Stem-prefixes and ditransitive alternations in Kimaragang[*]

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SUMMARY

In this paper I discuss the lexical causative prefix *po-*, which could also be described as a marker of transitivity. This prefix contrasts with another transitivity marker, *poN-*, in both semantic and syntactic properties. I discuss the classes of verbs that select *po-* (and the corresponding Conveyance Voice prefix, *i-*), and the semantic correlates of the *po-* vs. *poN-* alternation for the roots which allow both prefixes. I show that there is a close correlation between verb classes that select *po-* and the classes of verbs in Malagasy that may appear in the "intermediary voice" or *a-* passive. In both languages "caused change of location" plays a central role in the analysis.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet article traite du préfixe lexical causatif *po-*, que l'on pourrait aussi qualifier de marqueur de transitivité. Ce préfixe contraste avec un autre marqueur de transitivité, *poN-*, selon les propriétés sémantiques et syntaxiques. Je discuterai des classes de verbes qui sélectionnent *po-* (et le préfixe de la Voix du convoyage correspondant, *i-*) et des corrélats sémantiques de l'alternance *po-*/*poN-* pour les racines qui permettent les deux préfixes. Je montrai qu'une corrélation étroite existe entre les classes de verbes qui sélectionnent *po-* et celles en malgache qui pourraient assumer la « voix intermédiaire » ou le passif *a-*. Dans les deux langues, le « changement provoqué de position » joue un rôle central dans l'analyse.

1 INTRODUCTION

Lisa Travis has argued in a number of publications (2000, 2010, etc.) that the Tagalog prefix *pag-*

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[*] Lisa has frequently encouraged me, almost as long as I have known her, to come up with a better account of the "transitivity prefixes" in Kimaragang. I offer this brief descriptive sketch in the hope that it may prove to be a small step in the right direction.

is a causative which functions on two levels, the lexical causative vs. the productive causative. In this paper I make a similar claim about the prefix *po-* in Kimaragang Dusun (KQR). This prefix is the primary marker of the productive (or "morphological") causative for all verb roots. An example is presented in (1b).[1]

(1) a. S<in><um>uwang   yalo   sid   kaday.
        <PST><AV>-enter   3sg.NOM   DAT   shop
        'He went into the shop.'

    b. Isay   ot   pinosuwang(<in>Ø-po-suwang)   dialo   siti?
        who   NOM   <PST>AV-CAUS-enter   3sg.ACC   here
        'Who let him enter here?'

In its lexical causative function, however, *po-* is one of two options, the other one being *poN-*. The choice between *po-* and *poN-* is often predictable on the basis of verb semantics. Some roots can occur with either prefix, as illustrated in (2). For these roots the choice of prefix typically determines a choice between distinct but related senses (here, 'to insert' vs. 'to fill'). This pattern of systematic polysemy is often reminiscent of the locative and dative alternations in English.

(2) a. Ø-po-suwang   oku   diti   sada   sid   pata'an.
        AV-TR$_2$-enter   1sg.NOM   this(ACC)   fish   DAT   basket
        'I will put this fish in a/the basket.'

    b. Monuwang(m-poN-suwang)   oku   do   pata'an   do   sada.
        AV-TR$_1$-enter   1sg.NOM   ACC   basket   ACC   fish
        'I will fill a basket with fish.'

For most agentive transitive verbs in Kimaragang, one of the two prefixes (*po-* or *poN-*) is obligatory in Actor Voice. The prefixes also occur (less consistently) in other voices, but (as with Tagalog *pag-*) never when the Undergoer is selected as subject. Roots (or senses) which select *po-* in AV tend overwhelmingly to bear the Conveyance Voice prefix *i-* when their Undergoer is subject, as seen in (3a). As discussed below, these roots frequently correspond to Malagasy verbs which select the "Intermediary Voice" prefix *a-*. Many roots (or senses) which select *poN-* in AV take Objective Voice *-on* when their Undergoer is subject, while others take Dative Voice *-an*, as seen in (3b).

(3) a. Subay.ko'   i-suwang   ino   paray   sid   kadut.
        should   CV-enter   that(NOM)   rice   DAT   gunnysack
        'You should/must put that rice into a gunnysack.'

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b. S\<in\>uwang-an   dialo   dot   togilay   ilo'   bakul   yo.
    \<PST\>enter-DV   3sg   ACC   corn   that(NOM)   basket   3sg.GEN
    'He filled his basket with corn.'

