

# Referential status and informational hierarchy in Natauran-Amis (Formosan)

Isabelle BRIL (LACITO-CNRS, Paris)

## 1. Introduction

- Distinguish the system of argument **pivot** which triggers **voice selection** from **pragmatic informational hierarchy** (topic and focus).
- Some general features of the system in Amis (East Formosan)
  - unmarked **word order** : predicate initial
  - the **choice** of NOM **pivot** correlates with
    - profiling of a selected argument (pivot),
    - definiteness (only to some limited extent)

(1a) Vb in LOC voice, the syntactic pivot is left-dislocated as a pragmatic topic, compare with (1b).

(1) a. [Uyaan ma-wacay-ay iri] tungangan-an n-uhni.

ANAPH UV-naked-NMZ TOP mock-LOC.V GEN-3PL

‘Those who were naked, they were mocked by them.’ (Bril fieldwork, Buduy nu Pangcah.069)

b. tungangan-an n-uhni [k-uyaan ma-wacay-ay].

‘Those who were naked were mocked by them.’

### 1.1. General questions

#### 1.1.1. Which differences in information status are marked in the language ?

Amis indefinite nouns are zero-marked; definiteness is marked by a paradigm of deictic and anaphoric markers ; definite, already referential entities may also have zero marking.

#### 1.1.2. How are discourse-new referents introduced ?

Discourse-new entities are introduced by existential verbs & clauses.

*ira* ‘there is/loc’ (from DX3 ‘there’) + and negation *awa’ay*. Their argument is NOM.

A) In **existential clauses**, an indefinite specific NP may be marked by an anaphoric marker.

(2) Ira k-iyā cacay a remiad.

EXS NOM-ANAPH one LNK day

‘One day ...’ (Bril fieldwork, Lalagawan.018)

(3) Awa’ay-ay=tu k-uyan (u) ka-ka’en-en.

NEG.EXS-ASS=PRF NOM-ANAPH NM Ca-eat-PASS.NMZ

‘There was no longer any food (left).’ (Bril fieldwork, Flooding.0022)

B) **Presentative constructions** with proximal deictic *ini* ‘here is’. Its argument is NOM.

(4) Ini k-u kidudung.

PRST NOM-NM cloth

‘Here is some cloth.’ (Bril fieldwork, Buduy nu Pangcah.029)

#### 1.1.3. How are the pragmatic relations topic and focus marked?

**Topic** : left dislocation & slight **pause** ; various additional markers (*iri*, *hantu*, *satu*).

- (5) Tata'ang-ay a 'uner **iri**, **mi-ka**'en t-u tamdaw sa.  
 big-MODF LNK snake TOP AV-eat ACC-NM people EVID(say)  
 'That big snake, it ate people.' (Bril fieldwork, 'uner.0007)

Arguments, adjuncts, & clauses may be topicalised in this way.

**Focus/restrictor** : predicative and clause initial, the presupposition is its argument in nominative:

- (6) **U sakubad** [**k-u sa-ka-rebahuy** a ta-ira i Taulayang a mi-adup].  
 NM wing NOM-NM INST-NFIN-fly CMP go-there LOC T. CMP AV-hunt  
 predicate/focus < argument/presupposition >  
 'Wings are what they used to fly and arrive at Taulayang to hunt.' (Bril fieldwork, Lalagawan.020).

Arguments, adjuncts, & clauses may be focused in this way.

In terms of **prosody**:

- a slight **pause** after **topic with** rising intonation
- **Focus** : the syntactic relation between restrictor & presupposition constitutes one prosodic unit; prosodic saliency and stress on focus.

