

ARGUMENT SUPPRESSION IN LAKOTA
R. Pustet (Univ. of Munich) & D. Rood (Univ. of Colorado)

1. Split intransitivity and pragmatic perspective

Possible language universal: strategies for **backgrounding** of core arguments agent and patient in transitive clauses; example: agent-suppressing *they*-impersonal in English.

Not universal: **foregrounding**, i.e. structural devices for moving arguments out of a less discourse-salient into a more discourse-salient position (categories: e.g. "subject", "topic", "focus"). Constructions associated with foregrounding function are, in particular, passives and antipassives. Cases associated with foregrounded status are the nominative in accusative systems and the absolutive in ergative systems.

Shift of pragmatic perspective:

- (1) *the raccoon chased the dog*
- (2) *the dog was chased by the raccoon*

Question: Does core case-marking in the split-S language Lakota, which has been claimed to be sensitive to semantic roles only (e.g. Dowty 1991, Merlan 1985, Mithun 1991, VanValin 1990), express pragmatic categories like foregrounded status as well? Probable answer: no. Annotation: S-splits can be sensitive to semantic categories such as agency, control, tense, aspect, subordination vs. non-subordination, etc.; in some cases, alignment with a semantic/syntactic parameter may not be possible (Meira 2000).

Lakota has all kinds of backgrounding constructions; but does it also have devices for foregrounding?

2. The data

Marking of core case relations in Lakota:

- no morphological marking on the NP
- complex system of argument marking affixes on the predicate: intransitive "subject", transitive agent and patient, and, at least in specific semantic and syntactic constellations, benefactives, possessors, and other oblique roles are cross-referenced on the predicate.
- argument markers are usually composed of two parts: number-insensitive person marker + number marker. The person marking paradigms for transitive agent and patient are morphologically distinct. A zero affix encodes singular number, while plurality is expressed by means of the suffix *-pi*.
- The number markers are used for both transitive agents and patients.
- Intransitive arguments are coded by means of these sets of markers as well.

- (3) *na-má-ya-h'u-pi*
ST-1SG.PAT-2AG-hear-PL.AG
'you guys hear me'

2.1. Agent suppression

Agent-suppressing impersonal:

The construction is homonymous with the coding format for third person plural agent, i.e. zero agent marker + plural suffix *-pi*.

- (4) *hená ú waštúkala Ø-kága-pi*
 those with dried corn 3AG-make-IPS
 'with these (things) dried corn was made'
- (5) *Mary Light e-Ø-má-ciya-pi*
 Mary Light ST-3AG-1SG.PAT-say to-IPS
 'I am called/my name is Mary Light'
- (6) *"táku e-Ø-ní-ciya-pi só?" eyá yúkhá*
 what ST-3AG-2PAT-say to-IPS QS say then
 "'What is your name?" he said. It (the bush) replied: "My name is rose."
"uzížitka e-Ø-má-ciya-pi k'ú" eyá kéye
 rose ST-3AG-1SG.PAT-say to-IPS ASS say QT

The construction is structurally and semantically analogous to the impersonalizing *they*-construction in English.

- (7) *they sent him home* = agentless passive *he was sent home*

2.1.1. Basic analysis

Agent-suppressing *-pi* cannot always be analyzed as 'plural agent':

(A) Agent-suppressing *-pi* occurs with *thú* 'to give birth to', which, ontologically speaking, admits a single agent only per instantiation in reality, namely, the mother.

