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Topic-Marking constructions in Bantik

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Abstract

This paper aims to show how a topic noun phrase (NP) is marked syntactically in the Bantik language. Constructions that introduce a discourse-new entity, cleft-sentence construction, and left-dislocation will be investigated. All the above constructions can mark an NP that is referred to or activated in the immediately preceding discourse. A cleft construction in Bantik places a contrastive topic NP in sentence-initial position, which is followed by the linker *nu*, which introduces the main clause. Left-dislocation in Bantik is defined as a construction where the left-dislocated NP is referred to again by a pronoun in the main clause. A new entity is often introduced by a topic-introducing construction that employs the existential marker *pai*.

1. Introduction

The Bantik Language¹ is an Austronesian language spoken in North Sulawesi, Indonesia. It is said to belong to the Sangiric subgroup within the Philippine group, Western Malayo-Polynesian (cf. Noorduyn 1991, Sneddon 1984 among others). It is said to be spoken by around 10,000 people in nine villages in the vicinity of Manado, a provincial city of the North Sulawesi, and two more villages around 100 kilometers away from Manado (cf. Noorduyn 1991). Every speaker of Bantik also speaks Manado dialect of Indonesian. As people born after 1970 mostly use the Manado dialect and people born after 1980 basically do not use Bantik, it is clearly in danger of extinction.

The syntactic features of Bantik are similar to those of other Philippine languages, and so are the topic-introducing constructions in the following sections, but the comparison between them is beyond the focus of this paper.

The example sentences are taken from elicitation, naturalistic data, and translation of folk tales in Indonesian to Bantik. Naturalistic data consist of folk stories “*Biou ni-timpunuu bo i-boheng* (The tale of a turtle and a monkey)” and “*Batu Madengkei* (Mandengkei stone)”, and naturally occurring conversation “*Memperbaiki Rumah* (conversation about reconstructing a house)”, and “*Hidupan* (life)”.

Translated stories are: “*Biou ni-toada? bo i-lummuutu* (The tale of Toada and Lumimuutu)”, “*Kokokuk* (The tale of a kokokuk bird)”, and “*Burung Taoun dan Burun Ngulngul* (The tale of Taon Bird and Ngulngul bird)”.

¹ Bantik has five vowels /i, e, a, o, u/ and fourteen consonants /p, b, t, d, k, g, s, h, j, r, m, n, ŋ, ʔ/. The glottal stop occurs only base-finally with a few exceptions. A word consists of a base, or a base with one or more affixes. The basic word order is SVO while VOS word order frequently occurs when the verb is in an Undergoer Voice. Like many other Philippine type languages, Bantik has more than one Undergoer Voices (at least two) in addition to an Active Voice. For a detailed description of Bantik, see Bawole 1993 and Utsumi 2005.

In the following discussion, several technical terms are used. “Discourse topic” is used to refer to an entity that is important for the text and referred to repeatedly.

2. Referential statuses and linguistic expressions in Bantik

In this section, expressions that denote referential statuses of an NP will be briefly explained. I will employ the framework of the referential hierarchy that is proposed in Gundel et al 1993, Gundel 2003, and Hedberg 2013, among others. The description in (1) is an illustration an illustration of the givenness hierarchy given in Hedberg 2013, modified by the author, along with English expressions and the meaning of each cognitive status. A linguistic item in the list can refer to an entity lower in the cognitive hierarchy, so *it* in English can also be used to refer to an activated entity.

(1) Cognitive status	Meaning	English example
in focus	associate representation in focus of attention	<i>it</i>
activated	associate representation in working memory	<i>this/that/this NP</i>
familiar	associate representation in memory	<i>that NP</i>
uniquely identifiable	associate unique representation in DP	<i>the NP</i>
referential	associate unique representation	indefinite <i>this NP</i>
type identifiable	associate type representation	<i>a NP</i>

This universal givenness hierarchy can be applied to Bantik expressions as well. Below (2) is a tentative table of Bantik expressions that relates to the givenness or referentiality that described in Utsumi 2014b. *In focus* entities are normally expressed by zero-forms or connective pronominal forms. If an entity is activated, the proximal or distal demonstratives follow the NP in question. When it is familiar, the medial demonstrative follows the NP. As for uniquely identifiable NPs, one of the following linguistic entities precedes them: an NP introducing entities *tou/side*, or the mirative demonstrative *ite/ete*. *Tou* is used for a singular NP, and *side* for a plural NP. *Ite* is used to denote a discourse-new entity that is already present in the non-linguistic context. A discourse-new entity that is not known to the addressee is sometimes introduced by a bare NP, but it is also introduced by *pai*, an existential marker, in other instances.

