DOES THERE EXIST PASSIVE VOICE IN LAKHOTA AND CHEYENNE?

Avelino Corral Esteban
Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

Abstract: *This article attempts to provide conclusive evidence to decide on the existence or absence of passive in two Native American languages, namely Lakhota and Cheyenne, which exhibit a similar behaviour in this respect. Given that it is evident that these two languages do not show examples of an English-style passive, that is, considering the concept of "passive" from the viewpoint of traditional grammar, it will be necessary to study this issue from a different angle, presented in this case by the Role and Reference Grammar (hereafter RRG) (Van Valin and LaPolla, 1997). Thanks to its marked typological orientation, this theoretical framework makes it possible to see both the similarities and differences between these languages, as well as to solve the problems that arise when studying their grammar owing to their morphological complexity. With respect to grammatical voice, it is crucial to analyze these two languages typologically in terms of the morpho-syntactic parameter denominated "referential structure"'. This analysis will shed light on this issue by showing that there are two different types of languages with respect to this parameter and that this distinction has a bearing on the existence of two different types of passive, whose combination will be exhibited by the English-style passive.*

Key words: *Passive voice, referential structure, semantics, pragmatics, linking algorithm.*

1. INTRODUCTION

When the task of studying grammatical voice in a specific language is to be tackled, it is not difficult to become influenced by the distinction between active and passive voice that is typically observed in English and, accordingly, only those examples that correspond to the English-like passive construction tend to be considered instances of *passive voice*. Nevertheless, if we accept that this is not the only kind of passive and that there may exist more types, a broader perspective could be achieved. Role and Reference Grammar (RRG) provides us with an excellent method of analysis to study syntax across languages, since it has researched into the relationship among syntax, semantics and pragmatics, and, as a matter of fact, this relationship also turns out to be crucial in the study of passive voice. To start with, I will introduce the issue by defining the concept of *passive voice* from the viewpoint of traditional grammar. Later, I will analyze the referential structure both in Lakhota and Cheyenne, which will have a great influence on the type of passive-like constructions encountered in these languages. Next, I will identify and analyze all these grammatical structures that look like passives in these two languages. For this, I will use equivalent examples in both languages, thereby reflecting that, despite being languages that belong to two different linguistic families (i.e. Siouan and Algonquian respectively), Lakhota and Cheyenne appear to have similar structures denoting passive meaning. Finally, I will provide a summary chart that outlines the main points regarding passive voice in these two languages.

2. PASSIVE VOICE IN TRADITIONAL GRAMMAR

In traditional grammar we call *voice* or *diathesis* to the relationship that exists between the action expressed by the verb and the participants involved in that action. These participants are identified by the arguments of the verb, which may play different syntactic roles (i.e. subject, direct object or indirect object). When the subject is the agent or doer of the action, the verb is in the ´active voice´. Conversely, when the subject is the patient, theme or target of the action, it is said to be in the *passive voice*. In a transformation from an active-voice clause to an equivalent passive-voice construction, the subject and the direct object switch roles, hence the direct object gets promoted to subject, and the subject either demoted to an (optional) complement or even omitted. This transformation also causes a modification in the verb form. Languages react in two different ways when it comes to marking this transformation in the verbal form: on the one hand, some languages, like Spanish or English, use a periphrastic passive voice, which consists of an auxiliary verb plus a past participle form of the main verb; and, on the other hand, other languages, such as Latin, simply mark the passive transformation on the verb by inflection.

3. REFERENTIAL STRUCTURE

Van Valin (1977) highlights the important role that the referential structure plays in the grammar of a language, as this parameter determines the nature of many grammatical processes. This morpho-syntactic property reflects the relative distinctiveness of grammatical relations from semantic relations. Thus, we may set up a cline with reference-dominated languages occupying the end and role-dominated languages at the other. Reference-dominated languages show the greatest distinctiveness of grammatical relations from semantic relations, since their clause-level processes are sensitive to the pragmatic status of an NP rather than its semantic function. Consequently, the organization of a clause revolves around the pragmatic properties of its NPs and therefore it receives the name of *referential structure*, which may be realized in terms of case marking or word order. Within this referential structure there is one NP which is picked out as being the pragmatically most salient NP, which is denominated the pragmatic peak or PrP of the clause, and it becomes the pivot for referential operations, such as passivization, in the clause. In role-dominated languages, in contrast, their clause-level processes are more related to the semantic role of the NP, rather than its pragmatic salience, and therefore these languages do not have a referential structure at clause level. Thus, the presence or the absence of passive voice in a language depends on whether the language has a clause-level referential structure or not.

English is an example of reference-dominated language where the pragmatic operation of passivization takes place at clause level. English has no NP case marking, except for the personal pronouns, hence English expresses referential structure mostly by means of word order. This language has a fairly fixed canonical word order SVO and singles out the leftmost element, that is, the grammatical *subject* as PrP, or rather, the most salient NP, which always agrees with the verb. In (1a´) we see that the verbal morphology is affected by passivization, since the verb must adapt its form in order to show concord with the PrP. Likewise, the example (1a´´) illustrates how this language can also show pragmatic salience at sentence level by placing the fronted element before the PrP, which appears in the second position of the clause:

1. a. That white man killed a buffalo
    a´. A buffalo was killed by that white man
    a´´. A buffalo that man killed

By contrast, Lakhota is a role-dominated language and, as such, does not have clause-level referential structure and the pragmatic considerations operate exclusively at sentence level,

since at clause level this language is concerned with signalling semantic roles, rather than with pragmatic information. Lakhota hardly bears any case marking and then it is its canonical word order SOV that serves to differenciate between the NPs in terms of their semantic roles: in a transitive clause, S is the actor and O the undergoer. There is then no vehicle for the expression of the pragmatic salience of NPs at the clause-level:

2. a. *Wašíču kiŋ hé thatháŋka waŋ   Ø -   Ø -   kté*
    white man the that buffalo a   3SG:SUB-3SG:OBJ- kill
    ´That white man killed a buffalo.´
   a´. *Thatháŋka waŋ wašíču kiŋ hé   Ø -   Ø -   kté*
    buffalo a white man the that   3SG:SUB-3SG:OBJ- kill
    ´A buffalo killed that white man.´

As can be observed in the above examples, the word order of constituents is crucial for the understanding of the sentence since, owing to the fact that there is no overt presence of pronominal markers on the verb, a change in the position of the independent NPs will result in a change of semantic roles and therefore in a different interpretation of the sentence.

