Summer Institute of Linguistics and
The University of Texas at Arlington
Publications in Linguistics

Publication 107

Language in Context: Essays for Robert E. Longacre

Shin Ja J. Hwang
William R. Merrifield
Editors

A Publication of
The Summer Institute of Linguistics
and
The University of Texas at Arlington
1992

Library of Congress Catalog No: 92-80356

ISBN : 0-88312-183-2

ISSN: 1040-0850

Cover design by Hazel Shorey

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Language Typology in Relation to Narrative Texts of Indigenous Languages of Latin America

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The thesis of *The Grammar of Discourse* (Longacre 1983:xv) is that "language is language only in context." The purpose of this paper is to build on that statement and show correlations between language typology and organizational strategies in narrative texts, i.e., that some typological considerations are relevant only in the context of discourse.[1]

In recent years more and more linguists of almost all theoretical persuasions are giving attention to two topics: (a) typological studies and universals and (b) discourse, that is, text grammar. There is now quite widespread, although not universal, agreement that "phrasocentric 'sentence-level or sentence-internal' accounts of morphosyntax can have only a provisional and incomplete validity, and that a fully coherent theory of language must begin at (and not merely include) the level of discourse MOTIVATION for individual sentences" (Hopper and Thompson 1980:295). Attention has more recently been given to possible correlations between the typological properties of a given language and the strategies for organizing texts in that language.

Beginning exploration of correlations between word order and participant identification strategies were described by Wise (1979, 1980a,

[1]Research for this paper was partially supported by Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research Grant 4088. I am indebted to Doyle Opie, Thomas Payne, Doris Payne, and Marlene Ballena for valuable suggestions on an earlier draft. Wise 1982 and Wise 1985 represent earlier versions of the paper.

1980b), Longacre (1982), and Jacobsen (1983).[2] A related theme, topic (or local theme) continuity in discourse, is explored in-depth by Givón (1983). Doris Payne (1985, 1987, 1990) and Givón (1990) describe in some detail the pragmatic functions of word order variations. Exposition of detailed research on another dimension—relations between transitivity and foregrounding in discourse—is given by Hopper and Thompson (1980). Various authors (Hopper 1982) analyze the discourse motivation for the use of perfective aspects, but little attention is paid to the possible correlation between use of perfective aspect as a foregrounding device and language typology.[3]

In this paper, I summarize data on these topics from a variety of indigenous languages of Latin America in a continuation of the explorations mentioned above and raise questions for further study. Some relations between typological properties and foregrounding are also pointed out, and some topicalization strategies are briefly discussed. No attempt is made to follow up proposals by Longacre (1982) and others that there is a small number of universal text types. Rather, I start with the assumption that narrative is among the universal text types and that the word orders and other typological properties posited are the basic ones, at least for narrrative texts, in the languages considered.

The hypotheses presented are based primarily on studies of narrative texts in eighteen indigenous languages of Latin America, representing at least thirteen language families. The names of these languages and their linguistic affiliations are presented in (1). Supplementary data from other languages are also presented. Although these languages represent almost the full gamut of characteristics usually discussed in typological studies, almost all of them share the relatively infrequent occurrence of nouns and free pronouns in narrative texts and the frequent repetition of the last verb of the preceding sentence, or a pro-verb such as 'doing thus', as a sentence-initial connective.[4]

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[2]Although Wise 1979, 1980a, 1980b, Longacre 1982, Hopper and Thompson 1980, and Jacobsen 1983 were written almost simultaneously, each was done independently of the others.

[3]The works cited are illustrative only; scores of important works on these topics have appeared in the last decade.

[4]To my knowledge, only Tripp (1981) and Larson (1978) present data from written narrative texts. Hence, the discussion in this paper is primarily based on oral narrative texts. See Tripp [née Duff] (1974) for an exposition of contrasts between oral and written texts in Amuesha (Yanesha). Many colleagues of the Summer Institute of Linguistics checked much of the data presented in (2). I am especially indebted to Elizabeth Camp and Robert Dooley for data on Cavineña and Guaraní of Bolivia and Brazil, respectively. Unless otherwise indicated, the data on other languages are drawn from references listed at the end of the paper.

