

## Voice(ing) of the Past? A Synchronic & Historical Analysis of Click Clusters in #Kx'ao||'ae

Lee J. Pratchett, Institut für Asien u. Afrikawissenschaften, Betreuer: Prof. Güldemann

#Kx'ao||'ae is a Southeastern Ju dialect, part of the Ju dialect-continuum (Kx'a family). It is spoken by approximately 2000-4000 former Kalahari San hunter-gatherers across both sides of the Botswana-Namibia border (Biesele, Pratchett & Moon 2013).

Ju is phonologically one of the most complex languages on earth. It owes this in part to its ingressive consonant inventory, but also to the highly developed distribution of contrastive laryngeal settings, and co-articulations which occur with basic segments to form *click clusters* (Güldemann 2001, 2013; Nakagawa 2006). Unique to only a small handful of the so-called 'Khoesan' languages is *voice-lead* (Traill 1985), phonemic voicing in complex clicks and click clusters giving rise to more elaborate series formation. The data presented here provokes two questions: what is the status of voicing in complex segments in #Kx'ao||'ae, and; what does this suggest about the historical areal distribution of such segments, particularly concerning neighbouring unrelated languages?

There is a clear tendency in #Kx'ao||'ae, and other Southeastern Ju varieties, for pre-voiced click clusters to become devoiced, e.g. 'to be pregnant' *g!koo* in the Tsumkwe Ju|'hoan variety becomes *!koo* in #Kx'ao||'ae; 'to remove' *g!xa* (Tsumkwe Ju|'hoan) > *!xa* (#Kx'ao||'ae). Devoicing is not uncommon, but occurs with greater regularity and frequency in #Kx'ao||'ae than most other neighbouring varieties. Here, I outline my hypothesis for a sound change underway in #Kx'ao||'ae and the agents accelerating it.

Contact with languages which lack the voiced click series, in this case Naro (Khoe-Kwadi family), is a key to the analysis of this data. The question of contact is considered both synchronically and historically: contact with Naro is a significant factor, and I posit that this is symptomatic of the behaviour of these complex segments. Hence, I consider the #Kx'ao||'ae-Naro scenario to be an example of an areal phenomenon with important historical implications. As such, I make a case for considering shared lexicon between Ju varieties and Naro not as contact induced, but the traces of a common origin.

Biesele, M., L. Pratchett & T. Moon. 2012. Ju|'hoan and #X'ao||'aen documentation in Namibia: overcoming obstacles to community-based language documentation, in Austin, P. K. & S. McGill (eds.), *Language Documentation and Description*, Vol. 11, London: SOAS.

Güldemann, T. 2001. Phonological Regularities of Consonant Systems across Khoisan Lineages, in *University of Leipzig Papers on Africa – Language and Literatures* 16, Leipzig: ifAUL.

Güldemann, T. 2013. *Phonetics & Phonology: Southern Khoesan (Tuu)*, in Vossen, R. (ed.) *The Khoesan Languages*, London: Routledge. pp75-79.

Nakagawa, H. 2006. *Aspects of the phonetic and phonological structure of the G|ui language*. Ph.D Dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand.

Traill, A. 1985. *Phonetic and Phonological Studies of the !Xóõ Bushmen*, Hamburg; Helmut Buske.