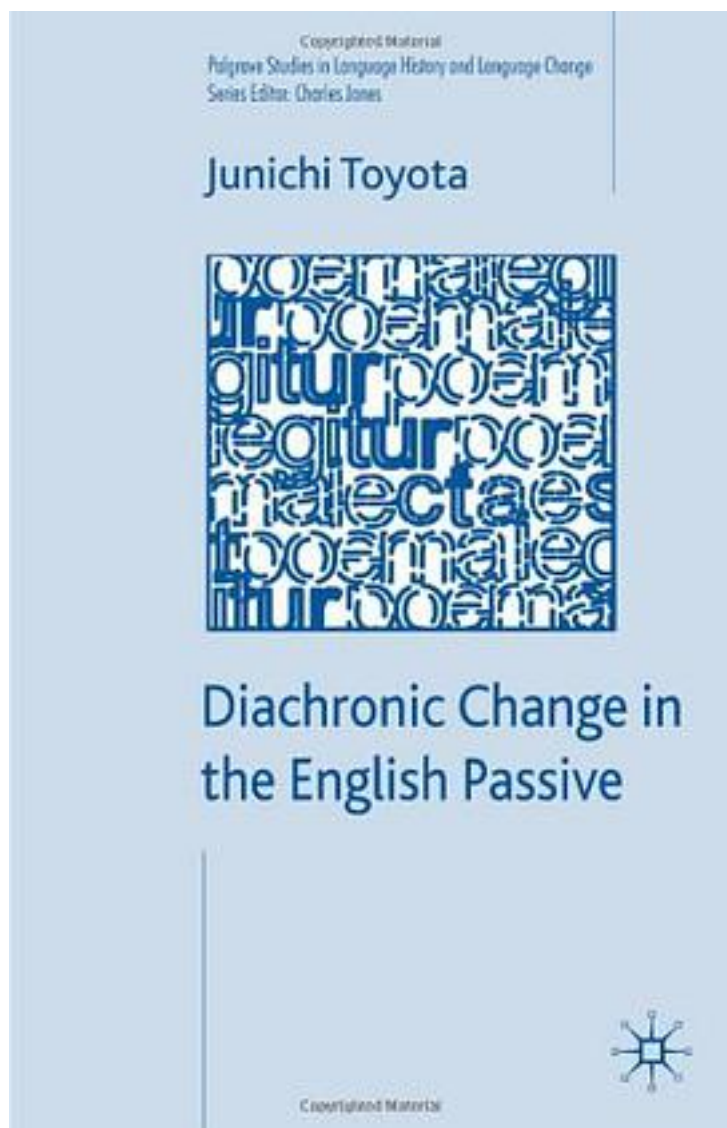


Diachronic Change in the English Passive



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JUNICHI TOYOTA presents a coherent historical development of the passive voice in English. Unique to this study is the use of continuum in the historical framework, and an examination of various constructions relating to the passive voice, demonstrating an intricate relationship among different constructions and functions over periods of time. Historical changes often leave some evidence of earlier constructions or functions, which can be identified in terms of gradience. This type of analysis has been neglected, and the voice continuum reveals that there are a number of cases of gradience. Furthermore detailed morphosemantic analysis reveals that not all previous work on the origin of some constructions, such as the get-passive, may be accurate, and some radical claims have been made concerning such constructions. The author explains complex details schematically, making this an accessible read for researchers and students of language history and language change.

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