

# The Tagalog Passive Voice in 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>-century Spanish Documentary Sources

Arwin M. Vibar<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

Since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the voice system of Philippine languages has been an important point of inquiry for linguists, language scholars, and second language learners. The Spanish missionaries who learned, studied, and wrote pedagogical grammars of Tagalog had sensed the substantial contrast between Spanish (and Latin) and Tagalog, which they realized was even more pronounced in their voice systems. Effectively, Fray Francisco Blancas de San José (1610) reached the conclusion that the three passive verbal forms that he had identified and named after the voice marking affixes *y-*, *in-*, and *-an* lay as the bedrock of the basic clause structure in Tagalog. Confirmed by three

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<sup>1</sup>Arwin M. Vibar is an Associate Professor in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of the Philippines Manila.

other missionaries representing each of the centuries of Spanish presence in the archipelago and elaborated upon with their contributions, Blancas de San José's analysis served as the foundation of the prevailing concept of the Tagalog voice system during the Spanish colonial period. But more than a task undertaken to typologize Tagalog, the comparison between these languages had been an important pedagogical strategy for learning the various languages of the people whom the missionaries sought to evangelize. This paper opens with an examination of how four Spanish missionaries described the Tagalog passive voice, explained the formation of passive verbs, and set the general rules for their use. Subsequently, the paper presents the grammarians' description of the syntactic structure of non-actor topic constructions in Tagalog, in which they showed that any nominal other than the actor can be the focus (*el intento*) in a sentence. Finally, it discusses the grouping of verb roots with similar meaning and the specific passive voice affixes these verbs can use. Considering the state of linguistics during the time these grammars were written, this analysis of the Tagalog passive may be regarded as groundbreaking and a precursor of the contemporary descriptions of this linguistic feature.

*Keywords:* missionary linguistics, Asian linguistics, Tagalog, Philippine voice system, passive voice

## 1 Introduction

Since the start of linguistic study and grammar writing in the archipelago, when the Spanish missionary-linguists arrived in the sixteenth century, the voice system of Philippine languages has always captivated the interest of language scholars. This is due to its great importance and its almost natural capacity to elude both adequate and comprehensive description. Specifically, the passive voice in Tagalog was adjudged as the substance and foundation of the language and that “the entire main structure of this language rests upon the three passives [such that] ... whoever is deficient and poorly grounded in this ... cannot possibly utter anything right or take full advantage of the other rules” (Blancas de San José, 1610, p. 46).<sup>2</sup> In addition, it was also observed that in Tagalog, it is more common to speak in the passive voice than in the active voice (Totanes, 1745/1850, p. 29; Coria, 1872, p. 157).<sup>3</sup> The American linguists were equally fascinated as they studied the works of their Spanish predecessors agreeing that “[p]erhaps the most salient feature of these languages is the prevailing use of the passive construction”

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<sup>2</sup>This and all subsequent translations from Spanish and Latin are by the author. The original text in full, with the translated parts in italics, is as follows: “*Toda la machina principal desta lengua estriua sobre las tres pasivas que llamamos la vna de .y. y la otra de, in, y la otra de ,an, y assi el q̄ esta bien puesto y fundado en ellas, realmente, es como señor desta lengua, y tiene la mayor y mas substancial parte della andada. Y el que en esto que es la substancia y fundamento estuuiesse corto y mal fundado, no es possible dezir cosa adrechas, ni aprouechar se biē de las de mas reglas: pues todas son como accidēte comparadas a esta materia por su gran importancia, y por mucha dependencia que todo lo de mas tiene desto.*”

<sup>3</sup>Two of the Spanish authors made a similar comment about the prevalence of the passive as already hinted in the earlier grammars: “En este idioma es mas frecuente el hablar por pasiva, que por activa” (Totanes, 1745/1850, p. 29); and “En el idioma tagalog es más frecuente el hablar por pasiva que por activa” (Coria, 1872, p. 157).

(Blake, 1906, p. 326). Such was the case that Bloomfield (1917) even said that “the active construction is *avoided* [emphasis added] whenever any object other than the actor is available as subject” (p. 154).

Even now, there is no indication that the mystique of the subject matter has diminished or started losing its attraction. In the introductory part of a paper on “this pervasive characteristic of the Austronesian languages of the Philippines,” i.e., the goal or patient-topic construction, Shibatani (1988) refers to the voice system in Philippine languages as “one of the most controversial subjects in the current field of linguistic research” (p. 85). Even after this seminal paper, the search for the definitive word on the theme continues. New analyses have been coming out to contribute to an even better description that it “sometimes seems as if Austronesian specialists can talk (and write) of nothing else” except about “the voice systems of Philippine-type languages” which “are a notorious problem for both descriptive grammarians and theoretical syntacticians” (Kroeger, 2010, p. 207).

The purpose of this paper is not to unveil a novel or distinct analysis that has long been forgotten. Certainly it is not to resolve any doubts about the applicability of the notion of subject or on the correct analysis of the goal-topic or patient-topic construction. Its aim is simply to demonstrate how the first scholars who encountered this type of construction in Tagalog regarded and recorded this phenomenon in their grammars. Hence, we will delve into a general description of the Tagalog passive, encompassing its nature, function, and the general and specific rules on how it is formed and used. Here we shall see that, despite depending heavily on their formal knowledge of Spanish and Latin and the state of linguistics then, the grammarians could make

a fairly respectable analysis of the language, which could guide later linguists by serving as good starting points for further studying the features of the language. In collating their descriptions, we uncover the methodology they utilized in describing the structure of this construction in the language: they maximized the potential of the case system in noun phrases to demonstrate sentence structure. Thus, when the goal or recipient of the action denoted by the verb, which they referred to as *lo que padece* (that which suffers or receives [the action]), is to be given more importance, it is assigned the nominative case and the actor or *la persona que haze* (the person that acts [or performs the action]) is given the genitive. With their discovery of the language's facility to emphasize specific nominals in a sentence, they developed a notion of focus<sup>4</sup> or what they called *el intento* (the target or intention) which they elaborated using noun cases and the corresponding type of passive (or verbal affix) depending on the meaning of the targeted object. It can also be deduced from the descriptions that the close association of the voice marking affixes and the *intento* may indicate an awareness that some relationship holds between them and the *intento* (Schachter & Otones, 1972, p. 69). The semantic categorization of verbs that correspond to the different types of passive constructions strengthens this perception. Accordingly, certain verbs with similar denotational meaning behave similarly and take the same passive forms, i.e., these verb roots take on similar voice marking affixes or use these affixes in similar ways. As we

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<sup>4</sup>*Focus* here is defined simply as an indicator of a relationship that exists between the verbal predicate, with its base and affix, and a constituent noun which the speaker has in mind. Schachter and Otones (1972) refer to it as “the feature of a verbal predicate that determines the semantic relationship between a predicate verb and its topic” (p. 69).

are concerned only of the genesis or the possible beginning of modern analyses that would come later, we will not draw more conclusions than what is literally documented in the grammars.

## 2 General Description

In this part of the paper, we will explore the descriptions made by four scholars who published their respective Tagalog grammars during the three centuries of Spanish presence in the archipelago, specifically in the years 1610, 1679, 1745, and 1872 (see Javier & Or, 2022, for the Spanish period in Philippine Linguistics). The first of these was authored by Francisco Blancas de San José (1610) and was the first published grammar of the language. The subsequent ones were Agustín de la Magdalena's *Arte de la Lengua Tagala Sacado de Diversas Artes* (1679), Sebastián Totanes's *Arte de la Lengua Tagala y Manual Tagalog para la Administración de los Santos Sacramentos* (1745/1850), and Joaquín de Coria's *Nueva Gramática Tagalog: Teorico-práctica* (1872). Given the high regard Blancas de San José was given by other grammarians of the period (Vibar, 2021, pp. 5–6) and the enduring impact of his contributions, a substantial portion of this article is about his analysis. For the most part, the next scholars focused on systematizing the presentation of this author's original ideas, while introducing propitious refinements in the process, which we shall highlight at the opportune moments.

### 2.1 What the Passive Is

There is no attempt to formally or directly define the passive voice since it is already assumed to be a constitutive element of any language since

the time of the Stoics who distinguished between active, passive, and neutral verbs (Collart, 1954, as cited in Quilis, 1980, p. 36). Besides, at least in the first two centuries of Spanish presence in the islands, the grammars primarily served the needs of missionaries who needed to learn the languages to be used for evangelization. They were not treatises but pedagogical grammars that had been based on the learners' prior knowledge of Spanish and Latin, mostly acquired from the grammars authored by Antonio de Nebrija, who wrote the first grammar of the Spanish language in 1492 (Quilis, 1980) and a Latin grammar in 1481 (Nebrija, 1495). In his Latin grammar, Nebrija describes the passive verb in Latin simply as that which ends in *or*, preceded by the nominative of the person who undergoes the action and followed by the ablative of the person who performs the action, with the preposition *a* or *ab*, which can be changed into dative or accusative by using the preposition *per* (San Juan Bautista & Santa Maria Magdalena, 1827).<sup>5</sup> Since the Spanish grammarians were heavily influenced by Nebrija's grammars (Vibar, 2021, p. 2), one can expect a definition of the Tagalog passive which is closely fashioned after his definition.

