Covert passive agents in Jakarta Indonesian: Unpronounced or missing?

Ksenia Ershova* and Satyawidya Wulansari

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1 Introduction

Jakarta Indonesian (JI):[2] three-way voice system (Chung 1975; Dardjowidjojo 1978; Sneddon 1996; Arka and Manning 1998; Cole et al. 2006; Aldridge 2007; Cole et al. 2008 a.o.)

Voice	Structure
Active:	S (N-)V O
Object (=passive type 2 / *pasif semu*):	O S (*N-)V
"Indo-European-type" passive:	O *(di-)V ((sama) S)

(1) *Question: Who took the table?*

Lia sudah **ng-**ambil meja makan-nya.
Lia already **AV**-take table eat-NYA

'Lia already took the dining table.' (active voice)

(2) *Question: Where is the table?*

Meja makan-nya Lia ambil.
table eat-NYA Lia take

'The dining table was taken by Lia.' (object voice)

(3) *Question: Who took the table?*

Meja makan-nya **di-**ambil Lia.
table eat-NYA **PASS**-take Lia

'The dining table was taken by Lia.' | **passive voice** |

The agent in passive voice may be:

1. a PP

(4) Desi di-masak-in nasi goreng **sama aku**.
Desi PASS-cook-APPL rice fried **with I**

'Desi was made fried rice by me.'

2. a verb-adjacent NP

(5) Desi di-masak-in **aku** nasi goreng **(*aku)**.
Desi PASS-cook-APPL **I** rice fried

'Desi was made fried rice by me.'

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*Massachusetts Institute of Technology; kershova@mit.edu

3. unpronounced

    (6) Nasi-nya sudah di-masak.
         rice-NYA already PASS-cook
         'The rice has already been cooked.'

The puzzle:

Covert passive agents are typically <u>existential</u> (e.g. Keenan and Dryer 2007) – also true in JI:

  (7) Buku-ku di-curi.   Aku mau tahu siapa yang nyuri.
      book-my PASS-steal I   want know who C   AV.steal
      'My bag was stolen (#by them). I want to know who stole it.'
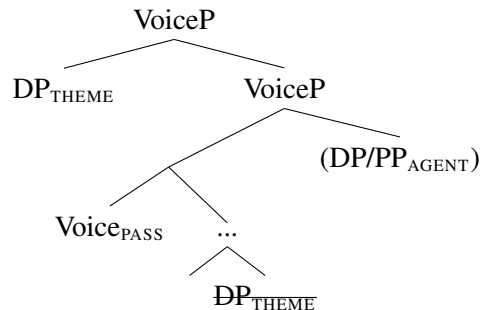
But may also be interpreted <u>referentially</u> (cf. English translation):

  (8) Aku marah sama Yuni   [soalnya baju-ku   di-buang   ?(dia)].
      I   angry with Yuni   because clothes-my PASS-discard s/he
   'I am angry with Yuni because my clothes were thrown out #(by her).'

Proposal: Passive Voice **may introduce** but **may not license** an external argument.

Agentless passives correspond to two string equivalent structures:

(9) ✓ agent θ-role   (10) ✓ agent θ-role
    ✗ external argument   ✓ *pro* external argument
    ⇒ existential interpretation   ⇒ referential interpretation
    ⇒ overt agent = adjunct   ⇒ *pro* = argument
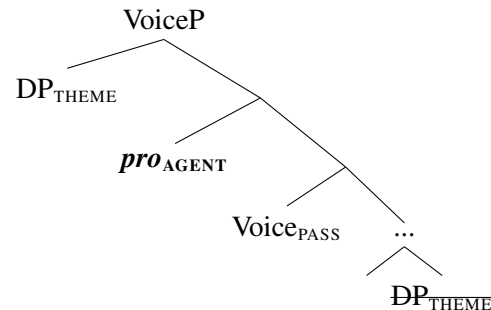
- *pro* is featurally deficient (Barbosa 2019):

   ⇒ can merge in Spec,Voice$_{PASS}$ (= unlicensed position)

   ⇒ must be interpreted as third person (except in imperatives)

Roadmap: 2 Canonical passive in JI; 3 Syntactically active covert agent; 4 Proposal; 5 Conclusion and extensions.

