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The Passive and Related Constructions in Marathi*

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It is becoming increasingly clear among studies of languages of the world that the passive expression is related to other constructions such as the reflexive, reciprocal, spontaneous, potential, and honorific. The passive construction in Marathi is also a case in point. Presently available characterizations of the Marathi passive cannot offer a unified account, let alone its correlations with other constructions, owing to their discrete nature and narrow perspective. In light of this, this paper offers a detailed alternative analysis of the Marathi passive construction (1) accounting for a hitherto ignored twin passive viz. the GO and COME passive, and (2) demonstrating that the passive construction in Marathi exhibits a continuum with other constructions along the lines suggested by Shibatani (1985).

1. INTRODUCTION

The passive construction has occupied a prominent position in linguistic descriptions in the last few decades, and has been analyzed by modern linguists in various frameworks, such as transformational and generative grammar (Chomsky 1965, Kuroda 1979), relational grammar (Perlmutter & Postal 1977, Pandharipande 1981, Rosen & Wali 1989), functional grammar (Givón 1979). As pointed out by Shibatani (1985), however, these formal as well as functional approaches are too restricted to account for the patterns of distribution which passive morphology exhibits. It has also been pointed out that various languages employ the same morphosyntactic properties as the passive in reflexive, reciprocal, spontaneous, potential and honorific constructions (Langacker & Munro 1975, Shibatani 1985). The Marathi morpheme *V-PERF+GO* is also a case in point, and is used in four construction viz. the passive, spontaneous, potential and honorific.

Previous characterizations of the passive in Marathi (Tarkhadkar 1836, Kher 1899, Joshi 1900, Damle 1911, Berntsen & Nimbkar 1975, Pandharipande 1981, Rosen & Wali 1989) are not only unable to provide a unified account, but also too narrow in perspective to account for the correlation of the passive with the other constructions. In light of this, the goal of this paper is to (a) provide an alternative account for the passive in Marathi, pointing out the inadequacies in the previous descriptions, and (b) explore the correlations of the Marathi passive with other constructions such as the spontaneous, potential and honorific.

As pointed out by Shibatani (1985), for a correct understanding of the correlation of the passive with the other constructions, a broader perspective is required. Accordingly, we will adopt the prototype framework proposed by Shibatani (1985) to explore the correlation of the Marathi passive with the other constructions. Let us first introduce the framework in which our analysis will be carried out.

1.1. The Framework : Shibatani (1985)

Shibatani adopts a traditional view of grammatical voice as a category that signals an unmarked vs. marked distinction of mapping between the basic syntactic functions of subject and object, and the basic semantic roles of agent and patient. In an active clause, the agent occupies the most prominent syntactic slot of subject, and thus cannot be deleted. However, in a passive clause the agent is removed from the most prominent syntactic slot, and is either demoted to the role of an adjunct or not encoded at all. Passive voice, therefore, can be seen as a means of demoting the agent or deleting it altogether. Thus, the prototypical passive is agentless. Shibatani (1985:837) defines the passive prototype as follows:

- (1) Characterization of the passive prototype
 - a. Primary pragmatic function: Defocusing of agent
 - b. Semantic properties:
 - (i) Semantic valence: Predicate (agent, patient)
 - (ii) Subject is affected.
 - c. Syntactic properties:
 - (i) Syntactic encoding: agent $\rightarrow \phi$ (not encoded)
 patient \rightarrow subject
 - (ii) Valence of P[redicate]: Active = P/n ;
 Passive = P/n-1.
 - d. Morphological property:

Active = P ;

Passive = P[+passive].

Shibatani points out that, rather than arguing whether a given construction should be considered passive or not, a description must be offered as to what extent the construction in question is similar to or different from the prototype. This view of grammar thus assumes that various constructions exist along a continuum. Some of them are prototypical, others are similar to the prototype to a limited extent, while still others share no similarities at all with the prototype. Such an approach is essential in understanding the relationships among various constructions within a single language, and is capable of providing a useful framework for cross-linguistic research. The rationale for adopting this framework comes from the fact that other frameworks cannot offer a unified account of the passive construction or its correlation with other constructions. The correlations discussed here are neither purely syntactic nor semantic in nature, but are rather pragmatic--i.e. all of them share a common pragmatic function viz. *agent defocusing*.

In what follows we will demonstrate that the broader pragmatic notion of *agent defocusing* offers a unified account for the passive construction in Marathi, as well as the constructions

2. THE MARATHI PASSIVE

(2) polis-An-nI cor pakaD-I-A
 police-PL-ERG thief.M catch-PERF-M
 'The police caught the thief.' [ACTIVE]

(3) a. polis-An-kaDUn cor pakaD-l-A ge-l-A
 police-PL-by thief.M catch-PERF-M go-PAST-M
 'The thief was caught by the police.' [GO PASSIVE]

b. polis-An-kaDUn cor pakaD-NyAt A-l-A
 police-PL-by thief.M catch-PTCPL come-PAST-M
 'The thief was caught by the police.' [COME PASSIVE]

In earlier analyses of the Marathi passive construction, the COME passive was either not discussed at all, or was treated as a construction synonymous with the GO passive. We will demonstrate with ample illustration that this, however, is far from true. The GO passive and the COME passive are neither interchangeable nor mutually exclusive in all contexts. Moreover, they are not discrete entities but rather form a continuum.

We shall begin with a review of earlier analyses of the Marathi passive in order to establish some background, and then argue that these are in fact inadequate to account for the Marathi passive-- to say nothing of its correlation with other constructions.

2.1. Review of earlier research

Earlier analyses of the Marathi passive construction can be broadly divided into two categories, viz. traditional grammars [Tarkhadkar (1836), Kher (1899), Joshi (1900), Damle (1911)], and modern linguistic descriptions [Berntsen & Nimbkar (1975), Pandharipande (1981), Rosen & Wali (1989)]. For the sake of convenience we will review them separately.

2.1.1. Traditional Grammars

Traditional grammarians such as Tarkhadkar (1836), Kher (1899), Joshi (1900), and Damle (1911) confine their discussion to the morphological and syntactic aspects of the passive construction, and totally ignore the semantic and pragmatic aspects.