The Kimaragang morphological causative paradigm is discussed in Kroeger (1988). In this paper I focus on lexical causatives, describing the classes of verbs that select *po-* and the semantic effects of the *po-* vs. *poN-* alternation for the roots which allow both prefixes. In Travis's framework, lexical causatives are formed in l-syntax, while productive causatives are formed in s-syntax. Alternatively, using the terminology of Sadler and Spencer (1998), we could say that lexical causatives are MORPHOSEMANTIC in nature, whereas productive causatives are MORPHOSYNTACTIC. It is not unusual for the same affix to function in both domains. For example, Kroeger (2007) argues that the benefactive use of the Indonesian applicative suffix *-kan* is morphosyntactic, whereas all non-benefactive uses are morphosemantic.

It turns out that there is a significant overlap between morphosemantic (l-syntax) uses of *-kan* in Indonesian and the Conveyance paradigm (*po-*/*i-*) in Kimaragang. Non-benefactive *-kan* does not trigger a specific syntactic change, e.g. valence increasing or promotion of PP to DP. Rather, it specifies a kind of semantic and syntactic output template, which crucially involves an argument that undergoes a change of location. This displaced argument must be expressed in s-syntax as either the direct object of an active monotransitive clause or the subject of a passive clause. With inherently ditransitive roots, such as *beri* 'give', *-kan* actually decreases the valence to create a monotransitive clause.

I will suggest that the Kimaragang Conveyance paradigm has a similar function. Verbs which bear one of these affixes typically denote an event involving three arguments, which we might refer to (in Talmy's terms) as CAUSER, FIGURE, and GROUND. Alternatively, they may denote a directed motion event involving two arguments, causer and figure, with the verb root itself supplying partial information about the path. In either case, the figure will be expressed in s-syntax as either the primary object (signaled by *po-*) or the subject (signaled by *i-*).

2   DISTINGUISHING LEXICAL VS. MORPHOLOGICAL CAUSATIVES

Carrier-Duncan (1985) mentions several diagnostics for distinguishing lexical vs. morphological causatives in Tagalog:[2]

(i) Lexical causatives "entail a direct, usually physical, connection between the causer and [the causee]", whereas morphological causatives may involve either direct or indirect causation.

(ii) Morphological causatives are vague concerning the degree of control retained by the causee, allowing either permissive or coercive interpretations, whereas lexical causatives are normally coercive.

(iii) As Travis's labels suggest, morphological causative formation is fully productive, whereas lexical causatives are formed only with specific verb roots.

Travis (2000: 158–160) makes similar observations about the idiosyncratic nature of lexical causatives, in contrast to the regularity which is characteristic of productive (morphological) causatives. She points out that lexical causative morphology does not always produce causative semantics. For example, with certain classes of Kimaragang verbs (e.g. the *hit* and *cut* verbs), the

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[2] She refers to these as direct vs. indirect causatives.

meaning of the lexical causative form with *po-* or *poN-* is identical to the basic meaning of the root itself. A causative interpretation arises with other types of verb roots, e.g. change of state verbs. Productive causatives, however, always involve a uniform semantic change, adding a new participant (the causer) and another layer of event structure (the causing event). Thus the meaning of the morphological causative is always distinct from the basic meaning of the root itself.

As noted in section 1, the prefix *po-* or *poN-* is required in the Actor Voice form for virtually all agentive transitive verbs. This is an important difference between Kimaragang and Tagalog: many transitive verbs in Tagalog require *pag-* in AV, but many others do not. In previous work I have referred to these Kimaragang prefixes as "stem prefixes" or "transitivity markers", rather than causatives, because they do not always contribute causative semantics. They are glossed as transitivity markers in the examples presented here.

3   VERB CLASSES THAT TAKE THE CONVEYANCE PARADIGM

Paul (2000) identifies several classes of Malagasy verbs that take the Intermediary Voice prefix *a-*. These include:

(a) LOCATIVE ALTERNATION verbs (sometimes referred to as the 'spray/load' class), such as *fatratra* 'stuff', *lafik(a)* 'pad', *raraka* 'scatter', *tototra* 'fill', *fafaz* 'scatter, sow', *hosor* 'apply, spread; anoint', *tondrak* 'drench, soak'. Intermediary Voice selects the locatum (= displaced theme) as subject. In Actor Voice, the displaced theme may either be marked with a preposition or occur as direct object, immediately following the verb.[3]

(b) DATIVE ALTERNATION verbs such as *roso* 'serve, present', *tolotra/tolor* 'offer', *seho* 'show', *toro* 'point out'. Once again, Intermediary Voice selects the displaced theme as subject. In Actor Voice, the displaced theme is always the first object, while the goal may either be marked with a preposition or occur as the second object of a double object construction.