However, sometimes word order is also used in this language to show emphasis or give a constituent a major prominence but this situation happens providing that the semantic roles appear expressed unambiguously on the verb:

3. a. *Wašíču kiŋ hená thatháŋka waŋ   Ø -   Ø -   kté-pi*
    white man the those buffalo a   3:SUB-3SG:OBJ- kill-PL
    ´Those white men killed a buffalo.´
   a´. *Thatháŋka waŋ wašíču kiŋ hená   Ø -   Ø -   kté-pi*
    buffalo a white man the those   3:SUB-3SG:OBJ- kill-PL
    ´A buffalo those white men killed.´

In (3a´) we can see a pragmatic operation where a constituent, the direct object, is fronted for pragmatic reasons, that is to say, to acquire more prominence. Nevertheless, the difference with respect to English is that this fronting takes place at sentence level, since the verbal morphology is not affected by the result of this operation. Therefore, in Lakhota, pragmatic salience is only shown at sentence level.

Cheyenne is another example of reference-dominated language, like English. In Cheyenne the referential structure of a clause comes determined by case marking, rather than by word order. In terms of NP case marking, Cheyenne has a very particular feature, which is typical of all Algonquian languages. This language has a special form of case marking, which consists in marking the less salient participant in a given discourse context. Thus NP case marking in Cheyenne distinguishes the obviative or fourth person referent from a more salient (third person) referent. This obviation only takes place in specific contexts: when there are two potential third person participants or also when there is a possessed noun by a third person participant. Thus, Cheyenne NP marks the non-salient instead of the most salient (or PrP) participant and therefore there appears to be a certain contradiction: Cheyenne uses case marking in order to express the clause-level referential structure, despite the fact that it does by marking the non-salient referent, rather than the third person referent highest in topicality or discourse saliency. In (4a´) we can observe that the fact that a different element receives prominence at clause level is not only reflected in the marking of obviation but also by a modification in the verbal morphology:

4. a. *Tá´to=vé* *´ho´e* *é-náh-oho na´èstse-ésevono*
that-white man (3)-kill-(3-4) a-buffalo (OBV)
´That white man killed a buffalo.´

a´. *Na´èstse-ésevone é- náh-aa´e tá´to=vé´hó´e*
a - buffalo (3)- kill-(4-3) that-white man (OBV)
´A buffalo was killed by that white man.´

a´´. *Na´èstse-ésevono tá´to=vé´ho´e é- náh- oho*
a buffalo (OBV) that-white man (3)-kill-(3-4)
´A buffalo that white man killed.´

In this language, word order, which is even freer than in Lakhota, also appears to play a crucial role in showing pragmatic salience at sentence-level, like in (4a´´), since although the most common word order in Cheyenne appears to be SVO, any possible variation is admitted.

4. PASSIVE VOICE ACCORDING TO RRG

In an English passive construction like *John was killed by that man*, the undergoer is the subject and the actor, if it occurs, is in an adjunct PP in the periphery core. Thus, the passive process can also be described as a valence-changing process where the syntactic valence of the verb is reduced from two to only one, e.g. the undergoer, since the actor appears in a by-phrase, and therefore it is not a direct core argument. Rather, in these constructions, actors are optional elements represented as peripheral adjuncts and are not regarded as part of the syntactic valence of the passive verb, although they remain to be semantic arguments of the verb.

Over the years and after having attempted to find evidence to support the existence of passive in Lakhota, several linguists (Buechel, 1939; Boas and Deloria, 1941; Van Valin, 1975, among others) came to the conclusion that there is no passive voice in this language.

Yet, in the next pages we will see some structures that could be similar in meaning to passives. The first one is illustrated by means of the example (2a´), repeated here as (5):

5. *Thatháŋka waŋ wašiču kiŋ hená* Ø - Ø - *kté-pi*
buffalo a white man the those 3:SUB-3SG:OBJ- kill-PL
´A buffalo those white men killed.´

Lakhota is is a pronominal-argument language where all the obligatory arguments of a predicate are represented by verbal affixes. In this sentence there is no possible ambiguity since the semantic roles of the predicate are clearly signalled by the pronominal affixes: owing to the presence of the suffix *–pi* and the absence of *wiča* (which would mark a plural animate object), the actor must be obligatorily plural, which only allows us to interpret the independent NP *wašiču kiŋ hená* as the actor. Despite the fact that this structure looks like a passive in English where the undergoer acquires a more-salient discourse position, formally it cannot be considered an English-like passive, since the verb undergoes no modification and therefore it is a pragmatic operation taking place at sentence level rather than at clause level.

Another case where a similar construction to passive voice is used in this language concerns sentences that also include the suffix *–pi,* but where the idea of plural agent is not so clear-cut as in (5):

6.   a. *Hokšíla kiŋ úŋthuŋ- Ø -   yaŋ- pi*
      boy   the STEM-3SG:SUB-hurt-PASS
      ´The boy was hurt.´
    a´. *Hokšíla kiŋ úŋthuŋ- Ø -   Ø -   yaŋ- pi*
      boy   the STEM-3:SUB-3SG:OBJ-hurt-PL/AGIPS
      ´They / People hurt the boy.´

This suffix –*pi* has been given two different interpretations in the examples above, which means that, then, it could also have two different functions: on the one hand, if we analyzed this structure as an example analogous to the English passive voice, then the suffix –*pi* would not have any specific referent for the agent and should be considered a passive marker that reduces by one the valence of the verb. On the other hand, if we took the suffix –*pi* as a plural marker that makes reference to an impersonal actor, namely 'they' or 'people' in English, the valence of the verb would remain the same, having two obligatory arguments represented within the core as two pronominal markers; in this case these two markers would stand for two third person arguments and therefore their realization is by means of the null pronominal marker -*Ø*-.

An important reason to believe that this suffix -*pi* is a passive marker comes from the fact that it can also appear in clauses with inanimate agents, which do not normally mark the plural by using this suffix –*pi*[1]. The following example, taken from Pustet and Rood (2007:351) appears to show that this suffix cannot refer to the inanimate agent and it must be considered a passive marker:

7.   a. *Thípi kiŋ thatéthaŋka Ø -   ihágya- pi*
      house the hurricane 3SG:SUB-destroy-PASS
      ´The house was destroyed by a hurricane.´

Against this view, it could also be argued that the noun *thatéthaŋka* (lit. 'big wind') could be used in plural meaning 'strong winds' and the use of the animate plural marker is due to a process by which an inanimate entity turns into an animate one because it is used as the agent of an action that is typically performed by humans. The fact that this construction always has an agent with no determiner can denote a plural, rather than singular, noun phrase. Thus, this example could also have an active interpretation that, owing to the altered word order of the independent NPs, would be pragmatically marked:

7.   a´. *Thípi kiŋ thatéthaŋka Ø -   Ø -   ihágya- pi*
      house the hurricane 3:SUB-3SG:OBJ-destroy-PL
      ´The house, the strong winds (hurricanes) destroyed.´

The next example in (8) is very similar to former sentences in the sense that it could also lead to two different interpretations: one as a passive sentence and another as an active sentence with a plural agent impersonalizer.

