

# Abstracts

of papers accepted for the  
19th Conference on African Linguistics

Boston University

14 - 17 April 1988

and final conference

# Program

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Text: Palatino 10, Jolan PanNigerian 12 and IPAPlus 12

PanNigerian courtesy of National Language Center, Federal Ministry of Education, 6 Obanta Road, Apapa, Lagos, Nigeria. IPAPlus courtesy of Phonetics Lab, University of California, Los Angeles.

## CHILDREN'S ACQUISITION OF BANTU NOUN CLASS PREFIXES

Joe Tsonope, University of Botswana

Children's acquisition of noun class prefixes in Bantu languages (Siswati and Sesotho) has been characterised as involving a three-stage developmental progression. Demuth (in press), Connelly (1984), and Kunene (1979) show that children acquiring Bantu languages go through stages where the nouns first appear without their prefixes, followed by a stage where a place-holder vowel appears in the place of a prefix, leading to the appearance of well-formed nouns comprising prefix plus stem. This paper discusses acquisitional evidence from another Bantu language, Setswana, which appears to support this three-stage acquisitional pattern of noun class prefixes. The explanation I proffer for such a developmental pattern rests on certain principles and heuristics which, I argue, children extract from input data. Overall acquisitional evidence indicates that the noun prefix is acquired as part of the whole noun, but not as a separate entity that the child initially segments off from the noun stem.

## LE SUFFIXE 'APPLICATIF' EN KINYARWANDA: SEMANTIQUE, SYNTAXE ET PERSPECTIVE FONCTIONNELLE DE LA PHRASE

André Twahirwa, Université Paris III, Sorbonne Nouvelle

On peut distinguer en kinyarwanda (Coupez 1980, 1985) les suffixes 'expressifs', qui ne modifient que le sens 'lexical' du verbe, des suffixes 'grammaticaux' qui, comme -Ir- dit 'applicatif', modifient la structure de la phrase en introduisant un SN supplémentaire. Postulant qu'à une identité de 'forme' doit correspondre, à un certain niveau d'abstraction plus ou moins élevé, une identité de 'sens', nous essayerons de dégager des multiples emplois recensés par Coupez (avantage, but, cause, possession, datif éthique, locants, temporels et modaux) UNE fonction unique du SN introduit par -Ir- dans la structure sémantique de la phrase: le SN applicatif fixe les limites (du champ) d'application du procès et la valeur de bénéficiaire et de 'bénéfactif' (Kimenyi, 1980) n'est qu'un de ses emplois. Le 'test disjoint' -- le SN applicatif bloque l'emploi absolu du verbe -- nous permettra de montrer qu'il existe une certaine correspondance entre les trois hiérarchies: sémantique, syntaxique et énonciative (= du point de vue de la perspective fonctionnelle de la phrase).

## CULTURAL IDENTITY PERCEIVED AS LINGUISTIC IDENTITY: RESULTS FROM A SURVEY OF THE NYANG LANGUAGES

James J. Tyhurst, University of California at Los Angeles

Linguistic and sociolinguistic data are both needed for surveys whose purpose is to identify the different dialect and language groups of a particular geographical region. This paper presents the results of a language survey among the Nyang languages of western Cameroon. The survey consisted of two questionnaires. A linguistic questionnaire tested for pronunciation differences and lexical differences between dialects and languages. A sociolinguistic questionnaire sampled speakers' opinions about dialect and language boundaries. The results of the survey exhibit two ways in which speakers' perceptions of what constitutes a speech community may differ from a linguist's analysis of purely linguistic data. In one situation, speakers claimed to be part of separate language groups, even though the linguistic differences were quite minor and even though they agreed that intercomprehension was possible. Conversely, another pair of groups claimed linguistic unity, whereas the linguistic data indicated significant dialect differences (e.g. different noun class prefixes). There are several practical consequences of these results. First, due to the problem of sampling every village in a particular region, linguistic surveys often resort to the (sociolinguistic) question, "Which other villages speak the way that you do?" The results of the Nyang survey show that the answer to this question may not provide the information that the linguist is seeking. Second, the survey demonstrates that both the linguist's and the speaker's view of the linguistic community must be considered in order to provide a solid basis for language development programs. The choice of a reference dialect and the extent to which

literature will be accepted in a community depends both on linguistic factors of intercomprehension and on sociolinguistic attitudes about speech communities.

### ON SOME PHONOLOGICAL RULES IN ARBORE

Rainer M. Voigt, University of Tübingen

Arbore, a Lowland East Cushitic language, which has been described in full detail by R. Hayward (1984), exhibits a great deal of morpheme alternation as well as phonological processes. Among the phonological rules, we find several rules that conspire in a specific way. The clue for comprehending the conspiracy lies in a componential analysis of consonants. Consonants are considered as elements which consist of one or two – phonetically successive – components. Glottalization and palatalization are the two underlying processes that require a componential analysis. With this concept, the system of occlusives can be given as follows

|    |     |       |    |    |     |   |    |
|----|-----|-------|----|----|-----|---|----|
| 1. | (p) | ʔb    | b  | (= | (p) | ɸ | b) |
|    | t   | ʔd    | d  | (= | t   | ɸ | d) |
|    | ty  | t y ʔ | dy | (= | č   | ç | ğ) |
|    | k   | k ʔ   | g  | (= | k   | ɸ | g) |

If we substitute the new definitions of consonants in the given rules, it becomes evident that they conspire to yield phonetic representations which contain no word-final clusters and no trilateral clusters of consonants or components of consonants.

### METHODS AND MATERIALS FOR TEACHING IVOIRIAN LANGUAGES

Karen F. Willetts, Center for Applied Linguistics and

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The materials used to teach Baoule, Bete, Dioula, and Senoufo (Senari/Cebaari) as second languages at the Université Nationale de Côte d'Ivoire will be presented. The methods used to teach these languages, with a particular emphasis on the teaching of tone will be discussed. Problems involved in teaching such courses in African Universities will be mentioned.

### ASPECT AND WORD ORDER IN CHADIC

Kemp Williams, Indiana University

The languages of the Biu-Mandara branch of Chadic exhibit a range of basic word orders. While many languages are exclusively SVO, many have VSO as their basic word order, with SVO, VOS, and other word orders as secondary possibilities. A number of languages, however, do not fall within a strict SVO/VSO dichotomy and appear to have both SVO and VSO as basic. In these languages word order is consistently linked to aspectual category: VSO occurs in the various 'aktionsarten' of the perfective aspect, SVO occurs with the imperfective. The notion of a dual aspectual system for Proto-Chadic, however, in which a marked imperfective contrasted with an unmarked perfective, has lately been criticized. Based on a morphological study of Biu-Mandara verb systems, Wolff (1979) goes so far as to claim that a perfective-imperfective contrast can not even be reconstructed for Proto-Biu-Mandara. The syntactic evidence, however, clearly demonstrates that such a dual aspectual system is reconstructible for Proto-Biu-Mandara, and possibly reconstructible for an earlier stage in Chadic as well.

**PUBLICATION OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF  
THE 19TH ANNUAL AFRICAN LINGUISTICS CONFERENCE**

**held at Boston University from the 14th through the 17th of April, 1988**

All participants who presented papers to the conference are invited to present final versions of their papers for review and consideration for publication in the proceedings volume for the conference which we expect will be published by Foris Publications, Dordrecht.

Final versions of the papers to be considered should be sent to:

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270 Bay State Road  
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