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A grammar of Tagdal: a Northern Songhay language

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Stellingen behorende bij het proefschrift

A grammar of Tagdal
a Northern Songhay language of Niger
door Carlos M. Benítez-Torres

1. Suppletion in Tagdal is due in large part to mismatched prosodies between Songhay and Tuareg vocabulary.
2. The Subject Relative *ə-* in Tagdal, which occurs mostly in Subject Relative Clauses, but also in adjective roots of Tuareg origin, is related to the Berber participle.
3. Adjectives in Tagdal derived from Tuareg roots have both verbal and adjectival characteristics.
4. Tadaksahak has three Songhay verb roots – *yed* 'return', *yéeri* 'vomit', *ziibit* 'be dirty' (Christiansen-Bolli 2010: 58-59) – that accept Tuareg Causative prefixes, while Tagdal does not. (i.e. these three Songhay roots do not get suppleted in Tadaksahak.) This is a result of the aforementioned prosodic mismatch.
Christiansen-Bolli, Regula. 2010. *A Grammar of Tadaksahak: A Berberised Songhay Language (Mali)*. Köln: Rüdiger Köppe.
5. Tagdal's structures point to its having originated abruptly, and that the language was likely a marker of identity – what Thomason (2001) calls an abrupt-genesis mixed language, and Smith and Grant (2019) refer to as a "neo-ethnic" mixed language.
Smith, Norval and Anthony P. Grant. 2019. Mixed languages, younger languages, and contact-induced language change. In: Anthony P. Grant (ed): *The Oxford Handbook of Language Contact*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 303-330.
Thomason, Sarah. 2001 *Language contact, an introduction*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press.
6. The key factor in determining whether a particular community's speech patterns are a language or not, is sociolinguistic, not linguistic.
7. When code-switching occurs between two tonal languages (e.g. Yunnan Chinese and Thai), one possible result is that the resulting speech patterns would keep the two languages apart, limiting interactions between the two prosodic patterns to word and phrase boundaries.
8. At least one possible result of code-switching between non-tonal and tonal languages is that vocabulary from the tonal language will be borrowed without the tone, if the matrix language is non-tonal.
9. Northern Songhay languages may not fit any of the accepted patterns for mixed languages cited by Meakins (2013). Its structures follow a different pattern, which Kossmann (2010) calls "parallel-system" structures. Therefore, mixing through the use of "parallel-system" should be added to the patterns of language mixing.
Kossmann, Maarten. 2010. Parallel System Borrowing. Parallel morphological systems due to the borrowing of paradigms. *Diachronica* 27/3. pp. 459-488.
Meakins, Felicity. 2013. Mixed languages. In: *Contact languages: A comprehensive guide*, Yaron Matras and Peter Bakker (eds). Berlin: Mouton. pp. 159-228.
10. By looking at certain features of Puerto Rican Spanish, it is possible to figure out at least some aspects of the early migration patterns from Spain (and the rest of Europe) to Puerto Rico.
11. Rescue cats and dogs make the best pets.