Accordingly, the principal rule in passivization is that the object to which the verb refers and upon which the action is performed (goal) stands in the nominative, and the entity that carries out the action (actor) is indicated in the genitive.<sup>6</sup> In the example below, the verb

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<sup>5</sup>Here is the complete definition: "El verbo pasivo es el que acabando en *or*, tiene antes de sí Nominativo de persona que padece, y despues de si Ablativo de persona que hace, con preposicion *a* ó *ab*; el cual se puede mudar en Dativo ó en Acusativo con *per*" (San Juan Bautista & Santa Maria Magdalena, 1827).

<sup>6</sup>"La cosa que padece y acerca de quiē se ha de exercitar lo q̄ el verbo dize, se pone en nominat. y la que haze en genit. ysulat ni Pedro yto: esto sea escrito de Pedro" (Blancas de San José, 1610, p. 47).

*ysulat* refers to and acts upon the pronominal *yto* (in the nominative case), and the actor, *Pedro*, takes the genitive case.

- (1) Y-sulat                      ni Pedro                      yto  
PAS-write.GOALFOC Pedro[GEN.ACT] this[NOM.GOAL]  
'Esto sea [*sic*] escrito de Pedro.' [May Pedro write this.]<sup>7</sup>

In effect, verbs in the passive voice govern<sup>8</sup> the case and assign the genitive to the person who performs the action (actor) and the nominative to the entity who undergoes the action (patient or goal) indicated by the verb root (Magdalena, 1679).<sup>9</sup>

This rule or definition is made on the basis of which element in the sentence assumes the nominative case and which element takes the genitive. Accordingly, that which receives the action (*lo que padece*), which is literally a patient, and to which that action indicated by the verb refers (*acerca de quiē se ha de exercitar lo q̃ el verbo dize*), i.e., a non-actor sentence constituent, is assigned the nominative case. On the other hand, the person (actor) who performs (*la que haze*) the action indicated by the verb takes the genitive case. The definition of the active voice is similarly formulated and can be abstracted from the following

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<sup>7</sup>The Spanish texts are lifted verbatim from the original sources; the English-translated glosses in square brackets are the author's own. All the abbreviations referring to grammatical categories are standard except for the shortened form for PASSIVE which is PAS based on the Leipzig Glossing Rules. Since the passive voice is designated only as *y-*, *in-*, or *-an* passive and is recognizable in the text, the type of passive voice is not included in the glosses. Only the goal and the actor are indicated since the grammarians identified only these two semantic roles.

<sup>8</sup>The concept of government used here is that of traditional grammar where a verb is said to "govern," i.e., control or assign, the grammatical case of its complement.

<sup>9</sup>"En passiva [los verbos transitivos] rigen genivo [*sic*] de persona que haze, y nominativo de persona que padece ..." (Magdalena, 1679, folio 28).



text whose aim is to differentiate between the two types of active voice markers: “In verbs that express movement, the active form with *um* is used to denote the movement performed by the thing placed in the nominative case, so that it moves. But to express active movement which occurs in another thing, it will be done using *mag*.”<sup>10</sup> Briefly, whether the *-um-* or *mag-* form is used, it is the actor or the performer of the action that takes the nominative case in an active sentence.

An additional concept emerges to enrich this fundamental description of the passive voice, which can be inferred from the following statement: “... in the passive voice, *what is primarily intended* [emphasis added] should be done and placed in the nominative, and then apply the appropriate passive construction according to the given rules” (Totanes, 1745/1850, p. 33).<sup>11</sup> We see the same idea repeated in a later grammar together with the use of the term *el intento* (Coria, 1872),<sup>12</sup> which literally means the objective or goal one sets for oneself, or simply “the target.” Below are three sentences that show different targets but using

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<sup>10</sup>“En verbos que dizen mouimiento, se dize por la activa de .vm. el mouimiento que en si exercita la cosa que se pone en nomin, de manera que el se mueve. Pero para dezir mouimiento activo q̄ passe en otra cosa, sera por Mag” (Blancas de San José, 1610, p. 31). For Schachter and Otanes (1972), *-um-* and *mag-* are affixes that form actor-focused verbs. Reminiscent of Blancas de San José’s differentiation, Schachter and Otanes distinguish the two verbs in terms of the direction of the action or movement expressed by the verb. *-Um-* is often used “in verbs denoting casual action/or action not involving movement of an object external to the actor” (p. 292) while *mag-* is found oftentimes in verbs that connote “deliberate action and/or action involving movement of an object external to the actor” (p. 289).

<sup>11</sup>“Para el acertado uso de estas pasivas, reflexiónese en cada una oracion, que *por pasiva deba hacerse lo que principalmente se intenta en ella y eso póngase en nominativo, y despues darle la pasiva, que le conueniere segun las reglas dadas*” (Totanes, 1745/1850, p. 33).

<sup>12</sup>“... obsérvese el intento que uno se propone en la oracion siguiente: Busca el Libro con esta luz en la celda” (Coria, 1872, p. 177).

the same verb root, each one with a specific passive affix (Totanes, 1745/1850, pp. 33–34; Coria, 1872, pp. 177–178). Note that in Spanish all three sentences mean, “Busca el Libro con esta luz en la celda” [Search for the book with this light in the room].

- (2) Ang libro,                    y,    hanap-in  
the book[NOM.GOAL] PRED search for-PAS.GOALFOC  
mo                    nitong ilao    sa silir  
you[GEN.ACT] this lamp[OBL] in the room[OBL]  
‘The book, search for it with this lamp in the room.’
- (3) Itong ilao,                   ay    i-hanap  
this lamp[NOM.GOAL] PRED PAS.GOALFOC-search for  
mo                    nang Libro    sa silir  
you[GEN.ACT] this book[OBL] in the room[OBL]  
‘This lamp, use it to search for the book in the room.’
- (4) Ang silir                    ay    hanap-an  
the room[NOM.GOAL] PRED search for-PAS.GOALFOC  
mo                    nang Libro    nitong ilao  
you[GEN.ACT] this book[OBL] this lamp[OBL]  
‘The room is where you are to search for the book with this  
lamp.’

Before leaving this topic, we cannot help but comment on the grammarians’ use of *ay* (or its short form *y*) in Tagalog especially in focusing specific constituent nouns. Early on, there was already a clear consciousness that *ay* did not function as a verb. Blancas de San José (1610) knew that it was but “a tapping and grace placed in the middle of the sentence when the noun about whom something is said takes the first position”

(p. 15). When *ay* is dropped, the sentence is said in reverse, i.e., *Si Pedro, ay, matapang* becomes *Matapang si Pedro* [Pedro is brave],<sup>13</sup> or *Ang libro, y, hanapin mo nitong ilaw sa silir* becomes *Hanapin mo nitong ilaw ang libro sa silir* [The book, search for it with this lamp in the room].

At this stage, the phenomenon of sentence focus was already intuited. It was called “what-is-primarily-intended” or the *intento* (Totanes, 1745/1850, pp. 33–34; Coria, 1872, p. 177) which can be translated as target, goal, or focus. In other words, it was no longer simply called the thing or object that stands in the nominative. We shall get back to this topic when we discuss the structure of non-actor constructions.

To end this part of the article, we can make three preliminary observations which will be further substantiated in the subsequent sections. First, it is evident that in Tagalog sentences, the actor is frequently not the bearer of the nominative case, which is a device that gives prominence to the nominal, and quite often it is the goal that takes the nominative. Secondly, we also find a hint that the prominent nominal somehow influences the choice of voice-marking affixes (e.g., *yto* being the prominent nominal and goal of the action expressed by the verb, points to the use of the *in*-passive). Finally, the meaning of the verb also affects the type of passive (or the voice-marking affix) that the verb will assume. We shall discuss these observations more toward the last part of this paper as we discuss the structure of non-actor constructions and the semantic grouping of verbs.

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<sup>13</sup>The complete quotation is as follows: “Podria ofrecer se le a alguno que se suple cō esta particula, ay, como diziēdo, si Pedro, ay, matapang: pero no es assi, por q̄ esta particula, ay, no es sino vn sōsonete y gracia q̄ ponē en medio quando precede el sujeto de quien dizē algo: y sino bueluan al reues aquella misma oraciō, si Pedro, ay matapang, diciendo, matapang si Pedro; la qual esta muy buena y perfecta, y vease donde esta el, ay, q̄ supla el sum es fui” (Blancas de San José, 1610, p. 15).

