The role of passives in the formation of hierarchical systems in Northern California

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Starting point

- **Hierarchical systems** express a **scale** in their grammatical marking **governed by the referential properties of event participants**, including person, animacy, and topicality (Silverstein 1976; Bickel and Nichols 2007:228).
- Hierarchy may determine **the choice and/or order of person indices** on the predicate
- A **sub-category** of such languages additionally **overtly signals event direction** (whether the agent or the patient in an event is ranked higher) => direct vs. inverse

Starting point

- **Passive constructions** have been considered as **possible sources** for the development of hierarchical systems (Mithun 2007, 2010, 2012)
- Mithun (2012:285) shows how such patterns could be the **result of language contact** in Northern California: bilingual speakers may have **borrowed** certain **discourse behaviors** (i.e. an increased exploitation of passives; a tendency to favor certain persons over others as subjects), which then crystallized in the grammar as hierarchical systems
  - Elimination of low-ranking agents through obligatory passivization or by simply leaving them unmentioned
  - Languages studied by Mithun (2012): Chimariko, Yana, Yurok, Karuk

Starting point

- Some view such systems in terms of **voice** (Givón 1994, Klaiman 1991, Shibatani 2006) pointing to their potential diachronic development (linking inverse grammatical systems to passives)
- This functional perspective highlights the fact that inverse systems may fulfill **similar functions to passives** in other languages
- Cristofaro (2013): patterns may not originate from the mechanisms postulated to dominate systems on synchronic grounds (e.g. animacy, etc); **same pattern** may **originate from different mechanisms in different languages**

Starting point

- **Present paper**
  - Builds on Mithun's work & analyzes passive constructions in 10 Northern California languages/language families with and without hierarchical systems
  - Goal: to examine why in some languages passives have led to hierarchical systems and, in some cases, incipient inverse systems, but not in others
- **Languages examined**: Chimariko, Karuk, Yana, Yurok, Shasta, Achumawi, Atsugewi, Wintu, Pomoan, and Yuki
- **Why these?** Geographically contiguous area; potential language contact effects
- Presentation: Core arg. patterns, Diachrony, Passives, Chimariko, Shasta, Wintu

The studied languages

- Chimariko
- Karuk
- Shasta
- Achumawi
- Atsugewi
- Yana
- Pomoan
- Yurok
- Wintu
- Yuki

Core argument patterns

- **Basic system**
  - Agent/patient: Chimariko, Pomoan, Yuki
  - Nominative/accusative: Yana, Pomoan, Yurok, Wintu, (Karuk)
  - Unclear: Shasta, Achumawi, Atsugewi
- **Locus**
  - Head: Chimariko, Karuk, Shasta, Achumawi, Atsugewi, Yana, Yurok, (Wintu)
    - Arguments on predicate: **1**: Karuk, Shasta, Yana, (Wintu)
      1 or 2: Chimariko, Achumawi, Atsugewi, Yurok
  - Dependent: Pomoan, Yuki, Wintu
- **Hierarchical**: Chimariko, Karuk, Yana, Yurok

Core argument patterns

- **Hierarchical systems**
- All hierarchical systems are head-marking [unlike agent/patient systems]
- Hierarchical systems can have an agent/patient or a nom/acc underlying system
- Sometimes 2 participants are overtly indexed on predicate (Chimariko, Yurok)
- Hierarchical languages vary in how they rank speech-act participants with respect to one another:
  - Karuk favors 1 over 2, but ranks 2pl highest
  - Chimariko/Yana select the single marked core argument in local relations by ranking agent and patient (Chimariko: agent > patient; Yana: patient > agent)

Core argument patterns

- **Unmarked arguments**
  - 3rd person (undergoer/object): **Chimariko, Karuk**, Shasta, Achumawi, Atsugewi, **Yana**, **Yurok**, (Wintu)
  - 3rd person actor/agent: **Yana**, (**Yurok**), (Wintu)
  - Agents: Yuki
  - Nominative case/subject: Pomoan, Wintu
- **Event direction (direct/inverse) marked:**
  - Traces of such a system: Karuk, Yana, Yurok, Chimariko (?)
- **Possession**: all hierarchical systems mark possession on the possessed

