

In some languages every subject is marked in the same way, and also every object. But there are languages in which a small set of verbs mark their subjects or their objects in an unusual way. For example, most verbs may mark their subject with nominative case, but one small set of verbs may have dative subjects, and another small set may have locative subjects. Verbs with noncanonically marked subjects and objects typically refer to physiological states or events, inner feelings, perception and cognition. The Introduction sets out the theoretical parameters and defines the properties in terms of which subjects and objects can be analysed. Following chapters discuss Icelandic, Bengali, Quechua, Finnish, Japanese, Amele (a Papuan language), and Tariana (an Amazonian language); there is also a general discussion of European languages. This is a pioneering study providing new and fascinating data, and dealing with a topic of prime theoretical importance to linguists of many persuasions.

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