



A Syncopating Conjugation *k-Stem in Lakota

Author(s): John E. Koontz

Source: *International Journal of American Linguistics*, Vol. 51, No. 4 (Oct., 1985), pp. 483-484

Published by: The University of Chicago Press

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1265312>

Accessed: 22/04/2010 09:22

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublisher?publisherCode=ucpress>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



The University of Chicago Press is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *International Journal of American Linguistics*.

A SYNCOPATING CONJUGATION **k*-STEM IN LAKOTA

In Buechel's (1970) Lakota Dictionary are two irregular and obsolete inflected forms *phú* 'I come' (1970:449) and *škú* 'you come' (1970:465).¹ Neither these forms nor their paradigm are known from any other source; however, we can deduce from gloss and shape that the stem is either *ú* 'come' or the corresponding vertitive *kú* 'come back'. Buechel elects *ú*, though he seems to have known only the inflected forms, and these only in an exchange of greetings used formerly on one person "seeing and recognizing another," a context in which the vertitive *kú* seems as likely.

In Modern Lakota (La) and in other Dakotan dialects both *ú* and *kú* are regular conjugation actives, with agent prefixes reflecting Proto-Siouan (PSi) **wa* 'first agent' and **ya* 'second agent'. Buechel's peculiar monosyllables clearly represent the Proto-Siouan syncopating conjugation, with **w* and **y* instead (Koontz 1983). The syncopating conjugation occurs in Siouan with certain classes of C|-initial stems, especially those reflecting Proto-Siouan **r*- and **h*-stems, for which the conjugation is widely attested. Rarer are syncopating **ʔ*- and **y*-stems, restricted to the three branches of Mississippi Valley: Dakotan, Dhegiha, and Winnebago-Chiwere. Rarer still are syncopating **p*-, **t*- and **k*-stems, so far known only in Dhegiha and Winnebago-Chiwere.

The hypothesis that *phú* and *škú* are syncopated personal forms of *ú* or *kú* is reasonable, since these reflect Proto-Siouan **hú* and **kú* (Taylor 1976), both with syncopating reflexes throughout Dhegiha and Winnebago-Chiwere. It is thus more than likely that the modern regularity of Dakotan *ú* and *kú* is secondary, but the question remains which of the two stems *phú* and *škú* these actually represent.

We can answer this by a comparison with the paradigms for the reflexes of **hú* and **kú* in the typical Dhegiha dialect Osage (Os). The first persons are unhelpful, since La *phú* matches regularly both Os *phú* < PSi **phú* = **w* + *hú* and Os *ppú* < PSi **wpú* = **w* + *pú*, where **pú* is a mutation of **kú*. In the second persons, La *škú*'s comparability with Os *šú* < PSi **šhú* = **y* + *hú* is not immediately clear, since PSi **sh* is little understood. However, Os *škú* < PSi **škú* = **y* + *kú* matches La *škú* regularly, suggesting strongly that the Dakotan stem is *kú*. This is confirmed by the paradigm of Dakotan's single syncopating **h*-stem, *éyA* 'say' < PSi **é* + *hA*. This has second-person *ehé* < PSi **ešhé* = **e* + *y* + *hé* (cf. Os *ešé*, parallel with *šú*).² This eliminates any remaining suspicion

¹ This material is based on work supported by the National Science Foundation under grant no. BNS-8406236 and by the National Endowment for the Humanities under grant no. RD-20477-84. I am grateful to Allan R. Taylor for drawing my attention to the *phú/škú* set as an example of second-person *š*- in Dakotan, where evidence for the syncopated second-person pronoun **y*- is otherwise indirect. All transcription notations used here are standard except for *ɖ* which represents an apical tap, traditionally printed as *ɖ* (edh); *ɖ* is a suitable alternative, and an *r* would do in a pinch, but would be very déclassé.

² For the phonological developments consult Matthews (1958), as modified by Rankin (1974).

that La *šk* might represent PSi **šh*, and allows us to conclude that Dakotan has a remnant syncopating paradigm for *kú* of the form *phú/škú/kú*. Presumably this was once only one of a number of similar **k*-stems, the rest of which have been regulated without trace.

What implications does this Dakotan syncopating **k*-stem have? First, Dakotan and Dhegiha agree in implying **k*-stem first persons with mutation of **k* to **p*. In contrast, Winnebago-Chiwere lacks the mutation, cf. Winnebago (Wi) *kúu/šgúu/gúu*. The Dakotan-Dhegiha pattern is clearly an innovation, since (1) neither Dhegiha's nor Winnebago-Chiwere's **p*- and **t*-stems have any mutations, showing the latter's **k*-stem pattern to be the more regular one; (2) PSi **wk* > La *khé* ~ Os *kké* ~ Wi *kée*, showing that **wk* does not simply fall together with **wp* in Dakotan and Dhegiha; and (3) Dhegiha dialects all preserve one conservative **k*-stem with the expected *kk* < **wk*—the compound *ká + da* 'desire', cf. Os *kkápda* 'I desire'. In addition, the most plausible explanation for the Dakotan-Dhegiha **k* > **p* mutations is analogy with the much more numerous syncopating **p*-stems³ first persons in **wp*, so that Dakotan must have lost not merely syncopating **k*-stems, but syncopating **p*-stems and perhaps **t*-stems as well. Before this evidence for syncopating stop-stems in Dakotan, it might have been argued that syncopating stop-stems were a development of a Dhegiha-Winnebago-Chiwere subgroup in Mississippi Valley; but if stop-stems occur throughout Mississippi Valley, and the **k*-stems actually show peculiarities uniting Dakotan-Dhegiha against Winnebago-Chiwere, that is, cross-cutting the subgroup previously most likely, then it is increasingly probable that syncopating stop-stems are simply an inheritance from Proto-Siouan. This probability is important, since knowing the precise domain of the syncopating conjugation is undoubtedly critical to an understanding of Proto-Siouan phonology and morphology (cf. Rudes 1974).

JOHN E. KOONTZ, *University of Colorado, Boulder*

³ The numbers of distinct C¹-initial syncopating morphemes in Mississippi Valley languages are small for all values of C, but two **p*-initial instrumentals are very productive, a circumstance without a parallel among the syncopating **t*- and **k*-stems.

REFERENCES

- BUECHEL, REV. EUGENE, S.J. 1970. A Dictionary of the Teton Dakota Sioux Language, ed. P. Manhart, S.J. Pine Ridge, S.D.: Red Cloud Indian School.
- KOONTZ, JOHN E. 1983. Siouan syncopating **r*-stems. *Na'pāo* 13:11–23.
- MATTHEWS, G. HUBERT. 1958. Handbook of the Siouan languages. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania.
- RANKIN, ROBERT L. 1974. Observations on Dhegiha (Siouan) phonetics and phonology. Paper presented to the Thirteenth Conference on American Indian Languages, American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, México, D.F.
- RUDES, BLAIR A. 1974. Sound changes separating Siouan-Yuchi from Iroquois-Caddoan. *IJAL* 40:117–19.
- TAYLOR, ALLAN R. 1976. On verbs of motion in Siouan languages. *IJAL* 42:287–96.