- (8) *wichása wá chícá wá kící-thú-pi*
 man IDF.SG child IDF.SG 3SG.POSS-give birth to-IPS
 'a man's son was born' (Deloria 1932:106)
- (9) *Lakhóta ki lé pte-sá wá thú-pi cha*
 Indian DEF this buffalo-white IDF.SG give birth to-IPS QL
 'the Indians celebrate the birth of a white buffalo/that a white buffalo was born'
- w-Ø-iyuški-pi*
 NSP.PAT-3AG-happy-PL.AG
- (10) *Wanikiya Thú-pi Apétu*
 Savior (Jesus) give birth to-IPS day
 'The Savior's Birthday, i.e. Christmas'

(B) No plural marking function of impersonalizing *-pi* in the following contexts:

- (11) *ihíhąni yúkhá héchel hú él aphá-pi hé héchel yazá kéye*
 in the morning then so leg at hit-IPS that so hurt QT
 'in the morning the spot where he had been hit hurt'

Context: the injured person had been hit by a rock thrown by a dwarf-like being.

- (12) *yúkhá hoksíla ki léchel iníhąsni lé thipsíla yuzú-pi*
 then boy DEF here nevertheless this prairie turnip pull up-IPS
 'the boy, nevertheless, kept peeping through the holes left by the pulled-out prairie turnips'

cha ohlóka cha ektá-sna éyokas 'i-hą skhé
 QL hole QL at-HAB look at-PRG QT

Context: the boy's mother is the only person pulling out prairie turnips here.

- (13) *héchel apétu ki lé él wó'oyaka wāzī oyág-ma-si-pi*
 so day DEF this on story IDF.SG tell-1SG.PAT-ask-IPS
 'today I was asked to tell a story'

Context: the person asking for a story was a single person, namely Regina Pustet.

(C) Agent-suppressing *-pi* is also found in discourse contexts in which an argument which qualifies as a filler for the semantic agent slot in the *pi*-construction cannot be identified. In particular: *pi*-constructions occurring at the beginning of narratives; (14) to (16), respectively, are opening sentences of narratives. Also, contexts in which the implied agent is semantically generalized to the effect that no particular extralinguistic entities are referred to; cf. (17).

- (14) *tókhi lé waniyetu tópa sece cha héhāni lé*
 about this year four maybe QL at that time this
 'about four years ago an airport was built, a very big one'

kīyékhiyapi o'inazi hécha cha hé lila thāka kága-pi
 airport such QL that INT big make-IPS

- (15) *ho hehāl tókheskhe pápa kága-pi ki hé obláki-kte*
 well then how dried meat make-IPS DEF that tell.1SG.AG-FUT
 'next I will tell about how jerky was made'

- (16) *lehāl wāgmīza skuyá ki hé ū tókheskhe ih'á-pi ki*
 now corn sweet DEF that with how boil.VT-IPS LK
 'Now I will tell about how people cooked with sweet corn'

hé obláki-kte
 that tell.1SG.AG-FUT

- (17) *tukté'el makhóche wā él wīgli yāké hātāhā hé táku kihā*
 wherever land IDF.SG in oil sit if that things DEF
 'wherever there is mineral oil in the ground something like that can be observed'

wāyāka-pi shké
 see-IPS QT

Question: are there purely structural clues which allow for analyzing impersonalizing *-pi* as a more abstract construction, i.e. as something other than the combination \emptyset - 'agent' + *-pi* 'plural'? Is the *pi*-construction structurally intransitive, with only the patient NP present? Answer: uncertain. Because transitive agents are always zero-marked in the third person in Lakota, there are two analytical options, like (18) (with the agent absent) and (19) (with the agent present):

- (18) *thaló ki hé Ø-kablá-pi*
 meat DEF that 3SG.PAT-slice-IPS
 'the meat was sliced'

- (19) *thaló ki hé Ø-Ø-kablá-pi*
 meat DEF that 3AG-3SG.PAT-slice-IPS
 'people sliced the meat'

2.1.2. Usage with intransitives

German, passive with intransitive base verb:

- (20) *es wird ge-lach-t*
 it 3SG.PRS.PASS.AUX PPP-laugh-PST
 'there is laughing going on'

Semantics: complete suppression of arguments
 Syntax: intransitive, subject slot is filled with the dummy argument *es* 'it'