(1)	A.	Capanahua	(Panoan)
	B.	Aguaruna	(Jivaroan)
	C.	Chayahuita	(Cahuapanan)
	D.	Ancash Quechua	(Quechua)
	E.	Guanano	(Tucanoan)
	F.	Amarakaeri	(Harákmbet)
	G.	Cavineña	(Tacanan)
	H.	Candoshi	(Jivaroan?)
	I.	Guarayu	(Guaraní)
	J.	Guaymí	(Chibchan)
	K.	Waunana	(Chocó)
	L.	Paya Kuna	(Chibchan)
	M.	Arabela	(Zaparoan)
	N.	Amuesha	(Maipuran Arawakan)
	O.	Nomatsiguenga Campa	(Maipuran Arawakan)
	P.	Yagua	(Peba-Yaguan)
	Q.	Chiquitano	(unclassified)
	R.	Mbyá Guaraní	(Guaraní)

Data concerning the organizing strategies and typological properties of participant identification, foregrounding, and topicalization are summarized in (2), with the languages of (1) arranged by basic word order. The cells of (2) are encoded as follows: x = property occurs; / = property occurs but does not seem to be fully developed; – = property does not occur or is not used for the function indicated; ? = data are unavailable or unclear.

1. Referential coherence

Referential coherence is one of the most prominent STRANDS in the overall tapestry of thematic coherency in discourse (Givón 1990:851, 879).

The strategies for achieving referential coherence are, therefore, taken as the starting point for discussing correlations between typological properties and narrative organizational strategies.

Narrators avail themselves of a wide range of phonological, grammatical, lexical, semantic, and cultural resources for tracking the participants in a text.[5] One would not expect to find a language in which there is a single strategy for participant identification. Nevertheless, one might expect to find some strategies used more than others or to the exclusion of certain others. In this section, I explore a number of grammatical properties which

[5]See Wise 1971:217–19 for a summary of devices used in Nomatsiguenga Campa.

function in some languages of Latin America as important strategies for identification of participants, i.e., referential coherence, even in the absence of noun phrases. The first of these is SWITCH REFERENCE.

(2)

	SOV													VSO			SVO	
Participant identification	**A**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**H**	**I**	**J**	**K**	**L**	**M**	**N**	**O**	**P**	**Q**	**R**
main vb person affixes	x	x	x	x	x	x	–	x	x	–	–	–	–	x	x	x	x	x
subord vb distinct form	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	/	x	x	–	–	–	–	x	x
subord vb SR suffixes	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	x
subord vb person affixes	–	x	x	x	x	/	–	x	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	x	x
gender	–	–	–	–	x	/	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	x	x	x	–
fourth person	–	–	–	–	–	–	/	–	x	x	–	–	–	–	–	x	–	–
S/O case markers	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	–	x	x	–	/	–	–	–	–	–
ergativity	x	–	x	–	–	–	x	–	–	x	x	–	–	/	/	/	–	/
use pronouns for contrast	–	x	x	–	x	x	–	x	–	–	–?	–	–	x	x	x	?	x
incl/excl first person	–	x	x	x	–	–	–	–	x	–	–	x?	–	–	x	x	x	x
frequent use of NP	–	–	–	?	?	?	x	?	–	x	?	x	x	–	–	–	x	?
Foregrounding	**A**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**H**	**I**	**J**	**K**	**L**	**M**	**N**	**O**	**P**	**Q**	**R**
tense-aspect	–	–	–	x	x	–	x	x	x	x	?	x	x	x	x	x	x	?
some subord vbs	x	x	x	–?	x?	x	–	x	–	–	?	–	–	–	–	–	–	/
sentence particle	–	–	–	x	–	–	?	–	–	–	x	–	–	x	–	–	?	–
subord vb relation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	–	–	x	?	–	–	–	–	–	x
Topicalization	**A**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**H**	**I**	**J**	**K**	**L**	**M**	**N**	**O**	**P**	**Q**	**R**
fronting	?	?	?	–	?	?	?	?	?	x	–	x	x?	x	x	x	?	x
sentence particle	x	x?	x?	x	x?	?	?	?	?	–	x	x	x	x	–	–	?	/

1.1. Switch reference. An excerpt from a Yaminahua[6] text is presented in (3) to illustrate switch reference. The suffixes *-ta* and *-xo* in subordinate verbs indicate that the subject of the subordinate clause is coreferential with that of the matrix clause, while *-ken* indicates switch reference. The participants are thus identified even in the absence of a noun phrase.[7]

[6]A Panoan language spoken in Peru and Bolivia. This illustration is from Norma Faust (personal communication).