Compare a topic in (7) *aku* (+ pause) and a focused *aku* (8) followed by NOM pivot:

- (7) **Aku**, maka-tengil ma-rarum=tu **k-aku**.  
 FR.1SG ABIL-hear UV-sad=PRF NOM-1SG  
 'As for me, (you) can hear that I am sad.' (Bril fieldwork, Cabay=aku.00153)
- (8) "**Aku ku** kaka, manay ci kaka=isu" han n-i ina=aku.  
 FR.1SG NOM-NM older.sibling so PM older.sibling=GEN.2s do.thus GEN-PM mother=GEN.1SG  
 '*I* the older, so I'm your older sibling" my mother said.' (Bril fieldwork, Cabay=aku. 00144)

#### 1.1.4. Does the language mark 'new topics' differently from 'contrastive topics' ?

(1) existential constructions are used for brand new entities, (2) left dislocated topics for already referential topics, (3) emphatic constructions are used for contrastive or selective topics.

### 1.2. Overview of talk

1<sup>st</sup> **referential status** & the question of argument definiteness:

2<sup>nd</sup>: **informational hierarchy**, (1) how topic & focus are encoded and (2) how different they are from the parameters that select voice type.

### 2. Referential status: Definiteness & indefiniteness

Zero marking is used for indefinite entities; definiteness is marked by determiners (or zero marking).

#### 2.1. Definite markers

3 degree system for deictics ; inflect for case: **k-** NOM; **n-** GEN; **t-** ACC

dx1	dx2	dx3	anaph	
proximal	medial	distal/visible	invisible/known	
ini(a(n))	ina	ira	iya(n)	Natauran dialect
u-ni(an)	u-na	u-ra(an)	u-ya(an)	Dialectal variations

## 2.2. Selection of voice & argument definiteness

- AV : Undergoer can be indefinite or definite
- UV : Undergoer is generally definite, but can be indefinite too.

**Mi-AV** with **definite** undergoer PAT :

- (9) ma-banaq=tu 'amin a **mi-sangaq** [...] t-u buduy n-uhni.  
 UV-know=PRF all CMP AV-make ACC-NM clothes GEN-3PL  
 'All learned how to make their clothes.' (Bril fieldwork, Buduy nu Pangcah.071-72)

**Ma-UV** with **indefinite pronoun as nominative pivot** : but minimally specific

- (10) **ma-melaw** numaku [**k-u** cima a tamdaw].  
 UV-see GEN.1sg NOM-NM who LNK person  
 'I saw someone' (specific) (Bril fieldwork)

## 2.3. Avoidance of indefinite pronouns as arguments

avoid indefinite pronouns and use existential/locative constructions instead with a nominalised construction.

- (11) Ira **k-u** tayni-ay.  
 EXS NOM-NM arrive-NMZ  
 'Someone is coming.' (lit. there's a coming x) (Bril fieldwork)
- (12) Awa'ay hen **k-u** tayni-ay nu/a tamdaw.  
 NEG.EXS still NOM-NM arrive-NMZ GEN/LNK person  
 'Nobody has arrived yet.' (lit. there is no coming person) (Bril fieldwork)

In (13-14) a locative NMZ marked by *-an* is used in avoidance of an indefinite **patient** :

- (13) Na mi-kilim k-aku tu badal inacila, ira **k-u ni-ka-tepa-an** numaku.  
 PST AV-look.for NOM-1SG ACC berry yesterday EXS NOM-NM PRF.NMZ-NFIN-find-LOC GEN.1SG  
 'yesterday I looked for berries and found (**some**).' (lit. there was some finding by me)

And in the negative:

- (14) [-----]awa'ay **k-u ni-ka-tepa-an** numaku.  
 NEG.EXS NOM-NM PRF.NMZ-NFIN-find-LOC GEN.1SG  
 'yesterday I looked for berries and found **none**.' (there was no finding by me) (Bril fieldwork)

## 2.4. Existential constructions

Existential predicates introduce **new** entities in discourse.

### 2.4.1. Introducing new, indefinite entities in discourse

- (15) **Ira k-u** suni.  
 EXS NOM-NM.sound  
 'There was a sound.' (Bril fieldwork)

### 2.4.2. Introducing specific referents or already referential referents

*Ira* is compatible with specific referents or minimally referential entities.

