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The antipassive marking in Mocoví

Forms and functions

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This paper presents the two different antipassive markers (suffixes -*(a)ɢan* and -*(a)taɢan*) that can be observed in Mocoví, addressing both their forms and functions. Besides the morphosyntactic, semantic and pragmatic features that are synchronically involved in Mocoví antipassive constructions, the study considers the functional overlaps between these two antipassive markings and causative, aspectual and agentive nominal meanings. Based on these characteristics, it will be proposed that the primary functions of both suffixes are to highlight the predicate activity and to downgrade the object/patient participant and thereby, as a consequence, to focus on the participant that carries out this activity, that is, the subject/agent. As Mocoví is a non-ergative language, this paper also contributes to the typological discussion about the relation between antipassives and ergativity, confirming that the marked antipassive construction is not exclusive of ergative languages.

Keywords: antipassive, causative, syncretism, activity marker

1. Introduction[1]

The general goal of this paper is to contribute to the typological discussion about the existence of marked antipassives in languages others than ergative languages. We base our contribution on the antipassive of Mocoví, a language that has a split alignment in which the indexing system is nominative-accusative for speech act participants (SAPs), and tripartite for non-speech act participants (non-SAPs). In particular, our aims are to describe the antipassive constructions in Mocoví and

to propose an explanation concerning the relationships that can be observed in this language between antipassivization and causativization as well as between the antipassive and aspectual and agentive nominal meanings. In order to cover such objectives, we will focus on three main issues: (i) the morphosyntactic, semantic and pragmatic features that are synchronically involved in Mocoví antipassive constructions, (ii) the cross-linguistically uncommon syncretism between antipassivization and causativization present in this language and (iii) the functional overlap between antipassivization and agentive nominal meaning and the aspectual shifts triggered by antipassive verbal markers. The paper will propose that the antipassive constructions in Mocoví can be marked by two suffixes (*-(a)ɢan* and *-(a)taɢan*) whose functions correspond primarily to the highlighting of the predicate activity and thereby, as a consequence, to the focusing on the participant that carries out this activity, that is, the subject. This activity-centered function precisely helps us to understand the uncommon antipassive/causative syncretism observed in Mocoví, which is initially possible due to restrictions on the number of argument slots available for the Mocoví causative constructions.

This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 briefly presents the Mocoví language and the data used in this work. The theoretical framework on antipassives is introduced in Section 3. Section 4 is devoted to the main features of active clauses in Mocoví regarding case marking, verbal indexes alignment and word order. Section 5 deals with the morphosyntactic, semantic and pragmatic features involved in the Mocoví antipassives as well as with the relationships that antipassivization maintains with causativization, and aspectual and nominal meanings. This section also presents a brief discussion in order to find out a functional explanation to the syncretism between antipassive and causative described in the language. Finally, the conclusions seek to synthesize the main outcomes of the study.

2. Mocoví language and data

Mocoví is spoken in Argentina and is a member of the Guaycuruan family that also includes the Toba, Pilaga, Caduveo and Mbaya languages (Fabre 2006).[2] Mocoví corresponds to a linguistic continuum that goes from the Chaco to the Santa Fe provinces. According to Censabella (2009: 160), the number of people representing the Mocovian nation is nearly 16,000.

The greatest number of Mocoví speakers is located in the south of Chaco province. The most relevant works referring to southern Chaco Mocoví correspond to

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2. The Mbaya language is now extinct.

the grammars of Gualdieri (1998) and Grondona (1998). In Santa Fe, Mocovían people live in a territory that expands from north to south. Carrió (2009) has studied the main grammatical aspects of the Mocoví of Santa Fe.

For this paper, we are dealing with data that come from the Mocoví spoken in Colonia Aborigen, an indigenous settlement located in the center of Chaco province.[3] The data include both elicited and naturally-occurring data that were collected during several fieldworks carried out from 2011 to 2013.

3. Antipassive constructions

3.1 Definition and functions

An antipassive construction is commonly understood as the result of a valency reducing mechanism (Dixon & Aikhenvald 2000; Payne 1997), that is, a detransitivization process that converts a transitive construction into a derived intransitive construction in which the agent-like argument of the transitive construction (A argument) has become the single core argument of the intransitive (S argument), whereas the patient-like argument (P argument)[4] has been either incorporated, encoded as an oblique, or omitted (Creissels 2012). The term *antipassive* was coined by Silverstein (1972) to indicate that this construction is a mirror image of the passive: in the passive, the demoted/suppressed argument is A, in the antipassive, P. Thus, the function of the passive is the downgrading of A (Shibatani 1985), whereas in the antipassive the function corresponds to the downgrading of P.

Although some linguists have recognized the possibility of having morphologically unmarked antipassive constructions (e.g. Heath 1976; Givón [1984] 2001),[5]

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3. In the same place, the Toba language is spoken.

4. We follow here Comrie's (1989: 111) definitions of S, A and P. For an explanation of these terms, see Álvarez (this volume: footnote 5).

5. In these cases, the English constructions exemplified in (i.b) and (i.c) are considered antipassives despite their lack of an overt verbal marker because they cover the same functional domain as overtly marked antipassives. In (i.b), the downgrading of P is triggered by the use of the preposition *at,* which indicates that P is lowly affected. In (i.c), the omission of P triggers an antipassive meaning that highlights the habitual activity carried out by the single participant.

(i) English   (Payne 1997: 220)
   a. Transitive   b. Object demotion   c. Object omission
   *The hunter shot the deer   The hunter shot **at** the deer   The hunter shot*

The apparent controversy seems to be based on terminological misunderstanding: there are antipassive constructions that may, or may not (as in English), require special verbal morphology

we will consider in this paper only those constructions in which the demotion/ omission of the P/object is overtly marked since Mocoví presents overt antipassive markers. Based on this correlation between form and function, antipassive in Mocoví can be viewed as a type of "grammatical voice" (Klaiman 1991).

In order to illustrate the transitive/antipassive alternation, we present the pair of examples in (1) from the Eskimo-Aleut language Inuktitut. Example (1a) shows a transitive clause with A and P arguments. Example (1b) displays an antipassive clause in which both arguments are respectively encoded as an S (subject in the absolutive case) and as an oblique argument (with the comitative marker). Moreover, an antipassive marker is attached to the verb.

(1)   Inuktitut (Tallerman 2011:218)
    a.   Transitive
       arna-p   *niqi*   *niri-vaa*
       woman-ERG meat.ABS eat-3SG/3SG
       'The woman ate the meat.'

    b.   Antipassive
       arnaq   *niqi-**mik***   *niri-**NNig**-puq*
       woman.ABS meat-with eat-ANTIP-3SG
       'The woman ate some of the meat.'

The construction alternation in (1) shows the downgrading of P associated with the antipassive marking because this argument has been demoted from being the object in (1a) to being the oblique argument in (1b). In her typological study, Cooreman (1994) has shown that antipassives are typically used when a certain degree of difficulty to identify the P argument exists. This is a consequence of some semantic features such as indefiniteness, non-referentiality and plurality. All of these features are usually correlated and contribute to the low identifiability of P in a scalar way. From a discourse point of view, the antipassive construction occurs in contexts where the identifiability of P is unimportant for the development of the core discursive argument and is therefore used to express background information (Cooreman 1994:67–68). Thus, antipassives tend to demote or delete the P argument because it is unimportant to the discourse, indefinite, unknown or otherwise difficult to identify.

