CHALLENGES AND BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH DIASPORA COMMUNITIES

Sharon Rose
Department of Linguistics
University of California, San Diego
DIASPORA COMMUNITIES

- Thousands of refugees and immigrants reside in North American cities, many of whom speak endangered languages
- Possibility of long-term, extensive documentation and description projects
- In San Diego, there are speakers of Chimiini (Somalia), Amuzgo (Mexico), Ma’di (Sudan), Aramaic (Iraq), Chin (Myanmar), etc..
- Endangered Language Alliance at CUNY has undertaken several description and documentation projects with speakers in NYC - Mamuju (South Sulawesi), Garifuna (Honduras, Belize), Zaghawa/Beri (Chad, Sudan), Masalit (Sudan)
Why work with diaspora communities?

- **Availability** – speakers reside close to universities and researchers; multi-year, year-round projects are possible
- **Community interest** – speakers themselves are aware of language attrition (usually in their children) and are eager for language work and materials
- **Difficult home conditions** – many refugees come from regions/countries where it is difficult to conduct in-situ fieldwork

- **Chimiini Documentation Project** (Brent Henderson, U. of Florida) works with speakers in Atlanta, Manchester, London, Mombasa –displaced from Somalia; conditions in Somalia are not conducive for field research (see Henderson 2011 ICDLC talk)
Why shouldn’t one work with diaspora communities?

“Working with immigrant communities – if a language is well spoken in a home country – is also hardly advisable: many grammatical features are extremely prone to contact induced change and are likely to shift under the impact of introducing new – and losing old – cultural practices.“ - Aikhenveld 2007: 5 (quote courtesy of Henderson 2011)

- Aikhenvald, A. 2007. Linguistic Fieldwork: setting the scene. STUF 60 (1).
DIASPORA COMMUNITIES - CHALLENGES

- Attrition and dialect merger
  - Refugees were often displaced in cities or refugee camps and learned other languages and mixed with people from other dialect areas → language contact
  - Size of diaspora community and displacement from home area leads to attrition
  - Negative views about language fluency

- Data collection
  - Small number of speakers means more limited data variety
  - Data is representative of particular dialect or even idiolect
  - Non-natural setting for data collection
Description and documentation of previously undescribed dialects/languages → increase in linguistic knowledge

Sustained contact means that data can be checked and re-checked

Recognition of local communities

Establish connections that will
- i) assist communities in home country
- ii) lay groundwork for future in-situ field trips

Is it still fieldwork? (Hyman 2001)
- ✓ Collecting data and working with native speakers for an extended period of time
- ✗ not in the home community in a far-off land; less sociolinguistic material
CASE STUDY: MORO LANGUAGE

Moro (ðəmwaróŋá) is a Kordofanian language spoken in the Nuba Mountain area of (North) Sudan. # of speakers unknown – perhaps 40,000?
MORO LANGUAGE PROJECT

- NSF-funded project that grew out of a field methods class at UCSD
- Moro speakers: Elyasir Julima & Ikhlas Elahmer, two of the four Moro speakers in San Diego
- Researchers: Farrell Ackerman, Sharon Rose, George Gibbard, Peter Jenks (Harvard), Laura Kertz (Brown)
- Past student participants: Bethany Keffala, Hannah Rohde (Stanford); UCSD undergraduates Amanda Simons and Andrew Strabone
I: MULTILINGUALISM

- Prior to 2005, schools in the Nuba Mountains used Arabic as the medium of education
- Policy of Arabization meant that native language education was banned, and many students were forced into Koranic schools
- 2nd Sudanese Civil War (1983-2005) included many ground attacks and bombing raids on the Nuba Mountains
- Many Moro reside as IDPs (internally displaced people) in Omdurman (city adjacent to Khartoum) – large Moro speaking enclave in Arabic-speaking city
Displaced Moro speakers in Omdurman were/are also educated in Arabic, or in English (church schools).

The younger generation is growing up monolingual in Arabic or bilingual in Arabic and Moro.

“Potential informants with such (=multilingual) backgrounds should not necessarily be excluded on a priori grounds” (Dimmendaal 2001:61)

Language contact in Sudan and in U.S.