## 2.2 When to Use the Passive

Determining when to use the passive voice requires knowing how it is distinguished from the active voice. Previously we have seen that both the passive and active voices are defined in terms of cases, i.e., active verbs go with “nominative actors” and passive verbs are happy with non-actors that bear the nominative case. To this can be added that essentially, while the active voice is used when referring to an indefinite object (or “goal”), the passive voice is employed when discussing a definite object (or “goal”). Verily, the active sentence is used to speak of something that is general and indefinite. In Spanish, this manner of speaking is achieved by using sentences that omit the definite articles before nouns. Just the opposite, the passive is used when referring to something specific (*señalada*) and definite (*determinada*) (Blancas de San José, 1610, p. 74). The following are examples:<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>“Veniendo al vso de la active y passiva, la diferencia q̄ entre ellas en esta lengua se ha de notar muy notoda (sic.), y guardalla quanto fuere possible, es que la actiua se vse quando se habla alguna cosa en general cō modo no determinado: lo qual se conocera en ver que en nro Español no tiene aquel articulo el, la, lo. Pero la passiuua se vse quando se habla de alguna cosa como señalada, y con modo determinado. Exemplo, para dezir trae agua; dezir por passiuua, conin mo tubig, o, conin mo ang tubig, es disparate: sino moha ca nang tubig: por que aquella passiuua conin mo ang tubig, haze sentido, trae la agua, la agua de que se entienden ellos señalada. Mata vn puerco, matay ca nãg babui. Empero para cosa señalada .v.g. mata el puerco, patayin mo ang babuy, o poner aquel yaon, o el tuyo, o lo que quisieren” (Blancas de San José, 1610, pp. 74–75). This explanation with its examples also appears in Magdalena (1679, folio 38), Totanes (1745/1850, p. 34), and Coria (1872, p. 178).

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- (5) *Active*  
Moha ca<sup>15</sup>  
k<um.ACTFOC>uha [bring] you[NOM.ACT]  
nang tubig (stem: *kuha*)  
water[GEN.INDF.GOAL]  
'Trae agua.' [Bring water.]
- (6) *Passive*  
Con-in mo  
PAS-kuha(n)-in.GOALFOC [bring] you[GEN.ACT]  
ang tubig  
the water[NOM.DEF.GOAL]  
'Trae la agua.' [Bring the water.]

In other words, whenever a sentence uses a definitizer, e.g., *ang*, *yaong*, and *iyang*, the passive voice is used such as in the following examples (Totanes, 1745/1850, p. 34; also found in Coria, 1872, pp. 178–179).

- (7) Pata-in mo  
kill-PAS.GOALFOC you[GEN.ACT]  
ang manùc (stem: *patay*)  
the chicken[NOM.DEF.GOAL]  
'Mata la gallina.' [Kill the chicken.]

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<sup>15</sup>The first and second person singular personal pronouns of Tagalog are, respectively, *aco* (NOM), *aquin/co* (GEN), and *saaquin* [OBL]; and *ycaol/ca* (NOM), *yyo* or *mo* (GEN), and *saiyo* (OBL) (Blancas de San José, 1610, pp. 8–10). The label OBL has been used to refer collectively to the ACC, DAT, and ABL.

- (8) Dalh-in                      mo  
bring-PAS.GOALFOC you[GEN.ACT]  
yaong tubig                                      (stem: *dala*)  
that water [NOM.DEF.GOAL]  
'Trae aquella agua.' [Bring that water.]
- (9) Houag mong                      pagsil-ín  
NEG    you[GEN.ACT] eat-PAS.GOALFOC  
iyang lamancati                                      (stem: *sila*)  
that meat[NOM.DEF.GOAL]  
'No comas esa carne.' [Do not eat that meat.]

This observation above is recorded in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century by American linguists who studied Tagalog.

In any given sentence the voice of the verb depends upon the relative importance of the various elements, the most important or most emphatic idea being made the subject of the sentence. If this is the agent of the action expressed by the verb, the active voice is used; if it is any other element of the sentence, then one of the three passives is employed. (Blake, 1916, p. 411)

And then,

In general the choice between these four constructions [active, direct passive, instrumental passive, and local passive] is made in accordance with the logical situation: the definite, known object underlying the predication as starting-point of discourse is chosen as subject. (Bloomfield, 1917, p. 154)

Whether these linguists borrowed these ideas from their predecessors or it is a conclusion born out by their independent study is irrelevant. What holds greater relevance to the objective of this paper is to demonstrate that these were ideated much earlier than the twentieth century and that the next linguists did not have to start from scratch.

### 2.3 Formation of Passive Verbs

Three types of passives were identified based on the verbal affix used, namely, the *y*-passive, *in*-passive,<sup>16</sup> and the *an*-passive (Blancas de San José, 1610, pp. 46–48). The following description appears in all the four grammars using the same rules applied in the same examples, with just minor modifications or additions.

The *y*-passive is used with verbs that denote *ad extra* actions of the actor (in the genitive case) toward the subject (in the nominative case) or simply those actions that are exteriorized. On the other hand, the *in*-passive is for verbs that denote *ad intra* operations toward the actor, i.e., those actions that do not end up being exteriorized (Blancas de San José, 1610, p. 50).<sup>17</sup> For example:

- (10) Yacyat mo aco nang bongã [sube me por fruta] [climb for a fruit  
for me]

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<sup>16</sup>All four grammarians used the label *in*-passive (*la passiva [pasiva] de in*) but Blancas de San José (1610) would also use the label *yn*-passive (or *passiva de yn*). To avoid confusing the readers, this article uses *in* except for texts directly taken from Blancas de San José's 1610 *Arte*.

<sup>17</sup>“La diferencia que se puede dar entre la passiva de .y. y la de .yn, y señal para quando se ha de vsar de la vna y quádo de la otra, es que la passiva de .y. es para accion que dize como echar acia fuera, ad extra, cosa q̄ va de la persona q̄ haze y se pone en gen. a otra parte, q̄ al fin es como despedir y echar acia fuera. Pero el in, dize atraher acia si o modo de atraher acia si” (Blancas de San José, 1610, p. 50).

- (11) Acyatin mo ytong bongã... [sube por ella y trahela] [climb for a fruit and bring it]

To form the *y*-passive, the prefix *y-* is attached to the root.<sup>18</sup> On the basis of tense and mood, four forms of the *y*-passive can be distinguished, i.e., an imperative mood, future tense, preterite tense, and the present tense. Accordingly, the root *sulat* has the following *y*-passive forms:

- Imperative: prefix + root, e.g., *ysulat*
- Future: use the imperative but reduplicate the first syllable of the root, e.g., *ysusulat*
- Preterite: use the imperative but place the syllable in between the first and second letters of the first syllable of the root, e.g., *ysinulat*
- Present: use the past form but reduplicate the first syllable of the root, e.g., *ysinusulat*

The second, i.e., the *in*-passive is formed by attaching the suffix *-in* at the end of the root.<sup>19</sup> This type of passive does not have all the forms that the *y*-passive has but only the imperative and the future. (The preterite and present forms use *-in-* but not as suffix.) Thus,

- Imperative: *hanap* > *hanapin*
- Future: the first syllable is reduplicated, e.g., *hahanapin*

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<sup>18</sup>The term “prefix” is not used but “letra antepuesta a la rayz de la palabra” (Blancas de San José, 1610, p. 47), or “particula” (Magdalena, 1679, folio 33; Totanes, 1745/1850, p. 29; Coria, 1872, p. 157). Magdalena also uses the description “se forma anteponiendo vna y” (1679, pp. 33–34). Similar expressions are used by Totanes (1745/1850) and Coria (1872).

<sup>19</sup>Instead of “suffix,” Blancas de San José uses the description “... se forma con la rayz posponiendo le esta syllaba .yn.” (1610, p. 48), while Magdalena uses “... se pone despues de la rayz” (1679, folio 33). Totanes (1745/1850) and Coria (1872) use the same expressions.



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- Preterite: no *-in* at the end but placed between the first two letters, e.g., *hanap* > *hinanap*; *tavag* > *tinavag*
- Present: when the root starts with a vowel, *in-* must be prefixed to form the present and the preterite forms in such a way that the *n* of *in-* is attached to the vowel of the root, e.g., *ona* > *ynona* (past), *ynoona* (present), ...

Finally, the *an*-passive is formed by attaching the suffix *-an* to the root of the verb.

- Imperative: root + *-an*, e.g., *sulatan*
- Future: imperative but reduplicate the first syllable of the root, e.g., *susulatan*
- Preterite: imperative but add an *in* between the first two letters of the root, e.g., *sinusulatan*
- Present: future form but add *-in-*, e.g., *sinusulatan*

Note: When the first syllable is a vowel, the same thing done with the *in*-passive is done, e.g., *aral*, *ynaralan*, *ynaaralan*.

This description of how the verbs are formed according to the different particles (or affixes) and aspects also appears in Blake's *A Grammar of the Tagalog Language* (1925, pp. 40–42), a fact that attests to the correctness or validity of the early grammarians' interpretation of the passive construction.

## 2.4 General and Specific Rules on When to Use Each Passive Type

Rules of usage specific to each passive type complemented by examples of verb roots, grouped according to their meanings and the type or types of passive each group can assume, are found in Blancas de San José

(1610, pp. 51–79) and in the three later grammars. We shall look into a few of these rules and the semantic grouping of verb roots to see how they are presented in the four grammars under study.

When the subject of a sentence, i.e., the noun that carries the nominative case, denotes a real or metaphorical instrument, or occasion/cause for doing something, the *y*-passive is used.<sup>20</sup> Likewise, the *y*-passive is used with verbs that mean to throw or to cast or move away from oneself.<sup>21</sup>

- (12) Y-acyat    mo                    aco  
 PAS-climb for.GOALFOC you[GEN.ACT] I[NOM.GOAL]  
 nang bongã    (stem: *akyat*)  
 a fruit[OBL]  
 ‘Sube me por fruta.’ [Climb for a fruit for me.] — where *aco* is  
 the occasion

When the subject indicates place or anything like a place, one has to use the *an*-passive.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>“... todas y quantas vezes se hablare de instrumento ora proprio ora metaphorico y consiguientemente de ocasion y causa de hazer se algo, hablando se de tal instrumento o ocasion y causa en nominatiuo: pide infaliblemente la passiuu de .y.” (Blancas de San José, 1610, p. 51).

