

MAKSYMILIAN DĄBKOWSKI / RESEARCH

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I am a Ph.D. candidate in the Linguistics Department at the University of California, Berkeley.

My research brings grammatical patterns from lesser-studied languages to bear on key questions of linguistic theory. Specifically, I investigate the role of word-internal syntactic structure in the phonology and morphology of agglutinating languages.

My main empirical focus is A'ingae (or Cofán, ISO 639-3: con), an Amazonian isolate spoken by ca. 1,500 Cofán people in northeast Ecuador and southern Colombia.

Below, my research projects are listed in vague order of recent, active interest. See [curriculum vitae](#) for publications by type and in chronological order.

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1 A'INGAE (OR COFÁN)

1.1 Metrical phonology and its interfaces

1.1.1 ... with verbal morphosyntax

I describe and analyze the phonology of stress and glottalization in A'ingae (or Cofán, isolate, iso 639-3: con) and provide a detailed description of the language's rich verbal morphology. I argue that the A'ingae morpheme-specific dominance effects (stress deletion) cannot be captured representationally. I demonstrate that the licensing of the A'ingae glottal stop differs across two morphophonological domains (metrically licensed within the inner, but not the outer, domain) and interacts with stress deletion, bearing out a new prediction of Cophonologies by Phase (Sande, Jenks, and Inkelas, 2020).

TWO GRAMMARS OF A'INGAE GLOTTALIZATION: A CASE FOR COPHONOLOGIES BY PHASE. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory*. Accepted pending revisions. [manuscript](#) • Invited talk presented at the *Atelier de phonologie* research seminar, Paris 8 University Vincennes-Saint-Denis. 2022. [slides](#) • Second qualifying paper. University of California, Berkeley. 2022. [qualifying_paper](#) • Paper presented at the 45th Generative Linguistics in the Old World Colloquium, Queen Mary University of London. 2022. [slides](#) [abstract](#)

TWO GRAMMARS OF A'INGAE GLOTTALIZATION. Talk presented at the QP Fest, University of California, Berkeley. 2023. [slides](#)

DOMINANCE IS NON-REPRESENTATIONAL: EVIDENCE FROM A'INGAE VERBAL STRESS. *Phonology* 38(4), pp. 611–650. 2021. [article](#)

A'INGAE SYNTAX CONDITIONS THE REPRESENTATION OF GLOTTALIZATION. Paper presented at the 28th Manchester Phonology Meeting, University of Edinburgh and University of Manchester. 2021. [handout](#) [abstract](#)

LARYNGEAL FEET IN A'INGAE: IMPLICATIONS FOR METRICAL THEORY. First qualifying paper. University of California, Berkeley. 2022. [qualifying_paper](#) • In: *Proceedings of the 39th West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics*. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project. To appear. [proceedings](#) [handout](#) [abstract](#)

MORPHOLOGICAL DOMAINS AND IDIOSYNCRASIES IN A'INGAE STRESS. Poster presented at the phonological symposium of Amazônicas VIII, Federal University of Goiás, Goiânia, Brazil. 2021. [talk](#) [handout](#) [abstract](#)

THE MORPHOPHONOLOGY OF A'INGAE VERBAL STRESS. Honors thesis. Providence, RI: Brown University. 2019. [thesis](#) [slides](#) • In: *Proceedings of the 38th West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics*, pp. 137–146. Ed. by Rachel Soo, Daniel Reisinger, and Katie Martin. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project. 2021. [proceedings](#) [slides](#) [abstract](#)

HEAVY FEET AND GLOTTAL STOPS IN A'INGAE. Paper presented at the 9th Conference on Indigenous Languages of Latin America, University of Texas at Austin. 2019. [slides](#) [abstract](#)

1.1.2 ... with reduplication

I describe and analyze the A'ingae superplural reduplicative suffix $-ʔσ$, which requires that the base and the reduplicant form $(^1σ_1\check{σ}_2?)σ_2$. I model this behavior with a reduplicant-specific *cophonology* (e.g. Orgun, 1996), which consists of a ranking of constraints motivated elsewhere in the language's grammar (Dąbkowski, 2022). Thus, I demonstrate that A'ingae reduplication is highly phonologically optimizing.

