

clusters than proto-Songhay did. Only Tasawaq retains phonemic tone, although phonemic stress in Tadaksahak reflects proto-Songhay tone patterns (Nicolai 1981.)

Grammatical characteristics

All Northern Songhay languages use the clause order subject-verb-object, unlike most southern Songhay varieties. Prepositional phrases with pronominal objects tend to be placed directly after the verb. Complementizers are strictly clause-initial, and are extensively borrowed.

In Tadaksahak and Tagdal, plurality is always marked on the head noun as well as some modifiers, with Berber nouns taking Berber plurals and Songhay ones taking a suffix; in the other languages, plurality is marked on the head noun for many Arabic and Berber loans using the source language plurals, but is otherwise marked by a Songhay clitic whose placement within the noun phrase varies.

The basic noun phrase order is possessor *n*-noun-adjective-relative clause. Possessors may also be placed after the noun, in which case they take the postposition **wane*, also used to form absolute possessives (discussed in Kossmann 2009.) Kwarandzyey and Tasawaq have retained the Songhay attributive adjective formant **-o(w)*, while Tadaksahak and Tagdal have largely replaced it with a borrowed Berber participial suffix. The position of the numeral in the noun phrase presents interesting variation: 1-10 always follow the noun, but higher numbers often precede it. All but a few of the lowest numerals are borrowed from Arabic or Berber.

All Northern Songhay languages have both prepositions and postpositions, the latter being used mainly for location and possession; the position of postpositions within the noun phrase depends on the language. Prepositions are extensively borrowed.

The verb normally consists of the following elements, fused into a single word: subject marker - aspect/mood/negation marker - verb stem - directional marker - object pronoun. The subject markers, optional in some languages, derive from the pan-Songhay subject pronouns, although the 2nd person plural is anomalous. The aspect/mood/negation markers have been considerably reduced, and the positive imperfective ("present") marker **-b-* is unique to Northern Songhay. 3rd person object pronouns often affect the phonological form of the verb stem, causing vowel lengthening. An inherited causative in **-nda* is found in Kwarandzyey and Tasawaq, but is absent or unproductive in Tadaksahak and Tagdal, which instead use Tuareg loans (Christiansen 2002, Benítez-Torres 2009). The directional markers are **-kate* "hither", also found in some other Songhay languages, and **-nan* "away", unique to Northern Songhay. Borrowed Arabic or Berber trilateral verbs across the family tend to take a prefix *i-/y-*, corresponding to the 3ms. subject agreement prefix in the source language, while longer verbs are borrowed as bare stems.

Vocabulary

All Northern Songhay languages have borrowed extensively from Arabic and Berber, to the point that such borrowing has become probably the principal means of lexical expansion. The Songhay layer is limited to a few hundred words, usually basic terms not standing in a relationship of hyponymy or hypernymy to one another (for example, "camel" is retained whereas "male camel" and "animal" are borrowed); Nicolai (1993) presents a brief overview of commonly retained lexemes. Some of the Songhay vocabulary is absent from the major Songhay dialects of Gao and Niger; many forms are shared only with Western Songhay, for example. Some show developments unique to Northern Songhay (for example, **kebar* "show", elsewhere in Songhay **kerbu* / **kebru* / **kebe*.)

Historical implications

The fact that a Northern Songhay language is spoken in Tabelbala, an oasis with no known historical connections to northern Niger, poses serious historical problems. Souag (fc) proposes two possible hypotheses: either Timbuktu originally spoke a Northern Songhay language, later transformed by influence from the dialect of the Songhay Empire's capital Gao, or Northern Songhay used to be spoken in the Touat region of Algeria. Further data is needed to decide the issue.

The Berber influence on Northern Songhay has traditionally been identified with Tuareg, but the reality is more complicated: there is no documented Tuareg influence on Kwarandzyey, and both Kwarandzyey and Tadaksahak turn out to contain loans from a non-Tuareg Berber language closely related to Zenaga and Tetserrét (Souag 2010a). This forces the conclusion that Western Berber was once rather more widespread.