(c) INSTRUMENTAL ADVANCEMENT verbs such as *didy* 'cut', *fehy* 'tie', *fefy* 'fence in', *rakotra/rakof* 'cover', *dobok* 'beat (drum)', *totof* 'cover, fill in'. Instruments in general can be selected as subject using Circumstantial Voice. With this class of verbs, Intermediary Voice may also be used to select the instrument as subject. In Actor Voice, these verbs allow the instrument to appear either as the first object of a double object construction or with the normal prepositional marking for instruments.[4]

In Kimaragang these same classes of verbs (among others) use the Conveyance Voice prefix *i-* to select a displaced theme or instrument as subject, and select *po-* in the corresponding AV forms. Active and passive forms of some verbs in the 'spray/load' and 'throw' classes are listed in Table 1; example sentences involving the root *po-tunguw* 'pour'/ *poN-tunguw* 'water (tr.)' are provided in (4–5).

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[3] The last three verbs in the above list are from Pearson (1998). Pearson points out that when the displaced theme of a locative alternation verb is the AV object, the goal may be marked with a preposition, at least for some verbs.

[4] Pearson (1998) seems to say that some verbs which allow Intermediary Voice to select the instrument as subject do not permit the instrument to appear either as a direct object. Examples include *jinja* 'cut down, reap, harvest', *dona* 'hit, knock', *kapok* 'beat'.

Table 1: Locative Alternation verbs & 'throw' verbs

CONVEYANCE SENSE		GENERAL TRANSITIVE SENSE	
AV / UV	**GLOSS**	**AV / UV**	**GLOSS**
Ø-po-suwang/i-suwang	'insert'	*m-poN-suwang/suwang-an*	'fill'
Ø-po-tunguw/i-tunguw	'pour'	*m-poN-tunguw/tunguw-on*	'douse; water (tr.)'
Ø-po-tuntug/i-tuntug	'pour'	*m-poN-tuntug/tuntug-an*	'douse; water (tr.)'
Ø-po-isu/i-isu	'smear, apply'	*m-poN-isu/isu-an*	'anoint'
Ø-po-rawus/i-rawus	'scatter, spread'	*m-poN-rawus/rawus-on(?)*	'scatter, spread'
Ø-po-tiyas/i-tiyas	'scatter, sprinkle'	*m-poN-tiyas/(??)*	'plant (scatter seed)'
Ø-po-siling/i-siling	'hurl (flat object)'	(??)[5]/*siling-on*	'throw at'
Ø-pa-taam/i-taam	'throw away'	(n.a.)	(n.a.)
Ø-po-pilay/i-pilay	'throw'	*m-poN-pilay/pilay-on*	'pelt; throw at'

(4) a. Ø-*po*-tunguw   oku   nogi di   tinasak sid lampu,   nobubus nogi.
        AV-TR$_2$-pour   1sg.NOM   yet   ACC   oil   DAT lamp   spilled also
        'Just when I was pouring the oil into the lamp, it spilt.'

   b. I-tunguw   sid poonumadan   do   tasu it   weeg di   sada …
       CV-pour   DAT HABIT.feed.CircV   GEN   dog   NOM   water GEN   fish
       'Pour the water from (cleaning) the fish into the dog's feeding dish.'

(5) a. Yoku   ot   minonunguw(<in>m-*poN*-tunguw) dino   tinorimo   dino …
        1sg.TOP   NOM   <PST>AV-TR$_1$-pour   that.ACC   cooked.rice   that
        'I was the one who added water to the rice (while it was being cooked)…'

   b. Tungu-on   it   sada   ki-owo …
       pour-OV   NOM   fish   PRTCL
       'Add water to the fish, okay?' (when cooking; to make gravy)

Verbs of speaking behave in much the same way as the Locative Alternation & 'throw' verbs. The Conveyance paradigm expresses transfer of information from speaker to hearer, with the message as Undergoer, while the general transitive paradigm normally treats either the addressee or the words themselves as Undergoer.

