The French non canonical passive in *se faire*

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Abstract

This paper focusses on the French non canonical passive construction in *se faire*, with the aim of showing how the passive meaning arises in this construction. The construction is first shown to be distinct from East Asian indirect passives to which it has been compared. It is shown that the reflexive pronoun *se* binds a participant within the embedded event. Then, it is argued that, even though the construction is based on the causative verb *faire*, there is no CAUSE component of meaning in the interpretation. Finally, the question of how the passive reading of the verb arises is addressed. The analysis proposed relies on the idea that the subject of *faire* undergoes a shift from subject of the semantic predicate AFF(ect) to object of AFF. The discussion of *se faire* set against the background of the various passivization strategies in the languages of the world.

1. Introduction

It is well known that, in many languages, a passive-like meaning may be obtained through a non canonical passive construction. The *get* passive in English is one such construction (Haegeman 1985). This article is concerned with the French non-canonical passive in *se faire*, illustrated in (1), where *se* is a reflexive pronominal clitic and *faire* is a causative verb. *Se faire* is considered a "passive auxiliary" by various authors (among which Bat-Zeev Shyldkrot 1980, 1984, Cocheyras 1968, Gaatone, 1983). We will refer to this construction as the "passive *se faire*" construction.

(1) Jean s'   est fait   écraser   (par une voiture)
     Jean REFL AUX CAUSE run-over (by a car)
     'Jean was run over by a car.'

How does the passive meaning arise in this construction? This question will be discussed, taking as background the theory of the passive developed in Huang (1999). In what follows, after presenting the three strategies of passiviation identified by Huang, we describe the main properties of the passive *se faire* construction. Then we compare it to East Asian indirect passives, and show that the French construction is distinct from an indirect passive of the East Asian type. In section 5, we show that although it is, structurally, a causative con-

struction, the passive *se faire* construction has no causative component of meaning. Finally, starting with the observation that an alternation between a causative reading and a passive reading of the same construction is attested in various languages, we ask how this is possible, and conclude with a proposal to account for the French alternation.

2. Three strategies of passivization

Huang (1999) identifies three strategies of passivization: raising, control, and null operator movement. The canonical passive construction is obtained through raising of an internal argument to the surface subject position, as illustrated in (2).

(2)   Passive through Raising
       a.   English : John$_i$ was hit t$_i$.
       b.   French : Jean$_i$ a   été frappé t$_i$.
                        Jean AUX PASS hit-PRT

In the control strategy, a main verb meaning 'undergo [an event]' selects a 'passive' VP with internal NP-movement of PRO to [Spec, VP]. The subject of the main verb controls this PRO. Such an analysis has been proposed for Japanese 'ni passives' (Hoshi 1991, 1994a, b), as illustrated in (3), and is proposed by Huang for Mandarin Chinese short passives. Huang suggests that English *get*-passives are also of this type (4).

(3)   Passive through Control.
       John$_i$-ga [$_{VP}$ PRO$_i$ Bill-ni t$_i$ nagur-] -(r)are-ta.
                   _____|
       John-NOM   Bill-BY   hit   PASS-PAST
       'John was hit by Bill.'

(4)   John got [$_{VP}$ PRO$_i$ blamed t$_i$ for his mistake.]
                    _____|

In the third type of passive construction, a main verb meaning 'get, acquire, or end up with the property of ...' selects an active IP, and there is null operator (NOP) movement of the object of the embedded verb within the IP complement

of the main verb. This is illustrated in (5), with Huang's analysis of Mandarin Chinese long passives (i.e. passives with a *by*-phrase). This construction is similar to a *tough*-construction, but with the null operator adjoined to IP. The embedded IP functions like a predicate on the surface subject, the null operator being coindexed with it.

(5)   Zhangsan$_i$ bei   [$_{IP}$ NOP$_i$ Lisi da le   t$_i$].
          |___ predication ___| |___ movement ___|
      Zhangsan PASS   Lisi hit PERF
      'Zhangsan was hit by Lisi.'

The three passivization strategies illustrate Chomsky (1995:388)'s claim that there are "no grammatical consructions (relative clauses, passives, etc.) except as taxonomic artifacts". The different passive constructions are distinct constructions making use of distinct operations allowed by UG. They share the following characteristics: (i) A missing NP position obtained through movement (NP-movement or NOP movement); (ii) coindexation of the surface subject with that missing NP through NP-movement, control or predication. In the second and third construction, the meaning of the main verb plays a crucial part in the passive meaning.

We show here that *se faire* in (1) illustrates a fourth way of obtaining a passive meaning, this time through binding by a reflexive clitic: (i) A missing NP position within the embedded predicate is bound by a reflexive clitic on the main verb; (ii) the reflexive clitic on the main verb is coindexed with the subject of that verb. The surface subject is therefore coindexed with the missing NP *via* the reflexive clitic. The passive interpretation results from the fact that the subject of the main verb gets an *affected* interpretation.

3.   The construction in *se faire*

Structurally, the *se faire* construction in (1) is a causative construction, more specifically the *faire par* construction illustrated in (6), where the external argument of embedded verb in the infinitive is suppressed and is optionally realized as a *by*-phrase. In that construction, *faire* forms a complex predicate with the lower verb, as shown by the fact that pronominal complements of the lower verb appear as clitics on *faire* (7).

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(6)   Jean fait   [offrir un poste   à Paul (par son oncle)].
      Jean CAUSE [offer a   position to Paul (by his uncle)]
      'Jean makes (his uncle) offer a position to Paul.'

