

GRAMMATICALIZATION  
OF CAUSATIVES AND PASSIVES  
AND THEIR RECENT DEVELOPMENT  
INTO STANCE MARKERS IN KOREAN

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ABSTRACT

This paper reports a unique state of affairs of “causatives” and “passives” in Korean. The two grammatical notions have long remained unstable due to the fact that certain morphological causatives and passives are formally identical and that these two notions are conceptually closely related. The paper also analyzes the processes involved in their development by tracing their paths to Middle Korean. In addition, it describes their recent change in Modern Korean, which has further complicated their usage, i.e. some of them have acquired an extended function as markers of the speaker’s attenuative stance to show politeness. This extension is motivated at the conceptual level by the demotion of agent to promote humility and the functional reinterpretation of existing forms; and, furthermore, at the socio-cultural level by political influence and language contact, among others. The current paper argues that this development involves diverse participating factors, i.e. discursive strategies, subjectification, inter-subjectification, and functional extension, and that linguistic variability may persevere over a long period of time.

KEYWORDS: Causative; passive; grammaticalization; stance-marker; politeness.

1. Introduction

Korean has a number of causatives and passives at various levels of grammar, i.e. lexical, morphological, and syntactic. One of the notable aspects of causatives and passives in Korean is that these grammatical concepts have long remained unstable. While they lack robustness in grammar, they show a very complex picture of layering in form and function. In other words, the extant forms of causatives and passives have different historical depths and yet have

similar functions. Furthermore, some of these markers came to extend their functions to intersubjective and interactive domains, i.e. to mark politeness by attenuating the illocutionary force of the speaker's speech acts. Since the functional extension of stance-marking takes advantage of the existing form in seemingly "wrong" contexts, this functional innovation has been subject to criticism among prescriptivists as a "violation" of grammatical rules.<sup>1</sup> However, the grammatical change in the minds of language users that sanctions such innovative language use provides descriptivists with a window into intriguing discourse strategies that are actively deployed in discourse settings.

Another interesting aspect is that Korean has a number of causative and passive markers that are identical in form. The formal identity of these two apparently opposite, yet closely related, notions is not at all strange from a typological point of view. However, the formal identity and conceptual affinity between them, coupled with other idiosyncratic factors such as the optionality of sentential arguments, seem to have caused individual speakers to exhibit differential partitioning of these grammatical notions, which consequently caused considerable variation in the grammatical system in general.

The objectives of this paper are threefold: (i) to describe the grammaticalization of causative and passive in Korean, the close relationship between them, and the fluidity of grammatical notions that may persist for an extended period of time, (ii) to analyze the emergence of the stance-marking function of causatives and passives from the viewpoints of grammaticalization and discourse pragmatics, and (iii) to discuss the theoretical issues the analysis presents, i.e. discursive strategies, (inter-)subjectification, and socio-cultural influence, among others.

This paper is organized as follows: Section 2 describes the state of affairs of causatives and passives in Korean; Section 3 analyzes the grammaticalization processes of causatives and passives and functional extension, which are fast spreading across the language community at present; Section 4 discusses diverse issues from the analysis, such as discursive strategies, (inter-)subjectification, socio-cultural influence on language use, and implications in grammar; and Section 5 summarizes the discussion and concludes the paper.

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<sup>1</sup> Certain language uses may not comply with the prescriptivist norms but they are licensed by individual speaker's grammar. Therefore, following the descriptivist stance, this paper does not negatively evaluate the apparent deviations at the level of individual language users. Certain grammatical notions may not be firmly established at a global level, which some may regard as confusion, i.e., individual-level variability may constitute community-level confusion.

## 2. Causatives and passives in Korean

### 2.1. Causative-passive ambiguities

Modern Korean has a number of causative and passive markers.<sup>2</sup> Many of them have undergone grammaticalization and are fully morphologized, whereas some of them are still in the periphrastic states, as shown in Table 1.<sup>3</sup>

Table 1. Causative and passive markers in Korean.

	Affixes (variants)	Periphrases
Causative	<i>i</i> -Type (- <i>i</i> -, - <i>hi</i> -, - <i>li</i> -, - <i>ki</i> -) <i>wu</i> -Type (- <i>wu</i> -, - <i>kwu</i> -, - <i>chwu</i> -)	DO-causative: - <i>key.ha</i> - MAKE-causative: - <i>key.sikhi</i> -, - <i>key.mantul</i> -
Passive	<i>i</i> -Type (- <i>i</i> -, - <i>hi</i> -, - <i>li</i> -, - <i>ki</i> -)	BECOME-passive: - <i>key.toy</i> - FALL-passive: - <i>e.ci</i> - EXPERIENCE-passive: - <i>tangha</i> - RECEIVE-passive: - <i>pat</i> - EAT-passive: - <i>mek</i>

As is evident in Table 1, Korean has a number of morphemes that carry functional ambiguity between causatives and passives, i.e. the *i*-type causatives and the *i*-type passives.<sup>4</sup> The lexical ambiguity in derived words is well ex-

<sup>2</sup> The periphrastic causative and passive markers listed in Table 1 have compositional meanings that amount to causative and passive meanings. An anonymous reviewer thus questions the grammatical status of these forms, especially that of passives, if they are true passives. However, the degree of their formal “univerbation” (Lehmann 1995 [1982]) and conceptual unity is such that their grammatical status is unanimously accepted by both Korean linguists and grammarians (Yoo 1909; Choe 1937; Huh 1975; Lee 1992; inter alia) with minor variations. It is also worth noting that the linker *-key* in periphrastic forms is often omissible and consequently such forms become nominal morphologies (see 3.2.2 and 3.3.2).

<sup>3</sup> According to Korean orthographic rules, periphrastic forms must be written with an inter-lexical space. In this paper this word boundary is marked with a period so that multi-word grammatical markers are more succinctly represented as single units.

<sup>4</sup> As an anonymous reviewer notes, the ambiguity exists mainly among the *i*-type causatives and passives. The relative semantic straightforwardness of other types is largely due to their low level of grammaticalization and, consequently, their relative semantic transparency. See, however, 3.2.3 and 4.4.1 for discussion of semantic bleaching that caused the convergence of certain causatives and passives.

emplified in (1), where the verb *wul-* ‘ring, cry’ is marked with *-li*, the function of which is ambiguous between the causative and passive. This kind of lexical ambiguity has been noted in a number of studies (e.g., Choe 1937; Huh 1975; Park 1976; Kim 1980).<sup>5</sup>

(2a) cong-i wul-ess-ta  
bell-NOM ring-PST-DEC  
‘The bell rang.’