Lakota, *pi*-impersonal with intransitive base verb:

- (21) *éyas^s lehán héchų s'e wachí-pi*
 but now that way dance-IPS
 'but today **people** dance like this'
- (22) *hená é cha ú chethí-pi*
 those IP QL with build a fire-IPS
 'with these things **people** started a fire'
- (23) *lé ú , wahíkpe na itázipa ki lená ú , wayé yá-pi*
 this with arrow and bow DEF these with , hunt go-IPS
 'with this, with these arrows and bows, **people** went hunting'
- (24) *lená léchų-pi chą-sna hená ú akísni-pi*
 these do this-IPS then-HAB those because of recover-IPS
 'whenever **people** do that **they** get well from it'

Dummy insertion as in German or other modifications of the valence frame of the respective verbs do not take place.

2.2. Patient suppression

"Blotting out" of transitive patients via: *wa-* 'inanimate patient dereferentializer', *taku-* 'inanimate patient dereferentializer', and *wicha-* 'animate patient dereferentializer'.

2.2.1. *wa-* 'inanimate patient dereferentializer'

- (25) *wa-yáta-pi-kte*
 NSP.PAT-eat.2AG-PL-FUT
 'you guys will eat'

Interpretation: either *wa-* eliminates the transitive patient slot (i.e. antipassive), or *wa-* fills it (translations: 'non-specific patient', 'things', 'stuff'). In the absence of clear structural clues, it is hard to decide what's going on.

Unlike *-pi*, *wa-* may appear more than once in a given predicate:

- (26) *wa-w-ó-Ø-kiya-pi*
 NSP.PAT-NSP.PAT-ST-3AG-help-PL
 'they helped (various people with various things)'

Usually, *wa-* serves to suppress reference to inanimate entities. Exceptions: (26), (27), (28).

- (27) *wa-Ø-kté-pi*
 NSP.PAT-3AG-kill-PL
 'they killed'
- (28) *John Jack wa-'iwaho-Ø-Ø-ye*
 John Jack NSP.PAT-remind-3SG.AG-3SG.PAT-ST
 'John reminds people of Jack'

wa- with intransitive base verbs: not very productive; only stative intransitives (adjectives and nouns).

- (29) *wa-thó* 'grass, green grass, leaves, garden'
WA-green/blue
- (30) *wa-sá* 'faded things'
WA-faded
- (31) *wa-cík'ala* 'small things'
WA-small
- (32) *wa-ká* 'elders'
WA-old
- (33) *wa-há* 'hides (PL noun)'
WA-hide
- (34) *wa-sú* 'hail (noun)'
WA-seed
- (35) *wa-ší* 'fat (noun)'
WA-fat (noun)
- (36) *wa-mní-tu* 'whale, shark, octopus, sea lion, seal, any large ocean animal'
WA-water-LOC
- (37) *wa-hú-topa* 'quadruped'
WA-leg-four

2.2.2. *takú-* 'inanimate patient dereferentializer'

Interpretation: either *takú-* eliminates the transitive patient slot (i.e. antipassive), or *takú-* fills it. Only inanimate reference. *takú-* can be substituted for patient-suppressing *wa-* in almost any case, although *takú-* is by far less frequent than *wa-* in discourse.

- (38) *takú-blustá*
things-1SG.AG.finish
'I finished things'
- (39) *takú-Ø-ka-bleca-pi*
things-3AG-INS-broken-PL
'they broke (many) things'
- (40) *takú-wa-kayege*
things-1SG.AG-sew
'I sew'
- (41) *takú-Ø-nah'u-pi*
things-3AG-hear-PL.AG
'they heard things'
- (42) *lél takú-cho-wa-k'i*
here **things**-ST-1SG.AG-roast
'I'm roasting things here'

2.2.3. *wichá-* 'animate patient dereferentializer'

The regular third person animate patient marker *wichá-* can be used non-referentially as well, and thus may serve to suppress reference to animate patients in transitive clauses just like *wa-* suppresses reference to inanimate patients.

