

Chapter 4

Yami Ditransitive Constructions

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to verify the existence of dative alternation in Yami, a language that has not only a rich case marking system but also a unique focus system. A descriptive study of its focus constructions, alternation of verbal morphology and case marking of nominals is investigated. The verbal morphology is found to consistently encode the information of the thematic role of the subject nominal and the case marking is also found to reflect the thematic role of the un-focus nominal while the focus nominal is always nominative case marked. The controversy lies in the status of the *so*-patient (patient nominal marked by *so* case marker) of AF construction. The data has shown that the patient nominal of AF construction can either be genitive case marked or *so* case marked, and the difference between them is in the presence of the definite feature. Some researchers (Ho, 1990; Rau, 2003; Deng, 2005) have treated the *so*-patient nominal as an oblique and the AF construction as a derived antipassive construction from the basic transitive sentence having the patient nominal as subject. But identifying *so*-nominal as a peripheral argument remains controversial, since under certain circumstances it can replace nominative and genitive noun phrases. This contradictory property leads us to reconsider the ergative-antipassive analysis and to reexamine the status of the *so*-patient nominal in

AF construction.

While the grammatical status of the *so*-patient nominal remains mysterious, the appropriateness of the term ‘focus’ is challenged by some researchers. Chang (1997) argues that the term ‘focus’ in Austronesian languages is misleading and should be identified as ‘voice’. He first compares the ‘focus’ construction of Austronesian with that of English, and points out the similarities and differences between them. He proposes that the ‘focus’ construction should be identified as ‘voice’ alternation which is considered a more appropriate term by recent Austronesianists. While ‘focus’ has been re-analyzed and identified as ‘voice’, the adequacy of the analysis of Yami as an ergative language and AF constructions as antipassives is challenged. This chapter first deals with issues on the adequacy of a re-analysis of Yami ‘focus’ as ‘voice’, then offers arguments against an ergative-antipassive analysis of the language, and finally, investigates the grammatical status of the *so*-patient nominal. After these issues have been dealt with, the construction of trivalent verbs will be investigated to consider the existence of dative alternation in this language.

The organization of this chapter is as follows. The comparison and arguments given by Chang (1997) are briefly discussed and the adequacy of identifying Yami ‘focus’ as ‘voice’ is determined in section two. Arguments against an ergative-antipassive analysis of the language are also provided and followed by arguments for a valency-neutral analysis of the Yami ‘voice’ system. Section three turns to a discussion of trivalent verbs in Yami and provides evidence and support for the existence of dative alternation. Section four supplies further justification for dative alternation in Yami. Section five discusses the limitations and implications of our findings and analyses. Section six concludes the chapter.

4.2 Focus or Voice?

This subsection begins with several analyses of the voice systems of Austronesian and Philippine-type languages, including one conducted by Chang (1997). Arguments and evidence are provided to support these proposals that the *so-called* focus system in Austronesian and Philippine-type languages should be identified as voice system. The data with regards to Yami, as one of these languages, is shown to confirm these proposals. In addition, the Yami voice system and the English active-passive voice system are compared to show their similarities and differences. After justifying the nature of the Yami voice system, arguments against an ergative-antipassive analysis, and for a valency-neutral voice system, are discussed.

4.2.1 Chang's Analysis (1997)

Chang (1997) points out that the term 'focus' is misleading since the only similarities shared by the *so-called* Austronesian focus system and the usual focus constructions of other languages such as English are those of providing contrast and emphasis. After comparing the Austronesian focus constructions to those of English, he suggests that the Austronesian focus system should be identified as voice system, and that the term 'voice' should be used in a broad sense. 'Actor voice' refers to sentences that have the agent argument as subject, and 'non-actor voice' refers to sentences whose subjects are not the agent argument of the predicate: patient voice, locative voice and instrument voice.

Chang proposes that the parallel between the usual focus construction of languages such as English and the Austronesian focus system is only superficial and that there are significant distinctions between them. According to Chang, interrogative pronouns, which are required to take focus position cross-linguistically, cannot take the *so-called* focus position in Austronesian languages. The Seediq and Kavalan

examples (1) and (2) are adapted from Chang (1997: 43), and clearly illustrate that interrogative pronouns in these two Austronesian languages cannot take the *so-called* focus position in sentence final position. When the interrogative pronoun ‘ima’ takes the *so-called* focus position, the sentence is rendered ungrammatical. When the interrogative pronoun occurs in sentence initial position and binds the subject gap as in (1c), the sentence is grammatical. The same pattern is found in Kavalan. The interrogative pronoun cannot take sentence final position (which is also the *so-called* focus position), and has bind the subject gap in sentence initial position in order for the sentence to be grammatical, as is shown in example (2b). In English and many other languages, interrogative pronouns usually can take the focus position, as illustrated in (3).

(1) Seediq

- a. s-um-ebuc icah a pawan
hit-AV what
‘Pawan is hitting plums.’
- b. *s-um-ebuc ricah ka ima
hit-AV plum Nom who¹
- c. ima_i ka s-um-ebuc ricah e_i
who Kom hit-AV plum
‘Who is hitting plums?’ (Chang/y 1997: 43-44)

(2) Kavalan

- a. *p-um-ukun ya tiana tu sunis
hit-AV Nom who Acc child²
- b. tiana_i ya p-um-ukun tu sunis e_i
who Nom hit-AV Acc child

¹ The example is directly taken from Chang’s (1997) dissertation and the meaning of this sentence is not provided. Therefore, this example does not have the English translation.

² The example is directly taken from Chang’s (1997) dissertation and the meaning of this sentence is not provided. Therefore, this example does not have the English translation.

‘Who is hitting the child?’ (Chang/y 1997: 43-44)

(3) English

- a. Who was it that interviewed you?
- b. *It was you that who interviewed.

Mandarin

- a. Zhangshan da de shi shei
Zhangshan hit DE is who
‘Who is it that Zhangshan hit?’
(張三打的是誰?)
- b. *da shei de shi Zhangshan
hit who DE is Zhangshan
(*打誰的是張三?) (Chang 1997: 42)

Notice that the interrogative pronouns – *who* and *shei* have to take the focus position in order for the sentence to be grammatical, whereas the interrogative pronouns in (1) and (2) have to take sentence initial position to be acceptable. Moreover, the noun phrase that takes the *so-called* focus position in Austronesian languages has to be definite, which is not a required property of the focus element in other languages, as is shown in the English example (4). The position before the complementizer ‘that’ is the focus position and the focus element ‘with a stick’ is indefinite. This further suggests that the *so-called* focus construction of Austronesian languages and the focus constructions of other languages are two distinct constructions. Therefore, Chang suggests that the focus system in Austronesian languages should be considered as voice system. In next subsection, other research is analyzed and the adequacy of using the term ‘voice’ instead of ‘focus’ is further justified.

(4) It was with a stick that John hit the child.