- (16) Ira **k-uyu** tumuk hananay n-uhni.  
 EXS NOM-ANAPH chief so.called GEN-3PL  
 'They had a chief as they say.' (Bril fieldwork, Cikasuan.019)

Demonstratives also appear when *ira* (a) reactivates a known or a specific entity or (b) refers to deictically identifiable entities. Negative existential *awa'ay* combines with demonstrative when referent is specific, reactivated and familiar.

- (17) Awa'ay=tu k-inian u nanum.  
 NEG.EXS=PRF NOM-DX1 NM water  
 'There was no longer any (of the) water.' (i.e. mentioned before, that had flooded the land)  
 (Bril fieldwork)

### 3. Informational hierarchy

- (i) topicalisation comprises a frame and a comment (Lambrecht 1994)  
 (ii) focus constructions comprise an asserted restrictor and a presuppositional content (Krifka 2007). Distinctive morpho-syntactic and prosodic features of frames and restrictors.

#### 3.1. Topic constructions

**Topics** are definite, stand in sentence initial position followed by a pause and raising intonation, with or without a topic marker *i(ri)*, *satu (iri)*, *hantu (iri)*, etc.

*Iri* also a sequential marker 'then' (frequent origin of topic markers in Austronesian languages, Bril 2007 & 2011).

##### 3.1.1. Autonomous, detached topics

Some left-detached topics stand in loose relation with the rest of the sentence; "syntactically autonomous, extra-clausal elements." (Lambrecht 1994: 193).

- (18) [Kilakilang-an], ira k-u buhang n-iyā kilang, kay itini=tu.  
 RED-forest-OBL EXS NOM-NM hole GEN-ANAPH tree perhaps here=PRF  
 'In the forest, there was a hole in that tree, perhaps it (the frog) was there.' (Bril fieldwork, Frog story.077)
- (19) [Ina tumuk ngangan], ca'ay=tu k-ami ka-banaq t-ina tumuk n-ina Cikasuan.  
 DX2 chief name NEG=PRF NOM-1p.excl NFIN-know ACC-DX2 chief GEN-DX2 Cikasuan  
 'As for the chief's name, we no longer know the chief of the Cikasuan.' (Bril fieldwork, Cikasuan.020)

##### 3.1.2. Topic-comment equative constructions

**Equative** constructions take the form of **topic-comment** constructions with a slight pause.

- (20) Ci ama=aku/ ci Buting Sabung, ci ina=aku/ ci Lahuk u Buting.  
 PM father=GEN.IS PM B S PM mother=GEN.IS PM L. NM B  
 'My father was Buting Sabung, my mother was Lahuk u Buting.' (Bril fieldwork, urip nu Balah.005)
- (21) U kaka/ u babahiy-an, u saba/ u babainay-an.  
 NM elder NM girl-LOC NM younger NM boy-LOC  
 'The elder child was female, the younger was male.' (Bril fieldwork, Flooding.0011)

Equative constructions such as (20-21) are "neutral" topic-comment constructions, distinct from left-dislocated topic constructions.

### 3.1.3. Left-dislocated topics

Left-dislocated topics are constituents of the clause, unmarked for case, their syntactic function is retrieved within the clause. All arguments and adjuncts (location, time, etc.) can be left-dislocated with a pause, *iri*, *hantu* (*iri*), etc.

(22) shows extra-clausal position of topic, longer pause, may host topic markers (*iri* for instance).

- (22) U **babainay**//, « ci Bulad » ku ni-pa-ngangan, u babahi//, « ci Cidal » ku ni-pa-ngangan.  
 NM boy PM Moon NOM PRF-CAUS-name NM girl PM Sun NOM PRF-CAUS-name  
 ‘The boy, Moon is the name given (to him), the girl, Sun is the name given (to her).’ (Bril fieldwork, U teker ni Adek.004)

In (23), Moon and Sun are contrasted.