(2b) ku-ka cong-ul wul-**li**-ess-ta  
he-NOM bell-ACC ring-CAUS-PST-DEC  
‘He rang the bell (or: He made the bell ring).’ (CAUS)

(2c) cong-i wul-**li**-ess-ta  
bell-NOM cry-PASS-PST-DEC  
‘The bell rang (or: The bell was made to ring).’ (PASS)

The formal identity of passive and causative markers is also observed in the following example, which shows ambiguity between the two interpretations of the mother breast-feeding the baby in (i) and the mother getting bitten by her baby on the breast in (ii) (taken from Lee 1999: 232, transliteration, glosses and translations ours):

(2) emeni-ka cec-ul ai-eykey mwul-**li**-n-ta  
mother-NOM breast-ACC baby-DAT bite-PASS/CAUS-PRES-DEC  
(i) ‘The mother makes the baby suck (= bite) her breast.’ (CAUS)  
(ii) ‘The mother was bitten by the baby on the breast.’ (PASS)

One of the contributing factors to the causative-passive ambiguity is the Korean idiosyncrasy that sentential arguments may be omitted relatively freely as long as they are recoverable from the context. For this reason, the thematic relationship is often unclear in clausal modifier constructions. This is well il-

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<sup>5</sup> The following abbreviations are used in glossing: ACC, accusative; ADN, adnominal; AGT, agent; CAUS, causative; COMP, complementizer; DAT, dative; DEC, declarative; EVID, evidential; FUT, future; GEN, genitive; HON, honorific; IMP, imperative; INST, instrumental; NF, non-finite; NOM, nominative; NOMZ, nominalizer; PASS, passive; PAT, patient; PDK, present-day Korean; PL, plural; POL, polite; PRES, present; PROH, prohibitive; PST, past; RETRO, retrospective; SFP, sentence-final particle; TOP, topic; vi, intransitive verb; vt, transitive verb.

illustrated by the following examples, in which the agent-instrument-theme relationship can be assessed only from the contextual cues and world knowledge (e.g. that a spoon is not edible and not animate).<sup>6</sup>

- (3) mek-ul suphwun  
 eat-ADN spoon  
 (i) ‘a spoon to eat with’  
 (ii) ‘a spoon to eat’  
 (iii) ‘a spoon that will eat (something)’

The ambiguity in argument relationship illustrated above may be compounded by an ambiguity between causatives and passives, especially when the form in focus belongs to the class of *i*-Type causatives/passives, as shown in (4):

- (4) nam-Ay pul-i-o-n il  
 other-GEN work- PASS/CAUS-POL-ADN matter  
 (i) ‘the affair in which the other person is made to work by (you)’  
 (PASS, PAT)  
 (ii) ‘the affair in which (you) were made to work by (the other person)’ (PASS, AGT)  
 (iii) ‘the affair in which the other person makes (you) to work’ (CAUS, AGT)  
 (iv) ‘the affair in which (you) make the other person work’ (CAUS, PAT)

(*Sekposangcel* 1447, 9:16a)

Example (4) is doubly ambiguous if *-i-* in *pul-i-* is the passive or causative marker and further, if “other” is the patient or the agent of the verb. Therefore, there are four possible interpretations for this phrase.

From the conceptual and typological perspective, the close relationship between causatives and passives to the point of confusion or overlap is by no means rare. A large body of literature has noted their close relationship (Aissen 1974; Comrie 1981; Marantz 1984; Baker 1988; Haspelmath 1990; Levin and Rappaport-Hovav 1995, among others; see also Lingtyp posting by Schulze 2011 on Manchu passive-causative *-bu-*). The conceptual affinity between these two categories is due to the fact that they are simply the reversed

<sup>6</sup> A related Korean idiosyncrasy is that the relations often signaled by the prepositions in English (e.g. ‘with’ in (3i)) does not surface in modifier constructions.

foci in viewing an event, i.e. a caused event may be described by means of either a causative-marked verb by highlighting the cause, or a passive-marked verb by highlighting the effect. Similarly, Abraham and Leisiö (2006) and the works therein show typological relationships between causative, middle, reflexive, and passive.<sup>7</sup>

## 2.2. The causativity and passivity continua

From a conceptual point of view, since the strength and agentivity of causation can vary widely, causativity may neutralize at the lower end and may overlap with passivity at its lower end, in the sense that a causative construction may not have a clear causer-causee contrast and a passive construction may not have a clear agent-recipient contrast at the lower end of the continuum. This highlighting vs. backgrounding alternation in conceptualization of a caused event is also well captured in the notion of “causative alternation” of unaccusative verbs as in the English examples: *The window broke* and *Pat broke the window* (Levin and Rappaport-Hovav 1995: 79).

The concept of causativity is a gradient notion in Korean, as exemplified in (5) with the causative-marked verb *nol-* ‘play’, i.e. *nol-li-* ‘make x play’, in which the perceived degree of causativity varies depending on the context.

- (5a) pwulssangha-n ay-lul **nol-li-ci.ma-la**  
 be.pitiable-ADN child-ACC play-CAUS-PROH-IMP  
 ‘Don’t make fun of a pitiable child.’ (Strong causativity)
- (5b) ay-lul tolo-wieyse **nol-li-ci.ma-la**  
 child-ACC road-on play-CAUS-PROH-IMP  
 ‘Don’t let the child play in the street.’ (Medium causativity)
- (5c) ta khu-n ay-lul **nol-li-ci.ma-la**  
 all grow.up-ADN child-ACC play-CAUS-PROH-IMP  
 ‘Don’t let a grown-up child be without work.’ (Weak causativity)

<sup>7</sup> It is worth noting that the English *get*-causative passive also shows causative-passive interaction (Givón 2006) and so do Mandarin *rang* ‘let, make’ and *jiao* ‘tell, make’ (Li 1986). As an anonymous reviewer points out, the causative and passive senses are not ambiguous in Givón and Yang’s (1994) analysis of the English *get*. What is relevant in this context is that the same lexeme *get* (the original meaning being the highly agentive ‘hold, seize’; *Oxford English Dictionary* 1991) is used for causative and passive constructions. In the passive construction, the agent is either backgrounded or entirely hidden.

- (5d) pissa-n                      kikyey-lul              **no-li-ci.ma-la**  
 be.expensive-ADN    machine-ACC    play-CAUS-PROH-IMP  
 ‘Don’t let the expensive machine sit idle.’ (Very weak causativity)

Similarly, gradience of passivity is also observed. Gradient passivity with passive-marked verbs can be perceived when they are reverted to active counterparts to determine their acceptability. Differing levels of passivity can be observed even when the self-same verb is used in different contexts. For instance, the passive-marked verb *phwul-li-* ‘be solved’ in (6) exhibits different degrees of passivity, as evidenced by differing degrees of acceptability of the verb’s active counterpart in the same context, i.e., from being acceptable with respect to ‘problem’ in (6a), to being marginally acceptable with ‘fund situation’ in (6b), and to being not acceptable with ‘weather’ in (6c) (modified from Woo 1997: 46; transliteration, gloss and interpretation ours).

