MULTILINGUALISM IN SOUTHERN NEW GUINEA.
THE CASE OF KÓMNZO AND WÄRA

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MOREHEAD-MARO LANGUAGES OR YAM LANGUAGES

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multilingualism in southern new guinea
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cartographic representation of languages in southern New Guinea

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OUTLINE

1. anthropology
   ① exogamy
   ② linguistic ideology

2. history
   ① changes in the traditional settlement patterns
   ② linguistic consequences

3. linguistics
   ① kómznzo and wära
   ② affix borrowing
   ③ verb prefixes

4. conclusion
EXOGAMY

- sister exchange between “starting places” (villages)
EXOGAMY

- sister exchange between “starting places” (villages)
- virilocal residence
**EXOGAMY**

- In any given village, marriages are composed of a man from the village and a woman from a different village.
- "Short marriage cycles" (Ayres 1983)\(^1\) lead to strong connections between particular pairs of villages.

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“Place exogamy is an ideal and normative rule. Marriage between people who claim prior unity at a ‘starting place’, i.e. the dialect group, is prohibited. In the native model this rule is sometimes explained as a rule of dialect exogamy: “We should not intermarry because we talk the same language” is a phrase sometimes stated by informants.”

(Ayres 1983: 186)

the notion of ‘starting place’ overlaps with language variety

\[
\text{place exogamy} = \text{linguistic exogamy}
\]
“In some parts of Australia, land areas are held to be associated with particular languages or subjectively-defined linguistic varieties by specific mythological sanction.” (Merlan 1981: 146)

- indirect link between an individual and a particular language variety
LINGUISTIC IDEOLOGY

- sociolinguistic questionnaire
- 40 individuals (21 male/19 female)
- language identity aligns with father’s language (just like clan or ‘starting-place’)
- actual variety spoken on a daily basis or linguistic competence is irrelevant

Tukém Forak (about 70)

$L_1 = Wära^a$
grew up in Yokwa (Wära)
made to Rouku (Kómnozo)
father grew up in Kwaikér (Kánchá)
$L_{ID} = Kánchá^b$

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$^a L_1 =$ dominant language
$^b L_{ID} =$ language of identification
Linguistic Ideology

- this is the underlying basis of many cultural practices or metaphors:
  - at *story places* only the local variety must be spoken
  - women “receive help” in acquiring the local variety by magic rituals
  - tree metaphor

- or it is stated openly in public speech:
  - women are expected to shift to the local variety
  - (male) children are supposed to learn only the local variety
many varieties are heard in Rouku

one of the two teachers at the local elementary school is a speaker of Anta

one of the local pastors was brought up as a speaker of Nama and he delivers public prayers in Nama

women do talk (and probably always have been talking) to their children in their own variety

each speaker has a multi-language profile

e.g.: Kómnzo, Wära, Anta, Nama, Kánchá, English, Motu, Tok Pisin

but a single language identity
HISTORY

- Changes in traditional settlement patterns have been documented: Ayres (1983)³ & Hitchcock (2006)⁴
- The colonial powers (Great Britain, Australia) and the church (London Missionary Society) encouraged people to consolidate into a village
  - Traditional: hamlets (often just one patriline)
  - Modern: village (+ garden, fishing, and hunting places)
- Motives for consolidation: church, education, access to road network
- Motives for dispersal: traditional way of life, higher density of people, land disputes, lack of resources

Several waves of consolidation and dispersal since the 50’s

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HISTORY - ROUKU

- in the past, some Farem men have lived in or “consolidated with” the neighbouring Wära speaking village Yokwa
  - their children and grand-children speak Wära as their L₁
  - but they live in Rouku and they are ethnically Farem people
- contradiction between linguistic reality and linguistic ideology
For a group of speakers\(^5\) there is a disconnect between dominant language \((L_1)\) and language of identity \((L_{ID})\)

\[
\text{FAREM} = L_1 = L_{ID} \ (\text{KÓMNZO})
\]

\[
L_1 \ (\text{WÄRA}) \\
\neq \\
L_{ID} \ (\text{KÓMNZO})
\]

\[
L_1 \ (\text{KÓMNZO}) \\
= \\
L_{ID} \ (\text{KÓMNZO})
\]

\(^5\)leaving aside women who almost always marry in from another linguistic variety.
Linguistics - Comparison

- Lexical comparison (cognate rate) based on a 350 item word list

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Kómznzo</th>
<th>Anta</th>
<th>Wära</th>
<th>Kánchá</th>
<th>Nama</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘bird of paradise’</td>
<td>yéthama</td>
<td>yétham</td>
<td>yéthama</td>
<td>yéthama</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘sister’</td>
<td>yémóth</td>
<td>emóth</td>
<td>yémóth</td>
<td>emóth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- But small differences are highly emblematic
**LINGUISTICS - COMPARISON**