Table 2: Verbs of speaking

GENERAL	GLOSS	CONVEYANCE	GLOSS
AV: *momoros* OV: *boros-on*	'speak (language); say (words); tell (addressee)'	AV: *po-boros/* CV: *i-boros*	'tell (message)' 'disclose, divulge'
duat-on	'ask (a person)'	*i-duat*	'ask (a question)'
ligow-on	'inform; invite (a person)'	*i-ligow*	'divulge'
sirib-an	'refer to indirectly'	*i-sirib*	'say indirectly'
—	—	*i-sowong*	'blurt out'

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[5] The form *moniling* does not occur, as far as I know.

Active and passive forms of some verbs in the Dative and Exchange classes are listed in Table 3. The root *taak* 'give' is ambiguous between transfer of ownership vs. physical transfer. In Active Voice, *pataak* entails physical transfer, whereas *manaak* typically implies (but apparently does not entail) transfer of ownership. The contrast is illustrated in (6a-b). Sentence (6a) allows either reading for the word *tana* 'land; dirt', whereas (6b) unambiguous, because land cannot be physically handed over, whereas dirt can. The use of *po-* with the Dative Voice marker, as in (6c), implies that the recipient gains physical possession but not permanent ownership. (The Conveyance Voice form *i-taak* allows either sense, but this is not the case with most other roots in this class; see Rappaport Hovav & Levin (2008) for a discussion of the special semantics of 'give'.)

Table 3: Dative Alternation and exchange verbs

CONVEYANCE SENSE		GENERAL TRANSITIVE SENSE	
AV / UV	**GLOSS**	**AV / UV**	**GLOSS**
Ø-pa-taak/i-taak	'give (theme)'	m-poN-taak/taak-an	'give to (recipient)'
Ø-pa-rawat/i-rawat	'serve (food)'	m-poN-rawat/rawat-an	'serve to (person eating)'
Ø-po-sumad/i-sumad	'feed to animals'	m-poN-sumad/sumad-an	'feed (animals)'
(??)/i-baray	'pay (money)'	m-poN-baray/baray-an	'pay (debt)'; 'pay for (thing bought)'
(??)/i-payu	'give in payment (for debt)'	m-poN-payu/payu-on	'redeem; settle (debt)'
po-boli/i-boli[6]	'spend (money)'	m-poN-boli/boli-on	'buy (thing bought)'
Ø-pa-dagang/ i-dagang	'sell'	m-poN-dagang/dagang-on	'buy'
Ø-po-olos/i-olos	'lend'	m-poN-olos/olos-on	'borrow'

(6) a.   Manaak(m-poN-taak)   oku   dikaw   do   tana.
       AV-TR$_1$-give   1sg.NOM   2sg.DAT   ACC   earth
       'I will give you some land/dirt.'

    b.   Ø-pa-taak   oku   dikaw   do   tana.
       AV-TR$_2$-give   1sg.NOM   2sg.DAT   ACC   earth
       'I will hand you some dirt (*land).'

    c.   Isay   ot   pa-taak-an   do   siin?
       who   NOM   TR$_2$-give-DV   ACC   money
       'To whom should contributions be given?'   (e.g. at a funeral)

The *a-* passive in Malagasy can be used to promote some but not all instruments to subject. The contrast appears to be lexically determined, but Paul (2000) notes that there are clear semantic constraints on this construction. First, "none of the Malagasy verbs that allow the *a-*/*-Vna* alternation are pure change of state verbs like *mamaky* 'break'" [2000: 57]. The instruments

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[6] One could consider *i-boli* to be an instrumental use of CV, since money is the instrument for buying things.

of pure change of state verbs can be promoted to subject using Circumstantial Voice, like any other instrument, but not with the *a-* passive. Second, only those instruments which are manipulated or moved are eligible to be promoted via the *a-* passive. In the next section we will see that this constraint extends to all uses of the prefix: only arguments that undergo a change of location can be promoted via the *a-* passive. Third, based on the work of Rahajarizafy (1960):

> …the instruments which are promoted with the *a-* passive are in some sense necessary for the action described by the verb. For example, cutting necessarily involves some cutting implement, whereas eating does not require the use of any instrument (other than the eater's own body). Hence the instrument of 'cut' will be promoted with the *a-* passive, but not the instrument of 'eat'. [Paul 2000: 54]