As for the morphological aspect, the traditional grammarians discuss in detail the diachronic change from the suffixal to the periphrastic passive. With regards to the syntactic aspect, they define the *karmaNI prayog* (passive construction) as one in which the verb agrees with the object (*karma* [lit. deed/fate/object]) in number, person and gender. According to this definition, whenever the subject is marked and the object is unmarked, the resultant construction would be the *karmaNI*, or passive construction.

- | | |
|---|---|
| (4) rAmA pustak wAcI-t-o
Rama.M book.N read-PRES-M
'Rama reads the book.' | Active construction |
| (5) rAmA-ne pustak wAcI-l-e
Rama-ERG book.N read-PAST.N
'Rama read the book.' | Passive construction with
instrumental subject |
| (6) ma-lA kAm kar-aw-t-e
I-DAT work.N do-POT -PRES-N
'I am able to work/ I can work.' | Passive construction with
dative subject |

This definition is incorrect in that in Marathi, the verb always agrees with an unmarked nominal (if any), and is thus independent of any construction. Example (5) is in fact an ergative construction, and should be distinguished from the passive construction.² Example (6) is a dative subject construction which is void of an agent.

The traditional analyses completely ignore the semantic and pragmatic aspects of the passive construction, yet--except for Joshi (1900)--all have discussed the GO as well as the COME passive. Their analyses, however, have treated these constructions as semantically identical, and thus mutually interchangeable in all contexts. We claim that this is not the case, and will discuss both of these constructions in greater detail later on. The traditional grammarians also fail to capture the correlation of the passive with other constructions such as the spontaneous, potential and honorific.

Having summarized the traditional analyses, let us now turn to modern linguistic descriptions pertaining to the Marathi passive.

2.1.2. Modern Linguistic Descriptions

In this section we will review the modern linguistic descriptions pertaining to the Marathi passive and argue that they are incapable of providing a unified account of the passive construction in Marathi.

Although, Berntsen & Nimbkar (1975) talk about the GO as well as the COME passive; however, they remain silent about their distribution and thus tacitly treat them as synonymous. They also fail to recognize the correlation of the passive with other constructions.

Pandharipande (1981) as well as Rosen & Wali (1989), on the other hand, completely ignore the COME passive. The relational grammar approach adopted by these authors is discrete in nature, and fails to capture the correlation between the passive and related constructions like the spontaneous, potential and honorific. We will demonstrate in the next section that this failure to recognize the correlations has led them to make unwarranted claims regarding the Marathi passive.

Before proceeding further, a discussion on the differences between the passive construction and the ergative construction is in order. It should be recalled that the traditional grammarians failed to make a distinction between the ergative construction and the passive construction in Marathi [Cf. (5)]. It is thus appropriate to clarify that these constructions are not the same and therefore should be treated as independent.

2.2. The Passive and the Ergative construction

In Marathi, the subject of a transitive clause (third person) in the past perfective is marked with the ergative marker *ne* (singular) or *ni* (plural). If the subject is a first or second person, there is no overt ergative marker; in either case, however, the verb agrees with the patient nominal, and not with the agent nominal. Note the following examples:

- (7) mI/tU/rAm-ne noTis wAc-l-I
 I/You/Ram-ERG notice.F read-PAST-F
 'I/You/Ram read the notice.'

The fact that the patient nominal of the ergative construction behaves like a subject (i.e. controls concord), makes it look like the passive construction. However, these two constructions exhibit fundamental differences. First, the ergative construction can be passivized, while the passive construction cannot:

- (8) rAm-kaDUn noTis wAc-l-I ge-l-I
 Ram-by notice.F read-PERF-F go-PAST-F
 'The notice was read by Ram.'

- *(9) rAm-kaDUn noTis wAc-l-I ge-l-I ge-l-I
 Ram-by notice.F read-PERF-F go-PERF-F go-PAST-F
 'The notice was read by Ram.'

Example (8) is the passivized form of the ergative construction (7), while (9) is the ‘passivized’ form of the passive construction (8). Note that (8) is grammatical while (9) is not.

Second, the agent nominal can be omitted in the passive, but not in the ergative construction. Deletion of the agent nominal in the ergative construction (viz. (7)) turns out to be ungrammatical, as shown in (10) below. However, the deletion of the agent in a passive expression (viz. (8)) does not affect its acceptability, as shown in (11):

*(10) noTis wAc-I-I
notice.F read-PAST-F
‘(Lit) Notice read.’

(11) noTis wAc-I-I ge-I-I
notice.F read-PERF-F go-PAST-F
‘The notice was read.’

Third, in ergative constructions the agent nominal is typically human, while in the case of the passive there is no such restriction. This is exemplified below:

(12) a. rAm-ne phAndI toD-I-I
Ram-ERG branch.F break-PAST-F
‘Ram broke the branch.’

*b. waryA-ne phAndI toD-I-I
wind-ERG branch.F break-PAST-F
‘The wind broke the branch.’

(13) fulpAkharAn-kaDUn parAgkaN wAhi-I-e jA-tAt
butterflies-by pollens.N carry-PERF-N go-PRES.PL.N
‘Pollen is carried by butterflies.’

(14) hrudayA-kaDUn sharIr-AtIl wiwidh bhAgAn-nA rakta-purawathA
heart-by body-in various organs-to blood-supply.M
ke-I-A jA-t-o
do-PERF-M go-PRES-M
‘In the human body, blood supply to the various organs is done by the heart.’

Ergative constructions thus display all the properties of active transitive clauses. The only difference between a canonical transitive clause and the *ergative construction* is in the pattern of agreement. In the former, the verb agrees with the agent nominal, while in the latter the verb agrees with a nominal other than the agent. In the absence of an unmarked nominal, the verb assumes a third person singular neuter form and does not agree with any of the nominals present in the clause.

To sum up, in this section we have presented a critical review of earlier research regarding the Marathi passive, and pointed out the inadequacies therein. We have also demonstrated that the passive and the ergative are independent constructions in their own right, and that the traditional treatment of ergative constructions as passive is inappropriate. In the next section we will present an alternative analysis of the Marathi passive construction.

3. AN ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE MARATHI PASSIVE

As pointed out earlier, the previous treatments--traditional as well as modern--are unable to account for the Marathi passive and its correlation with other constructions. In this section we will present an alternative analysis of the Marathi passive. The analysis presented here addresses two issues viz. the distribution of the GO and COME passive, and the correlation of the passive construction with other morphosyntactically related constructions which have not been taken up in earlier studies: the spontaneous, potential and honorific.