Diachrony in hierarchical systems

- Potential sources for hierarchical systems (Gildea and Zúñiga 2012)
  - Reanalysis of **deictic verbal morphology** (cislocatives) – Shasta (3/1,2; 1/2; 2/1)
  - Reanalysis of **zero 3rd person forms** – Chimariko, Karuk, Yana, Yurok & others
  - Person-sensitivization of **passive constructions** – Yana, Yurok
- Diachrony determines synchronic outcomes (rather than a universal hierarchy)

Passives in the languages

- Each of the studied languages features **some verbal affixes creating passive-like constructions** in their semantic function
- Some use passive(-like) constructions for
  - **Patient foregrounding:** Yana, Yurok, Wintu, Pomoan
  - **Agent backgrounding** or rendering the agent **unspecified or defocused:** Chimariko, Karuk, Shasta, Yana, Yurok, Wintu, Pomoan
- For some languages only a **medio-passive** has been reported: Achumawi, Atsugewi, Yuki
- Both passive and medio-passive in Wintu

Passive versus inverse

- Passive clauses, unlike most inverse clauses, are **intransitive**
- Major difference between passive and inverse systems: **active/passive distinction** involves changes in the alignment of semantic roles and grammatical relations and the **direct/inverse opposition does not**
- The two systems are **formally distinct**, but **functionally similar**
  - **Patient is more topical than the agent**
- The two systems potentially originate from one another in both directions: passive to inverse and inverse to passive (Givón 1994:36)

Passive/inverse in the languages

- **Karuk**: 2pl > 1 > 2sg > 3
  - *-ap* as a somewhat defective inverse marker (Macaulay 1992, Mithun 2012)
  - *-ap* in 3/2 (with 2 indexed); 1/2pl (with 2pl indexed) & some other instances
  - *ʾîin* functions like oblique agent marker in passives (Macaulay 2000, Mithun 2012)
  - no modern passive construction in Karuk
  - Example 1:

INVERSE (3sg > 2sg, POSITIVE):

ʔî·m ʔô· ke·miša ʔî·n ʔiʔáve·šap

ʔî·m	*ʔô·k*	*ke·miša*	*ʔî·n*	*ʔi-ʔav̌-aviš-ap*
outside	here	monster	SUBJ	2sg>3sg(POS)-eat-FUT-INV

'A monster outside here is going to eat you'. (Bright 1957:T3:22)

(Macaulay 1992:195)

Passive/inverse in the languages

- **Yana**: 1, 2 > 3 & patient > agent
  - obligatory passive marker *–wa* if hierarchy violated (Mithun 2012)
  - *-wa* also present is all local relations (1>2 & 2 > 1, with patient indexed)
  - *-wa* matches the modern passive marker
  - Paradigms show traces of proximal & distal demonstratives for 1st and 2nd person and cislocative for 1st pl (Mithun 2012)
- **Yurok**: 1pl > 2 > 3sg > 3pl
  - Selective passivization: *-y* passive with 3rd p. transitive agents (regardless of patient)
  - *-y* also functions as regular passive (like in other languages)

Chimariko

- **Chimariko**: 1, 2 > 3 & agent > patient
  - Basic **agent/patient system** (distinction **only for 1st person**)

Examples 2a/b: Agent-patient system in intransitive clauses

Harrington 020-1118[1]	Harrington 020-1113
noʔot ʔikʼonip	*noʔot tewčhuxanat*
noʔot ʔ-ikʼo-nip	*noʔot tew-**čhu**-xana-t*
1SG **1SG.A**-talk-PST	1SG big-**1SG.P**-FUT-ASP
‘I was talking’	‘I am going to be big’

Example 3: Agent-patient system in transitive clauses

‘Woman wanders’
noʔot čhušehemdeʔw kʼotihut, ʔawa hida imamda

noʔot	***čh**-ušehe-m-deʔw*	*kʼot-**i**-hu-t*	*ʔawa*	*hida*	***i**-mam-da*
1SG	**1SG.P**-take-DIR-DER	flee-**1SG.A**-CONT-ASP	house	lots	**1SG.A**-see-ASP

‘They took me off, I fled, I saw lots of houses’

Chimariko

- **Chimariko**: agent/patient distinction for 2pl?