4.2.2 Other Analysis

Himmelman (2002) points out that the Philippine-type ‘focus’ is distinct from what is commonly understood as pragmatic focus. In other words, the ‘focus’ of Philippine and related languages has nothing to do with the marking of new information (information focus) or the marking of contrastive emphasis on one of the arguments (contrastive focus), as the example in (5) illustrates. The noun phrase, which is the ‘focus’ of the sentence, is not new information, and it is not contrasted with another noun phrase to convey its meaning: it is the child (not the adult) who looked for a house/houses. Furthermore, Himmelman suggests that while the Philippine-type ‘focus’ is obviously a voice phenomenon, these two voice systems are not purely identical and should be distinguished from one another.

- (5) humanap na ng bahay ang bata’
 ACT-search now Gen house SPEC child
 ‘The child looked for houses/a house.’ (Himmelman 2002: 12)

Himmelman goes on to propose that there is no match for the Philippine-type voice construction to be found in any of the world’s languages, but there are certainly some similarities between English active-passive alternations and Philippine-type voice alternations. The most significant similarity is that both are able to put a different argument into the pivot (or subject) position, and the promotion of the argument is morphologically marked on the main predicate. When the predicate is affixed with an agent ‘focus’ affix, the subject has to be the agent. When the predicate is affixed with a patient ‘focus’ affix, the subject has to be the patient. This is similar to English active/passive alternation. When the predicate is unmarked, the sentence is an active one, as in (6a). When the predicate is affixed with a passive marker (be + past participle), a passive sentence is generated, as in (6b).

- (6) a. John breaks the window.
 b. The window **was broken** by John.

Moreover, Himmelmann summarizes two major approaches to the Philippine-type voice system – ergative and valency-neutral alternation (symmetrical voice systems). The ergative analysis of the languages suggests that the basic transitive sentence is the one with the patient argument occupying the subject position and the antipassive construction is the one with the agent taking the subject position. The analysis of valency-neutral alternation proposes that the transitivity does not change when the voice alternates. A change of voice only signals a change in the alignment of semantic roles and syntactic structures. When the sentence is in agent voice, the agent is the subject; when it is in patient voice, the patient is the subject, etc. Researchers working on different Austronesian languages have pointed out the inadequacy of the term ‘focus’ and have proposed that a system that has different arguments taking the subject position is similar to the ‘voice’ system of English and should be re-analyzed as such. In the next subsection, Yami data are investigated to show the inadequacy of the term ‘focus’ and arguments against an ergative-antipassive analysis are provided followed by support for a valency-neutral analysis.

4.2.3 Yami Voice System

In this subsection, Yami data are examined to further justify Chang’s proposal that the ‘focus’ system of Yami, as an Austronesian language, should be identified as voice system. Yami ‘focus’ constructions are similar to those of Seediq and Kavalan. The *so-called* focus noun phrase in Yami could take the position after the main predicate as in (7), sentence initial position as in (8), or sentence final position as in (9). But the

interrogative pronoun must take the sentence initial position as in (10) in order for the sentence to be acceptable. Furthermore, the focus elements in Yami are always nominative case marked, and nominative case marked nominals are always definite, as exemplified in (11). The two examples in (11) only differ in the case marking of the noun phrase ‘kanakan’ meaning ‘child’. When the noun phrase is nominative case marked, it refers to a definite entity. When it is *so* case marked, it refers to an indefinite entity. The characteristics of necessity for interrogative pronoun to occupy sentence initial position and definiteness of focus nominal are in accordance with Chang’s findings with Kavalan and Seediq. Therefore, it is more reasonable to regard the Yami ‘focus’ system as a voice system, as recent Austronesianists (Chang/y, 1997) have done with other Austronesian languages.

- (7) koman si manpang so kois
 Eat-AV Nom Manpang Cm pig
 ‘Manpang will eat pork.’ (Chang/c 1997: 7)
- (8) o volai mansongit so ino
 Nom snake AV-bite Cm dog
 ‘The snake will bite the dog.’ (Chang/c 1997: 11)
- (9) nasongiten no volai o ino
 bite-PV Gen snake Nom dog
 ‘The dog is bitten by the snake.’ (Chang/c 1997: 11)
- (10) ikong kanen mu?
 what eat-PV you
 ‘What are you eating?’ (Chang 2000: 91)
- (11) a. ya mian so kanakan do vahai
 Tns exist CM child CM house
 ‘There is a child in the house.’ (Ho 1990: 63)
- b. ya mina o kanakan do vahai

Tns exist CM child CM house
 ‘The child is in the house.’

Even after the so-called ‘focus’ system of Yami has been examined thus and speculated to be a kind of voice system, it is still not purely identical to English active/passive voice alternation. Nonetheless, the two systems do share important similarities. Therefore, it is necessary to make a contrastive study of both. In the next subsection, the voice systems of Yami and English are compared to examine the similarities and differences between them.

4.2.4 Comparison of the Yami Voice System and the English Active-Passive Voice

A comparison of the Yami and English voice systems draws our attention to the existing number of voice alternations possessed by each and to the alternation of verbal morphology with alteration of voice. Active English constructions are morphologically unmarked, whereas constructing a passive sentence in English involves inserting the auxiliary verb *be* and changing the verb to its past participle variant, as exemplified in (12). The subject of an active English sentence is the agent of the main predicate, and the subject of the passive English sentence is the patient of the main predicate. Similar characteristics are found in the Yami voice system. The subject of an agent voice sentence is the agent of the main predicate as illustrated in (13a), and the subject of a patient voice sentence is the patient of the main predicate as illustrated in (13b). These two voice systems differ in terms of the marking of the sentence voice on the main predicate and the number of voice variants that are present.

- (12) a. John broke the window. (transitive, active)
 b. The window was broken by John. (transitive, passive)

c. The window was broken. (transitive, agentless passive)

d. The window broke. (intransitive, active)

(13) a. ya manbakkak so kanakan si Mapay

Tns AV-hit CM child Nom Mapay

‘Mapay is hitting a child.’

b. na nibakkakan o kanakan na

he hit-PV Nom child his

‘He had hit his child.’ (Shih 1997: 55)

‘‘The child had been hit by him.’’

(14) a. ko man-apsi so kopo

I AV-break CM cup

‘I break a cup.’

b. ko ni-apsi o kopo

I PV-break Nom cup

‘I broke the cup.’ (Chang/c 1997: 27)

‘‘The cup was broken by me.’’