(7)   Jean *le*$_i$ *lui*$_j$ fait   [offrir e$_i$ e$_j$ (par son oncle)].
      Jean 3s-ACC 3s-DAT CAUSE offer   (by his uncle)
      'Jean makes (his uncle) offer it to him.' (him   Jean)

This is not the place to discuss the theory of cliticisation in French nor the question of whether the clitic is a flexional affix on the verb or an independent element. It will simply be assumed that cliticization involves binding of some (empty) element within the predicate.

The passive *se faire* construction is a variant of (7) where the clitic on *faire* is reflexive. The reflexive clitic can be accusative or dative; in the third person, its form is always *se*. The passive interpretation arises only when there is a reflexive clitic. Example (7) has only a causative reading, but (8), where the dative clitic *lui* of (7) is replaced by *se*, is ambiguous between a causative reading (a) and a passive reading (b).

(8)   Jean *se   le   fait*   offrir.
      Jean REFL 3s-ACC CAUSE offer
      a.   'Jean$_i$ causes [(someone) to offer it to him$_i$.]'
      b.   'Jean is offered it.'

The passive *se faire* construction is distinct from other constructions in *se faire* which involve ergative *se*. The ergative construction with *se*, illustrated in (9b) with the verb *casser* 'break', is a raising construction: *se* is said to absorb the external theta-role of the verb, this allowing the direct internal argument to raise to subject position.

(9)   a.   Jean a   cassé le vase.   b.   Le vase s'   est cassé.
            Jean AUX broken the vase   The vase REFL AUX broken
            'Jean broke the vase'   'The vase broke'

In its lexical meaning—that is, outside of causative constructions— *faire*, means 'to make', 'to do'. An ergative use of this lexical verb is given in (10), where the transitive variant would mean 'x did not make the world in one day' (*x n'a pas fait le monde en un jour*). By suppressing the external argument of *faire*, *se* voids the subject position, allowing the object *le monde* 'the world' to

raise.

   (10) Le monde ne s'   est pas fait en un jour.
          the world PRT REFL AUX NEG make in one day
          'The world did not come to be (/was not made) in one day.'

Let us dismiss the hypothesis that in the passive interpretation illustrated in (1), *se faire* is the ergative variant of *faire,* that is, a raising construction similar to (10). The ergative construction is an unaccusative construction where the surface subject is always the direct internal argument of the verb; dative complements never raise to subject position in French. But the subject of *se faire* can correspond to the dative argument of the embedded predicate, as can be seen in (8). Consider also (11a) (similar examples are pointed out by Washio 1995:158). As shown in (11b), this clause cannot be passivized. Not only is it the case that dative objects do not raise in French (*lui* is a dative object), but also, *dessus* being a conflation of the preposition *sur* 'on' and a covert pronominal, there is no position within the embedded VP where *Jean* could have originated. Crucially, (11c) is perfect. This shows that the surface subject of passive *se faire* is not derived by NP raising. We assume here that the clitic pronouns *lui* in (11a) and *se* in (11c) bind *dessus* and the pronominal that it incorporates.

   (11) a.   Pierre lui$_i$ tape dessus$_i$.
              Pierre 3s-DAT hits over
              'Pierre is hitting him.' (him   Pierre)

         b.   *Jean a   été tapé   dessus.
               Jean AUX PASS hit-PART. over
              'Jean has been hit.'

         c.   Jean se$_i$ fait [taper dessus$_i$.]
               Jean REFL f.   hit   on-him
              'Jean is being hit.'

We conclude that passive *se faire* is not an ergative construction.

4. Is *se faire* an indirect passive?

Both Washio (1993, 1995) and Huang (1999) link *se faire* to East Asian indi-

rect passives. Huang (1999 :42) claims that Romance *se faire* constructions are "simply examples of what has been known as indirect passives in East Asian". In this section, we point out differences between *se faire* and indirect passives that cast doubt on the truth of this statement. We will use Japanese, for which indirect passives have been widely discussed, as the language of comparison for East Asian languages.

4.1. Inclusive and exclusive indirect passives

In indirect passives, the subject is an extra argument with respect to the passive verb, which retains its direct object if it has one (12a). There are two types of indirect passives: *inclusive* or *subject included* indirect passives, and *exclusive* or *subject excluded* indirect passives. In the inclusive type, the surface subject of the passive verb is generally claimed to entertain a possessive relation with the object of the passive verb (Kubo 1992) (although for Washio, it is sufficient for the subject to entertain some relation—which could be pragmatic—with some object of the passive verb). Unaccusative verbs, where the unique argument of the (lower) verb is an internal argument, are possible in this construction (12b), but unergative verbs are excluded (Pylkkänen 1999, 2000).

(12) **Inclusive** or **Subject included** indirect passive:
  a.   John-ga   Mary-ni   kodomo-o sikar-are-ta. (=Huang, ex. (80))
       John-NOM Mary-DAT child-ACC scold-PASS-PAST
       John had his child scolded by Mary.
       (Lit. John$_i$ was scolded [his$_i$] child by Mary.)

  b.   Taroo-ga   musuko-ni sin-are-ta.
       Taro-NOM son-DAT   die-PASS-PAST
       'Taro was affected by his son dying.'