In (1b), however, the antipassive is related to another semantic feature commonly recognized for antipassive constructions, though it seems to be less common

(antipassive morphemes). Only in the former case we have to do with antipassive voice, in accordance with canonical understanding of the category of voice as a particular syntactic pattern regularly encoded by verbal morphology (Kulikov 2011), but antipassivization as syntactic phenomenon is undoubtedly present in both cases.

cross-linguistically (Cooreman 1994: 58): the low affectedness of P. Compared with the transitive in (1a), the postpositional marking on the object/P in (1b) implies that this argument is not fully affected (not all the meat has been eaten). The same situation occurs in Chamorro, an Austronesian language spoken in southeastern Asia and Oceania, where the object is marked in the antipassive by a locative preposition which is signaling its low affectedness, as shown in (2b).

(2) Chamorro (Cooreman 1988: 578)

    a. Transitive
un-patek   i   ga'lago
ERG.2SG-kick the dog
'You kicked the dog.'

    b. Antipassive
mamatek   *hao*   **gi**   *ga'lago*
ANTIP.kick 2SG.ABS LOC dog
'You kicked at the dog.'

Given that (2b) has a less affected participant, the event denoted in the antipassive construction no longer entails a change of state in the patient as it does in the transitive. The antipassive is then focused on the activity developed by the agent/subject rather than on its effect upon the patient. This activity-centered function of the antipassive is even more visible when the P argument is unexpressed as in the following examples from Tz'utujil, a Mayan language spoken in Guatemala. In this case, the P argument present in the transitive in (3a) has been suppressed in the corresponding antipassive (3b), resulting that the activity denoted by the verb is viewed as incomplete and non-punctual.

(3) Tz'utujil (Dayley 1990: 351 in Chamoreau 2008)

    a. Transitive
*ʃ-in-**aa**-tʃey*
COMPL-ABS.1SG-ERG.2SG-hit
'You hit me.'

    b. Antipassive
*ʃ-**at**-tʃey-**oon**-i*
COMPL-ABS.2SG-hit-ANTIP-INTR
'You were hitting.'

This activity-centered function of the antipassive obviously accounts for the high cross-linguistic correlation between the use of the antipassive and aspectual meanings such as iterative, durative, and habitual. Indeed, as Cooreman (1994: 57) points out, the antipassive is usually associated with aspectual changes because the

demotion/deletion of P implies that the antipassive focuses on an activity without a clear conclusion. This focusing on the activity explains why the antipassive is highly linked to aspectual meanings related to an imperfective reading. Therefore, cross-linguistically, the antipassive construction shows a high correlation with aspectual markers such as iterative, durative, habitual and so on, since all of them contribute to view the event as an activity extended over a period of time instead of one that signals the end point of its evolution. In fact, as Shibatani (2006) has recognized based on the assumption that voice phenomena represent different evolutionary phases of an action, antipassives concentrate on the development of an action instead of the salient effect of such action over the object participant.

As Creissels (2012: 5) has pointed out, the interference between the valency-changing function of antipassive markers and their aspectual function is not always restricted to transitive verbs since some languages have the ability to combine markers currently labeled 'antipassive' with intransitive verbs. In such cases, these markers have a purely aspectual function because the antipassive marking is no longer used for antipassivization but only for conveying aspectual meaning.

The aspectual shift associated with antipassive constructions can also be observed in the case of verbs that undergo a meaning change when they are antipassivized, implying an imperfective meaning. For instance, Cooreman (1994: 58) reports that in Quiché, a Mayan language spoken in Guatemala, the verb '*to wash*' changes to '*to wash clothes*' in the antipassive, and '*to drop*' shifts to '*to abort*' via antipassivization.

Although all the examples above are from ergative languages, it is important to point out that the marked antipassive constructions are not limited to this type of language. Even though some linguists have argued that the antipassivization is a typical valency change of ergative languages (Comrie 1978; Cooreman 1994; Dixon 1979, 1994), Polinsky (2005) has shown that many accusative languages also present marked antipassives and there is no principled correlation between ergativity and the antipassive marking. More recent studies have confirmed that the antipassive marking is also used in accusative languages (Janic 2013; Bostoen et al. 2015).

The strong relation between ergativity and the antipassive marking is perhaps because in ergative languages the detransitivization associated with the antipassive construction is clearly identifiable since the transitive/antipassive alternation typically involves a change in subject case marking from ergative to absolutive (see Examples (1) to (3)). This alternation is less visible in accusative languages where no formal change can be observed in the encoding of the subjects of intransitive and monotransitive predicates. Consider, for example, the antipassive construction in (4b) from an accusative language such as Nahuatl (Uto-Aztecan, Mexico). This example shows that Nahuatl uses the verbal prefix *tla-* for encoding the antipassive and the P argument of the transitive clause in (4a) is omitted in (4b). All of

these morphosyntactic changes do not impact in the A argument encoding which remains in both constructions expressed by the prefix *ni-*.

(4)   Nahuatl (Peralta Ramírez 2013)
   a.   Transitive
   ni-k-xiːn-t-ok   *hoːn   chogo-tziːn*
   1SG.NOM-3SG.ACC-shave-LIG-V.AUX   this   child-DIM
   'I am shaving this child.'

   b.   Antipassive
   baːk   ateː   ni-k-piya   *tegi-t*
   when   NEG   1SG.NOM-3SG.ACC-have   work-ABS[6]

   ni-ya   *ni-**tla**-xiːma*   *pan   gahli-meh*
   1SG.NOM-go   1SG.NOM-ANTIP-shave   PREP   house-PL
   'When I don't have work, I go shaving from house to house.'

Examples like (4) are relevant for substantiating how the antipassive works in Mocoví since the language presents a nominative-accusative alignment but only restricted to SAPs. As we will see below, Mocoví thus confirms that marked anti-passive constructions are not restricted to ergative languages.

   Before showing the antipassive constructions in Mocoví, let us present the main features of the active clause in this language.

4.   Main features of the active clause in Mocoví

The following subsections describe the main features of active clauses in Mocoví. They will be devoted to case marking, indexing alignment and word order. All of them are needed to capture the morphosyntactic consequences triggered by the antipassive in this language.

4.1   The nominal phrases and independent pronouns coding

Mocoví lacks case marking of core arguments expressed by nominal phrases or independent pronouns. Thus, the language follows a neutral alignment in this overt encoding property. Examples in (5a–b) illustrate the neutral alignment in nominal phrases in that they show all nominal arguments are identically treated despite

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6.   This ABSOLUTIVE gloss refers to a non-possessed noun instead of ABSOLUTIVE as a case marker.

their syntactic functions; that is, they have no overt marking for indicating their syntactic functions.

(5)   a.   ***so*   *yale*   *ɾa-sahmata-tak***
            CLF   man   3-cough-PROG
            'The man is coughing.'

      b.   ***so*   *yale*   *ya-kon-a*   *ji*   *le-kat***
            CLF   man   3-take-ALL   CLF   3POSS-knife
            'The man took the knife.'