8.   a. *Peter e-   Ø -   čiya -pi*
      Peter STEM-3SG:SUB-call-PASS
      ´He is called Peter.´ / ´His name is Peter.´
    a´. *Peter e-   Ø -   Ø -   čiya-pi*
      Peter   STEM-3:SUB-3SG:OBJ-call-PL/AGIPS
      ´They /People call him Peter.´

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[1]   When an inanimate participant has the semantic role of actor with a predicate denoting action, this inanimate agent is treated as an instrument and therefore it is represented as an oblique argument outside the core.

Furthermore, there exists another construction that proves even more clear evidence for the assumption that passive exists in Lakhota:

9. a. *Oglála Oyáŋke él ma-   thúŋ-   pi*
        Pine Ridge   in 1SG:SUB-give birth to-PASS
        ´I was born in Pine Ridge.´
    a´. *Oglála Oyáŋke él   Ø -   ma-   thúŋ-   pi*
        Pine Ridge   in 3:SUB-1SG:OBJ-give birth to-PL/AGIPS
        * ´They / People gave birth to me in Pine Ridge.´

In (9) it seems evident that only one of the two functions (i.e. agent impersonalizer or passive voice marker) of the suffix *–pi* can be accepted. In this case the only accepted interpretation of this sentence would be the one which analyzes this suffix as a passive voice marker, because it would not be semantically correct to regard the suffix *–pi* as a plural agent impersonalizer, since this suffix cannot convey the idea of a plural actor according to the semantic meaning of the predicate *thúŋpi* 'give birth to'. For this predicate the agent in question should be *the mother* but this argument denoting a specific participant and qualifying as a filler of the semantic agent slot in the construction cannot be identified by means of any of the verbal affixes in the clause.

According to Pustet and Rood (2008), the *pi-* passive-like construction is more common in contemporary Lakhota than it was time ago, perhaps influenced by a prolonged contact with the English language. It appears to be a recent construction that has been formed owing to the influence of English on Lakhota. It could then be hypothesized that there has been a gradual development of an agent plural marker (5) into an agent impersonalizer marker (8), then into a passive with the agent unmarked (9), and finally to a construction which includes a pragmatically foregrounded patient and a backgrounded agent (7).

It can be argued that the example (9) is the closest equivalent to the passive voice in Lakhota because it is the only example that shares the two characteristics that are claimed to be essential for the definition of passive in the traditional sense: first, the patient of the active voice appears in the subject position in passive voice entailing a change in the verbal markers (the presence of this passive marker *–pi*), which is supposed to account for this different positioning; second, the actor of the active voice is demoted and, as a result of this, either it is deleted (there is no overt agent here) or moves from its privileged position inside the core to a peripheral position outside the core. In the rest of the passive-like constructions there is no overt mark in the verb indicating that the element that functioned formerly as patient now functions as actor. There is no change in terms of case marking either and therefore the syntactic status of the argument remains unchanged.

Van Valin (1985: 368) claims that there is no Indo-European-style passive construction in Lakhota and, apart from the exception of the isolated case in (9), his view seems indisputable, because none of the previous examples in Lakhota shows the undergoer functioning as the subject that has been derived of a detransitivized verb and the actor appearing either as an oblique argument or deleted. They are simply examples of sentences where there is a specific plural agent or an unspecified agent represented by the suffix *-pi*.

These two facets of a passive construction, say, the occurrence of a marked privileged syntactic argument choice and the omission of the actor or its appearance as an oblique element in the periphery are referred to as PSA Modulation and Argument Modulation in the RRG literature. All these principles that characterize a basic voice construction are depicted in the following chart:

General characterization of basic voice constructions

a. PSA modulation voice: permits an argument other than the default argument in terms of the Default Macrorole Assignment principles to function as the privileged syntactic argument.

b. Argument modulation voice: gives non-canonical realization to a macrorole argument.

Table 1: Voice constructions (Van Valin & LaPolla, 1997: 294-295)

Next, the linking algorithm of the passive-like construction illustrated by the example in (9) will be provided in order to check that this construction works in the same way as the traditional Indo-European-style passive and also to validate the assumption that this theoretical framework is able to represent similar constructions from different languages analogously:

9. *Oglála Oyáŋke él   ma-   thúŋ-   pi*
    Pine Ridge   in 1SG:OBJ-give birth to-PASS
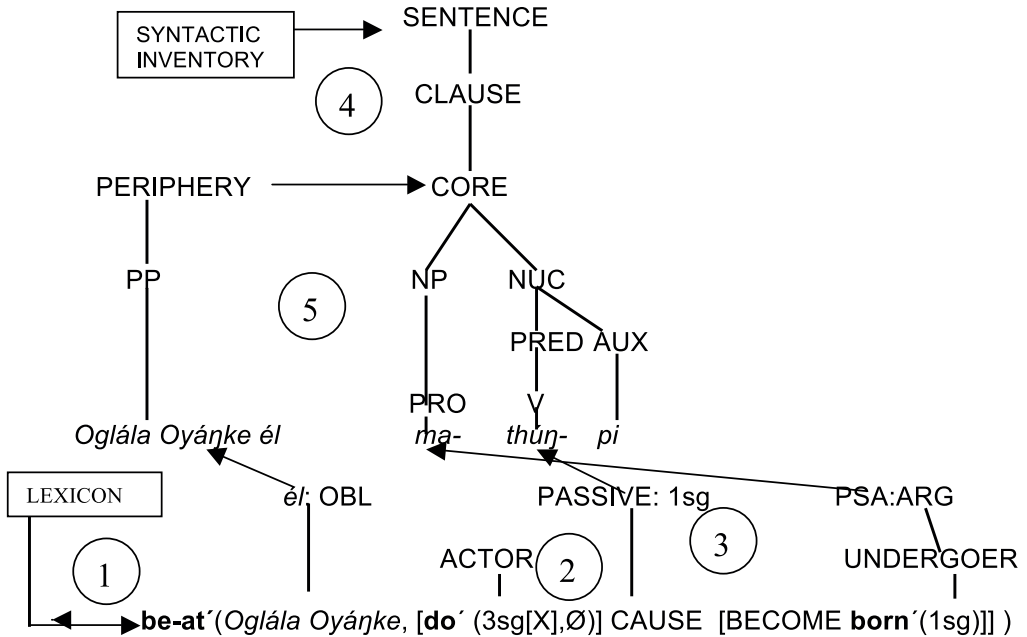   ´I was born in Pine Ridge.´

Figure 1. Linking algorithm in a Lakhota passive construction (semantics-to-syntax).

