

# Episode structure in *A'ingae* (Cofán)

Kees Hengeveld

Amsterdam Center for Language and Communication

# Introduction

A change of episode is signalled in A'ingae through a new or contrastive topic marker on a new participant, time, location, or reality domain.

Another candidate for episode-marking is Tail-Head linkage, but not all cases of Tail-Head linking mark episode boundaries.

Topic marking and Tail-Head linkage interact in interesting ways in marking all-new episodes.

# A'ingae (Cofán, Kofán)

Language isolate.

Spoken in in the provinces of Putumayo and Nariño in Colombia, and in the province of Sucumbios in Ecuador.

UNESCO reports 379 speakers in Colombia and 600 speakers in Ecuador in 2008.

Data collected by Rafael Fischer between 2001 and 2006 in Ecuador.

Further datacollection in Colombia underway.

Complemented by a collection of legends told by Enrique Criollo and presented in M.B. Borman (1990).

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# Episodes

# Episodes - definition

An episode is a combination of one or more events that are thematically coherent, in the sense that they show unity or continuity of participants, location, time, and reality domain.

Reality domain is generally not included in definitions.

# Episodes in narratology

“In prose this is likely to consist of a number of sentences taking up half a page or a page, usually demarcated by a coherence in the temporal or spatial setting or both. The most signal feature of the episode, however, is that it offers a thematically distinctive topic requiring a shift in the reader’s understanding.”

Miall, David S. (2004), Episode structures in literary narratives. *Journal of Literary Semantics* 33, 111–129.

# Episodes in grammar

Manifested in (i) clause chains, possibly linked through tail-head linkage, (ii) particles, (iii) conjunction reduction, (iv) new topic marking, (v) ...

Characterized by the fact that they are in the scope of absolute tense or absolute temporal modifiers, as opposed to relative tense or relative temporal modifiers



# Episodes in grammar

Coming out, stopping to check the mailbox, taking a look at the driveway, and pausing to adjust his hat, he walked to his car.

Yesterday he **will** arrive before lunch,  $\emptyset$  stay until dinner and  $\emptyset$  leave after midnight.

Mark **didn't** wash the dishes and  $\emptyset$  Hoover the floor.

# Episodes in grammar

## *Kirghiz*

Men erten menen tur-**up**, zaryadka žas-**ap**, kiy-in-**ip**,  
I morning with stand.up-CONV gymnastics do-CONV dress-PASS-CONV  
žu:-n-**up**, čaj ič-**ip**, mektep-ke bar-**a-žat**-am.  
wash-PASS-CONV tea drink-CONV school-DAT go-PRES-1.SG

'In the morning I stand up, do gymnastics, dress, wash myself, drink tea, and go to school'.

Johanson, Lars (1995), On Turkic converb clauses. In Martin Haspelmath & , Ekkehard Konig (eds), *Converbs in Cross-Linguistic Perspective*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 329.

# Episodes in grammar

## *Swahili*

Ni- <b>li</b> -kwenda	soko-ni	ni- <b>ka</b> -nunua	ndizi	sita,	ni- <b>ka</b> -la
1.SG-PST-go	market-LOC	1.SG-SIM-buy	banana	six,	1.SG-SIM-eat
tatu,	ni- <b>ka</b> -mpa	mwenz-angu		tatu.	
three	1.SG-SIM-give	companion-1.SG.POSS		three	

‘I went to the market, and bought six bananas; I ate three and three I gave to my companion.’

Ashton, E.O. (1944), *Swahili grammar* (including intonation). London: Longmans, 133.

# Episodes in *A'ingae*

Topic markers

# Topic markers

=*ta*: new topic

=*ja*: contrastive topic (or contrastive focus)

Both are used when there is a change of participants, location, time, or reality domain, but =*ja* may also be used to mark contrastive focus. Both may occur more than once in a single clause.

# New Topic marker =*ta*

Ja'ñu ru'nda'je'ninda pûshesûta te tise unkenge tsûi jayi.

[ja'ñu ru'nda-'je=ni]=**ta** pûshesû=**ta**=te tise unkenge tsûi ja-yi

now wait-IMPF=DS=NEW woman=NEW=RPT 3.SG daughter walk go-PROSP

'While he was waiting, the woman, her daughter, arrived. [BC14.014]

# Contrastive topic marker =*ja*

Khûi'nija tise pûsheja a'taningae ji'ya.