In the exclusive type, there is no relation between the subject of the passive verb and some participant in the event. Unergative verbs may enter this construction, as shown in (13). This construction has a strong adversative reading, while the inclusive one has a more neutral interpretation.
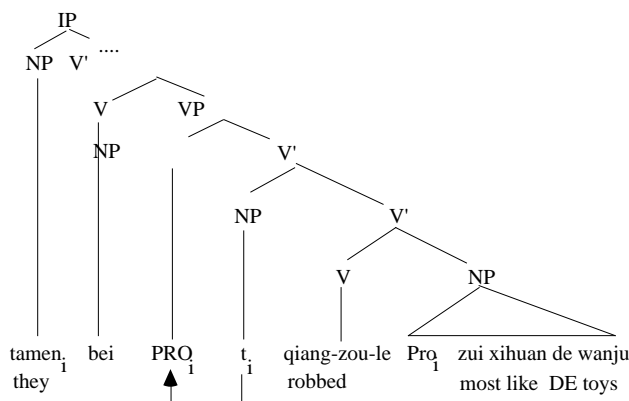
(13) **Exclusive** or **Subject excluded** indirect passive:
    Taroo-ga ame-ni hur-are-ta.
    Taro-NOM rain-DAT fall-PASS-PAST
    'Taro was rained on'

If canonical direct passives result from movement of an object of the (lower) verb by raising or NOP movement, what is the source of indirect passives? For Huang (1999), all passives involve movement. For inclusive indirect passives, Huang proposes that they result from movement of an 'outer' object of the (lower) V', that is, an extra object, generated in a position adjoined to the projection immediately dominating the direct object of the lower verb. Thus the Chinese sentence in (14a) receives the structure in (14b) (Huang 1999, ex. (126) & (127)). The inclusive reading results from the fact that the outer object controls the null possessor of the internal argument.

(14) a.   tamen bei qiang-zou-le   zui xihuan de wanju.
        they BEI rob-away-PERF most like   DE toy
        They had the toys that [they] liked most robbed [from them].
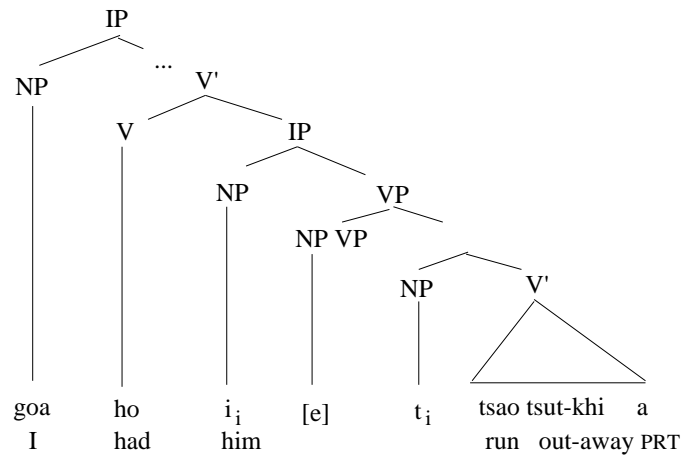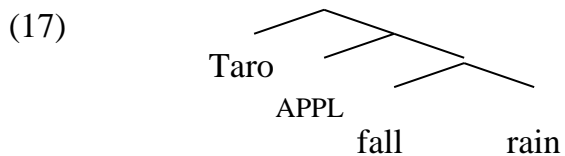
    b.

Exclusive indirect passives would result from movement of an 'outermost' object of the (lower) VP. Outermost objects, bearing the theta role Indirect Affectee, would be adjoined to the lower clause, higher than the VP internal subject, but lower than the IP subject, as shown in (15) from Taiwanese (Huang 1999, ex. (106c) & (130)). In (11b), the outermost object is [e], later raised by NOP movement to a position adjoined to the embedded IP, and coindexed with the subject *goa*.

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(15) a.   goa bosiosim ho i   chao-chhut-khi a.
            I   careless   HO him run-out-away PRT
            Due to my carelessness I had him running away (on me).

    b.

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                        IP
                   ┌────┴────┐
                  NP    ...   V'
                        ┌─────┴─────┐
                        V          IP
                              ┌─────┴─────┐
                             NP          VP
                                    ┌─────┴──┐
                                   NP VP
                                        ┌────┴────┐
                                       NP        V'
                                                ╱    ╲

  goa         ho        i i      [e]       t i    tsao tsut-khi   a
   I          had       him                       run   out-away PRT
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Huang observes that in a more articulate VP structure, the outer and outer-most objects should each be in the Spec of a light verb above V' and VP respectively. An analysis in that spirit is proposed independently by Pylk-känen (1999, 2000). For her, indirect passives involve an applicative head. Included subjects would be specifiers of a low applicative head dominating the direct object (see (16), proposed for (12b)). This low applicative would be interpreted as a directional TO/FROM possessive relation. Excluded subjects would be specifiers of a high applicative head dominating VP (see (17), proposed for (13)). The APPL head is lower than the verb in (16) and higher in (17).