In this sentence, given that this sentence has a passive meaning, the PSA must be the undergoer according to the PSA selection hierarchy and principles. Likewise, there is a slot in the LS which cannot be linked to any argument in the syntactic representation, owing to the fact that in this passive-like construction the agent has been deleted. This structure respects the two conditions that are compulsory in order to consider it an instance of passive voice, that is, the demotion of the agent and special marking on the verb.
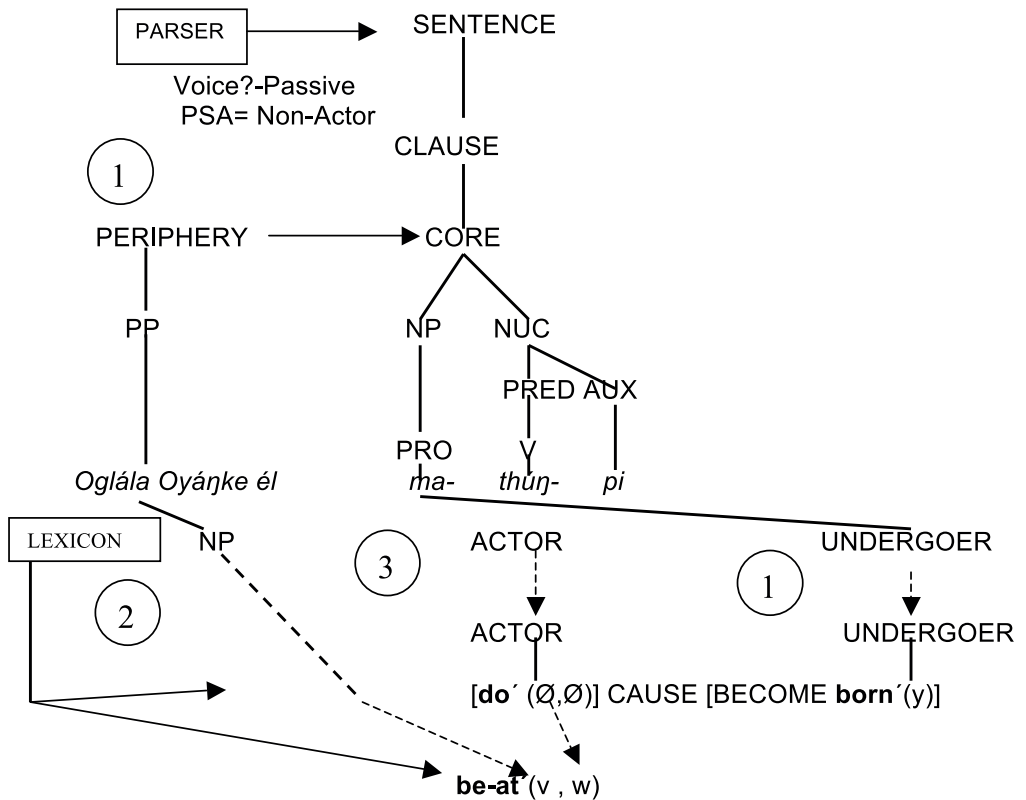
Figure 2. Linking algorithm in a Lakhota passive construction (syntax-to-semantics).

Given that this passive meaning appears to be marked by the suffix *–pi*, the PSA is not the actor of the predicate and, as the actor does not appear in the core or the periphery, we replace the variable representing the highest ranking argument in the LS with Ø.

Regarding Cheyenne, it is striking to note how the same kind of passive-like constructions as in Lakhota can be found in this different language. Thus, a clause that includes a transitive verb with two core arguments which can swap their positions for pragmatic reasons giving rise to two different word orders is very commonly found in Cheyenne. The example (4a´) will be reintroduced now as (10) in order to analyze it now as a possible instance of passive voice:

10. *Na´éstse-ésevono   tá´to=vé´ho´e   é-náh-oho*
    a   buffalo (OBV) that-white man (3)-kill-(3-4)
    ´A buffalo that white man killed.´

Although this sentence does not reflect the canonical word order in Cheyenne (i.e. SVO) and is a pragmatically odd sentence to be avoided, it is not completely rejected by Cheyenne speakers. It shows a reversal of macroroles, that is, Undergoer-Actor instead of Actor-Undergoer and therefore it seems plausible to assume the existence of two different interpretations: one in active with a topicalized argument and another in passive voice. Nevertheless, just as it happened in the Lakhota example in (5), the verbal morphology is not affected by the reversal of

semantic macroroles and therefore this pragmatic operation takes place at sentence level, rather than at clause level.

By contrast, if we compare and contrast the examples (4a) and (4a´), repeated here as (11a) and (11a´) respectively, we can observe that (4a´) not only differs from the former one in the position that the participants occupy in the clause but also in the verbal suffix, which has been modified in order to indicate a different relationship between the participants:

11. a. *Tá´to=vé´ho´ e é-náh- oho na´éstse-ésevono*
       that-white man (3)- kill-(3-4) a - buffalo (OBV)
       ´That white man killed a buffalo.´
    a´. *Na´éstse-ésevone é- náh-aa´e tá´to=vé´hó´e*
        a- buffalo (3)- kill-(4-3) that-white man (OBV)
        ´A buffalo was killed by that white man.´

This second sentence does appear to fulfil the two conditions that are required in order to consider this construction an example of passive voice in the traditional sense: the actor has undergone demotion because in this sentence it appears obviated -both in the independent NP and in the verbal affixes-, the patient has acquired a more pragmatic-salient position receiving proximate status, and the verb form has suffered modifications that reflect a change in the grammatical relationship between the agent and patient.

In sum, Cheyenne verbs, thanks to their rich morphology, can also undergo passivization. If compared to English, we can see that the passive is the English construction required in order to reflect the pragmatic status signalled by direction and proximate/obviative in Cheyenne. In English, the more topical patient is marked as more topical by assigning it the syntactic role of subject and placing it in preverbal position accordingly. The Cheyenne construction also recognizes the higher topicality of the patient (i.e. through proximate status) but does not require that a specific word order position be associated with it:

11. a´´. *Tá´to=vé´hó´e na´éstse-ésevone é- náh-aa´e*
         that-white man (OBV) a- buffalo (3)- kill-(4-3)
         ´A buffalo was killed by that white man.´

All the examples in (11) are semantically equivalent and the difference between them is purely a pragmatic one based on the speaker´s choice of word order and/or topic assignment (proximate status of the patient). Nevertheless, the really crucial difference lies in how the less topical agents are dealt with. An English passive detransitivizes the verb and either demotes (to oblique status marked by the preposition *by*) or completely deletes the less topical agent. In contrast, in Cheyenne the verb does not indicate any detransitivization since both participants take part in the clause and are fully lexicalized. This viewpoint appears to equate inverse with passive[2]. The evidence comes from the fact that the agent is demoted when it becomes obviated and the patient becomes more salient when it receives proximate status. Nevertheless, this only occurs when two third person referents are involved. Otherwise, the inverse does not seem to resemble a passive:

12. *Né-véstáhém-átse* (inverse)
    (2)- help- (1-2)
    ´I help you.´

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[2] Some scholars claim inversion not a voice at all, but rather see it as another type of alignment denominated *hierarchical alignment*, parallel to nominative–accusative, ergative–absolutive, and split-S alignments.

