

The Role of *an* in Ilonggo Information Structure

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Abstract

In Ilonggo (an Austronesian language spoken in the Philippines), the article *an* is known to mark constituents with “emphasis”:

(A) *nag-tinlo?* *an* *lalake* *saŋ* *din̄din̄*
 ACT-clean AN man DET wall
 ‘The man cleaned the wall.’

(B) *gin-tinlo?saŋ* *lalake* *an* *din̄din̄*
 GOL-clean DET man AN wall
 ‘The man cleaned the wall.’
(DGBIlonggo10-9-14groupRKelly)

To accommodate this quality of “emphasis”, the literature on Ilonggo morphosyntax has classically labeled *an* as either a topic marker (Wolfenden 1975) or a focus marker (Wolfenden 1971, Spitz 2001). I demonstrate that *an* does not fit exclusively into either of these functions, but that it plays a role in the articulation of both topics expressions and focus marking.

To evaluate the claims that *an* is a topic marker or a focus marker, I apply Lambrecht’s (1994) theory of information structure. This theory asserts that topical denotata (entities) are coded through topic expressions, which include lexical NPs and unaccented pronouns which establish a topic relation between the denotatum and the proposition of the sentence. Focus denotata are coded through focus marking, which are prosodic and morphosyntactic markers that establish a focus relation between the denotatum and the proposition.

An is capable of expressing three types of topic expressions: lexical NPs with a reference-oriented function (*an saŋat*, ‘the animal’), role-oriented “optional” lexical NPs (which can be dropped if assumed in context), and role-oriented specified pronouns (*an duwa sila*, ‘the two of them’). This

functional capacity is partially attributed to *an*'s inherently non-implicit nature; *an* can only appear before explicitly stated lexical NPs and pronouns that have been preceded by specifiers.

An's role in focus marking is ultimately unclear. *An* does appear within constituents that refer to focus elements, as shown in (Cb):

- (C) a. *ano an batag mo sa ija?*
 what AN give 2sg to 3sg
 'What did you give to him?'
 b. *gin-hata ko an regalo (sa ija).*
 GOL-give 1sg AN gift to 3sg
 'I gave (him) the gift.'
 (DGBIlonggo11-12-15monari)

However, it is presently impossible to determine if *an* itself is marking constituents with focus, or if phrases preceded by *an* are simply viable targets for some presently invisible focus marking (i.e. prosodic accents). Despite these unknown variables, it is established that *an* can certainly appear in constituents that express focus elements.

Through this analysis, I ultimately prove that the titles "topic marker" and "focus marker" are inherently inaccurate in describing how *an* contributes to the articulation of information structure in Ilonggo. The mechanisms for expressing topic and focus appear to be more nuanced and complex than the use of a single grammatical marker.

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List of Abbreviations

ACS - Verbal affix that forces *an* to appear on an accessory/instrumental entity

ACT - Verbal affix that forces *an* to appear on an actor entity

DET - Determiner

FOC - Focus marker

GOL - Verbal affix that forces *an* to appear on a goal entity

LNK - Linker between adjectives/determiners and nouns

POS - Possessive determiner

REF - Verbal affix that forces *an* to appear on a referent/locative entity

TOP - Topic marker

1 Introduction

This thesis evaluates the claim that the Ilonggo particle *an* is a formal mechanism for the grammatical marking of either topic or focus. The literature on Ilonggo has identified a morphosyntactic mechanism through which “emphasis” can be assigned to specific arguments within a sentence (Wolfenden 1971). Emphasis is articulated using the particle *an*, which precedes a given phrase and marks it with emphasis. The placement of *an* is directed by an affix found on the clause-initial verb (*nag*, *gin*). Consider the following illustrative examples, in which *an* is used to emphasize different phrases within similar sentences:

- (1) *nag-tinlo?* *an* *lalake* *san* *dinidin*
ACT-clean AN man DET wall
'The man cleaned the wall.'

- (2) *gin-tinlo?* *san* *lalake* *an* *dinidin*
GOL-clean DET man AN wall
'The man cleaned the wall.'
- (DGBIlonggo10-9-14groupRKelly)

As demonstrated in (1), *an* precedes the subject *lalake* ('man') when *nag* affixes onto the verb *tinlo?* ('clean'). In contrast, when *gin* is used in (2), *an* appears before the object *dinidin* ('wall').

This emphasis is not well-defined and its meaning has not been thoroughly explored in the Ilonggo literature. In previous theories of morphosyntax, it has been postulated that the placement of *an* marks phrases either as topics (Wolfenden 1975) or as foci (Wolfenden 1971, Spitz 2001). In this thesis, I provide evidence that *an* does not serve the exclusive function as a formal mechanism for the articulation of either topic expressions or of focus marking. I establish this evidence by applying Lambrecht's (1994) theory of information structure to sentences with *an*, through which

I can determine if *an* has the capacity to be used in the expression of either topics or foci. Instead of functioning as either a grammatical topic marker or focus marker, *an* is ultimately found to appear in the articulation of both topic expressions and focus constituents.

I begin by briefly providing background on the language of Ilonggo, my consultant, and the literature that has been published about Ilonggo (section 2). I also explore some of the grammatical features of *an* itself in this section. I then go on to outline Lambrecht's theory of information structure in section 3. This theory comprises two main parts: the first defines the concepts of topic and focus, which are pragmatic constructions. The second deals with topic expressions and focus marking, which are the formal mechanisms for coding pragmatic constructions. My analysis begins in section 4, where I apply Lambrecht's definitions of topic expression and focus marking to the Ilonggo particle *an*. I then go on to discuss the factors that influence *an*'s capacity for expressing information structure in section 5, along with the other possible grammatical functions that *an* might serve. I also present several preliminary hypotheses concerning other methods by which information structure is formally articulated in Ilonggo. I ultimately assert in section 6 that the relationship between *an* and Ilonggo information structure is more complex and nuanced than is possible to explore in this thesis, and that further research into Ilonggo prosody and related languages (like Tagalog) is required.