- (23) nika ci Bulad, // ca’ay ka-ta-tudung.  
 but PM Moon NEG NFIN-Ca-apt  
 ‘but as for Moon, he is not suited (for this).’ (Bril fieldwork, U teker ni Adek.010)

Compare with **focus** constructions (24) which make up one sentence (no pause), focus/predicate is prosodically salient; NOM argument contains the presupposition.

- (24) a Ci Cidal=tu **k-u** mi-kutay-ay.  
 PM Sun=PRF NOM-NM AV-replace-NMZ  
 ‘It was Sun who was the substitute/replaced (him).’ (Bril fieldwork, U teker ni Adek.018)

Compare with the neutral predication:

- b. mi-kutay=tu ci Cidal.  
 AV-replace=PRF PM.NOM Sun  
 ‘Sun replaced (him).’

- Subject topic (actor or agent)

- (25) [Uhni si-kawas-ay], ma-araw=tu k-iya isaw.  
 FP.3PL have-spirit-NMZ UV-see=PRF NOM-ANAPH surely  
 ‘They the shamans, (they) see that surely.’ (lit. this can surely be seen by them) (Bril fieldwork, Cabay aku.00116)

- Topic is possessive determiner, coreferent with *n-ira*:

- (26) [Ina kapah ci Adek], ira haw k-u balucuq n-ira.  
 DX2 youth PM Adek EXS EPIS NOM-NM heart GEN-3SG  
 ‘As for that young Adek, he had a plan.’ (Bril fieldwork, U teker ni Adek.057)

### 3.2. Strategies for introducing new entities at the beginning of stories

\ref Frog story.003; Bril fieldwork

- (27) Ina kungku **sa=tu t-ina** kungku, **ira** ku wawa, **ira** ku wacu, **ira** ku tatakulaq,  
 Dx2 story say=PRF ACC-dx story EXS NOM child EXS NOM dog EXS NOM frog  
 ‘As for the topic of this story, there is a child, a dog and a frog

\ref Frog story.005

- (28) Sulinay, **ira k-iya** wawa, ...  
 indeed EXS NOM-ANAPH child  
 ‘indeed, there is this child ...’

## \ref Frog story.008

- (29) **ya** tatakulaq **han=tu** **t-iya** tatakulaq **iri**,  
 ANAPH frog do.thus=PRF ACC-ANAPH frog TPC  
 < neutral > < accusative >  
 ‘as for that frog,

pa-tayra-(a)n n-iya wawa **iri**, ma-ha’en-ay u puduk.  
 CAUS-go-LOC.V GEN-ANAPH child TPC UV-be.thus-MODF NM bottle  
 ‘it was put by the child, (in) what seems a kind of bottle.’

**3.3. Topic shift and emphasis with *satu* and *hantu*****3.3.1. *Hantu* and *satu* as evidential verbs and voice markers**

*Hantu* is compatible with AV or UV constructions ; *satu* are only allows AV.

- (30) [Na ma-ha’en **iri**], kalat **han=tu** n-iya deku k-iya wawa,  
 PST UV-be.thus TOP bite do.thus=PRF GEN-ANAPH owl NOM-ANAPH child  
 ‘After that, the child was pecked by the owl, (emphatic, on purpose)

kalat-**an** nu deku k-iya wawa sa’an.  
 bite-LOC.V GEN owl NOM-ANAPH child EVID  
 ‘the child was pecked by the owl.’ (Bril fieldwork, Frog story.085-86)

- b. **ma-kalat** n-iya deku k-iya wawa.  
 UV-bite GEN-ANAPH owl NOM-ANAPH child  
 ‘the child was pecked by the owl’ (plain assertion)

- (31) Simsim **sa=tu** k-u binaulan. Vs. **mi-simsim** k-u binaulan.  
 think say=PRF NOM-NM villager AV-think NOM-NM villager  
 ‘The villagers thought.’ (Bril fieldwork)

**3.3.2. *Hantu* and *satu* as selective, contrastive topic markers**

Indicate topic shift, or selective, contrastive topics.

