Extra-Ordinary Morphology in an Avoidance Register of Datooga

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1. Introduction

Datooga belongs to the Southern Nilotic language family and refers to a dialect cluster spoken in northern and central Tanzania (Rottland, 1982). The Languages of Tanzania Project gives an estimated speaker number of 138,800 (Muzale & Rugemalira, 2008), with speakers of the Barabaiga dialect constituting the largest subgroup (Rottland, 1982). An unusual property of Datooga is the existence of an avoidance register used by married women. As an expression of respect towards their husbands' kin, Datooga women avoid saying the names of their senior in-laws as well as any ordinary words in the language which sound like those names. In place of the taboo forms, they use words from a conventionalized avoidance vocabulary, a practice known as *gíing'áwêakshòoda*. For example, if a woman's father-in-law is called *Gidabasooda*, a name which consists of the masculine name prefix *gida-* and the common noun *básòoda* 'lake', she will refrain from ever saying this name or the word *básòoda*.[1] In place of the latter, she will say *héywànda*, a form which is unique to *gíing'áwêakshòoda*, having no known meaning in the ordinary language. Using this conventionalized alternative is unlikely to impede communication since most speakers of the language, men and children included, are well accustomed to the avoidance register.

Remarkably similar practices of linguistic avoidance have been documented in unrelated languages elsewhere in Africa, most famously in the case of *hlonipha* in the Nguni languages of South Africa (Finlayson, 1982), and also in Kambaata, a Cushitic language of Ethiopia (Treis, 2005). Finlayson (2002:294) and Treis (2005:315) both comment on the endangered status of these special registers, and *gíing'áwêakshòoda* too has largely been given up among educated, Christian Datooga. However, many young wives are still learning and using the register and *gíing'áwêakshòoda* remains sufficiently vital to study in everyday use.

This paper presents the first linguistic description of the Datooga avoidance register, based on data collected in Manyara region, Tanzania, during July and August 2012. Informal interviews were conducted with 7 speakers (6 female, 1 male) and most examples of avoidance words were directly elicited from these speakers, although a few arose in spontaneous speech. Some brief ethnographic background is provided in Section 2, Section 3 sketches the phonological criteria for avoidance, and Section 4 describes the linguistic strategies for avoiding taboo words. Many of these strategies mirror those found in the formation of other documented avoidance registers, but less common is the use of morphologically exceptional word forms. Here I argue that the atypical morphology observed in a small

set of avoidance words relates usefully to Irvine & Gal's (2000) discussion of language ideology and linguistic differentiation, where linguistic difference on one level can be used to construct difference on another level. In this case, I suggest that non-prototypical morphological patterns can be linked to the non-prototypical status of avoidance words, which in turn can perhaps be linked to the distinctive, potentially problematic status of married women within Datooga society.

2. Ethnographic background

Datooga society is patrilocal and a woman often goes to live with her future husband's family several months before the wedding. Shortly after her arrival, the family holds a special milk-drinking ceremony at which the wife receives her new married names. Typically, women are instructed to start using the avoidance register at this ceremony. From this time onwards, and under all circumstances, they must avoid the names of their husband's senior male relatives of three ascending generations, the mother-in-law and her sisters, and the sons of the husband's paternal aunts, as well as any phonologically similar words (see next section). Within a single household, a woman shares many linguistic taboos with her mother-in-law, and co-wives avoid exactly the same set of words. From household to household women's vocabularies obviously differ according to the particular set of avoided names in each family, but we can still speak of an overarching avoidance register because native speakers agree on the equivalent avoidance terms for almost all Datooga words, i.e., speakers' metapragmatic typifications (Agha, 2007) differentiate *gíing'áwêakshòoda* from the ordinary language.

Linguistic avoidance is just one aspect of a broader set of avoidance behaviours, which include restrictions on dress, stance, and gaze, among others. Women may not eat in the presence of their father-in-law, nor may they touch him, nor make eye contact. By observing avoidance, women express *mùréeda* 'respect' to their husband's elders, and to break the taboo is considered shameful. Should a woman accidentally say a taboo name or word, she will bite on one of her beaded wedding necklaces to show that she made a mistake.[2] Women report that those women who consistently flout the taboo will suffer serious consequences, including difficulties in pregnancy and childbirth, and destruction of the sacred leather skirt, the *hànáng'wéanda*, by fire.