<sup>21</sup>“... todo lo que es echar, ó como echar hácia fuera, ó apartar de sí ...” (Totanes, 1745/1850, p. 31; Coria, 1872, p. 169).

<sup>22</sup>“Todo lo que es lugar o como lugar, poniendo se en nominatiuo, pide la passiuu de ,an, aunq̃ no siempre cõ las mismas particulas, sino segun q̃ la tal accion es de proposito hecha, o acaso, pocas o muchas vezes” (Blancas de San José, 1610, p. 51).

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- (13) Acyat-an                                  mo                                  yaon  
climb for-PAS.GOALFOC you[GEN.ACT] that[NOM.GOAL]  
nitong ytac  
this bolo[OBL]  
'Climb [the tree] to give that [person] this bolo.' — where *yaon*  
is the destination

When the subject means the material from which something is made, the verb has to use the *in*-passive.<sup>23</sup>

- (14) Tapis-in                                  mo  
make a tapis-PAS.GOALFOC you[GEN.ACT]  
ytong ising  
this fabric[NOM.GOAL]  
'Haz lo [*ising*] tapis.' [Turn it (this fabric) into a tapis.] —  
where *ising* is the material

Examining these three rules, one notices that the noun that stands in the nominative case is considered as the determiner of the kind of passive the verb will assume, i.e., *aco* (the occasion), *yaon* (the place), and *ytong ising* (the material). Further, the decision to use the passive or the active voice is dependent on whether the noun, i.e., the object spoken about in a sentence, is definite or not, i.e., as determined by their case markers. In the examples that follow, however, there is a more dominant tendency to refer to the kind or morphological shape of verbs

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<sup>23</sup>“Otra regla ay vniversal y que jamas faltará para la passiuá de .yn. y es que va por ella todo aquello de que se haze materia para hazer algo dello, o como materia: de tal manera que aquello que es la materia se ponga en nominatiuo y aquello que se haze della, se haga verbo que se conjugue por la dicha passiuá de .yn” (Blancas de San José, 1610, p. 69).

used rather than the features and denotation of the nouns, e.g., *yacyat*, *acyatin*, *acyatan*, etc. Nevertheless, there remain a few references to the nouns that influence the “choice” of the passive form, e.g., the rule for using the *an*-passive. This shift of focus from nominals to verb roots, or rather the split of focus into two, will be patently clearer with the introduction of the Latin verses (see following) which were composed to aid the memory and comprehension of the specific rules on the part of the language learners.

Further, for the most part, the passivization rules that apply to a specific verb are presented as also applicable to verbs with related meanings (see Blancas de San José, 1610, pp. 51–68). To illustrate, the word *acyat* [sube] [climb] can use any of the three types of passive depending on which object is placed in the nominative case, e.g., *yacyat mo aco nang bonãa* [sube me por fruta] [climb for a fruit for me]; *acyatin mo ytong bonãa* [sube por ella y trahela] [climb for the fruit and bring it]; *acyatan el arbol* [climb the tree]. The same rules will apply to semantically related verbs like *panaog* [baxar] [climb down], *abut* [alcanzar] [reach], e.g., *yabut mo yeri diyã* [alcança esto dando le ay] [reach this, giving it there]; *abutin mo yyan* [alcançalo, remandalo y trayendolo hacia si] [reach, resend, and bring it toward oneself]; *abutan la persona a quien se da algo alcançandolo como a lugar en quien para* [reach the person to whom something is given as the destination of that something].

We shall return to these observations further when we consider the patient-topic construction in the second part of this essay as well as the semantic grouping of verbs in the third part. At this point, it may also be worth noting that attention to semantic content appears to be important in understanding how the Tagalog passives are deployed (Kess,

1979, p. 235). Meanwhile, we can go over the examples of verb roots with related meaning which assume the same type of passive (Blancas de San José, 1610, pp. 52–59). In the following lists of roots written in old Tagalog, the modern spelling is added right next to the root, followed by the glosses in Spanish (if given) and English (supplied by the author).

**Tacbo** [takbo] [correr] [to run] — The verb *tacbo* and other verbs that denote movement behave similarly.

ytacbo mo ytong canin sa maginoo

‘lleva corriendo esta comida a &c.’

[run and bring this food/rice to the gentleman]

tacbohin mo ang canin doon sa maginoo

‘q̃ vaya por la comida corriendo y la trayga del maginoo’

[run and take this food/rice from the gentleman]

tacbohan mo si covan nitōg canin

‘es aquella persona o lugar a quien alguno lleua algo corriendo’

[run to him and give this food to Juan]

Similar words: *luvas* [luwas] [salir rio abaxo] [to go downstream], *pahir* [pahid] [limpiar] [smear/wipe], *coha* [kuha] [tomar] [take].

For the verb *coha* [kuha] [tomar] [take], the person who acts, i.e., the noun placed in the genitive case, brings toward himself an object, which is placed in the nominative case, e.g., *Aco ycoha mo nang tubig* [Trahe me agua] [Bring me water]. The following verbs behave similarly: *higit* [estirar] [stretch by pulling], *hango* [remove from the fire], *tabo* [scoop], *labnot* [pluck out by force], *docot* [dukot] [extract], *sipit* [clip], *dampot* [pick up], *lapnit* [tear by force], *pucnat* [tear off], *hila* [pull],

*binit* [pull to tighten], *sandoc* [sandok] [scoop], *yacap* [yakap] [embrace], *quimquim* [kimkim] [keep], *quipquip* [kipkip] [carry under one's arm], *tali* [tie].

**Gavar** [gawad] [dar] [to give] — All verbs that mean 'to give' takes the *y*-passive which is used for verbs that signify 'to cast off,' and the thing that is given stands in the nominative case. Similar verbs: *bigay* [to give], *biyaya* [give], *handog* [offer], *hayin* [offer], *laan* [reserve for someone], *taã* [taan] [reserve for someone], *lagac* [lagak] [to put in a place], *saoli* [sauli] [return], *bili* [buy], *bayar* [bayad] [pay].

**Coha** [kuha] [tomar] [to bring] — The verb uses the *in*-passive, e.g., *coha* [kuha] [take] > *conin* [kunin] [take], and the thing that is taken by hunting or fishing takes the nominative case. Similar verbs: *agao* [agaw] [snatch], *daquep* [dakip] [catch], *dagit* [swoop down], *bilanggo* [bilanggo] [take as prisoner], *omit* [umit] [steal], *pili* [select], *halao* [halaw] [select], *silo* [snare], *bating* [catch an animal], *bintol* [use a net to catch crabs], *binvit* [bingwit] [catch a fish], *docot* [dukot] [draw out], *bili* [buy].

**Tapon** [throw away] — Verbs that denote *ad extra* actions take the *y*-passive and are impossible to have an *in*-passive form. Similar verbs: *vacsi* [waksi] [get rid of something], *taboy* [drive away], *tolac* [tulak] [push away], *bulir* [bulid] [fall off or down], *bunto* [bent out], *bolosoc* [bulusok] [fall down]; to throw upward or downward: *losong* [lusong] [descend], *loslos* [luslos] [break or burst], *panaog* [descend], *luwas* [luwas] [go downstream], *lavit* [lawit] [dangle], *sinğa* [singa] [expel mucus], *suca*

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[suka] [vomit], *lova* [luwa] [belch out], *tae* [defecate], *yhi* [ihi] [urinate], *holog* [hulog] [drop], *hapay* [incline to one side], *acyat* [akyat] [bring something up], *taas* [itaas] [lift]; to scatter or spill: *bohós* [buhos] [pour], *sabog* [scatter], *sambulát* [burst], *bulagsac* [waste], *saboy* [scatter], *salin* [pour into another container]; verbs that denote movements that tend to remove something from where it was or any application of one thing to another: *lapit* [bring closer], *layo* [take farther], *siping* [lie down or place beside], *tago* [hide], *tacbo* [takbo] [run], *tapat* [put directly in front], *harap* [bring before something or something], *solong* [sulong] [push forward], *hatir* [hatid] [deliver], *lapat* [put two objects in contact], *taob* [put face down], *latag* [spread], *larlár* [ladlad] [spread], *yoco* [yuko] [bend], *laylay* [dangle], *orong* [urong] [to move back], *ovi* [uwi] [take home], *tahe* [tahi] [sew together], *tagpi* [patch], *hinang* [weld together].

**Caen** [kain] [comer] [to eat], *ynum* [beuer] [to drink] — Verbs that mean to eat or drink, which are both *ad intra* actions, use the *in*-passive. Similar verbs: *lamon* [eat], *silá* [eat], *ng̃oya* [nguya] [chew], *quilao* [kilaw] [eat raw], *cagat* [kagat] [bite], *ynum* [inom] [drink], *higop* [sip], *lagoc* [drink], *sipsip* [suck], *hothot* [huthot] [suck], *toca* [peck], *hithit* [inhale].