2 Background: Ilonggo

2.1 Overall Description

Ilonggo (also referred to as Hiligaynon) (ISO: [hil]) is an Austronesian language spoken in the Western Visayas and Negros Island Region of the Philippines (Lewis 2009). Ilonggo is considered the lingua franca for most of the Western Visayas, and it is regularly used in regional news

broadcasts and periodicals (Spitz 2001). There are slightly fewer than seven million native speakers of Ilonggo inside and outside of the Philippines. There are an additional four million who can speak Ilonggo with a substantial degree of proficiency (Philippine Census 2000).

There is some controversy concerning the usage of either “Ilonggo” or “Hiligaynon” when referring to the language spoken. In many contexts, Hiligaynon refers to the language while Ilonggo refers to the people of Iloilo Province, Panay, where there is a high concentration of speakers (Spitz 2001:1). Throughout this paper, I will use the term “Ilonggo” to refer to the language spoken by my consultant DGB, as it is the name that he uses.

2.2 Brief Literature Review

The first full descriptive grammar of Ilonggo was published in 1971 by Elmer Wolfenden. Along with providing the first substantive corpus of descriptive information on Ilonggo, Wolfenden uses this volume to propose and outline his system of Ilonggo “verb focus”, which will be further explored later on in the thesis (Section 4).

After publishing his reference grammar, Wolfenden went on to publish a description of Ilonggo phrase and clause constructions (1975) and a description of Ilonggo syntax (1975). In these volumes, Wolfenden performs in-depth analysis into underlying syntactic structures, creating formulas for clauses and phrases in Ilonggo. Within these theories, Wolfenden asserts that *an* is a “phrase introducer” that appears before noun phrases and marks them as “topical” (1975:25). A further description of Wolfenden’s theory of *an* is given in section 4.

There is little more linguistic work on Ilonggo besides Wolfenden’s pieces. Spitz (2001) provides his own short interpretation of Ilonggo phonology and morphosyntax, wherein he presents a theoretical “voice system” that parallels Wolfenden’s verb focus system. Ilonggo also

briefly appears in some comparative and typological works on Philippine languages (Reid 2000, Reid 2002, Spitz 2002). Four dictionaries have been published by Kaufman (n.d.), Motus (1971), Constantino (1975) and Yap (1983).

2.3 An Overview of An

Wolfenden defines *an* as a “phrase introducing particle”; it serves the grammatical function of marking phrases as substantival (1971:62). The following block of data illustrates a subset of the distribution of *an* in various sentences:

(3) *bigko? an balaj*
 dirty AN house
 ‘The house is dirty’
 (DGBIlonggo9-25-14class)

(4) *i-patfon an suga?*
 ACS-kill AN lights
 ‘Turn off the lights’
 (DGBIlonggo9-25-14class)

(5) *ma-dugai pato an nag-basa ako san libro*
 GOL-pass time AN ACT-read 1sg. DET book
 ‘A long time ago, I read the book.’
 (DGBIlonggo10-9-14groupRKelly)

Examples (3) and (4) illustrate how *an* appears before nouns (*balaj* ‘house’, *suga?* ‘lights’). In contrast, the *an* in (5) appears before the VP *nag-basa ako san libro* (‘I read the book’), which functions here as a subordinate clause. It should be noted that *an* only appears to modify that which it precedes. Therefore, while *an nag-basa ako san libro* is a constituent in (5), *pato an* cannot be considered a unit.

An cannot appear before names and proper nouns. It also seems that *an* cannot appear before pronouns. This latter quality is not unexpected; both Wolfenden (1971:25) and Spitz (2001:10) claim that *an* is part of the NP constituent, and a pronoun would replace this entire constituent. However, *an* can appear before a pronoun if it is accompanied by an adjective or determiner. Consider the following example (6), in which the property is demonstrated:

- (6) *an duwa sila naga-pindot sa laptop.*
 AN two 3pl ACT-press on laptop.
 ‘The two of them are both pressing/typing the laptop.’
 (DGBIlonggo10-2-14groupRKelly)

In (6), the presence of the quantifier *duwa* (‘two’) seems to permit the presence of *an* before the pronoun *sila* (3pl).

Spitz (2001) identifies another function of *an*: to nominalize VPs and turn them into artifacts of events. Consider the following NP in (7), in which the VP *gin-sulat san babae* is nominalized:

- (7) *an gin-sulat san babae.*
 AN GOL-write POSS woman
 ‘What the woman wrote.’
 (Spitz 2001:8)

Here, *an* creates an NP, which refers to an object that was written by the woman.

2.4 An and Emphasis

The placement of *an* in a sentence is directly related to the verbal affixes that appear at the beginning of a clause. Ilonggo sentences generally follow a default VSO structure. Depending on the affix found on the clause-initial verb, the placement of *an* must move to different phrases

within the sentence. Consider examples (1) and (2), which have been recopied as (8) and (9) for convenience, in which the placement of *an* changes as the verbal prefix changes from *nag* to *gin*:

(8) *nag-tinlo?* *an* *lalake* *san* *dinidin*
 ACT-clean AN man DET wall
 ‘The man cleaned the wall.’

(9) *gin-tinlo?* *san* *lalake* *an* *dinidin*
 GOL-clean DET man AN wall
 ‘The man cleaned the wall.’
 (DGBIlonggo10-9-14groupRKelly)

Switching *an* and *san* while keeping these verbal prefixes constant would be considered ungrammatical, as demonstrated in (8') and (9'):

(8') **nag-tinlo?* *san* *lalake* *an* *dinidin*
 ACT-clean DET man AN wall

(9') **gin-tinlo?* *an* *lalake* *san* *dinidin*
 GOL-clean AN man DET wall
 (DGBIlonggo10-9-14groupRKelly)

The patterns between verbal affixes and *an* placement are outlined by Wolfenden in his original grammar of Ilonggo. Wolfenden asserts that *an* can appear in front of four semantic types of entities: goals, referents, accessories (i.e. instruments), and actors (i.e. agents) (1971:104). The referent type includes the locations or beneficiaries of an action, while accessories comprise things which are used in the performance of an action (Wolfenden 1971:110). The patterns between verbal morphology and *an* placement have been outlined in Table 1 below (for the purposes of this

thesis, I have only included those affixes that have been found in the data collected by my consultant, DGB):

Table 1 - Patterns between Verb Morphology and an placement

<i>an</i> placement	Aspect	Verbal Affixes
Goal	Irrealis	-ON
	Realis	GIN-/GINA-/GINPA-
Referent	Irrealis	-AN
	Realis	GIN-/GINA-/GINPA- + -AN
Accessory	Irrealis	I-
	Realis	GIN-/GINA-/GINPA-
Actor	Irrealis	MAG-/MAGA-
	Realis	NAG-/NAGA

While the exact properties of this relationship between *an* and verbal morphology are still unclear, there is evidence to believe that *an*'s placement has some relationship to information structure. Our consultant has reported multiple times that the presence of *an* will “emphasize” or “highlight” a following constituent. This relationship has been indicated through the underlining in both the transcription and the glossing of (8) and (9).

