

Shuichiro NAKAO

Graduate School of Literature, Kyoto University

“Split Prosody” in Juba Arabic, an Arabic-based Pidgin

Juba Arabic (JA) is a well-known example of an Arabic-based pidgin (partially creolized in some areas), spoken in Equatoria region, Southern Sudan, and is genetically related to the Nubi language of Uganda / Kenya.

In this presentation, I argue that Juba Arabic has a “split prosody”, which has been proposed by Good (2004) for Saramaccan prosody.

Good (2004) defines a “split prosody” as one in which “*the majority of its words are marked for pitch accent but an important minority are marked for tone*”. We can analyze JA to be the first parallel example for Saramaccan.

In JA, all verbs, adjectives, adverbs and most of nouns belong to the Pitch accent (P) type, and a small number of nouns (maybe less than 100), mostly loanwords from vernacular languages, belong to the Tone (T) type.

(1) Pitch accent type lexicon (P-type)

1 σ: *sá* ‘clock/watch’, *sá* ‘true’.

2 σ: *gára* ‘gourd’, *jamá* ‘people’, *watá* ‘ground’.

3 σ: *séjera* ‘tree’, *giyáfa* ‘beautiful’, *seregêl* ‘earthworm’, *gamará* ‘moon’.

(2) Tone type lexicon (T-type)

All H: *mányáŋ* ‘monitor lizard’, *báŋgírí* ‘cheek’.

All L: *kwete* ‘dura beer’, *kibira* ‘forest’.

Mixed: *alíwará* ‘old-clothes’, *lúkúlúli* ‘bat’, *kapáparát* ‘butterfly’.

This distinction will be important in case of plural formation: the PL. form of P-type words is made by adding a suffix *-át* or *-ín*, and the stem loses the prosodical culmination (e.g. *sejer-át* ‘tree-s’), but on T-type words, PL. form is made by adding a suffix *-jín / L__*, *-jin / H__*, and the stem has no prosodical alternation (*alíwará-jin* ‘old-clothes-PL.’, *kwete-jín* ‘dura beer-PL.’).

Reference

Good, Jeff C. 2004. Split prosody and creole simplicity: The case of Saramaccan. *Journal of Portuguese Linguistics* 3: 11–30.