THE STRUCTURE OF METO POETRY

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OUTLINE

- Background
- The Meto Ritual greeting
  - Amarasi
  - Amfo'an
- Conclusions
LANGUAGE BACKGROUND
# Canonical Semantic Parallelism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amarasi dyadic set</th>
<th>Literal Gloss</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sufa-n  kaʔu-n</td>
<td>flower blossom</td>
<td>descendents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuan am bare</td>
<td>village and place</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taʔeku ma na-teeef</td>
<td>encounter and meet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ma-pinaʔ ma-krahaʔ</td>
<td>NMLZ-emit.light blaze-NMLZ</td>
<td>glory (noun)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n-piin ma na-kraah</td>
<td>3-emit.light 3-blaze</td>
<td>be glorious (verb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ka-nesi-t  ka-fin-i-t</td>
<td>exceeder surpasser</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WORDS HAVE DIVERSE SURFACE FORMS

• morphological metathesis: \textit{n-inu} → \textit{n-iun} ‘drink’, \textit{n-kono} → \textit{n-koon} ‘pass’

• metathesis and vowel assimilation
  • Amarasi: \(V_aCa\) → \(V_aV_aC\) \textit{n-fena} → \textit{n-feen} ‘rise’
  • Amfo’an: most vowels: \textit{n-inu} → \textit{n-iin} ‘drink’

• reduced forms of functors: \textit{ina}, \textit{ini}, \textit{iin}, \textit{in ‘3SG’}, \textit{=ma}, \textit{=ama}, \textit{=am}, \textit{=m ‘and’}

• consonant insertion: \textit{nii} ‘pole’ + \textit{=ees} ‘one’ → \textit{niiʤees}
  • most varieties: before vowel initial enclitics
  • Amfo’an: some varieties phrase finally

• vowel assimilation: \textit{fai} ‘night’ + \textit{=ees} ‘one’ → \textit{faadʤees}

• metathesis, vowel assimilation and consonant insertion: \textit{umi} ‘house’ + \textit{=ees} ‘one’ → \textit{uumʤees}

• epenthesis: \textit{knino}? ‘clean, holy’ → \textit{a|knino}?
STRUCTURAL PARALLELISM

• ma-pina-ʔ  ma-kraha-ʔ ‘glory’ (n.)  
  NMLZ-emit.light-NMLZ  NMLZ-blaze-NMLZ

• n-piin  ma  na-kraah  ‘be glorious’ (v.)  
  3-emit.light and  3-blaze
THE METO RITUAL GREETING
VIDEO
CALL + RESPONSE

Call: \textit{na-tuin} \underline{\textit{sari-t}} \underline{\textit{beko-t}} \underline{\textit{a-reok-t}} \textit{am nee}
3-because resolve-NML plan-NML NML-good\MET-NML and \textit{PAUSE}
‘Because of these good resolutions and plans and ...’

Resp: \underline{\textit{A-REKO-T}}
NML-good\\UNMET-NML
‘(they) are good’
AMARASI
BASIC STRUCTURE

Call (leader)  Response (group)

\[ \text{a1 a2 (b1 b2 c1 c2 ... ) nee (σ)σσσσ} \]
CONSTRAINTS ON RESPONSE

• Creating a parallel pair
• Repeating final word of call
• Completing a multi-part parallel pair
CREATING A PARALLEL PAIR

a. \( ka= n\text{-}tok\text{"}~took \ ma \ n\text{-}ta\text{"}~taa? \ hiit \ ar=kiiit \ ta\text{"}eku \ m \ nee \)
   NEG 3-INTNS~sit and 3-INTNS~quiet 1PI all=1PI.ACC 1PI-encounter and PAUSE
   ‘We don’t just sit around and be quiet we encounter and

b. \( TA\text{-}TEEF \)
   1PI-meet
   ‘(we) meet’

150525, line 5
REPEATING PART OF CALL

a. \( \text{ka } \text{t-tok-\text{-}l} \)  
   NEG 1PI-IN: 
   ‘We don’t ju

b. \( \text{TA-TEEF} \)  
   1PI-meet 
   ‘we meet’

a. \( \text{n-bi } \text{tabu } \text{kninu? ma } \text{oras } \text{a|kniun? am nee } \text{efa m nee } \text{meet and PAUSE} \)  
   3-RL.LOC schedule holy and time holy and PAUSE
   ‘during a holy moment and holy time’

b. \( \text{RO } \text{KNINU?} \)  
   very holy 
   ‘(it is) very holy’

