

Informational status and informational hierarchy in Natauran-Amis (Formosan)

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The presentation will focus on some strategies used in Natauran-Amis (northern Amis) to introduce new entities in discourse or to refer to old information. Existential and presentative strategies are generally used to introduce new entities in discourse or reactivate already mentioned entities. In Amis, existential predicates take a specific or non-specific indefinite NP as their nominative pivot, with a tendency to use nominative participial nominalisations as an alternative to indefinite pronominal pivots.

The informational status of entities (and related notions of definiteness, indefiniteness and specificity) is marked by determiners or absence of determiners, it also bears on the choice of voice and syntactic pivot, though not as clearly or strictly as in some Philippine type languages.

Strategies and constructions expressing informational, pragmatic hierarchy, and centering on notions of topics and focus will then be discussed. Their interaction with word order (dislocation) and syntactic function triggers some syntactic reorganisation which will be investigated.