3. Principles of avoidance

Linguistic avoidance is a lexical phenomenon; grammatical morphemes are not subject to the same restrictions. Beyond basic name avoidance, speakers of Datooga make reference to two different types of linguistic avoidance. The first and simplest principle is to avoid any lexeme which a tabooed name derives from. The second principle is to avoid any lexeme which begins with the same phoneme or sequence of phonemes as a tabooed name. This principle is subject to some variation and seems to be employed more subjectively. Speakers' understandings of what constitutes phonological similarity cannot yet be precisely characterized; this is an area for further research.

3.1. Avoiding lexical roots of taboo names

Personal names in Datooga derive from common nouns, verbs, and adjectives, chosen for their particular salience when the individual was born. Because names come from ordinary words, the range of possible names is considerable and the avoidance register needs to extend across practically the whole lexicon. Names often contain a gender prefix denoting the sex of the name's bearer: *gida-* is the male name prefix and *uda-* the female equivalent. Thus, a boy born during a funeral might be named *Gida-bung'eeda* (*bùng'éeda* 'funeral; tomb'), and any subsequent daughter-in-law will avoid the noun *bùng'éeda*. She can replace it with the conventional avoidance word *ráqwàta* (meaning 'rubbish heap' in ordinary Datooga—see 4.3), provided that word does not also sound like another taboo name. Because of this latter problem, where the most common avoidance equivalent is also taboo, there are often several *gíing'áwêakshòoda* replacements for a single word. For instance, the ordinary noun *béega* 'water' is most often replaced by *gárbàbánga* (from *gárbàb* 'cold'), but failing that, a woman can say

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[2] In the Kambaata and Xhosa avoidance registers, mistakes are rectified by spitting on the ground: all societies resolve the taboo violation by means of a gesture involving the mouth, the source of the taboo.

dàlìilóonga (from *dàlìil* 'clear'), or failing that, *hàláka* (related to *hálátka* 'well'). (These avoidance words are discussed in more detail in 5.1).

Speakers describe the relationship between an avoided name and the corresponding lexeme using the verb *wiiny-*, meaning 'smell of', as in (1):[3]

(1) Ú-nyéaw-ùu-da góo-wìinyí   nyéaw-ùu-da
     FEM-cat-PS-SG 3.SBJ-smell.of.IS cat-PS-SG

     lit. '*Únyéawùuda* smells of *nyéawùuda*'

Here, the female name *Únyéawùuda*, derived from *nyéawùuda* 'cat', would prohibit use of the ordinary word *nyéawùuda*, because one 'smells of' the other. A sentence illustrating the more usual use of this verb is given in (2):

(2) ánì géa-wìinyí   àróos-ta
     1SG 1SG.SBJ-smell.of.IS smoke-SG
     'I smell of smoke'

The trigger for avoidance might be the shared lexical root, i.e., the morpheme CAT, but as Herbert (1990a) has argued for *hlonipha*, the danger inherent in the avoided word is more likely its phonological form: the related word could be misheard as the taboo name and the woman may seem to be attracting the attention of the taboo in-law. If we understand the avoidance of related words to be motivated by shared phonological shape, then (1) is an interesting example of one sensory modality, smell, being used to describe another kind of sensory experience, sound.

3.2. Avoiding phonologically similar words

Speakers describe the second type of avoidance in terms of the concept 'approach', where a word and a name approach each other if their lexical roots share a certain amount of phonological material. Most often this can be characterized in terms of the (maximal) syllable, although some complications to this are discussed below. In (3), the name *Gwàsànóoga* shares the same first maximal syllable as the name *Gwàsmá*, and speakers consider these sufficiently similar for avoidance of one to rule out use of the other.

(3) Gwàsmá èa   Gwàsànóoga gw-éasìinyì
     G.   and G.   3.SBJ-approach.IS
     '*Gwàsmá* and *Gwàsànóoga* are related'

Example (4) illustrates a concrete usage of the same verb:

(4) gw-éasìinyì   jíir-gwa
     3.SBJ-approach.IS bull-PL
     'The bulls are approaching each other (as though to fight)'

Non-segmental criteria such as tone and vowel length do not appear to affect decisions about phonological similarity; the name *Sábìida* triggers avoidance of the noun *sàbúuni* regardless of the tonal difference.