[khûi=ni]=**ja**    tise    pûshe=**ja**    a'ta=ningae    ji='ya

lie=DS=CONTR    3.SG    wife=CONTR    dawn=ALL    come=ASS

‘While he lay there, his wife returned at dawn’. [BC23.2.024]

# Topic markers: participant

(Start of story. There was a man who did not know how to kill white-lipped peccary.)

Kha'indekhû'ta fi'thiye atesû'fa'chundekhû.

khai=ndekhû=**ta**    fi'tti-ye    atesû='fa='chu=ndekhû.

other=HUMPL=NEW    kill-INF    know=PLS=SUB=HUMPL

'Others knew how to kill.' [BC07.003]



# Topic markers: participant

(His mother still remembered.)

Dû'shûja in'jaña'mbi.

dû'shû=**ja**      in'jan-ña=mbi.

child=CONTR      remember-CAUS=NEG

'But the boy didn't remember.' [BC12.048]

# Topic markers: location

(Upriver things are like that)

Da vaninda tsa'kambi.

da va=ni=**ta**        tsa='kan=mbi.

HES PROX=LOC=NEW ANA=SIMIL1=NEG

'Uh, here (downriver) it's not like that.' [BC24.055]

# Topic markers: location

(So he cried and came.)

Tisû mamambanijan jiya.

tisû mama=pa=ni=**ja**                      ji='ya

REFL mother=ASSOC=LOC=CONTR    come=ASS

'He returned to where his parents were.' [MW 5:00]

# Topic markers: time

(The man was wondering whether his wife was visiting another man at night.)

Khakija, khaki kuse athe.

khaki=**ja**, khaki kuse athe.

next\_day=CONTR next\_day night see

'The next day at night he watched her.' [BC23.1.012]

# Topic markers: time

(The priest called all the people to come together in the house to pray, to marry them and to baptize the babies.)

Bu'ninda pare asi'thaen, "Re'rikhu a'i ji".

bu=ni=**ta**            pare    así'thaen    re'ri='khu            a'i            ji  
gather=LOC=NEW    priest think        small=CLF:QUANT    Cofán.person    come

'When they were all gathered, the priest thought, "Few people have come".'

[BC20.013]

# Topic markers: reality domain: condition

Vata tsû khien ja'ta juningae ja'ta vangae jaya.

va=ta=tsû khien ja=**ta** juni=ngae ja=ta va=ngae ja=ya.

PROX=NEW=3 DEM.MANN go=NEW DIST=MANN go=NEW PROX=MANN go=IRR

'If that huatusa goes like that over there, it will come back through here.'

[20040202-FASC-Panzaye-1-013]

Haiman, John (1978), Conditionals are topics. *Language* 54.3, 564-589.

# Topic markers: reality domain: condition

Sundaru sepimbiniija va Guantanga kaniñe.

sundaru sepi=mbi=ni=**ja**                    va    Guanta=nga ka'ni=ye

soldier    forbid=NEG=LOC=CONTR    PROX Guanta=DAT enter=INF

'If the army does not prohibit it, they'll enter Guanta.'

[20060122-TA-JuicioTexacone-0310.9]

# Topic markers: reality domain: purpose

Mûnda ma kachiye ta tiki bia'a ve jaya.

[mûnda=ma      kachai=ye]=**ta**=ti=ki      bia=a=ve      ja=ya

peccary=ACC.REAL meet=INF=NEW=INT=2 long=NPM=ACC.IRR      go=IRR

‘To see a peccary, do you need to go far?’ [HF 5:38]



# Topic markers: reality domain: purpose

Tseni jayeja kuyemakhe saparuemba anga'faya.

[tse=ni      ja-ye]=**ja**      kuye=ma=khe      saparu-en=mba      anga='fa='ya.

ANA.LOC=LOC   go-INF=CONTR   banana=ACC=ADD   basket-CAUS=SS   carry=PLS=ASS

'In order to go there, they made baskets and carried banana in them.'

(20040218-EC-Interview-229)

# Topic markers

Topic markers thus mark the new element that is responsible for there being a new episode.

This element may be a new participant, a new time, a new location, or a new reality domain.

# Episodes in *A'ingae*

Co-subordination and Tail-Head linkage

# Co-subordination

Tse'i kanjansi tayu khûpasi athepa dyupa ji.

tse'i kanjansi tayu khûpa=**si** athe=**pa** dyu=**pa** ji.

then boa already unwind=DS see=SS be\_afraid=SS come

'The boa having unwinded she realized what had happened, was afraid, and returned home.' [BC14.032]

# Co-subordination

Dyaisi kachûipa tseni pipa kan'jen.

dyai=**si** kachûi=**pa** tse=ni pi=**pa** kan'jen

sit=DS meet=SS ANA.LOC=LOC join=SS live

'While she was sitting he met her and joined her there and lived with her.'