To begin with, we agree with Pandharipande (1981) that the passive in Marathi is a rule-governed, in that it applies to a semantically definable class of volitional transitive verbs. Thus in Marathi, intransitive verbs typically fail to yield passives, and agents permitted in the passive tend to be typically human. We do not agree with Pandharipande, however, concerning her claims regarding the functions uniquely performed by the passive, viz. expressing a capabilitative (1981:123) and a prescriptive meaning (1981:127).

Rosen & Wali (1989) classify the Marathi passive into two categories on the basis of the meaning they convey: regular passive (RP) and capabilitative passive (CP). Thus, like Pandharipande, they also claim that the passive expresses a capabilitative meaning.

It is true that in Marathi, the same morphology viz. *V-PERF+GO* is employed for expressing (non)capabilitative meaning; however, we claim that this is not the passive construction *per* but rather the potential construction which shares morphosyntactic similarities with the passive. If capabilitative meaning is peculiar to the passive construction, it follows that intransitive verbs marked with the *V-PERF+GO* morphology should fail to express it, since in Marathi intransitive verbs do not yield the passive. Contrary to Pandharipande's claim, however, intransitive verbs involving the *V-PERF+GO* morphology do express a capabilitative reading. Pandharipande also claims that the capabilitative meaning expressed by the passive results from the ex-subject/agent's effort, and is determined by agent-external conditions such as the weather (1981:123). Again contrary to Pandharipande's claim, however, the capabilitative meaning expressed by a verb can be neutral with regards to agent-internal conditions (headache, pain, hatred, happiness, physical and psychological pain etc.) or agent-external (weather etc.) ones. Note the following examples:

- (15) a. ghAN wAs yet as-lyAmuLe rAm-kaDUn tyA
 foul smell coming be-because Ram-by that
 kholl-t zop-l-e ge-l-e nAhi
 room-LOC sleep-PERF-N go-PAST-N not
 'Ram could not sleep in that room as it was stinking.'
- b. bhitI-muLe rAm-kaDUn tyA kholl-t zop-l-e
 fear-because Ram-by that room-LOC sleep-PERF-N
 ge-l-e nAhi
 go-PAST-N not
 'Ram could not sleep in that room out of fear.'
- (16) a. bhAtA-lA wAs ye-t as-lyAmuLe rAm
 rice-ACC smell come-PTCPL be-because Ram
 kaDUn bhAt khA-ll-A ge-l-A nAhi
 by rice.M eat-PERF-M go-PAST-M not
 'Ram could not eat the rice since it had a foul smell.'
- b. poT bhar-l-e as-lyAmuLe rAm kaDUn bhAt
 stomach.N full-PAST-N be-because Ram by rice.M
 khA-ll-A ge-l-A nAhi
 eat-PERF-M go-PAST-M not
 'Ram could not eat rice since he was full.'

According to Pandharipande's analysis, transitive verbs which involve the *V-PERF+GO* morphology and express a capability meaning should be treated as passives, while intransitive verbs which involve the *V-PERF+GO* morphology and express a capability meaning would be either barred or treated as constructions unrelated to the passive. Pandharipande as well as Rosen & Wali thus fail to recognize the distinction between the passive and the potential construction, and make unwarranted assumptions about Marathi grammar.

In addition, if the claim is correct that the capability meaning is peculiar to the passive, a modal verb which expresses capability viz. *ShakNe* (can) should not be tolerated in a passive expression. Contrary to the claim, however, a capability modal can occur in a passive expression as exemplified below:

- (17) sAdhAraN widyArthyA-kaDUn-hI he gaNit sahaj
 ordinary student-by-EMPH this.N math. problem.N easily
 soDaw-l-e jA-u shak-t-e
 solve-PERF-N go-PTCPL can-PRES-N
 'This mathematical problem can be easily solved even by an ordinary student.'

Furthermore, Pandharipande's proposal predicts that those constructions should be blocked which involve the 'passive' morphology and a) express effortless, agent-internally-determined

capabilitative meaning, or b) indefinite agent and a capabilitative meaning. However, neither of these predictions is borne out, as exemplified below:

- (18) bharpUr jewaN zAla as-Una-hI mAjhyA-kaDUn
 too much meal became be-PTCPL-EMPH me-by
 don Ambe sahaj khA-ll-e ge-l-e
 two mangoes.N without effort eat-PERF-N go-PAST-N
 ‘Even after a heavy meal I could easily eat two mangoes.’

- (19) bharpUr jewaN zAla as-la tarI Aiskrim
 too much meal became be-PERF though ice-cream.N
 sahaj kha-ll-a jA-t-a
 easily eat-PERF-N go-PRES-N
 ‘Even after a heavy meal one can easily eat ice-cream.’

The above data thus undermines the claim that a capabilitative meaning is peculiar to the Marathi passive. As pointed out earlier, it is not the passive construction *per se* which expresses the capabilitative meaning, but rather a potential construction which exhibits morphosyntactic similarities to the passive.

According to Pandharipande, another function uniquely performed by the passive in Marathi is that of expressing a social convention, and thereby prescribing a particular mode of behavior (1981:127). Only passives without agent phrases are used in this way, and such passives differ from other constructions conveying prescriptive meaning in terms of the degree of politeness expressed by them. Pandharipande claims that such passive expressions convey the highest degree of politeness. Contrary to Pandharipande’s claim, however, such passives do not obligatorily convey a prescriptive meaning as exemplified below:

- (20) japAn-madhye japAnI bhAshA bola-l-I jA-t-e
 Japan-in Japanese language.F speak-PERF-F go-PRES-F
 ‘The Japanese language is spoken in Japan.’

- (21) mahArAshtrA-t gaNeshotsaw mothyA pramANA-war
 Maharashtra-in Ganesh festival.M big scale-on
 sAjrA ke-l-A jA-t-o
 celebrate do-PERF-M go-PRES-M
 ‘The Ganesh festival is celebrated on a grand scale in Maharashtra state.’

We treat these examples as indefinite/covert agent passives in which the agent phrase, despite being conceptualized, does not occur in the construction.