These same semantic constraints apply to the instrumental use of Conveyance Voice *i-* in Kimaragang. Kroeger (2010) shows that this usage is systematically impossible with the 'break' verbs, systematically possible with the 'cut' verbs, and sporadically possible with the 'hit' verbs. All instruments can be promoted to subject using the Instrumental Voice prefix, illustrated in (7a), but for verbs which also allow the instrumental use of Conveyance Voice (7b), these two constructions are not entirely equivalent. With 'cut' verbs the instrumental use of Conveyance Voice is pragmatically marked, and indicates that the speaker is adopting a perspective in which the instrument (rather than the patient) is viewed as the affected entity, or the entity being acted upon. Sentence (7b) indicates that the speaker's primary concern is the possible effect of the action on his bush knife, rather than the coconuts. AV forms of these verbs which include the stem prefix *po-* (rather than the expected *poN-*) convey the same marked interpretation, as illustrated in (7c).[7]

(7) a. Tongo   ot   *pangalapak*(poN-lapak)   nu   dilo'   niyuw?
       what   REL   IV-split   2sg.GEN   that(ACC) coconut
       'What will you split those coconuts with?'

   b. Nokuro.tu' *n-i-lapak*   nu   do   niyuw   ino   dangol   ku?
      why   PAST-CV-split   2sg.GEN   ACC   coconut   that(NOM)   bush.knife 1sg.GEN
      'Why did you use my bush knife to split coconuts?'

   c. *Ø-pa-lapak*   oku   po   diti   kapak   nu   do   niyuw.
      AV-TR$_2$-split   1sg.NOM   yet   this(ACC)   axe   your   ACC   coconut
      'I will split some coconuts with your axe (e.g., to test the sharpness of the axe).'

A similar contrast is possible with the 'hit' verbs, as illustrated in (8). But more often, when the Conveyance Voice paradigm is used with a 'hit' verb, it describes a situation where the normal Instrumental Voice would probably never be used. Some examples are presented in (9–10). Either way, the contrast between the two paradigms (e.g. 8a vs. 8b) is reminiscent of the *with-against* alternation in English. Conveyance Voice or *po-* is used to mark the moving object (figure) as the affected argument, rather than the stationary surface (ground).

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[7] In previous work I have taken the prefix *poN-* which shows up in IV to be the same stem prefix that I gloss as TR$_1$, assuming that the actual voice marker for IV was null in this context. This was based in part on evidence from closely related languages in which the prefix *i-* can co-occur with *poN-*. Since this does not happen in Kimaragang, it is simpler to treat CV and IV as distinct voice categories, treating the IV marker *poN-* as a homonym or polysemous sense of the stem prefix.

(8) a. Tongo   ot   *pinomobog*(<in>poN-bobog)   nu   dilo'   tasu   oy?
       what   NOM   <PST>IV-beat   2sg.GEN that   dog   Q
       'What did you beat that dog with?'

   b. Okon.ko' *i-bobog* ino   payung   ku   tu',   ara'ag   dati'.
      do.not   CV-beat   that(NOM) umbrella 1sg.GEN because   ruined   likely
      'Don't beat (anything) with my umbrella, it might get broken.'
      (or: 'Don't beat my umbrella against anything…')

(9)   *N-i-duntung*   dialo   sid   tobon   a   tonggom   yo.
       PST-CV-punch   3sg   DAT   wall   NOM   fist   3sg.GEN
       'He punched his fist against the wall.'

(10) a. Matay   beno(bo.ino)   wulanut   kukuyutan   nu
        die   PRTCL.that(NOM)   snake   holding   2sg.GEN

        ong   *i-lapos*   sid   pampang.
        if   CV-whip   DAT   rock
        'That snake you are holding will die if you whip it against a rock.'

    b. *Ø-Pa-lapos*   yalo   do   paray.
       AV-TR$_2$-whip   3sg.NOM   ACC   rice
       'He is whipping the rice (against something).' (i.e., threshing rice harvested with a
       sickle; beating it against something to remove the seed from the stalk)

4   WHAT DO THESE CLASSES HAVE IN COMMON?

Paul (2000: 87) suggests that the common property which allows instruments, material themes
and themes of dative verbs to be promoted via the *a-* passive must be located in the Lexical
Conceptual Structures (LCS) of the relevant verbs: "I believe that the Malagasy verbs discussed
in this chapter all share a similar LCS, probably encoding a change of location." Earlier she
states:

> I assume that these locata are present in the LCS of the verbs and therefore can be realized as
> arguments… In other words, the semantics determines the structural position of the locatum.
> This structural position is crucial in the application of passive. In this way, I concede the
> importance of semantics in determining the range of the *a-* passive. [Paul 2000: 55]

I too am prepared to concede the importance of semantics in determining the range of the
Kimaragang stem prefix *po-* and the Conveyance Voice prefix *i-*. However, as Paul points out,
this is no trivial task. In observing that subjects of the *a-* passive always seem to undergo a
change of location, she endorses Pearson's (1998) suggestion that elements promoted with the *a-*
passive are always "displaced themes". However, as we noted in section 3, other semantic factors
are also relevant, e.g. the question of whether the existence of a theme or instrument is entailed by
the meaning of the verb.