Proto-Northern Songhay speakers were certainly familiar with herding (**kud*), and a range of livestock including camels (**yoo*), sheep (**feegi*), goats (**hankini*), and cows (**hawi*). However, the nomadic lifestyle of the speakers of Tadaksahak and Tagdal is probably not representative of proto-Northern Songhay. Songhay words retained in proto-Northern Songhay include **fari* "cultivated field", **lambu* "garden", **kuumu* "hoe", **hugu* "house", **karkabu* "key" (Souag fc), indicating a sedentary agricultural lifestyle.

Bibliography

Kwarandzyey

Kwarandzyey (Korandjé) first came to linguists' attention following Cancel (1908), who provides a brief grammatical sketch and wordlist and notes its Songhay origin. Champault (1969) is an ethnography of the oasis, including numerous Kwarandzyey words and phrases; the author also began an incomplete unpublished French-Kwarandzyey dictionary (Champault ms). Tilmatine (1991, 1996) adds a few phrases of data to the previous, and discusses the language. Souag (2010b) effectively contains a grammar of Kwarandzyey with a focus on contact effects. A brief overview is given by Souag (2011.)

Nicolai (1979b, c) discusses the phonology of Kwarandzyey based on the little data then available, to which Nicolai (1981) adds a discussion of sound correspondences. Kossmann (2004b) discusses in passing *r*-loss in Kwarandzyey. Kossmann (2004a) attempts to reconstruct the mood/aspect/negation system of Kwarandzyey from the little data then available, pointing out some areas of intense Berber influence. Kossmann (2009) examines the genitive system across Northern Songhay, including Kwarandzyey. Souag (2008) briefly summarises the numeral system. Souag (2010a) argues for a stratum of Western Berber (Zenaga/Tetserrét) loans in Kwarandzyey, and discussing the principal sound changes affecting the language. Souag (fc) discusses the Arabic-based orthography used in practice by Kwarandzyey speakers.

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Tadaksahak

The only grammar of Tadaksahak so far is Christiansen-Bolli (2011), a slight expansion of her PhD thesis; it also includes a small Swadesh-based dictionary, a larger list of words of Songhay origin, and glossed texts.

Probably the earliest source of lexical data on Tadaksahak is the Tuareg dialect maps in Basset (1934), providing eight terms (for "Daousak, Ihannakaten"): *mu* "œil" [eye], *tinšar* "narines" [nostrils], *miy^a* "bouche" [mouth], *išin* "dent" [tooth], *taməsandarət* "canine" (ie **tay* "front tooth"), *tayməs* "molaire" [molar], "doigt" [finger], *aurəž* "talon" [heel]; Basset (1948) adds two more, *bangu* "tête" (head) and *ašardən* "âne" (donkey), commenting that "parmi les Touaregs, au Niger, dans l'énigmatique groupement des Idaousak, surgissent, ainsi pour le coq, l'âne ou les mulet, voire la tête, des variantes lexicographiques qui surprennent ici et ramènent immédiatement à des faits Zenaga, ksouriens ou maghrebin". Chaventré (1983) adds a list of kinship terms, in the context of a discussion of Tadaksahak genealogy. A more complete wordlist, along with texts, is to be found in Rueck & Christiansen (1999.) Heath (np), formerly available from his website, is a brief but careful lexicon of Tadaksahak. Lacroix (1981) presumably also provides a vocabulary.

Lacroix and Calame-Griaule (1970) provide a Tadaksahak text with translation. Nicolai (1979a, c) discusses Tadaksahak phonology, to which Nicolai (1981) adds a discussion of sound correspondences. Global Recordings Network (1999) is an audio recording in Tadaksahak gathered by missionaries summarising Christian beliefs; as the only publicly available Tadaksahak audio file, it may be of use for understanding the phonology. Christiansen & Christiansen (2002, 2007) discusses one of the most cross-linguistically unusual aspects of Tadaksahak grammar: the systematic use of Tuareg loans to suppletively form the causatives and passives of words of Songhay origin. Christiansen & Levinson (2003) discuss the relative clause.