Table 1. Morphological marking on main predicate for different voice constructions

	Active	Passiv/Patient voice	Location voice	Instrument voice
English	∅	Be + pass participle		
Yami	om/m	en/an/∅	an	i

The morphological markings on the main predicate to signal the voice of the Yami and the English sentence are summarized in Table 1. English has only two voice alternations, and hence, only one of them, that of passive voice, requires voice marking on the main predicate. Conversely, Yami has more than two voice alternations, and requires different voice markers to signal sentence voice. In other words, every voice alternate has its verbal affix. The part of the patient voice sentence whose main predicate is zero marked is the only exception which does not have overt marking on the main predicate to indicate sentence voice. But the absence of a patient voice affix on some of the main predicates of PV sentences is due to the presence of

the past tense prefix *ni-* which is in complementary distribution with the patient voice suffix *-en*. Therefore, Yami does not have a true zero voice marking variant corresponding to the English active voice variant. Besides this difference in voice marking, English lacks locative and instrument voice alternations which can be easily observed from the absence of the necessary markers in Table 1. However, locative and instrument voice alternations are not found in every sentence in Yami. They can only be found with verbs that assign more than two thematic roles, as exemplified in (15). (15a) is a locative voice sentence, and (15b) is an instrument voice sentence.

- (15) a. na niparalan ni Manidong so soli si Macinanao
 LV-mail Gen Manidong CMtaro Nom Macinanao
 ‘It is Macinanao who Manidong mailed a taro/taros to.’
- b. na nizakat so kois ni Manidong o ipangan
 IV-kill CM pig GenManidong Nom knife
 ‘It is the knife that Manidong killed a pig with it.’

Throughout our comparison of the morphological markings of main predicates in English and Yami, the most significant similarity between them is that these two voice systems can put different arguments into the subject position. For English passive construction, the valency of the main predicate reduces and the agent argument is suppressed to a by-phrase functioning as an adjunct. This raises the question of whether Yami voice variants have the characteristics of English actives and passives. If Yami is an ergative language whose basic transitive construction is the patient voice sentence as proposed by Ho (1990) and Deng (2005), then the agent voice sentence is considered to be an antipassive construction which is the functional equivalent of the English passive – suppression of an argument. However, the proposal that Yami is an ergative language is controversial, and some researchers have suggested that the voice alternations of Philippine-type and Austronesian languages do not reduce the valency

of the main predicate so that the main function of voice alternations is to put different arguments into the subject position. The Yami data have led us to argue against the ergative-antipassive analysis and support the valency-neutral analysis. In the next subsection, arguments against Yami as an ergative language and agent voice sentences as antipassives is provided with supporting evidence to show that Yami voice alternations are better explained with a valency-neutral approach.

4.2.5 Arguments against ergative and antipassive analysis

The aim of this section is to argue that the Yami voice system is actually a valency-neutral system in contradiction of the proposals of Ho and Deng which consider Yami to be an ergative language, the patient voice (PV thereafter) sentence to be the basic transitive sentence, and the agent voice (AV thereafter) sentence to be an antipassive construction. This section begins with a detailed examination of the arguments and supporting evidence of Ho and Deng for considering Yami to be ergative, and then follows with counterexamples to their evidence and a discussion of the flaws in their arguments. Finally, justifications for considering Yami to have a valency-neutral voice system are provided.

The ergative analysis of the language proposed by both Ho (1990) and Deng (2005) is based mainly on observations regarding markedness of verbal morphology, morphological identification, and semantic transitivity. First, they point out that the main predicate of a patient voice construction in this language is sometimes zero marked, and hence, should be considered as the basic clause. Second, the verbal morphology for a one-place predicate and an agent voice two-place predicate is identical, and the agent voice construction should not be the basic transitive construction. Last, they argue that telic action is always expressed in patient voice

construction and the patient nominal is always definite which implies that the individuation of the patient is high, and hence, the patient voice construction should be the basic transitive construction. They observe that the patient nominal of a two-place predicate patient voice construction and the subject of a one-place predicate construction are marked with the same case marker – *si* or *o*, and therefore, conclude that Yami is an ergative language. However, their observations are not entirely accurate and some of their supporting arguments are weak and circular.

Ho and Deng suggest that PV sentences should be considered as the basic voice due to the absence of verbal morphology on some of the PV verbs. As pointed out earlier in this chapter, the patient voice verbal affix *-en* and the past tense prefix *ni-* are in complementary distribution, which is only found in patient voice construction. In other voice constructions, the past tense prefix *ni-* can co-exist with other voice affixes such as the agent voice affix *-om-*, the location voice affix *-an*, and the instrument voice affix *-i*. In other words, *ni-* might be a variant of a patient voice morpheme. Therefore, the argument that some PV sentences have zero voice marking on the main predicate to support their claim is a weak one. Furthermore, they suggest that the fact that the one-place predicate is always agent voice marked by *-om/m*, while agent voice construction with a two-place predicate is marked with the same verbal morphology is an indication that the agent voice construction of the two-place predicate is an antipassive construction. However, as a derived construction, antipassive construction whose main predicate should be morphologically marked to indicate the suppression of an argument as what English passive morphology does is not found with AF construction in Yami. Therefore, the AF construction in Yami should not be analyzed as an antipassive construction. Except for their observations regarding markedness and verbal morphology, the argument of Ho and Deng that the

object of patient voice construction is definite and should have higher transitivity than agent voice construction is circular. The patient nominal in patient voice construction has to take the subject position, and hence, is nominative case marked. Notice that nominative case marked nominals are always definite in Yami. In other words, the property of definiteness is a product of the position it occupies, not one that it originally possesses.

(16) a. jabo kaji ko angsem-an so mata mo
 no Neg I eat-raw meat CM eye your
 ‘I will definitely eat your eyes.’ (Rau and Deng 2003: 24)

b. nanitorowan ni Manidong si Macinanao so vakong ni jama na
 Past-give-LF Gen Manidong Nom Macinano CM book Gen father his
 ‘It is Macinanao who Manidong gave his father’s book to.’

Notice that the patient nominal is always *so* case marked when it does not take the subject position. A nominal which is *so* case marked and bears patient or theme theta role is indefinite in non-patient voice constructions. However, the *so* case marking can have a definite reading when a demonstrative or possessive pronoun is attached to it, as is exemplified in (16). The patient nominal is *so* case marked and is definite and referential since it refers to a specific entity by means of the possessive pronouns ‘*mo*’ and ‘*ni*’, respectively. Therefore, the argument that patient voice sentences with definite patient nominals have higher transitivity than other voice constructions is not only circular but also not true.

If one considers Yami to be an ergative language and its AF construction to be antipassive, the grammatical function of the patient nominal of the AF construction marked by *so* case marker should be regarded as functionally similar to the agent nominal of English passive construction and as such, analyzed as oblique. Several

observations have shown that the *so* nominal should not be analyzed as oblique which further justifies the claim that Yami is not an ergative language and its agent voice construction is not antipassive. First of all, there are examples that the *so* case marker can replace the nominative case *o* and genitive case *ni*, as exemplified in (17) and (18). If the agent voice construction is antipassive and the *so* nominals are adjuncts, then it should not be possible to replace core arguments marked by *ni* and *o*. Therefore, the agent voice construction in Yami is definitely not antipassive, and the ergative and antipassive analysis is inadequate.

