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Guinaang Kalinga texts

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Appendix H Linguistic terms 124–125



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Appendix H: Linguistic Terms

Some of the linguistic terms used in this text collection are here explained, particularly with reference to terms used previously in describing Guinaang Kalinga.

Topic (T)

Topic is the term first used (Gieser 1963:45, 50-55) to refer to that nominal (or substantive) phrase, or its pronoun substitute, in a clause that has its syntactic relationship to the predicate indicated by the verbal inflection or, to use another term, is in focus. This usage followed that of McKaughan in his Maranao dissertation (1958). In 1977, however, focus terminology was followed (Hale and Gieser 1977), and the determiners that introduce these noun phrases were called focus markers and labeled Foc.

In this collection, topic is again used. In this connection, note is taken of McKaughan's article (1973) in which he abandoned use of the term topic to refer to these focused constituents in favor of subject, the term that was used prior to 1958, when he introduced the term topic, and is still used by many (cf. Reid 1966:10-11).

With all due respect to McKaughan, we have decided to retain the use of topic for a number of reasons. One is that topic is still used in this sense, even outside SIL (e.g., Schacter and Otnes 1972:60). Another reason is that, as Reid mentions (1966:11), the term and its use are now well understood. And the third, more or less compelling, reason is that use of topic avoids the conflict between use of subject to refer to the focused item and use of the same term to refer to the performer of an action.

Sentence topic (ST)

Sentence topic refers to nominal phrases that introduce certain kinds of sentences (cf. Gieser 1968; Longacre 1968:28-29). McKaughan uses the term topic to refer to nominal phrases that have been "moved to a special place of emphasis" (1973:209), and it seems that Brainard (1985:123) uses topic in much the same sense. It may be noted, incidentally, that the determiners that introduce sentence topics in the texts of this collection are also used to introduce titles, for example, sit in the title of text 1.

Subject (SUBJ)

The term subject is commonly used to refer to the grammatical function of performer of the action, although the term actor is also used in this sense (e.g., Schacter and Otnes 1972:381). Two who have used subject to refer to this grammatical function are Hale (1973:11) and Wolfenden (1975).

Link (LK)

Link is the term used in this collection in place of particle of attribution (Attrib), which was used in Hale and Gieser 1977.

Assertive particle (AP)

Another term, assertive particle, is mentioned here, not because it is new to this volume, but in order to say that, although this particle is not fully understood, a bit of understanding comes through comparison of such forms as issá pon ma'wá (NEG=I,3,SG AP STAT:do/make) 'it cannot be done', in text 6, sentence 1, and issá=yu ma=danág=an (NEG=II,2,PL STAT=worry=RF) 'Don't be worried', in text 20, sentence 32. It appears that pon has some kind of declarative force, which does not go with the imperative mode. Further, when pon is juxtaposed with naíd, which means something like 'used up, consumed', the negative existential, 'there is none', results.