

Paradigm uniformity in Luwanga derived nouns

Christopher R. Green

Indiana University-Bloomington - USA

Data collected on Luwanga, a variety of Luyia (J.30) spoken in Western Kenya, reveal a morpho-phonemic paradigm in place between Class 9/10 nouns and their Class 12/13 and 20/4 derivatives. These data illustrate a phonologically-driven nasal consonant deletion in Class 9/10 noun class prefixes in this language that correlates with the deletion of the augment (pre-prefix) in the augmentative and diminutive nouns derived from Class 9/10. Additionally, these data illustrate that speakers of Luwanga equate the absence of a surface nasal in this particular noun class with the deletion of the augment in others. This paper will explicate the robustness of this phenomenon in Luwanga, as well as additional characteristics of Luwanga that motivate and support this interesting correlation. Additional data illustrating an opaque underlying voicing contrast that drives the nasal consonant deletion in Class 9/10 prefixes, as well as a look at derived nouns in otherwise parallel contexts, particularly from Class 11/10 nouns, will also be presented. This paper therefore offers a glimpse at an unusual and previously undocumented phenomenon in this language and provides an important contribution to the ongoing discussion of NC phonology in Bantu languages.