The hypothesis that *an* has some connection to information structure is partially supported by the literature. Wolfenden asserts that *an* introduces phrases that function as the “topic” of a sentence (1971:61). Wolfenden’s definition of topic is different from present understandings; he asserts that a “topic” is the “focus complement” of the verbal clause. This definition draws from

Wolfenden's larger theory of Verb Focus in Ilonggo, in which verbal morphology establishes underlying structure in a clausal phrase.

Spitz (2001:7) asserts that *an* is a nominal determiner that marks "focus". Like Wolfenden, however, Spitz employs a definition of focus that varies significantly from that of Lambrecht: "many linguists... use *topic* for what I term *focus* ... and *focus* for what I term *voice* (verbal inflectional morphology)" (2001:7). We therefore find ourselves in a conflicting world of analyses wherein linguists have created their own definitions of topic and focus without specific justification, and connected them to the particle *an*. The goal of this thesis is to therefore determine whether *an* has any systemic relationship to expressing topicness or focushood.

2.5 The Consultant

DGB is a student at Swarthmore College. He is bilingual in Ilonggo and English. DGB grew up in California. He uses Ilonggo only when he is at home or speaking with his family on the phone. He does not regularly read any Ilonggo news media, though he does sometimes encounter Ilonggo through Facebook. DGB uses English almost exclusively while at school. At the time of the first recording, DGB had last used Ilonggo four days prior while speaking to his mother on the phone.

It is important to note that DGB's idiolect - from which I have gathered all data - might be different from the language outlined in the published literature on Ilonggo. Wolfenden's pieces, which have the most detailed descriptions of Ilonggo morphosyntax, are 40 years old. While Spitz (2001) is certainly more recent, his piece is very short and shallow. Furthermore, the influence of DGB's English-speaking context will likely increase the distance between his idiolect and the descriptions of Ilonggo in the literature. All elicitations with DGB were performed at Swarthmore College, where DGB speaks and writes in English almost exclusively. He only uses Ilonggo when

he calls his family or contacts them over the internet. Despite these factors, I have found few inconsistencies between the literature and the data collected by DGB.

One difference that has been observed is that DGB does not employ many of the verbal affixes that Wolfenden outlines (see section 2.4) (1971:102). This absence of affixes may simply be caused by the nature of sentences that I have been eliciting, which may not ever require using things like the neutral mode, unreal aspect, Actor focus infix *-um-*. I have also noticed that some of DGB's sentences have prosodic patterns that sound similar to English patterns. Unfortunately, very little work has been done on Ilonggo intonation, and it is presently impossible to measure how much DGB's English-speaking context influences his intonation patterns.

3 Background: Topic and Focus

For the purposes of this thesis, I base my analysis of Ilonggo upon Lambrecht's (1994) theory of information structure. I employ Lambrecht's work because it defines TOPIC and FOCUS in a rigorous and formal manner, with much discussion of their properties and behaviors. Lambrecht also provides an extensive and well-argued theoretical framework that contextualizes all of his definitions. As I am analyzing original data that was collected by myself and my field methods class, I wanted to employ a theory of information structure that thoroughly defined all relevant concepts and provided an extensive discussion their characteristics.

This section establishes definitions of the concepts of topic and focus as outlined by Lambrecht, as well as their basic semantic and syntactic properties. These concepts will then be applied to Ilonggo in section 4, with the goal of evaluating whether *an* can successfully function as a morphosyntactic method of articulating topic expressions or focus marking.

3.1 Overview of Information Structure

Lambrecht's definitions of topic and focus are couched within a larger theory of INFORMATION STRUCTURE. Information structure is a set of grammatical principles and rules that govern the relationship between the formal structure of sentences and the communicative situations in which sentences are used to convey pieces of propositional information (Lambrecht 1994:334). According to Lambrecht, propositions (conceptual representations of states of affairs) undergo pragmatic structuring in accordance with the immediate discourse situation in which the propositions are being communicated. This pragmatic structure is guided by the speaker's assumptions concerning the hearer's state of mind at the time of the utterance. These pragmatically structured propositions are then expressed through appropriate lexicogrammatical structures (Lambrecht 1994:334).

Under this assumed structure, Lambrecht presents his definitions of topic and focus, which articulate pragmatically constructed relations between denotata and propositions. Denotata are those referents which have been designated a topical/focused role in the sentence by some linguistic expression. Lambrecht repeatedly asserts that the organization of information in a sentence is not conveyed by lexical items or sentence constituents, but by establishing relationships between denotata and propositions (1994:209). The concepts of topic and focus therefore serve to systematically and reliably communicate the underlying roles of denotata in the larger context of discourse.

Some have argued that information structure is not a part of formal grammar, but should instead fall under the general domain conversational pragmatics (Lambrecht 1994, Zimmerman & Onea 2011). In such an interpretation, the context-dependent interpretations of sentences are attributed to non-linguistic factors. In response to this, Lambrecht points towards the existence of

“a great number” of morphosyntactic and prosodic features whose unique purpose is to signal information structure distinctions (1994:334). Examples of these features are explored in the following sections.

3.2 Defining Topic

Lambrecht (1994:131) provides the following definition of topic:

(10) TOPIC: A referent is interpreted as the topic of a proposition if in a given situation the proposition is construed as being about this referent, i.e. as expressing information which is relevant to and which increases the addressee’s knowledge of this referent.