(2) Bantik expressions and referential statuses

in	activated	familiar	uniquely identifiable	referential	type identifiable
focus >	>	>	>	>	>
∅	<i>ie</i> (proximal)		<i>tou/side</i> NP		∅NP
pronouns		<i>ene</i> (medial)		<i>ite</i> (mirative proximal)	<i>pai</i> NP
(connective forms)	<i>e?e</i> (distal)	full pronouns		<i>ete</i> (mirative distal)	

Both the existential marker *pai* and *tou/side* introduce a new entity into the discourse, but the

NPs they introduce differ in their information status. In Section 3, usages of the existential marker *pai* will be described in comparison with usages of *tou/side*, in order to clarify their functions.

3. Expressions for introducing a new entity: *pai* and *tou*

A discourse-new entity can be entirely new to the addressee, but it can also be present in the non-linguistic context, or can be assumed from a certain linguistic entity in the preceding discourse. If an entity is entirely new and cannot be assumed from the preceding discourse, the existential marker *pai* will be used to introduce it. If, on the other hand, it can be uniquely identified from the non-linguistic context or assumed from the preceding discourse, *tou/side* will occur before it. In this section, their similar but clearly different functions will be described. *Tou/side* will be glossed as PRO, because they behave as a free variable pronoun.

3.1 Usages of *pai*

Bantik has an existential marker *pai*. This marker has three main usages: first, it is used to denote that something exists, and in this case, it most often co-occurs with a PP that shows location, as in example (3). Second, it is used to show possession as in example (4). Third, it is used to denote a resultative state of the following clause, as in examples (5) and (6).

- (3) *su pandihi? nu-raodo? su bukidi? wulur maatus*
 LOC near LK-sea LOC hill Wulur Maatus
pai batu karaŋ.
 EXIST stone Karang

‘Near the sea, at the Wulur Maatus Hill, there was a stone (named) Karang.’ (*Biou ni Toada? bo i-Lumimuutu*)

- (4) *ia? pai sinage bua nu Bali.*
 SUBJ.1sg EXIST friend from LK Bali
 ‘I have a friend from Bali’. (Elicitation)

- (5) *pai [i-deki na-idao?=te su buha e]*
 EXIST SUBJ-Deki NA-reach=COMP LOC Buha DP
 ‘Deki has arrived at Buha.’

- (6) *pai i-stefi ma-mokou raku?=ku.*
 EXIST SUBJ-Stevy AV.NPST-wash clothes=LK.1sg
 ‘Stevy has already (started) washing my clothes’

The topic introducing function of *pai* derives from the first usage. A sentence with *pai* is often found in the first sentence of the text, as in examples (7) and (8). The *pai* in example (3) can also be analyzed as having a topic-introducing function, which is used in the first sentence of the folk story.

- (7) *pona e pai i-opo?, aden=ne i-opo? roŋkoro.*
 before DP exist SUBJ-old.man name=LK.3sg SUBJ-old.man Rongkoro
 ‘Once upon a time, there was an old man named Grandpa Rongkoro.’ (*Batu Madengkei*)
- (8) *su rou pona pai side dua siŋka-tuhaj.*
 LOC day before EXIST SUBJ.3pl two one-sibling
 ‘Days and days ago, there were two brothers.’ (*Kokokuk*)

3.2 *Tou/Side*: the marker that indicates an activated entity

We saw in the previous section that an NP that denotes an entirely new entity often follows the existential marker *pai*. In contrast, when an entity has some connection with the previously emerged entity, *tou*² and *side*³, which show the information status of “referential⁴” or “uniquely identifiable⁵”, are attached. *Tou* co-occurs with an NP that denotes a singular entity, both human and non-human, whereas *side* co-occurs with an NP that denotes plural entities. Descriptions of *tou* and *side* are presented in Utsumi 2014. *Tou/side* cannot mark an entity which cannot be assumed from the previous context, but neither can it be used to mark an entity that is fully “activated” or “in focus” in the cognitive hierarchy. An entity “in focus” or “activated” is referred to by a pronoun, the proximal demonstrative, or the distal demonstrative.