As illustrated in examples above, Mocoví has nominal classifiers. They represent a closed category that expresses some semantic aspects of the modified noun[7] as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Mocoví nominal classifiers

Absence				
Absence		*(a)-ka*	'absent'
Presence	**Movement**	*(a)-so*	'going, far away'
		(a)-na	'coming, near'
	Position	*(a)-ɾa*	'standing, vertically extended'
		(a)-ji	'lying, horizontally extended'
		(a)-ñi	'sitting, non-extended

The importance of nominal classifiers is given by its implication in achieving nominal definiteness, something that turns out to be relevant to the occurrence of the antipassive in Mocoví (see §5.1.1).

As for the encoding of core arguments in sentences, independent pronouns are obligatorily required to encode P arguments, involving mostly SAPs, but are optionally used S and A arguments, regardless of their grammatical person, since they are obligatorily encoded on the verb.

Table 2 shows independent pronouns corresponding to first and second persons.

Table 2. Mocoví 1st and 2nd person pronouns

	SG				PL	
1st	*ayim ~ yim*	'I'	*qomiɾ*	'we'	*qomiawge*	'all of us'
2nd	*qamiɾ ~ qami*	'you'	*qamiɾi*	'you'	*qamiawge*	'all of you'

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7.   These grammatical units have received more than one name in Southern Mocoví grammars. Gualdieri (1998: 197) calls them 'classifiers' but Grondona (1998: 79) analyzes them as 'demonstratives'.

Table 3 displays the third person pronominal paradigm.

Table 3. Mocoví 3rd person pronouns

	SG		PL	
(a)-ka-maɢaɾe	'he (absent)'[8]	*(a)-ka-maɢaɾe-pi*	'they (absent)'	
(a)-so-maɢaɾe	'he (going, far away, absent)'	*(a)-so-maɢaɾe-pi*	'they (going, far away, absent)'	
(a)-na-maɢaɾe	'he (coming, near)'	*(a)-na-maɢaɾe-pi*	'they (coming, near)'	
(a)-ɾa-maɢaɾe	'he (standing, vertically extended)'	*(a)-ɾa-maɢaɾe-pi*	'they (standing, vertically extended)'	
(a)-ǰi-maɢaɾe	'he (lying, horizontally extended)'	*(a)-ǰi-maɢaɾe-pi*	'they (lying, horizontally extended)'	
(a)-ñi-maɢaɾe	'he (sitting, non-extended)'	*(a)-ñi-maɢaɾe-pi*	'they (sitting, non-extended)'	

Regarding oblique arguments, Mocoví can mark participants as LOCATIONS or as INSTRUMENTS using the prefix *ke-*. However, the use of this prefix seems to be optional as indicated in the examples below. Examples illustrating the use of *ke-* are given in (6a) and (7a) whereas its optionality is shown in (6b) and (7b).

(6) LOCATIVE *ke-*

    a.   *so   yale ya-lawaq-tak **ke**-ǰi   ʔoči*
         CLF man 3-shout-PROG OBL-CLF forest
         'The man is shouting out in the forest.'

    b.   *ɾa-maɢaɾe Ø-n-ta   na   no-ʔwenaɢa*
         CLF-3   3-live-DUR CLF INDF_POSS-field
         'The man lives in the field.'

(7) INSTRUMENT *ke-*

    a.   *yim so-poɢo-yaɢač-igi   so   peget **ke**-so qopaɢ*
         1SG 1-get.broken-CAUS-LOC CLF dish OBL-CL F stick
         'I broke the dish with the stick.'

    b.   *ayim so-poɢo-yaɢač-igI   so   peget loʔokaʃen so   qopaɢ*
         1SG 1-get.broken-CAUS-LOC CLF dish same   CLF stick
         'I broke the dish with the same stick.'

4.2   Verbal indexing

Mocoví has three sets of verbal indexes that are the main grammatical means to encode some core arguments. Set I and set II are used in the active clauses whereas

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8.   Female gender is encoded by the prefix *a-*, and the plural number by the suffix *-pi*.

set III employs verbs that cover the functional domain of the middle voice. Table 4 displays these verbal index paradigms.

Table 4. Mocoví verbal indexes

	Active				Middle	
	Set I		Set II		Set III	
	SG	**PL**	**SG**	**PL**	**SG**	**PL**
1st	*sV-*	*sV-…-VG*	*jV-*	*qaɾV-*	*ñV-*	*ñV-…-VG*
2nd	*-iɾ ~ -i*	*-i*	*ɾV-…-iɾ*	*ɾV-…-i*	*nV-…-iɾ*	*nV-…-i*
3rd	*yV-*		*yV-*		*nV-*	
	Ø-		*Ø-*			
	ɾV-		*ɾV-*			
	tV-		*nV-*			

The chart shows that the verbal indexation sets in active clauses are formally distinguished in the first and second person whereas in the third person the opposition is only maintained by the *t-/n-* contrast. Furthermore, core arguments involving the plural third person do not trigger any formal change on verbal indexes.

Synchronically, set I is the most extended in the language and is used to express S and A arguments. In contrast, set II is mostly restricted to intransitive verbs and to a few monotransitives. This set also verifies the S_P = P correspondence.

The verbal indexing pattern displayed in Figure 1 is the one predominantly used in Mocoví. This pattern states that Mocoví generally indexes S and A arguments rather than P arguments.[9] Consequently, we will typically find examples in which one of the core arguments is indexed and the other one appears as personal pronoun or as a nominal phrase.

<div align="center">

subject (S = A) > object (P)

</div>

Figure 1. Mocoví verbal indexing pattern

Regarding the verbal indexing alignment, Mocoví shows a pattern rather complex and typologically unusual due to the types of alignment that are combined. This language presents a split alignment motivated by the grammatical person (SAPs vs. non-SAPs). On the one hand, the first and second persons predominantly display

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9. Despite this fact, the P indexing occurs in the language only when it corresponds to SAP (1/2) and the A argument expresses a third person, i.e., 3(A)→1/2(P) (see Example (12)). However, the P indexing seems to be disregarded as speakers increasingly tend to index only the third person A argument instead of the SAP as a P argument in almost all verbs.

a nominative-accusative alignment. On the other hand, the third person exhibits a tripartite alignment (Juárez 2013).

The nominative-accusative alignment marking in first and second persons is presented in Figure 2.

1st	SG	PL	SG/PL		2nd	SG	PL	SG/PL
S =	sV-;	sV-...-V_G	*P = no indexed*		S =	$-ir$	$-i$	*P = no indexed*
A =	sV-;	sV-...-V_G			A =	$-ir$	$-i$	

Figure 2. SAP's Nominative-Accusative alignment

Nominative-accusative alignment in the singular first person is illustrated in (8). As shown in (8a) and in (8b), S and A arguments are marked by the prefix sV- whereas P is encoded by the independent pronoun *yim* (8c).

(8)   1st.SG: Nominative-Accusative
          S-V

   a.   *sa-nah-ni   ke-ɾa   qopaɢ*
         1-fall-DIR   OBL-CLF   tree
         'I fall down from the tree.'