(16)
```
           ╱──────╲
        die     ╱────┴────╲
            Taro     ╱────┴────╲
                  APPL        son
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(17)
```
           ╱──────╲
       Taro    ╱────┴────╲
           APPL      ╱────┴────╲
                  fall        rain
```

4.2. *Se faire* and indirect passives

With these analyses in mind, let us come back to *se faire*. Huang 1999 observes that in (18), from Washio (1993), all functions of the embedded predicate are filled. He suggests that *se* corresponds to an 'outermost' object. (18) is then viewed as an *exclusive* indirect passive, and Huang adds that: "It is the presence of an outermost object that gives rise to passivity. And since the outermost object is only indirectly affected, a sense of adversity normally accompanies this kind of passives." (Huang 1999: 61).

(18) Jean s'   est fait [broyer la voiture de Marie par un camion.]
      Jean REFL AUX f.   [crush the car   of Marie by a truck   ]
      'Jean had Marie's car crushed by a truck.'   (Washio 1993)

He then suggests that affected dative clitics, an example of which is given in (19), could be the overt realization of an outermost object. The affected dative refers to an entity affected by the event and is always a clitic, not a full DP. (19) carries a meaning close to that of indirect passives: Pierre crushed Marie's car and this event affected the individual denoted by *him*.

(19) Pierre *lui*   a   broyé la voiture de Marie
      Pierre 3-DAT AUX crush the car   of Marie
      'Pierre crushed Marie's car on him.' (him   Pierre; could be Jean)

Huang also suggests that clitics of inalienable possession as in (20) could be the overt realization of outer objects of the verb. In (20) the dative clitic refers to the possessor of the definite DP object (for concreteness, we can assume that it binds an empty possessor within that DP). Following this reasoning, (21) would be an inclusive indirect passive, because, just as in (20), *se* binds the possessor of the definite DP object.

(20) Jean *lui$_i$*   a   cassé [e_i le bras].
      Jean 3-DAT AUX broken the arm
      'Jean broke his arm. (*his ≠ Jean*)

(21) Jean *s'$_i$*   est fait [casser [e_i le bras].]
      Jean REFL AUX f.   break the arm
      'Jean$_i$ had his$_i$ arm broken'.

Given that *se* may also bind an internal argument (inner object) of the lower

verb (22) and (8), we have to conclude that *se faire* would be similar to Japanese *-(r)are*, which has three readings: direct passive, inclusive indirect passive and exclusive indirect passive.

(22) Jean$_i$ *s$_i$'*   est   fait   [écraser *e$_i$* (par une voiture)].
     Jean REFL AUX f.   crush   (by a car)
     'Jean was run over by a car.'

Notice however that in excluded indirect passives, the surface subject is truly an extra argument with respect to the embedded predicate. This is not the case in French. For example, (23) cannot mean that Paul was affected because Julie cut her hair (the same is true if *les* is replaced by the possessive determiner *ses*). Also, an intransitive verb like *pleuvoir* 'rain' (24) or *pleurer* 'cry' (25) cannot be the complement of *se faire*, nor can it license an affected dative. In Japanese, the equivalents of (23)-(24a)-(25a) are perfect as exclusive indirect passives (compare (24a) with (13)).

(23) Paul s'   est fait couper les cheveux par Julie.
     Paul REFL AUX f.   cut   the hair   by Julie
     doesn't mean : 'Paul is adversely affected because Julie cut her hair.'
     means only : 'Paul had Julie cut his (own) hair.'

(24) a.   *Il s'   est   fait pleuvoir (par la pluie).
          He REFL AUX f.   rain   (by the rain).
          intended : 'He was rained on.'

      b.   *Il *lui*   pleut.
          it 3-DAT rains
          intended: 'It rains, and he is affected by it.'

(25) a.   *Jean se   fait pleurer par son enfant.
          Jean REFL f. cry   by his child
          intended : 'Jean is adversely affected because his child is crying.'

      b.   *Son enfant lui pleure.
          His child 3s-DAT cry
          intended: 'His child is crying and he is affected by it.'

We conclude that the affected dative in French is not the overt equivalent of some covert outermost object in Japanese. The conditions licensing affected

datives are distinct from those licensing Japanese exclusive passives. Passive *se faire* does not allow just any extra participant to be added to the embedded event. For every passive *se faire* construction, there is a simple clause with an accusative or dative object clitic, whose interpretation is parallel to that of *se*. This is exemplified in (18)-(19), (20)-(21) and (22a-b). In consequence, the subject of *se faire* is never excluded from the embedded event.

Interestingly, Washio (1993) introduced (18) with the aim of showing that the subject is *included* in *se faire*. This is so because (18) is possible only if there exists a pragmatic relation between Jean and Marie's car, for example, Jean borrowed Marie's car (for Washio, the relation between the included subject and some participant of the embedded event does not have to be a possessive relation). Notice that the necessity of a pragmatic relation between Jean and Marie's car is also observed between *lui* and Marie's car in (19); it is not a feature of passive *se faire*. If *se* always binds an position within the lower predicate and if unergative verbs like *pleuvoir* 'rain', *pleurer* 'cry', do not license affected datives (24b)-(25b), we explain the unavailability of these verbs as complement of *se faire*, since there is no object for *se* to bind within the embedded clause.

Thus, like the passive constructions discussed by Huang, passive *se faire* involves a missing NP in the embedded VP. But unlike these construction, there is no movement. The coindexation of the surface subject of *faire* with the missing NP is obtained via the reflexive clitic, which binds the missing NP and is coindexed with the surface subject. Binding of the missing NP by a reflexive clitic results in an included reading for the subject. But the construction is distinct from a Japanese indirect passive in at least the following respect. While unaccusative verbs enter the inclusive passive construction (Pylkkänen 1999, 2000), (26) shows that unaccusative verbs cannot be complements of *se faire*. Assuming that *se* is an outer object binding the possessor of the direct internal argument, the following sentence should be acceptable, but it is not. This shows that *se faire* is not the equivalent of included subject indirect passives of the Japanese type.

