

■ Case of the Agent in Passive Sentences

The agent that takes *ga* in the active sentence shows up with *ni* in the passive counterpart.

(1) *Tarō ga Hanako o aisuru* ‘Taro loves Hanako’.

(2) *Hanako ga Tarō ni aisareru* ‘Hanako is loved by Taro’.

In the following instances *ni* is not used with the agent.

First, *ni* is not used with verbs that express the act of creating, such as *tsukuru* ‘make, create’, (*keeki o*) *yaku* ‘bake (a cake), (*e o*) *kaku* ‘paint, draw (a picture)’.

(3) *Yūmei na shefu { *ni/ni yotte } tsukurareta ryōri* ‘the dish created by a famous chef.’

In this example, the agent in the passive sentence is marked by *ni yotte*, to avoid confusion with the receiver of the thing that is created.

Ni yotte, which makes the style somewhat bookish, may mark the agent in a direct passive sentence.

Second, *ni* is not used with three-argument verbs which express the transference of things between two people, such as *watasu* ‘hand over’, *okuru* ‘send’, and *ataeru* ‘give’.

(4) *Sensee { ?ni/kara } tegami o watasareta* ‘I was handed a letter by the teacher.’

In this example the agent in the passive sentence accompanies *kara* to show the source, so there is no confusion with the receiver (which would be marked by *ni*) of the item.

Kara is also used with the passive agent of verbs that express actions where there is no physical touching involved, such as *hanashikakeru* ‘strike up a conversation’, *shōtai suru* ‘invite’, *aisuru* ‘love’. *Ni* may also be used in this situation.

(5) *Mishiranu hito { ni/kara } hanashikakerareta* ‘I was talked to by a stranger.’

De may be used with the agent of a passive sentence.

(6) *Tatemono wa ikegaki de kakomarete iru* ‘The building is surrounded by a hedge.’

Case *de* can be used in an active sentence, *tatemono o ikegaki de kakomu* ‘surround the building by a hedge’, and in it *de* is close to the *de* of tool/means. This use of *de* is distinguished from the *de* that is used to accompany the agent only.

The agent of indirect passive sentences is always marked by *ni*. *Ni yotte* cannot be used in this sentence structure.

(7) *Rinjin { ni/*ni yotte } sawagare, nerarenakatta* ‘The neighbors made a lot of noise and I couldn’t sleep.’

→格 Case (2-D), 授受表現の諸特徴 Characteristics of Giving and Receiving Expressions (2-E)

● References

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