181017, line 4 "00
COMPLETING MULTI-PART PARALLEL PAIR

a. m-aʔko hai [uumaŋ] =ee naan-n =ee ma roopgw =ee nee
   1PX/2-ABL 1PX house =3DET inside-3SG.GEN =3DET and social.house =3DET PAUSE
   ‘from inside our house and our home’

b. IN NANA-N
   3SG inside-3SG.GEN
   ‘its inside’
CONSIDERATIONS ON RESPONSE

• Creating a parallel pair
  • when first member of pair is final in call

• Completing a multi-part parallel pair
  • when first member of dyadic set is ‘modified’ and second ‘unmodified’
  • call: \( a_1 \text{ modifier}_i, a_2 \text{ nee} \)
  • response: \( \text{ modifier}_i \)

• Repeating (part of) call
  • when final member of call is not part of a dyadic set OR
  • when final member of call is final member of a dyadic set
METATHESIS AND UNMETATHESIS

• Nouns must be unmetathesised (default semantic)
• Verbs must be metathesised (default semantic)
• Allowing the leader to create metathetic parallelism

• Nouns:
  • Call: noun\MET (na\an-n ‘inside’)
  • Resp: noun\UNMET (nana-n ‘inside’)

• Verbs:
  • Call: verb\UNMET (na-hunu ‘first’)
  • Resp: noun\MET (na-hu\un ‘first’)

17
METATHESIS AND UNMETATHESIS

a. m-aʔko hai [uumdz] =ee naan-n =ee ma [roopgw] =ee nee
   1PX/2-ABL 1PX house =3DET inside\M-3SG.GEN =3DET and social.house =3DET

   ‘from inside our house and our home’

b. IN NANA-N
   3SG inside\U-3SG.GEN

c. mes na-tuin n-aka n-biʔaak [neengw] =ee na-hunu m [faadz] =ee nee
   but 3-because 3-say 3-RL.LOC day =3DET 3-first\U and night =3DET

   ‘But it is said (that) during the first day and the night’

d. NA-HUUN
   3-first\M
AMFO'AN
## Call Response Chaining

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Call:</th>
<th>a1</th>
<th>t-batis</th>
<th>‘separate’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resp:</td>
<td>a2</td>
<td>at-boʔok</td>
<td>‘divide’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call:</td>
<td>a2</td>
<td>at-boʔok</td>
<td>lelel ‘field’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resp:</td>
<td>b2</td>
<td>poʔan</td>
<td>‘orchard’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call:</td>
<td>b2</td>
<td>poʔan</td>
<td>sanel ‘hut’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resp:</td>
<td>c2</td>
<td>lopo</td>
<td>‘social.house’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
a. *hai feto? hai oli? he $t$-*batis $ook$ $am$ $nee*

1PX sister 1PX ySi  IRR  1PI-separate REFL and

‘Our sister, our younger sibling we will separate ourselves and’

b. *AT-BO?OK*

1PI-part

a. *at-booo?k at m-a?ko $lele$ panin ma $nee*$

1PI-divide SUB 1PX/2-ABL field across and

‘when we part from the garden across (there) and’

b. *PO?AN PANIN*

orchard across

‘the orchard across (there)’

a. *po?an panin m-a?ko $san$el panin ma $nee*$

1PI-separate SUB 1PX/2-ABL hut across and

‘the orchard across (there and) from the hut across (there) and’

b. *LOPO PANIN*

social.house across

‘the house (across) there’
CONSTRAINTS ON RESPONSE (AMFO'AN)

