

Topics in Meadow Mari Information Structure

Although it has been recognized in old and recent descriptions of Meadow Mari syntax that information structure is an important factor governing word order variation, Meadow Mari information structure marking has not been systematically investigated so far. In this talk I give an overview about what is known about the morphosyntactic marking of Meadow Mari information structure, and which questions deserve further attention. In particular, I will discuss different types of focus marking and different types of topics. Special attention is paid to the 3rd person singular possessive suffix $-\check{Z}E$. It appears in a number of discursive functions, including the marking of contrast. I argue that in addition to its well-known contrastive function, it can also mark topic shifts in discourse, and can therefore be classified as topic marker.