

The prosody of Fataluku



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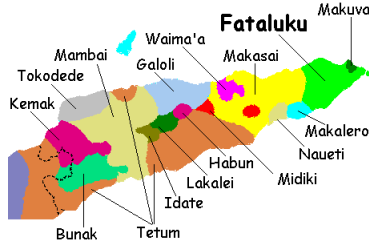
Fataluku

- Papuan language spoken in East Timor
- About 30,000 speakers
- No voiced stops
- Object - Verb order

• Online dictionary and texts at our website:
www.fataluku.com

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East Timor language map



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Overview

- lexical tone
- prosodic structure of sentences
 - heavy vs. light words
 - clitics
- tone rules
 - tone movement
 - tone deletion
 - tone insertion

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Word prosody

- Fataluku words have an accent / High tone associated with the 1st or 2nd syllable

kareta	‘car’	KA.re.ta
nucece	‘to bathe’	NU.ce.ce
arapou	‘buffalo’	a.RA.pou
tapule	‘to buy’	ta.PU.le

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Accent or tone?

- The distinction between a statement and a question is limited to the last syllable of the sentence. The lexical H tone (‘accent’) does not change into a L tone (as in accentual languages)

ka ^H .re.ta	‘a car’
ka ^H .re.ta ^H ?	‘a car ?’

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Tones

- All syllables either have a H tone or are toneless
- Words have a lexical H tone associated with the 1st or 2nd syllable. This tone is deleted in certain contexts
- A intonational H tone may be associated with the sentence-final syllable to mark a question

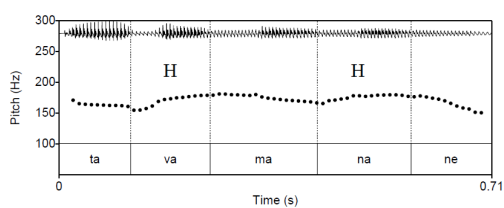
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Realization of H tone

- H → rise
- toneless after H → fall
- rise → H
- fall → H on previous syllable

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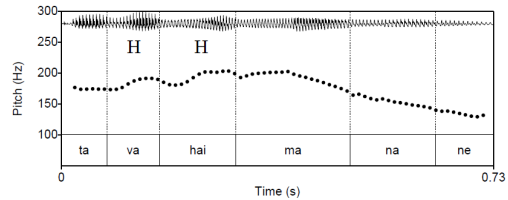
H + toneless



tava manane
3sg win

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H + H



tava hai manane
3sg ASP win

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Assigning tones

1. build phonological phrases (PhPs)
2. assign H tones to each PhP

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Full words

- Full words have a lexical H tone associated with the 1st or 2nd syllable
- Full words can form a phonological phrase (PhP) of their own

[ki.na^H.mo.ko] 'child'

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Tone movement

- The sentence-final syllable is reserved for intonational tones
- Constraint: only one tone per syllable
- If the sentence-final syllable contains a lexical H tone, then this tone shifts to the preceding syllable, if possible

🔊 olo^H → [o^H.lo] 'bird'
 🔊 le^H → [le^H] 'house'

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Clitics

- Clitics cannot occur on their own, but must precede or follow another word in the same phrase
- A clitic is part of the same phonological phrase (PhP) as its host (a full word)
- Some clitics have a lexical H tone:

a 'my' (no tone)
 i 'his, her, its' H tone

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Tone deletion

- Only the first lexical H tone of a PhP survives. If there is a second H tone, then it is deleted

🔊 a ma.ma^H.ni → [a.ma.ma^H.ni]
 'my pigeon'
 🔊 i^H ma.ma^H.ni → [i^H.ma.ma.ni]
 'his pigeon'

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Light vs. heavy words

- A word is heavy if it has a non-final lexical H tone
- A word is light if it has a final lexical H tone or no lexical H tone
- heavy words → 3 syllables or more, or 2 syllables with H tone on first syllable
- light words → max. 2 syllables

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PhP formation rules

- heavy + heavy → 2 PhPs
- heavy + light → 1 PhP
- light + heavy → 1 PhP
- light + light → 1 PhP

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2-syll. heavy word

	H	H	H
🔊	[Ninajar]	[malai]	[mahane]
	Ninajar	stranger	afraid
	heavy	heavy	heavy

'Ninajar is afraid of strangers.'