- (6a) mwuncey-ka              swip-key              **phwul-li-ess-ta**  
 problem-NOM              be.easy-MODE    solve-PASS-PST-DEC  
 ‘The problem was easily solved.’ (Strong passivity)
- (6b) cakum    saceng-i              **phwul-li-ess-ta**  
 fund              situation-NOM    solve-PASS-PST-DEC  
 ‘The fund market situation was eased.’ (Weak passivity)
- (6c) nalssi-ka              **phwul-li-ess-ta**  
 weather-NOM    solve-PASS-PST-DEC  
 ‘The weather became milder.’ (Very weak passivity)

### 3. Grammaticalization of causatives and passives

In the grammaticalization theory, grammatical forms are thought to have developed from lexical or less grammatical sources (Kuryłowicz 1975 [1965]).<sup>8</sup> Following this basic assumption, well supported by documented changes, the Korean causatives and passives as grammatical markers are thought to have originated from lexical sources, even though some forms are opaque as to their

<sup>8</sup> Kuryłowicz (1975[1965]: 52) defines grammaticalization as consisting in the increase of the range of a morpheme advancing from a lexical to a grammatical or from a less grammatical to a more grammatical status.

ultimate lexical origins. This section addresses the lexical sources, grammaticalization paths, and the functional extension of causatives and passives.

### 3.1. Lexical sources

As is shown in Table 1 in 2.1, there are multiple markers for causatives and passives in contemporary Korean. The markers can take the form of verbal affixes (morphological), which are the primary grammatical markers with a long grammaticalization history, or in the form of periphrases (analytical), which are secondary and have a shorter grammaticalization history. The lexical sources of the primary markers, i.e. the *i*-type (for causative and passive) and the *wu*-type (for causative), have not yet been identified.

On the other hand, the lexical sources of the secondary markers are straightforwardly clear, as these periphrases are herein named after the main lexical source, e.g. DO-causative, MAKE-causative, BECOME-passive, FALL-passive, etc.<sup>9</sup> The lexical sources of these markers are summarized in (7) (Note that *-key* and *-e* are linkers).

- |      |                     |                      |                                 |
|------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| (7a) | DO-causative:       | <i>-key.ha-</i>      | < <i>ha-</i> ‘do’               |
| (7b) | MAKE-causative:     | <i>-(key.)sikhi-</i> | < <i>sikhi-</i> ‘make, order’   |
|      |                     | <i>-key.mantul-</i>  | < <i>mantul-</i> ‘make, create’ |
| (7c) | BECOME-passive:     | <i>-(key.)toy-</i>   | < <i>toy-</i> ‘become’          |
| (7d) | FALL-passive:       | <i>-e.ci-</i>        | < <i>ci-</i> ‘fall’             |
| (7e) | EXPERIENCE-passive: | <i>-tangha-</i>      | < <i>tangha-</i> ‘experience’   |
| (7f) | RECEIVE-passive:    | <i>-pat-</i>         | < <i>pat-</i> ‘receive’         |
| (7g) | EAT-passive:        | <i>-mek</i>          | < <i>mek-</i> ‘eat’             |

A notable aspect in the source constructions shown in (7), especially those that take a verb, i.e. (7a)–(7d), is the use of the adverbializer MODE-marker *-key*, a non-finite marker for a “converb” (Ramstedt 1903; Haspelmath and König 1995), which constitutes an important channel for grammaticalization of passives and causatives. Its main syntactic function is to enable a verb to appear in adverbial subordination and its semantic function is to add the meaning of

<sup>9</sup> The lexical sources in Korean largely follow the crosslinguistic patterns as shown in such lexicons as Heine et al. (1993); Heine and Kuteva (2002), and elsewhere: ‘do’, ‘give’, ‘take’, ‘cause’, ‘leave’, ‘make’, ‘put’, ‘send’, etc. for causative; and ‘eat’, ‘fall’, ‘see’, ‘suffer’, ‘become’, ‘belong’, ‘come’, ‘get’, ‘give’, ‘go’, ‘hit the mark’, ‘receive’, ‘touch’, impersonal, anti-passive, anticausative, comitative, personal pronoun (3PL), personal pronoun (subject), reflexive, auxiliary (inactive), locative (in), movement marker, etc. for passive.



“mode” or “purpose” to the predicate. For instance, *alumtap-key* [be.beautiful-MODE] means ‘beautifully; so that (it) may become beautiful’ and *aphu-key* [be.painful-MODE] means ‘painfully; so that (one) may feel pain’. An important aspect of the adverbializer *-key* in the context of current discussion is that it inherently carries the futurity marking function (cf. “converbum futuri”, Ramstedt 1968 [1936]: 91).<sup>10</sup> This futurity meaning contributes to the emergence of a change-of-state meaning, the essential semantic feature in causatives and passives.

### 3.2. Grammaticalization

The primary verbal affixes are very old grams with opaque lexical sources. The use of affixal causatives goes beyond the oldest extant data written in the Korean writing system, Hangeul, i.e. prior to the 15th century. Despite their long history, however, a fluctuation in terms of their productivity in function is obvious throughout history. For instance, Park (1994) notes that in Late Middle Korean (15th–16th century), affixal causatives productively marked indirect causation, but in Modern Korean they came to specialize in marking direct causation, and the periphrastic causatives specialize in marking indirect causation.

Another noteworthy point is that the selection of the variants of affixal causatives and passives, i.e., of the *i*-type causatives/passives and the *wu*-type causatives, is lexically controlled; thus it is not entirely predictable which affix a verb may select to encode causativization and passivization. As a matter of fact, it is not clear if a particular verb will select an affix in the first place, because the periphrastic forms have become increasingly productive in Modern Korean.

#### 3.2.1. The DO-causative

The DO-causative *-key.ha-*, the most common periphrastic causative in Modern Korean, makes use of the mode-marker *-key* and the verb of action *ha-* denoting ‘do’ in its source construction. As is evident from the composition of the source items, the compositional meaning of the causative *-key.ha-* is ‘(x) does (something) so that y comes about,’ as illustrated in (8), where *mek-* ‘eat’ and *alumtap-* ‘be beautiful’ are causativized into ‘feed’ and ‘beautify.’

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<sup>10</sup> Similarly, Rhee (1996: 113) calls it the futuristic mode marker, and Park (1994) the purposive complementizer.

- (8a) mek-key ha- > mek-key.ha-  
 eat-MODE do eat-CAUS  
 ‘(x) does (something) so that (y) eats’ ‘feed’
- (8b) alumtap-key ha- > alumtap-key.ha-  
 be.beautiful-MODE do be.beautiful-CAUS  
 ‘(x) does (something) so that (y) is beautiful’ ‘beautify’

A relevant point is that the verb *ha-* ‘do’ is a light verb. In Modern Korean the action component of ‘do’ has bleached out so much that it is often considered as merely a grammatical device that creates a syntactic condition so that certain forms, e.g., adjectives, nouns, onomatopoeic words, foreign borrowings, etc., can occur in the predicate position. This semantic weakening is also responsible for phonological reduction later, an instance of concept-form iconicity.