Native Moro education has only recently been introduced in the Nuba Mountains with elementary primers in the standard ‘Werria’ dialect, developed by the Moro Language Committee in Khartoum.
ELEMENTARY MORO PRIMERS
ARABIC BORROWINGS– VOWEL HARMONY

- Moro has a vowel height harmony /e a o/ → [i u]; Arabic borrowings conform:
  - **Low vowel words**
    - albábá ‘door’ → al baab
    - aléta ‘wall’ → al ħaltʕ
    - alañgréma ‘bed’ → al ſangarajb
    - aţába ‘tobacco’ → at tabagh
  
  - **High vowel words**
    - aļkaníša ‘church’ → al kanisa
    - aţúmí ‘onion’ → at tum (= ‘garlic’)
    - aļba mbariə ‘stool’ → al bambar
    - sandúgi ‘box’ → as sandugh

Arabic words are augmented with a final /a/ or /i/.

High vowel status is determined by a single high vowel in the word (exception: bambar)
**ARABIC BORROWINGS– NOUN CLASS**

- Arabic nouns are typically borrowed with the al- definite article and show signs of coronal assimilation: ex. *at tum* -> *ʔtúmí*
- They are assigned to the j/j noun class pairing, a class which is characterized by a/ʌ-initial nouns in the singular and e/i-initial nouns in the plural – analyzed as vocalic prefixes (Gibbard, Rohde & Rose 2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ajén</td>
<td>ején</td>
<td>‘mountain’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>árómá</td>
<td>érómá</td>
<td>‘black biting ant’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʔbəlúkriə</td>
<td>ibəlúkriə</td>
<td>‘dove’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Concord: ajén jogána ‘the mountain is big’
Instrumental: ajén-já / ején-já

(cf. láwá logána ‘the mosquito is big’)

UC BERKELEY FIELDWORK FORUM, MARCH 3, 2011
### ARABIC BORROWINGS— NOUN CLASS

#### Low vowel words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>albábá</td>
<td>elbábá</td>
<td>‘door’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aléta</td>
<td>eléta</td>
<td>‘wall’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aləŋgréma</td>
<td>eləŋgréma</td>
<td>‘bed’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### High vowel words

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alkanísa</td>
<td>ilkánísa</td>
<td>‘church’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ātúmí</td>
<td>ihtúmí</td>
<td>‘onion’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albámbariə</td>
<td>ilbámbariə</td>
<td>‘stool’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ARABIC BORROWINGS– NOUN CLASS

If the noun is consonant-initial, then it is assigned to a noun class with a matching consonant:

- lugmʌ ‘porridge’
- lugmá-li ‘this porridge’
- lugmʌ latʃəfá ‘the porridge is bland’

or the ‘default’ ð consonant class (for labials, dentals):

- sandúgi ‘box’
- máŋga ‘mango’
- ţrabílí ‘car’ (<automobile)

Concord: sandúgi ḏogóna ‘the box is big’

Instrumentals: sandúgi-ḏa ; máŋga-ḏa ; bantalón-ḏá ; ţrabílí-ḏá
ARABIC ADAPTATIONS - TONE

Verb forms fall into two distinct tone classes:

- **Default tone** – tone pattern is determined by the syllable structure of the verb root
- **Melodic tone** – tone pattern is determined by the tense/aspect/mood system; phonological make-up of root plays no role
Proximal imperfective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Tone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>k-a-táváð-a</td>
<td>‘spit’</td>
<td>HH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-a-vóléð-a</td>
<td>‘pull’</td>
<td>HH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-a-wáð-á</td>
<td>‘poke’</td>
<td>H-H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-a-wóndat-á</td>
<td>‘see’</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-a-wárð-a</td>
<td>‘write’</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-ogóð-a</td>
<td>‘jump’</td>
<td>LH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-oað-á</td>
<td>‘mill’</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-óndət-á</td>
<td>‘dry’</td>
<td>HL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-áff-á</td>
<td>‘build’</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Open syllables

Closed first syllable

Onsetless first syllable

Onsetless closed first syllable
ARABIC ADAPTATIONS

- Arabic loans typically have the heavy syllable HL default tone pattern even if there are no heavy syllables in the root:
  - k-ʌ-lím-iə ‘join’
  - k-ákəm-a ‘judge’
  - k-álab-a ‘play’
  - k-ámad-aṭ-a ‘help’

Stress → Tone?