13. *Né-véståhém-e (direct)*
    (2)- help -   (2-1)
    ´You help me.´

As can be observed from above, both the direct and inverse forms represent two active sentences. The participants in these two actions are local forms, rather than third person referents and therefore they cannot be corefered by independent NPs. The only difference between these two examples is the reversal of semantic roles, which is reflected in the direction of the action[3].

Next, a figure with a linking algorithm process will be shown. In this case it will represent syntactically the example (11a´), reintroduced now as (14), which exhibits a construction that could be said to equate with an English passive:

14. *Na´éstse-ésevone é- náh-aa´e tá´to=vé´hó´e*
       a- buffalo   (3)- kill-(4-3) that-white man (OBV)
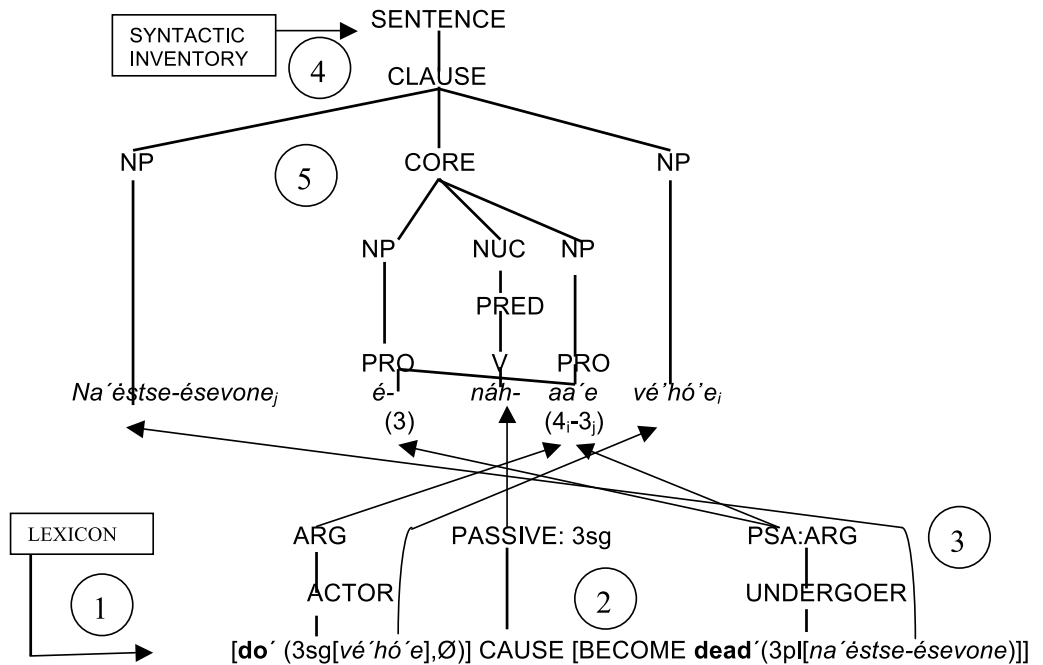   ´A buffalo was killed by that white man.´

Figure 3. Linking algorithm in a Cheyenne passive construction (semantics-to-syntax).

In this passive-like construction we can observe how either there is no passive marker, or the marker *–aa´e*, as it is a cluster that includes grammatical information concerning person, number, animacy, and syntactic functions of the participants, may mark passive voice indirectly. Based on the PSA selection hierarchy and the PSA principles, for this passive sentence, the undergoer

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[3]   Thus, the issue of whether the inverse is active or passive has been the subject of much debate. Perlmutter and Rhodes (1988) argue that the inverse is passive because it changes the syntactic status of the arguments although the agent is only demoted to object status, rather than to oblique, as it occurs cross-linguistically. Dryer (1996: 37) states that the inverse is a sort of passive although somewhat different from a normal passive. Others like Wolvengrey (1993) expresses the view that it is both active and passive at the same time.

is assigned PSA, instead of the actor, which in this sentence appears as a direct core argument, rather than as an oblique element in the periphery as in the English passive voice.
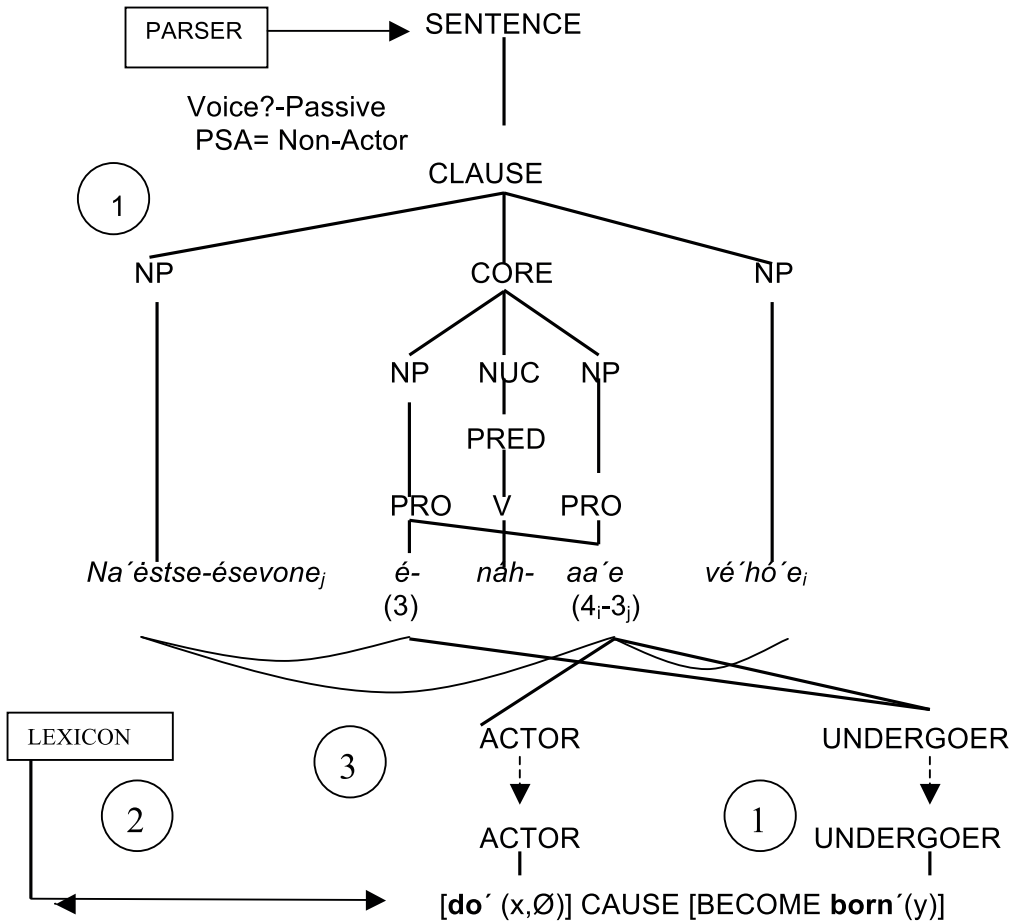

Figure 4. Linking algorithm in a Cheyenne passive construction (syntax-to-semantics).

