

Advances and developments in cross-Bantu typology: Empirical, comparative and methodological approaches

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Recent years have seen many new contributions to the field of cross-Bantu typology, which is widely defined as data-oriented and framework-neutral investigations on observable cross-linguistic variations (cf. Nichols 2007), and implications lying behind the attested variation in the Bantu languages. Along the line of general trends in contemporary linguistic typology, most of the successful work in cross-Bantu typology have been focusing on a specific domain of grammar typically through a ‘feature-driven’, rather than a traditional ‘holistic’, approach (cf. Croft 2003, Hyman 2018), including, for example, applicative constructions (e.g. Bresnan & Moshi 1990, Pacchiarotti 2020), inversion constructions (e.g. Marten & Van der Wal 2014), conjoint/disjoint alternation (e.g. Van der Wal & Hyman 2016), negation (e.g. Guérois et al. 2024), object marking and symmetry (e.g. Van der Wal 2022), or relative constructions (e.g. Van de Velde 2019), just to name a few.

In tandem with the culmination of such in-depth knowledge on the attested variations, as well as cross-linguistic generalisations based on them, studies on typological covariation between different grammatical properties have also developed to shed an empirical light on implicational tendencies lying behind the variation. This line of research was initiated in Marten et al. (2007), the first attempt to explore morphosyntactic variation and variability across Bantu languages through investigating a set of typologically defined parameters which are fine-tuned for Bantu morphosyntax. This approach has recently developed into a wider investigation of intra-parametric covariation (see Shinagawa & Marten 2023), which is enabled by a large-scale database (Marten et al. 2018) compiling featural data from more than 100 sample languages obtained through a fine-grained set of 142 morphosyntactic parameters covering an entire range of morphosyntactic configuration of Bantu languages (Guérois et al. 2017; available online). The approach has also led to increased research in morphosyntactic description of Bantu languages (see Shinagawa and Abe 2019, and Lee, Abe and Shinagawa 2021; both available online).

Against this recent progress, for this workshop we invite contributions to address questions of typological studies of Bantu languages, for example:

- Typologically relevant features of individual Bantu languages
- Typologically informed description and analysis of Bantu languages
- Typological comparison of Bantu languages
- Work based on the parameters of Guérois et al. (2017), or inspired by the parametric approach to Bantu typology
- Methodological work on Bantu typology

We believe that papers in the workshop will highlight the vibrant scholarship in Bantu typology and showcase recent developments and advances, as well as critical reflection and future directions.

Some materials available online:

- Guérois, Rozenn, Hannah Gibson and Lutz Marten. 2017. Parameters of Bantu Morphosyntactic Variation. Zenodo. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3958997>
- Lee, Seunghun J., Yuko Abe, and Daisuke Shinagawa (eds.) 2021. Descriptive materials of morphosyntactic microvariation in Bantu vol. 2: A microparametric survey of morphosyntactic microvariation in Southern Bantu languages. Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. URL: <https://tufs.repo.nii.ac.jp/records/7693>
- Shinagawa, Daisuke and Yuko Abe (eds.) 2019. Descriptive Materials of Morphosyntactic Microvariation in Bantu. Tokyo: Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. URL: <https://tufs.repo.nii.ac.jp/records/7692>

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- Shinagawa, Daisuke and Lutz Marten. 2023. A micro-parametric survey on typological covariation related to focus marking strategies based on the Bantu Morphosyntactic Variation database. *Linguistique et Langues Africaines* 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.4000/lla.9676>

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