- actor or agent topic NP:

- (32) [Inian u sa-kaka-ay **han=tu**], mi-sangaq-ay t-uinian u lumaq.  
 DX1 NM SUP-elder-NMZ be.thus=PRF AV-build-NMZ ACC-DX1 NM house  
 ‘As for the eldest one, he works in house-building, (lit. he’s a builder of houses).’ (Bril fieldwork, Urip nu Balah.025)

- (33) [Iya Pangcah **han=tu** **iri**], ma-bukil a si-buduy.  
 ANAPH Amis be.thus=PRF TOP UV-ignorant CMP have-clothes  
 ‘As for the Amis, they were ignorant of how to dress.’ (Bril fieldwork, Buduy nu Pangcah.006)

**3.3.3. *Hantu* and *satu* as topic markers in emphatic constructions**

Signal topic shift, the topic NP is repeated with different cases:

- neutral and accusative cases (with *satu*)

- neutral and accusative or neutral and genitive cases (with *hantu*)

- (34) Sulinay, [**iya** wacu **han=tu** **n-iya** wacu **iri**],  
 indeed ANAPH dog be.thus=PRF GEN-ANAPH dog TPC  
 ‘Indeed, as for that dog, (it is thus),

mi-kilim t-iyā galasu a kureng hananay.  
 AV-look.for ACC-ANAPH glass LNK jar so.called  
 (he's) looking (in) that glass jar, like that.' (Bril fieldwork, Frog story.038)

(35), another change of topic, the sentence before is about the water :

(35) Tuwa, [wacu han=tu nu wacu iri], tebuy-en=tu n-ira a mi-lakec.  
 then dog be.thus=PRF GEN dog TPC carry-UV=PRF GEN-3S CMP AV-cross.ford  
 'Then as for the dog, (it is thus), it was carried by him (the child) across the ford.' (Bril fieldwork, Frog story.110)

### 3.4. Clausal topics: forwarding vs. contrastive topic or topic shift

Same strategies: just a pause, *iri*, *satu (iri)* or *hantu(iri)*.

#### 3.4.1. *Iri* : topic with sequential forwarding 'then'

(39) there's a change of pivot (from *dog* as actor to the *jar* as location pivot).

(36) Sulinay mi-kilim k-iyā wacu iri, mukmuk-an n-ira k-iyā kureng,  
 indeed AV-look.for NOM-ANAPH dog TPC stuck-LOC.NMZ GEN-ANAPH NOM-ANAPH jar  
 'Indeed, (as) the dog is searching, he gets stuck into the glass jar.' (lit. the jar was the place where he got stuck.' (Bril fieldwork, Frog story.040)

#### 3.4.2. *Satu iri* (AV) or *hantu iri* (AV, UV): topic shift, contrastive or selective topic

(37) [Ma-qepud sa=tu iri], "bahaw u lilac=isu" sa c-ina=aku.  
 UV-come.down be.thus=PRF TOP ONOM NM dirt=GEN.2S say PM-mother=GEN.1SG  
 '(the souls) came down then, "woah! How dirty you are ! (lit. the dirt of yours) my mother said.' (Bril fieldwork, Cabay aku.0113-114)

But compare (38-39)

(38), the preceding sentence is about the dog's head being freed from the jar ; *satu* signals a change of perspective and evidential stance.

(38) Tuwa, [na=ma-ha'en sa=tu], ma-hkulung=tu k-uhni tara i putal.  
 then, PST=UV-be.thus say=PRF UV-go.together=PRF NOM-3PL go LOC outside  
 'Then, this being so, they went together outside.' (Bril fieldwork, Frog story.055)

(39), the preceding sentence mentions the (dog) chased by the bees; another change of perspective, but *iri* forwards the story.