  Example 4a/b:

Agent-patient distinction with second person plural

Harrington 020-1126	Harrington 020-1126
qhuk'o?nan	*qhak'o?nan*
***qh**-uk'o-?na-n*	***qha**-k'o-?na-n*
2PL-talk-APPL-ASP	**2PL.P**-talk-APPL-ASP
'You talked to him'	'He talked to you'

Chimariko

- **Chimariko**: agent/patient distinction for 2pl?
- Example 5:

No agent-patient distinction with second person plural in intransitives

Harrington 020-1113
mamqhedot tewqhoxanat
mamqhedot tew-qho-xana-t
2PL big-**2PL**-FUT-ASP
'You are going to be big'

- 2nd pl patient form would need to be *–qha*
- verb stem *tew-* requires patient forms

=> distinction only in transitives for 2pl
=> actor/undergoer distinction

Chimariko

- **Chimariko**: only core argument higher on hierarchy overtly indexed
- Example 6:

Hierarchical system: 1>3 => 1; 3>1 => 1

'Fugitives at Burnt Ranch'

phaʔasitaʔče yekhotinda, čhaxaduʔxakon, wisseeda čhumčaxa

phaʔasitaʔče	***y-****ekho-tinda*	***čha-****xaduʔx-akon*	*wisseeda*	*čhu-m-čaxa*
that.why	1SG.A-kill-PROG	1PL.P-ʔ-FUT	downstream	IMP.PL-DIR-COMP

'That's why I killed him, they will kill us, you all move down to B. Noble's place.'

Chimariko

- **Chimariko**: But both core arguments indexed in 2>1
- Example 7: Hierarchical system: 2>1 => 2 + 1 undergoer; 2>3 => 2

a. *mexota*
m-e-*xota*
2SG-1SG.P-look.at
'You look at me'

b. *mixota*
m-*ixota*
2SG-look.at
'You look at it'

c. *mekhoxana?*
m-e-*kho-xana-?*
2SG-1SG.P-kill-FUT-Q
'Are you going to kill me?'

d. *makhoxana?*
m-*akho-xana-?*
2SG-kill-FUT-Q
'Are you going to kill him?'

Chimariko

- **Chimariko: Summary of system**

Table 1:

Actor > Undergoer	Affix on predicate
1>1	**1** agent
1>2	**1** agent
1>3	**1** agent
2>**1**	2 + **1** undergoer[1]
2>2	2
2>3	2
3>**1**	**1** patient
3>2SG	2
3>2PL	2PL patient
3>3	3

[1] The affix for the first person undergoer is different from the first person patient form

Chimariko

- **Chimariko: Personal pronouns & discussion**
- 1 undergoer ≠ 1 patient form (1 undergoer: **-e**)
- 2pl patient form *qh**a**-/-qh**a*** only in transitives (=undergoer, not patient)
- Sources for forms unclear
- Undergoer forms = vowels; pron. affixes = consonants

Table 2:

	Singular agent	Plural agent	Singular patient	Plural patient
Verbal prefixes				
First person	*y-, ʔ-*	*ya-*	*čh-*	*čha-*
Second person	*m-*	*qh-*	*m-*	*qha-*[1]
Third person	*h-*	*h-*	*h-*	*h-*
Verbal suffixes				
First person	*-ʔ (i)*	*ya-*	*- čh*	*- čha*
Second person	*-m*	*-qh*	*-m*	*-qh*
Third person	*-h/Ø*	*-h/Ø*	*-h/Ø*	*-h/Ø*

[1]Occurs only in transitive sentences with third person actors.