Tou/side can be regarded as a pronominal entity that precedes nouns, adjectives, and verbs, to form a nominal phrase. Especially, a noun that denotes a human being cannot stand alone but should take *tou/side* as shown in (9). In example (10), *tou* precedes an adjective, whereas in (11), *side* precedes a verb. *Tou/side* in the two examples forms nominal phrases.

- (9) *i-tou mahua nei ma-turau si sie.*
 SUBJ-PRO male dem.medial AV.NPST-live LOC here
 ‘That man lives here’ (Elicitation)
- (10) *isie ma-ruan si-tou ma-pedeke?*
 SUBJ.3sg AV.NPST-buy OBJ-Prou ADJVZ-short
 ‘S/he will buy a short one’ (Elicitation)
- (11) *su se?e ma-ka-serei si-side mam-bere*
 Loc there.distal AV.NPST-POT-see OBJ-PRO AV.NPST-work

² *Tou* is supposed to derive from *toumata* meaning “human being” in Bantik. The reconstruction of “human being” in Proto-Sangiric languages (to which Bantik belongs) is **tau* (Sneddon 1984).

³ *Side* is originally a third person plural pronoun.

⁴ The term “referential” is used here according to the definition in Hedberg 2013. A referential satisfies one of the following two conditions: (i) “It is mentioned subsequently in the discourse,” and (ii) “it is evident from the context that the speaker intends to refer to some specific entity.”

⁵ The definition of the term “uniquely identifiable” here is taken from Hedberg 2013. Something that is uniquely identifiable satisfies both of the following conditions: (i) “the referent form contains adequate descriptive/conceptual content to create a unique referent,” and (ii) “a unique referent can be created via “bridging inference” by associating with an already activated referent.”

‘There, (we) can see workers (*lit.* those who work)’ (Elicitation)

It is to be noted that *tou/side* is optional for non-human NPs as shown in (12)a and (12)b.

- (12)a. *manu?* *ene* *ma-ituj*
 that.medial ADJVZ-black
 ‘That chicken is black.’
- b. *i-tou* *manu?* *ene* *ma-ituj*
 SUBJ-PRO chicken that.medial ADJVZ-black
 ‘That chicken is black.’

Although a non-human entity that is new to the discourse can occur without *tou* or *pai*, this is not always the case. Example (13) shows that a non-human entity that is salient in the non-linguistic context is introduced by *tou*. The speaker comments on the usage of *tou* in example (13) that if the addressee is aware of the presence of the coconut tree (*pun m-baŋo*), then *tou* is preferred. It seems a non-human entity that is new to the discourse but is known immediately by the addressee preferably co-occurs with *tou/side*.

- (13) *i-tou* *pun m-baŋo* *ma-raŋkasa?* *apade?=ku*
 SUBJ-PRO tree LK-coconut ADJVZ-tall belong=NI.1sg
 ‘The tall coconut tree belongs to me’ (Elicitation)

In the naturalistic data, a discourse new entity may or may not co-occur with *tou/side*. In example (14), *korano* ‘king’ appears for the first time but is not accompanied by a marker: the existential marker *pai* does not appear either. In contrast, when it appears for the second time as shown in example (15), the referential marker *tou* appears before it. It seems that the presence of *tou/side* is not obligatory but preferred when the addressee is assumed to be able to identify the NP. Example (16) shows the usage of *side* that is attached to an NP that denotes an activated entity in the immediately preceding sentence.