The PSA is the non-actor macrorole and the actor, unlike in English, is a direct core argument. Thus, all semantic slots in the LS are filled and also all of them are linked to syntactic positions in the representation. In this example, passive does not reduce the verb valence by one because the verb remains to have two obligatory core arguments.

There is another construction that could be compared to an English-style passive. According to Petter (1952: 39) and Leman (1979: 55 & 87), this passive consists in adding the suffix –an to the verbal stem of a transitive predicate, with the exception of the third person singular subject, which takes –e:

15. *Ná-heševéh-ane   Peter*
    (1)-be called-PASS
    ´I am called Peter.´ / ´My name is Peter.´

16. *Peter é- heševéh- e*
        (3)-be called-PASS
   ´He is called Peter.´ / ´His name is Peter.´

Despite the fact that Leman in his dictionary (2006: 72) includes in the entry for this verb *heševéhé* meaning 'be called' the specification VAI, that is to say, the abbreviation that stands for an intransitive verb with an animate subject, which seems to suggest a passive sentence with the actor deleted, this verb also lends itself to a second interpretation:

16. a´. *Peter é- heševéh- e*
         (3)-be called-PASS
     ´He is called Peter.´ / ´His name is Peter.´
16. a´´. *Peter é- heševéh- e*
          (3)-be called-AGIPS
     ´They /People call him Peter.´

Just as it happens with the Lakhota use of the suffix *–pi,* the Cheyenne use of these suffixes *–an* and *–e* can be interpreted in two different ways, either as a passive voice marker or an agent impersonalizer. It turns out difficult to know if these suffixes *–an* and *–e* are passive voice markers, whose presence reduces the syntactic verb valence by one and does not permit the lexicalization of the agent, or if, by contrast, they reflect an impersonal agent like 'they' or 'people' that does no appear overtly because it is easily deduced from the context or because it is so general that it does not need to be included.

The existence of two different suffixes to represent the same process is problematic. With Speech Act participants this form presents the suffix *–an* and with non-Speech Act participants it includes the suffix *-e.* This alternance could better be accounted for in terms of direction: *-an* and *–e* indicate inverse and direct forms respectively. Thus, on the one hand, the fact that the suffix *–an* appears with local forms and that these local forms have the semantic role of patient in these sentences entails that this suffix is an inverse marker signalling that the object is higher on the Animacy-Topicality hierarchy than the subject. Likewise, on the other hand, the suffix *–e* would be a direct marker showing that the subject is higher than the object. Somehow, this view would discard the passive interpretation with third persons because, although we assumed the presence of a demoted actor, the verb would not be marked in a special way to indicate the passive transformation:

17. a. *Ameohestȯtse é-hóxe´an-e*
       car   (I)-clean- PASS???
     ´The car was cleaned.´

Among Algonquianists it is common to attest the existence of an Indefinite Actor or Unspecified Actor or X in this construction. The first term, which was suggested by Hocket editing Bloomfield (1958), was in use for forty years but finally gave way to the second one because it is more accurate[4]. This construction renders the semantic argument that functions as the actor obligatorily unspecified:

17. a´. *Ameohestȯtse é-hóxe´ an-e*
       car   (X)-clean- AGIPS
     ´They / People cleaned the car.´

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[4]   The inclusion of an indefinite pronoun in this construction is ungrammatical: *Ameohestȯtse é-hóxe´an-e* = The car is cleaned.
    * *Vo´éstane é-hóxe´an-e ameohestȯtse* = Somebody cleaned the car. *Vo´éstane é-hóxe´an-a ameohestȯtse* = Somebody cleaned the car.

Therefore, if we also take these examples in Cheyenne as constructions involving the presence of an Unspecified Actor, then the issue of deciding whether this construction is an instance of passive voice or not is partly clarified. Assuming that an Unspecified Actor is represented by the personal prefix *é-*, just as it happens with the third person and the inanimate participants, and that this Unspecified Actor is less salient than the first and second persons but more salient than the third person, the obviative and the inanimate, then these forms with Speech Act participants are equated with inverse forms and the forms in which the Unspecified Actor cooccurs with third person, obviative, and inanimate participants are equated with direct forms.

Table 2. Extended Animacy-Topicality hierarchy in Cheyenne (option 1).

Speech Act participants				Non-Speech Act participants	
2	>	1	>	X > 3 > 4 (> 5 > 6) >	I

Thus, the Animacy-Topicality hierarchy is modified with the inclusion of this new person called Unspecified Actor (abbreviated X) and it seems evident that the position of this Unspecified Actor is located between the SAPs and the third persons. Nevertheless, this view would also be problematic because, given the Unspecified Actor has a higher ranking than the third person, in the direct forms the second argument of the predicate (the third person participant) would not be promoted to subject status and then it would not be correct to consider it an instance of traditional passive construction.

A different option could be raised to solve this problem. This second possibility would assume that this Unspecified actor is ranked lower than the third person, obviative and inanimate and therefore both suffixes *–an* and *–e* are inverse markers that appear exclusively with this Unspecified Actor:

Table 3. Extended Animacy-Topicality hierarchy in Cheyenne (option 2).

Speech Act participants				Non-Speech Act participants			XActor
2	>	1	>	3 > 4 (> 5 > 6) >	I	>	X

Consequently, this different view would not discard the possibility of a passive voice interpretation because the actor would become demoted and the second argument would be promoted to subject status in all cases. This option would then equate these constructions with the English passives and, as will be illustrated with the next example, it would adapt itself better to a passive interpretation than to an impersonal agent interpretation.

Nevertheless, this hypothesis would also raise some problems, for example: the existence of two different inverse markers within the same paradigm and the higher ranking of the inanimate with respect to the Unspecified Actor, which is supposed to be realized mostly by animate participants. On the one hand, it does not seem very logical, though, to think that this Unspecified Actor is lower in the Animacy-Topicality hierarchy than the inanimate if we take into account the enormous weight given to animacy in the Cheyenne grammar.