Borrowed nouns usually have penultimate H tone, which may/may not extend to the final vowel → tone assigned based on stress (Arabic or Moro?)
# PROBLEMS WITH URBAN ELICITATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ðə́b̥wá dóá</td>
<td>‘gum tree’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ugi</td>
<td>‘tree/flower’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>édeé</td>
<td>‘dalib tree’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wará</td>
<td>‘baobab tree’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imwənì</td>
<td>‘type of tree’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evárə̞ŋé</td>
<td>‘type of tree’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lə́wirə̞</td>
<td>‘type of tree’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ðòona</td>
<td>‘type of tree’ (very tall)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evəðá</td>
<td>‘type of tree’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lúwja</td>
<td>‘type of tree’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rrí</td>
<td>‘type of tree’ (with red branches)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ðədīŋé</td>
<td>‘type of tree’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2: DIALECT VARIATION

- There are seven dialects of Moro; the standard dialect is Werria.
- The dialect we are studying is ḉətəgəvəla.
- The two other Moro speakers in San Diego speak Ulba (close to Thetogovela) and Werria (most distinct).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnologue names</th>
<th>Blench (2005)</th>
<th>Names provided by our consultants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Umm Gabralla (Toberelda)</td>
<td>tobařelda</td>
<td>δətəgovəla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umm Dorein (Longorban)</td>
<td>ɫŋorəban</td>
<td>ɲorban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nderre</td>
<td>ndəria</td>
<td>nderrea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laiyen</td>
<td>layenia</td>
<td>ajnea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nubwa</td>
<td>ɫnəbwa</td>
<td>unubwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulba</td>
<td>uləba</td>
<td>ulba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Werria</td>
<td>lamwarəŋ</td>
<td>waɾia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DIALECT VARIATION

- **Phonology**
  - Werria /t 3l/ → Thetogovela /g v l/
  - Werria was previously described as ‘not a tone language’ (Black & Black 1971) – Thetogovela does have tone, but Werria probably does, too.

- **Morphology**
  - Object markers: Werria 3sg –ma → Thetogovela –ŋó
  - Locative and instrumental verb clitics in Thetogovela

- **Syntax**
  - Werria use of auxiliary gafo ‘to be’ (Thetogovela gaŋó)’ to form compound tenses
  - Auxiliary gero/gaber for negation in Werria; Thetogovela uses kanno
  - Cleft wh-questions in Thetogovela; unreported in Werria
DIALECT VARIATION

- **Dictionaries of Moro:**
  - Black & Black (1971) – *A Grammar of Moro*
  - Blench (2005) – based on several weeks of fieldwork in Sudan
  - Guest (1997) – SIL researcher in Sudan in early 1990s

- **All these dictionaries contain differences from Thetogovela**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guest</th>
<th>Thetogovela</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bədɔ</td>
<td>vádɔ</td>
<td>‘shave’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ḍəŋ</td>
<td>gəŋ</td>
<td>‘kill’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laldəŋ</td>
<td>lálləŋ</td>
<td>‘run’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eɗa ‘person’</td>
<td>eɗa</td>
<td>‘meat’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abəŋ ‘curse’</td>
<td>ábəŋ</td>
<td>‘pray’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aŋe</td>
<td>minhaŋfu</td>
<td>‘peel’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Standard textbooks are being created using the Werria dialect**
DIALECT VARIATION

- Our speakers can understand Werria, but they are also good at pointing out differences between Werria and Thetogovela.
- How much dialect influence was there in Omdurman?
- Inter-speaker disagreements about data do arise – are these due to age (10 year age difference), gender, degrees of language attrition or different village origins?
- Our grammar and dictionary will conflict with standard Moro – is this helpful or harmful to the community?
Years of working on Moro has led to some interesting discoveries that have been enriched by

- i) a team of researchers
- ii) continued data collection that gradually revealed patterns

Variation is documented because of repeated elicitation

Discoveries:

- Symmetrical status of objects
- Wh ex-situ questions, relative clauses, clefts – all marked by wh-agreement on verb as well as particles marking extraction ‘path’
- Tone in verbal system – determined by tense/aspect/mood/directionality/clause as well as by syllable structure of root
- Phonological patterns of causative
CASE STUDY: OBJECT MARKER POSITION

Object marker (in this case 3sg ŋó ‘him’) is suffix in perfective aspect:

(1) Kúku k-a-ŋó-ó-ŋó
kuku SUBJ-MAIN-hide-PFV-3SG.OBJ
‘Kuku hid him’

Object marker ŋó is a prefix in imperfective aspect

(2) Kúku k-a-ŋó-ó-vəʧ-a
kuku SUBJ-MAIN-3SG.OBJ-hide-IMPV
‘Kuku is about to hide him’
### VERB CONJUGATIONS WITH PREFIX OBJECT MARKER