- (14) *dadiŋihi?=te* *i-korano* *ni-boheŋ*.
 listen=COMP SUBJ-king LK-monkey
 ‘Monke’s king listend.’ (*I-timpunu bo i-boheng*: line 54)
- (15) *na-marote* *i-tou* *korano* *nu-boheŋ* *kasi?*
 AV.PST-announce=COMP SUBJ-PRO king LK-monkey INT
pa-dadiŋihi?, *kite?* *siŋka-maya-n* *ie,* *ka-kanio?* *bo* *bagai.*
 CAUS-listen SUBJ.1pl.EXC one-all-AN this RED-small and big
 ‘The king of monkeys announced and let (them) listen (to him), “We are one people, including small ones and big ones.”’ (*I-timpunu bo i-boheng*: line 62)

- (16) *manu?* *si-yopi* *ni-tekos-an.*
 chicken LOC-Yoppy PST-steal-GV
isie *na-moaga?* *si-side* *ma-na-nekoso?*
 SUBJ.3sg AV.PST-beat OBJ-PRO MA-RED-steal
 ‘A chicken at Yopi’s house was stolen. He beat the thieves.’ (Elicitation session)

To conclude, both the existential marker *pai* and the pronominal *tou/side* can mark an entity that occurs for the first time in the discourse. The existential marker *pai* is used to introduce a brand new entity in the discourse whereas *tou/side* marks identifiable entities. To describe them in the cognitive hierarchy terms, *pai* marks “type identifiable” entities and *tou/side* marks “referential” or “uniquely identifiable” entities.

4. Cleft constructions

In this section, the cleft construction and its function will be discussed. The cleft construction in Bantik places an NP in sentence-initial position, which is followed by the linker *nu* that introduces the main clause. Cleft constructions in the below examples are placed in brackets, as shown in example (17).

A clefted NP denotes an entity that is contrasted with another entity, and it is already a given entity in the discourse. In the cognitive hierarchy, a clefted NP mostly denotes “activated” or “familiar” entities that are contrasted with another entity. *Ene* “that” in example (17) indicates the hot season that is described in the immediately preceding clause. Here, *ene* is covertly contrasted with the other season in the tropical area, i.e., the rainy season. This is an instance of a contrastive topic⁶ NP in a cleft position.

This cleft construction, as often is the case with other languages in the Philippines and Indonesia, is also used in content questions as in example (18). Example (19) has the same construction but the linker *nu* introduces a relative clause. “”

- (17) *duŋkuru* *nu-ene* *maŋorou* *bo* *suaya* *nu-rou,*
 before LK-that hot.season and light LK-day
 [*ene=te* *nu* *paŋ-uri?* *ma-iha?*]
 that=COMP LK APP-say ADJVZ-hot

‘Back then, (it was in a) hot season, and the sunshine, that is the one that could be said to be hot’.

(*Biou ni Toada? bo i-Lumimuutu*)

- (18) [*isai nu* *na-mihe* *doiti?* *si-kau*]
 who LK AV.PST-give money OBJ-2sg
 ‘Who gave you the money?’ (Elicitation)

- (19) *babaeh?* *su-beo,* *isie* *ma-ka-dea?* [*apa* *nu*

⁶ I use the term “contrastive topic” as it appears in Lambrecht (1994 : 291). Topics, including “contrastive topics” are outside the scope of negation.

reward LOC-wild.pig SUBJ.3pl AV.NPST-POT-find what LK
ni-kan *n-toumata]*
 PST-eat LK-people

‘As the reward to the wild pig, he (=wild pig) can find what was eaten by people’

When more than two entities are compared and one of them is picked up, the cleft construction is used to mark the “contrastive focus”. A contrastive focus excludes the possibility of the other option. The fronted NP, *ana?* “child” in (20), is previously mentioned, and was picked up in those sentences again to be contrasted with *ia?* “I” in the previous sentence. In this sentence, *ana?* are the ones who support the speaker’s life, since *ia?*, the speaker herself, is not able to do so anymore. The sentences in example (21) are taken from a free conversation between four people. They have been neighbors for a long time and share knowledge of the village people. When they talk about a possible candidate for a folk-story teller, several elderly people come to mind. The people who are compared become the contrastive foci of the last two sentences. Words in angled brackets in the below examples are loanwords from Indonesian.