The DO-causative seems to have been frequently used even in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, since its occurrences are frequent. However, in historical times, the DO-construction seems to have been amenable to taking on either the compositional meaning, i.e., in a complex sentence including a subordinate clause marked by the converb marker *-key*; or the fully grammaticalized causative meaning, as shown in (9).<sup>11</sup>

- (9a) kilh-ulu so-khey.hA-la  
 street-ACC be.clean-CAUS-IMP  
 (i) ‘Do something so that the street is clean’ (compositional)  
 (ii) ‘Make the street clean/Purify the street.’ (causative)  
 (*Sekposangcel* 3, 1447)
- (9b) pwuin-i manAl-Al patcAv-a cwasi-key.hA-ni  
 wife/queen-NOM garlic-ACC bring-NF eat-CAUS-as  
 ‘as the wife/queen brings garlic and,  
 (i) does something so that the king may eat it’ (compositional)  
 (ii) feeds the king...’ (causative) (*Sekposangcel* 24, 1447)

The ambiguity between compositional and constructional meanings suggests that the syntagmatic string was not fully grammaticalized in Late Middle Korean. This is because the compositional semantics of the string ‘do x so that y

<sup>11</sup> Note the variation of *-khey* and *hA-*. The former is a fused form of the light verb *ha-* in *soha-* ‘be clean’ and the linker *-key*, and the latter, a historical variant of the verb *ha-*.

does/becomes *z*' is nearly identical with the grammaticalized notion of 'cause *z*'.

Around the turn of the 19th century, the causative *-key.ha-* further grammaticalized into the futurity/conjecture/intention marker *-keyss-* by getting combined with the verb of existence *iss-* 'exist' (Huh 1982; Rhee 1996).<sup>12</sup> This change was critically triggered by the semantic bleaching and phonological erosion of the light verb *ha-* 'do', whereby the action verb became invisible and made the subject-verb connection opaque (Rhee, 1996). Since futurity and conjecture are inherently indeterminate, *-keyss-* continued to change and came to be used to soften the illocutionary forces of assertions or statements (see 3.3.3 for more discussion).

### 3.2.2. The MAKE-causative

The MAKE-causative makes use of the verbs *sikhi-* 'make, order' and *mantul-* 'make, create'. As the core verb in DO-causative has lost its action meaning in the process of grammaticalization, the MAKE-causative sharply contrasts with the DO-causative for its implication of strong causativity. However, due to its strong causativity, the MAKE-causative is not as productive as the DO-causative, a trade-off between semantic generality and functional productivity.

A historical survey in corpora shows that *sikhi-* 'make, order' was used largely as a lexical main verb until the end of the 19th century, when it began to be directly attached to a noun, e.g. *cyengci-sikhi-* [stop-CAUS] 'make something stop' (1896 *Toknipsinmwun Daily*). The causative *-key.sikhi-*, i.e. with the MODE-marker, is extremely rare and the first attestation in the historical corpus is *syenulhA-key.sikhi-* 'make someone shudder' (1911 *Ssangokcek*, Lee Haejo). Likewise, *mantul-* 'make, create' was mainly a lexical verb until the end of the 19th century, when the causative *-key.mantul-* came to be used, e.g. *phyenphyenhA-key.mantul-* 'make something even' (1886 *Camsang-cipyo*). All these show that the development of MAKE-causative is a recent one.

<sup>12</sup> According to Na (1953), Huh (1982), Rhee (1996), among others, the futurity marker *-keyss-* developed from a construction consisting of *-key-* (the mode-marker), *hA-* 'do', *-e-* (the non-finite linker), and *is-* 'exist'. The last two formants developed into *-ess-* (the past marker) in the 17th century. The developmental path suggested by Huh (1982: 38) is: *-key.hA.yas* > *\*key.Ayas* > *keyyas* > *keys* > *keyss*. See Rhee (1996: 109–131) for details.

In Modern Korean, the MAKE-causatives are largely used as a nominal morphology. This is particularly so with the causative based on the verb *sikhi*- ‘make, order’. It is indeed the most frequently recruited derivational morphology to host a noun and transform it into a verb with causal meaning, e.g. *phakoy-sikhi*- [destruction-make] ‘cause destruction, destroy’; *kongpwu-sikhi*- [study-make] ‘make someone study’, etc.

### 3.2.3. The BECOME-passive

The BECOME-passive *-key.toy-* developed from a construction consisting of the MODE-marker *-key* and the verb *toy-* ‘become’. Even though *toy-* is monomorphemic in Modern Korean, it is in fact a product of a lexicalization process involving a Late Middle Korean adjective *tAv-* ‘be like.’ The *-key.toy-* ‘become like’ passive brings forth inchoative meaning. For instance, the adjectives *telep-* ‘be dirty’ and *nolah-* ‘be yellow’ may be passivized by means of *-key.toy-* and acquire the inchoative meaning ‘become dirty, be made dirty’ and ‘turn yellow, be made to be yellow,’ respectively. Since the meaning of the source structure of *-key.toy* was originally ‘(it) happens so that (y) comes about,’ there occurred demotion of the volitional meaning which was inherent in the MODE-marker *-key*, overridden by the non-volitive verb *toy-* ‘become’. This is critical in the development of the stance-marking function in PDK to be addressed in 3.3.2.

A historical survey in the corpora shows that *toy-* (and its precursor *tav-*) was largely used as a nominal morphology to attribute a passive meaning from the Late Middle Korean, e.g., *silum-tav-* ‘be made sorrowful’ (1447 *Sekposangcel*), *uysim-toy-* ‘be made suspicious’ (1587 *SohAkenhay*), etc. This nominal morphology *-toy* is considered to be one of the primary means of marking passivity in Modern Korean. With the increase in productivity, its passive meaning became bleached to an extreme degree, as shown in such expressions – commonly used, yet often denounced as avoidable – as *kupcung-toy-* ‘sharply increase,’ *sicak-toy-* ‘begin,’ *hapkyek-toy-* ‘pass (an exam),’ *cinsiltoy-* ‘be truthful,’ etc.<sup>13</sup> This tendency is also discussed in more detail in the context of stance-marking in 3.3.2, 4.1 and 4.2.

<sup>13</sup> In place of these passive verb forms, prescriptivists suggest the use of their active counterparts, i.e. those derived with *-ha-* ‘do,’ as *kupcungha-*, *sicakha-*, *hapkyekha-*, etc. The process of semantic bleaching in causative and passive has proceeded extensively in Modern Korean. Due to the extensive desemanticization, the DO-causative and BECOME-passive converge in certain

### 3.2.4. The FALL-passive

The FALL-passive *-e.ci-* stands out among the periphrastic passive and causative markers in that it uses the non-finite marker *-e* instead of *-key* as the forms in other cases do, as exemplified by the contrast of *ccic-e.ci-* ‘be torn’ (< ‘tear-fall’) on the one hand, and *cec-key.toy-* ‘become wet’ (< ‘be.wet-become’) and *cec-key.ha-* ‘make wet’ (< ‘be.wet-do’) on the other. This non-finite marker *-e*, incidentally, is the most commonly used connective in verb serialization. Unlike the adverbializer *-key*, which inherently has the futuristic meaning, the non-finite linker *-e* has the function of conceptually consolidating the serialized events (Koo 1987). Therefore, it is not surprising that events expressed by multiple verbs serialized by *-e* tend to be construed as a single event, e.g. *ttayli-e pwuswu-* ‘hit-and break’ > ‘destroy’. This single-event construal is largely responsible for the development of auxiliary verbs from verb serialization (Rhee 1996). The FALL-passive is one of many auxiliaries that originated from verb serialization.

