

Impersonal Constructions in Ainu

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ABSTRACT

The impersonal “passive” in Southern Hokkaido Ainu dialects employs the transitive construction, while the impersonal “passive” in Central Hokkaido employs the transitive construction for third and first person Undergoers and the intransitive construction for second and indefinite person Undergoers. This fact gives extra support for Shibatani’s idea (1990: 60) that “the Ainu passive represents a case of change from a transitive construction to an intransitive construction”. It is likely that Southern Hokkaido Ainu dialects have retained an older pattern of impersonal and that Central Hokkaido Ainu dialects have been documented exactly at the stage of shift from impersonal “passive” to genuine passive. Therefore it is hardly surprising that even in Southern Hokkaido Ainu dialects the discourse function of the impersonal “passive” is not just defocusing Actor – a typical function of impersonals, but also focusing on Undergoer and focusing on the result of action, the latter two are characteristic of the genuine passive. The formation of the impersonal “passive” in Ainu appears to be sensitive to the topicality hierarchy *second person > first person > third person*, i.e. in the Ishikari dialect, the Undergoers which are higher on the topicality hierarchy trigger the construction with more properties of the prototypical passive.

1. Genetic, dialectal and typological profile of Ainu

Ainu is a critically endangered language of unknown genetic affiliation which shows considerable dialectal variation. The three primary divisions are geographically based, and distinguish between the dialects once spoken on Hokkaido, Sakhalin, and the Kurile Islands. Sakhalin and the Kuriles form part of the Russian Federation today, with Hokkaido being the last autochthonous location of native speakers. The Hokkaido dialects can be roughly divided into Northeastern (Northern, Eastern, and Central) and Southwestern (Southern – indicated with a square in Figure 1 and Southwestern) groups, which are further subdivided into local sub-dialectal forms (see Hattori 1964:18).

Table 1. *Person marking in Ainu (Southern Hokkaido, Chitose dialect)*

person-number	A/S/O pronouns	A affixes	S affixes	O affixes
1SG	<i>kani</i>	<i>ku=</i>	<i>ku=</i>	<i>en=</i>
1PL(EXC)	<i>coka</i>	<i>ci=</i>	<i>=as</i>	<i>un=</i>
<u>inclusive</u> also has the functions of: 1. 2SG/PL honorific 2. impersonal (=indefinite) 3. logophoric (all glossed as INDF)	<i>aoka</i> <i>aoka</i> --- <i>asinuma</i> SG / <i>aoka</i> PL	<i>a=</i> <i>a=</i> <i>a=</i> <i>a=</i>	<i>=an</i> <i>=an</i> <i>=an</i> <i>=an</i>	<i>i=</i> <i>i=</i> --- <i>i=</i>
2SG	<i>eani</i>	<i>e=</i>	<i>e=</i>	<i>e=</i>
2PL	<i>ecioka</i>	<i>eci=</i>	<i>eci=</i>	<i>eci=</i>
3SG	<i>sinuma</i>	\emptyset	\emptyset	\emptyset
3PL	<i>okay</i>	\emptyset	\emptyset	\emptyset

As we can see, inclusive, viz. *aoka* PL, *a=* for PL.A, *=an* for PL.S, and *i=* for PL.O, is used not only in its proper inclusive function to refer to the speaker and addressee, but also has a number of other functions: 2SG/PL honorific, impersonal (or indefinite; no pronouns are used), and logophoric reference to a participant in the quote in the case of his/her coreference with the third/second person singular of the main clause. Southern Hokkaido dialects under consideration are peculiar with respect to ‘logophoric’ function, since they have developed a special singular pronoun *asinuma* ‘oneself’, which is cross-referenced on verbs by the above-mentioned originally non-singular inclusive affixes. ‘Logophoric’³ function is of great importance, because it is commonly used in folktales to refer to the person of the protagonist in the quote, since folktales have the structure of reported discourse with the whole story comprising a single quote. Although, I think that the referential usage ‘inclusive’ provides the best account in terms of unified diachronic analysis of these synchronically separate referential and non-referential usages, for details see Bugaeva (2008: 11-13), I prefer to use in glossing ‘indefinite’ (INDF) as a commonly used general label which was first suggested by Tamura ((1988) 2000: 71-76).

