

Affixation in reduplicated monosyllables in Matu'uwal Atayal

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Matu'uwal Atayal is an Austronesian language, spoken in the foothills of Miaoli county in northern Taiwan. Although the majority of its roots follow the common Austronesian CVCVC template, it also has a number of reduplicated CVC roots, which exhibit unusual properties after affixation. After suffixation with *-un* or *-an*, the reduplicant includes a copy of the suffix vowel:

hirhir	+	-un	→	hiruhirun	'to saw'
taptap	+	-an	→	tapatapan	'to fan'

A number of roots have different vowels in unsuffixed forms (the pattern is always CaCCuC), but the vowels change after suffixation. This type of vowel change does not occur in canonical CVCVC roots.

lanlun	+	-un	→	lunlulun	'to think'
camcum	+	-un	→	cumucumun	'to tidy up'

Atayal, like several other Formosan languages, has a phenomenon called pseudo-nasal substitution (PNS, see Blust 2013 ch. 4.3.1.5). Unlike nasal substitution in Malayo-Polynesian languages, PNS happens in specific roots, mostly those starting with bilabials, but occasionally other consonants as well. Instead of normal *-um-* infixation, PNS replaces the first consonant of the root with /m/, ignoring its place of articulation: e.g. /qaniq + -um-/ → /maniq/ 'to eat'.

When PNS occurs in reduplicated monosyllables, both the base and reduplicant have their initial consonants replaced:

bagbug	+	-um-	→	magmug	'to chop firewood'
basbus	+	-um-	→	masmus	'to play with fire'

In this presentation, I will attempt to untangle vowel assignment, PNS, and other morphophonological processes in reduplicated monosyllables in Matu'uwal Atayal, and present a unified analysis of these phenomena. I will build upon a Harmonic Serialism-based approach to metrically conditioned syncope, first proposed by McCarthy (2008) and utilized by Huang (2017) to analyze syncope in canonical roots in Matu'uwal.

References

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