**Hanap** [buscar] [to search], *tavag* [tawag] [llamar] [to call forth] — Verbs that mean to search or summon go with the *in*-passive because they all mean to attract (*ad intra*). Similar verbs: *songco* [sungko] [recruit], *yaya* [invite], *yacag* [yakag] [invite], *polong* [pulong] [gather to meet], *habul* [habol] [run after], *songdo* [sundo] [fetch], *sisir* [sisid] [swoop], *tonton* [tunton] [retrace].

**Potol** [putol] [cortar] [to cut] — Verbs that signify something that is done with an instrument usually do not go with the *y*-passive when the thing affected is in the nominative case but by either *in*- or *an*-passive, i.e., *putlin mo yto* [putulin mo ito] [cut it] (showing what has to be cut), or *putlan mo yto nang munti* [putulan mo ito nang munti] [corta/quita le vn poco] [cut it a little]. When the verb refers to the instrument, it assumes the *y*-passive, i.e., *ypinotol* [ipinutol] [cut something with an instrument]. Similar verbs: *tagá* [hack with a cutting tool], *sibac* [sibak] [split with an ax], *biac* [biyak] [cleave], *tabac* [tabak] [cut down], *lagari* [saw], *lapa* [dissect], *quitil* [kitil] [nip], *bacbac* [detach], *gilit* [cut], *pogot* [pugot] [cut off/decapitate], *gapas* [cut or mow], *hiva* [hiwa] [slice], *gayat* [grate], *gūting* [gunting] [cut with a scissor], *punit* [tear], *catam* [katam] [smoothen with a plane], *palacol* [palakol] [ax], *ahit* [shave].

Other verb groups include:

- those that signify application or some mode of application to the body to mean carrying something, e.g., *dala* [carry], *sonong* [sunong] [carry on one's back], *pasan* [carry on one's back], *calong* [kalong] [to place on one's lap], *sapo* [catch with both hands], *quilic* [kilik] [carry against the hips], *bitbit* [carry/hold dangling], *calabit* [kalabit] [touch with one's finger tip];
- verbs that mean understanding or willing, e.g., *ysip* [isip] [think], *alaala* [remember], *talastas* [understand], *quilala* [kilala] [know], *lalang* [create], *ybig* [ibig] [like], *himanman* [understand], *panindim* [reflect], *pita* [desire], *sinta* [love], *giliu* [giliw] [love],



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*gonita* [gunita] [remember], *halata* [perceive], *osisa* [usisa] [look into];

- verbs that indicate a specific way of looking, e.g., *tingāla* [tingala] [look up], *lynḡon* [lingon] [look back], *silip* [peep], *aninao* [aninaw] [see through], *panoor* [panood] [watch];
- verbs used for measuring, weighing, and cutting that constitute an act of understanding, e.g., *bilang* [count], *timbang* [weigh], *sucat* [sukat] [measure], *dangcal* [dangkal] [measure with the span from the tip of the thumb and of the middle finger], *balac* [balak] [plan], *dipa* [measure with the span of two extended arms], *salop* [measure with a ganta];
- verbs that mean “to tie,” e.g., *gapus* [bind], *bigquis* [bigkis] [bind], *balot* [wrap], *ticlop* [tiklop] [fold], *ypit* [ipit] [clip], *tohog* [tuhog] [string together], *capit* [kapit] [hold on to something/grasp]; and
- verbs that denote the destruction of something, e.g., *sira* [destroy], *patay* [kill], *colam* [kulam] [hex], *gayoma* [gayuma] [charm], *tastas* [unstitch], *lason* [poison], *camandag* [kamandag] [poison], *sacal* [sakal] [choke].

To facilitate their internalization, these rules were made clearer and expressed in Latin verses that served as a mnemonic device for the missionaries (Magdalena, 1679, folios 35–37).<sup>24</sup> These verses were so

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<sup>24</sup>These Latin verses, which first appeared in Magdalena’s grammar, do not only appear in the Tagalog grammars of Totanes (1745/1850, pp. 31–33) and Coria (1872, pp. 171–176) but also was adapted in the Hiligaynon grammars of Métrida (1894, pp. 68, 77, 80) and Cuartero (1890, pp. 51–52), and Bermejo’s Cebuano grammar (1895, pp. 78, 80–83). It is highly possible that Magdalena composed them as both Totanes and Coria mentioned his name in their respective grammars with Coria saying, “uno de los religiosos franciscanos más instruidos en este idioma, llamado el P. Magdalena, imprimio en su compendioso *Arte tagalog* unos versos latinos, que conser-

useful that they are found in all the Tagalog grammars included in this study and have been adapted in many grammars of other Philippine languages as well. A free translation in English follows the Latin verses.

**The *in-* passive**

Verba motum aliquem in subjecto faciendi.  
Escam quamcumque, potumque sumendi.  
Aliquem vocandi, aliquidque petendi.  
Onus portandi, aliquidque quærendi.  
Verba destruendi, modoque particulari aspiciendi,  
*In* passivum petunt, quibus secandi iunges.  
Omnia quæcumque ad se atraxerit homo.  
Sit alliciendo, emendo, sitque venando.  
Actaque etiam ex tribus potentiis orta.  
Materia vel quasi ex qua rex (sic) aliqua fit;  
Quod suum facit homo quod id tale habet.  
Vultque fieri, & haberi  
Gaudent *in* passivo cum metiendi verbi.

[Verbs that make some movement in the subject  
and indicate taking of food and drink;

Verbs used for calling someone or asking for something,  
and for carrying a load and requesting something.

Verbs that mean to destroy and to look at something in a  
particular way;

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vados en la memoria facilitan su uso y comprensión” [one of the most knowledgeable Franciscan religious in this language, called Fr. Magdalena, printed some Latin verses in his concise Tagalog grammar, which when committed to memory, facilitate their (i.e., the passive types’) use and comprehension] (Coria, 1872, pp. 170–171).

the *in*-passive is needed for verbs that mean to cut, etc.  
Verbs that mean carrying something toward someone  
by removing, getting, or hunting it,  
and the outward acts rising from the potencies (i.e., internal  
senses).  
Verbs to refer to the material or anything similar from  
which something is made,  
to indicate what man does by himself, what he actually  
has,  
or he would rather do and have,  
and verbs to indicate weight, measure, count, etc. are  
happy with the *in*-passive.]

**The *y*- passive**

Verba loquendi declarandi atque docendi,  
Comparandi verba dandi, atque vendendi.  
Et quocumque modo rem extra mittendi.  
Tempusque & causa instrumentum & quasi.  
*Y* passivum petunt, semper que antepositur illis.

[Verbs used for speaking, declaring, and teaching;  
(verbs) of narration, imitation, and also of reference;  
verbs to mean accommodating, giving, and selling, and  
whichever manner of sending out something.  
Time, cause, instrument, and the like.  
They require the *y*-passive which is always placed before  
verbs.]

### The *-an* passive

Persona cui datur ex quaque tollitur aliquid.

Ad idque quo verba gaudentia y passivo tendunt.

Sit nunc persona, sit nunc res, cum loci teneat rationem.

Semper petunt *an*, extrémoque addere puta.

[The person to whom something is given or from whom something is taken, or to that where the happy verbs tend toward in an *y*-passive or the place where something comes from or sent to, always require *-an* to be added at the end.]

The Tagalog verbs, grouped according to their meanings in Blancas de San José (1610, pp. 51–68) as already seen above, are used to illustrate the rules expressed in these Latin verses. The key difference is that the verbs are listed systematically: the verbs that take the *in*-passive are even enumerated using ordinal numbers. While the verbs that take the *y*-passive and *an*-passive are not numbered, they are presented in an orderly way, using signalling devices like “y” [and], “tambien” [also], or “y tambien” [and also]. For example, in Table 1 are the verbs that use the *in*-passive, which is used for all verbs that denote to attract or draw near oneself or *atraer ò como atraer azia si* (Magdalena, 1679, folio 35), and therefore all the verbs that mean to take something, which is placed in the nominative case.

**Table 1. Meanings of the Verb Group in in-passive<sup>25</sup>**

|                  | Meaning of the Verb Group in <i>in</i> -passive   | Example   |
|------------------|---|---|
| 1 <sup>st</sup>  | to take, to reach for something   | <i>coha</i> [tomar] [take], e.g., <i>conin mo ang libro</i> [take the book]; <i>abut</i> [alcançar] [reach for x], e.g., <i>abutin mo iyan</i> [reach for that object]  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | to ask  | <i>hingĩ</i> [pedir] [to ask], e.g., <i>hingin mo an balangna</i> [pide una cosa] [ask for the cooking pot]   |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup>  | to take something and make it one's own   | <i>aquinin co</i> [tomo lo para mi] [take it as mine]   |
| 4 <sup>th</sup>  | movement  | <i>quiboin</i> , e.g., <i>houag mong quiboin</i> [no lo menees] [don't shake something or someone]  |
| 5 <sup>th</sup>  | to eat and drink  | <i>canin mo yian</i> [comete esso] [eat that]   |
| 6 <sup>th</sup>  | to search and call forth  | <i>caonin mo si Pedro</i> [llama a Pedro] [call Pedro]  |
| 7 <sup>th</sup>  | something which is done with an instrument, not placing the instrument in the nominative case, which is for the <i>y</i> -passive | <i>potol</i> [cortar] [cut], e.g., <i>potlin/potolin mo yian</i> [corta ello] [cut it]; <i>tabasin mo nang panabas</i> [cortalo cō las tixeras] [cut it with a trimmer] |
| 8 <sup>th</sup>  | any mode of application to the body   | <i>dala</i> [llevar] [carry], e.g., <i>dalhin/dalahin mo</i> [llevalo] [take it]  |
| 9 <sup>th</sup>  | acts of one's faculties   | <i>talastasin</i> [entiēdelo] [understand]  |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> | to look in some particular way  | <i>lingonin mo yian</i> [mira esso de passo] [look back at it]  |

|                  | Meaning of the Verb Group in <i>in</i> -passive                            | Example  |
|------------------|--|--|
| 11 <sup>th</sup> | destruction or something that leads to it                                  | <i>sirain mo</i> [destruyelo] [destroy it]   |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> | to make something out of some raw material (placed in the nominative case) | <i>tapisin mo yian ysin</i> [haz saya de essa pieza de isin] [make an apron out of that piece of tapestry] |

In Table 2 are the verbs that take the *y*-passive, which is used for all verbs that signify to throw out or away or *echar azia fuera* (Magdalena, 1679, folio 36). The object that is thrown away is placed in the nominative case. For easy reading and reference, the numbers on the first column are supplied.