Arguments do not inflect for case in Ainu: A and O are distinguished by their relative position in sentence structure and by verbal cross-referencing; obliques are marked by postpositions. Each verb is unambiguously either intransitive or transitive, since each type employs different verbal cross-referencing, cf. the marking for A and S in Table 1.

Possessivity is the only category obligatorily marked on nouns. Inalienable possession is expressed by the “izafet” construction, the head noun being marked by the possessive suffixes and personal prefixes; the latter are identical with A verbal cross-referencing prefixes. Alienable possession is expressed by a dependent-marking construction (*kor* ‘have sth/sb’).

³ Note that my ‘logophoric’ function corresponds to ‘first person in quotes’ employed by Tamura (2000: 74-76) and other researchers.

Verbs are usually marked for plurality by the suffix *-pa* which signifies plural subject referents when used on intransitives and plural object referents when used on transitives. There are also a few suppletive verbs with different stems for the singular and plural. Tenses are absent; there is only one tense-aspect marker – the perfect auxiliary *a*. The verb has extensive aspectual, modal and evidential systems which are expressed by suffixes, auxiliaries, and particles. There are many affixes to mark different types of actant relations.

2. Goal and data of this study

It may be also noted here that one great difference between the Ainu and Japanese languages is that while the Japanese tongue abhors passives the Ainu use them [here: impersonals] wherever possible and the Japanese only when forced to do so.

(Batchelor 1938: 2)

As is well-known nowadays, Ainu lacks the personal passive construction, but there are two impersonal constructions in Ainu: impersonal proper (indefinite subject construction) and impersonal “passive”, which may, more or less, be regarded as functional equivalents of passives in other languages. Impersonal constructions in Ainu display a number of cross-linguistically unusual properties, and thus present a challenge to a comprehensive typology of impersonal constructions. I will offer a comparative analysis of impersonal constructions in the relatively well-described Southern Hokkaido dialects (Saru: (Tamura 1988/2000), Chitose (Nakagawa 1995, Bugaeva 2004)) and in less described Central Hokkaido dialects (Ishikari: Asai 1969, Tamura 1970a) in order to provide a tentative grammaticalization scenario for these constructions and to discuss their typological implications. The analysis is based on my corpus of colloquial Ainu data, viz. for Southern Hokkaido dialects (308 clauses): T1, JK (Saru) and B, OI (Chitose); for Central Hokkaido dialects (140 clauses): SK (Ishikari), and on examples from specialist literature, viz. T2 (Saru) and T3 (Ishikari). The reason for not using numerous folklore texts in these dialects here is that impersonal marking is materially identical with ‘logophoric’ marking (the person of the protagonist; see Table 1), which would significantly complicate the study.

3. Impersonal constructions in Southern Hokkaido Ainu dialects (Saru)

As is well-known, in Southern Hokkaido Ainu dialects, the impersonal “passive” originated from the impersonal proper construction, which appears to be a commonly attested grammaticalization path (see Shibatani 1990: 60, Malchukov 2008: 96), and the impersonal proper must have, in its turn, developed from the inclusive personal marking (1) since both employ the same verbal morphology, viz. the prefix *a=* for A (2) and suffix *=an* for S (3), note that I use INDF in glosses. The suffix *=an* is unambiguously traced back to the existential verb *an* ‘exist’, and the prefix *a=* may also be possibly traced back to the existential verb *an* since it corresponds to *an=* in all other dialects.

- (1) a. Inclusive person (“minimal inclusive” - (1+2) ‘I and you’)

suy *u-nukar=an* *ro*
again REC-see=INDF.S COHR
‘Let’s (I and you) meet again.’ (OI); Chitose

- b. Inclusive person (“augmented inclusive” - (1+2+3) ‘I and you and s/he/they’)

aoka *anak,* *kamuy* *renkayne,* *ri* *uske* *ta*
we(1+2+3) TOP god thanks.to high place at
oka=an *kusu* *isitoma* *ka* *somo* *a=Ø=ki*
exist=INDF.S because fear also NEG INDF.A=3.O=do
‘Thanks god(s), we (I and you and s/he/they, i.e. all of us) lived at the high place, so there was nothing to be feared (with respect to the flood). (T1: 50); Saru

- (2) Impersonal of vt

- a. *Ø=num-i* *a=Ø=kar* *wa* *a=Ø=sakanke*
3.POSS=nut-POSS INDF.A=3.O=make and INDF.A=3.O=boil.and.dry
‘They (people in old days) took the nuts of (water caltrops) and preserved them by boiling and sun drying.’ (T 1 26); Saru