[BC15.005]

# Tail-Head linkage

Two types of THL:

- Regular Tail Head Linkage
- Dummy head Tail Head Linkage

# Regular Tail-Head linkage

Ande usefuen, uya.

ande usefa-en **uya.**

earth end-CAUS move

'The world came to an end by earthquake.' [BC01.001]

Uyasi pûiyi'khu usefuensi a'i pa'fa.

**uya**=si pûiyi'khu usefa-en=si a'i pa=fa.

move=DS all end-CAUS=DS people die=PLS

'When the earthquake ended it all, the people died.' [BC01.002]

# Dummy head Tail-Head linkage

Fûe'khu ûfa'ma fi'thimbe pasa.

fûe=khu      ûfa=ma      fi'thi=mbe      **pasa.**

one=CLF.ANG    blow=FRT    kill=NEG.ADVR    pass

'He shot at one but missed.' [BC07.013]

Tsumba tse'i munda jasi, umbuen ja.

**tsun**=pa    tse'i munda    ja=si    umbu=en    ja.

do=ss      then peccary    go=DS    pursue=ADVR    go

'So, then when the peccary left, he followed them.' [BC07.014]



# Tail-Head linkage

Tail-Head linkage does not necessarily connect episodes.

“THL has four functions, referential coherence, processing ease, thematic continuity (chained type) and thematic discontinuity (thematized type).” (de Vries 2005: 363)

Vries, Lourens de (2005), Towards a typology of tail-head linkage in Papuan languages. *Studies in Language* 29.2, 363-384.

# Episodes and Regular Tail-Head linkage?

Andema unkamba isû i.

ande=ma            unkan=pa    isû    i.

earth=ACC.REAL    wrap=SS        take    bring

‘He brought some dirt all wrapped up.’ [BC01.022]

Ipa afe.

i=pa            afe.

bring=SS    give

‘He gave it to them (the men).’ [BC01.023, men already in context]

# Episodes and Dummy Tail-Head linkage

Tsumba kungûve japa kan'ninda kû'a iyu'fa'u sheke.

tsun=pa kungû=ve ja=pa kan=ni=ta kû'a iyu'fa='u **sheke**

do=SS yam=ACC.IRR go=SS look=DS=NEW red worm=AUG scatter

'Then looking for sweet potatoes he saw red worms scattered about.' [BC07.045]

Tsunki dyupa ji.

**tsun**=si dyu=pa ji

do=DS fear=SS come

'Then he was afraid and returned.' [BC07.046]

# Particle heads

Particles in initial position may have the same function as a head in Tail-Head linkage, either continuing an episode or initiating a new one.

(Steeping the tobacco in water he drank it.)

Tse'i khûsi.

**tse'i** khûsi.

then drink

'Then he was drunk.' [BC02.017]

# Particle heads

(Everything was silent.)

Tse'i Pûifama anzaphûthuva.

**tse'i** Pûifama anzaphû-thuva

then Pûifama fly-throw

'Then the demon flew up.' [BC11.016]

# Particle + Tail-Head linkage

Jû, na giya'tase thunthun.

jû nane giya=tshe **thunthun**

yes really clean=ADVR smoothen

Yes, they made it real smooth. [BC26.067]

Thunthumba tse'i ru'ndaye ashaen'fa.

**thunthun**=pa **tse'i** ru'da=ye ashan-en='fa

smoothen=ss then wait=INF begin-CAUS=PLS

Having smoothed it they began to wait. [BC26.068]

# Particle + Tail-Head linkage

Fûe'khu ûfa'ma fi'thimbe pasa.

fûe ='khu            ûfa='ma    fi'thi-mbe   **pasa**

one=CLF:QUANT    blow=FRT    kill-NEG.CV    pass

'He shot at one but missed.' [BC07.013]

Tsumba tse'i munda jasi, umbuen ja.

**tsun=pa tse'i** munda    ja=si    umbu=en    ja.

do=ss    then peccary    go=DS    pursue=ADVR    go

'So, then when the peccary left, he followed them.' [BC07.014]

# Episodes in A'ingae

Topic marking on heads



# Topic markers on Heads

Topic markers may also occur on the head in THL.