On the other hand, there appears to be evidence that discards the possibility that the suffixes –*an* and –*e* are both inverse markers. This evidence comes from the fact that, if we compare the inflectional paradigm of a VTA verb with obviative forms to a VTA verb with Unspecified Actor forms, these appears to be distinction between local forms and third person forms across all paradigms:

4-1	- aetsenoto	(INV)	X-1	- āne
4-2	- aetsenoto	(INV)	X-2	- āne
4-3	- aa´e	(DIR)	X-3	- e
4-11	- aetsenone	(INV)	X-11	- anéme
4-12	- aetsenone	(INV)	X-12	- anéma
4-22	- aetsenōvo	(INV)	X-22	- anéme
4-33	- aevóho	(DIR)	X-33	- eo´o

All things considered, it seems evident that, although the first option is more restrictive in the sense that only local forms could be equated with passive, it appears to fit better into the grammar of this language, given the great similarity exhibited by the inflectional paradigm of a verb including the Unspecified Actor form with respect to the rest of paradigms and the respect shown for the criterion of animacy when considering the ranking of the Unspecified Actor in the hierarchy.

There is an example that, like in Lakhota, appears to provide evidence for the existence of passive voice in Cheyenne. This example involves the presence of the equivalent to the English verb *be born* in Cheyenne, namely, the verb *hestáotse*[5] . This verb also appears in Leman´s dictionary (2006: 68) listed as VAI, that is, an intransitive verb with an animate subject. It is evident that this subject receives the semantic role of patient according to the meaning of the predicate but, however, it also seems evident that that there must be an agent and that, in this case, this agent must be undoubtedly realized by the specific participant *a mother*:

18. *É-hestáots-   e   Mo´ôhtávóheomené-no*
    (3)-give birth to-(X-3)   Lame Deer -   LOC
    ´I was born in Lame Deer.´

The option of considering this suffix a plural agent impersonalizer is not semantically accepted, since this suffix cannot convey the idea of a plural actor according to its meaning. The agent "the mother" would necessarily have to be the participant that fills the semantic agent slot in the LS of this construction.

It seems clear that predicates like *hešévehe* 'be called' in (16) and *hestáotse* 'be born' in (18) require two semantic arguments: one standing for the agent and the other standing for the patient. The recognition of the patient does not raise any problem because it always appears overtly and it is the most pragmatic salient participant, but, on the contrary, as for the agent in these two situations, either it is largely trivial to know who call somebody a name or it is easy to predict who has given birth to a child. Just as I posited for the equivalent construction in Lakhota, especially the latter predicate renders a clear example of passive in Cheyenne. This

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5   This term *hestáotse* seems to come from two words: *hesta* "exist" plus *otse* "become".

structure could well be explained by assuming that there is an Unspecified Actor that represents the demoted agent of the action and a second argument that represents the patient of the action, which has been promoted to the passive subject status. These facts, taken in conjunction with the special suffix the verb carries means that this construction fulfils the two syntactic conditions, e.g. syntactic demotion of the agent and special passive marking on the verb, for it to be considered an example of passive in the traditional sense. Nevertheless, the exact nature of the Unspecified Actor has been long debated among Algonquianists with the use of the term ´unspecified actor construction´ favoured over the term ´passive´ as a result. The only difference shown by this passive-like construction, as well as the other one that was exhibited in (11a´), with respect to a traditional passive voice construction is the non-conversion of the agent from a direct core argument into an oblique element outside the core.

Now, a new figure with the linking algorithm process of the example (18) will show that this construction can be analyzed in the same way as its Lakhota equivalent construction (see Figures 1 and 2):

18. *Ná-hestáots-   ane   Mo´ȯhtávȯheomené-no*
    (1)-give birth to- (X-1) Lame Deer -   LOC
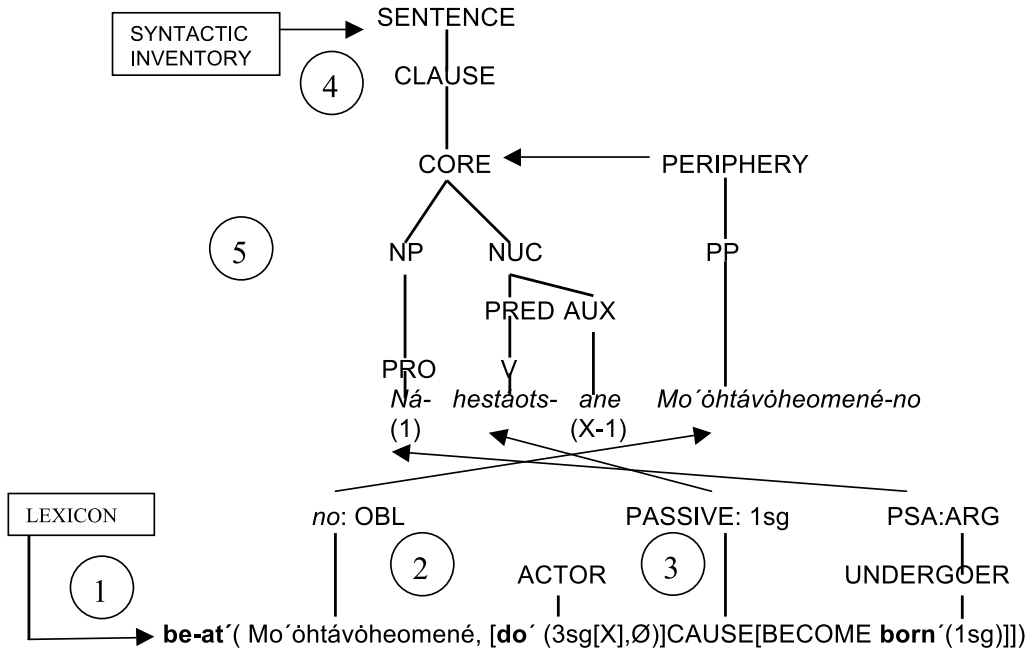   ´I was born in Lame Deer.´

Figure 5. Linking algorithm in a Cheyenne passive construction (2) (semantics-to-syntax).