A'INGAE REDUPLICATION IS PHONOLOGICALLY OPTIMIZING. In: *Supplemental Proceedings of the 2022 Annual Meeting on Phonology*. Ed. by Noah Elkins, Bruce Hayes, Jinyoung Jo, and Jian-Leat Siah. Washington, DC: Linguistic Society of America. To appear. [proceedings](#) [talk](#) [poster](#) [abstract](#)

1.2 Diphthongs and their changes

I document a typologically unusual process of postlabial raising in A'ingae. I present a model which derives the postlabial raising through an interaction of constraint weights and the number of Q-Theoretic (Inkelas and Shih, 2016, 2017) subsegments, contributing a novel argument for the representations of Q-Theory. I argue that the contemporary variation in the distribution of *ai* and *ii* is a consequence of sound change, followed by recent replacement and partial paradigmatic leveling.

A Q-THEORETIC SOLUTION TO A'INGAE POSTLABIAL RAISING. *Linguistic Inquiry*. Under revision. [manuscript](#) • Poster presented at the 29th Manchester Phonology Meeting, University of Edinburgh and University of Manchester. 2022. [talk](#) [poster](#) [abstract](#)

POSTLABIAL RAISING AND PARADIGMATIC LEVELING IN A'INGAE: A DIACHRONIC STUDY FROM THE FIELD. In: *Proceedings of the Linguistic Society of America* 8(1). Washington, DC: Linguistic Society of America. To appear. [proceedings](#) [poster](#) [abstract](#)

A DIACHRONIC LOOK AT THE A'INGAE HIGH FRONTING DIPHTHONG. Paper presented at the *Borderlands, Minorities, Migrations* conference, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw. 2022. [handout](#) [abstract](#)

1.3 Negative nominalization

I identify the “nominal negative” suffix $-a_{NN}$, which obligatorily attaches to noun phrase-internal functional heads that nominalize negated predicates. I propose that $-a_{NN}$ expones agreement with the Neg(ative) feature on T. Therefore, I document the first case of agreement with polarity on nominalizers to date.

POLARITY AGREEMENT IN A'INGAE NOMINALIZATIONS. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for the Study of the Indigenous Languages of the Americas, Denver, CO. 2023. [handout](#) [abstract](#) [abstract_summary](#)

1.4 Apprehensional semantics in a typological perspective

In a collaborative project with Scott AnderBois, we describe and analyze different uses of the A'ingae apprehensional morpheme $-sa'ne_{APPR}$. We put forth a formal account of rationale and precautioning clauses, which captures language-internal asymmetries and typological trends within this semantic domain.

THE SEMANTICS AND EXPRESSION OF APPREHENSIONAL MODALITY, as second author, with Scott AnderBois. Manuscript. Providence, RI: Brown University and University of California, Berkeley. In preparation.

RATIONALE AND PRECAUTIONING CLAUSES: INSIGHTS FROM A'INGAE, as first author, with Scott AnderBois. *Journal of Semantics*. To appear. [article](#) [manuscript](#)

A'INGAE =SA'NE 'APPR' AND THE SEMANTIC TYPOLOGY OF APPREHENSIONAL ADJUNCTS, as equal author, with Scott AnderBois. In: *Proceedings of the 30th Semantics and Linguistic Theory Conference*, pp. 43–62. Washington, DC: Linguistic Society of America. 2020. [proceedings](#) [handout](#) [abstract](#)

THE APPREHENSIONAL DOMAIN IN A'INGAE (COFÁN), as first author, with Scott AnderBois. In: *Apprehensional constructions in a cross-linguistic perspective*. Ed. by Marine Vuillermet, Martina Faller, and Eva Schultze Berndt. Studies in Diversity Linguistics. Language Science Press. To appear. [chapter](#) [abstract](#)

1.5 *The left periphery*

I argue that A'ingae second-position clitics are matrix clausal C-heads. Thus, I show that—despite its apparent non-configurationality—A'ingae has a structured left periphery. I describe A'ingae pied-piping structures and provide a Q-based (Cable, 2010) analysis thereof.