- (43) *yúkhá eháni Iktómi kákhena yá-há kéye . yúkhá*
 then long ago Iktomi about go-PRG QT then
 'A long time ago Iktomi was traveling around. Suddenly

ugnáhelakha tuktél lowá-pi na wachí-pi cha
 suddenly somewhere sing-IPS and dance-IPS so
 he heard **people** singing and dancing somewhere'

na-wicha-h'ù kéye cha .
 ST-3PL.PAT.IPS-hear QT QL

Context: no preceding context; example is the opening of a narrative.

In *wichá-khuwa-pi* 'they chased people' in (44) and in *ó-wicha-kiye* 'it helps', *wichá-* does not refer to specific people, but rather, to people in general.

- (44) *eháni hél wanági eyá wíwíla wichása e-wicha-kiya-pi*
 long ago there spirit LK spring man ST-3PL.PAT-call-IPS
 'long ago spirits called 'spring men' sometimes chased **people**'

cha héchacha hená eyásna Ø-wichá-khuwa-pi
 QL that kind those always 3AG-IPS-chase-PL.AG

- (45) *hé ugnás hí yazá-pi hátaḥa hé*
 that maybe tooth ache-IPS when that
 'When people maybe have a toothache, they put it in their mouth,

i-y-ó-gnaka-pi-kte , pus-yá-ke , hátaḥa hé
 mouth-EI-L-place-IPS-FUT dry.A-ADV-kind of when that
 dried as it is. It helps (people).'

ó-wicha-kiye
 ST-IPS-help.VT

2.3. More details on the usage of argument-suppressing *-pi* and *wa-*

- By and large, argument-suppressing *-pi*, *wa-*, *takú-* and *wichá-* seem to target core arguments only, i.e. transitive agents and patients, respectively, and intransitive "subjects". There are, however, occasional exceptions to this rule.
- Agent-suppressing *-pi* may cooccur with patient-suppressing *wa-* or *wichá-* in a single verb form:

- (46) *wa-yátka-pi ki lila s'ag-yáḥa íyake*
 NSP.PAT-drink-IPS DEF INT strong-ADV run
 'drinking is going on very strongly'

- (47) *cha wa-glúzaḥa-pi na'ís nūwá-pi ki ,*
 QL NSP.PAT-POSS.wash-IPS and bathe-IPS DEF
 'for doing laundry and taking baths there also were lots of rules'

hená nakú lila wówasukiye óta
 those also INT rule many

- (48) *apétu iyóhila owáchekiye ki lená wa-ká-hla-pi na*
 day each church DEF these NSP.PAT-INS-ring-IPS and
 'every day the church bells rang, and people were buried/there were funerals'

hená wíchá-ha-pi
 these IPS-bury-IPS

- (49) *wa-khálya-pi*
 NSP.PAT-heat.V-IPS
 'coffee'

- (50) *wa-kága-pi*
 NSP.PAT-make-IPS
 'statue'

- (51) *wa-h'áyethu-pi*
 NSP.PAT-decorate-IPS
 'decorations'

2.4. Interim summary: lack of promotion of constituents in argument-suppressing constructions

None of the numerous argument-suppressing constructions dealt with so far has a characteristic that is often felt to be essential for the functional definition of passive or antipassive: syntactic promotion of arguments. In the English passive, for instance, the basic transitive patient (*the boy* in (52) and (53)) is promoted to the status of subject, a position occupied by the agent in the corresponding active clause:

active:

- (52) *the teacher sent the boy home*

passive:

- (53) *the boy was sent home (by the teacher)*

Subjecthood in English is mainly defined via clause-initial position.