Chimariko

- **<u>Chimariko: Discussion</u>**
- Could vowels (-e-, -a-) eventually be reanalyzed to signal event direction in 2>1 & 3 > 2pl?
- Unclear whether 1st person singular is *ye-*
- *qha-* could also simply parallel form of 1st person plural agents and patients which contain vowel /a/
- The forms do not stem from passives

Chimariko

- **<u>Chimariko</u>:** passive-like constructions semantically; no syntactic impact
- Ex. 8a: *-te ʔw* signals indefinite third person actor

'Crawfish'
hopute^{ʔ}w ^{ʔ}ama, txol makumčaxat q'ehčaxat

*h-opu-**te^{ʔ}w***	*^{ʔ}ama*	*txol*	*makum-čaxa-t*	*q'e-h-čaxa-t*
3-mine-DER	land	crawfish	perish-COMP-ASP	die-3-COMP-ASP

'They mined the land, all crawfish perished, they died all'

- Ex. 8b: *-tta* foregrounds patient

'Crawfish'
^{ʔ}aq^{h}a ^{ʔ}elohq^{h}ut ^{ʔ}ixa^{ʔ}yta, memat txolop ^{ʔ}iwinq^{h}utta

^{ʔ}aq^{h}a	*^{ʔ}eloh-q^{h}ut*	*^{ʔ}-ixa^{ʔ}y-ta*	*memat*	*txol-op*	*^{ʔ}-iwin-q^{h}ut-**ta***
water hot-liquid	1SG.A-make-ASP	alive	crawfish-DEF		1SG.A-dump-liquid-**DER**

'I made the water hot, I dumped them alive, the crawfish, immersingly'

Chimariko

- **<u>Chimariko</u>: Summary**
- Hierarchical system
  - Did not originate from passives or passive-like constructions (markers not apparent & have no syntactic impact)
  - No traces of deictic verbal morphology apparent in forms
  - Likely source: zero-marked third persons
  - Irregularity: 1st person & 2 plural undergoers marked

Shasta

- **Shasta**: portmanteau prefixes encoding subject person, modality, number, tense, evidentiality (Silver 1966:116-7)
  - Modality: hortative, imperative, volitional, potential, subjunctive, declarative
  - Number: singular, plural, undifferentiated
  - Tense in the declarative mode: present, near past, distant past, undifferentiated
  - Person: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and undifferentiated
  - Evidentiality: 3rd person discerns direct evidential, inferential, reportative, (and gerundial, passive, & undifferentiated)

Shasta

- **Shasta**: portmanteau subject prefixes
- Example 9: 1st person *tá-, t'á-, s-*

Shasta grammatical marking: portmanteau prefixes

Hortative			Volitional		Potential
táhu'sá?	b.		*t'áhu'sá?*	c.	*sáhu'sá?*
tá-hu'sá?			*t'á-hu'sá?*		*s-áhu'sá?*
1.SG.HORT-talk			1.SG-talk		1.U-talk
"Let me talk!"			"I will talk"		"I might talk"

Shasta

- **Shasta**: Only one core argument indexed: subject
  - Presence of a 3rd person object indicated by transitivizing suffixes: applicative suffix added, but 3rd person object is left unmarked
  - Presence of 1st or 2nd person object indicated by presence of cislocative in all local relations (1/2 & 2/1) (in addition to subject marker)
  - Example 10: (from Mithun 1996:420)

Shasta cislocative as indicator of object

ƙwáhus·i·k	'He talked.'	(Silver 1966: 127)
*ƙwáhus·ayant-**i·ƙa**?*	'He talked to **me/you** (sg).'	(Silver 1966: 59)

Shasta

- **Shasta: Passives**
- Shasta has a passive construction similar to that of Chimariko: there are prefixes on the verb indicating a third person indefinite actor
- Only the third person discerns passive in the portmantaeu paradigms
- Passive only occurs in the volitional (=intention to do sth, translated by 'will' or 'going to', potential, and declarative modes (Silver 1966:121)