(20) <*zadi*> *ia?* *ie* *gagudaŋ=te,*

then SUBJ.1sg now old=COMP

<*zadi*> <*hidop*>=*ku* *ie,* *doŋka* [*ana?* *nu* *ma-miaha?* *e]*

then life=LINK.1sg this then child LK AV.NPST-feed DP

‘Then I got old, so my life is (like) this, and now it is my children that support (me).’ (*Hidupan*, monologue)

(21)L: *ada* *isie* *man-dea?* *ma-biou* *e,* *i-ma?*
 if SUBJ.3sg AV.NPST-find MA-story DP SUBJ-mother

ma-tiho? *ma-biou* *e.*

AV.NPST-know AV.NPST-story DP

‘If she is looking for storytelling, (your) mother knows how to tell stories.’

T: *i-ma?* *aya=te* *ma-kuari.*
 SUBJ-mother not=COMP AV.NPST-able

L: [*i-ma?* *bun* *nu* <*musti*> *ma-tiho?* *e]*.
 SUBJ-mother Bun LK musti AV.NPST-know DP

‘Mother Bun should know (telling the stories).’

E: [*i-ma?* *len* *nu* <*maksud*>=*nu]*
 SUBJ-mother Len LK goal=LK.2sg

‘Mother Len is who you mean’.

In example (22), the timing of a marriage is a local discourse topic. A man and a woman finally got married one day when the condition for the marriage was met, and the NP that denotes that day (*rou ene* “that day”) becomes the contrastive focus. It is the new piece of information that the storyteller wants to

convey to the hearer, and it cancels out the other possibilities.

- (22) *i-toada?* *bo* *i-rumimu?utu* *siŋka-pahi-sabu* *side* *dua*
 SUB-Toada and SUBJ-Lumimuutu once-RCP-meet SUBJ.3pl two
na-pahi-sasuka *nu* *tikin* *n-side*.
 AV.PST-RCP-measure NU stick LK-3pl
 ‘When Toada and Lumimuutu met, they compared their sticks.’
- s-in-ere-an* *mai* *n-side* *tikin* *aya=te* *pada*.
 PST-see-GV already LK-3sg stick not=COMP same
 ‘It seemed their sticks were not the same (length) anymore.’
- yo* [*rou* *ene=te* *nu* *side* *dua* *na-kabiŋ*]
 then day that=COMP LK SUBJ.3sg two AV.PST-marry
su *timbou* *nu-kantaŋ=ne*.
 LOC top LK-mountain=LK.3sg
 ‘So that was the day when the two of them got married at the top of the mountain.’

5. Left-dislocation sentences

Left-dislocation in Bantik is defined as a construction where the left-dislocated NP is referred to again by a pronoun in the main clause. A fronted NP functions as a sentential topic or a contrastive topic in this construction, which is very commonly found in the naturalistic data. It is predominantly an entity “in focus” that becomes a referent of the fronted NP.

For example, *i-tuadi?=ne* in example (24), which follows example (23), is referred to again in the main clause by *=ne* (third person pronoun, connected form⁷). In the previous context, the two brothers were introduced as discourse topics and the elder brother has been explained, so *i-tuadi?=ne* in this sentence is clearly a contrastive topic. The left dislocated items are shown in the brackets [], and repeated NPs are bold-faced in the following examples.

- (23) *su* *rou* *pona* *nu* *ie* *pai* *side* *dua* *siŋka-tuhaŋ*
 LOC day before LK this EXIST SUBJ.3pl two one-sibling
 ‘Days and days ago, there were two brothers.’ (*Kokokuk*, folk story)
- (24) [*i-tuadi?=ne*] *aden=**ne*** *i-gimon*
 [SUBJ-younger.sibling=LINK=3sg] name=LINK.3sg SUBJ-Gimon
 ‘The younger brother, his name was Gimon’ (*Kokokuk*, folk story)

This construction is also used to introduce a discourse topic as in example (25). Here, the topic *manu? taonan* “taonan bird” is referred to again by a possessive pronoun *=ne* (third person pronoun, connected

⁷ A connected form of a pronoun is used to denote the possessor when it follows an NP, and the actor when it follows a verb in undergoer voice.

form). A similar construction is shown in examples (26) and (27).

