

Categories of the verb in natural languages include tense, aspect, modality (mood) and voice. Among these, voice, in its rich and diverse manifestations, is perhaps the most complex. But most prior research concentrates on only certain types, predominantly passives.

Voice expresses relations between a predicate and a set of nominal positions – or their referents – in a clause or other structure. *Grammatical voice* is the first typological study of voice systems based on a multi-language survey. It introduces a threefold classification of voice types, in the first place distinguishing passivization phenomena (derived voice) from active–middle systems (basic voice); and further, distinguishing each of these from pragmatically grounded voice behaviors, such as focus and inverse systems.

As the first comprehensive study of voice systems and voice typology, this book makes a significant contribution to current research in linguistics and grammatical theory.

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Grammatical voice

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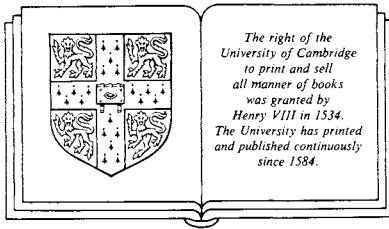
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To Madan

न प्रेम ।
न प्यार ।
न काम ।
न रति ।
न आदर ।
न स्नेह ।
यह कार्य है
मदन के लिये ॥

Contents

<i>List of figures</i>	page xi
<i>Preface</i>	xiii
<i>List of abbreviations</i>	xviii
1 The study of voice	1
1.0 Preliminaries	1
1.1 Voice in traditional grammar	2
1.2 Role-remapping voice	11
1.3 Voice as alternation in subject's participant status	23
1.4 Voice as marker of pragmatic salience assignment	31
1.5 Argument structure and voice	35
2 Middle voice and basic voice systems	44
2.0 Preliminaries	44
2.1 Fula	47
2.2 Tamil	69
2.3 Indo-European	82
2.4 Basic voice as patterning of the verbal lexicon	104
3 Control and voice	110
3.0 Preliminaries	110
3.1 Perspectives on the control construct	112
3.2 The grammar of control	117
3.2.1 Agency, undergoing and intransitive predicate classification: unaccusativity	121
3.2.2 Active–stative systems	124
3.2.3 Morphologically marked lexical classes in Cupeño	132
3.3 The control construct and basic voice	137
3.4 Affectedness, attribution of control and submissive verb constructions	140

x *Contents*

3.5 Attribution of control and verbal derivation	146
3.6 The grammaticization of control	156
4 Inverse voice systems	161
4.0 Preliminaries: ontology, head-marking and the inverse type	161
4.1 Korean	171
4.2 Apachean languages	175
4.3 Passive vs inverse voice	182
4.4 Algonquian languages	185
4.5 Tanoan languages	200
4.5.1 Arizona Tewa	204
4.5.2 Other Tanoan languages	211
4.5.3 Tanoan systems and the inverse type	222
5 Information-salience voice systems	227
5.0 Preliminaries: clausal pragmatics and informational salience	227
5.1 Mayan languages	228
5.2 Philippine languages	245
6 Toward a theory of voice	260
<i>Notes</i>	272
<i>Bibliography</i>	296
<i>Index</i>	315

Figures

1.1	Clause-level and logical-level structure correlations	<i>page</i> 5
1.2	Unmarked and marked voice configurations	10
1.3	Some basic clause-structure correlations of semantic roles and grammatical relations	15
1.4	Some basic and remapped relational configurations	16
1.5	Some definitions of thematic relations	40
2.1	Summary of Fula verbal conjugation, based on Arnott 1956: 131, Table 1	48
2.2	Three-voice, two-voice, and one-voice valence classes of simple radicals in Fula	55
2.3	Semantic classification of some Fula radicals with middle primary voice, based on Arnott 1956 and 1970, Appendices 11, 12	58
2.4	Some diatheses, based on Geniušienė 1987	66
2.5	Ergative, active and active–middle argument-structure organization	108
3.1	Natural predicate classification according to the control construct	111
3.2	Non-control predicate subclasses according to Thalberg 1972	119
3.3	Potentiality of agency scale (animacy hierarchy)	120
3.4	Tentative classification of unergative vs unaccusative predicate concepts, based on Perlmutter 1978	122
3.5	Representative instances of intransitive verb classes in Chocho, based on Mock 1982 (1980)	126
3.6	Subgroups of zero-marked lexical verbs in Cupeño, based on Hill 1969: 353	134
3.7	Prototype functions of basic voice categories	139
4.1	Some Arizona Tewa person prefix paradigms, based on Kroskirty 1985	205

xii *List of figures*

4.2 Some Picurís person prefix paradigms, based on Zaharlick 1982	216
4.3 Some Southern Tiwa person prefix paradigms, based on Rosen 1990	221
4.4 Some Towa (Jemez) person prefix paradigms, based on Myers 1970	221
5.1 Mappings of nominal functions, case categories, verbal voices and form classes in Cebuano, based on Shibatani 1988a	249
5.2 Focus-, actor- and actor-/focus-sensitive properties in Philippine languages, based on Shibatani 1988a: 125, 1988b: 107	257

