

## MALECITE PROSODICS\*

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The question of Malecite prosodics has not been worked out yet. I would like to talk about two questions: the stress and the length of the vowels.

We must distinguish between dynamic and musical stress in this language. What I call primary stress in Malecite, is more dynamic than musical. The secondary stress is dynamically lower than the primary stress; but musically it can be even higher than the primary stress, if it follows after the primary stress. The two last syllables are musically the highest point in the segment, whether they are dynamically stressed or unstressed. Some examples:

stressed: *skfcin* 'Indian';  
two stressed syllables: *pilswēhsisak* 'girls'.

Regularly, every second syllable is stressed. There are exceptional cases, when the stress has a function, for instance in *mihhtākws* 'my former father', the stress expresses that he is dead. Three stressed syllables: *ipa — lāpin- yèt* 'just look there'.

As regards the length of vowels in Malecite, the linguistic literature is uncertain. I would like to raise my question most of all from the following point of view: does the length of vowels depend on the stress, or on the following consonant, or on none of them?

There are five vowels in Malecite: *a, o, e, i, ə*. Four of them can be long or short, the *ə* is always short.

I made two tables of these vowels, having in the horizontal row three lines (I = primary stress, II = secondary stress, III = unstressed syllable). Vertically, there are five possibilities in these tables (1 = before single *p, t, k, h, s, c*; 2 = before single *m, n, l, w, y*; 3 = before clusters like *hp, ht, hk, hs*, etc.; 4 = before clusters like *mt, sw, lw, kl, nk*, etc.; 5 = at the end of words).

Table 1 was made for the short vowels, Table 2 was for the long ones. Some observations on the basis of these tables:

The number of the vowels *a, o, e, i* is roughly equal in both tables.

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The columns 1 and 2 are almost equally filled in, in both tables.

Column 3 is completely filled in for the long vowels, and there are very few realizations in this column for the short vowels. One could think on the basis of this column that the long vowels are positional, that they occur before *hp, ht, hk, hs, kc, hkw*. But if we consider also columns 1 and 2, we see that the long vowels are realized before almost all consonants.

In column 4, the short vowels are numerous, the long ones are not, i.e., the vowels are mostly short before clusters like *mt, sw, lw, lm, kl, kw, pc, nk*, etc.

In column 5, i.e., at the end of words, there are rather few realizations both for the short vowels and the long ones. But there are rather many realizations in this column in unstressed syllables, both for the short and the long vowels.

This investigation shows that the length of the vowels does not depend on the stress, or not only on it. On what does it depend? Could it be dependent on the length of the word? I made another investigation in this regard and received a negative answer. On what does it depend? To a certain extent it seems to be dependent on the following consonant, but not always.

I think that it is impossible to give an acceptable rule when to pronounce the Malecite vowels short, and when long; at least we cannot do it yet. Because we cannot do it, we must mark it.

The tables, with their examples, are as follows.

TABLE 1  
Short Vowels.

	I In prim. str. syl.	II In sec. str. syl.	III In unstr. syl.
1. Before <i>p, t, k, h, s, c</i>	<i>a, o, e, i, ə</i>	<i>a, o, e, i, ə</i>	<i>a, o, e, i, ə</i>
2. Before <i>m, n, l, w, y</i>	<i>a, o, e, i, ə</i>	<i>o, i, ə</i>	<i>a, o, e, i, ə</i>
3. Before <i>hp, hs</i> , etc.	<i>o, i, ə</i>	<i>ə</i>	
4. Before <i>mt, lw</i> , etc.	<i>a, o, e, i, ə</i>	<i>a, o, ə</i>	<i>a, o, e, i, ə</i>
5. At the end of words	<i>i</i>	<i>o, i</i>	<i>a, o, e, i, ə</i>

I 1 *etócēyāhsi*, I 2 *tōwāpalānəm*, I 3 *tāhkiw*, I 4 *ālawikānak kēhsānko*, II 1 *wat-te mēc*  
*ēlōhkēwok*, II 2 *āhāciw*, II 3 *nikwāhs*, II 4 *āmte apc kwācinīpən*, II 5 *mā apc nīpowiyò*,  
III 1 *kisī-nipowī*, III 2 *sāmi mēmhowēhso*, III 4 *mā-apc tīwāwi wāsis*, III 5 *ēlmāldhki*.

TABLE 2  
Long Vowels.

	I	II	III
1.	<i>ā, ō, ē, ĩ</i>	<i>ā, ō, ē, ĩ</i>	<i>ā, ō, ē, ĩ</i>
2.	<i>ā, ē, ĩ</i>	<i>ā, ē, ĩ</i>	<i>ā, ō, ē, ĩ</i>
3.	<i>ā, ō, ē, ĩ</i>	<i>ā, ō, ē, ĩ</i>	<i>ā, ō, ē, ĩ</i>
4.	<i>ē</i>		<i>ā</i>
5.	<i>ā (ō, ĩ emph.)</i>		<i>ā, ē, ĩ</i>

I 1 *nĕkəm*, I 2 *noĭĕyakw*, I 3 *kĭsŏhsək*, I 4 *memtĕkmən*, I 5 *nəkásā*, I 5 (emph.) *wisəkĭ tahāma*, II 1 *mĭlhamāpən*, II 2 *nĭkwəhs mĕhcĭnan*, II 3 *pāmawohsŏhpən (nĕkəm)*, III 1 *šlăwĭkĕnək*, III 2 *năci-wĭcĕyŏwan (nĕkəm)*, III 3 *skĭnŏhsĭsək*, III 4 *ĕlwe-ĕhta nĭsătĭkw*, III 5 *ĕlmĭ-ihĭk*.

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#### DISCUSSION

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Have you found any correlation between length in Proto-Algonkian and length in Malecite?

There are also minimal pairs in Micmac which show clear cases of vowel length.

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In Malecite, probably, there is a contrast between short and long vowels. The following examples could be presented from the floor: *nākā* 'and', *nāka* 'dead, a person who is gone'; *kisŏhs* 'can you walk?', *kĭsŏhs* 'sun, moon, month'. But further investigation is necessary to be sure of it. As regards Proto-Algonkian, still more further investigation is necessary. Bloomfield wrote about different lengths of vowels, not only in Menomini, but also in Proto-Algonkian. But at that time, these languages were poorly recorded.

Your comment about the minimal pairs in Micmac is very important. One should check it in all Algonkian languages; we should know if the 'long and short' correlation exists in them; if yes, we should know if it is there in the same words. This way, one could decide in which words it is Proto-Algonkian, and in which words it is an individual peculiarity of this or that language.