2 Canonical passive in Jakarta Indonesian

'Canonical passive' properties of the **di-**passive (Keenan and Dryer 2007):

  1. Dedicated passive morphology: prefix *di-*

2. Obligatory promotion of internal argument: if theme is postverbal, it is right dislocated, not in-situ

    (11) a. Yuni masak **nasi goreng-nya** pedas.
             Yuni cook   **rice fried-NYA** spicy
             'Yuni made the fried rice spicy'

> ACTIVE: Agent [$_{VP}$ Verb **Theme** Adverb]

         b. **Nasi goreng-nya** di-masak   pedas sama Yuni.
             rice fried-NYA   PASS-cook spicy with Yuni
             'The fried rice was made spicy by Yuni.'

> PASSIVE: **Theme** [$_{VP}$ Verb ~~Theme~~ Adverb] Agent$_{PP}$

         c. Di-masak   pedas **nasi goreng-nya**.
             PASS-cook spicy **rice fried-NYA**
             'The rice has been cooked spicy!'
             (Comment: Maybe you weren't expecting the rice to be spicy.)

> PASSIVE: [$_{VP}$ Verb ~~Theme~~ Adverb] **Theme**

         d. * Di-masak   **nasi goreng-nya** pedas.
             PASS-cook **rice fried-NYA**   spicy
             Intended: 'The rice has been cooked spicy.'

> PASSIVE: * [$_{VP}$ Verb **Theme** Adverb]

3. Implicit agentive interpretation (contrast with anticausative/unaccusative)

    (12) a. Di-tutup   [supaya kamar-nya hangat].
             PASS-close so that   room-NYA warm
             'It (=the window) was closed to keep the room warm.'   ✓<u>passive</u>

         b. # Jendela-nya ke-tutup   [supaya kamar-nya hangat].
             window-NYA INTR-close so that   room-NYA warm
             lit. 'The window closed to keep the room warm.'   <u>*unaccusative</u>

    (13) a. Pintu-nya di-buka   [soalnya Desi mau datang].
             door-NYA PASS-open because Desi want come
             'The door is opened because Desi is coming.'   ✓<u>passive</u>

         b. # Pintu-nya ke-buka   [soalnya Desi mau datang].
             door-NYA INTR-open because Desi want come
             lit. 'The door opened because Desi is coming.'   <u>*unaccusative</u>
             (Comment: Does Desi have magic skills?)

4. Agent is optional + existential interpretation

    (14) Buku-ku di-curi.   Aku mau tahu siapa yang nyuri.
          book-my PASS-steal I   want know who C   AV.steal
          'My bag was stolen (#by them). I want to know who stole it.'

5. Agent is demoted (both PP and bare DP) ⇒ cannot bind pivot reflexive

   (15) Cuma **diri-nya** yang di-pikir-in   **(sama) Yuni**.
        only   **self-3SG** C   PASS-think-TR **(with) Yuni**
        lit. 'Only she/he/*herself is thought about by Yuni.'

   Contrast with object voice:

   (16) Cuma **diri-nya** yang **Yuni** Ø-pikir-in
        only   **self-3SG** C   **Yuni** OV-think-TR
        'Yuni only thinks about him/her/herself.'

So far: Compatible with available analyses of *di*-passive in Malay/Standard Indonesian (Aldridge 2007; Cole et al. 2008; Erlewine and Sommerlot 2023):

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di- = v/Voice$_{PASS}$ introduces agent θ-role + doesn't project specifier:

(17)
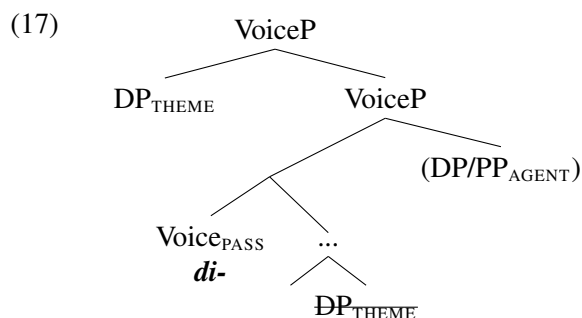
The problem: The *di*-passive <u>may</u> contain a referential, syntactically active external argument.

3 Syntactically active covert agent

<u>Non-canonical property of **di-**passive</u>: possibility of a referential, syntactically active external argument.