**Root = vəleð 'pull'**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Example Form</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. proximal imperfective</td>
<td>ka-ŋó-vəleð-a</td>
<td>'he is pulling him here'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. proximal subordinate</td>
<td>kabwáná  áŋ-ŋó-vəleð-e</td>
<td>'he wants to pull him here'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. distal subordinate</td>
<td>kabwáná  áŋ-ŋó-vəleð-a</td>
<td>'he wants to pull him'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. consecutive imperfective</td>
<td>t  áŋ-ŋó-vəleð-ó</td>
<td>'and then he was pulling him'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. consecutive perfective</td>
<td>t  áŋ-ŋó-vəleð-a</td>
<td>'and then he pulled him'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. negative</td>
<td>kanná  áŋ-ŋó-vəleð-a</td>
<td>'he doesn’t/didn’t pull him'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. negative imperative</td>
<td>án:ná  á-ŋó-vəleð-a</td>
<td>‘don’t pull him!’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VERB CONJUGATIONS WITH SUFFIX OBJECT MARKER

a. perfective  
k-a-vəleð-ó-ŋó  ‘he pulled him’

b. distal imperfective  
k-á-vəleð-ó-ŋó  ‘he is pulling him’

c. proximal imperative  
vóléð-ó-ŋó  ‘pull him here!’

d. distal imperative  
vəleð-a-ŋó  ‘pull him!’
The aspect/mood/direction/clause type of the verb appears to be what determines object marker position, but there is no single, unified generalization.

- **NOT aspect**
  - Suffix Object $\rightarrow$ distal imperfective
  - Prefix Object $\rightarrow$ proximal imperfective, both consecutives (imperfective and perfective)

- **NOT main vs. subordinate clause**
  - Suffix Object $\rightarrow$ main clause
  - Prefix Object $\rightarrow$ subordinate clause + proximal imperfective main clause

- **NOT direction**
  - not all verb forms make this distinction
  - Suffix Object $\rightarrow$ both distal and proximal imperatives
THE ROLE OF TONE

Verb forms fall into two distinct tone classes:

- **Default tone** – tone pattern is determined by the syllable structure of the verb root
- **Melodic tone** – tone pattern is determined by the tense/aspect/mood system; phonological make-up of root plays no role
## Default Tone

### Proximal Imperfective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Accent Pattern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>k-a-távǎd-a</td>
<td>'spit'</td>
<td>HH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-a-vóléd-a</td>
<td>'pull'</td>
<td>HH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-a-wád-a</td>
<td>'poke'</td>
<td>H-H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-a-wónda-t-a</td>
<td>'see'</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-a-wárō-a</td>
<td>'write'</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-ógōt-a</td>
<td>'jump'</td>
<td>LH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-oaō-a</td>
<td>'mill'</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-ónda-t-a</td>
<td>'dry'</td>
<td>HL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-áff-a</td>
<td>'build'</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Open syllables**: 
  - k-a-távǎd-a: HH
  - k-a-vóléd-a: HH
- **Closed first syllable**: 
  - k-a-wád-a: H-H
  - k-a-wónda-t-a: H
- **Onsetless first syllable**: 
  - k-a-wárō-a: H
  - k-ógōt-a: LH
- **Onsetless closed first syllable**: 
  - k-oaō-a: L
  - k-ónda-t-a: HL
**MELODIC TONE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perfective: LL-H</th>
<th>Proximal imperative: HH-H</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>k-a-ʔavəð-ó</td>
<td>ʔavóð-ó</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-a-vəleð-ó</td>
<td>véléð-ó</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-a-wað-ó</td>
<td>wáð-ó</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-a-wəndat-ó</td>
<td>wəndat-ó</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-a-warð-ó</td>
<td>wárð-ó</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-oqət-ó</td>
<td>óqət-ó</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-oað-ó</td>
<td>áð-ó</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-ondət-ó</td>
<td>óndət-ó</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k-aff-ó</td>
<td>áff-ó</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- ‘spit’
- ‘pull’
- ‘poke’
- ‘see’
- ‘write’
- ‘jump’
- ‘mill’
- ‘dry’
- ‘build’

**Types of Syllables**
- **Open syllables**
- **Closed first syllable**
- **Onsetless first syllable**
- **Onsetless closed first syllable**
THE ROLE OF TONE

- **Default tone** – tone pattern is determined by the syllable structure of the verb root
  - \rightarrow OBJECT MARKER PREFIX

- **Melodic tone** – tone pattern is determined by the tense/aspect/mood system; phonological make-up of root plays no role
  - \rightarrow OBJECT MARKER SUFFIX
TONE INTERACTION