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2-syll. light word

H	H	
☞ [Laumalai]	[nana mahane]	
Laumalai	snake	afraid
heavy	light	heavy

'Laumalai is afraid of snakes.'

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Syntactic phrases

- In the following sentences, there are two syntactic phrases, as follows:
 - SV: Subject + Verb
 - SVO: Subject + Object-Verb
 - SVOV: Subject-Verb + Object-Verb
- Two syntactic phrases cannot form a single phonological phrase

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Light subject

H	H	H
☞ [tava]	[serika]	[arure]
3sg	little	cry
light	heavy	heavy
(subject)		

'She cries little.'

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Pre-clitic

H	H	
☞ [tava]	[tali narure]	
3sg	very	cry
light	light	heavy
(subject)	(clitic)	

'She cries a lot.'

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Post-clitic

H	H		
☞ [ana rahin]	[mace nanip]		
1sg	yesterday	eat	but
light	light	light	light
			(clitic)

'Yesterday I ate but ... (I ate only a little).'

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SVOV sentences (1)

H	H		
☞ [tava la'a]	[Mala'ara mara]		
3sg	go	Malahara	go to
light	light	heavy	light

'He is going to Malahara.'

(Note: glottal stop usually not realized in Lospalos dialect)

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SVOV sentences (2)

	H		H		H
👉	[ana	la'an]	[sapuraki]	[tapule]	
	1sg	go-SS	orange	buy	
	light	light	heavy	heavy	

'I am going to buy oranges.'

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Tone insertion

- Phrasal tone rule:
If a phonological phrase contains a non-final word of which the last two syllables are toneless, then insert a H tone on the last syllable of this word

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Tone insertion

	H		H		H
👉	[Laumalai]	[Inikumalai	aci]		
	Laumalai	Inikumalai	see		
	heavy	heavy	light		

'Laumalai saw Inikumalai.'

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Long subject

	H		H		H		H
👉	[Inikumalai	ho]	[Laumalai]	[hai	manane]		
	Inikumalai	and	Laumalai	ASP	win		
	heavy	light	heavy	light	heavy		

'Inikumalai and Laumalai have won.'

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tone deletion + insertion

	H		H		H		H
👉	[ana	an]	[hai	narure	nanip]	[tava	tua]
	1SG	almost	ASP	cry	CONJ	3SG	because
	light	light	light	heavy	light	light	light
			clitic		clitic		

'I almost cried because of him.'

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Three words

- The previous example has three words in one PhP, because it contains two clitics
- Three words in one PhP is also possible if PhP boundaries are not determined by clitics, in case of two following light words:
 - light + light + light
 - heavy + light + light → 1 PhP
 - light + light + heavy

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light - light - light

H	H		
☞ [Laumalai]	[le hai naci]		
Laumalai	house ASP	see	
heavy	light	light	light
		clitic	

‘Laumalai has seen the house.’

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heavy - light - light

H	H	H	
☞ [Laumalai]	[Inikumalai hai naci]		
Laumalai	Inikumalai	ASP	see
heavy	heavy	light	light

‘Laumalai has seen Inikumalai.’

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light - light - heavy

H	H		
☞ [Ninajar]	[nana hai manane]		
Ninajar	snake ASP	win	
heavy	light	light	heavy

‘Ninajar has beaten the snake.’

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Clitic rule

- A clitic is part of the same phonological phrase (PhP) as its host (a full word)
- This is true even if there is another word in between them
- This may result in two heavy words in one PhP

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Three PhPs

H	H	H	
☞ [tavar]	[naunuku]	[arure]	
3PL	all	cry	
light	heavy	heavy	

‘They all cried.’

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Only two PhPs!

H	H	H	
☞ [tavar]	[hai naunuku narure]		
3PL	ASP	all	cry
light	light	heavy	heavy
	clitic↗	

‘They have all cried.’

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Conclusion (1)

- Prosodic structure depends on word weight, but syntax may overrule this
- No two heavy words in one PhP, but clitic and host must be part of the same PhP
- Subject and verb form two separate PhPs even in case of two light words

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Conclusion (2)

- Only one lexical H tone in each PhP
- In addition, a PhP may have a phrasal H tone
- The sentence-final syllable may have an intonational H tone

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