- comparison of morphemes / function words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GLOSS</th>
<th>WÄRA</th>
<th>KÓMNZO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRONOUN</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1SG.ABS</td>
<td>ze</td>
<td>nzä</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1SG.ERG</td>
<td>zén</td>
<td>nze</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG.ABS</td>
<td>fe</td>
<td>mbä</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG.ERG</td>
<td>fén</td>
<td>mbe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEM</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROX ‘here’</td>
<td>nä</td>
<td>zä</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROX.ALL ‘hither’</td>
<td>nak</td>
<td>zmbo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NOM</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERG</td>
<td>-o</td>
<td>-f</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>-f</td>
<td>-fo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NMLZ</td>
<td>-se</td>
<td>-si</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VERB</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.γ middle prefix</td>
<td>re-</td>
<td>zä-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3NSG actor suffix</td>
<td>-éy</td>
<td>-éth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kómnzo has copied the **IMMEDIATE PAST** prefix from Wära

Kómnzo *n*- is currently being replaced by Wära *nz*-

The variants of the prefix pattern according to age (in the group on the right)

\[
\text{FAREM} = L_1 = L_{ID} (\text{KÓMNZO})
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
L_1 (\text{WÄRA}) & \neq L_{ID} (\text{KÓMNZO}) \\
\text{IMM.PST} & = \text{nz-}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
L_1 (\text{KÓMNZO}) & = L_{ID} (\text{KÓMNZO}) \\
\text{IMM.PST} & = \text{nz- (old)} \\
\text{IMM.PST} & = \text{nz- (young)}
\end{align*}
\]
speaker 1 (male/75/L₁=KÓMNZO)

(1) *keke ane ngazime ersérwére ... ane mane néngafsinzér ... kofä*

keke ane ngazi-me e-rsr-wr-e (. ) ane mane
not DEM coconut-INS 2|3NSG-scrape-ND-1NSG (. ) DEM which
n-nga-fsi-nzr-∅ (. ) kofä
IMM.PST-M-count-ND-2|3SG (. ) fish

‘We don’t mix those ones with coconut ... the ones which he has just listed ... the (types of) fish’

(tci20120922-26 MAB #8-9)
LINGUISTICS

speaker 2 (male/38/L₁=KÓMNZO)

(2) *kar mane nzénganéfsine rénzam kar mbenrä?*

kar mane *nz-nga-n-fsi-n-e* rnzam kar
place which IMM.PST-M-TOW-count-DU-1NSG how.many place
mb-e-n-rä
MED-2|3NSG-TOW-COP.ND

‘As for the places that we have just listed, how many did we come
up to?’

(tci20120922-21 DAK #40)
» Why this particular morpheme?

» the **IMMEDIATE PAST** morpheme gets added to a verb which is inflected for **NON-PAST**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMM.PST-</th>
<th>inflected verb (N.PST)</th>
<th>→ immediate past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ø-</td>
<td>inflected verb (N.PST)</td>
<td>→ present tense / future</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

» there is another slot in the verb template for **DEIXIS** which precedes the **IMMEDIATE PAST**

| DEIXIS- | IMM.PST- | verb |
verbs may be marked for deictic status (PROX, MED, DIST)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEIXIS</th>
<th>IMM.PST-</th>
<th>verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PROX-</td>
<td>IMM.PST-</td>
<td>verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MED-</td>
<td>∅-</td>
<td>verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIST-</td>
<td>∅-</td>
<td>verb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

for the argument only the PROX is relevant

<table>
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<th>DEIXIS</th>
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<th>verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>PROX-</td>
<td>IMM.PST-</td>
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</table>
in terms of frequency (not structurally) we could say that the deictic prefix and the IMM.PST prefix occur in the same slot

▶ speakers can potentially confuse the two slots if there are syncretisms in the system
- deictic prefixes are related to the deictic demonstratives
- Wära: nä (‘here’), nan (‘this’)
- Kómnzo: zä (‘here’), zane (‘this’)

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>IMM.PST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WÄRA</td>
<td>n-</td>
<td>verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KÓMNZO</td>
<td>z-</td>
<td>verb</td>
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LINGUISTICS

▶ past system:

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<tr>
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<td>n-</td>
<td>nz-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KÓMNZO</td>
<td>z-</td>
<td>n-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

▶ present system (variation patterning according to age):

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<tr>
<td>WÄRA</td>
<td>n-</td>
<td>nz-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KÓMNZO</td>
<td>z-</td>
<td>n- → nz-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

▶ future:

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<tr>
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<td>z-</td>
<td>nz-</td>
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▶ affix copying from Wära into Kómnzo is a ‘repair strategy’ to disambiguate the syncretism which occurs in a situation of increased or different kind of contact.
CONCLUSION

- this case study of affix copying from Wära to Kómnzo requires evidence from anthropology & linguistics
- shows how the social setting interacts with language structure

- anthropological story:
  - stable language ecology: high multilingualism due to linguistic exogamy
  - change in settlement patterns → disturbance in the language ecology → increase in contact between varieties as well as a change in the nature of contact (because some local men (not just married women) speak Wära)

- linguistic story:
  - closely related varieties (typologically identical)
  - syncretism between morphemes of different grammatical categories and different slots in the verb template
  - morphological material is more easily transferred because it is “below the radar” of lexical purism