Shasta

- **<u>Shasta</u>: Passives**
- Three 3rd person prefixes in the declarative are considered passive markers: < č>, <y>, <hw̓v̀> (verbs occurring with these forms are translated either as passive or as transitive)
  - /**č**is·anta·ʔ/=/**y**ís·anta·ʔ/=/**h**ís·anta·ʔ/ “He was told” or “They/he told him”
  - /**č**ís·a·kenta·ʔ/ “They were told” or “They/he told them”

Shasta

- **<u>Shasta</u>: Summary**
- No person hierarchy: subject is indexed
- Different developments for local (1/2 & 2/1) and non-local (3/3) relations
  - Local relations: cislocative
  - Non-local relations: applicative (3rd p. object), passive (3rd p. indefinite actor)
- No pervasive passive, only in 3/3 (=> could develop into obviative system)

Wintu

- **<u>Wintu</u>:** Nominal case marking following nominative/accusative pattern
- Nouns and pronouns are treated as either particular or generic in aspect (a contrast often reflected in specificity or animacy; Golla 2011:146)
- Nouns and pronouns are inflected for accusative case; nominative is unmarked

Table 3: Wintun nominal inflection for aspect and case (Golla 2011:147)

Gloss	Aspect	Subject (nominative; unmarked)	Object (accusative: *-(u)m, -t*)
"stone"	generic	*son*	*sonum*
"stone"	particular	*soh*	*sohum*
"fingernail"	generic	*k'ahay*	*k'ahayum*
"fingernail"	particular	*k'ahah*	*k'ahahum*
"older sister"	generic	*lay*	*layat*
"older sister"	particular	*lah*	*lahat*

Wintu

- **Wintu**: Dependent marking (Pitkin 1984:138-142)
- Optional **1st person subject suffix *–da*** on predicate (possibly related to the substantival emphatic and intensifying suffix *–da*)
  - Syntactically it participates in the system of evidentials => visual evidence
  - Co-occuring with an evidential it is used to express first person
  - When marking person, it contrasts with 2nd and unmarked 3rd person
- Optional **2nd person subject suffix *-sken***
  - Resembles combination of generic aspect *–s* & noun *ken* or auxiliary *keneh*
  - Suffixed only to 4 auxiliaries and 3 suffixes: the passive *–here*, the hearsay evidential *–kele*, and the nonvisual evidential *–nthele*

Wintu

- **<u>Wintu</u>: Passive**
- Inflectional suffix {here} or hE (Pitkin 1984:115)
- Followed by 5 suffixes: 1st person *-da*, 2nd person *-sken*, generic aspect *-s*, inevitable future *-le*, hortative *-di*
- Seems that *here* was historically a stem available for compounding
- Shepherd 2006:28: passive **-her* parallels the other auxiliaries in form and function
- **<u>Examples (Pitkin 1984:116)</u>**: *λey-hi-da* 'I just got hit'; *λey-here-sken* 'you just got hit'; *λey-here-s* 'the one who got hit', *doyu-here-sken* 'it is being given to you', *doyu-hi-da* 'it is being given to me'

Wintu

- **Wintu: Summary**
- Dependent case marking with some (optional) head marking
- Optional indexing of 1st and 2nd person on predicates in certain instances
- Optional indexing also occurs in passive constructions

Conclusions

- Certain factors seem to come together in hierarchical systems
  - Head-marking for grammatical relations
  - Zero-marked 3rd person
  - Head-marking for possession
  - Some form of event direction marking (except Chimariko)
- Passive constructions are not necessarily responsible
  - In languages with no pervasive or syntactic passives (Chimariko, Shasta, Wintu), passive constructions are either not responsible for the formation of a hierarchical system or such system does not occur

Conclusions

- Results show that systems have crystallized in different stages of development which explains many of the irregularities
- Language contact may contribute to the origin of a particular grammatical system (as shown in Mithun 2007, 2010, 2012), but language-internal underlying mechanisms are crucial
- Overall, each system/language is studied best individually

Thank you!