(17) a. sino ya makzra **ni Ino**? [+definite]

b. sino ya makzra **so ino**? [-definite]

(18) a. ya mian **so kanakan** do vahai
 Tns exist CM child CM house
 ‘There is a child in the house.’

b. ya mian **o kanakan** do vahai
 Tns exist CM child CM house
 ‘The child is in the house.’

Secondly, the proposal that nominals marked by *so* case markers should not be analyzed as oblique can be further justified by the syntactic representation of causative constructions in Yami. The presence of the causative marker *pa-/mapa-* is claimed by Chang (1997) to increase the valency of the main predicate. As such, a one-place predicate when inflected by a causative marker requires two arguments to complete its meaning, as illustrated in (19a). Comparing it with the same predicate without causative marker in (19b), only one argument is required. Notice that (19a) is an agent voice sentence which requires the agent nominal to function as the subject. When patient voice alternation is not possible with a one-place predicate, affixation of a causative marker increases the valency of the one-place predicate which can take

two core arguments and has patient voice alternation, as exemplified in (19c). The sentence in (19c) is in patient voice: the patient nominal has to be nominative case marked instead and functions as the subject, and the agent nominal has to be genitive case marked.

(19) a. ya ni-mapa-lavi so kanakan si Manidong
 Past-AF-Cau-cry Cm child Nom Manidong
 ‘Manidong caused a child to cry.’

b. ya nimlavi o kanakan.
 Past-AF-cry Nom child
 ‘The child cried.’

c. na ni-pa-lavi ni Manidong o kanakan
 Past-Cau-cry Gen Manidong Nom child
 ‘Manidong caused the child to cry.’
 ‘The child cried because of Manidong.’

Thirdly, the fact that the *so* nominal can sometimes be omitted has raised doubts with regard to its validity as a core argument. However, the omission of the nominative nominal is also possible in this language, as illustrated in (20). Both examples are agent voice sentences, but differ in the presence of their core argument. (20a) has an implied agent and an overt patient. (20b) has an implied patient and an overt agent. Therefore, omission is not a qualified criterion to distinguish between core and peripheral arguments in Yami.

(20) a. man-rakat so ino
 AF-die CM dog
 ‘(someone) killed the dog.’ (Chang/c 1997: 14)

b. ko man-bakbak
 I(Nom) AF-beat
 ‘I beat (something).’ (Deng 2005: 25)

The above three observations not only constitute negative evidence against an ergative-antipassive analysis, but also positive evidence for a valency-neutral approach to Yami voice alternations. In the previous chapter, the case marking for nominals bearing different theta roles was found to be consistent. Notice that nominals that bear different theta roles and take the subject position have to be nominative case marked. Other nominals that do not take subject position are marked consistently according to their theta roles. Agent nominals are genitive case marked, patient nominals are either *so* case marked or genitive case marked, locative nominals are locative case marked, and instrument nominals are genitive case marked by *no*. Nominative and genitive case marked nominals are definite, and *so* case marked nominals are indefinite. The case markers for nominals bearing different theta roles are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 Summary of case markers for nominals bearing different theta roles.

	agent	patient/theme	location (source/goal)	instrument
Non-subject	Genitive (no or ni)	Genitive (ni/no) [+ definite] so [- definite]	Locative (ji or do)	Genitive (no)
Subject	Nominative	Nominative	Nominative	Nominative

All Yami voice alternations are morphologically marked with few exceptions in patient voice constructions. This might be one of the features that has misled researchers to consider patient voice constructions as the basic clause type. However, as previously mentioned, zero marked PV constructions are only found with the past tense marker *-ni*. Therefore, PV constructions are not morphologically unmarked. The lack of patient voice verbal morphology is due its complementary distribution with the past tense marker *-ni*. In English active-passive voice alternations, only passive alternation is morphologically marked. If Yami patient voice construction is the basic

clause type, as it is with English actives, then there should be explicit markings on the main predicate of non-patient voice constructions to trigger the derivation of the derived construction – antipassive, similar to the derivation of English passives. English employs the auxiliary *BE* and past participle to signal the subject change: languages such as Dyirbal that has employed the derivational suffix *-Na(y)* on the main predicate to trigger the derivation of the antipassive, as illustrated in (21).

(21) a. English Passive

The window **was** broken by John.

b. Dyirbal Antipassive

bayi yara bugun d3ugumbil-gu bural-**Na**-u
 DET.ABS man.ABS DET.DAT woman-DAT see-**ANTI**-TNS
 ‘The man saw the woman.’ (Foley 1998: 13)

Unlike English and Dyirbal, Yami bears no explicit morphological marking or any derivational affix on the main predicate in various voice alternations to function as a trigger for deriving passives or antipassives from underlying transitive clauses. Moreover, the case marking for non-subject nominals remains the same in different voice alternations. This is an indication that the valency of the main predicate is unaffected by voice affixes. When an English passive verbal morphology is present, the agent nominal is either omitted or functions as an adjunct – *by* phrase. When a voice affix is present in Yami, only the agreeing subject nominal that functions as the subject has to be nominative case marked; the others remain unchanged with the same case marking.

By examining the status of the *so*-nominal and comparing the verbal morphology of derived passives or antipassives with the AF construction in Yami, it is found that *so*-nominals should not be regarded as oblique or adjunct, AF constructions are not

antipassives, and Yami is not an ergative language, Hence, its voice system is valency-neutral.

4.2.6 Summary

When the Yami focus is identified as voice alternation, evidence is found to oppose the ergative-antipassive analysis for Yami. The evidence opposing the ergative analysis also serves as positive evidence to support the proposal that Yami has a valency-neutral voice system. While the *so*-patient nominal of agent voice construction has been considered as oblique in previous research, observations supporting its role as a core argument are noted in the present study. These include a recognition of the following features: the potential for replacing core argument by *so* nominal, the definiteness of *so*-nominal by adding demonstrative or possessive pronoun, the lack of antipassive verbal morphology, the *so* nominal being the additional argument while the valency of the predicate is increased by affixation of causative marker, and the grammaticality of omission of nominative and *so* nominals. All of these observations have led us to suggest that Yami voice alternations do not change or reduce the valency of the predicate, that the *so* nominal is not oblique, that agent voice construction is not antipassive, and that Yami is not an ergative language. In the next section, trivalent verbs in Yami are investigated to examine the existence of dative alternation in this language.