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Tagdal/Tabarog

No grammar of Tagdal/Tabarog has been written. The closest available to a sketch is Benitez-

Torres (2009, n.d.), discussing verbal morphology and focusing on the phenomenon of systematic suppletive verbal derivation discussed previously for Tadaksahak. Nicolai (1979a, c) discusses Tadaksahak phonology, to which Nicolai (1981) adds a discussion of sound correspondences. Wordlists for both Tagdal and Tabarog, along with texts, are to be found in Rueck & Christiansen (1999), which argues that they represent dialects of a single language. Lacroix (1981) presumably provides a vocabulary.

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Tasawaq

The first grammar of Tasawaq is Alidou (1988), containing a sketch grammar and a vocabulary. A more easily accessible sketch grammar is given in Wolff and Alidou (2001), focused on the description of Tasawaq as a mixed language. Kossmann (2007a) similarly describes the grammar of Tasawaq with a contact focus, based on new fieldwork.

Bernus (1972), with a chapter by Lacroix, gives a short vocabulary and a text along with more extensive ethnographical and historical information. Lacroix (1980) presumably contains a vocabulary of the language. Rueck & Christiansen (1999) give an extensive vocabulary of Tasawaq (marred by lack of tone marking) and a text, along with some sociolinguistic discussion. Bernus (1992) and Calame-Griaule (1992) are primarily focused on anthropology, but give some useful lexical data and a couple of phrases. Anonymous (nd) gives two small vocabularies, including time, animals, colours, numerals, and a few greetings, in an impressionistic French transcription.

Nicolai (1979b, c) discusses the phonology, to which Nicolai (1981) adds a discussion of sound correspondences. Kossmann (2007b) examines the assignment of tone to verbs borrowed from Tuareg. Sidibé (2010a) presents an overview of plural morphology, while Sidibé (2010b) discusses verbal derivation.

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Emghedesie

The only first-hand description of Emghedesie we are ever likely to have is Barth (1851), who gives an extensive list of words and phrases along with a brief translated text. It survived into the early 20th century; Abadie (1927:189) briefly (and somewhat inaccurately) notes that "On trouve encore à Agadez et à In Gall quelques vieillards qui peuvent parler un dialecte songhaï, mais ce dernier est tombé en complète désuétude." Since then, however, the language appears to have become extinct; modern-day Agades speaks a dialect of Hausa (itself inadequately documented.) Nicolai (1981) occasionally discusses Emghedesie sound correspondences and phonology. Lacroix (1981) reviews Barth's data from the perspective of a Songhay-speaking linguist.

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General

Lacroix (1968) first coined the term "songhay septentrional" (Northern Songhay), drawing attention to these languages' differences from mainstream Songhay and to the heavy role of Berber influence in shaping them. Nicolai (1978, 1979a, b, c, 1981b) has studied their phonology in some detail, based mostly on first-hand data; Nicolai (1981) is a general examination of the comparative phonology of Songhay, with an emphasis on contact issues and sound correspondences and a good deal of Northern Songhay data. Nicolai (1993) discusses the question of which Songhay vocabulary has been preserved in Northern Songhay, and why. Rueck & Christiansen (1999) gives a very useful comparative vocabulary and discusses mutual comprehensibility. Kossmann (2004b) discusses the meager evidence that a (possibly Northern) Songhay language was spoken in the Touat-Gourara region of Algeria. Kossmann (2009) is a comparative overview of the genitive in Northern Songhay and its possible origins. Souag (fc) confirms the cladistic validity of Northern Songhay based on shared innovations, argues that its closest relative within Songhay is Western Songhay (Timbuktu and Djenné), examines the implications of its vocabulary for its history, and proposes two scenarios for its development.

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