This is surprising, as the head repeats the tail of the previous clause, and thus represents given information.

This construction is used when the information contained in the sentence is all new or scene-setting.

So the combined marking does introduce a new episode.

# Topic markers on regular heads

Tsa'ma tsû juni Pastoninda te kan'jen.

tsa='ma=tsû ju=ni Pasto=ni=ta=te **kan'jen.**

ANA=FRT=3 DIST=LOC Pasto=LOC=NEW=RPT live

'But it is said that she (God's mother) lives in Pasto.' [BC26.122]

Kan'jembata dû'shû khen'chukhu tsûi jayi.

**Kan'jen=pa=ta** dû'shû khen=chu-khu tsûi ja-yi.

live=SS=NEW child thus=SUB=ATTR walk go-PROSP

'There a child, this big, was walking along.' [BC26.123]

# Topic markers on dummy heads

(back to earlier theme after interruption)

Tsun'jan mani kitonijan metshi ti ja'ñuja, minga tsû?

**tsun=ja**      mani      Quito=ni=ja      me'i=tshi=ti      ja'ñu=ja      minga=tsû?

make=CONTR where      Quito=LOC=CONTR no=ADJR=INT now=FOC when=3

'So in Quito, or wherever, there is no longer (this music), what will that be like?'

[20040218-EC-Interview-088]

Note absence of SS/DS marking on dummy head.

# Topic markers on dummy heads

(start of story)

Tsunda tsû kuankuamaja kundase'faya tayupi'sû a'ija.

**tsun=ta=tsû** kuankuan=ma=ja kondase='fa='ya tayupi='sû a'i=ja.

make=NEW=3 coancoan=ACC=CONTR converse=PLS=ASS formerly=ATTR person=CONTR

'So the people from before told this story about the coancan.'

[20040215-03-LC-Unfendyu'ndyu-002]

Note absence of SS/DS marking on dummy head.

# Topic markers on particles

(side remark)

Tse'ita ushambi.

**tse'i=ta**      usha =mbi

then=NEW      can=NEG

'Then (the tricksters) couldn't (smell it).' [BC07.078]

# Topic markers on particles

(evaluation)

Tayuta tsû tsa'kanfambi tsû.

**tayu=ta=tsû**      tsa='kan='fa=mbi=tsû.

already=NEW=3    ANA=CMP=PLS=NEG=3

'It's not like that anymore.'

[20060118-LM-2-0023.811]

# Topic markers on particles

(shift in story)

Ja'ñuja, panshen rande ande tsû.

**ja'ñu=ja**,      panshen      rande      ande=tsû

now=CONTR    very              big              land=3

'Now, it is a very big piece of land.'

[20060118-LM-2-0345.682]

# Conclusions



# Conclusions and discussion

New and contrastive topic markers in A'ingae systematically mark the start of a new episode.

Tail-Head linkage does not necessarily link episodes.

But topic marking on Heads does, in which the episode is all-new.

# Conclusions and discussion

The A'ingae data show the relevance of the episode as a unit of grammatical analysis.

It is therefore part of the semantic representation in Functional Discourse Grammar as a layer in between the proposition (p) and the event (e):

$(p_i: (ep_i: [(e_i: \dots (e_i)) (e_i: \dots (e_i)) (e_i: \dots (e_i)) (e_i: \dots (e_i))]) (ep_i)) (p_i))$

Many interesting hypotheses derive from this treatment, especially as regards the interaction between absolute and relative tense.

# Conclusions and discussion

Coming out, about to enter his car, but having forgotten his raincoat, he went back in.

(**past** ep<sub>i</sub>: [(**sim** e<sub>i</sub>: -come out- (e<sub>i</sub>)) (**post** e<sub>i</sub>: -enter car- (e<sub>i</sub>)) (**ant** e<sub>i</sub>: -forget raincoat- (e<sub>i</sub>)) (**sim** e<sub>i</sub>: -go back in- (e<sub>i</sub>))] (ep<sub>i</sub>))

Hengeveld, Kees & Mackenzie, J. Lachlan (2008), *Functional Discourse Grammar: A typologically-based theory of language structure*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hengeveld, Kees & Keizer, Evelien & Giomi, Riccardo (in prep.), *Layering in Functional Discourse Grammar: The hierarchical structure of the language system*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

This presentation can be downloaded from  
[www.keeshengeveld.nl](http://www.keeshengeveld.nl)