4.3 Ditransitive Verbs

The ergative-antipassive analysis treats the *so*-patient nominal as oblique which creates difficulties in the investigation of trivalent verbs in Yami. However, once the distinction between ‘focus’ and ‘voice’ has been clarified and the term ‘focus’ has

been re-analyzed as ‘voice’, the grammatical function of the *so*-patient nominal can be revised as evidence that Yami voice alternations are valency-neutral. But, before we investigate the ditransitive construction of Yami, we must clarify the availability of voice alternations with various types of verbs. According to the studies of Starosta (2001) and Huang (2006), not every verb in western Austronesian languages possesses all voice alternations, even if they are more complex than those of English. For ditransitive verbs, Huang (2006) has reported that ditransitive constructions can have nominative agent, location, and beneficiary NP. In her analysis, the nominative NP of the locative voice refers to the indirect object – the recipient – and the nominative NP of the beneficiary voice refers to the direct object – the transported theme (The term that refers to the direct object of ditransitive verbs in this thesis is ‘patient’: it is applied in a broad sense to refer to both patient and theme. Therefore, the beneficiary voice is analyzed as ‘patient voice’ in our analysis). It is also true of Yami that not all verbs have all the voice variants. The typical ditransitive verb ‘give/send’ in Yami which is supposed to have three voice variants does not have all voice variants. This verb not only does not have the three voice variants of ditransitive verbs, but also has two distinct verb forms as examples in (22). In (22a), the verb ‘give’ lacks the location voice variant; in (22b), the verb ‘send’ lacks the patient voice variant and does not seem to have agent voice variant³. Therefore, this section examines not only the verb ‘give/send’, but also other trivalent verbs. In addition, the syntactic expressions of the two internal arguments –direct (the transported theme) and indirect object (the recipient) are examined for any possible indication of the

³ Agent voice variant of the verb are not confirmed by all the informants. Therefore, the validity of its existence is uncertain. Therefore, it is not listed with other examples in (22). The example of possible agent voice variant of the verb ‘panta’ is list below:

si Manidong yamanta ni Macinanao so vakong
 Nom Manidong give-AV Gen Macinanao CM book
 ‘Manidong gives/sends Macinanao a book.’

existence of dative alternation.

(22) a. TORO

- i. tomoro si Manidong ji Macinanao so vakong
 give-AV Nom Manidong Loc Macinanao CM book
 ‘Manidong gives/sends Macinanao a book.’

- ii. itoro no ama do ina o vakong
 give-PV Gen father Loc mother Nom book
 ‘It is the book that father gives/sends to mother.’

b. PANTA

- i. ipanta no ama o ina so vokong
 send-LV Gen father Nom mother CM book
 ‘It is mother who father gives/sends the book to.’

Constructing a well-formed ditransitive sentence requires the presence of one external argument and two internal arguments. In Yami, the main function of the case system is to signal the theta role of the nominal. Therefore, it is sometimes difficult in Yami to distinguish between core and peripheral arguments, and transitive and ditransitive verbs, when a sentence contains three nominals. Therefore, a comparison must be made between verbs that assign different theta roles in order to distinguish trivalent verbs. The first set in (23a) consists of verbs that have a thematic structure of agent, patient, and goal. Verbs of the second set in (23b) assign agent, patient, and source theta roles. Those of the final set in (23c) contain agent, patient, and instrument in their theta grid. The examples in (23) show that syntax does not distinguish between source and goal nominals but does distinguish instrument nominals from other nominals through different case marking.

(23)

a. [agent, patient, goal]

PV: na niparalah ni Manidong **ji** Macinanao o soli

Past-PV-mail Gen Manidong Loc Macinanao Nom taro
 ‘It is the taro that Manidong mailed to Macinanao.’

b. [agent, patient, source]

PF: na nitakaw ni Manidong **ji** Macinanao o vakong
 Past-PV-steal Gen Manidong Loc Macinanao Nom book
 ‘It was the book that Manidong stole from Macinanao.’

c. [agent, patient, instrument]

PV: na nizakat **no** ipangan ni Manidong o kois
 Past-PV-kill Gen knife Gen Manidong Nom pig
 ‘The pig was killed with the knife by Manidong.’

Different case marking does not provide any support for either set of verbs to be considered ditransitive or trivalent. When comparing these verbs in different voices, we find a distinction in terms of agent voice construction. The agent voice sentence of the verb ‘kill’ with the thematic structure of agent, patient, and instrument is unacceptable, as in (24). The sentence only becomes grammatical when the instrument nominal ‘*no ipangan*’ meaning ‘the knife’ is excluded. The inclusion of the third nominal – goal or source - in agent voice construction is acceptable, as exemplified in (25). The ungrammaticality of agent voice with instrument nominal and the grammaticality of agent voice with goal and source nominal show the distinction between these verbs. Source and goal nominals function as core arguments and have to receive the theta role from the main predicate. The instrument nominal cannot receive the theta role from its main predicate since it is a transitive verb which can only assign two theta roles: agent and patient. According to Theta Criterion, every theta role a verb can assign must be assigned to NPs and every NP can only receive/bear one theta role. When a verb can only assign two theta roles, a third NP cannot surface due to the absence of an assigned theta role. Therefore, the set of verbs with the thematic structure of [agent, patient, instrument] does not consist of trivalent

verbs.

(24) AV: ya nimzakat so kois-am si Manidong (*no ipangan)
 Past-AV-kill CM pig Nom Manidong Gen knife
 ‘Manidong killed a pig.’

(25)

a. [agent, patient, goal]

AV: ya nimaparala si Manidong so soli ji Macinanao
 Past-AV-mail Nom Manidong CM taro Loc Macinanao
 ‘Manidong mailed Macinanao taro.’

b. [agent, theme, source]

AV: nimanakaw ji Macinanao si Manidong so vakong
 Past-AV-steal Loc Macinanao Nom Manidong CM book
 ‘Manidong stole a book from Macinanao.’

The apparent unacceptability of agent voice with instrument nominal might lead us to question what makes the patient voice alternation in (23c) acceptable while its main predicate ‘kill’ can only assign two theta roles. The grammaticality of (23c), reduplicated below in (26b), is licensed by the patient voice verb form. It is commonly observed in Yami that the valency of a verb can be altered by changing the verbal morphology. Notice that the instrument voice verb form in (26c) is the same as the patient voice verb form in (26b). In order for the instrument nominal to occupy the subject position, it has to function as a core argument and be assigned a theta role. Therefore, the change in verbal morphology has increased the valency of the verb and hence, the grammaticality of both (26b) and (26c). This is similar to causative construction which will be discussed in next subsection.

(26) [agent, patient, instrument]

a. AV: ya nimzakat so kois-am si Manidong (*no ipangan)
 Past-AV-kill CM pig Nom Manidong Gen knife
 ‘Manidong killed a pig.’

b. PV: na nizakat no ipangan ni Manidong o kois
 Past-PV-kill Gen knife Gen Manidong Nom pig
 ‘The pig was killed with the knife by Manidong.’

c. IV: na nizakat so kois ni Manidong o ipangan
 Past-IV-kill CM pig Gen Manidong Nom knife
 ‘It was the knife that Manidong killed a pig with it.’