The unwarranted claims made by Pandharipande and Rosen & Wali regarding the meaning/functions of the passive stem from their failure to recognize the correlations that the passive has with other constructions. The constructions expressing capabilitative meaning discussed above are claimed by Pandharipande and Rosen & Wali to be the passive, while in fact they

represent a separate one: the potential. At the same time, the constructions expressing a prescriptive meaning are claimed by Pandharipande to be passive, yet they are in fact indirectly related to the honorific construction in that a particular mode of behaviour is prescribed as a means of expressing respect/honour, as exemplified below:

- (22) booT ghAl-Un mandirA-t prawesh ke-l-A
 boot wear-PTCPL temple-LOC entry.M do-PERF-M
 jA-t nAhI
 go-PRES not
 'One is not supposed to enter a temple with shoes on.'

The potential, as well as the honorific construction shares morphosyntactic similarities with the passive. To conclude, the discrete approach adopted by Pandharipande and Rosen & Wali fails to recognize these correlations, and has led them to make unwarranted claims regarding Marathi passives.

Let us now turn to another important issue related to the passive that has not been addressed in previous analyses, viz. the distribution of the GO and COME passives.

3.1 *The Distribution of GO and COME passives*

As mentioned earlier, most of the previous studies on the Marathi passive have not even mentioned the COME passive, while the few that have treat it as semantically identical with the GO passive and thus interchangeable in all contexts. In this section we will demonstrate that the GO and COME passives are not semantically identical, and that the notion of “**intention**” plays a key role in their distribution.

We claim that, in Marathi, COME passives are typically employed to depict a meticulously planned, highly intentional event in which the agent plays the role of the planner, and who brings about the event with the aim of achieving the desired outcome. The GO passive, on the other hand, is typically employed to depict a non-meticulously planned, less intentional event. It should be noted that the notion of “**intention**” is not a matter of “all or nothing” but rather a matter of “degree”. The higher the degree of intention, the greater the chances of employing the COME passive by the speaker and vice versa.

From the above explanation, one can predict that in the case of a meticulously planned (highly intentional) event, the GO passive will be blocked and--conversely--in the case of a non-meticulously planned (less intentional) event, the COME passive will be prevented from appearing. Both of these predictions are borne out, as exemplified below:

- (23) hA bomb sabhAsthAnA-pAsUn shambhar miTar antarA-war
 this bomb.M meeting place-from hundred meter distance-on
 ubhyA kelelyA ekA moTArI-t thew-NyAt A-l-A
 standing did one motor-in keep-PTCPL come-PERF-M
 ho-t-A /* thew-l-A ge-l-A ho-t-A
 become-PRES-M / Keep-PERF-M go-PAST-M become-PRES-M
 'This bomb was kept in a vehicle parked a hundred meters away from the venue of the meeting.' [The daily *KesarI* internet edition dated 15th Feb. 98 *wrutawishesh* column]

- (24) uttarpradeshA-tIl kalyANsing yanche sarkAr baDtarfa
 Utterpradesh-in Kalyansing his government.N dismiss
 kar-NyAt A-l-e / * ke-l-e ge-l-e
 do-PTCPL come-PERF-N/ do-PERF-N go-PAST-N
 'The Kalyansingh government in Uttar Pradesh was dismissed.'
 [The daily *KesarI* internet edition dated 22nd Feb. 98 *wruttawishesh* column]

Events like planting a bomb or dismissing a government depict a highly intentional activity involving a high degree of planning, and--as correctly predicted by our proposal--the COME passive is allowed while the GO passive is blocked. The following examples depict the reverse situation:

- (25) a. japAn-madhye japAnI bhAshA bol-l-i jA-t-e
 Japan-in Japanese language.F speak-PERF-F go-PRES-F
 'In Japan, they speak Japanese.'
 *b. japAn-madhye japAnI bhAshA bol-NyAt ye-t-e
 Japan-in Japanese language.F speak-PTCPL come-PRES-F
 'In Japan, they speak Japanese.'
- (26) a. dakshiN bhAratA-t prAmukyAne tAndUL khA-Il-A jA-t-o
 south India-LOC mainly rice.M eat-PERF-M go-PRES-M
 'In South India, mainly rice is eaten.'
 *b. dakshiN bhAratA-t prAmukyAne tAndUL khA-NyAt ye-t-o
 south India-LOC mainly rice.M eat-PTCPL come-PRES-M
 'In South India, mainly rice is eaten.'

The events depicted in the above examples are less intentional, and typically lack meticulous planning in that there is no definite entity that exercises conscious effort in bringing them about. Thus, as per our proposal, they can be couched only in the form of a GO passive, while the COME passive is barred. Native speakers of Marathi do make a distinction between GO and COME passives. Note the following contrast:

- (27) tyA-lA sewAjeshtate-nusAr badhatI di-l-I
 he-DAT seniority- as per promotion.F give-PERF-F
 ge-l-i / * de-NyAt A-l-I
 go-PAST-F/ give-PTCPL come-PAST-F
 'He was promoted on a seniority basis.'
- (28) tyA-lA sewAjeshtatA DawlUn badhatI de-NyAt
 he-DAT seniority violating promotion.F give-PTCPL
 A-l-I / * di-l-i ge-l-i
 come-PAST-F / give-PERF-F go-PAST-F
 'He was given promotion, violating the norms of seniority.'

Example (27) depicts a event in which a controller who has the authority to award a promotion does so as a part of some routine procedure, while example (28) depicts a meticulously planned activity, overriding an otherwise routine procedure. The former depicts a typically less intentional activity, while the latter depicts a typical highly intentional one. In consonance with our proposal then, the COME passive is blocked in (27) while the GO passive is blocked in (28).

3.2. Additional evidence

In this section we will provide some additional evidence to support our proposal that the notion of “**intention**” dictates the selection of GO or COME as a passive auxiliary in Marathi.

3.2.1. Adverbial Modification

If our proposal is correct, adverb *cukUn* ‘mistakenly’ should occur only with GO passives which typically depict non-meticulously planned, less intentional events and should be blocked in COME passives which typically depict meticulously planned, highly intentional events. Conversely, the adverb *muddAm* ‘purposely’ should occur only with COME passives and should be barred from GO passives. All of these predictions are borne out as exemplified below:

- (29) rAm-kaDun rAwaN cukUn mAr-l-A ge-l-A
 Ram-by Ravan by mistake kill-PERF-M go-PAST-M
 ‘Ravan was killed by Ram mistakenly.’