(26) *Il s'   est fait   mourir [e_i le fils]
     He REFL AUX CAUSE die   the son
     'He is adversely affected because his son died on him.'

In sum, the conditions under which exclusive and inclusive indirect passives
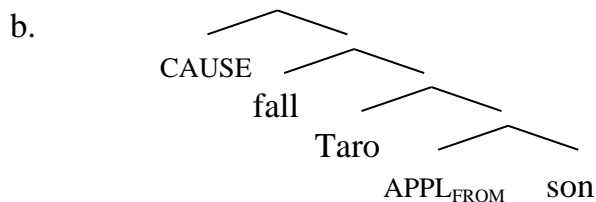
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are generated in East Asian languages are distinct from those conditioning the availability of *se faire*. Despite superficial similarities, *se faire* is not reducible to an East Asian indirect passive, even of the inclusive type. While the idea that outer and outermost objects are involved both in indirect passives and in French datives of inalienable possession and affected datives is not substantiated at this point, the notions of outer object and outermost object are interesting and certainly deserve further study.

In any case, we have shown that passive *se faire* is only possible when the reflexive clitic binds a position within the predicate. Accepting this, we still need to account for the fact that the subject is interpreted as being affected by the event. This will be done in section 6, after we have asked ourselves whether there is a CAUSE predicate in passive *se faire*.

5.   Does *se faire* contain a CAUSE predicate?

Given that *se faire* is a causative construction, we now compare it to adversative causatives, such as those found in Japanese (27a). Pylkkänen (1999, 2000) suggests that Japanese adversative causatives contain a CAUSE predicate dominating an inclusive indirect passive, as illustrated in (27b). The CAUSE predicate has no external argument, and the applied argument raises to the surface subject position.

(27) a.   Taroo-ga musuko-o korob-ase-ta.
            Taro-NOM son-ACC   fall-CAUSE-PAST
            'Taro was affected by his son falling'

      b.

Pylkkänen argues in favor of the existence of a CAUSE predicate in that construction by showing that adversative causatives are not compatible with situations where there is no cause (28a), but they are compatible with a by-phrase naming the causing event (28b). Also, adversative causatives are incompatible

with naming an individual implied in the causing event (28c):

(28) a. #Taroo-ga   titioya-o sin-ase-ta.
 Taro-NOM father-ACC die-CAUSE-PAST
 'Taro was affected by his father dying.'
 (odd if Taro's father dies of natural causes)

b. Taroo-ga   ame-ni-yotte yasai-o   kusar-ase-ta.
 Taro-NOM rain-BY   vegetable-ACC rot-CAUSE-PAST
 'Taro was affected by the vegetable rotting because of the rain.'

c. *Taroo-ga   Hanako-ni-yotte yasai-o   kusar-ase-ta.
 Taro-NOM Hanako-BY   vegetable-ACC rot-CAUSE-PAST
 'Taro was affected by the vegetable's being caused to rot by Hanako'

In the case of passive *se faire*, because of the availability of a causative reading for *se faire*, where the subject is the instigator of the event, there is some confusion in the litterature as to the availability of a causative component of meaning in that construction. We show here that in the *passive* reading there is no CAUSE component of meaning.

First, the arguments used by Pylkkänen do not carry over to *se faire*. Kupferman (1995:67), shows that the embedded predicate in *se faire* constructions must be agentive, and that the *by*-phrase carries only the Agent role, and not any other role given to the subject by the predicate. While the passive sentence in (29a) can allow either *this boy* or *the doubt* as a *by*-phrase, the *se faire* construction in (29b) allows only *this boy*. Crucially, the subject of the embedded predicate cannot name a Cause (*by the trip* in (30)). Kupferman analyzes the subject of the embedded predicate as an adjunct similar to the agentive adjunct in nominals, where the same agentivity requirement is observed.

(29) a. Marie a   été   assaillie par ce garçon / par le doute.
 Marie AUX PASS. attacked by this boy   / by the doubt
 'Marie was attacked by this boy / by a doubt.'

b. Marie s'   est fait assaillir par ce garçon / *par le doute.
 Marie REFL AUX f.   attack by this boy   / by a doubt
 'Marie was attacked by this boy / by a doubt.'

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(30) Léa s'   est fait décoiffer   par Max   / *par le voyage.
      Léa REFL AUX f.   mess_up_the_hair by Max / *by the trip.
      'Léa's hair was messed up by Max/*by the trip.'

Notice in passing that the agentive requirement on the subject of the embedded predicate provides an explanation for the ungrammaticality of unaccusatives as complements of *se faire*: unaccusative verbs are not agentive.[2]

Arguing in favor of a CAUSE predicate, Martin (2002:219) claims that the *se faire* construction denotes two eventualities, while the canonical passive denotes only one eventuality. The higher eventuality with *se faire* would be a CAUSE predicate. According to her, in (31a) the adverb preferentially modifies the higher event and in (31b), it preferentially modifies the lower event, and passive sentences do not show that double reading for the adverb. The latter claim is not right. The two passive sentences in (32) show the same ambiguity as those in (31) between *rapidement* denoting the time preceding the surgery and *rapidement* denoting the duration of the surgery:

(31) a.   Marie s'   est rapidement fait opérer.
            Marie REFL AUX quickly   f.   operate-on
            'Marie was quickly operated on.'

      b.   Marie s'   est fait opérer   rapidement.
            Marie REFL AUX f.   operate-on quickly
            'Marie was operated on quickly.'

(32) a.   Marie a   rapidement été   opérée.
            Marie AUX quickly   PASS operated-on
            'Marie was quickly operated on.'

      b.   Marie a   été   opérée   rapidement.
            Marie AUX PASS. operated-on quickly
            'Marie was operated on quickly.'

These examples show that the adverb can have scope either over the bare event (VP) or over the time of the event (INFL). They do not demonstrate that there is one more event with *se faire* than with passive sentences, and even less that *faire* introduces a CAUSE predicate.

Martin (2002:222-223) later shows that, in causative sentences, the speaker

can, while asserting the first, causative, event, cancel the implication that the second event happened (33), and that this is not possible with the passive reading of *se faire* in (34).[3] This shows that, with passive *se faire*, no causative event is available for interpretation.