- b. *kippu* *hunak* *ta* *a=Ø=hok* *pe* *an?*
ticket where at INDF.A=3.O=buy NR be
‘Where does one buy the tickets?’ (JK 186); Saru

- c. *amam* *a=Ø=hok* *wa* *ikasma* *icen*
rice INDF.A=buy and be.left money
‘the money left from buying rice’ (JK 8); Saru

- (3) Impersonal of vi

- a. *apkas=an* *ayne* *Ø=ipe* *rusuy*
walk=INDF.S finally 3.S=eat DESID
‘If one walks, he gets hungry.’ (JK 236); Saru

- b. *to* *ka* *Ø=sat* *kane* *cip-ta⁴=an*
lake top 3.S=be.dry as.if boat-dig=INDF.S
‘They (people in old days) made (so many) boats [lit. ‘they boat-made’] that the lake (looked) dry (when all the boats were there).’ (T1 26); Saru

⁴ This verb contains the incorporation of O.

Impersonal constructions are defined here broadly as constructions lacking a referential subject, which is consistent with the traditional usage of the term impersonal.

And one more word on terminology is in order. Following Foley and Van Valin (1984), I use the terms Actor and Undergoer which are semantic macroroles and are not necessarily equivalent to Agent and Patient in the narrow sense. The label “Actor” refers to a group of roles that are typically expressed as subjects of simple transitive predicates and the label “Undergoer” to those that are typically expressed as objects.⁵

The impersonal “passive” in Southern Hokkaido Ainu dialects is a subjectless construction with a retained direct object (note O markers in (4) and (5), cf. Table 1) which is formed by the prefix *a=* on transitive (4a) and ditransitive action predicates (4b) (such as *rayke* ‘kill sb’, *ko-uwepekennu* ‘ask sb’, *kore* ‘give sth to sb’ and *ko-pisi* ‘ask sb about sth’). The impersonal “passive” allows Actor extension⁶ via an oblique phrase, viz. ablative *or-o wa* ‘from the place of’ with animate Actors (5), or instrumental *ani* ‘by’ with inanimate Actors (6), which is rather uncommon cross-linguistically (see Siewierska 1984: 174). Here, *a=* can no longer be analyzed as a marker of the impersonal subject ‘we/one/they’, as in (2), and should rather be analyzed as the dummy subject marker ‘it’.

(4) Impersonal “passive” without Actor extension

a. *neno e=iki yak a=e=koyki na*
like.this 2SG.S=do if INDF.A=2SG.O=scold SGST
‘If you do that, you will be scolded.’ (T2 71); Saru

b. *a=en=ko-pisi p anakne opitta ku=Ø=ye wa*
INDF.A=1SG.O=to.APPL-ask thing TOP all 1SG.A=3.O=say and
‘I’ll say everything I am asked about.’ (lit. ‘The things I am asked about, I’ll say all of them.’) (T1 12); Saru

(5) Impersonal “passive” with animate Actor extension

hapo or-o wa a=en=koyki
mother place-POSS from INDF.A=1SG.O=abuse
‘I was scolded by (my) mother.’ (T2 72); Saru

⁵ In the first version of this paper, I had “Agents” and “Patients”, but then after reading the insightful paper on Nootka “passive” (Nakayama 1997), I decided to change my earlier terminology.

⁶ Similar Actor extension in the impersonal “passive” has been reported for a number of languages, i.e. Kimbundu (Bantu) (Givón 1990: 606), Trukic (Austronesian), Indonesian (Austronesian) (Shibatani 1985: 845), North Russian (Timberlake 1976: 550-51) and in Modern Estonian (A. Aikhenvald, p.c).

- (6) Impersonal “passive” with inanimate Actor extension

rera ***ani*** *cikuni,* ***a=Ø=kekke*** *wa*
 wind by tree INDF.A=3.O=break and

‘The tree was broken by the wind.’ (B 41); Chitose

The marker *a-* used on transitive ‘psych predicates’ (i.e. predicates denoting perception, viz. *nukar* ‘see sth/sb’ and *nu* ‘hear sth’, cognition, viz. *ramu* ‘think about sth’, and psychological states, viz. *erayap* ‘be pleased with sth’ and *sitoma* ‘be afraid of sth’) has a detransitivizing effect and triggers a decausative⁷ interpretation which may be regarded as an extension of its original function; in this case, *a-* is treated as a derivational prefix. Note that decausatives do not allow Actor extension by definition.

