

Deviation from Typological Sonority: Voiceless as Markedness in Bakairi

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Outline

Overview of the language

Phonological properties

Markedness: [-VOICE] floating feature

My Introduction to the Bakairi

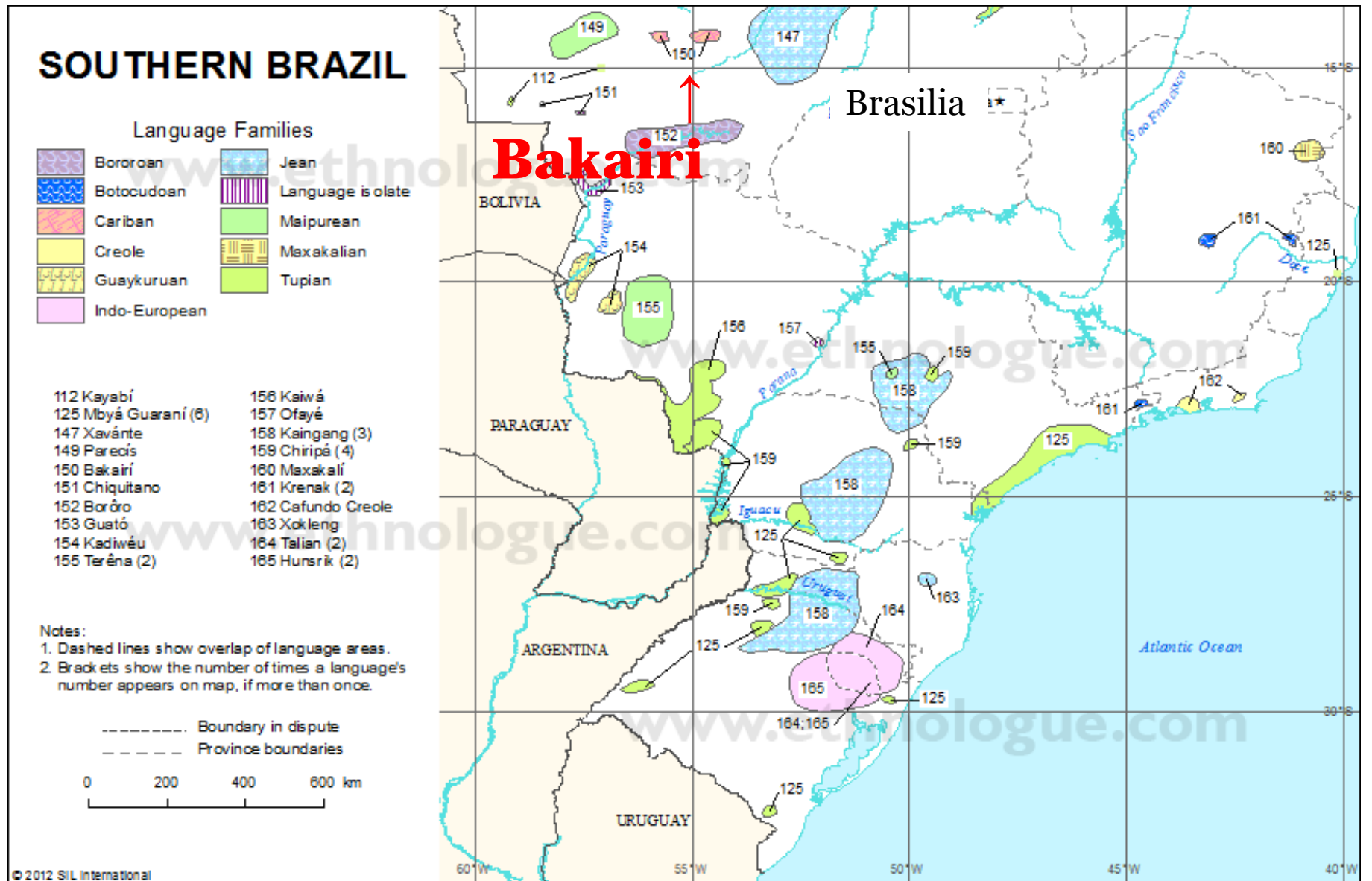


Photograph by Taukøne, personal archive.

Latest fieldtrip to the village, 2013



Personal archive



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1. Overview of the language

- Carib language (Pekodian branch)
- Spoken in Southern Amazonia
- Endangered status
- Two dialects
- 1,000 speakers

1.1 Phonology

- Stress falls on the second to last **mora** → **bimoraic**
e.g. 'kurə 'people' agaiti'õ 'elder'
- Person inflection employs **ablaut**
e.g. uhudu 'my hair' əhudu 'your hair'
- Progressive aspect is expressed by **nasality**
e.g. senetageragi 'I lowered s.t.' kəẽnetageli

1.2 Morphology

- Highly agglutinative
- Verbs:
person inflection (nominative or ergative), detransitivizing morphemes, nominal root, verbal stem, adverbs, TAM and additional morphemes (such as subordinators).
- Nouns:
can receive various morphemes (inflection, possessum, derivations, grammatical functions).