When comparing the voice variants of the verb ‘kill’, we find a very interesting observation. When the verb forms in sentences (26b) and (26c) are identical, the patient and instrument nominals surface differently. In (26b), the instrument nominal is led by the genitive case marker – *no*, and the patient nominal is led by the nominative case marker – *o*. In (26c), the instrument nominal is led by the nominative case marker – *o*, and the patient nominal is led by the case maker – *so*. This alternation is similar to the English “*with/against* alternation” (Levin, 2005), as is cited in the examples in (27). The instrument nominal has surfaced as an object in (27a) and as an oblique in (27b). Similarly, the instrument nominal in Yami can either take the subject position as in (27c) or remain the same as an instrument nominal – perhaps as an added argument.

- (27) a. Kerry hit the stick against the fence.
 b. Kerry hit the fence with the stick. (Levin 2005: 187)

The alternation between the subject and the additional nominal is not found with every verb in Yami; even the ditransitive verb ‘give/send’ does not seem to have this kind of alternation. A comparison of the voice variants of the verbs ‘steal’ and ‘mail’ indicates that the patient and location voice variants of the verb ‘mail’ show a similar alternating pattern to the verb ‘kill’, as illustrated in (28b) and (28c). The patient

nominal can either take the subject position as in (28b) or the object position as in (28c). The goal nominal can either take the subject position as in (28c) or remain in situ as a locative nominal as in (28b). For the verb ‘steal’, the alternation of patient and location nominals is not confirmed. But it is observed that these two nominals in different voice constructions take different structural positions than do the patient and goal nominals in (28b) and (28c). The only difference is that the verb forms for patient and location voices of the verb ‘steal’ are distinct. Therefore, there is not enough evidence to suggest that sentences containing the verb ‘steal’ have alternation analogous to that which is found with the patient and source nominals of the verb ‘mail’.

(28) [agent, theme, goal]

a. AV: ya nimaparala si Manidong so soli ji Macinanao
 Past-AV-mail Nom Manidong CMtaro Loc Macinanao
 ‘Manidong mailed Macinanao taro.’

b. PV: na **niparalah** ni Manidong ji Macinanao o soli
 Past-PV-mail Gen Manidong Loc Macinanao Nom taro
 ‘It was the taro that Manidong mailed to Macinanao.’

c. LV: na **niparalah** ni Manidong so soli si Macinanao
 Past-LV-mail Gen Manidong CM taro Nom Macinanao
 ‘It was Macinanao who Manidong mailed taro to.’

(29) [agent, theme, source]

a. AV: nimanakaw ji Macinanao si Manidong so vakong
 Past-AV-steal Loc Macinanao Nom Manidong CMbook
 ‘Manidong stole a book from Macinanao.’

b. PF: na **nitakaw** ni Manidong ji Macinanao o vakong
 Past-PV-steal Gen Manidong Loc Macinanao Nom book
 ‘It was the book that Manidong stole from Macinanao.’

- c. LV: na **nipanakawan** si Macinanao so vakong ni Manidong
 Past-LV-steal Nom Macinanao CM book Gen Manidong
 ‘It was Macinanao who Manidong stole a book from.’

The alternation between patient and goal nominals of the verb ‘mail’ in (28b-c) corresponds to English dative alternation in (30). The major difference between these two alternations is that the patient nominal is realized as subject in Yami and as object in English.

(30) English dative alternation

- a. John gave Mary a book.
- b. John gave a book to Mary.

Dative alternation is claimed to occur most often with the verb ‘give’, and hence, ‘give’ is usually the first verb to be investigated in determining the presence of dative alternation within a language. Likewise, our investigation begins with the verb ‘give’. The Yami verb meaning ‘give’ has two variants. One is *panta*, and the other is *toro*. Both forms denote the meanings of ‘give’ and ‘send’. But the distribution of these two verb variants is diverse and is found to be in complementary distribution.

(31) *Panta*

- na(ni)panta ni Manidong si Macinanao so vakong
 (Past)-LV-give/send Gen Manidong Nom Macinanao CM book
 ‘It was Macinanao who Manidong give (gave)/send (sent) a book to.’

(32) *Toro*

- na (n)itoro ni Manidong o vakong ji Macinanao
 (Past)-PV-give/send Gen Manidong Nom book LocMacinanao
 ‘It was the book that Manidong give (gave)/send (sent) to Macinanao.’

Panta has only one voice variant – location – and *toro* has three voice variants – agent, patient, and location. The examples in (33) show the three available voice

variants of the verb ‘TORO’. However, the agent and location voice variants for the verb *toro* have two different interpretations. One means ‘to compensate’, and the other means ‘to give’. The meaning of ‘to compensate’ is more common and is considered to be the more appropriate interpretation of the two voice variants. The verb *panta* is usually used to express change of possession, as illustrated in (31) or the verb *toro* of patient voice, as in (32). Notice that Yami employs the verbs *toro* and *panta* to express the meaning of ‘to give or to send someone something’. *Toro* has a patient voice variant and *panta* has a location voice variant when the verb refers to ‘give/send’ – indicating change of possession. Agent voice does not occur with these two verbs when they denote the meaning of ‘give or send’. Notice that the interpretations of agent and location voice constructions differ from those of the patient voice sentence in (33b). The agent and location voice variants have the interpretation of give or send someone something for compensation, but the patient voice variant does not have this interpretation.

(33)

a. AV: nitomoro si Manidong ji Macinanao so vakong
 Past-AV-give NomManidong Loc Macinanao CM book
 ‘Manidong gave Macinanao a book for compensation.’

b. PV: nanitoro ni Manidong o vakong ji Macinanao
 Past-PV-give Gen Manidong Nom book Loc Macinanao
 ‘It was the book that Manidong gave to Macinanao.’

c. LV: nanitoroan ni Manidong si Macinanao so vakong
 Past-LV-give Gen Manidong Nom Macinanao CM book
 ‘It was Macinanao who Manidong gave a book to for compensation.’

When other trivalent/ditransitive verbs are compared with the verb ‘give/send’, a similar pattern is observed. The only difference is in the verb forms. A trivalent verb

‘pavonong’ meaning ‘distribute something’ or ‘give out something’ has three voice variants – agent, patient, and location - as illustrated in (34). Notice that the verb form for patient and location voice constructions is identical, and that the patient and goal nominals of these two voice constructions have surfaced in different structural positions. This pattern is the same as it is with the verb ‘mail’, and hence, leads us to hypothesize that this alternation occurs typically with verbs that have the following thematic structure: [agent, patient, goal]. When the verb ‘learn’ reveals a similar alternation pattern as shown in (35), we must revise our hypothesis to include verbs that have the thematic structure of [agent, patient, source]. Hence, we can further generalize to specify verbs with the thematic structure of [agent, patient, location].