          A-V

   b.   *se-ʔgenaɢa-ni   ñi   imek*
         1-demolish-DIR   CLF   house
         'I demolished the house.'

                                      P

   c.   *qamiɾ   maqa-iɾ-eni   yim*
         2SG   push-2-DIR   1SG
         'You pushed me.'

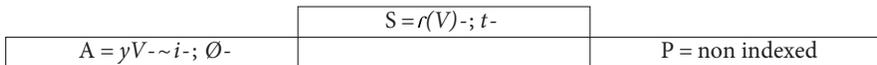Figure 3 illustrates how the tripartite alignment is recognized in the third person.

A = yV-~i-; $\emptyset$-	S = $ɾ(V)$-; t-	P = non indexed

Figure 3. Non-SAP's tripartite alignment

The tripartite alignment is illustrated in (9) in which the S argument is indexed through the prefix $ɾ$- (9a), the A argument is encoded by the prefix i- (9b), and P is expressed by the nominal phrase *so nogotoki* 'child', as in (9c).

(9)   3rd: Tripartite

                                S-V

  a.   *so-maɢaɾe ɾ-oʔo-tak*
      CLF-3   3-be.angry-PROG
      'He is getting angry.'

                              A-V

  b.   *so-maɢaɾe yim i-waɢan*
      CLF-3   1SG 3-hit
      'He hit me.'

                      P

  c.   *ayim se-laɾ   so   nogot-oki*
      1SG   1-order CLF young-DIM.M

      i-daːnake   waɢayaq
      3-buscar.DES water
      'I ordered the child to look for water.'

4.3   Word order

In Mocoví, the word order of main active clauses could vary depending on pragmatic-discourse reasons. However, it is possible to observe some common word order patterns. These word orders will be useful to establish that the antipassive does not affect the clause syntax in that respect.

On the one hand, when non-SAPs are involved, this language follows an SV order in intransitive clauses, as shown in (10a), and an SVO order in monotransitive clauses, as shown in (10b).

(10)   S   V

  a.   *so   qaɾ-qaya   Ø-čiqa-ge   villa angela ɾa-piči-tak*
      CLF 1PL.POSS-brother 3-came-ALL Villa Ángela 3-visit-PROG
      'Our brother comes from Villa Ángela to visit.'

  b.   S   V   O

      so   yale y-awane-ta so   šipwa
      CLF man 3-see-DUR CLF horse
      'The man saw the horse.'

On the other hand, a variation in the word order is observed when the O argument corresponds to an SAP. In this case, the language displays an SOV order, as illustrated in (11a–b).

(11) a. **S   O   V**
      yim qamiɾ se-čaq
      1sɢ 2sɢ   1-cut
      'I cut you.'

    b. **S   O   V**
      ɉi-maɢaɾe yim i-waɢan
      ᴄʟꜰ-3   1sɢ 3-hit
      'He hit me.'

Finally, an OVS word order could verify a mixed scenario in which S corresponds to a non-SAP and O refers to an SAP, as in (12).

(12) **O   V   S**
      qamiɾ ɾ-aʔqa-iɾ-eni   so   pyoq
      2sɢ   2-bite-2-ᴅɪʀ ᴄʟꜰ dog
      'The dog bit you.'

5. The Mocoví antipassive

In the following subsections, we will show how the antipassive clauses are constructed in Mocoví, considering the morphosyntactic aspects involved in this kind of construction as well as the semantic and pragmatic features that motivate their uses. We will propose that Mocoví has two antipassive markers (suffixes *-(a)ɢan* and *-(a)taɢan*), which present some interesting differences. Among these differences, we will see that the P argument in antipassive constructions may be deleted with both antipassive markers but demoted, that is, expressed under specific conditions, with only one of these markers. Taking into account the former verbal marker, we will analyze the relationships between antipassive and causative constructions. Regarding the latter, we will address the connection between the antipassive and the agentive nominal meaning. Aspectual changes involved in both types of antipassive marking will also be discussed.

5.1   The *-(a)ɢan* marker

First, we describe antipassive clauses in which the suffix *-(a)ɢan* is involved; then we introduce examples where the same marker is used for causative clauses, illustrating a cross-linguistically uncommon syncretism between antipassive and causative.

5.1.1   *-(a)ɢan as an antipassive marker*

An antipassive clause in Mocoví can be expressed as in (13b).

(13) a.   Transitive
    so   pyoq   *i-ta-tak*   so   yale
    CLF   dog   3-sniff-PROG   CLF   man
    'The dog is sniffing the man.'

   b.   Antipassive
    so   pyoq   ɾe-ta-**ɢan**
    CLF   dog   3-sniff-ANTIP
    'The dog sniffs.'

The comparison between the transitive clause in (13a) and the corresponding antipassive construction in (13b) identifies three important features of the antipassivization process in Mocoví.

i.   The antipassive is marked by the suffix *-(a)ɢan* that appears attached to the transitive verb *-ta-* 'to sniff' in (13b).[10]
ii.   The antipassivization implies a valency reducing operation, which is noted in (13b) considering the following two pieces of evidence:
   –   The number of arguments has been moved from two to one, because the P argument of the transitive clause has been deleted in the antipassive.
   –   The verbal index has changed from *i-* (13a) to *ɾ-* (13b), which indicates that the subject has shifted from the A argument to the S argument (see Figure 3 above).
iii.   Semantically, because the P argument is not present in (13b), the antipassive construction focuses on the action developed by the subject rather than on its effect on a supposed P. The subject agentivity is then conceived without its causing effect, and the event is described as non-punctual, associated with a habitual meaning. Note that the aspectual shift involved in the antipassive construction is accompanied by the absence of the progressive marker *-tak* present in (13a).

Not all instances of antipassive *-(a)ɢan* constructions in Mocoví are associated with the deletion of P. Indeed, it is possible to have antipassive constructions in which P is expressed. In these cases the encoding of the P argument differs from its encoding in the prototypical transitive clause as shown in (14). In (14b) and (14c), we recognize the same antipassive marker used in (13b). However, compared to the transitive construction exemplified in (14a) and to the antipassive exemplified in (13b), the patient argument is still present in these antipassive constructions but it

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10.   If the verbal root ends in consonant, the */a/* epenthetic vowel is required.

is encoded without any nominal classifier. This is contrary to what happens in (14a) where the P argument is introduced by the nominal classifier *so*.

(14) a. Transitive
      *so   yale **i**-čaqa-tak   **so**   l-aʔat*
      CLF man 3-cut-PROG CLF 3POSS-meat
      'The man is cutting his meat.'

   b. Antipassive
      *so   yale   ɾe-čaq-**soɢon**[11] leña   ke-ǰi   la-ʔa*
      CLF home 3-cut-ANTIP   firewood OBL-CLF 3POSS-home
      'The man cut firewood for his house.'

   c. Antipassive
      *so-maɢaɾe-pi ɾ-owaɢan-**aɢan** n-qopaɢ*
      CLF-3-PL   3-hit-ANTIP   INDF_POSS-stick
      'They cut firewood.'