- (25) *su huan nu <dunia>, ni-ka-dea?-en manu? taonan*
 LOC in LK world PST-POT-find-GV bird Taon
bo manu? bayan
 and bird Bayan.
 ‘In the (ancient) world, Taonan bird and Bayan bird were found’.
[manu? taonan] ao?=ne bagai bo bomburu=ne ma-itun
 [bird Taon] body=LK.3sg big and feather=LK.3sg ADJVZ-black
 ‘Taonan bird, its body was big and its feathers were black’ (*Burung Taoun dan Burung Ngulngul*)
- (26) *[isie] duŋkuru.nu.ene, <mayat>=ne ni-dijan <kulurahan> sijkil.*
 SUBJ.3sg at.the.same.time body=LK.3sg PST-take region Singkil
 ‘As for him, at that time, his body was taken to Singkil’. (*Memperbaiki Rumah*)
- (27) *bo [sapi] ana?=ne e na-i-pahu? su p-in-a-ŋiki?-an*
 and cow child=LK.3sg DP AV.PST-NVlt-coil LOC PST-APP-tie-GV
 ‘And the cow, its child was unintentionally coiled to the pole (to which it was tied).’

Example (19), shown below as (28), also has a left-dislocated NP. An NP that is repeated can be placed at the end of the clause as in example (29).

- (28) *[babahe? su-beo], isie ma-ka-dea? apa nu*
 reward LOC-wild.pig SUBJ.3pl AV.NPST-POT-find what LK
ni-kan n-toumata
 PST-eat LK-people
 ‘As the reward to the wild pig, he (=wild pig) can find what was eaten by people’
- (29) *[ana?] kadua=ne, i-franŋki kumaunang, ma-turau*
 child second=LK.3sg SUBJ-Franky Kumaunang AV.NPST-live
su buha, isie
 LOC Buha SUBJ.3sg
 ‘The second child, Franky Kumaunang, he lives in Buha’.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, markers for discourse new entities and two constructions that show information structure in Bantik were described. We looked at the two markers for NPs that show information status, which are *pai* and *tou/side*. The existential marker *pai* is used for an entity that is entirely new to the discourse, or a “type identifiable” entity. For “uniquely identifiable” or “referential” entities which can be assumed from the previous context or can be inferred from the non-linguistic context, *tou/side* is used to mark the NP.

Contrastive topics and contrastive foci are shown by cleft construction, whereas discourse topics are marked by left-dislocation. A cleft construction requires an NP that is “activated” or “familiar” to be fronted. It is always the case that a clefted NP denotes an entity that is contrasted overtly or covertly with the other entity/entities in the immediately preceding discourse. Although it is possible to find clefted pronouns in the elicitation data, they are infrequently fronted in the naturalistic data.

Left dislocation is used when an NP denotes an entity “in focus”. It is a salient local topic, and is referred to again by a pronoun in the main clause that follows it.

The correlation between the information status of NPs and these constructions should be studied in more detail in the future.

Abbreviations

1sg	first person singular
1pl.EXC	first person plural exclusive
1pl.INC	first person plural inclusive
2sg	second person singular
2pl	second person plural
3sg	third person singular
3pl	third person plural
-AN	suffix <i>-an</i> which has a function of nominalization, or of forming derivational verbs
AV.NPST-	prefix attached to verb base, indicating non-past tense and Actor Voice
AV.PST-	prefix attached to verb base, indicating past tense and Actor Voice
CONT	enclitic <i>=te</i> that indicates continuative aspect
COMP	enclitic <i>=ken</i> that indicates completive aspect
DP	discourse particle
-GV	suffix attached to verb bases, which indicates goal voice
INT	interjection
LK-	noun marker <i>ni-/nu-</i> that denotes genitive or actor in undergoer voice sentences, or linker that connects two NPs
POT-	potentive prefix <i>ka-</i> which attaches to verb bases
PRO	pronoun <i>tou/side</i> that forms an NP with a noun, an adjective, or a verb
REL	relativiser <i>mu</i>
SUBJ	nominative case marker attached to subject nominals

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