[7]Abbreviations used in this paper are: ABL ablative, AUX auxiliary, DS different subject, LOC locative, NEG negative, O object, PRF perfective, P plural, PROG progressive, PST past, PST1 immediate past, PST2 remote past, REFL reflexive, REG regressive, REP reportative, REPET repetitive, S subject, SEQ sequential, SS same subject, TOP topic, TR transitive, V verb, Ø zero morpheme, 3 third person.

(3) *Naska-ken* *tikiricho* *non* *retetini.* *Ninshi* *non*
do^thus-DS^PST jaguar we kill^PST2 vine^with we

tedextini. *Ninshi* *tedex-ta,* *naba-ta,*
strangle^we^PST2 vine^with strangle-SS^PST1 kill-SS^PST1

askafa-xo, *fe-ta* *kofiro* *fatini* *non.*
do^thus-SS^PST^TR bring-SS^PST1 skin do^we we

That having happened (jaguar sat in the trap), we killed the jaguar. We strangled (him) with vine. Having strangled (him) with vine, killing (him) right away, having done, having brought (him), we cured the skin.

In Panoan languages (of Bolivia, Brazil, and Peru) and Cahuapanan languages (of Peru), a fairly extensive set of suffixes indicates not only coreference or switch reference of agents but also the temporal or logical relation between the subordinate and matrix clauses. In other cases, such as Quechua languages (of Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru) and Jivaroan languages (of Ecuador and Peru), there are only two or three suffixes which indicate switch reference, but in each case the grammatical markers explicitly track participants throughout a text.

What correlations can be established between switch-reference systems and other properties of a given language? By comparing the third row of (2) with the classification of languages by word order we see that, with a single exception, switch reference is present only in SOV languages. In 1979 I proposed that SOV word order is a necessary condition for a switch-reference system. That hypotheses is confirmed by the data presented here; thus, switch reference implies SOV word order. However, this is apparently true only for Latin America. Some exceptions have been found in other parts of the world.[8]

Nevertheless, Brazilian Guaraní presents an apparent counter-example. Even in this case, however, the order is SVO in independent clauses only, while it is SOV in subordinate clauses (Robert Dooley, personal communication). Furthermore, other members of the Guaraní family, Guarayu and Sirionó of Bolivia, have SOV word order.[9] We are probably justified, then, in

[8]Longacre (1982:473) also links clause chaining to word order types. Robert Conrad (personal communication) confirms that switch reference is found in Papua New Guinea only in SOV languages. However, according to Longacre (1990), in some African languages with basic VSO order there is an inverse left-chaining switch reference system, i.e., the subordinate clause follows the matrix clause and the switch-reference suffix indicates if the subject of the subordinate clause is the same or different from that of the preceding clause.

[9]The Sirionó word order was confirmed by Perry Priest (personal communication).

explaining the Guaraní exception as an example of a syntactic change still in process, since we would expect the change to occur first in the independent, i.e., main clause.[10] The hypothesis that Brazilian Guaraní is in the process of change is further supported by the fact that Guarayu and Sirionó do not have switch reference.

Another example of difference with regard to the presence or absence of switch reference in members of a single language family is exemplified in Tacanan languages. Ese-ejja (Bolivia and Peru) is an sov language but no trace of switch-reference meaning can be assigned to particles which are cognate with switch-reference particles in other Tacanan languages such as Cavineña. In fact, in all of the Tacanan languages, which form a branch of the larger Pano-Tacanan family, switch reference functions somewhat differently than it does in the other languages of our sample. The difference is probably another evidence of change in progress. In Cavineña and Araona (both Tacanan languages spoken in Bolivia), subordinate clauses with switch-reference suffixes occur almost exclusively as repetitions of old information which connect sentences rather than as an element in which new information can be introduced. See, for example, the contrast in Araona sentences (4a) and (4b).

In most of the other languages in our sample new information—and in some cases even foregrounded action—is frequently given in subordinate clauses with switch-reference markers.

