoshi (1999), Ishida (2015), and Kaga (2016) that possessor passives in Japanese are distinct from indirect passives, as exemplified in (25) in that the subject of possessor passives originates in a VP-internal position and is raised to the subject position, as in (25), unlike the subject of indirect passives in (26), which originates in the subject position.

- (25) [Taroo_i-ga [_{VP} *t_i* seiseki-o sikar]-are-ta]
 (26) a. Taroo-ga ame-ni hur-are-ta
 Taro-Nom rain-by fall-Pass-Past
 ‘It rained, and Taro was adversely affected by the rain’
 b. Hanako-ga Taroo-ni piano-o hik-are-ta
 Hanako-Nom Taro-by piano-Acc play-Pass-Past
 ‘Taro played the piano, and Hanako was adversely affected by it.’

Since possessor passives allow both a *ni*- and a *ni yotte*-marked agentive phrase, as with direct passives, it is interesting to ask whether the subject of possessor passives exhibits a behavior parallel

to that of direct passives with respect to scope reconstruction. To see this, consider:

- (27) a. Huta-ri-no gakusei-ga dono-sensei-ni-mo seiseki-o sikar-are-ta
 2-CI-Gen student-Nom which-teacher-by-also grade-Acc scold-Pass-Past
 ‘Two students had their grades scolded by every teacher.’
 [2 > every, *every > 2]
- b. Taroo-ka-Hanako-ga dono-sinsain-ni-mo sakuhin-o home-rare-ta
 Taroo-or-Hanako-Nom which-judge-by-also art.work-Acc praise-Pass-Past
 ‘Taro or Hanako was praised by every judge.’
 [or > every, *every > or]

In these *ni* passive examples, the subject cannot take narrow scope under the *ni*-marked QP. Compare these with the following *ni yotte* possessor passives:

- (28) a. Huta-ri-no gakusei-ga dono-sensei-ni yotte-mo seiseki-o sikar-are-ta
 2-CI-Gen student-Nom which-teacher-by owing-also grade-Acc scold-Pass-Past
 ‘Two students had their grades scolded by every teacher.’
 [2 > every, every > 2]
- b. Taroo-ka-Hanako-ga dono-sinsain-ni yotte-mo sakuhin-o home-rare-ta
 Taroo-or-Hanako-Nom which-judge-by owing-also art.work-Acc praise-Pass-Past
 ‘Taro or Hanako had their art work praised by every judge.’
 [or > every, every > or]

Although the judgment is not very sharp, it is possible to interpret the subject in (28) as taking narrow scope under the *ni yotte*-marked QP. If this is a fact, then it constitutes a further support for Kuroda’s (1979) and Hoshi’s (1991, 1999) claim for the syntactic dichotomy of *ni* and *ni yotte* passives. Moreover, it constitutes a piece of supporting evidence for the claims by Terada (1990), Kubo (1992), Homma (1995), Hoshi (1999), Ishida (2015), and Kaga (2016) that the subject of possessor passives is derived from a VP-internal position, although it is the case only with *ni yotte*-marked possessor passives.⁶

⁶ These authors differ, however, as to the precise underlying position of the subject of possessor passives. Terada (1990), Kubo (1992), and Ishida (2015) argue that the subject originates from within the object NP denoting a possessee, the position where the possessor argument appears in corresponding active sentences. This is illustrated in (i):

6. Conclusion

In this squib I have provided a piece of supporting evidence for the dichotomy of *ni* and *ni yotte* direct passives in Japanese that has been proposed in Kuroda (1979) and Hoshi (1991, 1999). I have shown that the facts about relative scope of QPs in the subject position and the agentive *ni* and *ni yotte* phrases, although they seem to constitute counterexamples at first sight, do indeed constitute a piece of supporting evidence for the proposed dichotomy. I have also shown that the dichotomy of *ni* and *ni yotte* passives in terms of the derivation of the surface subject also applies to possessor passives in Japanese, in that the subject of *ni yotte* possessor passives, but not that of their *ni* counterpart, has moved from a VP-internal position. This conclusion also supports the analysis of Japanese possessor passives by a number of authors whereby the subject has moved from a VP-internal position.

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- (i) Taroo_i-ga [VP [NP *t*_i seiseki-o] sikar]-are-ta
 (ii) Sensei-ga [VP [NP Taroo-no seiseki-o] sikat]-ta
 teacher-Nom Taro-Gen grade-Acc scold-Past
 'The teacher scolded Taro's grade.'

On the other hand, Homma (1995) and Hoshi (1999) argue that the subject of possessor passives is an argument distinct from the possessee object and thus originates in the outer object position, as in (iii):

- (iii) [Taroo_i-ga [VP *t*_i [[NP *pro*_i seiseki-o] sikar]]-are-ta]

See Homma (1995) and Hoshi (1999) for details.

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