German: promotion of patients in passive clauses via change of case marking from accusative to nominative.

active:

- (54) *der Lehrer schick-te den Junge-n nachhause*
 the.NOM.SG.MSC teacher send-PST the.ACC.SG.MSC boy-ACC home
 'the teacher sent the boy home'

passive:

- (55) *der Junge wurde (von dem*
 the.NOM.SG.MSC boy 3SG.PST.PASS.AUX by the.DAT.SG.MSC
 'the boy was sent home (by the teacher)'

Lehrer) nachhause ge-schick-t
 teacher home PPP-send-PST

Argument suppressing constructions in Lakota neutralize one of the basic transitive arguments; but the syntactic status of the remaining argument remains unchanged.

	coding format for AG	coding format for PAT
<i>pi-</i> 'agent dereferentializer'		same as in basic TR clause
<i>wa-</i> 'inanimate patient dereferentializer'	same as in basic TR clause	

<i>takú-</i> 'inanimate patient dereferentializer'	same as in basic TR clause	
<i>wichá-</i> 'animate patient dereferentializer'	same as in basic TR clause	

2.5. Agent suppression plus overt agent NP: a "foregrounding passive"?

Very recent language data: the agent can appear in combination with a *pi*-construction.

Translation by native speakers: English passive with oblique agent phrase.

- (56) *wichása ki mathó Ø-kté-pi*
 man DEF bear 3SG.PAT-kill-PASS?
 'the man was killed by the/a bear/bears'

2.5.1. General facts about argument coding in Lakota

Usually, SOV = AG PAT V word order; but reversal possible:

- (57) *súka hé igmúthaka hé theb-Ø-Ø-yé*
 dog that mountain lion that ST-3SG.AG-3SG.PAT-eat up
 'the dog ate the mountain lion'

- (58) *súka hé igmúthaka hé theb-Ø-Ø-yé*
 dog that mountain lion that ST-3SG.AG-3SG.PAT-eat up
 'the mountain lion ate the dog'

Determiners, i.e. articles and demonstratives, are present in the NP in virtually all contexts.

There are three marking formats:

(a) article only -- the article follows the noun

- (59) *wichása ki/wa*
 man DEF/IDF.SG
 'the/a man'

(b) demonstrative only -- the demonstrative follows the noun

- (60) *wichása hé*
 man that
 'that man'

(c) article plus demonstrative -- the demonstrative may either precede or follow the noun plus article complex:

- (61) *hé wichása ki*
 that man DEF
 'that man'

- (62) *wichása ki hé*
 man DEF that
 'that man'

An NP may lack determiners is when it is used in a non-specific, non-referential, sometimes generic, sense:

- (63) *igmú ki ithúkala wichá-yuta-pi*
 cat DEF mouse 3PL.PAT-3AG.eat-PL.AG
 'cats eat mice'

2.5.2. Analysis of the Lakota *pi*-passive with overt agent NP

In a translation in which *mathó* 'bear(s)' designates the species in general rather than an individual bear or individual bears, no special passive construction needs to be posited:

- (64) *wichása ki mathó Ø-Ø-kté-pi*
 man DEF bears 3AG-3SG.PAT-kill-PL.AG
 'bears killed the man'

Question: what about the additional translations for the agent NP in example (56): 'the bear', 'a bear', and 'the bears'? In these cases, the animacy of the agent NP requires the presence of determiners. Further, the singular translations 'the bear' and 'a bear' are not compatible with the element *-pi* if the latter is analyzed as a regular plural marker.

Answer: with singular translations of the agent phrase, *-pi* must express something other than a regular plural agent.