**Table 2. Meanings of the Verb Group in *y*-passive**

|   | Meaning of the Verb Group in <i>y</i> -passive                                      | Example   |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | to throw  | <i>itapon mo yian</i> [arroja esto] [throw it away]   |
| 2 | [to use] any instrument whether properly or metaphorically speaking to do something | <i>itong sondang yputol mo nyian cahui</i> [corta con este cuchillo esse madero] [use this knife to cut that piece of wood] |

<sup>25</sup>The Spanish translations, some of which are inexact, are lifted from the grammars while the English translations are the author's.

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| Meaning of the Verb<br>Group in <i>y</i> -passive   | Example   |
|---|---|
| 3 [to make someone or something] the occasion or cause for what the verb means                    | <i>icaò ang ipinahampas nang Padre saaquin</i><br>[por tu causa me açotò el Padre] [you are the reason why the Priest had me beaten]                                      |
| 4 to spill, to pour   | <i>ibobo mo yian tubig</i> [derrama essa agua]<br>[pour that water]   |
| 5 to move outward and apply one thing onto another  | <i>itali mo dyian</i> [atalo ài] [tie it there]   |
| 6 to apply something to fire  | <i>ysaing mo</i> [guisalo] [steam it]   |
| 7 to metaphorically apply something either by likening or speaking and to imitate or make similar | <i>ymucha mo dito yian gauamo</i> [asimila â esto esso que hazes] [make what you are doing like this]; <i>ibabala sa Padre</i> [dilo al Padre] [warn the Priest about it] |
| 8 to throw up [from one's mouth]  | <i>ysucamo yian alac</i> [vomita esse vino]<br>[vomit that wine]; <i>yluva mo yian sa bibig mo</i> [aroha esso que tienes en la boca] [spit that out of your mouth]       |
| 9 to speak of a specific time when an event happened, happens, or will happen                     | <i>arao na ipinagpanhic co niong sulat</i> [dia en que subì aquel libro] [the day when I carried that letter upstairs]  |

Finally, we are given a few examples of verbs that take the *an*-passive: *bigyan mo aco nang tubig* [dame agua] [give me water], *abutan mo si Pedro nang soliyao* [alcança (dando) a Pedro vna escudilla] [reach for Pedro, giving him a bowl]. The *an*-passive is used for all verbs that refer to a place or anything that functions as a place and all the verbs that

mean to give, call, count, trim, etc. The person to whom something is given or from whom something is received takes the nominative case because they function as a place.

The later versions of the specific rules are even more clearly presented. The language learner will notice that more specific examples are interspersed through the verses (see Totanes, 1745/1850, pp. 31–33) and the verses are numbered using ordinal numbers (see Coria, 1872, pp. 171–176). The difference between them is not substantive (see also Saracho Villalobos, 2018, p. 203) since it consists merely of variances such as typographical errors and/or change of conjugation of the same verb, e.g., *otraxerit* vs. *atrahérit*, *vultque* vs. *vulque*, *cun* vs. *cum*, *atiam* vs. *etiam*; change of verb, e.g., *emendo* vs. *comendo*; omission of a verse that is found in the original, e.g., the line *Ad idque quo verba gaudentia y passivo tendunt* has been left out in the new versions. In any case, most of what has been said in the 1610 grammar subsists in these versions. Table 3 is Coria's adaptation in table format.

### 3 Structure of Non-actor Constructions

Having seen how the early grammarians explained the nature, use, and formation of the three passives, we can now consider the structure of sentences where these passive verbs appear. We shall also see their other conclusions that were eventually carried over into the more recent analysis of the passive voice such as those about complements, i.e., nominals with a non-focus relation with verb (Schachter & Otanes, 1972, p. 71) and sentence focus.



Table 3. Latin Verses in Coria's Grammar

| Latin Verse   | Author's Free Translation                                     | Coria's Explication                 | Example   |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b><i>in-passive</i></b>                                  |   |                                     |   |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Verba motum aliquem in subjecto faciendi. | Verbs that make some movement in the subject                  | Verbs of movement                   | <i>Quiboin mo</i> [Menéalo] [Shake it];<br><i>Habulin mo</i> [Alcánzalo] [Run after it]   |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Escam quamcumque, potumque sumendi.       | ... that indicate taking of food and drink                    | ... that mean to eat and drink      | <i>Canin mo itó</i> [Cómete esto] [Eat this];<br><i>Inumin mo itong alác</i> [Bébeteste este vino] [Drink this wine]  |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Aliquem vocandi, aliquidque quærendi.     | ... that are used for calling someone or asking for something | ... to mean search for, call,       | <i>Hanapin mo si Luis</i> [Busca á Luis] [Look for Luis];<br><i>Tauagin mo si Luis</i> [Llama á Luis] [Call Luis]   |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Onus portandi, aliquidque petendi.        | ... for use for carrying a burden, and requesting something   | ... to lift and carry in any manner | <i>Dalihin [sic] mo itong bata</i> [Lleva este muchacho] [Bring this child];<br><i>Passanin [sic] mo itó</i> [Lleva á hombros esto] [Carry it on your back] |

|                 | Latin Verse  | Author's Free Translation  | Coria's Explication               | Example  |
|-----------------|--|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| 5 <sup>th</sup> | Verba destruendi, modoque particulari aspiciendi.                                      | Verbs that mean to destroy, and to look at something in a particular way             | ... to destroy, kill, cut, uproot | <i>Patayin mo ang aso</i> [Mata al Perro] [Kill the dog]; <i>Sirain mo iyan</i> [Deshace eso] [Destroy that]                             |
| 6 <sup>th</sup> | <i>In passivum petunt, quibus secandi junges.</i>                                      | For verbs that mean to cut, etc., the <i>in</i> -passive is needed                   | ... to cut, etc.                  | <i>Potlin mo yaon</i> [Corta aquello] [Cut that]; <i>Tastasin itong tinahi mo</i> [Descose lo que cosistes] [Unravel what you have sewn] |
| 7 <sup>th</sup> | <i>Omnia quaecumque ad se atraherit homo. Sit alliciendo, comendo, sitque venando.</i> | ... that mean carrying something toward a person by removing, getting, or hunting it | ... to bring toward oneself       | <i>Conin mo ito</i> [Toma esto] [Take this]; <i>Bilhin mo itong lupa</i> [Compra esta tierra] [Buy this piece of land]                   |

|                  | Latin Verse  | Author's Free Translation  | Coria's Explication                              | Example  |
|------------------|--|--|--|--|
| 8 <sup>th</sup>  | Actaque extribus potentiis orta.                             | ... that denote outward acts arising from the potencies (i.e., internal senses)                | ... that refer to acts of the three potencies    | <i>Isipin mo</i> [Piénsalo] [Think about it]; <i>Ibiguin mo ang Dios</i> [Ama á Dios] [Love God]   |
| 9 <sup>th</sup>  | Materia vel quasi ex qua res aliqua fit;                     | ... that refer to material or anything similar from which something is made                    | —  | <i>Binaro co yaong cayo</i> [Hice camisa de aquella manta] [I made a shirt out of that clothing material]; <i>Bababayin co itong calap</i> [He de hacer casa de esta madera] [I will make a house from this log] |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> | Quod suum facit homo, id tale habet, vulque fieri, et habere | ... to indicate what man does by himself, what he actually has, or he would rather do and have | ... to take, make, or have something for oneself | <i>Aquinin do [sic] itong baro</i> [I will take this shirt as mine]; <i>Iyohin mo iyán</i> [Haz tuyo eso] [Make that yours]  |

|                  | Latin Verse                            | Author's Free Translation  | Coria's Explication          | Example   |
|------------------|--|--|------------------------------|---|
| 11 <sup>th</sup> | Gaudet in passivo cum metiendi verbis. | verbs to indicate weight, measure, counting, etc. ... all of these verbs use the in-passive. | ... to weigh, measure, count | <i>Sucatin mo itó</i> [Mide esto] [Measure it]; <i>Dangcalin mo</i> [Mídelo á palmos] [Measure it with the span from the tip of the thumb and of the middle finger] |