(39) Tuwa, [na=ma-ha'en iri], ira k-uyu buhang n-iyā tatakulaq saan haw,  
 Then, PST=UV-be.thus TOP EXS NOM-ANAPH hole GEN-ANAPH frog EVID EPIS  
 'Then, this being so then, "is that the frog's hole?', he thinks.' (Bril fieldwork, Frog story.064)

## 4. Focus constructions

Focus/restrictor is predicative, in initial position, stressed. No pause. Restrictor contains the salient information & specifies or restricts the truth value of the presupposition (Krifka 2007).

### 4.1. General features

focus has the syntactic pattern: focus/predicate <NOM argument>.

(40) a. Na ma-tu'as-ay k-u mi-diput-ay.  
 PST UV-old-NMZ NOM-NM AV-protect-NMZ  
 'It was elderly people who brought (me) up.' (Bril fieldwork, urip nu Balah.007)

- b. Na mi-diput k-u ma-tu'as-ay i-takuwan  
 PST AV-protect NOM-NM UV-old-NMZ LOC-1SG.ACC  
 'Elderly people brought me up.' (Bril fieldwork)

(41), compare **detached topic**, then a *topic argument* (italics)+ restrictive focus (underlined)

- (41) Hay **wawa**, *uru u ca'ay-ay hen pi-kikung*,  
 yes child that.one NM NEG-ASS still NFIN-marry  
 'Yes (among) the children, *that one who's still not married*,  
uraan=tu a cacay k-u sa-simsim-en nu niyam.  
 DX3=PRF LNK one NOM-NM Ca-think-PASS GEN GEN.1P.EXC  
it was about that one only that we have concerns.' (Bril fieldwork, urip nu Balah.083-084)  
 (it is that one which is a cause of concern for us)

#### 4.2. Informative, identifying, contrastive focus

Only prosodic saliency on the focus distinguishes it from standard predicate-argument order. All subtypes of focus follow the same pattern.

##### 4.2.1. Informative, identifying focus

- (42) U kingcal k-aku.  
 NM policeman NOM-1SG  
 'I'm a policeman.' (Bril fieldwork)  
 answer to 'what do you do?' > *u ma'an ku demak numisu?*
- (43) U mi-ma'an-ay k-isu? — U pa-se-banaq-ay k-aku.  
 NM AV-do-NMZ NOM-2SG NM CAUS-have-knowledge-NMZ NOM-1SG  
 'What (work) do you do?' — 'I'm a teacher.' (Bril fieldwork)  
 (what are you a doer of?)
- (44) a. [Cima] k-u mi-senat-ay tu taruduq numisu?  
 who NOM-NM AV-cut-NMZ ACC finger GEN.2S  
 'Who cut your finger?' (Bril fieldwork)  
 b. [Aku:=tu] k-u mi-senat-ay tu taruduq nu tireng.  
 FR.1s=PRF NOM-NM AV-cut-NMZ ACC finger GEN.1SG self/body  
 'I cut my own finger.' (Bril fieldwork)
- (45a) the pragmatic focus is coreferent with the pivot of the **LOC-V** marked by *-an* :
- (45) a. [U ma'an] k-u libabuy-an n-iya wacu?  
 NM what NOM-NM bark-LOC.V GEN-ANAPH dog  
 'What is this dog barking **at**?'  
 b. [U mi-takaw-ay] k-u libabuy-an niya wacu.  
 NM AV-steal-NMZ NOM-NM bark-LOC.V GEN-ANAPH dog  
 'It's a thief that the dog is barking at.' (Bril fieldwork)
- (46) focus is coreferent with the pivot of the **INSTR** voice:
- (46) a. [Na=unian a pu'ut haw] k-u sa-pi-cikcik numisu tu titi?  
 PST=DX1 LNK knife EPIS NOM-NM INST-NFIN-cut GEN.2SG ACC meat  
 'Was it with this knife that you cut the meat?'

