

Non-universality of reflexive analysis for anticausativization: Evidence from the Hokkaido dialect of Japanese

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Koontz-Garboden (2009) proposes a reflexive analysis for anticausativization, where the semantic operation responsible for anticausativization is the coindexing of the effector argument with the theme argument. This analysis makes the following prediction: the reflexivization operation results in anticausativization when the external argument is thematically underspecified but it results in a reflexive-type construction like *Kim dressed herself* when the external argument is an agent. Koontz-Garboden argues that this analysis is applicable to the anticausativization in general (Koontz-Garboden 2009: 80).

The aim of this presentation is to examine the universality of the reflexive analysis for anticausativization, arguing that the anticausativization in the Hokkaido dialect of Japanese cannot be handled with the reflexive analysis.

The Hokkaido dialect of Japanese forms anticausative predicates through the affixation of the spontaneous suffix */-rasar/*. In the Hokkaido dialect, the intransitive sentence derived through passivization and that derived through anticausativization differ syntactically: the agent appears in the oblique form in the passive sentence but it is removed in the anticausative construction. The intransitive predicate derived by suffixation of */-rasar/* exhibits the same semantic properties as those of underived achievement intransitive verbs: the resulting-state interpretation in the progressive form and the incompatibility with durational adverbs. An internet research using Yahoo API has revealed that the majority of intransitive predicates with the spontaneous suffix are derived from accomplishment transitive verbs. These semantic properties indicate that the transitive – intransitive pairs, related through spontaneous suffixation, are semantically causative – inchoative pairs, and that the morphologically marked inchoatives can be regarded as anticausatives.

The reflexive analysis predicts that the transitive verbs selecting agent as an argument are excluded from anticausativization. However, this prediction does not hold in the Hokkaido dialect of Japanese. The anticausatives in the Hokkaido dialect can be derived from agentive transitive verbs. I argue that an analysis suppressing the operator CAUSE (and subsequently the causing event) is more suitable than the reflexive analysis for the anticausativization in this dialect. The suppression analysis is

compatible with the range of anticausativization in this dialect and it is useful for analyzing the syntactic phenomena related to the anticausative constructions, such as co-occurrence restrictions with intentional adverbials, purposive clauses and so on. The suppression analysis also has an advantage of capturing the semantic commonality among the usages of spontaneous suffixation.