There are three key features that a topic requires. First, a topic entity must be a discourse referent; it must exist in the universe of discussion independently of the information that is being predicated of it in the given proposition. Second, for an entity to be considered topical, it must already have a certain degree of activeness in the conversation. In other words, a topical entity must be understood as presently under discussion. If a topic is inaccessible/inactive in a conversation, it can be promoted to active status by using special topic-promoting constructions. Third, the relationship between a topic and a proposition is pragmatically recoverable at the time of an utterance. An entity must be taken for granted as a point of relevance for a given proposition if it is to serve as a topic of the proposition. Because of this, a topic element is often unaccented or phonologically null. A topic element can still be overtly expressed or accented; however, unaccented topics are generally preferred across languages (Lambrecht 1994:336).

It should be noted that the concept of TOPIC refers specifically to an abstract entity, and that its definition functions strictly within the realm of pragmatics. A TOPIC EXPRESSION

(shortened to TE in later sections) is the grammatical manifestation of a topic, and is defined by Lambrecht in (11):

(11) TOPIC EXPRESSION: A constituent is a topic expression if the proposition expressed by the clause with which it is associated is pragmatically construed as being about the referent of this constituent (Lambrecht 1994:131).

Topic expressions can serve one of two purposes. Grammars usually distinguish between these purposes by coding them differently. The first purpose, known as the reference-oriented function, is to announce/activate an inactive topic referent in the discourse (Lambrecht 1994:96). Under this function, topic expressions will take the form of lexical noun phrases. The second purpose is the role-oriented function, which is to express a semantic relation between a pragmatically pre-established topic referent and a predicate. This function is typically expressed using what Lambrecht calls UNACCENTED PRONOMINALS. This set includes free and bound pronouns, inflectional morphemes, and null arguments, as these usually refer to referents that are active within a conversation (Lambrecht 1994:172,201). It should be noted that while pronominals always point to an active referent, lexically coded referents are not marked for activation state. A lexical noun phrase can therefore serve either the reference-oriented or role-oriented function (Lambrecht 1994:98). However, Lambrecht also notes that unaccented pronominals are the most preferred form of topic, and that lexical NPs are generally dispreferred as role-oriented topic expressions across languages (1994:98).

TOPICALIZATION is the process by which a non-subject constituent is marked as a topic expression. This process can occur through a variety of ways, including word order rearrangement and particle placement. Topicalization through word order rearrangement is exemplified in the

final sentence of the following English example (12), through which the inferentially accessible referent 'product' is promoted to full active status:

(12) Why am I in an up mood? Mostly it's a sense of relief of having finished a first draft of my thesis and feeling OK at least about the time I spend writing this. The product I feel less good about.

(Lambrecht 1994:147)

In the final sentence, the object NP *the product* is the topic of the sentence. Topicalization in English shifts the object to the front of the sentence, ahead of the subject, and marks it as a topic expression.

3.3 Defining Focus

Lambrecht's definition of focus is as follows:

(13) FOCUS: The semantic component of a pragmatically structured proposition whereby the assertion differs from the presupposition (1994:213).

The PRESUPPOSITION is the set of propositions that have been evoked in a sentence which the speaker assumes are already known by the addressee at the time of the sentence's utterance. The ASSERTION is the proposition articulated in a sentence which the addressee is expected to know as a result of hearing the sentence. Under these definitions, another way of expressing (13) is that the focus of a proposition is the semantic element whose presence marks a proposition as "new information"; the hearer is not yet aware of this proposition, and by listening to the sentence, the hearer will gain awareness of the proposition.

Unlike the topic denotatum, the focus denotatum does not have to be referential; it does not have to be an entity that exists in the universe of discourse independently of its role in a

proposition (Lambrecht 1994:336). The focus denotatum is also pragmatically nonrecoverable, in that its relation to the proposition of the sentence is unpredictable at the time of speech.

Therefore, a focus element is always accented and overtly expressed, while the topic element is often (though not necessarily) unaccented or phonologically null.

Like topic, the focus of a sentence is an abstraction for the purposes of pragmatics. What constructs an assertion is not the focus denotatum itself, but the establishing of a relation between denotatum and proposition (Lambrecht 1994:217). FOCUS MARKING is the formal mechanism for signaling a focus relation between a pragmatically construed denotatum and a proposition (Lambrecht 1994:217). Marking can occur through a variety of means: prosodically, morphologically, syntactically, or through a combination of methods. As focus elements are pragmatically non-recoverable, they are always given some form of focus marking.

It should be noted that focus marking does not mark a constituent as new; it signals a focus relation between an element of the proposition and the proposition as a whole. It should also be noted that focus marking and accent placement are not to be equated (Lambrecht 1994:208).

To briefly demonstrate syntactic focus marking, we can look to the use of *wa* and *ga* in Japanese. Consider the following question-answer pairs (14) and (15), in which the questions elicit answers with different focus structures (expressions that have been marked with focus are in small caps):

- (14) a. *Kuruma wa doo-desu-ka?*
car TOP how-is-Q
'What happened to your car?'

b. (*Kuruma wa*) KOSHOO-*shita*.
 car TOP break-PST
 ‘My car/It BROKE DOWN.’

(15) a. *Jitensha wa koshoo-shita-ka?*
 bike TOP break-PST-Q
 ‘Did your bike break down?’

b. KURUMA GA *koshoo-shita*.
 car FOC break-PST
 ‘MY CAR broke down.’

(Lambrecht 1994:223)

In (14a), (14b), and (15a) the use of *wa* after *kuruma* (‘car’) and *jitensha* (‘bike’) denotes TEs. However, in (15b), the particle *ga* marks *kuruma* with focus, as it is the new, unpredictable information that is being introduced into the discourse. The ‘car’ referent cannot be the topic here, as it cannot be presupposed to play a role in the proposition ‘broke down’.

An important aspect of Lambrecht’s theory of focus is the concept of FOCUS STRUCTURE. Lambrecht asserts that, across all languages, the focus elements of a sentence are organized into one of three structures (1994:336). The first focus structure is PREDICATE FOCUS, the purpose of which is to predicate a property of a given topic. Predicate focus is exemplified in (14b), where the speaker provides new information about the topic ‘car’. The second structure, argument focus, is employed to identify the argument of a given established proposition. (15b) demonstrates argument focus, as it identifies the correct argument of the proposition ‘broke down’.