- b. Ca'ay ka-unian, [na=uraan a hawan] ku **sa-pi-cikcik**=aku t-ina titi-an  
 NEG CONEG-DX1 PST=DX3 LNK machete NOM INST-NFIN-cut=GEN.1SG ACC-DX2 meat-ACC  
 'No, it's not with this one, it was with that machete that I cut the meat.' (Bril fieldwork)

In (c) interrogative verb *ma'an* is inflected with INSTR Voice:

- c. **Sa-pi-ma**'an=isu k-unian a pu'ut ?  
 INST-NFIN-do.what=GEN.2SG NOM-DX1 LNK knife  
 'what do you use this knife for ?'

- d. **Sa-pi-cikcik**=aku k-unian a pu'ut.  
 INST-NFIN-cut=GEN.1SG NOM-DX1 LNK knife  
 'I use this knife to cut.' (lit. this knife is used by me to cut) (Bril fieldwork)

- **Adjuncts**: are focused with their preposition marker or their case marking:

1) LOC prepositional adjunct

- (47) [Na=i Tayliku haw] k-isu a mi-nanam tu suwal nu Hulam ?  
 PST=LOC China EPIS NOM-2SG COMP AV-know ACC language GEN Chinese  
 'Was it in mainland China that you learnt the China language of Chinese ?'

2) Focused oblique arguments

- (48) Ci ama-**an**=aku k-aku a mi-nanam.  
 PM father-OBL=GEN.1SG NOM-1SG COMP AV-learn  
 'It's from my father that I learned.' (Bril fieldwork, wawa nu Ciwidian.112)

#### 4.2.2. Contrastive focus : same syntactic pattern

- (49) a. Nacila [na=**isu** haw] k-u tayni-ay ?  
 yesterday PST=FR.2SG EPIS NOM-NM arrive-NMZ  
 'Is it **you** who came yesterday ?' (the arriver)

- b. Ca'ay ka-aku, [u **saba**=aku] k-u tayni-ay.  
 NEG CONEG=FR.1SG NM young.sibling=GEN.1SG NOM-NM arrive-NMZ  
 'No it's not me, it's my younger brother who came ?' (Bril fieldwork)

#### 4.3. Focus in a subordinate clause

- (50) ma-banaq k-aku [na ci **Kilang**] [ku mi-araw-ay t-iya tamdaw-an].  
 UV-know NOM-1SG PST PM Kilang NOM AV-meet-NMZ ACC-ANAPH person-ACC  
 < main clause > <focus predicate> < sentential argument, presupposition >  
 'I know it was Kilang who met that person.' (Bril fieldwork)

### 5. Conclusion & main results

- Existential clauses introduce new indefinite entities in discourse.
- Definiteness either zero-marked or by determiners.
- Topics are left-dislocated, referential and definite, marked by a pause, sequential *iri* or by two evidential verbs.
- Only salient prosody distinguishes focus from neutral predications with predicate-argument order.
- Pragmatic I.H. devices combine with the syntactic-semantic device of voice systems ; to what extent is voice selection related to considerations such as topic continuity or argumentative effects?
- Shuanfan Huang's study on Seediq (2002) concludes "although some AF clauses take non-referential patients, lexical patients in NAV are not significantly more referential and/or definite than those in AV clauses (1999:425).