Characteristics of the *pi*-passive with overt agent NP:

- patient phrase precedes agent phrase (obligatorily)
- agent phrase does not contain determiners
- agent phrase is number-insensitive, i.e. can be given both a singular and plural reading

Additional examples:

- (65) *igmúthaka hé súka theb-Ø-yá-pi*
 mountain lion that dog ST-3SG.PAT-eat up-PASS
 'that mountain lion was eaten by dogs/a dog/the dog'

- (66) *wichása hé mathó Ø-khuwá-pi*
 man that bear 3SG.PAT-chase-PASS
 'that man was chased by bears/a bear/the bear(s)'

- (67) *hoksíla hé wichícala a-Ø-phá-pi*
 boy that girl ST-3SG.PAT-hit-PASS
 'that boy was hit by girls/a girl/the girl(s)'

Question: can the agent phrase in the putative *pi*-passive be analyzed as an incorporated noun? Answer: no, because:

(A) Transitive agents are not usually incorporated into the verb in Lakota; exception:

- (68) *iyáyi na wayáka yé, táku sug-Ø-wáphapha-pi*
 go and see IMP something dog-3AG-bark at-PL.AG
 'go and look, dogs are barking at something'

(B) The agent in *-pi*-constructions such as (70) does not exhibit the stress pattern associated with noun incorporation, i.e. loss of stress as in (69).

- (69) *pte-Ø-kté-pi*
 buffalo-3AG-kill-PL.AG
 'they killed buffaloes'

- (70) *wichása ki hé pté paslóhahq Ø-ihpéya-pi*
 man DEF that buffalo knock down 3SG.PAT-throw-PASS
 'that man was pushed/knocked down by buffaloes/a buffalo/the buffalo(es)'

- (71) **wichása ki hé pte-páslóhahq Ø-ihpéya-pi*
 man DEF that buffalo-knock down 3SG.PAT-throw-PASS

2.5.2. Usage of the *pi*-passive with overt agent NP

Cross-linguistically, high-transitivity verbs lend themselves to passivization most easily. The Lakota *pi*-passive tends to be used with high-transitivity verbs.

- (72) *siná ki hé wichícala Ø-kága-pi*
 blanket DEF that girl 3SG.PAT-make-PASS
 'that blanket was made by girls/a girl/the girl(s)'
- (73) *Joe wíya ektá Ø-áya-pi*
 Joe woman there 3SG.PAT-take to-PASS
 'Joe was taken there by women/a woman/the woman/the women'
- (74) *wichása hé mathó Ø-yahtáka-pi/yubláza-pi/ksúyeya-pi*
 man that bear 3SG.PAT-bite-PASS/tear apart-PASS/hurt-PASS
 'that man was bitten/torn apart/hurt by bears/a bear/the bear(s)'
- (75) **wichása hé mathó Ø-wayáka-pi*
 man that bear 3SG.PAT-see-PASS
 'that man was seen by bears/a bear/the bear'
- (76) **wichása hé mathó na-Ø-h'ú-pi*
 man that bear ST-3SG.PAT-see-PASS
 'that man was heard by bears/a bear/the bear'

Use of the *pi*-passive with non-third person agent could not be clearly documented. The same speaker provided diverging grammaticality judgments on examples (77) and (78), which share the same basic structural profile. In (78), a singular translation of the agent NP -- the main diagnostic in analyzing the *pi*-construction as a passive --, is possible, whereas in (77), the singular translation 'a/the girl' is ungrammatical.

- (77) *mathó ni-yúblaza-pi*
 bear 2SG.PAT-tear apart-PASS
 'you were torn apart by bears/a bear/the bear(s)'
- (78) *wichícala a-má-pha-pi*
 girl ST-1SG.PAT-hit-PASS?
 'girls hit me'

The *pi*-passive can, apparently, be used with animate agents only.

- (79) **mathó ki hé íya Ø-kté-pi*
 bear DEF that rock 3SG.PAT-PASS
 'that bear was killed by a rock/rocks'

3. Theoretical discussion of the data

Role and Reference Grammar (e.g. Foley & VanValin 1984, VanValin 1985, VanValin 2001): role-dominated vs. reference-dominated languages. Lakota: role-dominated.

Basic notion: "pivot" = argument type that controls clause-internal as well as clause-external syntax in a given language. Tools for pivot assignment include passives and antipassives.

