

Ixcathec antipassive constructions
and what they tell us about the semantic alignment in Chocholtec and Popoloc

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Two of the four Popolocan languages have been claimed to be active-stative languages, i.e. Chocholtec (Mock 1982) and Popoloc (Swanton 2005). Namely, in Chocholtec, a set of *m-* clitic pronouns is said to attach to some verb roots producing inactive verbs, while the S(ubject) and A(gent) person suffixes attach to the same verb roots producing active verbs. In Popoloc, the portmanteau A(gent)-P(atient)/R(ecipient) suffixes, specialized for human arguments, also combine with some verbs which are otherwise intransitive (Veerman-Leichsenring 2006: 100-103).

I will contribute to this discussion with first-hand data from the closely related Ixcathec. After a presentation of argument coding in Ixcathec, I will focus on the uses of *-mi²* < ***hmi* “person”, which functions as an antipassive as it triggers the suppression of [+human], first, second, or even third person, patient-like (P) and recipient-like (R) arguments, and the unique argument of stative predicates (Adamou 2014). Compare the transitive in (1a) and the antipassive in (1b).

- (1) a. *βi²-ʔu²se²ʔe²* *sa¹=na²-ʔa¹-na¹na²*
 IPFV-look DEF-CL.KIN-mother-POSS.1SG
 ‘(She)’s looking at my mother.’ (transitive)
 (RRM, Conversation, 2010)
- b. *ʔu²se²ʔe²-ke²-mi²*
 look-ITER-ANTIP
Lit. ‘(He)’s looking again.’ (antipassive)
 In context: ‘(He)’s looking (at us) again.’
 (CRG, Conversation, 2011)

Also, knowing that Ixcathec is a VS/AVO language, observe how in example (2) the first singular free pronoun is in a position in which only the canonical S arguments can be found.

- (2) *ni¹ka²* *k^w-i²rha²-na³-mi²* *ʔi²na¹na³*
 just PFV-meet-1SG-ANTIP 1SG
Lit. ‘I just met.’ (antipassive)
 In context: ‘I just met (with them).’
 (RRM, Conversation, 2010)

In the light of the Ixcathec antipassive *-mi²*, I suggest that the Chocholtec *m-* clitic pronouns resulted from fusion of *mi* < “person” and the person suffixes, an analysis supported by the 17th century Chocholtec documents (see Swanton 2014). The new set of [+human] pronouns was then exploited for the stative-active distinction, similar to the Popoloc portmanteau suffixes and as commonly observed cross-linguistically (Mithun 1991). In contrast, Ixcathec *-mi²*, followed a different path and was grammaticalized as an antipassive marker.

References

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