Although a pattern of shared initial syllables often accounts for the perceived relationship between a taboo name and the subsequently avoided words, not all segments of the syllable need to match for two words to be considered related. Table 1 contains some examples of avoided name-word pairs where relatedness is based on smaller amounts of shared phonological material.

That no precise phonological rule can be given to account for the data might be due to individual speaker variation brought about by variation in how strictly different families adhere to the avoidance custom. Future research on naturally occurring metalinguistic correction, i.e., of a new wife by her

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[3] Abbreviations: 1 'first person'; 3 'third person'; FEM 'feminine name'; FS 'formative suffix'; IS 'inflectional suffix'; NMLZ 'nominalizer'; OBJ 'object'; PL 'plural'; PRF 'perfect'; PS 'primary suffix'; SBJ 'subject'; SG 'singular'; SNG 'singulative'.

SHARED PHONEMES	TABOO NAME	AVOIDED WORD
$C_1...\sigma$	**Q**uutahaw	**q**àmárda 'wall'
	Dindayi	**d**ûumda 'song, celebration'
$C(C)V\sigma$	**Mwa**mwaya	**mà**yi 'relaxed'
$CV\sigma$	**Si**qista	**sí**ida 'person'

Table 1: Avoided name-words pairs sharing minimal phonological material

mother-in-law, will shed some light on this. For now, a general phonological guideline for avoidance is as follows: avoid any lexeme in which one or more segments of the first syllable match those of the lexical root of the taboo name.

4. Avoidance strategies

The 306 *gíing'áwêakshòoda* words collected so far include nouns, verbs, adjectives, and prepositions[4] and have each been categorized according to avoidance strategy. Table 2 lists all observed linguistic strategies for deriving the avoidance vocabulary and provides the percentage of words which make use of that strategy. All these strategies are mentioned by Mous (2003) in his discussion of special registers. The following subsections comment briefly on the different strategies and provide examples. The 'unknown' category contains those words that speakers were unable to identify as anything other than *gíing'áwêakshòoda*; further research may uncover their origin (perhaps as archaisms or borrowings). The strategy 'derived form' is dealt with separately and in more detail in 5.

AVOIDANCE STRATEGY	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL WORD LIST
Borrowing	3%
Circumlocution	7%
Derived form	19%
Lexical substitution	47%
Consonant replacement	7%
Unknown/uncategorized	17%

Table 2: Avoidance strategies

4.1. Borrowings

A common strategy employed in the construction of special registers is to borrow words from another language (Mous, 2003:223). This is a marginal strategy in *gíing'áwêakshòoda* with only 9 tokens of this kind among the words collected so far. Four originate from Swahili, and five from Iraqw, a neighbouring Cushitic language. The borrowings from Iraqw have all been adapted to Datooga nominal morphology, where a nominal stem bears several suffixes. Fieldwork was conducted in an area where Datooga speakers have a high level of contact with Iraqw people, and these avoidance words may not be found in other Datooga-speaking areas. Indeed, each of the borrowings elicited so far is associated with an alternative non-borrowed avoidance word. For instance, the ordinary Datooga noun *ùhùuda* 'head' can be replaced by either *ságànda*, borrowed from Iraqw *saga* 'head' (Mous et al., 2002), or with *qúnyèta*, meaning 'brain' in ordinary Datooga.

Other examples include *ìnqwàràjéega*, which can replace *háng'wêaka* 'clothes' from Iraqw *inqwár*, and *gúkù* instead of *ùnqáqòoda* 'chicken' from Swahili *kuku*. In these examples, the borrowed word has the same reference in the source language and in *gíing'áwêakshòoda*, but this is not always the case. The Swahili noun *sherehe* 'celebration; ceremony' is borrowed into the avoidance register to replace the noun *nyèangíida* '(traditional) wedding', where its meaning narrows.

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[4] Prepositions are derived from body part terms in Datooga, so although they are function words, their lexical source must presumably be salient enough to qualify them for avoidance.