1. The covert agent may refer to a contextually salient antecedent:

   (18) Aku marah sama Yuni   [soalnya baju-ku   di-buang   ?(dia)].
        I   angry with Yuni   because clothes-my PASS-discard s/he
        'I am angry with Yuni because my clothes were thrown out #(by her).'

   (19) Jendela-nya di-tutup   sendiri.
        window-NYA PASS-close alone
        (My son is now big enough to do such things...)
        'He can close the window on his own.'

2. The covert agent may bind a reflexive in pivot position:

   (20) Cuma **diri-nya** yang di-pikir-in.
        only   **self-3SG** C   PASS-think-TR
        (I don't want to be friends with her...)
        'She's selfish (lit. Only herself is thought about by her.)'

(21) Cuma **diri mereka** yang di-pikir-in.
     only **self they**   C   PASS-think-TR
     (I don't like them...) 'They only think about themselves.'

Similar to agent in object voice:

(22) Cuma **diri-nya** yang **Yuni** Ø-pikir-in
     only **self-3SG** C   **Yuni** OV-think-TR
     'Yuni only thinks about him/her/herself.'

Contrast with overt passive agent:

(23) Cuma **diri-nya** yang di-pikir-in   **(sama) Yuni**.
     only **self-3SG** C   PASS-think-TR **(with) Yuni**
     lit. 'Only she/he/*herself is thought about by Yuni.'

Constraint on syntactically active agent: <u>it must be third person</u>

- Covert agent cannot refer to contextually salient antecedent that is 2SG:

(24) Aku marah sama kamu [soalnya baju-ku   di-buang   #(kamu)].
     I   angry with you because clothes-my PASS-discard you
     'I am angry with you because my clothes were thrown out #(by you).'

- 2SG reflexive cannot be bound by covert agent:

(25) Cuma **diri kamu** yang di-pikir-in.
     only **self 2SG**   C   PASS-think-TR
     'S/he is obsessed with you. (lit. Only yourself is thought about by her.)'
     *'You only think about yourself.'

⇒ Referential passive agent must be (i) covert and (ii) 3 person.

**Sidenote: Arka and Manning (1998) observe a similar pattern for *di*-passive with 3 person passive agent expressed as *-nya* in Standard Indonesian

(26) Diri-nya tidak di-perhatikan-**nya**.
     self-3SG NEG PASS-care-**3**
     'S/he didn't take care of himself/herself.'

Difference: *-nya* is an overt pronominal clitic (also used for direct objects and possessors)

JI does not allow for the analogous structure:

(27) * Nasi goreng-nya di-masak-**nya**.
     rice fried-NYA PASS-cook-**3**
   Intended: 'The fried rice was cooked by him/her.'

Potential diachronic connection?

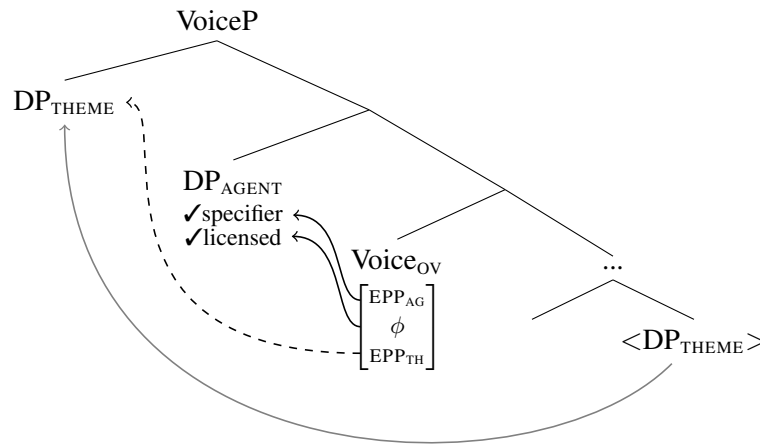# 4 Proposal: Voice$_{\text{PASS}}$ projects an agent, but cannot license it

The analysis:

- Nominals are licensed / assigned case through ϕ-agreement (e.g. Chomsky 2000, 2001; Sheehan and Van der Wal 2018; Kalin 2019; Nie 2020)