(see handout for references)

“The role of passives in the formation of hierarchical systems in Northern California”, Carmen Jany (cjany@csusb.edu)

Grammatical relations	**Chimariko**	**Karuk**	**Shasta**	**Palaihn. Achumawi**	**Palaihn. Atsugewi**	**Yana**	**Pomoan**	**Yurok**	**Wintu**	**Yuki**
Basic system	Agt/patient	mixed	N/a	N/a	N/a	Nom/acc	Agt/patient ; Nom/acc	Nom/acc	Nom/acc	Agt/patient
Locus	Head	Head	Head	Head	Head	Head	Dependent	Head	Dependent/Head	Dependent
Form	Prefixes or suffixes	Prefixes	Portmanteau prefixes	Portmanteau pre-/suffix combinations	Portmanteau pre-/suffix combinations	Suffixes	Enclitics/suffixes	Suffixes + some prefixes	Suffixed case on nouns +pronouns 1st/2nd subj on verb	Suffixes
Number of core arguments on predicate	1 (except 2/1 = 2 + 1)	1	1 (subject)	1 or 2	1 or 2	1	0	2 or 1	0 (1 for 1st & 2nd p. sometimes)	0
Hierarchical system	**yes**	**yes**	no	no	no	**yes**	no	**yes**	no	no
Person & role or person only on pronominal affixes	person (+ role 1stp & 2pl)	person (+ some role)	person only	person & subj/obj comb.	person & subj/obj comb.	person only	N/a	person + role	N/a	N/a
Agentive system (on intransitives)	yes (1st person)	yes (incipient; 1st person)	no	no	no	no	yes (entire paradigm)	no	no	Yes (patient case ; only for humans)
Inverse system (local, non-local, mixed)	no (incipient?)	*-ap* (defective)	no	no	no	*-wa* passive	no	-y passive	no	no
Zero-marked arguments	3rd person undergoer	3rd person undergoer; some 2sg and 3sg forms	3rd person object	3rd person undergoer in 3/3	3rd person undergoer in 3/3	3rd person	nominative case (South-eastern Pomo)	3rd person patient (undergoer); some 3rd person agent	Nominative case (subjects); 3rd person on verbs	agents
Nominal core case	no	no	no	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes
Passive markers	*-tew* & *–tta* passive-like	*-ap* inverse (irregular; not throughout)	*č-, y-, hwa v-* passives	*-dz-* medio-passive	*-dz-* medio-passive	*-wa* passive	*-ya* defocus ; *-wa* unspec. agent	*y* passive (Mithun 2012)	*-č'ʰ* mediopass *-here* passive	*-il* mediopassive
Word order*	Verb-final	free	Pragmatically based	Verb-initial	free	Verb-initial	Verb-final	Verb-final	free	Verb-final
Possession	**Head**: pre- or suffixes on possessed	**Head**: pre-fixes on possessed	Dependent: suffixes on possessor noun or pronoun	Dependent: suffix on possessor; special set of independent pronouns	Dependent: suffix on possessor; special set of independent pronouns	**Head**: suffixes on possessed; Dependent: possessive demonstratives; *k(i)* particle	Dependent: suffixes on possessor; special set of indep. pronouns; Head: prefixes on possd. kinship	**Head**: prefixes on possessed	Dependent: suffix on possessor noun or pronoun**	**Head**: prefix on kinship terms Dependent: dative case on possessor
Shape of possessive affixes (same or diff. from pron. affixes)	Yes	Some similarity, but generally different	N/a	N/a	N/a	Yes	N/a (diff.)	No (but similar to forms of independent pronouns)	N/a (diff.)	N/a (diff.)

* no everyday conversational data for most languages, only oral narratives

Wintu: **genitive case marks nouns as possessors and as agents of passive verbs

Hierarchies (from Mithun 2012)

Chimariko: 1, 2 > 3 & agent/patient
Karuk: 2pl > 1 > 2sg > 3
Yana: 1, 2 > 3 & patient/agent
Yurok: 1pl > 2 > 3sg > 3pl

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