- (7) a. *heasi* *cise* *Ø=Ø=nukar*
 at.the.sea.shore house 3.A=3.O=see

‘(He) saw a house at the shore.’ (constructed example - A.B.)

- b. Decausative

heasi *cise* ***a-nukar***
 at.the.sea.shore house DEC-see

‘A house at the seashore is visible.’ (JK 71); Saru

Impersonals in Southern Hokkaido Ainu dialects (and in other Ainu dialects as well, cf. (8)-(11)) have a major Actor-defocusing function, as in (4) and (2b), and/or Undergoer-focusing function, as in (2b) and (5), and also the function of focusing on the result of the activity, as in (2a, c) and (6); note that all three functions are commonly attested functions of the prototypical passive (Dixon and Aikhenvald 1997: 74).

There are certain restrictions on impersonal “passive” formation in all Ainu dialects: sentences with first or second person Actors, i.e. the speech act participants (henceforth SAPs), regardless of the person of Undergoer (SAP→X), resist passivization because these participants are far too high in topicality to be defocused, i.e. ‘by me/you’ is not possible in (4)-(6), which seems to be a rather common restriction found in many languages scattered in Siberia, South Asia, Australia, and the Americas (Zuniga 2006: 1).

The fact that discourse relevance is controlled by the topicality hierarchy is reminiscent of inverse constructions in the extended sense of Givón (1994) and also of Zuniga (2006), the latter approach is less broad than the former, cf. a more traditional definition of the inverse construction in Dixon and Aikhenvald (1997: 98). I suggest that certain sensitivity of the Ainu impersonal

⁷ A similar analysis is provided in Shibatani (1990: 56) who calls the construction in question “spontaneous” and by Kindaichi ((1931) 1993) who calls it “middle passive”.

“passive” to the topicality hierarchy indicates that it is historically related to an inverse system. Further supporting evidence may be found in other Ainu dialects such as Ishikari of Central Hokkaido.

4. Impersonal constructions in Central Hokkaido Ainu dialects (Ishikari)

Unlike in Southern Hokkaido Ainu (Saru), the impersonal “passive” marking in Central Hokkaido Ainu (Ishikari) itself depends on the person of Undergoer (recall that only third person Actors are allowed in the impersonal), which is a kind of hierarchical alignment, see Table 2. In the case of a third person Undergoer, the Ishikari dialect employs as the impersonal “passive” marker the originally inclusive transitive prefix *an=* (8) corresponding to *a=* of Southern Hokkaido, cf. (5). However, it is the intransitive counterpart *=an* which is employed as the impersonal “passive” marker in the case of a second person (9) and inclusive (11) Undergoer. Moreover, in the case of a first person Undergoer, Ishikari employs an entirely different impersonal “passive” marker *ci=* (10) which has originated from the first person plural exclusive transitive subject prefix *ci=* (cf. Table 1).

Table 2. *Impersonal “passive” marking in Ainu.*

Central Hokkaido Ainu dialects (CHA, Ishikari) vs. Southern Hokkaido Ainu dialects (SHA, Saru)

	with 1SG Undergoer	with 1PL(EXC) Undergoer	with inclusive Undergoer	with 2SG Undergoer	with 2PL Undergoer	with 3SG/PL Undergoer
CHA, Ishikari (T3 261) ⁸	<i>en=ci=</i>	<i>un=ci=</i>	<i>i=...=an</i>	<i>e=...=an</i>	<i>es=...=an</i>	<i>an=∅=</i>
SHA, Saru (T2 59)	<i>a=en=</i>	<i>a=un=</i>	<i>a=i=</i>	<i>a=e=</i>	<i>a=eci=</i>	<i>a=∅=</i>

Here are a few sentential examples to illustrate the form and function of the impersonal “passive” in Central Hokkaido Ainu dialects (Ishikari). Just like in Southern Hokkaido Ainu (see (2)-(6)), the impersonal “passive” in Central Hokkaido Ainu has not only Actor-defocusing function, as in (8a, b) and (11), which is characteristic of the impersonal, but also such typical functions of the passive as Undergoer-focusing function, as in (9) and (10a), and the function of focusing on the result of the activity, as in (8c) and (10b).