## References

- Bril, Isabelle. 2011 [2007]. Coordination, information hierarchy and subordination in some Austronesian languages". In Azeb Amha, Christian J. Rapold, Sascha Völlmin and Silvia Zaugg-Coretti (eds), *Converbs, medial verbs, clause chaining and related issues*. *Frankfurter Afrikanistische Blätter* 19. Rüdiger Köppe Verlag.
- 2010. Informational and referential hierarchy: clause-linking strategies in Austronesian-Oceanic languages". In Brill (ed.). *Clause-linking and clause hierarchy: syntax and pragmatics*. Amsterdam: Benjamins. 269-311
- Chen, Teresa. 1987. *Verbal constructions and verbal classifications in Nataoran-Amis* (Pacific linguistics. Series C)
- Gundel, Jeanette K. and Hedberg, Nancy. Forthcoming. Reference and Cognitive Status: Implicature and Typology. In, Fernandez-Vest, M. M. Jocelyne and Robert D. Van Valin, Jr., eds. *Information Structure and Spoken Language in a Cross-Linguistic Perspective*. Mouton de Gruyter.
- Hedberg, Nancy. Applying the Givenness Hierarchy Framework: Methodological issues. Tokyo workshop 2013.
- Himmelman, Nikolaus P. 2005. 'The Austronesian languages of Asia and Madagascar: Typological Characteristics.' In Alexander Adelaar & Nikolaus P. Himmelman (eds.), *The Austronesian Languages of Asia and Madagascar*, 110-181. London: Routledge.
- Holmer, Arthur. 1999. Structural implications of the function of Instrument Focus in Seediq. In Paul Jen-Kuei Li & Elizabeth Zeitoun (eds.). *Selected papers from the Eighth International Conference on Austronesian Linguistics*: 423-454. Taipei: Academia Sinica.
- Kaufman, Daniel. 2009. Austronesian typology and the nominalist hypothesis. In, *Austronesian historical linguistics and culture history: A festschrift for Robert Blust*, ed. by Alexander Adelaar and Andrew Pawley, 197–226. Canberra: Pacific Linguistics.
- Krifka, Manfred 2007. Basic Notions of Information Structure. In: C. Féry, G. Fanselow & M. Krifka (eds.), *The Notions of Information Structure*. Potsdam: Universitätsverlag, 13-55.
- Krifka, Manfred & Renate Musan eds. 2012. *The Expression of Information Structure*. Berlin/Boston: Mouton De Gruyter
- Kroeger, Paul. 1993. *Phrase Structure and Grammatical Relations in Tagalog*. Stanford: CSLI Publications
- Lambrecht, Knud. 1994. *Information Structure and Sentence Form: Topic, Focus, and the Mental Representations of Discourse Referents*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Shuanfan, Huang. 2002. The Pragmatics of Focus in Tsou and Seediq. *Language and Linguistics* 3.4: 665-694.
- Tsukida, Naomi. 2008. Verb Classification in Amis. In Mark Donohue and Søren Wichmann (eds.) *The Typology of Semantic Alignment*. Oxford University Press. 277-293.
- Wu, Joy. 2006. *Verb classification, case marking, and grammatical relations in Amis*. Ph.D State University of New York at Buffalo.
- Zeitoun, Elizabeth, Lillian M. Huang, Marie M. Yeh and Anna H. Chang. 1999. Existential, Possessive, and Locative Constructions in Formosan Languages. *Oceanic Linguistics*, Vol. 38, 1: 1-42.

## Abbreviations

ABIL	abilitative	EXCL	exclusive	NM	noun marker
ACC	accusative	EXS	existential	OBL	oblique
ANAPH	anaphoric	FR	free (pronoun)	ONOM	onomatopoeia
ASS	assertive	FUT	future	PASS	passive
AT	actor trigger	GEN	genitive	PM	personal marker
Ca	Ca-reduplication	INCL	inclusive	PRF	perfect
CAUS	causative	INST	instrumental	PL	plural
CMP	complementiser	LOC	locative	PRST	presentative
CONEG	conegative marker	LNK	linker	PST	past
DET	determiner	MODF	modifier	QM	question marker
DX1	proximal deictic	NEG	negation	RED	reduplication
DX2	medial deictic	NFIN	non-finite	SG	singular
DX3	distal deictic	NM	noun marker	SEQ	sequential
EPIS	epistemic	NOM	nominative	SUP	superlative
EVID	evidential	NMZ	nominaliser		