- (30) rAm-kaDUn rAwaNA-lA muddAm mAr-NyAt A-l-e
 Ram-by Ravan-ACC purposely kill-PTCPL come-PAST-N
 ‘Ravan was killed by Ram purposely.’

- * (31) rAm-kaDUn rAwaNA-lA cukUn mAr-NyAt A-l-e
 Ram-by Ravan-ACC by mistake kill-PTCPL come-PAST-N
 ‘Ravan was killed by Ram mistakenly.’

- * (32) rAm-kaDun rAwaN muddAm mAr-l-A ge-l-A
 Ram-by Ravan purposely kill-PAST-M go-PAST-M
 ‘Ravan was killed by Ram purposely.’

The contrast exhibited among (29), (30), (31) and (32) lends strong support to our proposal. (29) depicts an event in which Ram did not intend to kill Ravan, but just by mistake happened to kill him. The killing of Ravan in this case is less intentional and involves no meticulous planning and hence the GO passive is used. The situation in (30) is just the opposite. In the case of (31), the COME passive is employed—which depicts a meticulously planned, highly intentional event. Nevertheless, the adverb *cukun* ‘by mistake’ which modifies it is not compatible with such an event, and consequently presents a contradiction. The situation in (32) is just the opposite. The adverb *muddAm* ‘on purpose’ creates a contradiction in the context of a GO passive, as they do not depict meticulously planned, highly intentional events. As predicted by our proposal, (31) as well as (32) turn out to be ungrammatical.

3.2.2. Co-occurrence with a modal expressing possibility

Marathi has a modal expression that conveys the notion of possibility. COME passives depict meticulously planned, highly intentional events and thus do not leave any room for speculation. On the contrary, GO passives can accommodate a speculative meaning. In consonance with our proposal, GO passives can thus accommodate the modal's speculative/possibilitative meaning, while the COME passives can not:

- (33) tu-IA dillI-t fas-aw-la jA-NyAci shakyatA Ahe
 you-ACC Delhi-LOC cheat-CAUS-PERF go-PTCPL possibility BE
 'There is a possibility that you may be cheated in Delhi.'

- *(34) tu-IA dillI-t fas-aw-NyAt ye-NyAcI shakyatA Ahe
 you-ACC Delhi-LOC deceive-CAUS-PTCPL come-PTCPL possibility BE
 'There is a possibility that you will be cheated in Delhi.'

It is interesting to note that if the speaker of the utterance (34) knows in advance about some plan to cheat, the utterance is perfectly grammatical.³ In such a case, the speaker uses the COME passive but at the same time does not want to commit himself, and thus warns the interlocutor in a non-committal way by using the possibilitative modal form. This shows that extra-linguistic/pragmatic information plays a crucial role in the grammaticality judgments of the GO and COME passives.

3.2.3. Non-human agents

Passive expressions with non-human agents are always couched in the form of a GO passive, and never in the form of a COME passive. This fact receives a natural explanation under our proposal, in that non-human agents lack intention and the ability to plan meticulous planning in order to bring about an event. Note the following contrast:

- (35) a. fulpAkharAn-kaDUn parAgkaN wAhi-l-e jA-tAt
 butterflies-by pollens.N carry-PERF-N go-PRES.PL.N
 'Pollen is carried by butterflies.'

- *b. fulpAkharAn-kaDUn parAgkaN wAha-NyAt ye-tAt
 butterflies-by pollens.N carry-PTCPL come-PRES.PL.N
 'Pollen is carried by butterflies.'

- (36) a. hrudayA-kaDUn sharIr-AtIl wiwidh bhAgAn-nA
 heart-by body-in various organs-to
 rakta-purawathA ke-l-A jA-t-o
 blood-supply.M do-PERF-M go-PRES-M
 'In the human body, blood supply to the various organs is done by the heart.'

- *b. hrudayA-kaDUn sharIr-AtIl wiwidh bhAgAn-nA
 heart-by body-in various organs-to
 rakta-purawathA kar-NyAt ye-t-o
 blood-supply.M do-PTCPL come-PRES-M
 ‘In the human body, blood supply to the various organs is done by the heart.’

Consider further the above-mentioned examples. The nominals in the agent slots (viz. *hruday* ‘heart’ and *phulpAkhare* ‘butterflies’) are non-volitional, yet potent entities. We regard these expressions to be ambiguous between the passive and spontaneous constructions. On the agent-volitionality parameter, they can be interpreted as spontaneous, while on the agent-potency parameter they can be interpreted as passive.

To summarize, the evidence presented in the foregoing discussion lends strong support to our proposal that the notion of “**intention**” plays a crucial role in determining the distribution of GO and COME passives. We will now turn to the issue of the correlations that the Marathi passive has with other constructions (the spontaneous, potential and honorific), which had not been addressed in the previous research.

4. THE PASSIVE AND RELATED CONSTRUCTIONS

Having discussed the passive construction in the previous section, we now focus on the constructions related to it, namely the spontaneous, the potential and the honorific constructions. Shibatani (1985: 825) claims that various constructions can be related not just in morphosyntactic or semantic terms, but also in terms of common pragmatic function. In Marathi, the passive, spontaneous, potential and honorific constructions share morphosyntactic similarities in that the agent is consistently marked with an oblique marker, while the main verb is rendered in the *V-PERF+GO* form. We will demonstrate that despite the morphosyntactic similarities these constructions are independent in their own right, and yet they are related to the passive construction through a pragmatic notion, namely agent defocusing. Let us begin with the spontaneous construction.

4.1. The Spontaneous Construction

A prototypical spontaneous construction depicts an event that occurs on its own without the intervention of an external agent. In other words, spontaneous events are void of agency and volition. Spontaneous expressions in Marathi share morphosyntactic similarities with the passive construction--even though they differ semantically in that the former typically lacks an agent, while in the latter an agent is always involved. This correlation finds natural explanation in the framework offered by Shibatani (1985) in that the spontaneous and the passive share a common pragmatic function viz. agent defocusing. As Shibatani (1985: 838) states:

Defocusing of an agent is highly germane to spontaneous events and states. An event predicated of an agent is basically causative; i.e. , an event is brought about by an agent. But an event dissociated from an agent is one occurring spontaneously. Thus a sentence with a defocused agent may be utilized to describe a spontaneous event.