Traditional Indo-European-style passives fulfill two pragmatic functions, namely

(A) backgrounding:

- imposes a structurally as well as pragmatically peripheral status on an argument, in the case of the passive, on the agent/actor.
- the backgrounded argument is either demoted to an oblique or eliminated from the clause.

(B) foregrounding

- elevates an originally less salient participant to a position of greater salience.
- frequent structural correlate: promotion, i.e. a shift from a syntactically less central to a more central case.

VanValin (1985:368) argues that "[t]here is no Indo-European-style passive construction in Lakota; that is, there is no construction in which the U [= undergoer, R.P. & D.R.] appears as the derived subject of a detransitivized verb with the A [= actor, R.P. & D.R.] either in an oblique phrase or deleted".

According to VanValin (1985:368), the closest equivalent to a passive in Lakota is the agent-suppressing impersonal construction dealt with in section 2.1, which he analyzes as containing an explicit agent/actor specification by means of the element *-pi*.

(80) *thaló ki hé Ø-kablá-pi*
 meat DEF that 3SG.PAT-slice-IPS
 'the meat was sliced'

Question: what is the status of the arguments in a *pi*-passive with respect to foregrounding?

(81) *wichása ki mathó Ø-kté-pi*
 man DEF bear 3SG.PAT-kill-PASS
 'the man was killed by the/a bear/bears'

Answer: the patient might be foregrounded. Reasons:

(A) The word order PATIENT PRECEDING AGENT in the *pi*-passive is irreversible; and clause-initial position of nominal arguments is linked with high discourse salience in Lakota. Basically, word order (SOV) is utilized for the coding of case relations in Lakota. But word order becomes available as a device for expressing pragmatic categories, such as foregrounded status, in cases in which the context or the semantic profile of the NPs themselves removes any ambiguity regarding the referential identity of the agent and the patient in a transitive clause. In (82), the patient NP *lé wichó 'oyake ki* 'this story' must be interpreted as more salient than the agent NP *atéwaye kihq* 'my father'.

(82) *lé wichó 'oyake ki lé até-wa-ye kihq o-má-ki-yake*
 this story DEF this father-1SG.AG-have as DEF ST-1SG-BEN-tell
 'this story was told to me by my father'

(B) Why does the *pi*-passive with overt agent NP exist, if not for the purpose of foregrounding? A *pi*-construction like (81) is entirely equivalent to the corresponding active transitive clause with respect to role semantics. In principle, there might be such a thing as synonymy between construction types, yet it appears counterintuitive to assume that there is absolutely no difference in meaning between a *pi*-passive with overt agent and the corresponding active transitive construction. The functional difference might have to be sought in a possible patient-foregrounding function of the *pi*-passive.

REFERENCES

- Dowty, D. 1991. Thematic proto-roles and argument selection. *Language* 67:547-619.
- Foley, W. & R. VanValin 1984. *Functional syntax and universal grammar*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Meira, S. 2000. The accidental intransitive split in the Cariban family. In: Gildea, S. (ed.), *Reconstructing grammar*, 202-230. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Merlan, F. 1985. Split intransitivity: Functional oppositions in intransitive inflection. In: J. Nichols & A. C. Woodbury (eds.), *Grammar inside and outside the clause*, 324-362. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mithun, M. 1991. Active/agentive case marking and its motivations. *Language* 67:510-546.
- Rood, D. & A. Taylor 1996. Sketch of Lakota, a Siouan language. In: Sturtevant, William C. (ed.), *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 17, 440-482. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution.

- VanValin, R. 1985. Case marking and the structure of the Lakhota clause. In: Nichols, J. & A. Woodbury (eds.), *Grammar inside and outside the clause*, 363-413. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Van Valin, R. 1990. Semantic parameters of split intransitivity. *Language* 66:221-260.
- VanValin, R. 2001. *An introduction to syntax*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.