LEXICAL RESTRICTIONS ON GRAMMATICAL RELATIONS AND VOICE CONSTRUCTIONS IN AMIS

Isabelle Bril
(LACITO-CNRS; LABEX-EFL)

Amis (an Austronesian language of Taiwan) displays a rich voice system, with seven voices that are only partly symmetrical, and a bipartite, split alignment (i.e. antipassive-like vs. ergative). Voices and alignments are selected and restricted by (i) the lexical properties of verb classes (activities vs. states), (ii) by their Aktionsart features, (i.e. atelic activities vs. telic achievements), with an impact on patient affectedness. Referential factors such as patient definiteness also come into play, as well as animacy and intentionality of agents.

Actor Voice (AV) *mi-* is affixed to atelic activity verbs, with a partly affected (± definite) oblique theme/patient. The Non-Actor voice NAV *ma-*, reminiscent of middle voice in some of its functions, occurs with verbs denoting properties, states (including sensation, emotion, perception, cognition, position, grooming, etc.) as well as intradirective motion verbs.

AV *mi-* and NAV *ma-* verbs have antipassive-like alignment.

There are subcategories of AV and NAV constructions. For instance, AV *mi*-verbs denoting a superficially affected theme like 'follow, call, bark at', tend to treat it as a non-core oblique argument; whereas AV *mi*-verbs implying some resulting state such as 'strike, cut, weave, etc.' have core oblique patients. Such behavioural differences appear in cleft constructions.

Undergoer Voice (UV) *ma-* constructions only occur with two-argument verbs, with ergative alignment, i.e. an undergoer subject and a genitive agent. The UV *ma-* construction is obligatory when the verb denotes some achievement with a definite, totally affected patient.

The only voice which is not restricted by verb classes is UV *-en*, which is affixed to all verb types including stative. In contrast with UV *ma-*, the agent of two-argument UV *–en* verbs must be animate and intentional.

The other three voices (Locative, Instrumental and Conveyance Voices) are also aligned ergatively. The Locative Voice (LV) *–an* is a hybrid case between an applicative voice with a locative noun as subject, and a standard voice whose subject is the superficially affected theme/patient of some verb classes (yell, call, bark at). LV *-an* also occurs with intransitive verbs denoting natural phenomena (some of which may also select NAV *ma-*).

The two applicative voices (instrumental and conveyance) are secondary derivations from AV *mi-* and NAV *ma-* verbs allowing an instrument or a transferred entity/beneficiary as subject (give, sell).

This voice system thus offers alternate ways of encoding core arguments in a bipartite alignment frame, also making use of high or low transitivity, by promoting non-core arguments (applicative voices), or demoting arguments to non-core status.

Bril, Isabelle. 2016. Information Structure in Northern-Amis (Formosan): A morphosyntactic analysis. *Oceanic Linguistics*, 55: 2, 451-481.

— 2017. Roots and stems: Lexical and functional flexibility in Amis and Nêlêmwa. *Studies in Language*. E. van Lier (ed.), *Special issue on lexical flexibility in Oceanic languages*, 41: 2, 358-407.

Chen, Teresa. 1987. *Verbal constructions and verbal classifications in Nataoran Amis*. Canberra: Pacific Linguistics.

Foley, William A. 1998. Symmetrical voice systems and precategoriality in Philippine languages. Paper presented at the 3rd LFG conference, Brisbane.

— 2008. "The place of Philippine languages in a typology of voice systems." In *Voice and grammatical relations in Austronesian languages*, ed. by Peter K. Austin & Simon Musgrave, 22-44. Stanford: CSLI Publications.

Tsukida, Naomi. 2008. Verb Classification in Amis. In *The Typology of Semantic Alignment*, ed. by Mark Donohue & Søren Wichmann, 277-293. OUP.

Wu, Joy. 2006. *Verb classification, case marking, and grammatical relations in Amis*. Ph.D State University of New York at Buffalo.