The third structure, sentence focus, is used to report an events without any context in particular. No pragmatic presupposition is formally evoked, aside from the situational assumption

that “something happened”. This event-reporting function is demonstrated in the following example (16), in which focus is marked using both the marker *ga* and through prosody on the verb *kosboo* (“break”):

- (16) a. *Nani ga oko-tta?*
 What FOC happen-PST
 ‘What happened?’
- b. KURUMA GA KOSHOO-*shita*.
 car FOC break-PST
 ‘MY CAR broke down.’
 (Lambrecht 1994:223)

Lambrecht notes that sentence focus and argument focus are often homophonous or near-homophonous in many languages. This property is exemplified in sentence (15b) and (16b); syntactically, the sentences are identical, and any difference in focus structure must be communicated through prosody and context. This homophony often leads to conflation of the two structures in past linguistic analyses of focus structure. However, he asserts that the two structures serve distinct conversational purposes (Lambrecht 1994:223).

Lambrecht also mentions the possible existence of a fourth focus structure, contrastive focus, which he chooses not to discuss in this book (1994:223). It should also be noted that Lambrecht chooses not to engage with the issue of the amount of propositional information that can be indicated by a single focused constituent within a sentence or clause. While a sentence can have multiple focus elements (*I am HANDSOME and SMART*), Lambrecht does not discuss what factors constrain the amount of asserted information that can be expressed within a focused constituent, and he ultimately asserts that the subject requires further research (1994:238).

The differences between topic and focus denotatum prevent a denotatum from simultaneously being both the topic and the focus of an utterance. A denotatum cannot be both pragmatically recoverable and nonrecoverable at the same time. Because topics are pragmatically recoverable, there are many instances in which a topic relation between the topic and the proposition does not have to be overtly expressed. Consider the following question-answer pair (17), in which the answer lacks a TE:

- (17) a. What color is your shirt?
b. Green.
(Lambrecht 1994:217)

While reference to a topic denotatum is not required in every sentence, a focus element is obligatory in every sentence. This assertion is an extension of the assumption that each independent sentence uttered aims to provide new and relevant information (Lambrecht 1994:236; Grice 1975).

3.4 Identifying Topic and Focus: Grammar and Prosody

If a language has formal grammatical means for coding information structure distinctions, Lambrecht defines it as having PRESUPPOSITIONAL STRUCTURE. By using an expression with presuppositional structure, the speaker communicates that the hearer should construe the proposition as having a particular information structure.

As explored in the sections above, topics and foci are distinguishable on a number of levels. On a formalized, grammatical level, TEs are generally expressed through lexical noun phrases or unaccented pronominals, depending upon the function of the expression. In contrast, focus

marking is typically articulated through phonetic, morphosyntactic, and structural methods that vary greatly across languages.

Lambrecht goes on to identify several recognizable relationships that exist between a language's information structure and its morphosyntax and phonetics. The most salient trend noted is that, in some languages, morphosyntactic methods can be used to express distinctions between presupposed and asserted propositions. These methods include word order, syntactic subordination, or the use of definite determiners (Lambrecht 1994:337). As topics are inherently presupposed and foci are inherently asserted, it may be beneficial to look for these distinctions as evidence of topicness or focusness.

3.5 Identifying Topic and Focus: Pragmatics and Context

To effectively identify the relations between denotata and propositions, it is usually necessary to give attention to the discourse context in which the sentence is embedded (Lambrecht 1994:120).

Consider the following pair of sentences (18), which are stated in response to the preceding question in parentheses:

- (18) a. (What did the children do next?) The children WENT TO SCHOOL.
b. (Who went to school?) THE CHILDREN went to school.
(Lambrecht 1994:121)

In the context of (18a), the statement is clearly intended to increase the addressee's knowledge about *the children* as a previously established set of entities. The topical expression of the sentence is therefore *the children*, which in turn refers to the topical entity of *the children*.

In contrast, (18b) does not have a topic. The sentence is no longer providing new information about the children; instead, *the children* serves as a focus expression, as it presents non-

recoverable information. One might propose that the presupposed open proposition “x went to school” might be topical. However, this proposition is semantically incomplete and thus cannot be said to have a referent. Therefore the asserted proposition cannot be construed as being about the referent. While presupposition and topic are related, they are not synonymous (Lambrecht 1994:122).

The interface between form and interpretation on the level of information structure generally involves multiple correspondences between various linguistic components. There is usually not a one-to-one correspondence between a given category of grammar and a category of information structure. However, this lack of simplicity does not mean that it is impossible to identify systemic patterns in how information structures are communicated through grammar. Lambrecht asserts that, to fully appreciate the articulation of information structure, one must adopt the perspective that grammar is organized such that the various meaning-bearing components (morphology, syntax, prosody, and the lexicon) are interconnected and accessible to each other (1994:339).

4 The Role of *an* in Information Structure

In this section I apply Lambrecht’s rigorous, specific definitions of topic and focus to Ilonggo to determine if *an* has any formal relationship to the articulation of topicness or focushood.

4.1 Analysis: an as a Topic Expression Introducer

According to Lambrecht’s theory of topics, TEs can either take the form of a lexical NP (reference-oriented TE) or an unaccented pronominal (role-oriented TE). Within this framework, *an* could potentially be used in a reference-oriented capacity, as it must appear before NPs or nominalized phrases. In this function, *an* would function as a TE INTRODUCER, to borrow the

terminology of Spitz and Wolfenden. Consider the following first sentences of a frog story (19), which illustrates how *an* can be used to introduce and refer to multiple characters in a larger narrative¹:

(19) a. *mai bata? na gina-lantao-an ja an sapat*
exists child LNK REF-look-REF 3sg AN animal

sa kwarto ja sa gab?e?
in room 3sg in night

‘There is a child that is looking at the animal in his room at night’

b. *an sapat nag-gwa? sa kwartoja san mag-dulog*
AN animal ACT-outside of room 3sg DET ACT-sleep

an bata?
AN child

‘The animal left the room when the child was sleeping.’

c. *nag-buktao na an bata?*
ACT-wake now AN child

‘The child is now awake.’