While most of the Malagasy verbs discussed above allow three arguments and so alternate
between two different passive forms, Paul notes that non-alternating transitive verbs whose only
passive form is the *a-* passive always select themes that undergo some change of location or

orientation. Examples include *mandraka* 'raise', *midina* 'lower' (tr.), *mandavo* 'spill' (tr.), *mamindra* 'move, displace'. The same holds true in Kimaragang. Moreover, there are a number of roots whose basic meaning does not include change of location or motion, but which can be used in the Conveyance Voice to add a motion component of meaning. Some examples are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Conveyance Voice adding motion component

ROOT	GLOSS	CONVEYANCE VOICE	GLOSS
tutud	'burn'	*i-tutud*	'poke X into fire'
siddang	'sun-dry'	*i-siddang*	'set X out to dry'
salaw	'smoke, dry (by fire)'	*i-salaw*	'set X near fire to dry/smoke'
ganti	'replace'	*i-ganti*	'trade away; exchange for something'
odia (Malay loan)	'gift' (N)	*i-odia*	'give as a present'
sokot	'stick to' (intr.)	*i-sokot*	'stick X onto Y'
ogom	'sit'	*i-ogom*	'set down'
ogot	'tie' (rope etc.)	*i-ogot*	'tie X to Y' (e.g. tie buffalo to tree)
sogi	'blow'	*i-sogi*	'cause X to move/drift by blowing'

In addition to change of location, Conveyance Voice frequently contributes a directional component, namely motion away from the deictic reference point, sometimes referred to as "centrifugal motion".[8] An interesting expression of this is seen in the converse pairs of certain transfer and exchange verbs mentioned in Table 2 above, repeated here as (11).

(11)	*Ø-po-dagang/i-dagang*	'sell'	*m-poN-dagang/dagang-on*	'buy'
	Ø-po-olos/i-olos	'lend'	*m-poN-olos/olos-on*	'borrow'

Another example of this centrifugal meaning is seen in the contrast between 'bring' vs. 'take'. The concept of 'bring' is expressed with *mong-owit/owit-on* 'carry', which expresses accompanied motion unspecified for direction; a locative adverb (e.g. *siti* 'here') is added to specify motion toward the deictic reference point. The concept of 'take' is expressed with *pa-atod/i-atod* meaning 'to take something (away from current location)'.

With some verbs Conveyance Voice expresses separation without change of location on the part of the theme, e.g. *i-ogol* 'leave behind'; *i-olu* 'leave as a remainder/left-over'.

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[8] Wolff (1973: 79), in discussing the functions of PAn **Si-*, says that it "is typically used in the case of verbs which refer to an action of conveying, or doing something in a direction away from the agent." See Pittman (1966) for a brief discussion of centrifugal vs. centripetal motion in Tagalog.

5   CONCLUSION

I have suggested that the Kimaragang lexical causative (transitivity prefix) *po-* plays a dual role. First, it specifies a general class of events in which a figure/theme is caused to move away from the deictic center, or in a lexically specified direction. Second, it indicates that the figure/theme must be expressed in s-syntax as a primary object. Conveyance Voice *i-* selects the same class of events and indicates that the figure/theme must be expressed as grammatical subject. It is tempting to assume, following Travis, that *po-* is present but invisible in Conveyance Voice clauses. This seems like a plausible assumption, given their shared semantic properties, but some explanation would need to be given for the fact that these two affixes do co-occur when *po-* is used as a productive (s-syntax) causative.

Keenan (1976) used the label "Intermediary voice" for the *a-* passive, and "Goal voice" for the *-Vna* passive. These labels reflect the structure of a typical caused motion event: the ground (= patient or goal) is the endpoint, and the figure/theme is an "intermediary", neither final nor initial in the causal chain. This is the primary event type for which the Malagasy *a-* passive and the Kimaragang Conveyance paradigm are used.

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