Even though the antipassive constructions exemplified in (14b) and (14c) still have the presence of the P argument, these constructions marked by the antipassive suffix *-(a)ɢan* still imply a detransitivization because the verbal index used in the antipassive construction corresponds again to the S argument, not to the A argument. As previously shown in Figure 3, the prefix *ɾ(V)-* corresponds to the third person index for S.

Semantically, the absence of the nominal classifier in the encoding of the P argument exemplified in (14b) and (14c) is associated with the low definiteness of this argument, showing that the antipassive correlates here with a low degree of P individuation. The meaning of P is then non-specific or generic. Indeed, the nouns referring to P in the antipassive constructions in (14b) and (16c) are used as mass nouns and therefore denote an uncountable entity. This feature clearly indicates the low identifiability of P. As in the case of the antipassive construction with a deleted P, the antipassive predicate with a lowly individuated P contributes again to emphasize the activity of the event rather than its effects.

As pointed out in cross-linguistic studies on antipassives, the antipassive marking can also frequently appear with plural P arguments, another way for expressing a less identifiable argument (Cooreman 1994; Polinsky 2005, among others). This possibility also exists in Mocoví, as illustrated in (15b). Compared to the transitive construction in (15a), the antipassive in (15b) exhibits the same P argument with

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11. Gualdieri (1998: 72), who studied southern Chaco Mocoví, recognizes that the epenthetic syllable *so* is inserted in order to avoid the sequence of two uvular consonants. Furthermore, this example shows that the addition of such syllable triggers the assimilation of the vowel *a* in the antipassive suffix.

the same nominal classifier but in a plural form. The plural noun marked by the suffix *-ɾ* is combined here with the collective suffix *-(i)pi* which refers to a group of things conforming a unit constituting a whole.[12] Again, the plurality of P is clearly related with low individuation. However, in this example the low individuation could be associated with another semantic feature commonly attributed to antipassive constructions: a low degree of P affectedness. Indeed, besides the antipassive marker (suffix *-(a)ɢan*), the verb is also marked by the locative suffix *-(i)gi*. This locative marker could indicate that the P argument is less affected by the verb action. Recall that antipassives in Chamorro, illustrated in (2b), are partially constructed with a locative marker used to encode a downgraded argument, implying low affectedness.[13]

(15)   a.   Transitive
        qomawge sa-kon-aɢa so qopaɢ
        1PL   1-take-PL   CLF stick
        'All of us took the stick.'

       b.   Antipassive
        *qomawge sa-kon-**aɢan**-aɢa-**gi** so qopaɢa-ɾ-i**pi***
        1PL   1-take-ANTIP-PL-LOC CLF stick-PL-COL
        'All of us took sticks.' / 'All of us took at sticks.'

These examples also show that when the subject argument corresponds to an SAP, it is not possible to observe a formal change in the verbal indexes since SAPs follow a nominative-accusative alignment in Mocoví, and thus S and A arguments are here encoded by the same verbal index.

   The function of the low affectedness of P associated with the presence of the locative suffix *-igi* could also be supported by the fact that some instances of the Mocoví antipassive construction seem to present an individuated P argument. Indeed, Mocoví is a language that allows the antipassivization process with highly topical P arguments such as first and second persons, presumably the highest on the scale of individuation. However, it appears that low individuation is still present since these P arguments have to be plural in antipassives. As observed in (16b), the P argument is expressed by a first plural person (the independent pronoun *qomiɾ),* and the plural number is also encoded in the verbal structure by the suffix *-lo.* Compared to the transitive construction in (16a), the antipassive construction is marked by the antipassive suffix *-(a)ɢan* and the locative suffix *-igi*. The verbal

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12. *-(i)pi* can occur suffixed either directly to the noun or before the plural suffix.

13. The same can be said for the English object demotion construction exemplified in the footnote 4, which is functionally similar to an antipassive.

index has changed from *i-* to *ɾ-*, indicating that the antipassive derived construction is intransitive as a result of the valency reducing operation.

(16) a. Transitive
   *so-maɢaɾe yim **i**-waɢan*
   CLF-3   1SG 3-hit
   'He hit me.'

   b. Antipassive
   qomiɾ** **ɾ**-owaɢan-**aɢan-igi-lo
   1PL   3-hit-ANTIP-LOC-PL.P
   '(He) hit us.' / '(He) hit at us.'

Again, it is possible to propose that the interpretation of the low affectedness of P is related to the use of the locative suffix *-igi*. The meaning of a lowly affected P argument may also be supported by the fact that in (16b) a singular agent argument is acting upon a plural patient and it is therefore hardly conceivable that each of these patients was fully affected by a single participant.

The examples in (17) illustrate again the possible overlap between the two major semantic features of the P argument associated with antipassive constructions in Mocoví: the low individuation of P given by its plurality and the low affectedness of P encoded by the locative suffix *-igi* combined with the antipassive marker. As in (15), the valency reducing operation involved in the antipassivization illustrated in (17b) is not visible in the verbal indexes since the constructions involve an SAP as subject, following a nominative-accusative alignment.

(17) a. Transitive
   *yim qamiɾ **s**-owaɢan*
   1SG 2SG   1-hit
   'I hit you.'

   b. Antipassive
   qamiɾ-i** **s**-owaɢan-**aɢan-igi-lo
   2-PL   1-hit-ANTIP-LOC-PL.P
   'I hit you(PL).' / 'I hit at you(PL).'

Despite the fact that the locative suffix might be associated with a low degree of P affectedness, the plurality of this argument is always present. This situation might indicate that the most prevalent semantic property of the P argument in the Mocoví antipassive marked by *-(a)ɢan* corresponds to the low individuation of P (note again that in (17b) a singular argument is acting upon a plural argument).

In sum, we have seen that the suffix *-(a)ɢan* serves to mark an antipassive construction in which the P argument has been deleted or encoded by different

structural means, indicating its discourse irrelevance (unexpressed Ps) or its low individuation (Ps with no classifier or plural Ps). When the antipassive construction has a plural P argument, the antipassive suffix *-(a)ɢan* may be followed by the locative suffix *-igi* that seems to encode the low affectedness of P, showing then an overlap with the feature of the low individuation of P. In all cases, the antipassive construction suffixed by *-(a)ɢan* serves to highlight the activity denoted by the verb and performed by the single active participant.

5.1.2   *The -(a)ɢan antipassive-causative syncretism*
Another use of the *-(a)ɢan* marking exists in Mocoví which corresponds to a valency increasing operation, namely, causativization. As illustrated in (18), the suffix *-(a)ɢan* presents an interesting syncretism between antipassive and causative constructions.[14] Examples in (18) show a contrast between an intransitive/inchoative clause in (18a) and a transitive/causative clause in (18b), which corresponds to the causative alternation, according to Haspelmath (1993).[15]

Compared to the intransitive/inchoative clause in (18a), the direct[16] causative clause (Shibatani & Pardeshi 2002) exemplified in (18b) is marked by the suffix *-(a)ɢan* that allows the introduction of a new participant, the causer-agent, as the subject. The valency increasing operation is also reflected by the change in the verbal indexes attached to the verbs in (18a) and (18b). The third person single argument in the first clause is encoded by the prefix *ɾ-* but the causer, in the second one, is indexed by the prefix *y-* as the most prototypical agent argument of monotransitive clauses, as illustrated above in (9b) (see also Figure 3).