Object prefix has H tone –> default H tone does not appear on root

- prox. imperfective
  ka-vóléð-a
  ka-ŋó-vôleð-a

- subordinate
  áŋ-vóléð-e
  áŋ-ŋó-vôleð-e

- consecutive imperfective
  ŋáŋ-vóléð-!ó
  ŋáŋ-ŋó-vôleð-ó

- negative
  kanna á-vóléð-a
  kanna á-ŋó-vôleð-a

- H tone of object marker serving as ‘default tone’ for stem?
# TONE INTERACTION

H-toned object suffix follows stem -> no tone interaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Stem 1</th>
<th>Stem 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>perfective</td>
<td>k-a-vəleð-ό</td>
<td>k-a-vəleð-ό-ηό</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>distal imperative</td>
<td>vəleð-α</td>
<td>vəleð-α-ηό</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proximal imperative</td>
<td>vəléð-ό</td>
<td>vəléð-ό-ηό</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>distal imperfective</td>
<td>k-á-vəleð-ό</td>
<td>k-á-vəleð-ό-ηό</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### FULL SET OF OBJECT MARKERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Perfective</th>
<th>Imperfective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3sg non-human</td>
<td>k-a-vôleð-ó</td>
<td>k-a-vôleð-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1sg</td>
<td>k-a-vôleð-ó-né</td>
<td>k-a-nó-vôleð-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2sg</td>
<td>k-a-vôleð-ó-ŋá</td>
<td>k-a-ŋá-vôleð-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3sg human</td>
<td>k-a-vôleð-ó-ŋó</td>
<td>k-a-ŋó-vëleð-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1inc.dual</td>
<td>k-a-vëleð-ó-ńda</td>
<td>k-á-ńda-vëleð-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1ex.plural</td>
<td>k-a-vëleð-álánda</td>
<td>k-a-ńda-vëleð-álánda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1incl.plural</td>
<td>k-a-vëleð-ó-ńd-r</td>
<td>k-á-ńdə-vëleð-a-́</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2pl</td>
<td>k-a-vëleð-ó-ńda</td>
<td>k-á-ńda-vëleð-a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3pl</td>
<td>k-a-vëleð-ó-lo</td>
<td>k-a-vôleð-a-lo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The 3pl object marker –lo is always a suffix:

Melodic tone verb forms:
- perfective: k-a-vəleð-ô k-a-vəleð-ô-lo
- imperative: vəleð-a vəleð-a-lo

Default tone verb forms:
- prox. imperfective: k-a-vóléð-a k-a-vóléð-a-lo
- subordinate: áŋ-vóléð-e áŋ-vóléð-e-lo
- consecutive imperfective: t-áŋ-vóléð-ô t-áŋ-vóléð-ô-lo

- lo is also the only object marker with LOW tone
- Werria dialect does allow lo to be prefix: g-ə-l-ît-ə ‘he drinks for them’ (Black & Black 1971, p. 32) → no information on tone
Unusual case of tone impacting affix placement contributes to the debate over role of phonology in impacting morphology and affix position (Kim 2008, Paster 2008)

Without work with diaspora speakers, these data would not have come to light

Without collection of as many different verb forms as possible with and without object markers, the generalization would have gone unnoticed and assumed to be associated only with morpho-syntactic features

it took us a long time to recognize the role of tone!
IN-SITU FIELDWORK?

- Prior to 2005, reaching the Nuba Mountains was problematic and dangerous; now easier to access from north
- Since 2005, several individual linguists or teams of researchers have made trips to the area (Koalib, Tima, Lumun, Ghulfan)
- Nuba Mountains will NOT be automatically included in new South Sudan
- “The concern now is that the possibility of southern independence – and greater stranglehold by Khartoum in the North — may turn frustration into violence in the Nuba Mountains region” - United States Holocaust Museum – Jan. 21, 2011
- “The current presence of heavy military armed forces in the Nuba Mountains/ Southern Kordofan area is an imminent threat of war and if it breaks out again it will be a catastrophe. “ - Suleiman Musa Rahhal, FIBMS, Chairman of Nuba Mountains Democratic Forum, Jan. 19, 2011
CONCLUSION

- Our experience working with Moro speakers in San Diego has been immensely beneficial.
- Enrichment of knowledge about Moro and a poorly documented group of languages that would otherwise not have occurred.
- Dictionary and papers shared with Moro Language Committee in Khartoum and other Kordofanian researchers.
- 1st Nuba Mountain Languages Conference in September 2011 at Leiden University – brings together researchers on Moro, Ebang, Koalib, Lumun, Tima, Ghulfan (based on work with refugees in Cairo).
- Benefits of diaspora work outweigh drawbacks, as long as limitations are recognized.