Kena passives in Indonesian: A Malaysian perspective

In their study on *kena* constructions in Colloquial Malay, Kartini and Nomoto (2010) point out a dialectal difference between Malay and Indonesian: in addition to participating in the adversative passive construction, *kena* is also used to express obligation/non-volition ('have to') in Malay whereas Indonesian lacks the latter usage, as shown in (1).

(1) Ali kena tipu wanita itu.   Malay/Indonesian
  (i) ^{M}✓/^{I}✓ 'Ali got cheated by the woman.'
  (ii) ^{M}✓/^{I}* 'Ali had to cheat the woman.'

They suggest that this difference arises because *kena* is a type of raising verb ('funny predicate') in Malay, but not in Indonesian. However, it remains unclear what Indonesian *kena* really is (besides a verb meaning 'to incur; get'). The present paper addresses this issue.
  Kartini and Nomoto argue that (1) has two interpretations in Malay because the same sentence can be parsed as involving either an active or a passive lower clause:

(2) a. Ali [$_{VP}$ kena [$_{vP}$ $\emptyset_{ACT}$-tipu wanita itu]].   (active)   Malay
      'Ali had to cheat the woman.' (1-ii)
    b. Ali [$_{VP}$ kena [$_{vP}$ $\emptyset_{PASS}$-tipu (oleh) wanita itu]].   (passive)
      'Ali got cheated by the woman.' (1-i)

(2a) and (2b) both contain the same *kena* morpheme with a modal meaning like 'forced by the circumstances'. In the active, the circumstances force the subject to do something, hence he 'has to' to it. In the passive, the circumstances force the subject to undergo some action, usually (but not necessarily) putting him into an adverse situation. $\emptyset_{ACT}$- in (2a) is the null voice marker in the bare active. Given the word order and the optionality of *oleh* 'by' (phrase), $\emptyset_{PASS}$- in (2b) is not the null voice marker in the bare passive, but a phonologically null allomorph of *di-* in the morphological passive.
  We propose that *kena* in Indonesian is a control verb that takes an affected ([+AFF]) external argument. Assuming that in a control structure, the controller and the controllee must be semantically coherent, *kena* can only embed a passive clause as in (3b). While the PRO in a passive clause is affected, that of an active clause is not, as indicated by (the lack of) [+AFF] in (3). This explains why Indonesian *kena* does not mean 'have to'.

(3) a. *Ali$_{[+AFF]i}$ [$_{VP}$ kena [$_{CP}$ PRO$_i$ $\emptyset_{ACT}$-tipu wanita itu$_{[+AFF]}$]].   Indonesian
    b. Ali$_{[+AFF]i}$ [$_{VP}$ kena [$_{CP}$ PRO$_{[+AFF]i}$ $\emptyset_{PASS}$-tipu (oleh) wanita itu]].
      'Ali got cheated by the woman' (1-i)

  Kena being a control verb is actually not surprising. Other funny predicates such as *cuba/coba* 'to try' also occur in control as well as raising structures (Nomoto 2008). $\emptyset_{PASS}$- is also used in accidental *ter-* sentences in both Malay and Indonesian. However, while corresponding *ter-* sentences with $\emptyset_{ACT}$- are widely available in Malay, they are strictly constrained in Indonesian, parallelling the situation of *kena* sentences.
  In conclusion, *kena* in *kena* passives is not a passive marker but a modal verb in both Malay and Indonesian. Thus, our analysis can handle sentences in which *kena* is followed by the genuine passive marker *di-*; such sentences exist in both dialects. Further, it suggests a natural course of development of the various attested uses of *kena* in terms of change in the subcategorisation frame: <Goal/Experiencer, Theme/Event> (verb of physical/abstract contact) → <Experiencer, Event> (control verb) → <___, Event> (raising verb).