

VERB CLASSIFICATION, CASE MARKING, AND
GRAMMATICAL RELATIONS IN AMIS

by

Jing-lan Joy Wu
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Abbreviations

ABLT	Abilitative	PPN	Personal Proper Noun
ASP	Aspect	PREP	Preposition
AV	Actor Voice	RED	Reduplication
CAU	Causative	RECP	Reciprocal
CN	Common Noun	REFL	Reflexive Marker
DAT	Dative Case	UV	Undergoer Voice
EXCL	Exclusive	1/2/3S	first/second/third person singular
FAC	Factual Marker	1/2/3P	first/second/third person plural
GEN	Genitive Case		
InA	Instrumental Applicative		
INCL	Inclusive		
IRR	Irrealis		
LA	Locative Applicative		
LNK	Linker		
MOOD	Mood Marker		
NEG	Negative Predicate		
NEUT	(Voice) Neutral		
NOM	Nominative Case		
PAST	Past Tense		
PL	Plural		
POSN	Possessive Pronominal Noun		

Phonetic Symbols

Symbols Used in this Dissertation (Consonants)	IPA Symbols
p	p
t	t
k	k
q	ʔ
,	ʔ
c	c
f	f
s	s
x	x
h	ħ
m	m
n	n
ng	ŋ
r	r
l	ɾ
d	ɽ
w	w
y	j

Symbols Used in this Dissertation (Vowels)	IPA Symbols
i	i
e	ə
a	a
u	u
o	o

Abstract

This dissertation explores the following three issues related to the verbal semantics and syntax of Amis within the framework of Role and Reference Grammar: verb classification, case marking, and grammatical relations. The following analyses and claims are proposed. First, instead of adopting a four-voice system claimed in the prior research, this dissertation argues that there are only two voices in Amis: actor voice (AV) and undergoer voice (UV). The latter is composed of the plain UV and the applicative UV constructions, which include the instrumental applicative and the locative applicative. The applicative constructions promote the semantic status of an NP, and they follow the UV pattern by default. This is a piece of evidence showing the ergativity of Amis. The voice markers exhibit robust derivational functions besides inflectional functions. Their semantics are decomposed and represented with logical structures, and their derivational functions are explicated through a set of lexical rules. Inflectionally, the AV constructions show both PSA modulation and argument modulation functions. The UV pattern, though being deemed as the default voice, appears to be a morphologically marked one for some verbs. Hence, Amis presents a split system in this regard.

Second, a tri-case system containing nominative, genitive, and dative cases is proposed for Amis. The dative case is claimed to mark either a non-macrorole argument or an adjunct. Thus, two-place AV predicates with nominative-dative case pattern should be macrorole intransitive. That is, the AV verbs pattern like intransitive verbs in Amis, and the case marking of the S argument in both types of verbs is the same as the undergoer of a UV verb. Amis thus exhibits an ergative case marking pattern.

Third, besides voice morphology and the case frame, Amis verbs are classified in terms of their Aktionsart features. In general, the basic Aktionsart classes proposed in RRG can be also differentiated in Amis.

Finally, it is found that except for the relative clause and the nominal type of displacement construction where there exists a subject-like grammatical relation, other grammatical phenomena in Amis such as control, reflexivization, and pivots in consecutive clauses mostly have semantic controllers and/or pivots.