

### Editorial of JWAL Volume 45. Issue1

The Editorial Board of the Journal of West African Languages (JWAL) is pleased to present Volume 45, Issue 1. This volume comprises eight papers from 12 linguists, covering areas that include phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and translation.

The lead study is by Nadezhda Makeeva and Andrey Shluinsky of the Institute of Linguistics in Moscow, Russia. Their paper, titled *Noun classes and class agreement in Akebu*, presents a discussion on the noun class system of this Kwa language spoken in Togo. Seven noun classes are established before discussing the intricacies of each class in turn. This is one of the first systematic studies of the nominal systems of this lesser studied language.

The second paper is on *Negation patterns in the Kwa language group* by Lauren Schneider of Simon Fraser University. She first provides a concise survey of negation strategies in selected Kwa languages and then shows that certain patterns like the “Jespersen cycle”, which were first thought to be widespread across language groups are hardly even attested in these Kwa languages. Rather, one of the consistent patterns in these languages is the deployment of a preverbal nasal morpheme.

Our third paper is the result of joint work by Jonathan C. Anderson, Christopher R. Green, and Samuel Obeng of Knox College, Syracuse University, and Indiana University respectively. The paper is titled *On the expression of diminutivity in Susu*, a Mande language. The paper’s core aim is to outline “...the use of several morphemes, both affixal and free, that figure into the expression of diminutivity in the language.” In doing this they focus on an analysis of the diminutive marker “-di” which is quite regular in other Mande languages.

Mary Amaechi of the University of Ilorin, Nigeria is the author of our fourth paper titled, *Yes – No question formation in Igbo: the phono-syntax interface*. The paper picks up a long standing debate about low tones on Igbo pronouns and their role in initiating yes – no question formation in the language, arguing that “...the low tone on singular subject pronouns in Igbo yes-no questions is a relic of the question particle *à* found in the plural counterpart.”

Titled *Nominal inflection in the Safané dialect of Dafing: ternary quantity contrasts and the morphologically conditioned phonology*, the fifth paper discusses the morphophonology of nominal inflection in the language, especially its Safané dialect. Its author, Jeremy Steffman of the University of California at Los Angeles, uses the Dafing data to interrogate two leading approaches within Optimality Theory about the representation of morphologically dependent phonology.

Ideophone studies are beginning to feature quite regularly in JWAL volumes of late and this volume is no exception. Our sixth paper, titled *Ideophones in Bafut* – a Grassfields language of Cameroon, by Melvise Asohisi of the University of Western Australia, is a description of the linguistic structural properties of ideophones in the language, with the author arguing that ideophones in the language do not consist of a word class of their own but are distributed among other word classes.

Our seventh paper is titled *Nkọrọọ proverbs in Urhobo translation* and is written by Rita Mebitaghan of Delta State University, Nigeria and Ebitare Obikudo of the University of

Port Harcourt. It discusses the challenges involved in translating proverbs between two languages of different word order, one SVO and the other SOV. In terms of strategies for addressing the translation challenges the authors adopt the dynamic equivalence translation method whereby “...proverbs of the Source Language (SL) are not identical with those of the Target Language (TL) due to contextual differences.”

The eighth and final paper of volume 45.1 is by Kwame Abukari of the University of Tromsø, Norway on the Dagbane language of northern Ghana. The paper is titled *Segment deletion as a morpho-phonological process in Dagbani compound word formation*. The paper discusses three types of variables in terms of their predictive power for segment deletion in compound word formation. The author argues that the nature of the constituent contact margin was likely more predictive of segment deletion than other variables.

I wish to thank the reviewers of these eight papers as well as those of papers that did not make it into this volume. I also wish to thank our authors, readers, and the general West African linguistic community for their enthusiastic interest in JWAL. We continue to attract a keen readership and very healthy submission rates. Finally, I thank the editorial board members, especially our able Assistant Editors, Ms Hasiyatu Abubakari and Ms Izabela Jordanoska, for layout and formatting of the eight papers into one volume – Volume 45, issue 1.

Adams Bodomo

Editor, JWAL