

Voice Syncretism in Takituduh Bunun

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This paper presents evidence from original fieldwork for voice syncretism in Takituduh Bunun (Austronesian: Taiwan), where the Locative Voice (LV) marker has taken over the function typically associated Patient Voice (PV) for a subset of the verbal lexicon, while still retaining its originally function. The pattern is illustrated in (1a-b) & (2a-b), where the verb *kulut* ‘cut’ exhibits both Patient and Locative Voice forms, with Patient and Location as clause Pivot, respectively, and the verb *tabal* ‘chop’ exhibits the same alternation in terms of semantic role of the pivot (Patient and Location, respectively), but fulfills both functions with the LV form.

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|-----|--|---------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1a. | <i>kulut-un</i> | <i>uva’az</i> | <i>ca</i> | <i>sanglav</i> |
| | cut-PV | child | PIVOT | vegetables |
| | ‘The child cut the vegetables.’ | | | |
| 1a. | <i>kulut-an</i> | <i>uva’az</i> | <i>sanglav</i> | <i>ca pitdidai’an</i> |
| | cut-LV | child | vegetables | PIVOT kitchen |
| | ‘The child cut vegetables in the kitchen.’ | | | |
| 2b. | <i>tabal-an</i> | <i>uva’az</i> | <i>ca</i> | <i>lukic</i> |
| | chop-LV | child | PIVOT | wood |
| | ‘The child chopped the wood.’ | | | |
| 2b. | <i>tabal-an</i> | <i>uva’az</i> | <i>lukic</i> | <i>ca quma</i> |
| | chop-LV | child | wood | PIVOT field |
| | ‘The child chopped wood in the field.’ | | | |

In a preliminary list of 200 transitive verbs, the same pattern is attested across different verb classes (Tsukida & Zeitoun 2023 and Ross 2015), semantic categories (Levin 1993), degrees of transitivity (Hopper and Thompson 1980) and phonological contexts (Li 1988), illustrated using six verbs in (3a-c) across different semantic and transitivity categories, where the verbs to the right lack an expected PV form.

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|-----|------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| 3a. | Perception: | <i>tan’aun/tan’aan</i> ‘hear’ | ---/sadu’an ‘see’ |
| 3b. | Physical Impact: | <i>ludaqun/ludaqan</i> ‘hit’ | ---/lintauzan ‘push’ |
| 3c. | Movement: | <i>sinapun/sinapan</i> ‘chase’ | ---/pavazan ‘leave’ |

Since this pattern is attested across different parts of the lexicon, the emergent pattern appears to be that of two inflectional classes, here tentatively named PV/LV-verbs and LV-verbs (approximately 30% of the current verb list). This conclusion is further corroborated by intra- and interspeaker variation; some speakers use the forms *painukun*(PV)/*painukan*(LV) ‘to wear’ interchangeably, while others prefer *painukan*.

	PV/LV-Verbs	LV-Verbs
Agent Voice	M-	M-
'Patient' Voice	-un	-an
Locative Voice	-an	-an
Circumstantial Voice	is-	is-

Proposals for the development of this pattern remain speculative. A pattern found among languages with the Austronesian Voice System is that transitive verbs can alternate between Patient and Locative Voice marking on the verb to signal a lower degree of transitivity for the latter (cf. Puyuma, Teng 2008, 111). The latter use could then have been reanalyzed as the default voice marking, leading to a loss of the PV form. Another possible origin is via analogy; verbs of perception often use LV for object pivot clauses (cf. Tsou, Huang & Huang 2007, 434), and this usage could have spread via analogy to other categories of verbs as well, replacing the PV form.

This paper documents an a-typical Austronesian Voice System, making it a relevant contribution to Austronesian linguistics. It also provides evidence for emerging inflectional classes and how a symmetrical voice system and transitivity marking can change over time, while also constituting the first attempt at a systematic description of voice marking in the Taktiuduh Bunun lexicon, highlighting its broader empirical and theoretical contributions.

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