(18)   a.   Intransitive (Gualdieri 1998: 263)
     ɾ-eda   na   l-asote
     3-move CLF 3POSS-branch
     'The branch moves.'

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14. In her southern Chaco Mocoví grammar, Gualdieri (1998) briefly recognizes that the verbal marker *-ɢan* is used to indicate similar functions to antipassive and causative as well, but she does not propose an explanation for this syncretism. More recently, Carrió (2015) also mentions the existence of this syncretism in Mocoví but offers no explanation either.

15. In the causative alternation, the inchoative verb is basic and the causative verb is derived, while in the anticausative alternation, the causative verb is basic and the inchoative verb is derived. Both are cases of directed inchoative/causative alternations (Haspelmath 1993).

16. Shibatani and Pardeshi (2002) establish a distinction between direct vs. indirect causation in terms of two basic situations in which direct causation is defined as a situation involving an agentive causer and a patientive causee, while indirect causation corresponds to a situation where both the causer and the causee are agentive participants.

    b.   Causative *-(a)ɢan*
        *y-ida-**ɢan**   na   l-asote*
        3-move-CAUS CLF 3POSS-branch
        '(He/she) moves the branch.'

Syntactically, both (antipassive and causative) uses of the verbal marker *-(a)ɢan* are contradictory because as previously mentioned, the antipassivization is considered as a valency reducing operation whereas the causativization corresponds to a valency increasing operation.

    The contrast between a transitive clause and the *-(a)ɢan* causative clause is shown in (19), but in this case we deal with another type of causative clause, namely an indirect causative (Shibatani & Pardeshi 2002). The transitive clause in (19a) has a first person agent-subject whereas the transitive clause in (19b) has a third person agent-subject. The causative construction in (19c) combines both grammatical persons but in this case, the first person is the causer-subject (the instigator of eating) and the third person is the causee-object (the agent of eating).

(19) a.   Transitive
         (ayim) se-ke-tak   n-lolegse
         1SG   1-eat-PROG INDF_POSS-fried.bread
         'I am eating a fried bread.'

      b.   *so   pioɢ i-aʔik l-aʔat*   (Gualdieri 1998:221)
         CLF dog 3-eat 3POS-meat
         'The dog eats the meat.'

      c.   Causative *-(a)ɢan*
         *ayim si-ki-**yaɢan***[17] *so   pyoɢ*
         1SG   1-eat-CAUS   CLF dog
         'I feed the dog.' / 'I make the dog eat.'

It is worth noting that the number of arguments seems to be restricted when *-(a)ɢan* is used as an indirect causative marker. Indeed, in the indirect causative construction exemplified in (19c), the real patient of eating (i.e. the direct object of the original transitive verb) cannot be expressed, suggesting that the base construction has to be in fact an active intransitive construction. This is confirmed by the construction in (20), since the only possibility to causativize a highly transitive verb (like *alawat* 'kill') is to firstly detransitivize this verb via antipassivization in order to accept the causativization process. The first *-(a)ɢan* in (20) is then an antipassive marker that de-transitivizes the transitive verb, and the second *-(a)ɢan* is a causative

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17. According to Gualdieri (1998:71), the glide /y/ is inserted in some contexts in order to form the CV syllable.

marker that re-transitivizes the verb, in order to obtain an indirect causation. This double suffixation, and particularly the first antipassive suffixation, logically cancels the possibility to express the real patient (*the killed person*) as a third argument.

(20)   *ǰ-alawat-aɢan-aɢan*   (Gualdieri 1995: 266)
        1-kill-ANTIP-CAUS
        'He/she makes me kill'

This kind of constraints on the number of core NP arguments allowed per causative sentences has been reported for some languages (Song 1996). This overall mechanism that has been named by Song (1996) a "NP density control", is used by languages to keep the number of core NP arguments in the causative sentence from exceeding the maximum number of core arguments permitted in the ordinary noncausative (transitive) sentence. So, in languages like Mocoví, transitive verbs cannot be morphologically causativized because the number of core NPs allowed per simplex sentence is two.

This kind of restriction thus implies that *-(a)ɢan* causativization seems to be associated not only with agent introduction, but also with patient demotion. Indeed, besides the cases of the indirect causative exemplified above, we can observe that the demotion of the patientive participant is also present in the direct causativization of the inactive intransitive verb as exemplified in (18), because the patientive subject in (18a) is demoted to the object position in (18b). This particular feature is shared with the antipassive use of *-(a)ɢan* since the patient is demoted or eliminated in the *-(a)ɢan* antipassive, and also in both direct and indirect causatives in which the patientive participant is demoted and eliminated, respectively. Considering the differences between the antipassive and the causative uses of *-(a)ɢan*, we can observe that this polysemy pattern shows verb sensitivity insofar as the causative use is found with inactive and active intransitive verbs and the antipassive is found with transitive verbs.

Although the primary function of causativization is to introduce an additional participant as a causer-subject and the primary function of antipassivization is to downgrade the patient-object, the syncretism observed in Mocoví could indicate that both functions are associated with a more general function: the highlighting of the activity carried out by the agentive subject. Indeed, such different uses (antipassive, direct and indirect causatives) of *-(a)ɢan* seem to share this function. Additionally, all valency-changing uses of *-(a)ɢan* are also associated with the non-topicality of the patient. We will come back to this point later (cf. 5.3); for now, it is important to keep in mind this brief given explanation. To move on with the description of Mocoví antipassive, we present the other antipassive marker used in this language.

5.2   The -*(a)taɢan* marker

Another antipassive marker in Mocoví is the suffix -*(a)taɢan*. In contrast with the suffix -*(a)ɢan,* which has an extended occurrence in Mocoví, the antipassive marker -*(a)taɢan* appears to be reduced to only a few Mocoví verbs. Another interesting difference between both antipassive markers is that the antipassive construction marked by -*(a)taɢan* does not present the possibility to express P because P is always deleted in the derived -*(a)taɢan* antipassive construction.

5.2.1   -*(a)tagan as an antipassive marker*
Examples of antipassives marked by -*(a)taɢan* are given in (21c) and (21d).

(21)   a.   Transitive
            ayim ñ-ataɾen   so   ɾa-lola-ɢa-y-k
            1SG   1MID-cure   CLF   3-be.sick-NMLZ-ATTR-M
            'I cured the sick person.'

       b.   Transitive
            *ayim s-ataɾen   so   ɾa-lola-ɢa-y-k
              1SG   1-cure   CLF   3-be.sick-NMLZ-ATTR-M
            'I cured the sick person.'

       c.   Antipassive
            *ayim s-ataɾen-**ataɢan**-tak*
            1SG   1-cure-ANTIP-PROG
            'I am curing.'

       d.   Antipassive
            *ayim s-ataɾen-**ataɢan***
            1SG   1-cure-ANTIP
            'I am a doctor.' (Lit: 'I cure.')