The asssignment of the PSA is carried out by taking the PSA selection hierarchy and the PSA principles into consideration. Thus, for a passive construction like this, the PSA is the undergoer, rather than the actor, which is a semantic argument of the predicate, as it can be seen in the LS, but, however, it is not a syntactic argument of the clause since it appears neither in the core nor in the periphery. Furthermore, owing to the fact that we take the suffix –*ane* as a passive marker, it is represented as an auxiliary verb, just as *be* is represented in English.
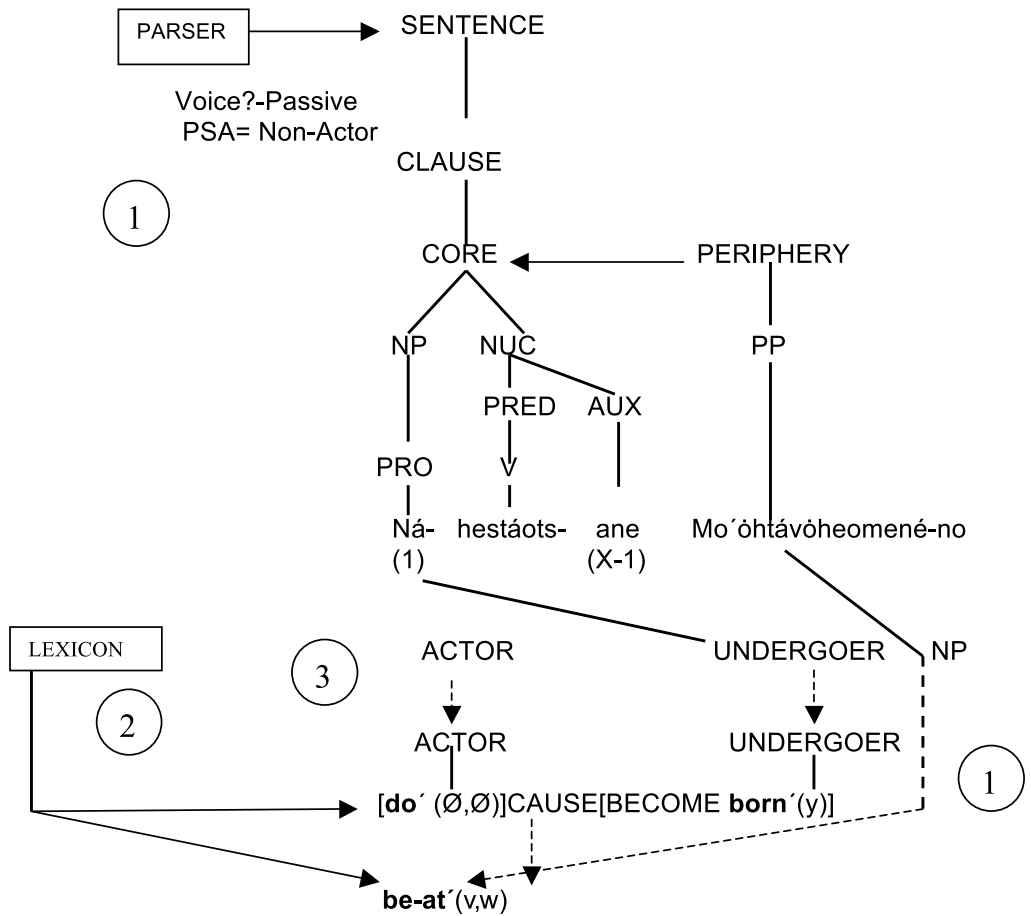
Figure 6. Linking algorithm in a Cheyenne passive construction (2) (syntax-to-semantics).

If this construction is regarded as an example of passive voice, the PSA is then the undergoer and, as there is no actor in the core or the periphery, the variable that should represent the actor in the LS appears as Ø. The only element that appears in the periphery is the locative, whose final suffix *–no*, despite not being a postposition, behaves just like one of them.

In sum, as such, the two-way voice division between active and passive that results from grammatical subject choice in languages like English is not found in Lakhota and Cheyenne. Instead, these languages appear to have pragmatically-conditioned constructions where the word order rules their interpretation and passive-like constructions involving the co-occurrence of an unspecified agent with a passive-like patient. The following table shows the closest equivalents in Lakhota and Cheyenne for the active and passive voice in English:

Table 4. Equivalences in voice between English, Lakhota and Cheyenne.

ENGLISH	LAKHOTA	CHEYENNE
ACTIVE VOICE: The boy kissed the girl.	*Hokšíla wičhíŋčala í- Ø- Ø - puthake* boy girl STEM-3SG:SUB-3SG:OBJ-kiss	Direct *Kȧsóhéso é-mȧsém-óho he'éka'éškóesono* boy (3)-kiss- (3-4) girl (OBV) *He'éka'éškóesono é-mȧsém-óho kȧsóhéso* girl (OBV) (3)-kiss- (3-4) boy
PASSIVE VOICE: (+ by-phrase) The girl was kissed by the boy.	*Wičhíŋčala hokšíla í- Ø- Ø - puthake* girl boy STEM-3SG:SUB-3SG:OBJ-kiss	Inverse *He'éka'éškóéso é-mȧsém-aa'e kȧsóhésono* girl (3)-kiss- (4-3) boy (OBV)
(-by-phrase) The girl was kissed.	Unspecified Actor *Wičhíŋčala í- Ø- Ø - puthake- pi* girl STEM-3SG:SUB-3SG:OBJ-kiss-AGIPS	Unspecified Actor *He'éka'éškóéso é-mȧsém-e* Girl (3)-kiss- (X-3)

5. CONCLUSION

In this paper I have dealt with a central issue of RRG, which is to establish a relationship between syntax, semantics and pragmatics to study different languages and find similar characteristics however different they are. More specifically, I have shown that it is possible to represent passive-like sentences similarly in two languages, Lakhota and Cheyenne, despite the fact that they differ greatly in the formation of their clauses.

I have also illustrated that it is not possible to find examples of English-style passives in these two languages in the sense of sentences that fulfil the three following features: the promotion of object to subject, the demotion of the agent to a peripheral position outside the core , and a special marking on the verbal form to signal the change of valence. Nevertheless, this fact does not mean that this is the only kind of passive, since, if we take referential structure into consideration, several pragmatic operations taking place at sentence level, as in Lakhota, or both at clause and sentence level, as in Cheyenne, can be thought to denote a meaning similar to the passive in English.

Thus, Lakhota is a role-dominated language where word order is ruled by semantic content rather than by the need to make case markers code pragmatic roles and therefore it only shows passive-like pragmatic operations at sentence level. The patient is potentially raised in status and the actor demoted through a pragmatic interpretation of the clause rather than through a syntactic shift as in English. Cheyenne is a reference-dominated language where case marking and word order are governed by the necessity to code pragmatic roles, hence it displays a passive-like construction at clause level that behaves exactly in the same way as the English-like passive, with the only exception that the actor is not demoted out of the core into a position in the periphery of the clause and therefore the verb suffers no valence reduction.

There is an only case, involving the same predicate in both languages, where the only overt NP in this passive-like construction, say, the one that functions as the undergoer, appears foregrounded and appears to have been derived of a detransitivized verb. Furthermore, this undergoer has been moved to a position of greater pragmatic salience and has become the PrP. Likewise, the other participant, the actor has been deleted or backgrounded.

In conclusion, reference-dominated languages, like English and Cheyenne, can have both foregrounding passives, where an element that has less saliency is moved to a position of greater salience, that is to say, a non-actor element becomes the PrP, and backgrounding passives, where the backgrounded argument, namely the actor, is demoted and subsequently removed from the core or even deleted. By contrast, role-dominated languages, like Lakhota, can only have backgrounding passives. English appears to merge the two types of passive functions, since its passives promote a non-actor argument to PrP and the backgrounded argument is demoted and removed from the core.

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