

Marking Information Status in Tapus Minangkabau

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This paper discusses grammatical strategies for marking information status in Tapus, a Minangkabau variety spoken in the northeastern corner of West Sumatra province, Indonesia. Tapus is particularly interesting because it is spoken on the border of Minangkabau (a Malayic language) and Mandailing (a Batak language). While Tapus maintains core properties of Minangkabau, it also shows signs of grammatical influence from Batak (e.g. a strong tendency toward VOS word-order).

This paper discusses strategies used to mark information status in Tapus. The strategies we discuss are: (i) employment of ‘strong’ vs. ‘weak’ pronouns, (ii) selection of voice, (iii) general word order, and (iv) formation of cleft constructions. Our description is based on elicited data as well as naturalistic texts.