(4) a. *Jae lala-tso jolotaiqui.*
fish roast-after^SS consume^3^PST1
After he_x had roasted the fish, he_x ate it all.

b. *Jae lale-jao jolotaiqui.*
fish roast-after^DS consume^3^PST1
After he_x had roasted the fish, he_y ate it all.

In Aguaruna (Jivaroan, Peru), for example, a story of 138 clauses was told with 137 subordinate clauses marked for coreference of subjects or switch reference; only the final clause included an independent verb (Mildred Larson, personal communication).

[10]Givón (1976:170) says that a change of agreement in main clauses but not relative clauses of Black English "is of course not surprising, since main clauses (and in particular declarative-affirmative ones) are the most progressive, innovative environment in language, where innovations are first introduced and from where they spread later on into other environments."

In some languages, e.g., Ancash Quechua and Aguaruna, a person-marking affix occurs in the subordinate verb if the subject of the clause is not coreferential with that of the matrix clause; in others, such as those of the Panoan family, person-marking affixes do not occur in subordinate verbs but do in independent verbs. As one might expect, person-marking affixes in independent verbs are a necessary condition for their occurrence in subordinate verbs. They are not, however, a condition for switch reference. There are no person-marking affixes in the Tacanan languages. Consequently, noun phrases and free pronouns occur much more frequently than in other languages with switch reference.[11]

1.2. Noun phrases. Noun phrases are, of course, a principal mechanism for identifying participants in every language. In some of the languages considered here, participants are almost always referred to by nouns or pronouns. F. Arosemena (1980:71–74) states that this is true of Guaymí (a Chibchan language of Costa Rica and Panama). In other cases, such as Guarayu, noun phrases are used to refer to the principal character at the beginning of the narration and afterwards only at the beginning of main sections if new participants have been introduced in intervening sections. In contrast, participants of lesser importance, and especially inanimate objects, are frequently referred to by noun phrases.

The question of frequency of noun phrases and free pronouns needs to be studied in more detail and some sort of ratio of nouns (or free pronouns) to verbs specified for each of the languages. In Ashéninca Campa (Maipuran Arawakan of Peru) narratives, the ratio of verbs to any sort of noun phrase is very high; "out of the first 180 words [of the Beetle legend] a full two-thirds of those words are verbs" (D. Payne 1981:9). A ratio of nouns to verbs has not been ascertained for most of the languages discussed in this paper.

1.3. Gender. Another important device for identifying participants is gender which occurs primarily in vso and svo languages; however, some sov languages, e.g., Piro (Maipuran Arawakan, Peru), also have gender. Lehmann (1974:199–200) proposed that gender originated in Indo-European languages as a result of change from sov to vo order. On the basis of other data, discussion of which is outside the scope of this paper, I agree with Keenan (1978:287) that verb-initial order in Maipuran Arawakan languages is probably a relatively recent innovation. Comparative studies

[11]See Munro (1979) and Haiman and Munro (1983) for discussion of many other aspects of switch reference, most of which have not yet been fully explored in the languages treated here.

indicate, however, that gender was distinguished in proto-Maipuran Arawakan.[12] Furthermore, Ursula Wiesemann (personal communication) reports that Kaingang (Ge, Brazil) has gender, is clearly sov, and does not appear to be changing at all from sov order.

Culina (Arauan, Peru and Brazil) is clearly an sov language in which gender distinction is an important device for tracking referents and for marking the participant in focus. There thus appears to be little correlation between gender and word order in these languages of Latin America.

One might expect that at least gender and switch reference would be mutually exclusive. Nevertheless, the Guanano (Tucanoan, Colombia) and Amarakaeri (Harakmbet, Peru) data do not seem to support a universal such as: gender implies lack of switch reference (gender → switch reference). Note that in Chiquitano (unclassified, Bolivia) and the Maipuran Arawakan languages the gender distinction is masculine/feminine or masculine/non-masculine in third person. In Amarakaeri it is between human/nonhuman in third person, and in Yagua between animate and inanimate. In Guanano and at least some other Tucanoan languages, on the other hand, the distinction is between masculine/feminine in first and second person singular. Furthermore, the person-marking affixes occur on subordinate verbs only if the subject is coreferential with that of the matrix verb; if the subjects are different, only the switch-reference suffix occurs. The opposite is true in other switch-reference languages: if a person-marking affix occurs at all in subordinate verbs, it occurs when the subjects are different rather than when they are coreferential. Is there some correlation between these differences and the differences in gender in Guanano?