Preface

Throughout my career as a linguist, I have been interested in categories of meaning in natural languages and their expression through cross-linguistically recurrent structural patterns and behaviors. Over the past several years my research interests have come to focus on certain behaviors that, at the outset, seemed difficult to classify under any well-defined grammatical category. In fact, when I embarked on their study, all that these behaviors seemed to have in common was that somewhere and at some time, some grammarian has referred to them under the rubric of grammatical voice. Now, on two grounds, the time seems ripe for bringing to light my research on these behaviors in the form of a monograph on voice as a grammatical category. And so, by way of accounting to the reader for the lengthy text below, I risk overburdening it with this preface explaining how it has come to be.

In the first place, a comprehensive work on this subject seems desirable in light of the current diversity of views on voice. In fact, grammarians presently use the term voice in reference to no fewer than three distinct classes of grammatical behaviors. The term is invoked, firstly, in reference to systems where regular alternations in verbal morphology signal alternate allocations of nominals among positions in structural configurations. This class of voice systems is termed *derived voice** in the present study. It encompasses behaviors prominent in current grammatical theories, usually treated under the general rubric of *passivization**. Included are ordinary transitive (personal) passives plus such other varieties as impersonal passives, oblique passives, antipassives and so on.

However, there is a second, much older tradition of identifying voice with verbal oppositions which, in certain languages, signal alternations in the participant roles of subjects. Generally, they express the coincidence or noncoincidence of a clause's subject with the locus of the principal effects of the action or situation denoted by the verb. Systems

xiv *Preface*

of this type are best known from active/middle* alternations in classical languages, such as Latin, Greek and Sanskrit. Nonetheless, they are also found in languages neither Indo-European nor ancient. They are discussed in the main text below under the rubric of basic* (as contrasted with derived*) voice.

Thirdly and finally, some writers invoke the term voice in reference to systems in which alternations of verbal morphology signal the alternating assignment among a clause's nominals of some pragmatic status or salience, such as informational or ontological salience. Systems of this type, below termed pragmatic voice* systems, are perhaps best known from recent treatments of Philippine language such as Tagalog. However, such systems are not confined to a single genetic group or family, but are also manifested elsewhere, such as in Mayan languages, which are among the pragmatic voice systems discussed in the main text. Also, pragmatic voice encompasses Algonquian and other systems of the inverse* type, which the main text likewise surveys.

The present work aims to clarify the idea of voice by adopting a typological approach to voice phenomena. In the course of the presentation, it has been necessary to invoke some technical terms. Where they are introduced, such terms are marked with an asterisk (*).

Aside from the need for greater clarity in the conceptualization of voice, an additional impetus for the present work has been the success of recent titles on other major verbal categories. In recent years, Cambridge University Press has produced Bernard Comrie's *Aspect* (1976) and *Tense* (1985) and F. R. Palmer's *Mood and modality* (1986). Voice has lately been the only major verbal category for which there has been no up-to-date comprehensive treatment, making the present seem a propitious time for such a work. I never seriously considered submitting my project proposal to any publisher other than Cambridge University Press. I am indebted to the Cambridge University Press Syndicate for its acceptance of this work, which made that effort unnecessary.

And so to the pleasant task of thanksgiving. I wish to acknowledge my friends on the Cambridge University Press staff who have assisted in this project, headed initially by Penny Carter and subsequently by Marion Smith and Judith Ayling, for their expeditious and painstaking handling of the work, by which they have made me feel as supported and valued as any author could desire. I am grateful for the generosity of the anonymous reviewers who furnished a favorable evaluation of my proposal to the Cambridge University Press Syndicate, as well as to two

reviewers who subsequently broke anonymity to discuss the proposal with me in person, Arnold Zwicky and Bernard Comrie.

I should acknowledge, however, that the proposal was not the project's true beginning; it was about three years before the proposal stage that the work began. Since that time, numerous scholars have lent their assistance, many by commenting on my published and unpublished research related to voice or by furnishing copies of their own. While most of these individuals are acknowledged at some point in the main text, I should like to take this opportunity to particularly name and thank the following: B. J. Allen, P. K. Anderson, D. W. Arnott, Glenn Ayres, Joan Bresnan, William Cowan, Bill Croft, Amy Dahlstrom, Bill Davies, Donald Frantz, Emma Geniušienė, Ives Goddard, John Haiman, Heather Hardy, George Hewitt, Jane Hill, Eloise Jelinek, M. Dale Kinkade, Paul Kroskrity, Sir John Lyons, Steve Marlett, Anthony Mattina, Carol Mock, Doris Payne, David Perlmutter, Paul Riesman, Carol Rosen, Jerrold Sadock, Janine Scancarrelli, William Schmalstieg, George Sheets, Masayoshi Shibatani, Thom Smith-Stark, Bob Sprott, Yero Sylla, Laurence and Terry Thompson, and Bob Van Valin. I apologize for any omissions in this list; the number of individuals I have found willing to lend lesser or greater degrees of assistance has been gratifyingly large. Of course, when it comes to the results, I alone am responsible for any shortcomings.