⁸ Both Tamura (T3 261) and Asai (1969: 779) treat the impersonal forms with 1SG/PL Undergoers as containing portmanteau morphemes, viz. *enci-* and *unci-*, and the impersonal forms with 2SG/PL and inclusive Undergoers as containing a kind of circumfixes, viz. *e-...-an* etc, but I prefer a more discrete analysis, cf. Table 2.

(8) Impersonal “passive” with 3SG Undergoer

- a. *maciya ekota Ø=san a wa wen sisam*
 town to 3.S=go.down PERF and be.bad the.Japanese
or wa
 place from

an=Ø=kisma,

INDF.A=3.O=grab

Ø=isitoma,

3.S=be.scared

Ø=paraparak

3.S=cry.aloud

‘She went to the town and was grabbed by the Japanese (man), she was scared and cried aloud.’ (SK 177); Ishikari

- b. *ci=Ø=kor pon peko onuman-an a=Ø=ahun-ke*
 1PL.A=3.O=have young cow evening-be INDF.A=3.O=enter-CAUS
oyra
 forget

soy

ta

Ø=hotke

wa

Ø=an

outside

at

3.S=sleep

and

3.S=be

‘In the evening, we (lit. ‘someone’) forgot to put our calf (inside) and it was sleeping outside.’ (The children are confessing to their mother.) (SK 177); Ishikari

- c. *Kindaici tono nispa ku=Ø=nukar*
 K. lord rich.man 1SG.A=3.O=see

tono

nispa

tura

ci=noka

a=Ø=uk

lord

rich.man

with

1PL.POSS=image.POSS

INDF.A=3.O=take

‘We met Prof. Kindaichi. We had a picture taken with him.’ (SK 185); Ishikari

(9) Impersonal “passive” with 2SG Undergoer

- a. *e=yup-i or-o wa*
 2SG.POSS=elder.brother-POSS place-POSS from
e=kor-e=an
 2SG.O?=have-CAUS=INDF.S

pe

Ø=ne

ruwe?

thing

3.A=COP

INF.EV

‘Is it the thing you were given by your elder brother?’ (T3 247); Ishikari

Impersonal “passive” with 2PL Undergoer

- b. *es=aca-ha* *or-o* *wa* *es=koyki=an* *a*
 2PL.POSS=uncle-POSS place-POSS from 2PL.O?=scold=INDF.S PERF
ruwe?
 INF.EV
 ‘Have you (PL) been scolded by your uncle?’ (T3 248); Ishikari

(10) Impersonal “passive” with 1SG Undergoer

- a. *huci* *or-o* *wa* *sayo* *ney* *pakno*
 grandmother place-POSS from gruel always till
en=ci=e-re
 1SG.O=1PL.A=eat-CAUS
 ‘My grandmother always fed gruel to me (and ate less expensive food (fish) herself).’ (SK 63); Ishikari

Impersonal “passive” with 1PL Undergoer

- b. *tumi kes* *ta* *Upun* *ta* *toy*
 war end at place.name at land

tono *or-o* *wa* *un=ci=kor-e*
 lord place-POSS from 1PL.O=1PL.A=have-CAUS
 ‘In the end of the war, we were given land at Upun by the Japanese authorities.’
 (SK 154); Ishikari

(11) Impersonal “passive” with inclusive Undergoer

- "okkayo* *or-o* *wa* *i=koyki=an* *kor* *tan-pe*
 man place-POSS from INDF.O=abuse=INDF.S and this-thing
nenno-an
 like.this-be

tusseka *ne* *na."* *sekor* *∅=en=e-pakasnu*
 kick COP FIN QUOT 3.A=1SG.O=about.APPL-teach
 ‘(The man) taught me: “If we (‘you and I’, ‘one’) are abused by a man, kick him like this.’
 (SK 133); Ishikari

Just like in the Southern Hokkaido dialects, in Central Hokkaido dialects, Actors in the

impersonal “passive” may, as in (8)-(11), or may not be encoded with the oblique phrase *or-o wa* ‘from the place of’, as in (12).