Several comments can be made about the examples in (21):

–   In (21c) and (21d), the antipassivization is marked by the suffix -*ataɢan.*
–   The form *ñataɾen* 'I cure' in (21a) is used in a transitive way with verbal indexes of set III (cf. Table 4) instead of the most frequent set I indexes. This incompatibility with indexes of set I is confirmed by the ungrammaticality of (21b).[18]

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18. As stated above, verbal indexes of set III are usually employed with predicates that cover the functional domain of the middle voice. Probably, the use of such middle verbal indexes responds in (20a) to the fact that the cure of somebody within the shamanistic tradition is seen as involving the affectedness of the agent and the patient as well.

- The use of the index *ñ-* for encoding the first person in (21a) allows to observe the detransitivization process associated with the antipassive, since such person is encoded by the prefix *s-* in the antipassive clauses as in (21c) and (21d). Recall that the prefix *s-* corresponds to the S arguments in active (in)transitive clauses (S=A correspondence) (cf. Figure 2).
- The valency operation is also supported by the absence of the P argument in these antipassive constructions.
- As in the antipassive clause of (13b), due to the absence of the P argument the antipassive version focuses on the activity of curing, contrary to the transitive counterpart in (21a) that focuses on the effect of curing. Interestingly, different from what we saw with the antipassive marker *-(a)ɢan* (see Examples (13) and (14))*,* the antipassive suffix *-ataɢan* is combined in (21c) with the progressive marker *-tak*, conveying the meaning of an activity in progress at the moment of speech. The contrast between (21c) and (21d), in which the progressive marker is absent, shows that the antipassive marker *-ataɢan* in (21d) implies the meaning of a habitual activity that is interpreted here as a habit, as a job.

5.2.2 *The -(a)taɢan marker and the overlap with agentive nominal meaning and aspect*

The antipassive suffixed by *-ataɢan* in (21d) evokes an agentive nominal meaning because the activity denoted by the antipassivized verb is viewed as habitual and stable over time like nominal meanings (Givón 2001: 51). As seen above, the antipassivization via *-(a)taɢan* suffixation serves to highlight this activity by eliminating the P/object argument. The single remaining argument is then conceived as an agent that carries out its activity continuously, atelically. In other words, we have an agent that performs an activity in an aspectually imperfective way – repeatedly, habitually, duratively. This situation can be expressed by an agent noun, like doctor in the English translation of (21d), since this kind of noun serves to identify a person's occupation or profession, an activity that one usually performs in a durative and habitual way. Indeed, an agent noun denotes an agent in terms of the activity that he/she is habitually carrying out. Since the temporal stability of nouns means that the denoted nominal property does not change or changes little over time, the defining activity of the agent noun is carried out repeatedly over time.[19] Therefore, an agentive nominal interpretation associated with a profession or an occupation fits well with the antipassive marking, showing that the antipassivization with *-(a)taɢan* also presents an overlap with the agentive nominal domain. This overlap is based on the fact that the agentive nominal time-stability and the aspectual

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19. '*He is a singer*' is thus equivalent to '*He usually sings*'; '*He is a smoker*' is equivalent to '*He usually smokes*'.

imperfectivity associated with the antipassivization can both serve to highlight the activity habitually carried out by the subject. Both meanings thus can be expressed via the antipassive marker.

In terms of aspectual meaning, we can observe again that the antipassive constructions in (21c) and (21d) describe an activity without a perceptible onset or conclusion, thus presenting a high correlation with aspect since the event or state-of-affairs denoted by the verb is described as incomplete or non-punctual. Consequently, the meaning shifts associated with the antipassive marking imply iterative, habitual or durative meanings. These examples explain why the *-(a)taɢan* antipassive seems to have a high correlation with the progressive aspect marker *-tak,* which is a cross-linguistically typical phenomenon for antipassives, as stated before in §3. Based on these aspectual meanings, it could be possible to analyze the suffix *-(a)taɢan* as the result of the grammaticalization process of the durative suffix *-ta* and the activity suffix *-(a)ɢan* (Examples (6b) and (10b) illustrate *-ta*). Due to the occurrence of both grammatical components, it is comprehensible that such antipassive marker changes the aspectual meaning, highlighting the durativity of an activity.

Some predicates suffixed by the antipassive marker *-(a)taɢan* can even reflect an aspectual change in terms of Aktionsart (Vendler 1967). For example, it is possible to observe in Mocoví how a verb changes from a state to an activity when *-(a)taɢan* is used. The example in (22a) shows that the predicate of cognitive state *yaʔden* 'he knows' changes to a cognitive activity when the antipassive suffix *-(a)taɢan* is combined to the same verbal root *ɾaʔdenataɢantak* 'he is thinking' in (22b). Note again the change of verbal indexes that indicates a valency reducing operation. This meaning shift undergone by the verb when it is antipassivized resembles the examples from Quiché (see above) and other languages as well (e.g., Chamorro, Warrungu, Jacaltec, among others), in which the meaning shift implies duration, iteration, or some similar change towards imperfective aspect of the predicate (Cooreman 1994: 58).

(22)   a.   Transitive
       so   *maɢayale* *ya-ʔden* *la-qaːt-qa*   *na*   *moqoit*
       CLF man   3-know   3POSS-talk-NMLZ CLF Mocoví
       'The man knows the Mocoví language.'

     b.   Antipassive
       ɾa   *maɢayale* *ɾa-ʔden-**ataɢan**-tak*
       CLF man   3-know-ANTIP-PROG
       'The man is thinking.'

The aspectual change involved in (22) clearly demonstrates that the suffix -*(a)taɢan* is associated with dynamicity and durativity since the Aktionsart difference between STATES and ACTIVITIES lies exactly in both features (Vendler 1967) that are absent from STATES but are present in ACTIVITIES.

The correlation between antipassive and aspect is even clearer in some examples in which the antipassive function has been relegated in favor of an exclusively aspectual function. Indeed, the aspectual function argued for the antipassive marker -*(a)taɢan* is even found with intransitive predicates. This situation is similar to what has been recognized in other languages with antipassive marking (see Creissels 2012: 5).[20] Mocoví thus has the qualities of these languages in which an antipassive marker can be combined to intransitive predicates only as an aspectual marker as shown in (23a).

(23) a. Intransitive
          *kristian ɾ-owen-**ataɢan**-tak   ke-ɾa   n-campo*
          Cristian 3-work-ANTIP-PROG OBL-CLF INDF_POSS-field
          'Cristian is working in the field.'

      b. Transitive
          *y-owen ɾa   n-oʔwenaɢa
          3-work   CLF INDF_POSS-field
          'He works in the field.'

Formally, the example in (23a) shows that the intransitive clause is identical to antipassives because it takes the prefix ɾ- for encoding the third person agent and the suffix -*(a)taɢan* marks the predicate as well. Moreover, there is no P argument and the progressive aspect marker -*tak* is used, two features commonly present in the antipassives marked by -*(a)taɢan* (see Examples (21c) and (22b)). However, it is difficult to support that the suffix -*(a)taɢan* functions here as an antipassive marker since the same predicate could not be used in a transitive form, as shown in (23b). In (23a), the use of -*(a)taɢan* is thus not accompanied by a valency decreasing. Its function appears to be reduced to an aspectual meaning that relies on the durativity of the activity verb meaning.