4.2. Circumlocutions

Another fairly marginal strategy for replacing taboo words in Datooga is to use a circumlocution. The conventional way to avoid *déarèeda* 'ashes' is to say *bòngéeda bêasta*, meaning 'flour of the fire'.[5] Circumlocutions are often used to replace words denoting animals, so *bìchéanda* '(wild) pig' becomes *dìyéedá árèar* 'red animal' and *úchúbòoda* 'snake' becomes *dìyéedá gêaw* 'long animal' in the avoidance register. These examples are conventionalized, but it seems probable that women also use spontaneous circumlocutions when they cannot remember or do not know the common *gíing'áwêakshòoda* word; future research on spontaneous dialogue will test this hypothesis.

4.3. Lexical substitution

As Table 2 shows, by far the most common avoidance strategy is to substitute the prohibited word with another related word from ordinary Datooga. The substitute word is conventionalized, and the semantic relationship between the avoided word and its *gíing'áwêakshòoda* counterpart is in most cases semantically transparent. For instance, if a woman avoids *bêasta* 'fire', she can say *éydàta* 'flame', where a part-whole semantic relationship motivates the substitution. A similar example also depending on a meronymic relationship between the avoidance word and its ordinary Datooga equivalent is *qóròoqta* 'shin' which is used in place of *gèeshta* 'leg'.

Another very frequent type of semantic relationship holding between a Datooga word and its avoidance substitute is synonymy, where the two words are close in meaning. This can be seen with nouns, adjectives, and verbs: *shàng'shàng'éega* 'fresh milk' conventionally replaces *èanóoga* 'milk'; *mísàn* 'dark' replaces *dìu* 'black; dark-coloured'; *qányùw-* 'talk' replaces *bálòol-* 'speak'. In some cases the substitute word shares a certain property, very often physical, with its taboo counterpart, so we find metaphorical examples like *sîirda* 'slit (in cloth or skin)' replacing *náwèeda* 'path', presumably motivated by the shared property of being long and thin. The example given above in 3.1 of *ráqwàta* 'rubbish heap' replacing *bùng'éeda* 'funeral; grave' also draws on physical similarity; graves in Datooga communities are cone-shaped structures built up over a period of nine months.[6]

Other conventional lexical substitutions appear to be motivated by hyponomy, e.g., to avoid the general term *nyêega* 'grass', a woman can say *ng'àróojíga* 'grass species'. To avoid *ng'úta* 'spear', she can refer instead to a specific type of spear, *qùlàjáanda*. With body parts, the substitution can sometimes be accounted for in terms of metonomy, where the taboo word and its replacement are associated through physical contiguity. For example, to avoid *mùrdéeda* 'side; hip', the conventional choice is *shìidánéeda* 'flesh below ribs (of cow); cut of meat'. The noun *mùrdéeda* also has a prepositional use meaning 'beside; at' in ordinary Datooga. Interestingly, *shìidánéeda* can only replace the noun and not the preposition; *méatkwéeda* 'side' is used in the latter case. This suggests that speakers are sensitive to lexical category here; a single surface form in ordinary Datooga has separate representations in the avoidance register based on its morphosyntactic properties.

4.4. Consonant replacement

A less common strategy of avoidance is consonant replacement, well-known from the Nguni avoidance register *hlonipha* where click phonemes were borrowed from neighbouring Khoisan languages to disguise the offending consonants in taboo words (Herbert, 1990b). In Datooga, no non-native phonemes function in this way, but several avoidance words have been modified from their taboo counterparts by means of consonant replacement.

Consonant replacement most often comes in pairs, targeting the onset and coda consonants of the original syllable, or the onsets of adjacent syllables, leaving the intervening vowel intact (this vowel is *a* in almost all cases). For instance, the syllable *bar* can be replaced with *dab* to render the word acceptable to say: *bàrda* 'knife' becomes *dàpta*; *bar-* 'beat; kill' becomes *dab-*; *bàréanyèeka* 'journey' becomes *dàbéanyèeka*. The syllable *dab* can also replace *mar*: *qàdápta* replaces *qàmárda* 'wall'. Bilabials are

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[5] The form *bòngéeda* is actually the *gíing'áwêakshòoda* word for 'flour'; the ordinary word for 'flour', *dèaránga*, shares the same stem with the word 'ashes' and therefore isn't a suitable alternative.