- (12) *e=po* *oya-ke* *ta e=an* *yak*
 2SG.POSS=son.POSS different-place to 2SG.S=be if
e=ray-ke=an
 2SG.O?=kill-CAUS=INDF.S
 ‘If you (SG) move out of your son’s place, you will be killed.’ (SK 168); (Isikari)

I suggest that the formation of the impersonal construction in the Ishikari dialect (Table 2) is determined by the topicality hierarchy in which the second person is ranked higher than the first person, and the first person is ranked higher than the third, which is reminiscent of the Algonquian languages (Dixon 1994: 90), see (13). Undergoers which are higher on the topicality hierarchy have a greater discourse relevance and trigger the construction with more properties of the prototypical passive.

- (13) second person > first person > third person

As we can see, in Ishikari dialect, in the case of the third and first person Undergoers, the verbal morphology is transitive (see Table 2, cf. Table 1): the impersonal “passive” markers employed are the originally transitive prefixes *an=* <INDF.A> (8) and *ci=* <1PL.(EXC).A> (10).

In the case of the first person Undergoers (Table 2), the overt object markers are retained (third person is always zero-marked), but they are attached in the reverse order, viz. *en=ci=* <1SG.O=1PL.A=> and *un=ci=* <1PL.O=1PL.A=>; cf. *a=en=* <INDF.A=1SG.O=> (Southern Hokkaido) with the regular order of prefixes which iconically reflects the regular SV/AOV constituent order in the Ainu clause.

And finally, in the case of the second and inclusive person Undergoers (Table 2), the verbal morphology is intransitive, viz. the impersonal “passive” marker employed is the original *=an* <INDF.S> for S, cf. (9), (11) and (4a); the verbal cross-referencing for the second and inclusive person Undergoers is retained. The reason why the inclusive patterns similar to the second person is because its referential area comprises the first and second persons at the same time (‘you and I’) and because of the higher ranking of the second person over the first person, the second person is given a priority in the choice of a marking pattern, see (13).

According to Givon (1990: 574-5), the following three features are central to the syntax of passivization (all three turn out to be scalar): (1) syntactic demotion of Actor, (2) syntactic promotion of Undergoer and (3) verb intransitivization. In Tables 3 and 4, I have made an attempt to summarize the respective morphosyntactic properties of the impersonal “passive” in Central Hokkaido and Southern Hokkaido Ainu dialects.

Table 3. *Morphosyntactic properties of the impersonal “passive” in Central Hokkaido Ainu dialects (Ishikari)*

	2SG/PL	INC	1SG/PL	3SG/PL
1.syntactic demotion of Actor	(+)	(+)	(+)	(+)
2.syntactic promotion of Undergoer to S	(?)(+)	(-)(+)	(-)(+)	(-)
3.verb intransitivization	(+)	(+)	(-)	(-)

Table 4. *Morphosyntactic properties of the impersonal “passive” in Southern Hokkaido Ainu dialects (Saru)*

	2SG/PL	INC	1SG/PL	3SG/PL
1.syntactic demotion of Actor	(+)	(+)	(+)	(+)
2.syntactic promotion of Undergoer to S	(-)(-)	(-)(-)	(-)(-)	(-)(-)
3.verb intransitivization	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)

As we can see, the analysis of the impersonal “passive” in Central Hokkaido is not straightforward. Answers to the question on the intransitivization are based on the type of impersonal “passive” marking involved (transitive *a=*, *ci-* (-) or intransitive *=an* (+)). Answers to the question on the promotion of Undergoer to S are based on its verbal cross-referencing marking (S marking (+) or O marking (-)) and on its relative order with respect to the impersonal “passive” marking (regular: after the impersonal “passive” marking (-) or irregular: before the impersonal “passive” marking (+)).

It is tempting to interpret verbal cross-referencing of the second person Undergoer, viz. *e=/es=*, as S marking, since Ainu patterns neutrally with respect to the second person, i.e. there is no morphological distinction between A, S and O. However, it makes more sense to provide an identical analysis for both *=an* <INDF.S>-marked impersonal “passives” in Central Hokkaido Ainu, i.e. to regard *e=/es=* of *e=/es= ...=an* (with second person Undergoer) and *i=* <INDF.O> of *i=...=an* (with inclusive/indefinite Undergoer) as a kind of O markers, since the latter one is an unambiguously objective marker, see Table 1.

It is likely that the *=an* <INDF.S>-marked impersonal “passive” has the argument structure of a nominalization with the verb *an* ‘be/exist’⁹, i.e. somewhat like the interpretation *es=koyki=an* lit. ‘There was scolding you (PL)’, see (9b). Generally, the nominalization of verbal forms in Ainu, may be either marked by the nominalizer *p* on transitives, as in (4b), or it may be unmarked on intransitives, as in (14ii).

