

Deviation from Typological Sonority: Voiceless as Markedness in Bakairi

Bakairi is an undocumented Pekodian language from southern Amazonia. The nonsonorant consonants in this language are /p/, /t/, /k/, /s/, and they respectively possess the voiced counterparts of /b/, /d/, /g/, /z/. A [-VOICE] floating feature, in Bakairi, exhibits four sonority traits that are contrary to what has come to be accepted as characteristics of language universals.

(a) Word-initial devoicing occurs in all sonorant consonants. This is the reverse of word-final devoicing, which Ewen and Hulst claim to be a prevailing trait across languages (2001).

(b) Words, which in Bakairi typically have more than three syllables, allow only one occurrence of a nonsonorant word-internally (Examples 1-2); this forces all other nonsonorants in derivations and compoundings to have surface realizations as [+VOICE] (Example 3). This is contrary to what has typologically come to be expected (Greenberg, 1966; Moravcsik, 2013).

(c) There is a morphological hierarchy that determines where the floating feature docks. The docking of the floating feature is NOMINAL ROOT > VERBAL STEM > PREFIX > SUFFIX (Example 4).

(d) Moreover, as Bakairi is a highly agglutinative language, it has a tendency to create word derivations; in all word derivations, no changes occur in the docking of the floating feature (see Table).

Therefore, contrary to previous assertions that [+VOICE] typologically indicates markedness (Wetzels, 2002), the [-VOICE] feature designates markedness in Bakairi. This paper will make use of extensive data collected through fieldwork to present in specific detail these four traits.

EXAMPLES

- (1) kid-e \tilde{V} kəridə-dili
1PL.INC-bend-PRG
'We are bending something.'
- (2) k-ə \tilde{V} pazigui-li
1-knead-PRG
'I am kneading.'
- (3) k-əz-ita-goge-li (underlying form: *goke* 'wash')
1-REFLX-mouth-wash-PRG
'I wash my own mouth.'
- (4) eti 'clothes' > az-eti-ge-li 'to undress'
eunu 'smoke' > əs-eunu-ge-li 'to make smoke by itself'
eunu 'smoke' > eunu-ke-li 'to make smoke'

TABLE: EXAMPLES OF THE REPLICATION OF THE FLOATING FEATURE IN DERIVATIONS

Immediate Past (1SG)	Imperative (SG)	Participle	gloss
senetai	enekə	enetibə	'to bring all'
siaduawətai	iaduwəkə	iaduwətibə	'to burn'
sidələtai	idələkə	idələtibə	'to cook'
separagunədai	epagarunəgə	eparagunədibə	'to take a break'
setadədai	etadəgə	etadədibə	'to gather'
setədai	etəgə	etədibə	'to cast'

ABBREVIATIONS

1	first person
INC	inclusive
PL	plural
PRG	progressive
REFLX	reflexive
SG	singular
\tilde{V}	nasality as a marker of the progressive aspect

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