[6] See Blystad (2000) for a detailed account of Datooga burial customs.

also the target for replacement in the following case: *nal* is a substitute for *saC* when C is a bilabial stop or nasal: *sàbúuni* 'soap' becomes *nàlúuni*; *sàmágu* becomes *nàlágu*; *sàmàháan* becomes *nàlàháan*.[7]

Beyond these patterns of syllable replacement, which suggest that bilabials are preferred targets, no systematic method of consonant replacement can be discerned. The phoneme *b* is sometimes replaced by *j*, e.g., *bâanga* 'machete' (also from Swahili) becomes *jâanga*, *ímbárárìida* 'maize stalks' becomes *ínjájáwìida*; elsewhere *b* is replaced by *q*, e.g., *bàsáat* 'thin' becomes *qàjáat*; most frequently, as in some of the examples in the previous paragraph, it is replaced by *d*, e.g., *bìkpík* 'scooter' (from Swahili) becomes *dìktík*. Taken together, these examples suggest that stops are favoured as both target and replacement consonants. The last example, presumably a fairly recently borrowing from Swahili, suggests that this method of avoidance is still used creatively by speakers.

5. Derived *gíing'áwêakshòoda* forms

The fifth avoidance strategy, and the focus of the rest of the paper, is to use some kind of derived form. By 'derived form' I mean that the *gíing'áwêakshòoda* equivalent for an ordinary word has been morphologically derived from a nominal, verbal, or adjectival root which usually bears some semantic relation to the word it replaces. For instance, to avoid *nyáwìishta* 'scabies', the conventional choice is *fóor-shòo-da*, a deverbal noun derived from *fáar-* 'scratch'. The suffix *-shoo* is a nominalizer which derives activity nouns from verbs, and *-da* is a nominal suffix encoding singular reference (but see Kiessling (2000:349) for a more precise description of this suffix). In this example, the underlying derivational processes are those of the ordinary language, i.e., the avoidance word is also a possible word in ordinary Datooga. In cases such as this, the boundary between 'lexical substitution' and 'derived form' is not at all clear, and the decision to place a word in the 'derived form' category depended on speakers' hesitation and uncertainty about the word's ordinary usage. (The noun *fóorshòoda* was categorized as lexical substitution, as it clearly meant 'scratching').

One *gíing'áwêakshòoda* word is categorized as derived because its structure takes advantage of a paradigm gap. In ordinary Datooga, the noun *ùmbóy-da* 'goat.SG-SG' has a suppletive plural, *nóo-ga* 'goat.PL-PL'. To avoid the singular form, women use *gùríichàanda*,[8] but the plural replacement is *ùmbóy-ga* 'goat.SG-PL', a unique formation in which the plural suffix has been attached to the singular stem. This *gíing'áwêakshòoda*-specific plural is unlikely to be an archaism: the ordinary plural *nóoga* can be traced back to Proto-Southern Nilotic **no-* (Ehret, 1971:97). The word *ùmbóy-ga* is therefore a good candidate for a purposefully derived form which uses the morphological resources of ordinary Datooga in a creative way.

In other cases, the morphological structure of *gíing'áwêakshòoda* forms does not correspond to regular morphological patterns of the language. These forms involve an unusual combination of morphemes which is either poorly or not at all attested in the ordinary language. Such words are of particular interest because they can be distinguished from the ordinary language on structural grounds and not just by means of native speakers' metapragmatic intuitions. Examples are presented and discussed in 5.1, and 5.2 then proposes a possible sociolinguistic motivation for the existence of such words. All of these atypically derived forms are nouns, suggesting that this word class holds greater creative potential for speakers than the other classes.

In the interests of space, only certain aspects of Datooga nominal morphology are discussed here; more detailed descriptions can be found in Rottland (1982), Rottland & Creider (1996), Creider & Rottland (1997) and Kiessling (2000).

5.1. Examples

The most straightforward example of incongruous morphology appears in the *gíing'áwêakshòoda* word given in (5), used to avoid *èawéeda* 'night'.

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[7] The first and last of these examples are borrowings from Swahili.
[8] The origin of this word was not known to my consultants.