In spontaneous expressions the agent is absent altogether, while in the passive the agent is posited and defocused syntactically. Let us take a closer look at the spontaneous construction in Marathi.

4.1.1. The Spontaneous Construction in Marathi

In Marathi, passive morphology viz. *V-PERF+GO* is employed to express a spontaneous event as exemplified below:

- (37) yA kAdambarI-cl pahill don prakarNa mI jANiwpurwak
 this novel-of first two chapters.F I consciously
 lihi-l-I. parantu nantar-cl prakarNe matra mI lihill
 write-PERF-F but after-of chapters.F however I wrote
 Ahet ase mI muLIc mhaNaNAr nAhI. tI lihi-l-i
 BE like I never say not those write-PERF-F
 ge-l-i asa-c mI mAn-t-o
 go-PAST-F like-EMPH I.M believe-PRES-M
 ‘I have consciously written the first two chapters of this novel. However,
 I would never say that I have written the subsequent chapters. I firmly
 believe that they got written themselves.’ [“Hiroshima” introduction p7]
- (38) yA rAsAynik abhikriye-t urjyA bAher Tak-l-I jA-t-e
 this chemical reaction-in energy.F out throw-PERF-F go-PRES-F
 ‘In this chemical reaction energy is given off.’
- (39) yA kyAmeryA-t rol ApoAp gundAL-l-A jA-t-o
 this camera-LOC film.M by itself wind-PERF-M go-PRES-M
 ‘In this camera, the film rewinds itself.’
- (40) sundar strI-kaDe tAbADtob laksha wedh-l-a jA-t-e
 beautiful lady-toward immediately attention.N draw-PERF-N go-PRES-N
 ‘Beautiful ladies are often noticed.’
 (Lit. One’s attention unknowingly gets drawn towards a beautiful lady.)
- (41) bhukampA-t hajAro lok jiwanta gAD-l-e ge-l-e
 earthquake-in thousands people.N alive bury-PERF-N go-PAST-N
 ‘In the earthquake thousands of people were buried alive.’

It is noteworthy that the main verbs involved in these expressions are all agentive and volitional; however, they are deagentivized by dissociating agency from them. Furthermore, all of the verbs lack corresponding intransitive counterparts, hence passive forms are employed to fill the gap. This is a manifestation of the tendency of languages to fill in lexical gaps through available means. Note the following contrast:

- (42) samudra-cyA lATAn-nI jahAj dUr fek-l-e ge-l-e
 sea-of waves-INSTR ship.N far throw-PERF-N go-PAST-N
 'The ship was thrown far off by the sea's waves.'

- (43) *a.wAdaLA-ne chappara uD-aw-l-I ge-l- I
 storm-INSTR roofs.F fly-CAUS-PERF-F go-PAST-F
 'The roofs were blown off by the storm.'

- b.wAdaLA-ne chappara uD-Un ge-l- I
 storm-INSTR roofs.F fly-PTCPL go-PAST-F
 'The roofs got blown off by the storm.'

The verb *fekNe* 'to throw' lacks an intransitive counterpart, while the verb *uDawNe* 'to make fly' has a corresponding intransitive form viz. *uDNe* 'to fly'. In order to express a spontaneous event then, the former employs passive morphology to derive an intransitive counterpart, while the latter uses a corresponding intransitive form. In order to express a spontaneous event in Marathi, passive morphology is used only when the verb in question lacks an intransitive counterpart. This indicates that spontaneous expressions are close to prototypical non-volitional intransitive verbs, and are thus distinctly different from volitional passive expressions.

Interestingly, only the GO passive and never the COME passive can be employed in Marathi spontaneous expressions. This is consistent with our proposal that the COME passive depicts meticulously planned events. It is thus incompatible with the spontaneous expression, which depicts events occurring on their own accord, as exemplified below:

- (44) a.bhukampA-t hajAro lok jiwanta gAD-l-e ge-l-e
 earthquake-in thousands people.N alive bury-PERF-N go-PAST-N
 'In the earthquake thousands of people were buried alive.'

- *b.bhukampA-t hajAro lok jiwanta gAD-NyAt A-l-e
 earthquake-in thousands people.N alive bury-PTCPL come-PAST-N
 'In the earthquake thousands of people were buried alive.'

- (45) a. pUl kosaL-un tyA-khAlI dahA lok
 bridge collapse-PTCPL that-below ten people.N
 ciraD-l-e ge-l-e
 crush-PERF-N go-PAST-N
 'The bridge collapsed and ten people got crushed below it.'

- *b. pUl kosaL-un tyA-khAlI dahA lok
 bridge collapse-PTCPL that-below ten people.N
 ciraD-NyAt A-l-e
 crush-PTCPL come-PAST-N
 'The bridge collapsed and ten people got crushed below it.'

From the foregoing discussion it is evident that the spontaneous and the passive are separate constructions in their own right. Semantically, they differ remarkably in that spontaneous events are void of agency, while passive events tacitly imply it. Nevertheless, this distinction is not rigid and cases of overlap are attested [Cf. (35a), (36a)]. Still, passive and spontaneous constructions are marked morphosyntactically in a similar way as they share a pragmatic function viz. agent defocusing. In the passive, agent defocusing is partial, while spontaneous expressions lack agents altogether.

4.2. The Potential Construction

Potential constructions express the ability/inability of the agent to perform the activity described by the main verb. In Marathi, the potential construction is morphosyntactically marked in a similar way to the passive in that the agent appears in an oblique form, and the main verb is marked with the *V-PERF+GO* morphology. This is because the potential construction is very closely related to the passive--as well as to the spontaneous construction. Shibatani (1985: 839) observes that

... An event that occurs spontaneously has a strong propensity to happen. If this automatic happening is negated, then a reading of impotentiality is implied.

In Marathi, potential constructions are more felicitous in negative contexts. Let us take a closer look at the potential construction in Marathi.

4.2.1. The Potential Construction in Marathi

Marathi has the following three constructions that can be treated under the rubric of potential [X=agent, V= Main verb (+ volitional)].