1.4 Fourth person. Fourth person—the distinction between proximate and obviative third person pronouns—is another strategy for participant identification. In the languages treated in this paper, Guarayu and Guaymí—sov languages which have neither switch reference nor gender—are the only ones which clearly have a fourth person in contrast to the third. Payne and Payne (1990:361) report for Yagua (Peba-Yaguan, Peru), a vso language, a pronoun which can be coreferential with any person other than first or second person singular. It would seem, therefore, that fourth person does not correlate with word order, but that it probably does not occur with switch reference.

1.5. Case marking of s/o. Case marking is, in general, a strategy for indicating the role of the participant rather than for participant identification. Case markers—whether in an ergative or nonergative system—seem

[12]Although gender does not occur in Amuesha there are some vestiges of it.

to be a necessary condition for switch reference, although the converse is not true. Furthermore, in the data examined here case marking on subject and object occurs only in SOV languages but not in all SOV languages. I am uncertain, however, if data from other areas of the world permit a converse statement of Greenberg's Universal 41: "If in a language the verb follows both the nominal subject and nominal object... the language almost always has a case system" (1966:96). That is, is it also true that case marking on subject or object implies SOV order?

In Campa languages (Maipuran Arawakan) where nouns are relatively infrequent and participants are usually referred to only by person-marking affixes in the verb, the role of participants other than agent or patient is indicated by valence-changing affixes in the verb, with the exception of a single oblique nominal suffix. This property merits further study in languages where subject and object cases are not marked and where there is a high ratio of verbs to nouns.

1.6. Other related properties. Other properties which help identify participants but do not appear to correlate with switch reference or word order include:

a. Distinction between first person inclusive and exclusive.

b. Use of free pronouns to contrast participants or their roles and as dummy elements to which enclitics required by the sentence or text structure may be attached. Note, for example, that this trait is found both in Aguaruna and Amuesha, SOV and VSO languages, respectively. On the other hand, free pronouns are not used to contrast participants in languages such as Arabela (Zaparoan, Peru) where person-marking affixes do not occur in independent verbs.

2. Prominence

2.1. Foregrounding. In all types of narrative the speaker (or writer) may choose to foreground certain events as the central core or backbone of the story and relegate others to a background function. One of the strategies for doing so is the choice of certain aspectual or tense suffixes on verbs in different parts of a text. This device is used in two-thirds of the languages of our sample.[13] In

[13]See Hopper and Thompson (1980) for detailed discussion of this strategy. Hopper and Thompson were not, of course, the first to point out the correlation between tense or aspect and foregrounding. For example, in an analysis of the Poema del Cid, Gilman (1961:89) demonstrated that the Spanish preterite tense is used for actions and thoughts of the Cid and his band [main events] while the imperfect is used for the actions of less important characters.

Guaymí, for example, "the verbs of the central thread . . . are suffixed by *-ni* (perfect)" (M. Arosemena 1980:15), while verbs of background information are suffixed by *-bare, -mäne* (imperfect). In Amuesha (Maipuran Arawakan, Peru) either the perfective or regressive (resolved) aspect occurs in verbs on the main event line but also occurs in some backgrounded sentences; compare *esho'tena* and *eñchehto* in background sentence (5c).

Another strategy for foregrounding actions is the use of a sentence-qualifying particle. In Amuesha, *–ña* (sequential) occurs on the first element of sentences in the main sequence of events. Thus, it occurs in sentences (5a), (5b), and (5e), but not in (5c) or (5d), which are supplementary or background information telling what the people did while looking for Lizard.

(5) a. *Allempo-ña-pa' ahuo' e'n-e:r-eht-a' allohuen-eht.*
Then-SEQ-TOP REP seek-REG^3–3p-go all-3p
Then they (the people) all went to look for him (Lizard).

b. *All-ña-pa' ahuo' e'ñ-eht allohuen-eht; año'*
there-SEQ-TOP REP seek^PRF^3-3p all-3p but^no

eñch-eht-o.
find^PRF^3-3p-NEG
There they all looked for him but they didn't find him.