- (14) *koyki* ‘to fight’ (T4. 287) (vt)
 → *u-kasuy* i. ‘to fight with each other’; ii. ‘a fight’ (vi)

⁹ A similar development has been attested in Ute (Givón 1990: 610).

According to Tamura ((1970b) 2001: 217), “a statement about an action by indefinite person /’ukoyki’án/” allows the following double interpretation, cf. (15a) and (15b). It is obvious that (15a) has developed from (15b).

(15) a. *u-koyki=an*
 REC-fight=INDF.S
 ‘They (indefinite person) fight.’

b. *u-koyki* $\emptyset=an$
 REC-fight 3.S=exist
 ‘There is a fight.’

Note that the similar double interpretation of =*an* is possible in the case of the impersonal from intransitives, as in (3).

5. Inverse constructions in Ainu (with a focus on Central Hokkaido Ainu dialects (Ishikari))

The fact that discourse relevance is controlled by the topicality hierarchy is reminiscent of inverse constructions at least in the extended sense of Givón (1994), cf. a more traditional definition of the inverse construction in Dixon and Aikhenvald (1997: 98). I suggest that certain sensitivity of the Ainu impersonal “passive” to the topicality hierarchy indicates that it might be historically related to an inverse system.

In the Ishikari dialect, the impersonal construction (i.e. the one without an oblique phrase) may also be employed for the obligatory inverse, as in (16) – (17), which occurs when a first person acts on a second person complying with the higher ranking of the second person, see (13).

(16) a. *e=e-pakasnu=an* *kusu* *ne* *na*
 2SG=about.APPL-teach=INDF.S intention COP FIN
 ‘I’ll teach it to you (SG).’ (lit. ‘There will be teaching of you (SG).’)
 (T3 247); Ishikari

b. *ku=ihoski* *wa* *e=kik=an* *hi* *ka*
 1SG.S=get.drunk and 2SG=hit=INDF.S COMP even
ku=∅=erampewtek
 1SG.A=3.O=not.know
 ‘I got drunk and did not know that I had hit you.’ (lit. ‘...that there was the hitting of you.’) (T3 247); Ishikari

(17) a. *es=e-pakasnu=an* *kusu* *ne* *na*
 2PL=about.APPL-teach=INDF.S intention COP FIN
 ‘I’ll teach it to you (PL).’ (lit. ‘There will be teaching of you (PL).’)
 (T3 248); Ishikari

b. *esokay* *es=hunara=an* *hike* *ka* $\emptyset=wen$
 2PL 2PL=search=INDF.S but even 3.S=be.bad
 ‘I was looking for you, but in vain.’ (lit. ‘There was looking for you...’)
 (T3 248); Ishikari

This is apparently the first time the construction in question has been identified as an inverse construction in Ainu. All Ainu dialects consistently trigger the obligatory inverse construction when a first person acts on a second person (1→2), since nothing like **ku=e=* <1SG.A=2SG.O=> or **ku=eci=* <1SG.A=2PL.O=> is ever possible. Just like in the above-described Ishikari dialect, in most Ainu dialects, the inverse marking is either completely identical or at least reminiscent of the impersonal marking, viz. in Shizunai (Refsing 1986: 223), there is *an=e=* for 1SG/PL→2SG and *an=eci=* or *eci=...=an* for 1SG/PL→2PL; in Sakhalin (Murasaki 1979: 50), *eci=* for 1SG → 2SG, *an=e=* for 1PL→2SG, *e=...=yan* [corresponding to *e=...=an* in other dialects] for 1SG/PL→2PL, the major difference is that the inverse does not allow Actor extension. In Southern Hokkaido Ainu dialects, the formal relatedness of the inverse and impersonal is not that obvious since they invariably employ the prefix *eci=* (originally 2PL for A, S and O, see Table 1) for 1SG/PL→2SG/PL, cf. the inverse marking in Sakhalin. I suggest that the inverse prefix *eci=* may as well be traced back to either to *a(n)=eci=* and *a(n)=e=*, as in geographically adjacent Shizunai dialect (Refsing 1986: 223).

