

Information Structure and Grammaticalization in Tagalog:

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Ever since Foley & Van Valin (1984) and Shibatani (1991) the *ang*-marked phrase in Tagalog has often been called a grammaticalized topic. The notion *grammaticalized topic* leads to two possible interpretations: (a) an erstwhile topic-marking strategy turned into something else, e.g. a more or less classic subject-marking strategy, or (b) an information structural concept like topic has developed a special grammatical significance. These interpretations differ in that the first suggests that *ang* no longer exclusively marks an information structural category and indeed may not have a lot of information-structural properties associated with it anymore; in the second sense, we are dealing with a language for which information structure is a key ingredient to its grammatical organization and morphosyntactic marking. In order to decide between these two interpretations, we need to have a clear concept of what it means to be topic. A number of competing characterizations have been proposed for the notion of topic, e.g. the thing given (Henri Weil 1844), the psychological subject the speaker wants the hearer to think about (von der Gabelentz 1869), the framesetter used to restrict the main predication to a certain domain (Chafe 1976), the entity with respect to which information should be stored (Reinhart 1982). The characterizations differ substantially, and so it does not come as a surprise that papers dealing with topichood in Tagalog seem to talk about quite different phenomena at times. Kaufman (2005) investigates syntactic and prosodic strategies for marking pragmatic topic and focus in Tagalog and comes to the conclusion, that *ang*-marking of an argument licenses the occurrence of an argument in a syntactic topic or focus position, but should not be equated with either of these pragmatic functions. Nagaya (2006) on the other hand thinks of topichood of an argument in terms of discourse continuity and topic chains and notes that topics tend to be referred to by pronouns, while non-topics (at least if they are 3rd person) tend to be coded by demonstratives or zero anaphora, i.e. topichood in this paper is regarded as independent of *ang*-marking or some extra syntactic position. Katagiri (2006) notes that from a cross-linguistic perspective that *ang*-marked arguments share a lot of characteristics with topics, but stresses that the situations in which theme or patient arguments are *ang*-marked differ from those in which topics in other languages are marked. Indeed the patient-orientedness of the Tagalog grammar system is often said to clash with certain expectations regarding topichood. In my talk I will review the different characterizations of topic and the way they are encoded. I will furthermore argue that patient-orientedness is what we expect if a notion like topic gets grammaticalized. 'Discourse topic' may be understood as the entity with respect to which (new) information is accumulated. If one extends this characterization to the sentence level, patient-orientedness is not a surprising feature, given that in many kinds of events, Undergoers are the ones whose properties are changed, manipulated and affected, i.e. we get new information about their properties. Such an analysis involves the strong and often repeated claim that if we have a definite and affected Undergoer, it should have to be *ang*-marked. By reviewing data that seem to be exceptions, we will be able to see the principles at play in the interaction of discourse structure and morphosyntax.

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