c. *Ahuo' pot-a't-n-e:n-eht yoncll-ech ña-ña*
REP split-REPET-ABL-PROG-3p yonkell-tree it-also

moncn-ach all-o-te' Ø-esho't-e:n-a
monken-tree there-LOC-maybe 3-enter- PROG-REF

año' ahuen eñch-eht-o.
but^no rapidly find^PRF^3-3p^NEG
They split open the yonkell and monken trees in case he had entered one of them, but they didn't find him right away

d. *Ahuo'to' Ø-esho't-os-Ø-a shocsh-ech-o.*
REP 3-enter-there-PRF-REFL shocosh-tree-LOC
because he had entered a shokosh tree,

e. *Ñeñĭo-ña pot-err-eht-err ahuo' eñch-eht.*
which-SEQ split-REG-3p-REG REP find^PRF^3-3p
in which, when they split it open, there he was. (Tripp 1981:22)

Both of these strategies are also used in some other languages: in Ancash Quechua the sentence-qualifying particle *-na* (which may have been borrowed into Amuesha from Quechua) occurs on the first element of a sentence in the main event line and distinctive past tense verb forms occur on actions which are highlighted.

In languages where there are structurally distinct subordinate verbs, independent clauses are sometimes considered to carry the main sequence of information. In many cases, however, such as Aguaruna, much of the main event line is of necessity in the form of subordinate clauses and the independent verb may simply summarize a story or section with a verb such as 'do' and present no new information, much less a foregrounded event. In those cases, there is usually some device for distinguishing foregrounded from backgrounded actions in subordinate clauses. In Aguaruna, the subordinate verbs marked with the suffix *-k(a)* and some independent declarative verbs form the main event line, as in (6), in which the main events are bracketed. All but *pujau* 'he stayed' are subordinate verbs marked by *-k(a)*. The other verbs are attributive to these main events.

(6) *[Nunik] wekaekamaa bachig yujaun*
doing^thus after^much^hunting monkey those^which^walked^o

[wainak], uchigman diis [maak] uchigiin
seeing baby^owner^o looking^at killing^it its^baby^o

jujukii tagkumaa jukij jegaa itaa
taking^it after^taming^it taking^it to^house after^bringing^it

[unuinak] apujus [pujau] tuwajame.
teaching^it causing^it^to^live^with^him he^stayed they^say
Then, after much hunting, he saw a group of monkeys going by. Seeing one that had a baby with it, he killed that one. Taking the baby and taming it, he brought it to his house and, keeping it there, he taught it, they say. (Larson 1978:252,53,55)

In Cashinahua (Panoan, Peru and Brazil), on the other hand, those subordinate clauses in which the switch-reference rules are violated impart background as opposed to foreground information (Richard Montag,

personal communication). It is probably correct to say that where long chains of subordinate clauses are a frequent construction, foregrounded events are more likely to be indicated by some subordinate verbs than by certain tense or aspect suffixes in the independent verbs. At this point, however, it is not possible to establish this as a universal.

In languages where there is a split-ergative system, or a split s-marking system (T. Payne 1984), ABSOLUTIVE constructions may provide another strategy for foregrounding. For Pajonal Campa, Heitzman (1988) claims that absolutive constructions indicate a change of location or state of the participant referred to by the absolutive form or they indicate the climax of the narrative. That is, they appear to indicate a greater degree of foregrounding than the perfective aspect which marks the main line of events.[14]

In Guajiro (Maipuran Arawakan, Colombia and Venezuela), "when an active verb occurs on the prominent event line, that verb always has a person prefix" (Mansen and Mansen 1976:155). That is, the absolutive construction functions as a backgrounding device. In Yucuna (Maipuran Arawakan, Colombia), on the other hand, the absolutive form often occurs when events follow in close sequence on the main event line.

Study of split-ergativity or split s-marking and foregrounding strategies summarized in (2) has not so far led to any hypotheses regarding correlation with word order or other typological properties. This is very possibly due not only to the difficulty of interpreting varying usages of terms in the sources but also to the fact that there are varying levels or degrees of foregrounding. Perhaps in the languages where more than one strategy is indicated, main events, pivotal events, and the peak of the narrative are not clearly distinguished from each other in the descriptions; or background and significant background information may need to be distinguished.[15] This part of text organization and related topics such as coordination and subordination clearly merit more detailed analysis in a variety of languages.