(5) mìsán-úumèeda
     dark-NMLZ
     'night' (*gíing'áwêakshòoda*)

This noun contains an adjectival root meaning 'dark' (which carries an obvious semantic association with the avoided word 'night') but the suffix which follows this root is not expected to occur attached to an adjective based on its distribution elsewhere in the language. The derivational suffix *-uumeeda* attaches to nouns containing a singulative suffix and results in abstract nouns which refer to the state of being X, where X is the base noun, as in (6) and (7) (Rottland, 1982:166).

(6) Dátòo-nyéan-d-úumèeda
     Datooga.person-SNG-SG-NMLZ
     'Datooga-hood' (Datooga)

(7) húd-êan-d-úumèeda
     girl-SNG-SG-NMLZ
     'girlhood' (Datooga)

A deadjectival noun from the adjective *mísàn* 'dark' already exists in the ordinary language in the form *mìsánéeda*. It is conceivable that speakers would use this form as a lexical substitution to avoid 'night', but instead there exists a word specific to the avoidance register which exhibits a unique application of the suffix *-uumeeda*. Semantically, the combination is unproblematic, resulting in something like 'the state of being dark', but morphologically this form is conspicuous in the extension of the suffix to an adjectival stem.

A second example of a novel morphological combination is the following, used to avoid *dígèeda* 'donkey':

(8) sù-qwàh-án-èe-da
     1PL.PRF.SBJ-load-FS-PS-SG
     'donkey' (*gíing'áwêakshòoda*)

The verb stem *qwah-* 'load' forms the root of this word; again, the semantic connection between the root and the word's denotation is transparent. The suffix attached to the stem is what Kiessling (2000:364) calls a 'fossilized formative suffix', glossed here as FS. Any function it once had is unclear, and it appears in only 4% of ordinary nouns in my corpus (25/657). In all instances, the primary suffix following *-an* is *-ee*, including the word in (8). (Primary suffixes can be associated with number but do not directly encode it—see Kiessling (2000) for an explanation of these suffixes.) The final suffix in (8) encodes singular number.

Although nouns containing the *-an* suffix are not common, what is more unusual about this noun is the verbal prefix *su-*. This is a phonologically conditioned allomorph of the portmanteau morpheme *si-* which encodes a first person plural subject and perfect tense. It is also used to express an impersonal subject, resulting in the equivalent of a passive in English, e.g.:

(9) si-laj-eagwa
     1PL.PRF.SBJ-beat-2PL.OBJ
     'You (pl.) were beaten' (from Rottland (1982:181))

According to Rottland (1982:161), the same prefix can appear in nouns which refer to a person or thing using a general description, e.g., *ú-si-lali* 'the known person' from *lal-* 'know (a person)' or *géa-si-bwaliinyi* 'loved things' from *baliiny-* 'love (v.)'. The example in (8) can thus be parsed as 'thing that was loaded', an effective alternative for 'donkey'. Morphologically, however, it differs from Rottland's examples in two ways. First, (8) takes three nominal suffixes, while Rottland's examples bear only a final *-i* (with unknown function). Second, neither a gender prefix (see (1)) nor a special nominalizing prefix precede the impersonal subject prefix in (8), but these appear to be obligatory in ordinary nouns containing this suffix. The form *sùqwàhánèeda* therefore has an exceptional morphological structure compared to other words in the language.

The derived *gíing'áwêakshòoda* noun in (10) also has a verbal base bearing the uncommon formative suffix *-an*.

(10) qwàl-ány-éan-da
      separate.cattle-FS-SNG-SG
      'calf' (*gíing'áwêakshòoda*)