A'INGAE PIED-PIPING: A Q-BASED ANALYSIS. Paper presented at the 4th Symposium on Amazonian Languages, University of California, Berkeley. 2022. [handout](#) [abstract](#)

A'INGAE SECOND-POSITION CLITICS ARE MATRIX C-HEADS. In: *Proceedings of the 25th Workshop on Structure and Constituency in the Languages of the Americas*. Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Working Papers in Linguistics. To appear. [proceedings](#) [handout](#) [abstract](#)

1.6 *Language documentation*

I have documented A'ingae in the indigenous communities of Dureno and Sinangoé (Sucumbíos, Ecuador) and remotely. I have deposited over 14h of oral narrative video recordings (of which 2h30 transcribed and translated) and elicitation data, including fieldnotes and over 70h of audio recordings. I have played a key role in developing a FLEx database of morphologically analyzed A'ingae texts.

A'INGAE (ECUADOR AND COLOMBIA) – LANGUAGE SNAPSHOT. *Language Documentation and Description* 20, pp. 1–12. 2021. [article](#)

A'INGAE FIELD MATERIALS, as first contributor, with Shen Aguinda, Jorge Mendúa, Leidy Quenamá, and Raúl Quieta. 2020-19. California Language Archive, Survey of California and Other Indian Languages. University of California, Berkeley. [collection](#)

A'INGAE LANGUAGE DOCUMENTATION, as equal author, with Justin Bai, Kalinda Pride, and Nicholas Tomlin. Poster presented at Summer Research Symposium, Brown University, Providence, RI. 2017. [poster](#)

1.7 *Other*

I conducted other A'ingae-related research, including projects on conditional constructions and nominal classifiers.

CONDITIONAL CONSTRUCTIONS IN A'INGAE. Manuscript. University of California, Berkeley. 2021. [manuscript](#)

COFÁN COMES IN ALL SHAPES AND SIZES. Manuscript. Providence, RI: Brown University. 2017. [manuscript](#)

2 DISCONTINUOUS VOWEL HARMONY IN GUÉBIE

In a collaborative project with Hannah Sande and Emily Clem, we document and analyze discontinuous vowel harmony in Guébie (Kru, iso 639-3: gie) focus fronting. We propose a novel model of the phonology-syntax interface, where subparts of phonologically evaluated phases may undergo further movement.

PHONOLOGY-SYNTAX INTERLEAVING IN GUÉBIE FOCUS FRONTING, as first author, with Hannah Sande. Paper presented at the 14th Brussels Conference on Generative Linguistics: *Where syntax and phonology meet*, KU Leuven Brussels Campus, Belgium. 2021. [handout](#) [abstract](#)

3 LOGIC IN SPONTANEOUS LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

In a collaborative project with Roman Feiman, I designed and implemented a novel experimental paradigm for detecting processing difficulty signatures in self-paced reading tasks. We demonstrate that spontaneous natural language comprehension is normatively accurate.

LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION REVEALS NATURAL LOGICAL ABILITY, as first author, with Roman Feiman. Manuscript. University of California, Berkeley and Providence, RI: Brown University. In preparation.

EVIDENCE OF ACCURATE LOGICAL REASONING IN ONLINE SENTENCE COMPREHENSION, as first author, with Roman Feiman. Paper presented at the 34th CUNY Conference on Human Sentence Processing, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. 2021. [talk](#) [slides](#) [abstract](#) • Poster presented at the 47th annual meeting of the Society for Philosophy and Psychology. 2021. [talk](#) [slides](#) [abstract](#)

DO PEOPLE MAKE SPONTANEOUS LOGICAL INFERENCES WHILE READING? Capstone project presented at Brown University, Providence, RI. 2019. [slides](#)

4 PARAGUAYAN GUARANÍ AND FREE AFFIX ORDER

I describe and analyze the prosodic structure of the verb in Paraguayan Guaraní (Tupian, iso 639-3: gug). I show that the Paraguayan Guaraní (partially free) suffix order is determined by phonological subcategorization and prosodic well-formedness. I propose that the phenomenon of free affix order is not unified, but driven by either phonology or morphology, giving rise to two distinct typological profiles.