- Voice$_{\text{AV/OV}}$ projects a specifier and hosts a ϕ-probe $\Rightarrow$ can license the external argument.
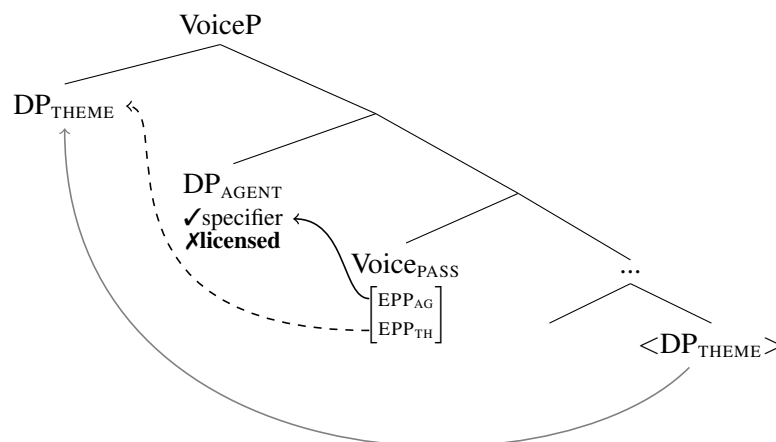
(28)   Actor voice:
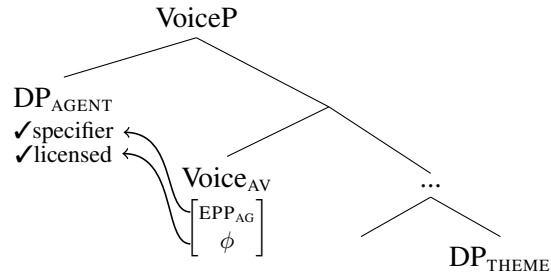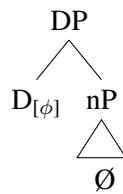

(29)   Object voice:

- Voice$_{\text{PASS}}$ <u>can</u> project a specifier, but does not host a ϕ-probe $\Rightarrow$ cannot license an external argument.

(30)   Passive voice:

- Overt pronouns = D^0 (ϕ-features) + unpronounced nP (Ritter 1991; Postal 1966; Elbourne 2001; Déchaine and Wiltschko 2002,a.o.)

- Null *pro* = featurally deficient minimal nP (Barbosa 2019)

(31) Overt pronoun:

DP
├── $D_{[\phi]}$ nP
│   △
│   Ø

(32) Null *pro*:

nP
△
Ø

- *pro* has no ϕ-features $\Rightarrow$ does not require ϕ-licensing

> $\Rightarrow$ *pro* can appear as agent in Spec,Voice$_{\text{PASS}}$

Explains:

- Why the covert agent must be third person:

  Absence of ϕ-features = third person (Harley and Ritter 2002; Béjar and Rezac 2003; Anagnastopoulou 2005)

- Why overt agents cannot bind reflexives, but covert agent can:

  Covert agent *pro* is an argument; overt agents are adjuncts.

Implications:

- Passive Voice <u>does</u> project a specifier.

- ϕ-features need to be licensed.

- Necessary distinction:

  Third person as absence of ϕ-features (*pro*) vs. featurally specified third person (overt pronoun)

5 Conclusion and extensions

JI passive expands the voice typology:

- *di*-passives are <u>canonical</u> in every way, <u>except</u> they allow a referential covert agent in argument position.

- Passive voice not only introduces <u>agentive semantics</u>, but can also introduce <u>an external argument</u>.

- However, it <u>cannot license</u> the external argument.

- Only ϕ-deficient *pro* can appear in argument position.

> **Main conclusion:** Passive voice introduces, but does not license, the external argument.

Extension:

Passives can be used as imperatives (both JI and SI, e.g. Sneddon 1996:326; Udayana 2022):

(33) rendang-nya *pro* cepat di-masak
      rendang-NYA   quick PASS-make
      'Make the rendang (=meat curry dish) quick!'

(34)   Kamu itu jangan cuma diri kamu yang *pro* di-pikir-in.
         you   this don't only self you C   PASS-think-TR
         'Don't just think about yourself!'

The puzzle: the addressee of imperatives is universally the notional subject (see e.g. Anderson 1976; Dixon 1994), but here it is the <u>passive agent</u>.

Explained by the *pro* analysis: *pro* <u>can</u> be the notional subject in a passive!

In imperatives, *pro* is locally bound by an imperative operator, allowing for a second person interpretation (Zanuttini 2008; Zanuttini et al. 2012)

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