The *-e.ci-* passive is semantically harmonious with ‘by itself’, ‘by mistake’, ‘on its own’, etc., similar to the *get-*passive in English (Rhee 1996: 186–187). Unlike the affixal passives, which only mark passivity, the periphrastic *ci-*passive additionally carries the inchoative and procedural meanings. The acquisition of these meanings in the course of grammaticalization seems to have prompted the division of labor among the passive markers, and consequently enabled the stacking of seemingly-identical passive markers (see 4.4.2 and 4.4.3 for more discussion).

A historical survey shows that the FALL-passive was attested from Late Middle Korean but was not as productive as in Modern Korean. The number of verbs that formerly used the affixal passive in Late Middle Korean but came to use the FALL-passive instead gradually increased over time, e.g. *tul-i-* > *ttel-e.ci-* ‘be dropped’, *etthi-i-* > *ete-e.ci-* ‘be acquired’, *macho-i-* > *macchwu-e.ci-* ‘get fit’, etc.

### 3.3. Further functional extension: Stance-marking

In recent years, certain causative and passive forms extended their functions to the interactional, intersubjective domains. The primary *i-*-type and *wu-*-type verbal affixes, *N-toy-* (< ‘become’), *-e.ci-* (< ‘fall’) and *-keyss-* (< ‘do’), are

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lexical items such as *pwungkoy-ha-* ‘collapse-do’ and *pwungkoy-toy-* ‘collapse-become,’ both simply denoting ‘collapse (v)’.

extensively expanding their uses for discursive strategic purposes, i.e. marking the speaker's attenuative stance,<sup>14</sup> a tendency briefly noted earlier in Koo (2004). This functional extension of the causative and passive has not yet received scholarly attention in earnest to date, except in contexts where such uses are denounced by prescriptive grammarians as ungrammatical and thus avoidable.

### 3.3.1. Case 1: Verbal affix *-i-*

The first case involves the use of affixal passive *-i-*. For instance, the verb of vision *po-* 'see' can be suffixed with *-i-* to derive passive 'be seen, seem' and causative/transitive 'show, make x be seen'. The derived verb in the passive sense is very productively used for marking the speaker's stance of attenuation, as shown in the following example taken from a newspaper article.

(10) Verbal affix *-i-* Passive (*po-i-* [see-PASS] 'seem')

kwuknay wansengchaepchey-tul-uy komin-to  
domestic car-manufacturer-PL-GEN agony-also

khu-e.ci-l kes-ulo po-i-pnita  
be.big-PASS-ADN NOMZ-INST see-PASS-DEC

'It seems that the domestic car manufacturers should worry about it.'  
(Lit. < 'It is seen that the agony of the domestic car manufacturers will be made big.' *Money Today*, 22 Feb 2012.)

### 3.3.2. Case 2: BECOME-Passive *-toy*

The second case is the use of the BECOME-passive *-toy* either as a verbal or nominal morphology. This usage is among the most popular ways of marking the speaker's politeness toward the addressee in contemporary Korean.

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<sup>14</sup> There is terminological indeterminacy with the notion of "stance" as noted in Englebretson (2007: 2–3) and Du Bois (2007). There are different labels used for similar concepts: "stance" (Biber et al. 1999; Dancygier and Sweetser 2005; Englebretson 2007 and the works therein), "addressee orientation" (Nuyts 2001), "point-of-view" (Smith 2002), etc. Generally, stance covers attitudinal, epistemic, emotional, and evidential states, and the attenuation is one of the attitudinal stances.

(11) BECOME-passive V-*key.toy*-

(11a) kyoswu-nim cehi kyelhonha-key.toy-ess-supnita  
 professor-HON we marry-PASS-PST-DEC  
 ‘Professor, we will marry.’ (< Lit. ‘Professor, we were made to marry.’)

(11b) cey-ka hoysa-lul kumantwu-key.toy-ess-e-yo  
 I-NOM company-ACC stop-PASS-PST-SFP-POL  
 ‘I quit my job.’ (< Lit. ‘I was made to stop working at my company.’)

Example (11a) is said by a couple visiting their professor to inform him of their planned marriage as a preface to request to officiate at their wedding ceremony. Even though there was no external force that made them decide on their much desired union, their volitional decision is presented by using the passive, as if there had been such force. Similarly, example (11b) is said by one who recently quit her job. On the face of it, it is not clear if she was truly forced to quit the job, but this is a common way of speaking of one’s own decision, i.e., as if she had not been the agent of decision-making. The demotion of agency by means of using linguistic passivization is a common strategy of politeness (Brown and Levinson 1985). The use of the BECOME-passive for polite stance is also attested with nominal morphology, as shown in (12).

(12) BECOME-passive N-*toy*-

(12a) kesulum ton 250-won-toy-si-keyss-supnita  
 change money 250-won-PASS-HON-FUT-DEC  
 ‘Here’s the change, 250 won.’ (The change that pertains to you is 250 won.)  
 (Lit. < ‘The change will be honorably made to be 250 won.’)  
 (retrieved from a Google search, 4 May 2013)

(12b) pwutukiha-n sichayk-i-lako ihay-toy-pnita-man...  
 be.without.choice-ADN policy-be-COMP understanding-PASS-DEC-but  
 ‘I understand that [the forced black-out] is an unavoidable policy, but...’  
 (Lit. < ‘(It) is understood as a policy without alternatives, but...’)  
 (*Yonhap News*, 5 Feb 2012)

Utterances like example (12a) are commonly heard at business encounters, spoken by a cashier to the client about the change due. This usage is often cited by prescriptive grammarians as a paradigm example of grammatical violation, doubly wrong with passivization and honorification, the latter violating the “honorable-subject” condition, i.e. ‘the change’ is not honorifiable. Example (12b) is also commonly encountered both in spoken and written styles. The nominal BECOME-passive typically occurs with *verba cogitandi*, such as ‘think’, ‘suppose’, ‘judge’, ‘expect’, ‘understand’, etc. The strategy behind this is one of demoting the agency by implying that the thought process was not actively initiated by the speaker but was prompted by the external stimulus. This is thought to be a cautious way of presenting one’s opinions.<sup>15</sup>

### 3.3.3. Case 3: Futurity-conjectural from DO-Causative

Another case is the use of the futurity marker *-keyss-* which was derived from the DO-causative (see 3.2.1 above), as exemplified in (13).

- (13) DO-causative-derived futurity marker *-keyss-*  
 [a nurse to a patient]  
 ca icey ce-ccok-ulo olmki-si-keyss-supnita  
 now now that-side-to move-HON-FUT-DEC  
 ‘Now, please move over there now.’  
 (< ‘Now, (you) will kindly move over there now’)  
 (<< ‘Now, (it) has been made such that (you) will honorably move  
 over there now.’)