6. Conclusions

As we have seen, the impersonal “passive” in Southern Hokkaido Ainu dialects employs the transitive construction, while the impersonal “passive” in Central Hokkaido employs the transitive construction for third and first person Undergoers and the intransitive construction for second and indefinite person Undergoers. This fact gives extra support for Shibatani’s idea (1990: 60) that “the Ainu passive represents a case of change from a transitive construction to an intransitive construction”, which he bases, however, on rather different argumentation (= *an* <INDF.S> marker of Ishikari is not taken into account). In fact, the Central Hokkaido Ainu pattern of the impersonal “passive” (or similar ones) is spread over a vast area comprising all Northeastern dialects and partly Sakhalin dialects, and the Southern Hokkaido Ainu pattern of the impersonal “passive” is shared by Southwestern dialects (e.g. Horobetsu) and partly by Sakhalin dialects (Nakagawa p.c). It is quite likely that Southern Hokkaido Ainu dialects have retained an older pattern of impersonal and that Central Hokkaido Ainu dialects have been documented exactly at the stage of shift from

impersonal “passive” to genuine passive.

In such a situation, it is hardly surprising that even in Southern Hokkaido Ainu dialects which have preserved an earlier stage of impersonal constructions, the discourse function of the impersonal “passive” is not just defocusing Actor – a typical function of impersonals, but also focusing on Undergoer and focusing on the result of action, the latter two (and also the former one) are characteristic of the genuine passive.

It appears that the formation of the impersonal “passive” in Ainu is sensitive to the following topicality hierarchy which is repeated here for convenience.

(18) second person > first person > third person.

In all Ainu dialects the impersonal “passive” construction is used to encode the inverse direction only (i.e. SAP→3 is outruled) and the active proper, impersonal “passive” and inverse constructions partly share (but not completely, since 3→SAP is also possible) the task of indicating the direction of an action, as is summarized below¹⁰:

(19) Optional (either an active or an impersonal “passive” form is possible): 3→SAP

Active forms proper only: SAP→3, 2→1

Inverse forms only: 1→2.

Additionally, in the Ishikari dialect, the Undergoers which are higher on the topicality hierarchy trigger the construction with more properties of the prototypical passive (see Table 3) which was supposed to be the next step in the grammaticalization chain (a never finished scenario).

(20) a. Grammaticalization scenario in Southern Hokkaido Ainu dialects

- existential verb (*an*) >
- inclusive: “minimal inclusive” / “augmented inclusive” (*aoka*; *a=*, *=an*, *i=*) >
- impersonal: (a) proper (*a=* for vt, *=an* for vi), (b) impersonal “passive” (*a=* for vt).

b. Grammaticalization scenario in Central Hokkaido Ainu dialects

- existential verb (*an*) >
- inclusive: “minimal inclusive” / “augmented inclusive” (*anokay*; *a=*, *=an*, *i=*) >
- impersonal: impersonal proper/impersonal “passive” (*an=*, *=an*, *ci=* <1PL.(EXC)> for vt, *=an* for vi) > {**passive**}.

¹⁰ In my analysis I follow the patterns outlined by Shibatani (2006: 251) in his analysis of Southern Tiwa.

Ainu is unique in that discourse relevance, i.e. the choice of the construction type in (19) (in all Ainu dialects) and the type of impersonal “passive” marking (in some Ainu dialects, e.g. Ishikari), is partly determined by the topicality hierarchy—as in the case of an inverse system—indicating the possibility that the impersonal passive has historically developed from a more extensive inverse system¹¹. It could also be regarded as one of the reasons for pervasiveness of the impersonal in Ainu discourse (recall the epigraph to section 2). More extensive comparative Ainu data are required to support my hypothesis on the relation between the inverse and impersonal “passive”.

Abbreviations: 1/2/3 = person, Ø = zero-marked third person, A = transitive subject, A.B. = Anna Bugaeva, APPL = applicative, CAUS = causative, COHR = cohortative, COMP = complementizer, COP = copular, DEC = decausative, DESID = desiderative, EXC = exclusive, FIN = final particle, INDF = indefinite, INF.EV = inferential evidential, O = object, PERF = perfect, POSS = possessive, QUOT = quotation marker, REC = reciprocal, S = intransitive subject, SAP = speech act participants, SG = singular, SGST = suggestive particle, TOP = topic.

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¹¹ A similar grammaticalization pathway has been attested in Sahaptin (Rude 1994: 103) and, presumably, in Southern Tiwa (Shibatani 2007).

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