The Majang Language

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Stellingen behorende bij het proefschrift
The Majang Language
door Andreas Joswig

1. Majang has seven vowels.
   Contra the claim that it has nine or even ten vowels by Unseth 2007: Maǧangir language. In S. Uhlig (Ed.), *EncyclopaediaAethiopica* (Vol. 3, pp. 627–629). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag; and by Moges 2008: The Phonetics and Phonology of Majang Vowels: A Historical-Comparative Perspective. In D. Payne & M. Reh (Eds.), *Advances in Nilo-Saharan Linguistics – Proceedings of the 8th Nilo-Saharan Linguistics Colloquium, University of Hamburg, August 22–25, 2001* (p. 255-265). Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag).

2. Majang has no postpositions and thus does not violate Greenberg's relevant prediction for VSO languages.
   Contra Unseth 1989, p.106, of Sketch of Majang Syntax. In L. M. Bender (Ed.), *Topics in Nilo-Saharan Linguistics* (p. 97–127). Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag.

3. Majang polar tones cannot be analyzed as high tones affected by Meeussen's Rule – they need to be seen as genuine instances of tone polarity.

4. In Majang a morpheme can be both toneless and characterized by a floating tone .
   Contra Halle and Vergnaud 1982: On the Framework of Autosegmental Phonology. In H. van der Hulst & N. Smith (Eds.), *The Structure of Phonological Representations (Part I)* (pp. 65–82). Dordrecht: Foris Publications, who on p. 67 claim that all floating tones must associate themselves with available toneless syllables.

5. The Majang language uses the conjoint form in order to mark that the clause follows the default or unmarked pattern of the language.

6. It is not possible to study the grammar of a language by just analysing natural texts.
   Contra Dixon 2010, pp. 321 ff, of *Basic Linguistic Theory 1: Volume 1: Methodology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.). In the same way it is not possible to study a language just by using elicited data.

7. In many, if not most Ethiopian Afro-Asiatic languages (I have studied this in Amharic, Borna, Diizin, Awngi and Xamtanga), any high-central vowel can and should be analysed as non-phonemic and entirely predictable in a phonology which renders the syllable as a purely phonetic device without any phonological status. This is contrary to most descriptions of these languages so far.

8. What has been described as *possessor raising* in Swahili is not a phenomenon relating to the concept of possession at all.

9. It is necessary to determine a standard for each language that is to undergo successful literary language development.
   Contra Mühlhäusler 1994: Language Planning and Small Languages – The Case of the Pacific Area; in Lüdi, (ed.) *Sprachstandardisierung – 12. Kolloquium der SchweizerischenAkademie der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften 1991*. Freiburg, Switzerland: Universitätsverlag Freiburg. pp. 131-53; and contra Gal 2018: Visions and Revisions of Minority Languages – Standardization and Its Dilemmas; in Lane et al. (eds). *Standardizing Minority Languages – Competing Ideologies of Authority and Authenticity in the Global Periphery*. New York: Routledge. pp. 222-42; both object to language standardization on philosophical grounds.

10. In German it is possible to create a sentence with eight adjacent homophonic (and nearly homographic) words.

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