



Tagalog provides morphological evidence for this perspective. Tagalog verbs undergo ‘voice’ alternations which allow various arguments to be promoted as the discourse-prominent pivot, marked with nominative case; each verb can only be associated with a single pivot. Object pivots, for example, require Object Voice (OV) marking on the verb (4a). Applicative promotion is obligatory in Tagalog; all applied arguments must be promoted to pivot and require Benefactive Voice (BV) or Locative Voice (LV) marking on the verb. In Tagalog LV external possession constructions, the pivot is interpreted as the possessor of the theme (4b) (Nie 2018); this suggests that the possessor must be base-generated in a position local to the theme (Kayne 1975, Szabolcsi 1984) but moves to a higher projection where it is promoted to pivot. Since LV is associated with a range of applied arguments (e.g. goal, location), it likely spells out this higher promotion head.

(4) Tagalog external possession

- a. B<in>asag-∅ [ko] [ang plorera ng bata] kahapon.  
 <PERF>shatter-OV 1SG.GEN NOM vase NOM child yesterday  
 ‘I shattered a child’s vase yesterday.’
- b. B<in>asag-an [ko] [ng plorera] kahapon [ang bata].  
 <PERF>shatter-LV 1SG.GEN GEN vase yesterday NOM child  
 ‘I shattered the child’s vase yesterday.’

Tagalog instruments may be introduced as an adjunct, as in the Agent Voice (AV) construction in (5a), or as an applied argument in the BV construction in (5b). Some instrumental pivots co-occur with both BV and an instrumental affix *paN-* on the verb (5b), suggesting that the applied argument is introduced by *paN-* but promoted to pivot by BV. Thus Tagalog provides overt morphological evidence for both the thematic and the promotion projections needed for applicative pivots.

(5) Tagalog instrumentals

- a. Nag-punas [ako] [ng silya] [gamit ang trapo].  
 AV.PERF.PAG-wipe 1SG.NOM GEN chair use NOM rag  
 ‘I wiped a chair with the rag.’
- b. I-p<in>am-punas [ko] [ng silya] [ang trapo].  
 BV-<PERF>INSTR-wipe 1SG.GEN GEN chair NOM rag  
 ‘I wiped a chair with the rag.’

In sum, applicative constructions may (i) promote applied arguments to object, feeding processes like object agreement and passivisation; (ii) promote them to pivot, for discourse prominence; or (iii) not promote them at all. The resulting typology of applicatives is given in (6).

(6) Typology of applicatives

	No promotion	Promotion to object	Promotion to pivot
Overt applicative		Chaga benefactive	Tagalog BV, LV
Non-overt applicative	German DOC	NAm English DOC	

Note the empty cells in (6). There appear to be no languages that (i) have overt applicative marking but do not promote the applied argument to object or pivot, or (ii) have obligatory promotion of the applied argument to pivot but no overt applicative marking. Thus what has been called applicative morphology may actually be promotion morphology. The table furthermore points to an overtness distinction between high applicatives (overt) and low applicatives (non-overt) (Marantz 1993). The relationship between overtness and applicatives poses an interesting question for future research.