In the above example, the futurity marker is employed to make a request by way of making a prediction, a crosslinguistically common strategy. Even though compliance with the request is expected to be immediate, the use of future makes room for the addressee’s action, a mitigating strategy for a potentially face-threatening act.

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<sup>15</sup> As Anthony Shin (p.c.) points out, such usage may also have been motivated by the fact that it allows for the possibility that many factors beyond one’s conscious thoughts may have been responsible for the coalescence of an idea into a coherent, recognizable form.



### 3.4. Summary

The description of the grammaticalization of causatives and passives may lead to some generalizations. The earliest attestations of affixal markers of causative and passive date back to Late Middle Korean. But even in this early period, many of these causatives and passives were identical in form, and the contexts in which they occurred are not consonant with what the modern-day intuition requires, suggesting that these grammatical notions were not well established.

Except for the DO-causative *-key.ha-*, which was frequently attested in Late Middle Korean, the verbs in most periphrastic causatives and passives were used as main verbs until the end of the 19th century, when they began to be grammaticalized as periphrastic causatives and passives. Even with the innovation of periphrastic forms in Modern Korean, confusion still persists. The functions of these markers are further extended as stance markers, which makes the confusion as to their functions even deeper.

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1. Discursive strategies

The most prominent aspect of the development of causatives and passives and their functional extension is the use of discursive strategies. Since the periphrastic passives encode indirect passivity, whereas the morphological passives encode direct passivity, the combined forms are often used to maximally demote directness, an excellent way of describing a state of affairs indirectly. Likewise, the BECOME-passive is often used without the agent or the external force imposed on the theme or patient, which is usually encoded as the sentential subject. Suppression of the agent makes the sentence's meaning more indirect, and thus makes it appear more polite.

As for the FALL-passive, developed from the verb denoting 'fall', since falling is typically caused by the natural force of gravity, it seems to have implied uncontrollability, thus helplessness (see 4.2 below). It is in this sense that the passive *-e.ci-* is deemed suitable for marking attenuation. In other words, the event denoted by the proposition is now 'what befell the speaker' rather than 'what the speaker actively did and was responsible for'.

The futurity-marker, which originated from the DO-causative (see 3.2.1 above), further developed into *-keyss-*, the marker of conjecture. In PDK,

*-keyss-* comes to be used to soften the illocutionary force of assertions or statements. It is as if the speaker were adding ‘I’m just guessing’ to the proposition being presented.

#### 4.2. Subjectification and intersubjectification

Subjectification is a common concomitant of, though not limited to, the processes of grammaticalization (Traugott and König 1991; Traugott and Dasher 2002). Subjectification is well observed in the development of the grammatical notions of causativity and passivity. There are two major sources of causatives and passives that rendered them subject to a semantic change, whereby the meanings became increasingly situated in the mind of the speaker (Traugott and König 1991: 209). These sources are as shown in (14):

(14a) [MODE > ‘attainment’] in DO-causatives and BECOME-passives

(14b) [‘fall’ > ‘helplessness’ ‘uncontrollability’] in FALL-passives

As shown in 3.2, the source constructions of DO- and BECOME-passive had *-key*, which previously marked ‘mode’. This mode marker acquired the subjective meaning that the mode has actualized the event. In other words, the meaning changed from mode to attainment. Similarly, falling is an event in the physical world, but it acquired the more subjective meanings of ‘helplessness’ and ‘uncontrollability’ associated with the falling event in the course of grammaticalization (see 4.1 above).

As for intersubjectivity, Traugott (2003: 128) defines the notion as “the explicit expression of SP/W’s [= speaker/writer’s] attention to the ‘self’ of AD/R [= addressee/reader] in both an epistemic sense, and in a more social sense (paying attention to their ‘face’ or ‘image needs’ associated with social stance and identity)”. Intersubjectification, the process whereby intersubjectivity increases, is obvious in the development of causative and passive into attenuative markers. The speaker intends to demote agentivity and thus reduce illocutionary force to make the statements sound more polite, a consideration for the face of the addressee.

From a typological perspective, it is noteworthy that there are similar cases attested in other languages, where passives gave rise to intersubjective functions. An interesting example is the passive marker *bei* in Mandarin, as discussed in Wang (1980), Bennett (1981), Y. Kim (2008), among others, which underwent a series of semantic and functional changes: ‘blanket’ >

‘cover, reach’ > ‘suffer’ > causative > negative viewpoint marker (Y. Kim 2008). Chappell (1983) also notes adversity, completiveness, the identifiability of the subject/undergoer, and the obligatory expression of the agent, as associated with *bei*. The emergence of the stance-marking function as associated with *bei*-passive is similar to the Korean passives under discussion.<sup>16</sup>

#### 4.3. Socio-cultural influence

Grammarians and normatively-minded educators often criticize language innovation. They often blame diverse contributing factors for these ‘errors’, such as carelessness and willful violation of existing grammar. For the strategic ‘misuse’ of passives and causatives, Kim (2011) attributes ‘excessive’ use of passive to the censorship of journalism in the early 1980s by the government, which had been established by a military coup. In order to avoid responsibility, according to Kim (2011), journalists chose to hide the agent of the main verb, and as a result, passive sentences proliferated. He claims that this style became fossilized in journalism under the disguise of eliminating subjectivity, as exemplified in (15), taken from an editorial of a local newspaper:

- (15) Isangul yoyakkhentay, cengpwuuy 5.17 cochenun simsangchanhun pwukkoyuy tongthaywa cenkwukcekulo hwaktaytoyn soyosathaylul kamanhan kesulo [a] **phwuli-toy-mye**, naakase ilul kyeykilo kwuk-kaanpocek chaweneyse pwucengpwuphaywa sahoypwulanul tasulilyeko kyelsimhan kesulo [b] **kwanchuk-toy-nta**.

‘In sum, the government’s imposition of the martial law of May 17 [a] **is interpreted** as having considered North Korea’s extraordinary moves and the unrest which has been spread nationwide, and it [b] **is further observed** as a determination to control corruption and social unrest from the national security perspective at this opportunity.’

(*The Hankookilbo Daily*, 20 May 1980, taken from Kim 2011: 29, translation and highlighting ours)

Example (15) is excerpted from an editorial of a nationally distributed newspaper, *The Hankookilbo Daily*, which succumbed to censorship and complied

<sup>16</sup> See Gonzalez-Garcia (2006) for a similar intersubjectification phenomenon with *lo que se dice* in Spanish.

with the ‘guidelines’ from the oppressor. The editorial, entitled “Protection of life in crisis: Let’s pursue stability and progress with wise self-control”, in support of martial law, is characterized by the frequent use of passive forms. Most importantly, it does not explicitly mention who “interprets” (in (a)) and “observes” (in (b)) the situation. Both the “interpreter” and “observer” present positive views about the newly imposed and much reviled martial law, but they can, by way of using passives, prevent their identity from being revealed in the sentence.