(DGBIlonggoFrogStory)

In (19a), the lexical NP *an sapat* (‘the animal’) is not a TE; while it refers to an identifiable referent ‘animal’, this referent is not fully active at the time of utterance. The referent’s relation to the predicate is unpredictable, and the sentence is not about the ‘animal’, but about the ‘child’, which is established through *mai bata?* (‘there is a child’). These three features indicate that, in this situation, *an sapat* is used to express some part of the focus of the sentence.

¹ Transcription from Tamsin True-Alcala, 2014, Field Methods Final Project.

However, in (19b), *an sapat* can be viewed as a TE that refers to the topic denotatum ‘animal’. The entity ‘animal’ has been brought to active status through its introduction in the previous sentence (19a). The entity has clear aboutness in the sentence; the predicate describes an action that the animal performs (leave the room) and the manner in which it is executed (while the child is sleeping). These qualities are sufficient evidence to argue that *an sapat* is a lexical NP TE.

In the third sentence (19c), the expression *an bata?* brings attention back to the entity ‘child’, and establishes it as the topic of the sentence. ‘Child’ has been active since the beginning of the story, and is thus accessible as a topic. Because attention had switched to ‘animal’ in (19b), a lexical phrase must be used to re-establish the child as the entity of interest, and the thing about which the predicate is providing more information. Through the use of *an*, the speaker can move between active topics explicitly and without confusion.

Because *an* cannot generally appear before a pronoun, it would be assumed that *an* cannot be employed for introducing unaccented pronominals. However, as demonstrated earlier in (15), *an* can appear with an adjective/quantifier before a pronoun. While such a pronoun could not be viewed as unaccented, it certainly points to a referent that already exists in the discourse. This property of *an* may allow it to extend its function as a TE introducer to include role-oriented TEs. Consider the following expansion of (15), which was elicited by presenting DGB with the picture of a mother and her daughter (see Appendix):

- (20) a. *mai selfon an bata? sa dulungan ja.*
exists cell.phone AN baby on ear 3sg
‘The baby has a cellphone on her ear.’

b. *an duwa sila naga-pindot sa laptop.*
 ANJ two 3pl ACT-press on laptop.
 ‘The two of them are both pressing/typing the laptop.’
 (DGBIlonggo10-2-14groupRKelly)

In (20b), *an duwa sila* (‘the two of them’) could be interpreted as a TE that refers to the topics ‘baby’ and ‘mother’. The predicate of the second sentence is certainly about the baby and the mother; specifically, it describes their action of typing on the laptop. Both entities are also active in the conversation at the time of utterance of *an duwa sila*. Their presence has been established through the picture, which DGB then comments on. It can also be asserted that the topics can be taken for granted, as the expression uses a pronoun to refer to them. By having each of the above qualities, the phrase *an duwa sila* fulfils our criteria for a TE that refers to valid topic denotata.

It should also be noted that, in some instances, expressions that have been introduced with *an* become optional after they have been established in the universe of discourse. This behavior implies that such phrases are TEs serving a role-oriented function; such TEs are preferably unaccented (i.e. pronominals), as their entities have already been established, and presenting them again would be redundant. Consider the following question-answer pair (21), in which a lexical NP that has been introduced by *an* becomes optional after its referent has been established in the previous sentence:

(21) a. *mai libro sa balai.*
 exists book in house
 ‘There is a book in the house.’

b. *gina-basa san lalake (an libro).*
 GOL-read DET man ANJ man
 ‘A man is reading (the book).’ (DGBIlonggo11-12-15monari)

In (21b), *an libro* ('the book') essentially functions as a role-oriented TE. In the first sentence (21a), the topic 'book' is coded through the phrase *mai libro* ('there is a book'). In the second sentence (21b), the book is still the topic; the purpose of this sentence is to give more information about what is happening to the book. Because 'book' is already active, it is unnecessary to announce it again using a lexical NP; however, doing so is not necessarily ungrammatical. The optionality of this NP therefore suggests that *an libro* is a role-oriented TE in this sentence; the topic is already established, so its only potential role would be to serve the grammatical purpose for explicitly showing a relationship between the topic and the predicate.

4.2 Analysis: *an* as a Focus Marking Particle

Lambrecht claims that focus marking (FM) is expressed through morphosyntactic or prosodic means. *An* could therefore potentially function as a morpheme that marks phrases with focus.

Consider the following question-answer pair, in which the new entity 'gift' is introduced using *an*:

(22) a. *ano an batag mo sa ija?*
 what AN give 2sg to 3sg
 'What did you give to him?'

b. *gin-bata ko an regalo (sa ija).*
 GOL-give 1sg AN gift to 3sg
 'I gave (him) the gift.'
 (DGBIlonggo11-12-15monari)

In the above (22b), *an* could be interpreted as a particle that marks *regalo* ('gift') as a focus element in this sentence. The entity 'gift' is certainly new, unpredictable information; indeed, it is the one piece of information that the asker does not yet know, as indicated by their specific, direct request

for what was given by the addressee. Because the focus denotatum is newly introduced to the conversation, it has been expressed through an overt lexical NP.

Another reason to think that *an* might be a focus marker is that it does not always appear before NPs or nominalized phrases. While topic denotata must be a referent that exists in the discourse independently of its role in a proposition, focus denotata are not required to be referential. However, as exemplified in (14), *an* can appear before phrases that do not point to a referent (in (14), *an* points to a complete VP). Because of this syntactic distribution, there is some reason to suspect that *an* might have the capacity to mark focus, not only on entities, but on propositions or descriptions as well. Consider the following example, which was elicited by using a photograph of a man in a suit sitting on a large dollar bill (see Appendix):

(23) a. *mar* *lalaki* *ŋa* *naga-punko* *sa* *babao* *saŋ* *kwarta*.
 exists man LNK ACT-sit on top DET money.
 ‘There is a man sitting on top of money.’

b. *amerikano* *an* *gina-soksok* *ja*
 suit AN ACS-wear 3sg
 ‘He is wearing a suit.’
 (DGBIlonggo10-2-14groupRKelly)

In (23b), we could interpret *an* as a particle that marks the verb word *gina-soksok* (‘wear’) as referring to part of the focus of the sentence. On a semantic level, the presence of this verb helps complete the construction of an assertion in the sentence; it comments on the topic of ‘man’, which is indicated through the TE *ja* (3sg pronoun). This focus denotatum is non-recoverable at the time of the utterance, and the focused element is therefore overtly expressed (and not encoded through a pro-verb).