5.3   Discussion

At this point, we have shown how the Mocoví antipassive clause is expressed and the morphosyntactic and semantic correlations associated with this type of construction. Now, it is time to come back to the antipassive/causative syncretism illustrated

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20. This syncretism between antipassive and aspectual markers is cross-linguistically well attested (see Spreng 2010).

by the suffix -*aGan* in Mocoví. Why does the language use the same verbal marker for expressing two opposite valency-changing processes – antipassive and causative? First of all, this syncretism seems to be possible because Mocoví imposes strict restrictions on the number of core arguments which can be accommodated by the causativized verb.[21] Indeed, as mentioned above, Mocoví does not allow the causativization of transitive verbs because the maximum number of core arguments permitted in causative sentences is two. Yet why would Mocoví have extended causatives to antipassives? Even though a deep understanding of this syncretism has to come from a diachronic point of view, we can nonetheless set out a synchronic functional explanation as a starting point.

Based on the data shown in the Section 5.1, we propose that the marker -*(a)Gan* can be viewed as an activity marker that serves to highlight both the activity expressed by the base verb and the agentive subject participant that is responsible for this activity, thus implying that the derived construction is also associated with the non-topicality of the patient. Bearing this general function in mind, the antipassive/causative syncretism in Mocoví becomes logically clear even though both types of clauses are opposite in terms of valency operations.

As mentioned in 5.1.2, the highlighting of the activity carried out by the agentive subject along with the implied non-topicality of the patient is the semantic function shared by the three uses of -*(a)Gan* as an antipassive marker as well as a direct and an indirect causative marker. However, although these constructions share this same functional motivation, this activity-centered function is achieved by two different means.

On the one hand, the antipassive derivation in Mocoví highlights the activity carried out by the subject as a consequence of the deletion or the downgrading of the P/object in the transitive base construction. Thus, the result is an intransitive clause in which the event is unbounded and can even be interpreted as a habit or a profession, depending on the base verb. On the other hand, the causative construction shares the same functional motivation as the antipassive because the causative construction also highlights the activity carried out by the agentive subject. Yet in this case, the highlighted activity is obtained via the introduction of a new subject, distinct from the subject present in the intransitive base construction. This additional participant is then a new active participant that functions as a subject-causer within the derived construction. Consequently, the subject of the base construction

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21. This same condition is present in the cases of applicative/antipassive syncretism studied by Malchukov (this volume). The NP density control (Song 1996) could thus be a prerequisite for cases of voice ambivalence implying two opposite valency-changing operations. More studies are obviously needed to validate this hypothesis.

is converted into the object of the derived causative construction that has become transitive.

The two different interpretations, i.e., antipassive or causative, associated with the suffix *-(a)ɢan*, depend thus on the base construction.

– If the base construction is intransitive, the *-(a)ɢan* suffixation corresponds to a causativization process, a valency increasing operation. In this case, the high-lighting of the activity carried out by the subject is triggered by the introduction of a new active participant as the subject of the derived construction. This new subject is then interpreted as the causer of the happening of the intransitive base event, and the derived construction as a whole highlights the activity carried out by this new subject. Hence, the subject of the base construction is converted into the object of the derived causative construction, increasing the transitivity of the derived construction that is also observable in the change of the subject indexing from S to A. The resulting construction is a direct causative if the subject of the intransitive base construction is patientive; it is an indirect causative if the subject of the intransitive base construction is agentive.
– If the base construction is transitive, the NP density control (Song 1996) exist-ing in Mocoví blocks the possibility to add a new participant, and the *-(a)ɢan* suffixation then corresponds to an antipassivization process, a valency decreas-ing operation. The highlighting of the activity is then given by the suppression/ demotion of the P argument, which consequently triggers the change of the subject indexing from A to S.

This antipassive/causative syncretism would thus indicate that the patient-deletion/ downgrading and the agent introduction can be functionally correlated, since they can be viewed as two different means associated with the highlighting of the activity performed by the subject. Indeed, in all cases, the derived construction marked by *-(a)ɢan* (antipassive, direct and indirect causatives) presents an agentive subject that carries out an activity.

6. Conclusions

In this paper, we confirm that the marked antipassive construction is not exclusive of ergative languages since it is clearly found in Mocoví, a non-ergative language. We have also presented the two different antipassive constructions that can be observed in Mocoví, addressing both their forms and functions.

We have shown that the antipassive clauses using the verbal marker *-(a)ɢan* are related to three main semantic/pragmatic features of P arguments: (i) the irrel-evance of these arguments when they are not expressed in the derived antipassives,

(ii) the low individuation recognized by the P encoding as plural objects, including collective marking, or as nominal objects with no classifier, and (iii) the low affectedness of P given by the plurality of nominal or pronominal objects and by the presence of the locative suffix *-igi* with the antipassivized verb. Interestingly, we have further seen that Mocoví also uses the same verbal marker *-(a)ɢan* to encode causative clauses.

This antipassive/causative syncretism is possible, first of all, because of the restrictions on the number of core arguments slots available for causative constructions in Mocoví, and, second, because of the activity-centered function and the non-topicality of the patient shared by both uses. Indeed, looking for an integrated synchronic explanation for both uses of *-(a)ɢan*, it has been proposed that the main function of this marker is to highlight both the activity expressed by the verb and the agentive subject participant that is responsible for this activity, and as a consequence, to indicate also the non-topicality of the patient. This activity-centered function would explain the antipassive/causative syncretism observed in Mocoví and shows that the suffix *-(a)ɢan* can be viewed in fact as an activity marker that is associated with antipassivization if the base construction is transitive and with causativization if the base construction is intransitive.

As for the other antipassive marker, the suffix *-(a)taɢan,* we have shown that it has the same activity-centered function but, contrary to *–(a)ɢan,* it is not used as a causative marker, and its antipassive use is less frequent and seems to always imply the deletion of the P argument. Additionally, the suffix *-(a)taɢan* presents more aspectual functions, for instance to change the meaning of state verbs into activities or to convey an agentive nominal interpretation of the detransitivized predicate as well. Furthermore, *-(a)taɢan* appears to also function as an exclusively aspectual marker in the language since it can be used with intransitive predicates without any evidence of being a valency reduction marker, which shows a strong overlap between antipassive and durative aspect.

The complex scenario associated with the Mocoví antipassive marking will become clearer when the diachrony of *-(a)ɢan* and *-(a)taɢan* can be integrated into this synchronic explanation. Such a task is beyond the scope of this paper and will be a topic for a forthcoming study which could endorse our synchronic functional explanation. Interestingly, it can be noticed that the activity verb 'make, do' is a common origin for causative markers (Heine & Kuteva 2002: 117–118). Although this same origin is less usual for antipassives, 'make, do' has also been recently confirmed as a source for antipassive markers (Creissels 2012). Obviously, a similar origin for the suffix *-(a)ɢan* would strongly support the activity-centered function proposed here from a synchronic perspective in order to explain the antipassive/causative syncretism in Mocoví.

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