Another socio-cultural factor involves language contact, i.e. influence from Japanese. Korean and Japanese are known to share a large number of common features and are often thought to have a common origin. Despite these commonalities, one of the most prominent differences, relevant to the current context, is the disparate distributional pattern of passives. Japanese learners of Korean and Korean learners of Japanese suffer from this disparate pattern and this has long been a research interest for language teachers. At the heart of this difference is the observation that the use of passives in Japanese is far more prevalent than in Korean. For instance, a number of contrastive studies on Japanese texts translated from a Korean source show that only 48% (Park 2011) to 59% (Shin 2003) of the passive expressions in Japanese texts matches the Korean source texts. A number of studies note the Japanese idiosyncrasy that Japanese exhibits productive use of passives with intransitive verbs, which is severely restricted in Korean (Shin 2003; Park 2011, *inter alia*). For instance, in a quantitative study, Sung (1999) notes that nearly 97.8% of passivized intransitive verbs in Japanese cannot be translated into passive forms in Korean. From a typological perspective, verbs with high transitivity (Hopper and Thompson 1980) can be more easily passivized than those with low transitivity. Japanese allows for passivization of the verbs at the lower end of this continuum, thus including intransitive verbs, whereas the cut-off point in Korean is much higher. It is reasonable, then, to suspect that this typological difference could have influenced the Korean grammar through language contact during the colonial period that lasted for thirty-five years from 1910.

An interesting aspect in this regard is that even though it cannot be determined to what extent these socio-cultural factors influenced the use of passives in Modern Korean, the use of passives has significantly increased in recent years. For instance, according to quantitative research by Woo (1997: 231), the ratio of active forms vs. passive forms in the early 20th century data was 9.58: 1, whereas the ratio in the 1990s was 2.43: 1, which means that the use of the passive forms became nearly four times as frequent as it was less

than a century ago.<sup>17</sup> A relevant point is that language purists lament the widespread use of “unwarranted” passives and blame it as an increased Japanese influence in recent years (Lee 2009). This state of affairs strongly suggests that the increased frequency of passives in Korean may be attributable to socio-cultural factors, i.e. political reasons and language contact, in addition to other factors discussed above.

#### 4.4. Implications in grammar

##### 4.4.1. Grammatical notions of passivity and causativity

A look into the Korean historical data immediately reveals that the use of passives in earlier historical eras was quite different from that in Modern Korean. In other words, the notion of passivity does not seem to have been well established in Middle Korean. Numerous occurrences of non-passive forms are attested in passive contexts, as noted in Lee (1972), Ryu (1984), Woo (1997), among others.<sup>18</sup> Such occurrences decreased markedly over time but were still often found around the turn of the 20th century. The decrease is particularly noticeable when different editions of the same text are compared, i.e. later editions increasingly replaced a non-passive with a passive. However, a “misused” notion of passivity (or, rather, non-application of passivity) seems to have persisted well into Modern Korean.

In this context, it is notable that the Korean lexicon has a number of words that came into existence in Modern Korean which contain passive morphemes yet do not carry passive meaning.<sup>19</sup> It is evident that the non-passive/passive voice confusion may have been responsible for the emergence of these “incorrect” forms, as exemplified in (16), where multiple affixes are applied to derive a word, and in (17), where words that are already well derived with af-

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<sup>17</sup> This calculation is based on the statistics presented in Woo (1997). Her sources are restricted to only six pieces of the work at the time and their genres and styles are not exactly controlled. Furthermore, she used different ways of causative-passive grouping. For these methodological limitations, the interpretation of the figures should be taken only as a general tendency rather than in strict terms.

<sup>18</sup> Woo (1997) suggests that this “ungrammatical” preference of active forms may be an influence from Chinese literature, in which passive is not well established.

<sup>19</sup> This phenomenon has been noted in a number of studies and was described in different ways with such nomenclature as “simple phonetic insertion” (Jun 1971), “vowel lengthening” (Kwak 1980), “double passive” (Lee 1972), “emphasis marking” (Han 1984), among others.

fixation, are adjoined by another superfluous passive marker (see 4.4.3 for discussion of related issues).<sup>20</sup>

(16) Stacked affixes for single derivation

- (16a) *ca-* ‘sleep’ > *ca-i-wu-* ‘put to sleep’  
 (16b) *tha-* ‘burn (vi.)’ > *tha-i-wu-* ‘put into fire; burn (vt.)’  
 (16c) *se-* ‘stop (vi.)’ > *se-i-wu-* ‘make someone stop; stop (vt.)’

(17) Superfluous affixation in multiple derivations

- (17a) *kenne-* ‘cross’ > *kenne-i-* ‘transfer’ > *kenne-i-i-* ‘transfer’  
 (17b) *ccilu-* ‘pierce’ > *ccil-li-* ‘get stabbed’ > *ccil-li-wu-* ‘get stabbed’  
 (17c) *pes-* ‘take off’ > *pes-ki-* ‘dismantle’ > *pes-ki-wu-* ‘dismantle’

The persistence of confusion is well illustrated by the coexistence of multiple forms, one of which is preferred by the prescriptivists, while the other is denounced but (more) commonly used by language users in general, especially with respect to the types in (17). The following is an excerpt from a recently posted advisory issued by the National Institute of the Korean Language (translation ours):

- (18) The passive form of the verb *pha-* ‘dig’ is *pha-i-*. But people often add *-i-* again to this already passivized form and use *pha-i-i-*. This is wrong. Likewise, the verb *cha-* ‘kick’ can be passivized as *cha-i-* ‘be kicked’ but the commonly used *cha-i-i-* is a wrong form and must not be used. (Posted 12 Jun 2012.)

In this context, it is noteworthy that not only the notion of passivity but also the notion of causativity seems to be undergoing confusion in Modern Korean as well. Causativity seems to be affected by the instability of the notion of passivity. For instance, prescriptivists denounce the “misuse” of causative markers in non-causative contexts. Speakers often use MAKE-causative forms instead of plain transitive forms using a light verb *ha-* used for deriving a verb from a noun (as mandated by prescriptive grammar).

<sup>20</sup> Since (16) illustrates the examples of single derivation, both passive markers are needed to form a word, and thus *Aki-lul ca-i-wu-nta* ‘(She) puts a baby to sleep’ and *\*Aki-lul ca-i-nta* for the same intended meaning. However, in the cases of the examples in (17) the forms with multiple derivations are considered incorrect by prescriptivists, and thus *Ton-ul kenne-i-nta* ‘(He) hands over money (to someone)’ is an accurate expression whereas *Ton-ul kenne-i-i-nta* is normatively unacceptable for the same intended meaning.

- (19) coh-un            salam    com    sokay-**sikhi**-ecwu-e  
 be.good-ADN    person    please    introduce-CAUS-BEN-SFP  
 ‘Introduce a good guy for me.’ (cf. *sokay-ha-ecwu-e*)

Furthermore, confusion about causativity extends to the replacement of causative-marked forms with plain forms, in a reversal of the situation described above, i.e. with the use of the light verb *ha-* in place of MAKE-causative *sikhi-*.

- (20) [a service-window clerk to a client]  
 sinchengse-nun            yeki    cepswu-**ha**-seyyo  
 application.form-TOP    here    receive-DO-POL.SFP  
 ‘Please submit your application form here.’ (Cf. correctly:  
*cepswu-sikhi-seyyo*.)