It should be noted that the scope of *an* does not seem to include *amerikano* ('suit'), despite the fact that 'suit' is arguably a part of the focus of the sentence. The entity 'suit' is not yet fully active at the time of the utterance, and the relationship between the proposition 'wear' and the entity 'suit' is pragmatically unrecoverable. One interpretation may assert that *an* fails as a focus marker here, as it does not mark the entire constituent with focus. However, it could be the case that *an* marks only a portion of the focus constituent in this sentence, while another mechanism may mark the other portions. Such a scenario was demonstrated in the Japanese example (9b), in which the noun *kuruma* was marked with focus by the particle *ga* while the verb *kosboo* was marked through prosody.

Using this perspective, it could be posited that the scope of *an*'s focus marking may be limited by the amount of asserted information that it can affect. In such a case, other mechanisms may have to compensate for the limited scope (i.e. prosody, word order). For example, the movement of *amerikano* ('suit') to the front of the sentence may be some method of focus marking that is employed when *an* is occupied with marking a VP. Such an explanation would require further research into the possible relationship between word order and information structure in Ilonggo.

5 Discussion

In my analysis (section 4), I have given examples of *an* functioning as both a TE introducer and a morphemic focus marker, though not simultaneously. These results strongly suggest that *an* does not have an exclusive role as either a focus marker or a TE introducer, but can instead contribute to both processes.

5.1 *The Role of an in Information Structure*

As demonstrated in the analysis above, *an* can introduce lexical NPs that can function as reference-oriented TEs. Because of this feature, we may expect to find *an* appearing primarily in narratives like (19), in which the speaker moves from topic to topic. *An* can also be used to articulate role-oriented topics, either by preceding pronouns with adjectives (as in 19) or by introducing optional lexical NPs (as in 21). However, as noted earlier, speakers will prefer to articulate role-oriented topics using unaccented pronominals such as the *ja* used in (23). Role-oriented TEs with *an* are therefore expected to be less frequent than role-oriented TEs that are unmarked pronouns.

An's relationship to focus marking is less clear. It has been demonstrated that *an* can be used in the expression of phrases that refer to focus denotata, as shown in (21b). However, it is unclear if *an* is actually the source of the focus marking in such sentences. We have already witnessed multiple examples in which focus denotata have been coded without the use of *an*, including (19a), (19b), and (21). There is some likelihood that sentences in which *an* appears before a focus constituent (like (22b) and (23)) may just be incidents in which overlap may have occurred, and *an* happened to be preceding an item in focus. This explanation is supported by the fact that *an* does not mark the entire focused constituent in (23), which could suggest that *an*'s presence may have nothing to do with focus marking in this scenario. While such a theory is not necessarily more valid, it is certainly simpler and relies on fewer unknown variables.

Granted, it should be noted that in each of (19a), (19b), and (21), *an* functions as a TE. The absence of *an* before focus constituents may be the result of *an*'s use in a TE. However, there are myriad other examples in which *an* is absent from either a focus constituent or a TE, as demonstrated in (24b) below:

- (24) a. *mai libro sa balai.*
exists book in house
‘There is a book in the house.’
- b. *mai lalake ŋa naga-basa saŋ libro.*
exists man LNK ACT- read DET book
‘There is a man who is reading the book.’
(DGBIlonggo11-12-15monari)

There is the possibility that *aŋ* is only permissible as a focus marker only in certain contexts, or with certain constituents. For example, the use of an *aŋ* focus marker may require that the entity being referred to is a theme (as shown in 22b) or that the proposition involves an instrument (as shown in 23). Such a question is outside of the scope of this thesis, as it would require a rigorous investigation of semantic roles in Ilonggo.

5.2 The Role of *Aŋ* Outside of Information Structure

Even after discussing *aŋ*'s role in articulating information structure, we are still left with questions about its overall function, and what consultants mean when they say that it assigns “emphasis”.

The answers to these questions will require further exploration into the behavior and distribution of *aŋ*. In future research, our understanding of *aŋ* may benefit from investigation into the closely related language of Tagalog, which has a superficially similar *aŋ* particle. Tagalog is a language that uses the Austronesian-type voice system (also known as Austronesian alignment), which is typologically unusual morphosyntactic alignment system that combines features of both ergative and accusative languages (Lynch et al. 2002).

In Tagalog, *aŋ* is known as a PIVOT, and it marks phrases with the DIRECT case (Lynch et al. 2002). The actual role of this direct case is dependent upon the verbal morpheme known at the

- (26) *an sapat nag-gwa? sa kwartoja san mag-dulog*
 AN animal ACT-outside of room 3sg DET ACT-sleep
an bata?
 AN child
 ‘The animal left the room when the child was sleeping.’
 (DGBIlonggoFrogStory)

- (27) *an duwa sila naga-pindot sa laptop.*
 AN two 3pl ACT-press on laptop.
 ‘The two of them are both pressing/typing the laptop.’
 (DGBIlonggo10-2-14groupRKelly)

Note that neither of these sentences follow the default VSO structure. In both of these examples, the subjects/TEs (*an sapat* and *an duwa sila*) have moved to the front of the sentence. These instances of phrase movement suggest that word order may play some role in the expression of topics.

As noted earlier in section 5.1, the systems of focus marking in Ilonggo is somewhat nebulous. However, some potential focus marking mechanisms have been identified. As noted in section 4.2, word order may have some relationship to focus marking. Consider again example (28), in which the object *amerikano* (‘suit’) moves to the front of the sentence:

- (28) *amerikano an gina-soksok ja*
 suit AN ACS-wear 3sg
 ‘He is wearing a suit.’
 (DGBIlonggo10-2-14groupRKelly)