(34)

a. AV: yanim(a)pavonong so soli si Manidong ji Macinanao
 Past-AV-distribute CM taro Nom Manidong Loc Macinanao
 ‘Manidong distributed/gave out taro to Macianano.’

b. PV: nanipavonong ni Manidong ji Macinanao o soli
 Past-PV-distribute Gen Manidong Loc Macinanao Nom taro
 ‘It was the taro that Manidong distributed/gave out to Macianano.’

c. LV: nanipavonong ni Manidong si Macinanao so soli
 Past-LV-distribute Gen Manidong Nom Macinanao CM taro
 ‘It was Macinanao who Manidong distributed/gave out taro to.’

(35)

AV: ya macinanao si Manidong ji Macinanao so ciciciring no tao
 AV-learn Nom Manidong Loc Macinanao CM language of people
 ‘Manidong learns Yami from Macinanao.’

PV: napacinanawan o ciciciring no tao ni Manidong ji Macinanao
 PV-learn Nom language of people Gen Manidong Loc Macinanao
 ‘It is Yami that Manidong learns from Macinanao.’

LV: napacinanawan si Macinanao ni Manidong so ciriciring no tao
 LV-learn Nom Macinanao Gen Manidong CM language of people
 ‘It is Macinanao who Manidong learns Yami from.’

The trivalent verbs discussed in this section can be divided into two subgroups. The first group consists of verbs that originally take only two arguments and have their valency increased by a change in the verbal morphology. The second group consists of verbs that originally take three arguments. Alternation between the patient and the added argument is observed among verbs of the first group; however, not all verbs exhibit this alternation. Similar alternation is observed with verbs of the second group between the patient and location nominals. For the verb ‘give/send’, the alternation between the patient and location nominals cannot be certain since the verb forms are not identical when these two objects occupy different structural positions since the alternation could be claimed to be a result of voice alternation. Object alternations and dative alternations are not necessarily found with every verb in Yami, since every verb has unique semantic properties. It is also true cross-linguistically that in every language only certain verbs have these alternations. Therefore, the claim that some Yami trivalent verbs have dative alternation, and some do not, is plausible. In this section, the existence of dative alternation is established based on observation of diverse surface structure and identical verb forms. In the next subsection, further justification for the existence of dative alternation in Yami is provided.

4.4 Further justification for dative alternation in Yami

Dative alternation has been the subject of much research in the last few decades. The differences between DOC and *to*-dative construction have been established and justified across various languages. Chapter two has reviewed some of the literature related to this issue and has listed some criteria to identify and distinguish between

these two constructions. Some of the criteria might not apply to the data of Yami ditransitive constructions due to the difference in its linguistic typology. However, others can be employed effectively to examine data to further justify the existence of dative alternation in Yami.

When a comparison is made between the English *to*-dative and the Yami patient voice sentence, it is revealed that these two constructions share certain similarities. First, goal nominals in both languages are marked by location markers. The English goal nominal is led by the preposition *to* while the Yami goal nominal is marked by the locative case marker *ji*, as is illustrated in (36). Despite the similarity between their surfaced forms, the meaning of these two sentences – the English *to*-dative and the Yami patient voice construction, indicates neither that the object has been received, nor that it has arrived at its destination. When these two sentences are in past tense form, the interpretation of these two constructions implies only that the objects in the examples in (36), ‘a book’ and ‘the taro’, have been mailed out. When the patient voice sentence shifts to locative and the goal nominal takes the subject position as in (37), the interpretation of the sentence changes to ‘it is Macinanao who Manidong mailed the taro to’ which is analogous to English DOC. The interpretation between patient and location voice constructions in Yami has one slight difference – one implies only that the object has been mailed out to someone (whether it has been received or not is unknown), and the other implies that ‘Macinanao’ has received the object mailed to him by the agent. This difference is clarified when both sentences occur in past tense, as in (38). A more detailed interpretation of (38a) would be ‘Manidong had mailed out taro to Macinanao, but whether he had received it or not is unknown’, while (38b) would be ‘It is Macinanao who Manidong had mailed taro to, and he had already received the taro.’

(36) a. Johan mails a book to Mary.

b. PV: na paralahen ni Manidong ji Macinanao o soli
 PV-mail Gen Manidong Loc Macinanao Nom taro
 ‘It is the taro that Manidong mails to Macinanao.’

(37) LV: na paralahen ni Manidong so soli si Macinanao
 LV-mail Gen Manidong CM taro Nom Macinanao
 ‘It is Macinanao who Manidong mails taro to.’

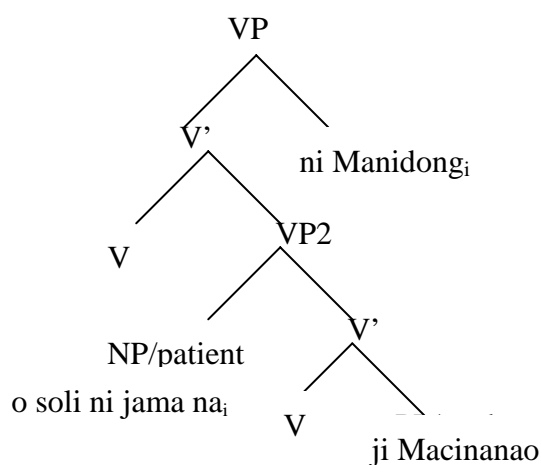
(38) a. PV: na niparalah ni Manidong ji Macinanao o soli
 ‘It was the taro that Manidong mailed to Macinanao.’

b. LV: na niparalah ni Manidong so soli si Macinanao
 ‘It was Macinanao who Manidong mailed taro to.’

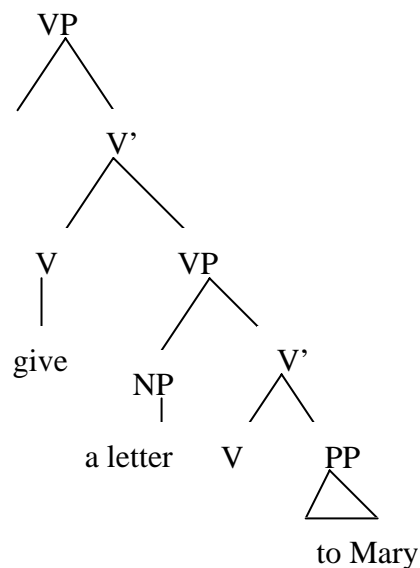
Besides the difference in meaning, the possessive pronoun ‘*na*’ meaning ‘his’ in the patient nominal ‘*o vakong ni jama na*’ in (39) can only bind the agent nominal ‘Manidong’, which is an indication that the goal nominal does not c-command the patient nominal. In other words, the patient nominal is in a higher structural position than the goal nominal, as illustrated in (40a). Notice that the transported object/patient has been reported to asymmetrical c-command the preposition goal in English *to*-dative construction, as illustrated in (40b). This asymmetry is also found in Yami ditransitive construction. The goal ‘Macinanao’ cannot bind the patient ‘his father’s book’ when it does not c-command the patient nominal as in (40a). Therefore, ‘Macinanao’ and the possessive pronoun ‘his’ are not co-referential, and the possessive pronoun ‘his’ can only refer to the agent ‘Manidong’, which c-commands the patient nominal.