The National Institute of the Korean Language recently posted an advisory regarding the use of causative as in (21), contrasting *ha-* ‘do’ with *sikhi-* ‘make’ (translation ours):

- (21) When we compare *ihay-ha-* ‘understand-do’ and *ihay-sikhi-* ‘make someone understand’, *-ha-* is appropriate when someone does something on his/her volition while *-sikhi-* is appropriate when someone makes someone else do something. These two need to be differentiated because they have different meanings, but they are in reality often used indiscriminately because of confusion. (Posted 14 Mar 2012.)

Examples in the advisory include some pairs of non-causative forms (marked with the light verb *ha-* ‘do’) and causative forms (marked with *sikhi-* ‘make’) that the Institute advises to use differently as in the following examples, among numerous others, i.e. not to use the latter causative *-sikhi-* form unless contextually required:

- |       |                     |     |                        |                 |
|-------|---------------------|-----|------------------------|-----------------|
| (22a) | <i>sokay-ha-</i>    | vs. | <i>sokay-sikhi-</i>    | for ‘introduce’ |
| (22b) | <i>chwiso-ha-</i>   | vs. | <i>chwiso-sikhi-</i>   | for ‘cancel’    |
| (22c) | <i>kamchwuk-ha-</i> | vs. | <i>kamchwuk-sikhi-</i> | for ‘reduce’    |

The seemingly widespread “confusion” may have to do, at least in part, with the homophonous nature of many of these passive and causative forms. As shown in Table 1 in 2.1, there are four primary affixes that are homophonous in causatives and passives, i.e. *-i-*, *-hi-*, *-li-*, and *-ki-*, in the *i*-types. These

homophonous forms seem to have contributed to ambiguity in the two notions. Indeed, S. Kim (2008) shows that Korean children have difficulties in acquiring passives and causatives, and suspects that the homophony between these two grammatical notions may be among the contributing factors.

It is noteworthy, however, that the state of affairs cannot be entirely attributed to the homophony because there are other forms, the periphrastic forms, in particular, that are at the center of the “confusion” even though there is no formal identity since they make use of entirely different lexical items such as *ha-* ‘do’ and *sikhi-* ‘make’, as shown in the preceding discussion. This strongly suggests that what is involved is not merely a matter of formal confusion but a matter of conceptual merge in the minds of language users.

#### 4.4.2. Functional reinterpretation of passives

One of the consequences of the emergence of diverse passive forms is the functional reinterpretation of the forms. This has to do with the elaboration of the passive system and division of labor among seemingly synonymous functions. Some states of affairs in Modern Korean indicate that the FALL-passive is being reinterpreted as a procedural marker of change of states rather than as a pure passive.<sup>21</sup>

- (23) [speaking of a tight book case]  
 (As I followed his instruction, even the thick and big books easily)  
*kkiw-e.ci-e.ci-te-kwun*  
 fit-PASS-PASS-RETRO-EVID  
 ‘could be made to be fitted in it, I noticed.’ (Modified from Lee 2004: 119)

With the functional reinterpretation, “double passives” are not semantically superfluous, but have different aspects of the procedure represented by the passive. In other words, repetition of the formally identical passive marker *-e.ci-* may be, in fact, a pure passivizer and a procedural marker combined.

<sup>21</sup> An anonymous reviewer suggests an alternative analysis according to which the passive forms have continuously been expressions for the meaning of “change of states” and the passive sense has been one possible interpretation of that meaning. This is indeed a possibility with the periphrastic passives since they have undergone lesser degree of grammaticalization and the source meanings of inchoation from ‘become’ and ‘fall’ are relatively easily accessible. However, the primary passives exemplified in (16)–(18) are not compatible with this analysis since they do not lend themselves to inchoative interpretations as their primary meanings.



## 4.4.3. Passive stacking

Another case in point is the so-called duplicate passive. Language users often produce sentences in which the BECOME-passive and the FALL-passive are stacked in *-toy-e.ci-*, as exemplified in the following:

- (24) Duplicate passive BECOME- & FALL-passive *-(key-)toy-e.ci-*  
 system malyen-i kacang cwungyoha-key  
 system preparation-NOM most be.important-MODE  
 sayngkak-**toy-e.ci**-pnita  
 thought-PASS-PASS-DEC  
 ‘I think securing a system is of the primary importance (for this).’  
 (Lit. ‘(It) gets to be thought that preparing a system is the most important.’)  
 (Retrieved from a Google search, 22 Jun 2012.)

As the passives and causatives depart from their original functions of marking pure causatives and passives and increasingly become markers of the speaker’s stance toward the event being described by the verb in Modern Korean,<sup>22</sup> the stacking of multiple morphemes often seems unchecked as shown in the following expression that is possible and conceptually comprehensible:

- (25) wancenhi ic-**hi-e.ci-key.toy-e.ci**-n yeca  
 completely forget-PASS-PASS-PASS-PASS-ADN woman  
 ‘a woman who became completely forgotten’

In the above example, as many as four passives, i.e., the affixal passive *-hi-*, and periphrastic passives *-e.ci-*, *-key.toy-* and *-e.ci-*, are stacked. This type of language use is harshly denounced but is becoming increasingly common in contemporary Korean.

## 5. Summary and conclusion

Korean has morphological and periphrastic markers of causative and passive. Korean causative- and passive-derived lexemes show gradience in causativity

<sup>22</sup> The old uses of causatives and passives do not disappear but persist in Modern Korean and thus the emergence of a new usage is an outgrowth of the conventional functions. This is a rather standard situation often described as “divergence” (Hopper 1986, 1991; Hopper and Traugott 2003[1993]).

and passivity, and there are lexemes that are ambiguous between causative and passive readings out of context. The morphological affixes for causatives and passives are historically old grams and are opaque as to their origins. Causatives and passives sometimes converge due to semantic neutralization or bleaching.

The DO-causative further participates in the emergence of the futurity marker and further develops into the conjecture marker. From the futurity/conjecture marking, it further extends its function in the interactive/inter-subjective domain, i.e. polite-stance marking. Likewise, some passive markers also extend their functions to stance-marking in discourse. The development seems to have been triggered by: (i) the speaker's desire to demote the agent, (ii) political factors, and (iii) language contact.

Historically, the grammatical notion of passivity seems not to have been well established in Late Middle Korean and becomes better established toward the advent of Modern Korean. However, the conceptual instability persists and is further complicated due to the functional reinterpretation of the passive forms to associate them with a more discursively salient category, i.e. politeness marking devices. This shows that a grammatical category may remain only loosely established for an extended period of time.

All this shows that the grammatical system is by no means a self-contained system but an open-ended, heterogeneous system consisting of fluctuating patterns in individual speakers' grammar. Considering that language speakers use available language materials to fulfill immediate discursive needs such as marking politeness, speakers of a language are not mere consumers of linguistic forms but are active manipulators of the existing forms, and thus creators and innovators of language.

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