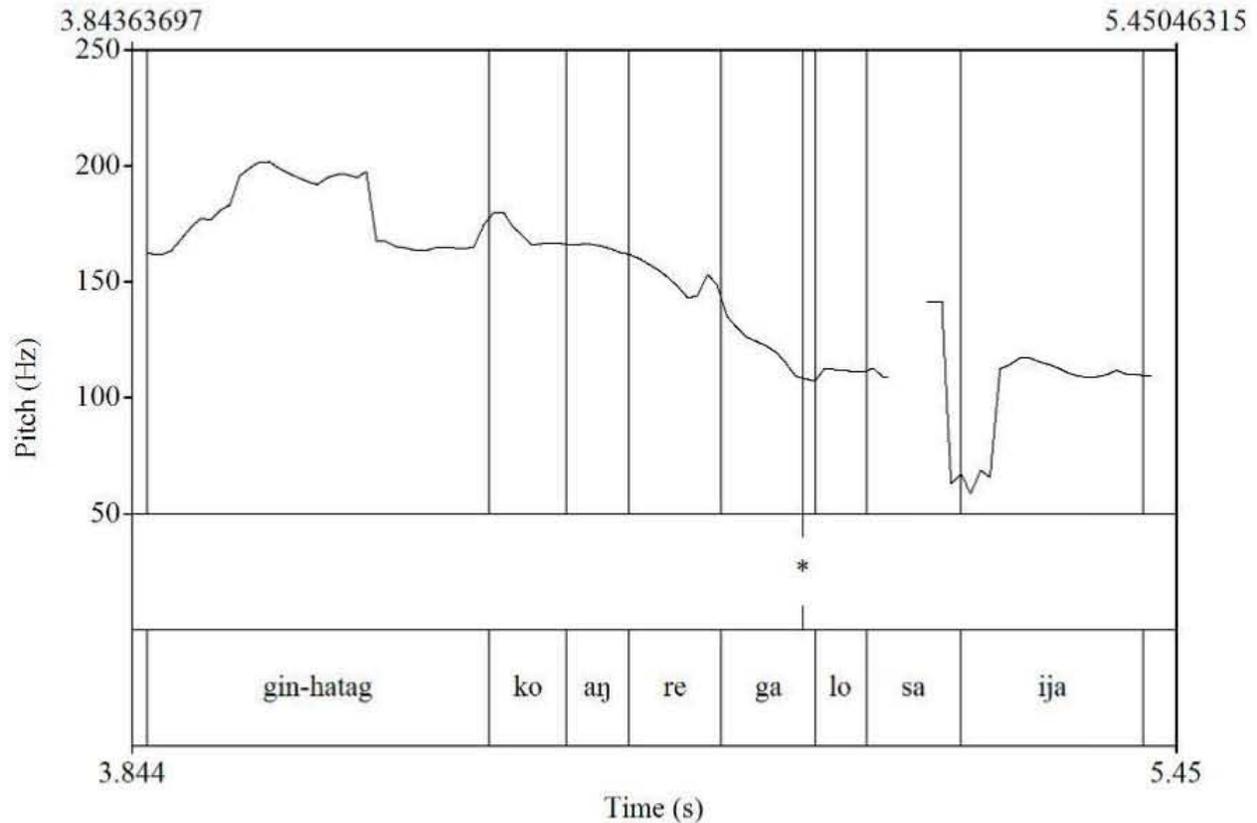
This shifting of the object *amerikano* may be a method of denoting the entity ‘suit’ as a focus element. It should be noted that this OSV structure mirrors that of interrogative sentences, as demonstrated in (29) below:

- (29) a. *ano any batag mo sa ija?*
 what AN give 2sg to 3sg
 ‘What did you give to him?’
 (DGBIlonggo11-12-15monari)

In (29), the question word *ano* (‘what’) shifts to the front of the sentence. In a similar fashion, the phrase that refers to some portion of pragmatically inaccessible information (*amerikano*) is brought to the front of the sentence. In both examples, *any* appears before the verb of the sentence (*gina-soksok* in (28) and *batag* in (29)). We therefore find an interesting parallel between i) a structure for requesting new information and ii) a structure for providing new information. This parallel may be an interesting starting point in further research about the possible use of word order and focus marking in Ilonggo.

There is also preliminary evidence which suggests that intonation may play some role in Ilonggo information structure, specifically with regards to marking focus. Presently, there is very little research on Ilonggo prosody (Valera 1974). However, in conducting a preliminary investigation of Ilonggo intonation, I noticed several examples in which a falling pitch accent (possibly notated as H+L* or H+L^[^]) coincides with the stressed syllable of a NP that points to a focus denotatum. Consider the following pitch contour in figure (30), which was drawn from example (22b):

- (30) *gin-batag ko an regalo (sa ija).*
 GOL-give 1sg AN gift to 3sg
 'I gave (him) the gift.'
 (DGBIlonggo11-12-15monari)



In (26), a falling accent (notated as * above the annotation) appears on the stressed syllable *ga* in the NP *an regalo* ('the present'). There is a possibility that this pitch accent may be a method of focus marking in Ilonggo. Unfortunately, there is insufficient information concerning the various factors that control pitch patterns in Ilonggo sentences (such as default prosody patterns), and as such any patterns observed may be influenced by unknown factors. For example, during preliminary investigations into Ilonggo prosody, I noticed that most declarative sentences end with a falling pitch contour. Therefore, while the falling accent was found in several instances other

than (26), I chose not to include them here, as (26) was the only instance in which the accent appears outside of the end of the sentence. Despite these factors, this pitch accent may be a point of interest for further research into Ilonggo intonation and focus marking.

6 Concluding Remarks

Ultimately, there is overwhelming evidence that *an* does not play any systemic, reliable role in the grammatical coding of topic or focus denotata. Through this analysis, I have clarified the ambiguity of Wolfenden's and Spitz's descriptions, and illustrated how, within Lambrecht's theoretical framework, *an* does not function exclusively as either a focus marker or as a TE introducer. This does not mean that the article *an* and the body of information structure are unrelated; *an* certainly has a role for marking some form of prominence onto constituents in Ilonggo sentences, which may overlap with or contribute to the marking of topic expressions or focus marking. As Lambrecht asserts, the marking of information structure often functions on multiple linguistic levels. For Ilonggo, the systems for expressing topics and foci are likely more subtle and nuanced than simply the use of a single article. Further research into Ilonggo verbal morphology, Tagalog's system of case assignment, and Ilonggo intonation (specifically the falling pitch accent) may increase our understanding of how information structure is formally expressed in Ilonggo.

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Appendix - Images used in Elicitations

Image 1 - used to elicit (20)



Image 2 - used to elicit (23)