| Latin Verse   | Author's Free Translation   | Coria's Explication  | Example   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <b><i>i</i>-passive</b>   |   |  |   |
| <p>1<sup>st</sup> Verba loquendi, similandi, atque docendi. Narrandi, imitandi, atque etiam referendi Commodandi, dandi, atque vendendi. Et quocumque modo rem extra mitendi.</p> | <p>Verbs for speaking, imitating, and teaching, narrating, imitating, and referring, accommodating, giving and selling, and any manner of sending something out</p> | <p>Verbs that mean to throw, or something similar, outward either for real or metaphorically, placing it [the thing thrown] in the nominative.</p> | <p><i>Itular mo itó doon</i> [Asimila esto á aquello] [Make it similar to that];<br/> <i>Iaral mo sa manga anac mo ang dasal</i> [Enseña á tus hijos la doctrina] [Teach your children about praying]</p> |

|                 | Latin Verse  | Author's Free Translation  | Coria's Explication   | Example   |
|-----------------|--|--|---|---|
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> | Tempusque et causa, instrumentum, et quasi. <i>I passivum petunt, semperque anteponitur illis.</i> | Time, cause, instrument, and the like require the <i>i</i> -passive, which [i.e., the affix <i>i</i> -] is always placed before them | Use the <i>y</i> -passive when verbs refer to a specific time, cause, reason for which an action is done or not, instrument which are placed in the nominative case | <i>Ang arao na ipinañgana [sic] sa ating P. Jesucristo</i> [El nacimiento de Nuestro Señor Jesucristo] [the day our Lord Jesus Christ was born]; <i>Ang ating P. Dios lamang ang dico ipinatay sa iyo</i> [Por Dios solamente no te mate] [Our Lord Jesus Christ is the only reason why I didn't kill you]; <i>Iyan palacól ay ipotól mo nitó</i> [Corta eso con esa hacha] [That ax, use it to cut this] |

| Latin Verse   | Author's Free Translation  | Coria's Explication  | Example   |
|---|--|--|---|
| <b><i>an-passive</i></b>  |  |  |   |
| Persona cui datur,<br>ex quaque tollitur<br>aliquid.<br>Sit nunc res, sit<br>nunc persona<br>Cun loci teneant<br>rationem.<br>Semper petunt <i>an</i> ,<br>extremoque addere<br>puta. | The person to<br>whom something is<br>given or from<br>whom something is<br>taken away, be it a<br>thing or a person,<br>or the place where<br>something comes<br>from or sent to,<br>always require an<br><i>-an</i> to be added at<br>the end. | Use the <i>-an</i> passive<br>when verbs refer to<br>a place and the like<br>where something is<br>placed, removed,<br>done, or undone,<br>comes from or<br>ends up in, be that<br>place be a person<br>or thing which is<br>placed in the<br>nominative case. | <i>Big-yan mo acó nang tubig</i> [Dame<br>agua] [Give me water]; <i>Labanan mo<br/>ang masasamang pita nang cata-oan</i><br>[Resiste á los malos apetitos de tu<br>cuerpo] [Fight the bad desires of the<br>body] |

The basic structure of a passive sentence as seen above is that the object to which the verb refers and upon which the action is performed (goal) stands in the nominative and the entity that carries out the action (actor) is indicated in the genitive. We reproduce (1) given earlier to serve as an illustration.

- (1) Y-sulat                      ni Pedro                      yto  
PAS-write.GOALFOC Pedro[GEN.ACT] this[NOM.GOAL]  
'Esto sea [*sic*] escrito de Pedro.' [May Pedro write this.]

The rule, it seems, is that the noun given the strongest emphasis gets the nominative case or is the subject of the sentence. In the given example, the pronoun *yto* is in the nominative case, i.e., the subject of the sentence and therefore what is emphasized. Following the rule governing the *in*-passive, the object of an action (i.e., *yto*) away from the actor, i.e., *Pedro*, is the subject of the sentence. This inference can be seen as well in Blake (1916), stating that, "The voice of the verbs depends on the relative importance of the various elements, the most important or most emphatic idea being made the subject of the sentence" (p. 411). Accordingly, the active voice is used if the emphasized nominal is the agent of the action denoted by the verb. When other nominals are used, the verb takes on any of the three passives. Similarly, Bloomfield (1917) affirms that the "definite and known object underlying the predication as starting point of discourse is chosen as subject" (p. 154) and when the subject is not the actor, the active voice is effectively avoided.

Another early description of a passive sentence is that it is used when speaking of something definite and pinned down or clearly indicated, as opposed to an active sentence which is used when talking about something in general and in an indefinite way, which in Spanish is



recognizable by the absence of the articles *el, la, lo* [the] (Blancas de San José, 1610, p. 74). In other words, there is reference to a case marker, in particular *ang*, as we see in the following paragraph that explains an exception to the rule on using the the marker *ang* in certain cases of the passive sentence.

... when something is spoken about in a general sense, let us say *in genere*, a certain type of thing is referred to, but in an indefinite (*indeterminado*) manner *in specie* when speaking about it in particular. In this case, when one speaks of it and realizes that a specific thing is spoken about, the passive is used because it refers to some type of definite thing. However, by its lack of definiteness in species or in particularity, *ang* is not added. This will be understood in practice. What do you need to bring from there? Palay. Anong coconin mo doon? Palay, not ang palay but palay [What will you take from there? Palay, not the palay but palay]. What I need to buy is fish: ang bibilhin ko, ay, ysda. Not ang isda, el pescado: but ang bibilhin co. y. isda [What I will buy is fish. Not ang isda, the fish: but what I will buy is fish].<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>“... quando se habla de algo determinado digamos in genere, tal genero de cosa, pero indeterminado in specie en particular, entonces quando se habla dello y si se repara en que de aquello se trata, se habla por passiva, porque se habla de algun genero de cosa determinado: pero por la indeterminacion que en especie o en particular tiene, no se le pone, ang. En practica se entendera. Que has de traher de alla? arroz. Anong coconin mo doon? palay, no ang palay sino palay. Lo que tengo que comprar es pescado: ang bibilhin ko, ay, ysda. No ang isda, el pescado: sino ang bibilhin co. y. isda” (Blancas de San José, 1610, p. 76).

A clearer reference to these markers can be seen in the following rule from Totanes (1745/1850, p. 34):

It is accurate to use the active voice when one speaks of something indeterminate, which can be recognized by the absence of some of these articles *los, las, le de los, de las*, etc., or their derivatives *meus, tuus, vester*, etc., or some demonstrative [pronouns] such as *este, esse, de aquel, aquello*, etc., which are the [definite] determiners. On the contrary, it is necessary to use the passive voice whenever the sentence carries any of those determiners.<sup>27</sup>

The case markers for singular nouns are listed in Table 4 (Blancas de San José, 1610, p. 7).

**Table 4. Case Markers for Singular Nouns**

|     |           |             |                      |              |               |                        |
|-----|-----------|-------------|----------------------|--------------|---------------|------------------------|
| NOM | si Pedro  | Pedro       | Peter                | ang tavo     | el hōbre      | the man                |
| GEN | ni Pedro  | de Pedro    | of Peter             | nang tavo    | del hōbre     | of the man             |
| DAT | cay Pedro | para Pedro  | to Peter             | sa tavo      | para el hōbre | to the man             |
| ACC | cay Pedro | a Pedro     | Peter                | nang/sa tavo | al hōbre      | the man                |
| VOC | ay Pedro  | ay, o Pedro | Peter                | ay tavo      | ola hōbre     | man                    |
| ABL | cay Pedro | de Pedro    | in/with ...<br>Peter | sa tavo      | del hōbre     | in/with ...<br>the man |

The forms of the noun whether proper or common are unchangeable, but to change the cases of proper nouns, some particles are used, i.e., *si*,

<sup>27</sup>“... Es precision el hablar por activa, siempre que se habla de cosa indeterminada; lo que se conocerá en no llevar alguno de los artículos, los, las, le, de los, de las, etc. ni derivativo, meus, tuus, vester, etc. ni demostrativo alguno como este, ese, de aquel, aquello, etc. que son los determinantes. [...] Por lo opuesto, precisa hablar por pasiva, siempre que llevase la oracion alguno de aquellos determinantes de la cosa” (Totanes, 1745/1850, p. 34).

*ni*, and *cay* for singular nouns. *Si* is used for nominative, *ni* for genitive, and *cay* for dative, accusative, and ablative. The plural particles are *sina* for nominative, *nina* for genitive, and *cana* for dative, accusative, and ablative (Magdalena, 1679, folio 1).<sup>28</sup>

That the categorization of a sentence as passive depends only on the change that affects the actor-subject does not mean that the analysis stops here (Hidalgo, 1970). In fact, there is an awareness that a sentence that uses a transitive verb may have other nominals, other than the actor and the goal, in the “accusative” case (Magdalena, 1679, folio 28). In the sentence below, for example, there is an additional noun, *nang tubig*, that is neither in the genitive nor the nominative case, but rather than tagging it as an accusative, it is marked as “oblique,” as Blake (1916, p. 412) does, stating the three cases as the nominative, genitive, and oblique. The same cases are used by Shibatani (1988, p. 86).