This form derives from the verb *qwal-* 'separate cattle into herds'. A deverbal noun from this root already exists in the ordinary language in the form *qwál-án-ée-da*, referring to the act of separating cattle. This ordinary form is altered in (10) by means of a singulative suffix *-jean*[9] in place of the primary suffix *-ee* (see Kiessling (2000) for exposition of these different suffixes). Semantically, a noun containing a singulative suffix can serve in contrast to the same stem plus primary and/or singular suffix to pick out an individual item from something more commonly referred to as a collective unit, e.g., *dámúqùush-èan-da* 'bird species-SNG-SG' (individual bird) vs. *dámúqùush-ta* 'bird species-SG' (flock).[10] Often, however, a singulative noun is the only alternative to its plural, and just has straightforward singular reference, e.g., *shùmùng'-éan-da* 'tail-SNG-SG' vs. *shùmùng'-ée-ga* 'tail-PS-PL'. (As far as I know, there is no other morphologically singular form). While it is uncertain what (10) could mean given the semantics of singulatives in ordinary Datooga, the unique property of (10) is the sequence of formative suffix *-an* and singulative suffix *-jean*. This combination is not attested in any other word.[11]

The avoidance register has three conventional alternatives for avoiding *béega* 'water'. The most common alternative is shown in (11), derived from the adjective *gárbàb* 'cold'.

(11) gárbàb-án-ga
      cold-FS-PL
      'water' (*gíing'áwêakshòoda*)

The deadjectival noun from the same stem in ordinary Datooga is *gàrbábánda* 'coldness'; in (11), the plural suffix *-ga* of the avoided word *béega* is carried over to create a unique *gíing'áwêakshòoda* form. Liquids (e.g., water, milk, honey beer) are morphologically plural in Datooga and this feature is always maintained in the avoidance equivalent, in this case resulting in a distinctive word form. (Since deadjectival nouns in Datooga generally refer to abstract properties of objects, it is not clear that the plural of a word such as 'coldness' would be readily interpretable in the ordinary language.)

The second alternative word for 'water' in (12) has a more unusual structure.

(12) dàlìil-óon-ga
      clear-FS-PL
      'water' (*gíing'áwêakshòoda*)

This form derives from an adjective *dàlìil* which refers to a colour-related property of objects, meaning something like 'clear; transparent; all one colour'. In ordinary Datooga, the nominal form denoting the property is *dàlíilnàtta*, derived by means of a common deadjectival suffix *-nad*. In (12), we find an unusual suffix *-oon* unattested in any other deadjectival nouns in the language. (A homophonous suffix is found in a handful of non-derived nouns, e.g., *jír-óon-èe-da* 'shadow'.) While the ordinary deadjectival noun *dàlíilnàtta* would presumably be a possible candidate for an avoidance word, instead we find a form with a unique morphological structure. Finally, the third *gíing'áwêakshòoda* word for 'water' is *hàláka*, probably related to ordinary Datooga *hálátka* 'well' but with certain, as yet unexplained phonological differences.

5.2. Discussion

The five examples in the previous section represent part of a set of avoidance words in *gíing'áwêakshòoda* that exhibits unusual or unique morphological properties. Although no systematic

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[9] In (10) the alveolar nasal and following palatal stop assimilate to produce a palatal nasal.

[10] In *dámúqùush-èan-da*, the *j* of the singulative suffix drops because it follows a palatal consonant (Kiessling, 2000:354).

[11] When asked for a possible meaning in ordinary Datooga, speakers said this was just *gíing'áwêakshòoda*.

patterns of deviant morphology can account for how avoidance words differ from those of ordinary Datooga, a number of word forms are structurally distinctive in various ways. Rather than setting aside these words as random, isolated examples, we might consider these non-prototypical forms as part of a unified phenomenon whereby uncharacteristic morphological structure is considered a feature of the avoidance register. This phenomenon is referred to in the title of this paper as "extra-ordinary morphology". Looking cross-linguistically, we find that unusual use of morphology is an attested feature of other special registers.

In Mous's (2003:222) discussion of lexical manipulation in special registers, he includes the strategy of "extending morphology". His example comes from the spirit language *Zar*, where the Amharic feminine definite suffix *-it* is used as a nominalizer, e.g., *läslasit* 'bread, cereals' from *läslassa* 'soft' (Leslau, 1964:9). In the latter work, Leslau describes a minstrels' argot of Amharic where a derivational suffix is attached to nouns which under normal circumstances do not take this suffix. Another example of extended morphology comes from a secret language in Lango in which semi-productive morphemes are prefixed to nouns which otherwise take no affixes (Storch, 2011:68). These kinds of examples are reminiscent of the atypical morphological combinations we have seen in *gíing'áwêakshòoda*, although they appear to be more systematic in the other special registers.[12]