(33) Naïvement, j'ai fait étudier les poèmes pour le lundi suivant.
Naively, I AUX f. study the poems for the monday following
Tu penses, aucun d'eux ne les avait ne fût-ce que relus!
You think, none of them NEG 3pACC AUX even re-read
'Naively, I had them study the poems for the following monday; you bet, none of them had even re-read them!'

(34) *Pierre s' est fait opérer, mais finalement, au dernier moment,
 Pierre REFL AUX f. operate, but finally, at the last moment,
on a annulé l' opération.
one AUX cancelled the operation
'Pierre got operated on, but at the last moment, the operation was cancelled.'

Other authors claim that there is causation in the *se faire* construction. For Gaatone (1983) and for Tasmowski and van Oevelen (1987), the subject of *faire* is a causer because it is always, even unconsciously, responsible for the occurrence of the embedded event. Gaatone (1983) brings up (35) to show that inanimate subjects are not possible with passive *se faire*. Tasmowski and van Oevelen (1987) claim that (36) is odd because the subject of *se faire* has no responsibility in the event. In both cases, the canonical passive is perfect.

(35) *La proposition s'est fait rejeter par tous les députés.
'The proposal was rejected by all representatives.'

(36) Et Jules? (and Jules?)
—Le pauvre garçon s' est fait rayer de nos listes. #Il est mort.
—the poor boy REFL AUX f. cross off our lists. he is dead.
'The poor boy got (his name) crossed off our lists. He is dead.'

The passive reading of *se faire* would therefore be a weak version of the causative reading. Arguing against this idea, Washio (1995: 104-109) makes two points. First, even if some kind of unconscious responsibility is attributed to the subject of *se faire* in its passive reading, that is not equivalent to saying that the construction is *causative* and that the subject *instigated* what happened

to him. Second, when the surface subject is coreferential with a dative argument of the embedded verb, no responsibility on the part of the subject is required, as shown in (37). Washio suggests that (37) is possible because the construction does not compete with a canonical passive. In (35)-(36), the construction competes with a canonical passive because the missing NP is a direct object. In that case only, *se faire* would carry some added idea of responsibility that would distinguish it from the passive.

(37) Pendant qu'il était dans le coma, Paul s'est fait voler sa montre.
       While   he was in   a coma, Paul had   his watch stolen.

While the examples proposed by Gaatone and by Tasmowsky and van Oevelen show that there is a difference between the canonical passive and passive *se faire*, the examples in (38) show that the surface subject of *se faire* can correspond to a direct object of the embedded verb and still *not* be interpreted as even remotely responsible for the event.

(38) a.   300,000 personnes se sont   fait massacrer par l'ennemi..
           300,000 persons   refl aux f.   slaughter by the ennemy.
           '300,000 persons have been slaughtered by the ennemy'

     b.   Les habitants   se   sont fait surprendre pendant leur sommeil
           The inhabitants REFL AUX f.   surprise   during   their sleep
           par l'éruption   du   volcan.
           by the eruption of the volcano
           'The inhabitants were taken by surprise during their sleep by the eruption of the volcano.'

Moreover, the following examples, found on the internet, show that *se faire* is used even with inanimate subjects that correspond to a direct object of the embedded verb. We must therefore reject the idea that in passive *se faire* the subject is interpreted as being responsible for the event.[4]

(39) a.   Notre gentil projet de loi s'   est fait adopter dans sa première
           our   nice   project of law REFL AUX f.   adopt   in   its first
           mouture.
           draft
           'The our nice bill has been adopted without revisions.'

b. Ce film s'   est fait massacrer au   nom de l'esthétisme
    This film REFL AUX f.   slaughter in-the name of   aestheticism
    cinématographique.
    of film-making
    'This film was demolished (by the critics) in the name of film-making aestheticism'

We conclude that there is no CAUSE predicate in passive *se faire*.

6. The causative-passive alternation

The preceding discussion raises two questions : If there is no CAUSE predicate in passive *se faire*, why is the causative construction used to denote a passive meaning? Where does the *affected* reading of the subject come from? In this section we propose an answer to both questions.

Constructions alternating between a causative reading and a passive reading are attested in many languages, particularly, but not exclusively, in East Asian languages. This phenomenon is illustrated in (40) with examples from Korean (40a), Mongolian (40b), Taiwanese (40c), and even English (40d), where even the transitive variant of *get* (not only the intransitive variant) can have a passive meaning.

(40) a. Korean HI (i, hi, li, ki) (Kim 1994)
          John-un   Mary-eykey meli-lul kkakki-ki-ess-ta
          John-top Mary-dat   hair-acc cut-hi-pst-dec
          'John had his hair cut by Mary'
          'John made Mary cut his hair'

      b. Mongolian (Washio 1993 :64):
          bi bags*aar   garaa   bariulav.
          I teacher-ins hand-ref catch-cause-past
          'I had the teacher catch my hand'
          'I was grabbed by the hand by the teacher.'

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c. Taiwanese (Huang 1999)
    goa ho i   tio-tio te-it tsiong a.
    I   HO him get-get first prize   perf
    'I made him win the first prize.'
    'I (adversely) experienced his winning the first prize.'

d. English:
    Mary got her camera stolen by the police.

To account for the alternation between a causative and a passive reading, three types of explanations come to mind: a passive first analysis, a causative first analysis, and a parallel derivation. Huang (1999) proposes a passive first analysis for (ergative) *get*. This analysis generates the verb low in the structure; the verb has an experiencer subject, which is responsible for the affected interpretation of the subject in the passive reading. In the causative reading, a causative VP shell is added to the initial VP, and the verb raises to CAUSE.

(41) [$_{VP1}$ Mary$_{causer}$ [V+CAUSE] [$_{VP2}$ John$_{exp}$ got [$_{VP}$ PRO blamed t$_i$ ...]]]
