

I PRESENTI IN -YA NEL RIG VEDA: ALLA RICERCA DELL'INTRANSITIVITÀ SCISSA

ABSTRACT

In the present paper, we address the distinction between active and middle voice in the intransitive -ya formations of Vedic and show how voice distinction encodes an unaccusativity hierarchy similar to the hierarchy that governs the auxiliary selection (HABERE vs. ESSE) in compound tenses in Romance languages. We suppose that the middle voice in the present/aorist system of these formations is recent and, therefore, the voice distinction manifested in the -ya presents can be interpreted as an on-going innovation, which is consistent with the general tendency of Indo-European languages to cancel the “labile oppositions”, in Haspelmath’s terms.