(39) na niparalah ni Manidong_i o vakong ni jama na_{i/*j} ji Macinanao_j
 Past-PV-mail Gen Manidong Nom book Gen father his Loc Macinanao
 ‘It was his_i father’s book that Manidong_i mailed to Macinanao.’

(40) a Yami patient voice



b. English to-dative construction



In establishing the similarities between English *to*-dative and Yami patient voice construction, causative morphology in Yami is occasionally found in locative voice construction. Jung and Miyagawa (2004) have pointed out that the Korean has dative/accusative alternation in both the lexical causative causee and the goal of ditransitive construction/DOC, as in (41). This further supports the theory of the DOC having a causative interpretation. Moreover, Kayne (2005 LSA class notes) reports that the French preposition *à*, on one hand, marks the causee, and on the other hand, marks the goal of a ditransitive construction/DOC, as in (42). This coincidence is also observed in Yami causative and LV constructions.

(41) a. John-i Mary-eykey/lul pica-lul mek-i-ess-ta
 John-Nom Mary-DAT/ACC pizza-ACC eat-CAUS-Past
 'John made Mary eat pizza.'

b. Mary-ka John-eykey/ul chayk-ul cwu-ess-ta
 Mary-Nom John-DAT/ACC book-ACC give-Past
 'Mary gave John a book.'

(Jung and Miyagawa 2004: 8)

(42) a. Jean a fait manger une tarte à Paul.

‘jean made paul eat a pie.’

b. Jean a donné un livre à Paul.

‘John has given a book to Paul.’ (Kayne, 2005 LSA class notes)

As pointed out in an earlier section of this chapter, the valency of the main predicate is increased by one with the presence of the causative morpheme *mapa/pa* (refer to examples in (19)). When the causative morpheme is affixed to a two-place predicate, the case marking is the same as LV construction as listed in (43). The causee ‘the dog’ in (43a) and the goal ‘Macinanao’ in (43b) are both nominative case marked. This coincidence leads us to recognize the similarity between English DOC and Yami LV construction of ditransitive verbs. Furthermore, Chang (2000) has reported that the presence of the morpheme ‘*pa*’ triggers the beneficiary argument to take the subject position as in (44). She considers this construction to be a beneficiary focus which should be regarded as beneficiary voice in our analysis. The beneficiary affix and the causative affix are identical and the case marking of the beneficiary nominal and the causee is also the same. Notice the coincidence of the identical case marking on the goal, beneficiary, and causee of these three constructions – ditransitive construction in locative and beneficiary voice and causative construction not only supports the theory that Yami LV construction of ditransitive verb has a causative interpretation, but also provides further justification for establishing a parallel between the LV construction of ditransitive verbs and English DOC construction.

(43) a. ya na rana ni-**pa**-kan no mavakes o ino ko so wakay
 already Past-Cau-eat Gen woman Nom dog my CM sweet potato
 ‘The woman caused my dog to eat sweet potato.’
 ‘My dog ate sweet potato because of the woman.’

b. na niparalah ni Manidong so soli si Macinanao
 Past-LV-mail Gen Manidong CM taro Nom Macinanao

‘It was Macinanao who Manidong mailed taro to.’

(44) na **pa**-notong ni ina so kanen o anak
 BV-cook Gen mother CM rice Nom child

‘It is the child who mother cooks rice for.’ (Chang/c 2000: 78)

The similarities between the English *to*-dative and Yami PV construction are established through comparing their surface structure and interpretation, and the asymmetrical c-command relationship between patient and goal arguments. The meaning difference between patient and locative voice constructions is subtle. This also leads us to relate the Yami locative voice of ditransitive construction to English DOC. While English DOC is claimed to have a causative interpretation, the Yami locative voice of ditransitive construction is found to have a surface form identical to causative construction: this coincidence leads us to establish the parallel between English DOC and the Yami locative voice of ditransitive construction.

4.5 Limitations and Implications

While some Yami ditransitive verbs are found to have dative alternation, the typical ditransitive verb ‘give’ is not. This might be due to the multiple meanings or functions of this verb. Nevertheless, dative alternation is found to occur with the two verbs ‘mail’ and ‘distribute/give out’. If more data can be elicited and examined, more verbs might be found to have this alternation. However, the scope of the present study does not allow us to pursue this aspect. This could be a worthwhile topic for future study of Yami.

The existence of dative alternation in Yami ditransitive verbs is affirmative, even though alternation is not found with every ditransitive verb. It is common for languages to have only a certain number of ditransitive verbs with dative alternation.

Therefore, the fact that we have only discovered two such verbs in Yami does not lead us to deny its existence. The recognition of dative alternation not only further justifies Harley's prediction of the co-existence of verbal *HAVE* and dative alternation within a language, but also shows that dative alternation is not excluded from languages with rich case systems (Harley, 2002). Japanese, Korean, Greek, and Yami are all languages with rich case markings, and are each reported to have dative alternation with their ditransitive predicates. This seems to imply that dative alternation is not a language-specific property. Establishing dative alternation in Yami also raises the question of whether this is a common property among Austronesian languages. This inference requires further study of the ditransitive constructions of other Austronesian languages. Furthermore, the criteria for examining the dative alternation discussed in Chapter two are mainly developed through the process of investigating English dative alternation and some of them can not be applied to Yami, a language whose linguistic typology is very different from that of English. Hopefully, more adequate criteria may be developed as more effort is put into the study of ditransitive construction of languages with different linguistic typology.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter began with a discussion of the distinction between focus and voice. Once we had identified the Yami focus system as a kind of voice system, we provided arguments against an ergative/antipassive analysis for this language, as well as justification for the theory that its voice alternations are valency-neutral. Once its voice alternations had been thus identified and clarified, its trivalent verbs were examined. Dative alternation was not observed with its most typical ditransitive 'give'. However, the alternation was observed with the two ditransitive verbs 'mail' and

‘distribute/give out’ among the ditransitive verbs that were elicited. Location voice alternation of these two verbs not only had a causative interpretation, but goal argument was also marked identically with the causee of causative construction and the beneficiary argument of beneficiary voice construction. Furthermore, the observation that the transported object/patient asymmetrically c-commands the location argument in Yami patient voice alternation of ditransitive construction led us to consider it as a variant of English *to*-dative construction.

In the process of identifying similarities between patient alternation in ditransitive construction in Yami and the *to*-dative in English, and also between locative alternation and English DOC, not only have we established the existence of dative alternation in Yami, but we have also justified Harley’s prediction of the co-existence of verbal *HAVE* and dative alternation within a language. This finding has several implications: first, that dative alternation is not a language-specific property; second, that dative alternation is not excluded from languages with rich case marking systems; and finally, that it is possible that dative alternation may exist among other Austronesian languages.