PARAGUAYAN GUARANÍ SUFFIXATION: PROSODIC AND SYNTACTIC FACTORS IN A PARTIALLY FREE AFFIX ORDER. Manuscript. University of California, Berkeley. In preparation. [manuscript](#)

PARAGUAYAN GUARANÍ AND THE TYPOLOGY OF FREE AFFIX ORDER. In: *Proceedings of the Linguistic Society of America* 7(1). 5159. Ed. by Patrick Farrell. Washington, DC: Linguistic Society of America. 2022. [proceedings](#) [handout](#) [abstract](#) [abstract_summary](#)

PROSODY DRIVES PARAGUAYAN GUARANÍ SUFFIX ORDER. In: *Supplemental Proceedings of the 2021 Annual Meeting on Phonology*. Ed. by Peter Jurgec, Liisa Duncan, Emily Elfner, Yoonjung Kang, Alexei Kochetov, Brittney K. O'Neill, Avery Ozburn, Keren Rice, Nathan Sanders, Jessamyn Schertz, Nate Shaftoe, and Lisa Sullivan. Washington, DC: Linguistic Society of America. 2022. [proceedings](#) [talk](#) [poster](#) [abstract](#)

PARAGUAYAN GUARANÍ IN A PRELIMINARY TYPOLOGY OF FREE AFFIX ORDER. Paper presented at the Emerging Topics in Typology 2021 (International Workshop Series) conference, University of Helsinki, Finland. 2021. [handout](#) [abstract](#)

5 YUCATEC MAYA SYNTAX IN SBCG

In a collaborative project with Justin Bai, Nicholas Tomlin, and Kalinda Pride, we formalize a syntactic fragment of Yucatec Maya (Mayan, iso 639-3: yua) in Sign-Based Construction Grammar. I argue against a nominalization analysis of the language's intransitive subjunctive control.

YUCATECAN CONTROL AND LEXICAL CATEGORIES IN SBCG. In: *Proceedings of the 24th International Conference on Head-Driven Phrase Structure Grammar*. Ed. by Stefan Müller. CSLI Publications, pp. 162–178. 2017. [proceedings](#) [slides](#) [abstract](#)

YUCATEC MAYA IN SBCG: A FRAGMENT, as equal author, with Justin Bai, Kalinda Pride, and Nicholas Tomlin. Paper presented at the 24th International Conference on Head-Driven Phrase Structure Grammar, University of Kentucky, Lexington. 2017. [slides](#) [grammar_signature](#) [abstract](#)

6 MISCELLANEOUS

I used to dabble in other things, including pied-piping, Garífuna prosody, Polish pragmatics, philosophy, translation, and emojis.

PIED-PIPING BY CYCLIC AGREE: IN DEFENSE OF FEATURE PERCOLATION. Manuscript. University of California, Berkeley. 2021. [manuscript](#)

WORDHOOD AND STRESS IN GARÍFUNA. Manuscript. University of California, Berkeley. 2021. [manuscript](#)

DEFINITENESS AND WORD ORDER IN POLISH. Manuscript. Providence, RI: Brown University. 2018. [manuscript](#)

MARRYING THE PROSENTENTIAL THEORY OF TRUTH TO FORMAL SEMANTICS. Manuscript. Providence, RI: Brown University. 2018. [manuscript](#)

A WITTGENSTEINIAN LOOK ON VAGUENESS. *Ivy League Undergraduate Research Journal* 1, pp. 1–12. Ivy League Undergraduate Research Symposium. 2018. [article](#)

THE END AND THE BEGINNING and THE THREE ODDEST THINGS. Translations of the poems *KONIEC I POCZĄTEK* and *TRZY RZECZY NAJDIWNIEJSZE* by Wisława Szymborska. *Aldus, a Journal of Translation* 8, pp. 6–13. 2016. [poem_translations](#)

PROPOSAL FOR A PRETZEL EMOJI, as equal author, with Justin Bai. *Unicode® Technical Committee Document Registry L2/16-374*. 2016. [document](#)