      —————————————| —————————————|

This type of approach cannot be extended to *faire*. Remember that structurally, *se faire* is a causative *faire-par* construction. In *faire-par*, *faire* is a pure causative morpheme which provides a CAUSE VP-shell dominating an event, as seen in (42). It has no experiencer component of meaning that would justify generating it low in the structure.

(42)   VP1
               ⟋   ⟍
            NP   V'
          Causer   ⟋   ⟍
                    V   VP2
                [+CAUSE]   Event
                    |
                  faire

A tenant of the parallel derivation is Washio (1993, 1995), who points out that the causative construction differs from the passive one in the direction of affectedness. In the causative, the direction is from person to event; in the passive, it is from event to person:

(43) a.   Person   Event
     b.   Person   Event   (Washio 1995:161)

Relying crucially on Jackendof f's Action T ier (Jackendoff 1990), W ashio suggests that *faire* is lexically underspecified as to the affectedness of its subject. The predicate AFF(ect) has two arguments: AFF(x,y). In (44), proposed for *faire*, the notation AFF ([X]) does not specify whether X is the subject or the object of AFF.

(44)   [EVENT2 ...   ]   (=thematic tier)
        EVENT1   AFF ([X])   (=action tier)

The causative reading is derived from (44) by interpreting X as subject of AFF and by introducing a CAUSE component of meaning through the Actor principle : " If X is an Actor and E is a bare subordinate Event, then relate X to E as the Instigator of E. " (Washio 1993 :83; 1995:181)

(45)   CAUSE ([X] ,   [EVENT2 ...])   (=thematic tier)
        EVENT1   AFF ([ ],)   (=action tier)

The passive reading is derived by interpreting X as the object of AFF. For the included subject reading—and therefore for *se faire* in his approach— Washio suggests that the subject of AFF is some object of the embedded event. This object, or more precisely what happens to this object, is what affects the subject of *faire*.

(46)   [EVENT2 ...[Z]   ]   (=thematic tier)
        EVENT1   AFF ([ ], [X])   (=action tier)

In the excluded subject reading, the whole subordinate event is interpreted as affecting X (47). The excluded subject reading of indirect passives would result from the Affectee principle: "If X is an Affectee that is completely disconnected from the subordinate Event, E, then interpret it by relating it to E itself" (1995:178).

(47)   [EVENT2 ...]   (=thematic tier)
        EVENT1   AFF ([ ], [X])   (=action tier)

The problem with this analysis in the case of *se faire* is that it is not clear that *faire* is underspecified as to the affectedness of its subject. First, in its lexical

meaning, *faire,* means 'make', and its external argument is an Actor.

(48) François fait   un gâteau.
      François is making a   cake

Second, *faire* has a causative meaning, but not a passive meaning, outside of causative constructions, e.g. in V-N constructions (Bouffard 2002):

(49) Jean fait   peur à Pierre.
      Jean causes fright to Pierre'
      'Jean frightens Pierre'

Third, *se faire* is derived from causative *faire* in the sense that the passive reading is one reading of one of the causative constructions in which *faire* enters, and it requires the presence of the reflexive morpheme. Because of that, it seems preferable, in the case of *se faire*, to adopt a causative-first approach and to treat the passive reading as derived from the causative reading. The difficulty with this is immediately apparent from (42): deleting the causative VP shell to get the passive reading seems to leave no room for *faire*. Below we suggest a way out of this problem.

First, the causative-passive alternation seems to occur (perhaps marginally) in the lexical domain as well; this is exemplified in (50) from Oehrle & Nishio (1981). Example (51) shows that the same meaning alternation seems to be marginally possible in French.

(50) Taroo ga   ie o   yaita.
      Taro-nom house-acc burned
      'Taro burned his house (intentionally or otherwise).'
      'Taro's house burned, and he was adversely affected by this event (although he did not cause the burning, intentionally or otherwise).'
      (= Miyagawa (1989 :129) citing Oehrle & Nishio (1981))

(51) (Que s'est-il passé? – 'What happened?)
      Jean a étouffé son moteur.
      'Jean stalled   his engine'
      'the engine stopped on Jean' (without Jean doing anything special)

We propose that there exist a process that switches the affectedness of the subject of a CAUSE predicate. In the normal case, the subject of a predicate with

a CAUSE component of meaning is interpreted as the subject of AFF, that is, as the Actor. In some circumstances, this entity can switch to being interpreted as the object of AFF, as illustrated in (52) illustrating the switch apparent in (50).

(52) 'burn' =   CAUSE ([x], [y BECOME burned])
              AFF ([x̲], [y])

              [y BECOME burned]
        AFF ([ ], [x̲])

Two distinct processes are at play in (52): (i) the subject goes from subject of AFF to object of AFF; (ii) the causative component of meaning disappears. The switch in the affectedness of the subject is schematized in (53); it is the crucial, and most intriguing, aspect of the process. Crucially, in this process, the syntactic realization of the arguments is not affected : in (50)-(51), the subject is the same in the causative and in the passive readings. The external argument remains external; internal arguments remain internal. This is *not* a valency-reducing process.

(53)   V < x̲ , y >   V < x̲ , y >
             | |
        AFF(x,)   AFF(,x)

The deletion of the CAUSE component of meaning can be understood as following from the existence of an implicative relation, noted by Washio (1995), between being an Actor bringing about an event and being the Causer of that event (54). If we deny some entity the status of Actor, we at the same time deny it its status as a Causer.

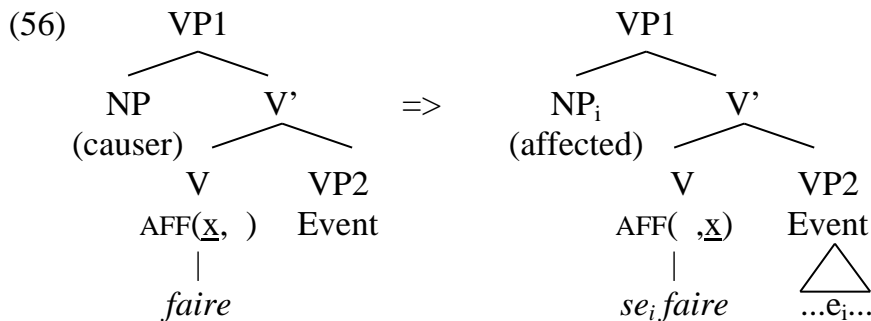(54) AFF ([ ], EVENT) => CAUSE ([ ], EVENT)

We can now come back to our initial question: *Why use a causative construction to construct a passive meaning?* The answer we suggest is the following. First, the CAUSE morpheme creates a higher event with an external argument and, crucially, an Action tier. Second, the shift in (53) allows the subject to be interpreted as affected, this resulting in the deletion of the CAUSE component of meaning. *Se faire* is then derived from causative *faire* as in (55). Contrary to Washio, we assume here that it is the embedded event which affects the subject of *faire*, not what happens to some participant of the embedded