• Creating a parallel pair
• Completing a multi-part parallel pair
• Creating a multi-part parallel pair
CREATING PARALLEL PAIR

a. askau-t =aa tuk~tuuk? am nee invite-NML =ODET INTNS~cut.short and PAUSE ‘the invitation is very truncated and’

b. pal-pala?
   INTNS~short.length ‘very short’ 170618, 1.54
a. ma-kaan-? at es mepu Uisneen =gwee m lasi nee
PROP-name-PROP SUB one work God =3DET and issue
‘Known as the work of God and the issue of’ 170618, 0.56

b. UISNENO
‘God’
CREATING MULTI-PART PARALLEL PAIR

a. *at-boɔʔk at m-aʔko lelel panin* ma nee
   1PI-divide SUB 1PX/2-ABL field across and
   ‘when we part from the garden across (there) and’

b. *POʔAN PANIN*
   orchard across
   ‘the orchard across (there)’

a. *poʔan panin m-aʔko sanel panin* ma nee
   1PI-separate SUB 1PX/2-ABL hut across and
   ‘the orchard across (there and) from the hut across (there) and’

b. *LOPO PANIN*
   social.house across
   ‘the house (across) there’
CREATING MULTI-PART PARALLEL PAIRS

a. *tafa*  *t*  *on*  *ho*  *amn-otu-*?  *paku*  *ma nee*
society SUB like 2SG  NML-burning-NML  lamp  and PAUSE

‘(it is a) society like the blazing of your lamp and’

b. *a?-kiku-*?  *finidʒ*
NML-scatter-NML  seed

‘the scattering of (your) seeds’
CONSTRAINTS ON RESPONSE

• Creating a parallel pair
  • when first member of pair is final in call

• Completing a multi-part parallel pair
  • when first member of dyadic set is ‘modified’ and second ‘unmodified’
  • call: \( a_1 \) modifier \(_i\) a2 nee
  • response: modifier \(_i\)

• Creating a multi-part parallel pair
  • when first member of dyadic set is ‘modified’ and second ‘unmodified’
  • call: \( a_1 \) modifier
  • response: a2 modifier
CONSTRANINT ON CALL

• Begins with previous response
  • response:  a2
  • call:       a2 ... b1 nee
CONCLUSIONS
## AMARASI AND AMFO'AN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Amarasi</th>
<th>Amfo'an</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>response creates parallelism?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>create multi-part parallelism?</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complete multi-part parallelism?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>repeat part of call?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>metathetic parallelism?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>call-response chain?</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>response structure</td>
<td>(σ)σσσ</td>
<td>unconstrained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>response intonation</td>
<td>high level</td>
<td>falling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>call intonation</td>
<td>_nee</td>
<td>_nee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PARALLELISM IS STRUCTURAL

• Meto poetry is organised around parallelism
  • semantic parallelism
  • structural parallelism
  • both highly constrained
  • allows group to correctly respond

• different varieties create structural parallelism in slightly different ways
BROADER IMPLICATIONS

- parallelism is structural, not just semantic
- structural parallelism is created by exploiting the linguistic features of the language
- poetry is a highly refined version of everyday language
- parallelism reflects worldview and culture
CONCLUSION

a. \( ar=kiit \quad ta-hiin \quad ma \quad ta-keo \quad moni-t \quad mansian \ pasan \sim \ pasan \)
   all=1PL.ACC 1PI-know and 1PI-aware live-NML human  FRD~pair
   bifee atoni? feto-f nao-f ta-bua ta-?mees =ook
   woman man sister brother 1PI-gather 1PI-unify =REFL
   n-bi bare a-reko-t paha =t nee
   3-RL.LOC place NML-good-NML land SUB PAUSE

   ‘We all know and are aware that the life of humans comes in pairs; woman and man, sister and brother, gathered and unified, in places and countries that are good.’

b. \( RO \quad REKO \)
   very good
   ‘(It is) very good.’

\( \theta00524, 0.36 \)
Thanks and appreciation to the audience and listeners for your attention and nee
MODERN INNOVATIONS

a. \texttt{ar=k}i \texttt{m-fain} nai \texttt{m-eik} \texttt{tetu-s} \texttt{ao\_mina?}  
\text{all=2PL.ACC LPX/2-return POL LPX/2-bring upright-NML body\_nice}  
\texttt{a-reko-t} \texttt{na-?ko Uisneno a-pakae-t} \texttt{neno\_tuunn} am nee  
\text{NML-good-NML 3-ABL God NML-create-NML sky\_above} and  
\textquoteleft Please return now with good blessings and health from God, the creator of heaven and\textquoteright

b. \texttt{RO TUNAN}  
\text{very above}