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/, /k/, /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-eṼkəridə-dili
   1PL.INC-bend-PRG
   ‘We are bending something.’
(2) k-əṼpaziguous-li
   1-knead-PRG
   ‘I am kneading.’
(3) k-əz-ita-gole-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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immediate Past (1SG)</th>
<th>Imperative (SG)</th>
<th>Participle</th>
<th>gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>senetai</td>
<td>enekə</td>
<td>enetibə</td>
<td>‘to bring all’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>siaduawətai</td>
<td>iaduwəkə</td>
<td>iaduwətibə</td>
<td>‘to burn’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sidələtai</td>
<td>idələkə</td>
<td>idələtibə</td>
<td>‘to cook’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>separagunədai</td>
<td>epagarunəgə</td>
<td>eparagunədibə</td>
<td>‘to take a break’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>setadədai</td>
<td>etadəgə</td>
<td>etadədibə</td>
<td>‘to gather’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>setədai</td>
<td>etəgə</td>
<td>etədibə</td>
<td>‘to cast’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ABBREVIATIONS
1 first person
INC inclusive
PL plural
PRG progressive
REFLX reflexive
SG singular
Ṽ nasality as a marker of the progressive aspect

REFERENCES