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event.

(55) 'faire' =   CAUSE ([x], [$_{event}$ ...])
                       AFF ([x̲], [ ])

      'se faire'=   [$_{event}$ ...]
                       AFF ([ ], [x̲])

Reinterpreted in structural terms, this analysis requires the V head of the higher VP shell to carry, not the thematic information CAUSE, but the action information AFF. The higher VP shell provided by *faire* has, in the unmarked case, an external argument which is an Actor, and therefore a Causer of the embedded event. The process in (53), which reverses the affectedness of the subject, gives rise to a reading where the subject is affected by the embedded event.

(56)   VP1   VP1
          ⟋   ⟍   ⟋   ⟍
       NP   V'   =>   NP$_i$ V'
     (causer)   ⟋   ⟍   (affected)   ⟋   ⟍
             V   VP2   V   VP2
         AFF(x̲,)   Event   AFF(,x̲)   Event
            | | △
          faire   *se$_i$ faire*   ...e$_i$...

We attribute the included reading of the subject of *faire* to *se.* By binding some object in the embedded VP and by coindexing it with the subject of *faire*, *se* ensures that the subject of *faire* is related to some participant of the subordinate event.

Thus, the passive reading of *se faire* has the following characteristics, minimally distinct from those of the passive constructions discussed by Huang (1999). It is this confluence of characteristics that yields the passive reading.

(57) a.   The subject of the higher verb *faire* is interpreted as affected by
            the lower event as a result of (53).

      b.   There is a missing NP within the embedded VP.

      c.   The reflexive clitic on *faire* binds the missing NP and is coindexed
            with the subject of *faire*.

The exact conditions triggering/allowing the reversal of affectedness sche-

matized in (53) are intriguing and clearly deserve a deeper investigation. In the case of *se faire* the reflexive clitic is probably a triggering a factor, because, in general, *se* signals that the surface subject of the verb on which it appears is affected by the event; this is the case in ergative reflexives, middles, and even in true reflexives. But, we saw with (50)-(51) that a reversal of affectedness can happen even in the absence of a reflexive clitic.

Could it be that the reversal of affectedness discussed above is simply some kind of bleaching of the causative verb? There is a difference. According to Huang (1999, ex. 106), in Taiwanese, the causative sentence can carry a variety of interpretations, from a strong causative reading to a weak causative (*let*) reading to a passive reading, direct or indirect. The existence of a weak causative reading in Taiwanese suggests that there is a gradual bleaching of the causative meaning in that language. With *se faire*, however, there is no weak causative reading. The subject of *se faire* is interpreted either as a Causer or as an affected entity. There is no intermediate interpretation. Because of that, and given the arguments provided in section 5 against the existence of a CAUSE component of meaning in passive *se faire*, we think that this is a process distinct from a simple bleaching of the causative reading.

7.   Conclusion

In this paper, we have shown that, to the typology of passive constructions attempted by Huang (1999), we can add a fourth strategy: binding by a reflexive clitic. In *se faire*:

- the missing NP in the embedded event is an ACC/DAT object bound by a reflexive clitic;

- the coindexation of the surface subject with the missing NP is obtained via the reflexive clitic.

We also showed that the passive reading of *se faire* results from a deletion of the CAUSE component of meaning of the verb, which nevertheless retains its external argument. This deletion of CAUSE accompanies a reversal of affectedness for the subject. The consequence is that the external argument of *faire* is interpreted as being affected by the event. If we are right that *se faire* results from a reversal of affectedness for the external argument, we must ask what the triggering factors are for this process, and how it fits within the general pattern

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of lexical semantics.

We must stress that, while it has been shown that, in French, the passive interpretation should be derived from the causative one, we do not claim that this is the case in every language and in every causative-passive alternation.

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Notes

[1] We thank Taro Kageyama for allowing us the opportunity to present this work at LP2002.

[2] Martin 2002 proposes that the *by*-phrase in *se faire* is an Effector rather than an Agent; it doesn't have to be volitional. This does not change the main point of the argument.

[3] In fact, Martin claims that, with *se faire*, the speaker is committed at least to the *partial* truth of the second event, on the basis of the acceptability of (i). But in (i), the only interpretation of *se faire* is causative: 'he' had someone drive him to the station (and not 'he was driven to the station'). When *se faire* has truly a passive meaning, the embedded event is always asserted.

(i) Il s'est fait conduire à la gare, mais il a très vite changé de destination quand il a su ce qui s'y passait.
     'He *se faire* drive to the station, but he quickly changed destination when he learned what was happening there.'

Martin also claims that the cause present in *se faire* can be reduced to the fact that fate caused the event to happen; this is a doubtful move, as it stretches the notion of cause to the point of voiding it of content.

[4] The stylistic difference between the canonical passive and passive *se faire* could perhaps follow from the analysis proposed in section 6 where, with passive *se faire*, the subject gets a theta-role Affected from the main verb on top of the role it has in the subordinate event. In the passive, the subject has only the theta role obtained in the object position from which it is raised. The reflexive construction could for example be preferred over the passive construction when the subject is emotionally affected by the event.

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