During the last three years of this project, after it came under contract, logistical obstacles arose owing to constraints on time and resources. For instance, enrollments at the last two institutions where I have been employed have put limits on the time and energy available for research (I have been teaching over two hundred students per year). Also, the project has received sparse financial assistance, proposals for same having been turned down by, *inter alia*, the National Science Foundation. However, the work has benefited from research grants in the amounts of \$500 and \$1000 awarded respectively by California State University-Fullerton and Oakland University in 1989 and 1990. Both institutions also assisted by making personal computers available for use in my office, for which I wish to express thanks. In addition, I wish to acknowledge Susan Kroon, former Oakland University student, for proof-reading assistance.

Another and much valued source of support has been the Department of Linguistics at the University of Minnesota. Under the capable chairmanship of Dr Michael Kac, the department has routinely offered me

xvi *Preface*

the status of Honorary Fellow since 1986, thereby permitting me to access the collections of the University of Minnesota Libraries. The librarians and staff have also contributed to the completion of this work. Among them, I especially wish to thank Jane Riedel and her colleagues in the Interlibrary Loan Office at the University of Minnesota's Wilson Library for their incalculable assistance in locating requested materials, however arcane the source or sloppily scrawled the request.

I have embarked on this, the largest research project thus far of my career, with the objective of making a worthwhile contribution to my discipline. Time will tell if I have succeeded, but should I fail, it will not have been for want of cooperation from speakers of the languages represented in the present work, speakers who have contributed their time and assistance to make possible the numerous references cited in the main text below. Yet I have an ever higher regard for the languages themselves. One thing of which my experience as a linguist has absolutely convinced me is that language is more than a natural object.

Language is organic. As a linguist who works routinely with languages, I cannot imagine thinking about them in any other way. A language has structure, function and design. It arises, it has a lifespan, and ultimately – possibly leaving heirs – it disappears. Language has nothing if not patterning and logic, yet every language I have ever taken the trouble to become acquainted with has confirmed my conviction that a language also has personality, a way of going about its purposes. No longer can I begin to investigate a new language without expecting to find within it a wonderful and companionable spirit. I have met language speakers I did not like, but never a language.

At a time when many so-called departments of linguistics have more or less gone out of the business of teaching about languages, it becomes a cherished pleasure to encounter others who share an enthusiasm for them and a serious fondness for their study. Among such colleagues is one, Bernard Comrie, to whom I owe an obligation difficult to state in words. Professor Comrie has supported this project with his counsel and encouragement since its beginnings, serving as a content advisor to this work on behalf of Cambridge University Press. I can't imagine having carried out the project without the sustaining interest of Professor Comrie. His timely and well-stated comments and suggestions have steered the text out of cul-de-sacs and blind alleys again and again. Even before this work was conceived, he has for years been an esteemed friend and advisor to me.

Preface xvii

Nevertheless, Professor Comrie's contributions go beyond his assistance to individuals or individual projects, since he works actively with publishers and institutions on behalf of linguistics at large, benefiting directly or indirectly all who labor in our field. Of all the linguists of my acquaintance, I admire Bernard Comrie most. But it is for the service you perform on behalf of our discipline, Bernard, that I thank you most of all.

And for providing a nucleus of sanity, it goes without saying – last but foremost – I couldn't have managed without Madan Madhav Sathe.

Abbreviations

A	transitive subject
A voice	actor voice
ABL	ablative
ABS	absolutive
ACC	accusative
AI	animate intransitive
ANTI	antipassive
AT	Arizona Tewa
AUX	auxiliary
CAUSE	causative
D voice	directional voice
DAT	dative
DU	dual
EMPH	emphatic
ERG	ergative
F	focus
FEM	feminine
G voice	goal voice
GEN	genitive
I voice	instrumental voice
II	inanimate intransitive
INF	infinitive
INST	instrumental
ITR	intransitive
LOC	locative
MASC	masculine
NEUT	neuter
NOM	nominative
OBJ	object
OBL	oblique

List of abbreviations xix

OBV	obviative
OC	out-of-control
OPT	optative
P	transitive object
PL	plural
PROX	proximate
PTCPL	participle
R	Reflexive (or Reflexive-retaliative) extension
RN	relational noun
S	intransitive subject
SAP	speech act participant; first or second person
SG	singular
ST	Southern Tiwa
SUBJ	subject
T	topic
TA	transitive animate
TI	transitive inanimate
TR	transitive
VP	verb phrase