- (15) Bigyan                      mo                      aco  
       give-PAS.GOALFOC you[GEN.ACT] I[NOM.GOAL]<sup>29</sup>  
       nang tubig  
       some water[OBL]  
       ‘Dame agua.’ [Give me water.]

Here we see a recognition that the other nominals in the same sentence can have different roles or functions as also pointed out in more

<sup>28</sup>“Los nombres en esta lengua son invariables, como tábien los Verbos, assi propios, como apellativos, y para variar los casos se les aplican vnas particulas, que en los propios, y de sobrenombres (que siguē la regla de los propios) son *si*, *ni* y *cay* en singular, *si* sirve para Nominativo, *ni* para genitive, y *cay* para Dativo, Accusativo, y Ablativo...” (Magdalena, 1679, folio 1).

<sup>29</sup>Based on the grammars, the pronoun *aco* in this sentence is a quasi-location or place.

recent studies (Schachter & Otanes, 1972, pp. 69–73; Ridruejo, 2007, p. 235). At this point, however, the grammarians are limited to naming these nominals as “actor” (*la persona que haze*) and “patient” (*la persona que padece*). At the same time though, it is acknowledged that the patient (goal) can have other functions as place or quasi-place (location, direction), instrument, recipient, etc., since these terms have been used to explain the rules that govern the three types of passives as well as in the semantic grouping of verbs based on the type of passive each one can take. This opens the way for a later proposal that there are more passive types than the number of voice affixes, as we shall see in the following section. Bloomfield (1917, pp. 153–154) renamed the three types of passive direct, instrumental, and local. Additional types will be named in later works.

As is observable, the nominative case gives prominence to a nominal. Thus, the emphasis of the sentence is clearly identifiable. The words *intento* (target, intention) and *connato* (effort especially to attain a particular goal) are used to refer to what the passive voice is able to achieve. We see this in Totanes’s (1745/1850) explanation of how concretely the passive is used in real life. This very same explanation is reaffirmed more than a hundred years later (Coria, 1872, pp. 177–178).

For the exact use of these passive forms, keep in mind in every sentence that you must use the passive in expressing the thing that is intended or aimed at, and you must put that object in the nominative case. Then give it the appropriate passive affix according to the given rules. For example, in this sentence *busca el libro con esta luz en la celda* [look for the book with this light in the room], I can have one of

three intentions. The first can be the book that I'm trying to find without making an effort to look for it with this or another lamp, or in the room or another place. In this case, I will automatically put the book in the nominative and I will use the *in*-passive, based on the rule *Aliquid quaerendi*, and I will say: *ang libro, y, hanapin mo nitong ilao sa silir* [the book, look for it with this light in the room]. The second intention can be that it be searched with this lamp, and not with another, placing the main effort on it, and thus I will place the lamp in the nominative case and give it the *i*-passive following the rule *Instrumentum, & quasi*, saying: *itong ilao, ay ihanap mo nang libro sa silir* [this lamp, use it to find a book in the room]. The third [intention] can be that it be looked for in the room, and not in another part (of the house), without any special emphasis on the book, or in the lamp. In this case, I will put the room in the nominative case, and I will give it the *an*-passive in accordance with the rule *Sit nunc res, Sit nunc persona cum loci teneat rationem*, saying *ang silir ay hanápan mo nang libro nitong ilao* [the room, look for the book there with this lamp].<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>“Para el acertado uso del estas pasivas reflexiónase en cada una oracion, que por pasiva deba hacerse lo que principalmente se intenta en ella y eso póngase en nominativo, y despues darle la pasiva, que le conviniere segun las reglas dadas. Vg. En esta oracion; *busca el libro con esta luz en la celda*, puedo tener uno de tres intentos. El primero, puede ser el libro, que pretendo hallar, sin poner connato en que se busque con esta ó con otra luz ni en la celda, ni en otra parte: en este caso pondré inmediateamente al libro en nominativo, y le daré pasiva de *in*, por la regla: *Aliquid quaerendi*, y dire: *ang libro, y, hanapin mo nitong ilao sa silir*. El segundo intento puede

The early grammarians could sense the phenomenon of topicalization or the concept of focus in their everyday use of the language but they could only do so, similar to Blake and Bloomfield (Shibatani, 1988), in terms of variation in voice. However, it is not completely untrue to say that with their great attention given to verbs as manifested in the Latin verses, they were not too far off from discovering the semantic relationship between the predicate verb and the nominal in the nominative case, which essentially is determined by focus (Schachter & Otones, 1972, p. 69).

## 4 Semantic Verb Grouping

Thus far we have seen how the early descriptions classified transitive verbs. First, they are either active or passive based on the cases of two specific nominals, i.e., the actor and the goal (or patient). Second, they are classified as active if the goal is indefinite or passive if the goal is definite. Then, they are subcategorized into three types on account of the meaning or role of the nominal that takes the nominative case, i.e., *y*-passive when the nominal refers to a real or metaphorical instrument, occasion, and cause for doing something; *an*-passive when referring to a place or anything like a place, and *in*-passive if it is some raw material for a finished product, etc.

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ser, que se busque con esta luz, y no con otra, poniendo en esto el principal connato, y asi pondré la luz en nominativo, y le daré pasiva de *i* por la regla: *Instrumentum, & quasi*, diciendo: *itong ilao, ay ihanap mo nang libro sa silir*. El tercero puede ser, que se busque en la celda precisamente, y no en otra parte, sin especial connato, en el libro, ni en la luz; y en este supuesto, pondré la celda en nominativo, y le daré pasiva de *an* por la regla: *Sit nunc res, Sit nunc persona cum loci teneat rationem*. Diciendo, *ang silir ay hanápan mo nang libro nitong ilao*” (Totanes, 1745/1850, pp. 33–34).

In addition to these descriptions, we have also seen that certain verbs that have been grouped together based on their semantic content would tend to behave similarly, i.e., they take a common passive type or they take all three verbal affixes and follow the same sentence structure. This is the main point of the Latin verses that were used as a mnemonic device: knowing the denotational meaning of a verb root can help determine which of the three passive types is required. Contemporary linguists would later claim that there is some evidence of regularity in verb type and voice form, i.e., “some peculiar voice forms are shared by voice paradigms derived from verb roots of similar semantics” (Klimenko & Endriga, 2016, p. 484).

At the same time, one will notice that the verses that refer to the *in-* and *y-*passive types start with the word *verba* (verbs) while those of the *an-*passive start with *persona* (person). This points to the fact that voice is identifiable not only by examining the morphological shape and meaning of the verb but also by the semantic role played by the nominals, i.e., as semantic participants in a nonsubject position with syntactic marking. Thus, it could be seen that the idea of topicalization, which essentially is about nominal marking (Shibatani, 1988), could already be envisaged. However, the overwhelming currency of the subject category hindered the early grammarians from having an alternative view of the emphasized or intended nominal.

By analyzing the types of verbs that usually take a specific passive voice affix, one can see that these early descriptions have foreshadowed future ones that depart from the idea that one voice affix corresponds to one voice. In other words, the proposal that there can be more voices than the number of voice affixes can already be deduced (Klimenko

& Endriga, 2016, p. 483). This can also be extrapolated based on the nominals that take the nominative case in a passive sentence. Bloomfield (1917, pp. 153–154) renamed the three passives as direct, instrumental, and local. Eventually, more types will be identified since it has become too obvious that the term “patient” (*lo que padece*) (i.e., the goal) is insufficient to encapsulate the concepts of instrument, occasion, cause, place, direction, raw material, etc. While the early descriptions, including those of the American linguists, identified only three passive voices (and two active ones, *mag-* and *-um-*), clear references to other voice inventories have been made, such as those identified in Klimenko and Endriga (2016, p. 483): actor, patient, directional, locative, beneficiary, causal, and measure.

## 5 Conclusion

In summary, we can say that the early descriptions dating back to early 17<sup>th</sup> century up to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century succeeded in understanding and interpreting the passive voice or the non-actor construction in Tagalog using the linguistic methods available to them during that period. It is important to note that despite their inevitable dependence on Latin and Spanish, they knew better than to impose rules that could have prevented them from seeing the internal structure of the Tagalog passive verb or sentence. This could be attributed to their early recognition that they were dealing with a language that was typologically distinct from their reference languages.

By exhausting the potentials of noun cases, complemented by a general knowledge of semantic roles, the early grammarians defined and



classified the passive voice, formulated its general and specific rules, and revealed features that could be studied further for a greater appreciation of this linguistic phenomenon. To recapitulate, the passive sentence is one in which the goal or the object which the verb refers to and upon which the action is performed is in the nominative case and marked with a definitizer, while the actor or the performer of the action is in the genitive case. Moreover, this goal is what is primarily intended or targeted among the nominals that may be present in the same sentence and can be serving a specific function such as the occasion, place, or instrument of the action.

In presenting examples or explaining the rules, the grammarians provided additional insights that would be useful for future studies or discoveries. These include the use of case markers to reveal the emphasized nominal, which later on would lead to the emergence of the concept of focus; the diversification of the category of goal into other roles which would become the basis of the “newer” types of passives, e.g., directional, locative, beneficiary; and the grouping of verb roots based on similar semantics that use similar voice-marking affixes that contemporary linguists would later use to hypothesize the existence of regularity in verb type and voice form.

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