A. X⁻ NP V + *shakaNe* 'can'CAN potential

- (46) rAm bhAt khA-U shak-t-o /shak-at nAhI
 Ram.M rice eat-PTCPL can-PRES-M/can-PTCPL not
 'Ram can/cannot eat rice.'

B. X-oblique NP V-aw nAhI(not)..... AW Potential

- (47) rAm-cyA-ne bhAt khA-waw-l-A nAhI
 Ram-GEN-INSTR rice.M eat-POT-PERF-M not
 'Ram could not eat rice.'

C. X-oblique NP V + jANe(go) nAhI(not)..... GO Potential

- (48) rAm-cyA-ne bhAt khA-l l-A ge-l-A nAhI
 Ram-GEN-INSTR rice.M eat-PERF-M go-PERF-M not
 'Ram could not eat rice.'

The periphrastic CAN potential construction is felicitous in both positive and negative contexts, while the AW construction is felicitous only in negative ones. GO potential constructions are generally felicitous in negative contexts, but they are not rejected altogether in positive ones. The CAN potential construction is an active construction in that the agent is unmarked. In contrast, the AW and GO potentials are non-active constructions, as evidenced by the fact that the agent exhibits oblique marking.

As pointed out earlier, the discrete approach adopted by Pandharipande (1981) and Rosen & Wali (1989) fails to make a distinction between passive and potential constructions. Note the following examples:

- (49) rAm-kaDUn tyA kholI-t zop-l-e ge-l-e nAhI
 Ram-by that room-in sleep-PERF-N go-PAST-N not
 'Ram could not sleep in that room.'
- (50) rAm-kaDUn ajibAt poh-l-e ge-l-e nAhI
 Ram-by at all swim-PERF-N go-PAST-N not
 'Ram could not swim at all.'
- (51) rAm-kaDUn don kilomiTar suddhA dhAw-l-e jA-t nAhi
 Ram-by two kilometer even run-PERF-N go-PRES not
 'Ram cannot run even two kilometers.'
- (52) Ai-kaDUn mulA-lA ragAw-l-e ge-l-e nAhI
 mother-by child-ACC scold-PERF-N go-PAST-N not
 a. 'The child was not scolded by the mother.'
 b. 'The mother could not scold the child.'
- (53) mAzyA kaDUn tyA-lA fasaw-l-e ge-l-e nAhI
 I by he-ACC cheat-PERF-N go-PAST-N not
 a. 'He was not cheated by me.'
 b. 'I could not cheat him.'

Among the above-mentioned expressions, those involving a transitive verb and expressing a capabilitative meaning [viz. (52), (53)] would be treated as passives by Pandharipande, and as impersonal passives by Rosen & Wali. Those involving an intransitive verb and expressing a capabilitative meaning [viz. (49), (50) and (51)] would be either barred or treated as something unrelated to the passive. We disagree with both of these analyses, as they are discrete in nature and fail to provide a unified account for the phenomenon under consideration. In the potential construction, the obliquely marked agent is obligatory, whereas in the passive construction it can be optionally deleted. In all the above-mentioned examples, the agent phrases marked with *kaDUn* cannot be deleted-- except in (52) and (53), which present cases of overlap between the passive and the potential construction. Under the gloss (a) interpretations, they are passives and permit agent deletion, while under the gloss (b) interpretations, they are potentials and do not permit

agent deletion. In Marathi, only transitive (volitional) verbs can yield passive expressions, whereas the potential construction can be formed with intransitive, as well as transitive verbs (exemplified above). Thus the domain of application of the potential and the passive construction is not the same, and as such they must be recognized as independent constructions. What the potential construction in Marathi shares with the passive is the pragmatic function of agent defocusing, and is thus morphosyntactically marked in a similar way.

Pandharipande (1981) also claims that AW potential constructions express (in)capability of the agent, determined by agent-internal conditions like headaches, pain, hatred, happiness, physical/psychological pain etc. GO potential constructions, on the other hand, express an (in)capability based on the agent's effort, and is determined by agent-external conditions like the weather. CAN potential constructions are neutral to whether their capability is determined by agent-internal or agent-external conditions, and whether or not the agent expends any effort in accomplishing the task. As mentioned earlier, however, the claims made by Pandharipande regarding the conditions that determine an (in)capability reading are not empirically supported [Cf. (18), (19)].

The GO potential construction is the only form that is relevant to our analysis because it shares morphosyntactic similarities with the GO passive. In subsequent discussion we thus confine ourselves to an examination of the GO potential construction.

First, GO potential constructions are generally felicitous in negative contexts, although they are not rejected altogether in positive ones:

- (54) bharpUr jewaN zAla as-Una-hI mAjhyA-kaDUn
 too much meal became be-PTCPL-EMPH me-by
 don Ambe sahaj khA-Il-e ge-l-e
 two mangoes.N without effort eat-PERF-N go-PAST-N
 'Even after a heavy meal, I could easily eat two mangoes.'

Second, the (in)capability of the agent expressed by the GO potential construction is related to an event occurring in the real world, they cannot express a stative/attributive ability. Note the following contrast:

- *(55) rAm-kaDUn bhAt khA-Il-A jA-t-o
 Ram-by rice.M eat-PERF-M go-PRES-M
 'Ram can eat rice.'

- (56) rAm-kaDUn bhAt khA-Il-A ge-l-A nAhI
 Ram-by rice.M eat-PERF-M go-PAST-M not
 'Ram could not eat rice.'

Third, the presence of a definite agent is mandatory in the GO potential construction, although in some cases the agent can be indefinite. When the agent is indefinite, the construction is freed from eventive or negative contextual restrictions. GO potential constructions express a capabilitative

meaning in the case of a definite agent, and a possibilitative meaning in the case of an indefinite one. Note the following contrast:

- (57) bharpUr jewaN zAla as-la tarI Aiskrim
 too much meal became be-PERF though ice-cream.N
 sahaj kha-ll-a jA-t-a
 easily eat-PERF-N go-PRES-N
 ‘Even after a heavy meal one can easily eat ice cream.’
- (58) bharpUr jewaN zAla as-Una-hI mAjhYA-kaDUn
 too much meal became be-PTCPL-EMPH me-by
 don Ambe sahaj khA-ll-e ge-l-e
 two mangoes.N without effort eat-PERF-N go-PAST-N
 ‘Even after a heavy meal, I could easily eat two mangoes.’

