

## **Multiple-grammar hypothesis: A case study of Japanese passive constructions**

### **Abstract**

The multiple-grammar hypothesis proposes that a native speaker's linguistic knowledge is not made up of a single monolithic grammar but is composed of several different component grammars that interact with each other. This hypothesis straightforwardly accounts for a speaker's ability to use different languages, different varieties of a language, or different registers and modes within a language, according to the situation in which s/he uses language. While a speaker's multilingual and multi-modal abilities have been discussed mainly as sociolinguistic issues, the current hypothesis examines it as an issue pertaining to the structure of grammar.

Our approach shares the spirit of the recent approach in functional linguistics in that we believe that a speaker's linguistic knowledge, or grammar, is formed for the most part through language use in actual situations. In this research paradigm, conversation has become the chief domain of research. However, a speaker's grammar is also shaped through his/her interaction with written language. These multiple exposures to different language modes will create multiple grammars.

In this paper, we conduct a case study on how passive constructions are used in conversation and written texts. The purpose is to show that while passive constructions share certain properties in both modes, they also exhibit modal specific characteristics as well. By examining these shared and unshared properties, we will be able to probe the nature of the multiple grammars of the native speaker.