2.2. Topicalization and focus of attention. The picture with regard to topicalization and focus is even more confusing because of inconsistency in the use of terms by different authors and in some cases the lack of attention given to these two organizing principles of discourse.

[14]Absolutive in the Campa languages consists of the subject-marking verb suffix of an intransitive clause having the same form as the object marker of a transitive verb; there is no ergative case-marking.

[15]See Jones and Jones (1979), D. Payne (1983 and 1984), and Myhill and Hibiya (1988:362) for discussion.

In this study, the term TOPIC is used in a sense very close to that of Prague School THEME; it is used as the local theme or topic which may change from one sentence to the next and is the element about which the rest of the sentence is a comment. It is also quite close, but not quite the same as GIVEN information, as in GIVEN vs. NEW information.

The principal devices for indicating topic in our data are fronting, used in Ashéninca Campa (David Payne, personal communication), and a sentence-qualifying particle marking topic or most relevant information, used in Quechua languages and Waunana. Some languages, such as Paya Kuna (sov) and Amuesha (vso), utilize both devices. In the Amuesha example above, the enclitic *-pa'* indicates the topic in fronted position in (5a) and (5b); but, since there is neither change of participant, place, or time, the theme is marked only by fronting in (5c)–(5e). It may be that fronting in Amuesha should be considered the topicalization strategy and the particle *-pa'* as a topic-shifting device.

Focus is used by some authors, and in this study, to refer to the participant on whom the narrator focuses his attention throughout an episode or the whole narration, i.e., it refers to the globally important participant, whereas topic refers to the locally important participant, or other element, in the sentence.[16] One device for focusing attention on a participant is to make him the point of reference for the kinship terms chosen for other participants.[17] Another strategy for focusing on a participant is the Campa use of the singular for plural.[18] In Nomatsiguenga Campa (Wise 1971:94), gender may also be used to focus attention—feminine forms are used to refer to a mixed group if a woman is in focus and the masculine if a man is.[19]

In Amuesha, at least, focus of attention throughout an episode and local topic are clearly distinct: "Other participants can be marked as topic [by the enclitic *-pa'* or fronting] while focus is maintained on the main participant who is the point of reference [for the kinship terms]" (Tripp 1981:33).

Another type of focus varies from one sentence to another and is somewhat comparable to the Prague School RHEME. Sentence-final position is a very common strategy for indicating this type of focus in languages of

[16]Comparable data on focus are insufficient to indicate various strategies in (2).

[17]Described for Amuesha by Tripp (1981:31).

[18]See Wise 1971:68 for Nomatsiguenga; Judith Payne (personal communication) reports the same for Ashéninca. Gilman (1961:89) made a similar observation with regard to the Cid. He pointed out that the author refers to the Cid in the singular while less important characters always act in pairs, e.g., Raquel and Vida, and the daughters of the Cid.

[19]Wayne Snell (personal communication) reports the same for the closely-related Machiguenga.

sov order such as Paya Kuna but occurs also in vo languages. In Paya Kuna, a focal or emphatic enclitic may be added to the sentence-final element. On the other hand, a focal enclitic seems to be the only focus-marker in Chayahuita. Since there is undoubtedly confusion of terms, this kind of focus or emphasis needs much more study.[20] Consequently, we are left with many more questions than answers regarding correlations between typological properties such as word order and topicalization, focus, and emphasis.

3. Conclusions

In this paper, which is more a report than a conclusive study, my proposed universal regarding the correlation between switch-reference systems and word order appears to be confirmed for Latin American languages. The really interesting question of why switch reference should imply sov order is still unanswered. From the evidence presented here it may be possible to state also that switch reference usually implies case markers, but I have not been able to check this with data from languages of other parts of the world.

We have been able to discount other hypotheses such as the possibility that gender and switch reference are mutually exclusive. On the whole, however, much more work remains to be done, including more in-depth study of various functions of switch reference, possible correlations between pronominal systems and other participant identification strategies, possible function of directionals in participant identification, foregrounding, or both, and the functions of demonstratives in the various languages. I hope the data presented here have been sufficient to stimulate further study so that in the not-too-distant future it will be possible to show many more correlations between various strategies for organizing narrative texts and other grammatical properties of the indigenous languages of Latin America.

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[20]Givón (1990, ch. 17) gives a broad survey of phenomena related to topicalization and focus, i.e., locally and globally important referents.

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