Having examined the potential construction we now turn to the honorific construction.

4.3. The Honorific Construction

In the honorific construction, deference is expressed towards the agent of the action. In Marathi, the honorific construction is marked morphosyntactically in the same way as the passive. This too can be explained in terms of the pragmatic notion of agent defocusing. As pointed out by Shibatani (1985:837-8):

A universal characteristic of honorific speech lies in its indirectness; and one of the clear manifestations of this is avoidance of the singling out of an agent which refers to the addressee, the speaker, or the person mentioned in the sentence. Defocusing of an agent in some way is thus an integral component of the honorific mechanism.

Let us take a closer look at the honorific construction in Marathi.

4.3.1. The Honorific Construction in Marathi

In Marathi, honorification in general is not widespread, and the construction is found only marginally. In the Marathi honorific construction, agent defocusing strategy is twofold: coding the agent as plural (rather than singular), and indirect reference of the agent effected by assigning it an oblique marker. Note the contrast in the following examples:

- (59) ???a. rAjjyapAl-An-nI yashaswI widyArthAn-cA
 state governor-PL-ERG successful students-GEN
 satkAr ke-l-A
 felicitation.M do-PAST-M
 ‘The state governor honoured successful students.’

- b. rAjjapAl-An-cyA-haste yashaswI widyArthAn-cA
 state governor-PL-GEN-hands successful students-GEN.
 satkAr ke-l-A ge-l-A
 felicitation.M do-PERF-M go-PAST-M
 ‘Successful candidates were honoured at the hands of the state governor.’

- (60) ???a. yA prasangI mukhyAmantryAn-n-I raktadAn
 this occasion chief minister-PL-ERG blood donation.N
 ke-l-e
 do-PAST-N
 ‘On this occasion the Chief Minister donated blood.’

- b. yA prasangI mukhyAmantryAn-n-kaDun raktadAn
 this occasion chief minister-PL-by blood donation.N
 kar-NyAt A-l-e
 do-PTCPL come-PAST-N
 ‘On this occasion the Chief Minister donated blood.’

Pandharipande cites the example in (61) below and argues that the agentless passive construction in Marathi expresses a social convention--thereby prescribing a particular mode of behaviour. Such expressions convey the highest degree of politeness, compared with other expressions that convey a prescriptive meaning (Pandharipande 1981: 128-9).

- (61) ApIyA shikshakA wiruddha asa bolla jA-t nAhI
 our teacher against like speaking go-PRES not
 (a) ‘It is not talked like this against one’s own teacher.’
 (b) ‘You should not talk like this against your own teacher.’

Pandharipande provides the glosses in the example. Gloss (a) expresses a covert agent expression and—according to our analysis—is a covert indefinite agent passive. The gloss in (b) is incorrect in our opinion, and should rather be ‘One does not speak against his own teacher like this’. Under this interpretation, it is clearly a polite indirect request. This is in line with the fact that indirect reference to the agent is a hallmark of polite expressions. On our analysis, a covert indefinite agent passive underlies the (a) interpretation of (61), while an honorific one underlies the interpretation discussed above. This example represents a case of overlap between the passive and the honorific construction.

Moreover, Pandharipande’s treatment is incorrect in that covert indefinite agent passives do not exclusively convey a prescriptive meaning [Cf. (20), (21)]. The honorific construction is an active construction, while the passive construction is not. The passive and the honorific are independent constructions and should be treated as such. They share a morphosyntactic similarity and are correlated through the pragmatic notion of agent defocusing.

5. DIACHRONIC DEVELOPMENT & SYNCHRONIC DISTRIBUTION

The correlations discussed in this paper are not isolated phenomena peculiar to Marathi, but are widely attested in various unrelated languages such as Japanese, Spanish, and Telugu. Moreover, the correlations are not accidental--both language-internally as well as cross-linguistically--but are rather systematic.

Shibatani (1997) rightly points out that in order to understand the patterns of synchronic polysemy, we must know something about the historical development of the constructions in question. To substantiate this claim he discusses the diachronic aspects of voice constructions, and points out that historically middle voice forms are the major source of passive constructions. In Classical Greek the middle voice category used to express reflexive, reciprocal, spontaneous and passive meanings, while in Spanish, reflexive constructions have given rise to other constructions like the spontaneous and the passive. The evolutionary path for the development of the Spanish passive is then *Reflexive* > *Spontaneous* > *Passive*. The Japanese passive also developed from a spontaneous construction. Shibatani (1998) proposes the Principle of Maximization of Contrast as the driving force behind these diachronic changes. This principle motivates a language to develop voice constructions so that a meaning contrast is maximized. Although the spontaneous construction seems to be the major source of passive constructions, there may be other sources too (Cf. Haspelmath 1990).

In Marathi the passive, the spontaneous, the potential and the honorific constructions all exhibit synchronic polysemy in their morphosyntactic marking, viz. the main verb in the perfective, followed by the auxiliary GO. In order to offer an explanation for this synchronic polysemy it is necessary to probe the historical development of these constructions. A diachronic account is beyond the scope of the present study, however, and must be left for future research.

6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In the foregoing sections we have addressed a language-specific issue, viz. the treatment of the Marathi passive, pointing out that currently available accounts are inadequate. The alternative analysis presented here throws light on issues such as the distribution of GO and COME passives, and the correlations of the Marathi passive with the spontaneous, potential and honorific constructions. Previous analyses failed to recognize these correlations, owing to their discrete approach and narrow perspective. Moreover, formal views of grammar (transformational, relational), have ignored the spontaneous, potential and honorific constructions from their scope of analysis, and have thus failed to account for the synchronic polysemy exhibited by the constructions in question.

To conclude, the pragmatic notion of agent defocusing holds the key to unraveling the mystery of the synchronic relationship of the passive construction with other constructions, and thus provides strong support for Shibatani's claim that various constructions can be related not simply morphosyntactically or semantically, but also in terms of common pragmatic function.

NOTES

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1 In citing examples from other studies, transliteration and glosses have been slightly modified to maintain stylistic consistency.

2 Cf. Section 2.2 for a detailed discussion of the passive and the ergative construction.

3 I would like to thank Ms. Vaishali Vaidya for pointing out this subtle contextual interpretation.

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