A socio-pragmatic account of why we find extra-ordinary uses of morphology within *gíing'áwêakshòoda* (and perhaps special registers more generally) centres around the notion of difference. Speakers distinguish *gíing'áwêakshòoda* from other registers of Datooga on a meta-pragmatic level: first, they have a name for the register and second, they are able to provide the linguist with the avoidance equivalent for a given Datooga word. Speakers' pragmatic differentiation of the register and ordinary Datooga, based on stereotypes of usage (cf. Agha (2007)), might be reinforced by morphological differentiation of ordinary and 'extra-ordinary' word forms. The pragmatic categorization of *gíing'áwêakshòoda* as 'special' or 'different' could potentially motivate the coinage of a form like *mìsánúumèeda* (see (5)) which stands out from the rest of the lexicon. In turn, non-prototypical word formation might serve as an additional sign which speakers register in their categorization of a word as *gíing'áwêakshòoda*.

In their paper on language ideology and linguistic differentiation, Irvine & Gal (2000) discuss the use of click consonants in Nguni avoidance registers and account for this phenomenon in terms of speakers' ideologies of difference: "difference at one level (the difference between Bantu and Khoi languages) was the basis for constructing difference at another level (a difference within a particular Bantu language)" (2000:46). This hypothesis can be adapted to fit with evidence from *gíing'áwêakshòoda*; the difference between an ordinary word form and the divergent structures of certain avoidance word forms is indexically related to difference at the level of register. Speakers' ideological associations between social and lexical difference provide a motivation for constructing phonological or morphological difference at the level of the word.

Avoidance registers are linguistic vehicles of social differentiation. In his discussion of Nguni avoidance registers, Herbert (1990a) argues that the use of avoidance language is related to the non-prototypical social status of women—non-prototypical in being female rather than male, and in living among a clan different to their own. In using avoidance words, women index their status as 'outsiders' Herbert (1990a). Although Herbert's claims are made about a different society, geographically quite separate from Datooga, a similar argument about women as 'different' can be made for Datooga, since it is also a clan exogamous, patrilocal society. At a basic level, at least, the practice of avoidance among Datooga women suggests that they pose a social problem which men and children do not, and this inherent tension sets them apart. The social stereotype associated with *gíing'áwêakshòoda*, and by extension, each *gíing'áwêakshòoda*-specific word, builds not only on the idea of respectful female behaviour, but also of divergence from a social norm. Ideologies of difference at the social, lexical, and morphological level are thus interconnected processes through which women index their position within the family and in society more generally.

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[12] Secret languages, spirit languages, and argots are also quite different from avoidance registers in their function and use, but they still all constitute derived registers which speakers distinguish from those of the ordinary language.

6. Conclusion

In her book on special registers across the African continent, Storch (2011:3) writes that "language [of special registers]—deliberately diverging from the norm—is central to the construction of social norms". Women's use of the avoidance register *gíing'áwêakshòoda* is a striking example of this, but the divergence goes beyond the use of an alternative lexicon. As I have tried to show here, within the register we also find divergence at the morphological level, resulting in words that are unique to *gíing'áwêakshòoda*. The possible origins of these avoidance-specific words have been left undiscussed here; without evidence from new coinages, we cannot prove that speakers engage in lexical manipulation, and it is possible that the morphologically unusual forms may ultimately be explained as archaisms. Future work will investigate these possibilities, but at the synchronic level, signs of morphological difference remain.

The work presented here is also relevant to the field of ethnosyntax, "the study of connections between the cultural knowledge, attitudes, and practices of speakers, and the morphosyntactic resources they employ in speech" (Enfield, 2002:3). In the case of Datooga, the social practice of avoidance differentiates married women from other members of the household and is realized linguistically by means of a special avoidance register. Avoidance words come to index a distinct category of person and behaviour through metapragmatic typification (Agha (2007)). More relevantly to the study of ethnosyntax, unusual morphological composition singles out certain avoidance words from the rest of the lexicon and consequently establishes another meaningful layer of differentiation. By social, lexical, and morphological means, speakers are thus able to construct and maintain shared cultural boundaries between what is ordinary and what is extra-ordinary.

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