1.2 Morphology

- Hierarchical person inflection
(1>2>3) leading to nominative or
ergative prefixes.

1.3 Syntax

- Constituent order: OVS (there are only nine languages in the world with the OVS word order) (Haspelmath 2005: 330)



2. Related phonological properties

- Word-initial devoicing
- One word-internal voiceless consonant per word
- Predictability of the voice feature

2.1 Word-initial devoicing

Word-initially, all contrastive consonants become voiceless

(/p~b/→[p], /t~d/→[t], /k~g/→[k], /s~z/→[s])

e.g. /ada/ [ada] 'cut'
/dahə/ [təhə] 'cutter → knife'

2.2 One word-internal voiceless consonant

e.g. [kəzɪtəgəbɪrəmo] 'I cannot brush my own teeth anymore.'

2.2 The Behavior of Sonorants

CV (or SV)	Word Initially	\pm Voice		Obligatory Voicing
1 σ (-)	1-	0		0
2 σ (-) \pm	1-	1 \pm	0	
3 σ (-) \pm +	1-	1 \pm		1+
4 σ (-) \pm + +	1-	1 \pm		2+
5 σ (-) \pm + + +	1-	1 \pm		3+
6 σ (-) \pm + + + +	1-	1 \pm		4+
7 σ (-) \pm + + + + +	1-	1 \pm		5+



3. Markedness: [-VOICE] floating feature

Although [+VOICE] typologically indicates markedness, Wetzels stated that in Bakairi, the [-VOICE] feature designates markedness (2002).

3.1 Docking of the floating feature

- Order of priority for the location of the floating feature, i.e. [-VOICE]:

1st stem > 2nd stem > prefix > suffix

3.1 Docking on the first stem

- 1st stem > 2nd stem > prefix > suffix
(-)



e.g. k-əʒ-ita-goge-bira-mo
1-REFLX-mouth-wash-FRUST-PL
'I cannot brush my teeth anymore.'

3.1 Docking on the second stem

- 1st stem > 2nd stem > prefix > suffix
(-)



e.g. k-əd-ãga-goke-bira-mo
1-REFLX-head-wash-FRUST-PL
'I cannot wash my hair anymore.'

c.f. previous example

k-əʒ-ita-goge-bira-mo
1-REFLX-mouth-wash-FRUST-PL
'I cannot brush my teeth anymore.'

3.1 Docking on the prefix

- 1st stem > 2nd stem > **prefix** > suffix
(-)



e.g. k-ə**s**-enomedə-**b**ira
1-REFLX-study-FRUST
'I cannot learn anymore.'

3.1 Docking on the suffix

- 1st stem > 2nd stem > prefix > **suffix**

(-)



e.g. k-ãwewə-**p**ira

1-catch fish-FRUST

‘I cannot catch fish anymore.’



3.2 Replication of the floating feature

- Once the location of the floating feature is determined, derivations and compounds replicate the [-VOICE] feature observed.

3.2 Replication of [-VOICE] in suffixes

- (1) s-ene-tai
1-bring-IMM.PST
'I brought s.t.'
- (2) ene-tibə
bring-PTC
'that has been brought.'
- (3) ene-kə
bring-IMP
'Bring it.'
- (4) ene-taũ-gə
bring-PL-IMP
'Bring it, all of you.'
- (5) ene-tõ-daũ-gə
bring-ITE-PL-IMP
'Bring it again, all of you.'
- (6) s-ene-pa
1-bring-NEG
'I did not bring s.t.'

3.2 Replication of [-VOICE] in stems

- | | |
|-----|--|
| (1) | s- eka -dai
1-sit-IMM.PST
'I sat.' |
| (2) | eka -dibə
sit-PTC
'that has been sat.' |
| (3) | eka -gə
sit-IMP
'Sit down' |
| (4) | eka -daũ-gə
sit-PL-IMP
'Sit down, all of you' |
| (5) | eka -dõ-daũ-gə
sit-ITE-PL-IMP
'Sit down again, all of you.' |
| (6) | s- eka -ba
1-sit-NEG
'I did not sit down.' |

cf with previous example

- | | |
|-----|---|
| (1) | s-ene- tai
1-bring-IMM.PST
'I brought s.t.' |
| (2) | ene- tibə
bring-PTC
'that has been brought.' |
| (3) | ene- kə
bring-IMP
'Bring it.' |
| (4) | ene- taũ -gə
bring-PL-IMP
'Bring it, all of you.' |
| (5) | ene- tõ -daũ-gə
bring-ITE-PL-IMP
'Bring it again, all of you.' |
| (6) | s-ene- pa
1-bring-NEG
'I did not bring s.t.' |



3.2 The floating feature

- A floating [-VOICE] feature docks according to a specific morphological order.
- The *marked*-position of [-VOICE] feature is a determinant in the production of well-formed words.



Summary

1. Overview
2. Phonological properties
3. Markedness: [-VOICE] floating feature

References

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