

## Vowel apophony and underlying segments in Siwa Berber (Egypt)

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Berber languages are well known for the important role played by apophony in verb derivation and flexion. A hitherto relatively little known form of apophony is that of the so-called “passive” (Laoust 1932) or more correctly “perfect / resultative” (A. Basset, 1935 and Leguil, 1986) of Siwa Berber. The resultative is marked on the one hand by a suffix –a, and also by what is referred to by Laoust as “a sound –i- inserted in the radical” [un son **i** intercalé dans le radical].

e.g.

1) yuzən « he sent»    yuzi:na « he has sent»

The problem is somewhat more complicated than this, since it appears necessary to define more precisely what is meant by “radical”.

In most Berber languages, pronominal complement markers are cliticised to the radical in the order indirect object -direct object.

e.g. Tamazight (Central Morocco)

2) izənz-as-θ      he- sold-him-it « he sold it to him»

However, the clitics can be moved to a position before the verb if they are governed by certain markers, as the negative marker **ur**.

3) ur as θ izənz    not - him – it – he sold « he didn’t sell it to him».

But in Siwi the clitics always follow the verb and cannot be moved, which would suggest they are an integral part of the verbal word. The formation of the resultative supports this view.

4) yuzən-tət « he sent her» / yuzən-ti:ta « he has sent her»

Here the –i- is inserted not in the radical (as in 1) but in the clitic itself (4). In other cases –a- appears instead of –i-.

5) uzənə « I sent »      uzənə « I have sent»

We will propose an explanation of this fact in terms of underlying short vowels, within the framework of templatic morphology.

### References

- Basset André (1935), “Problème verbal dans le parler berbère de Siwa” *Mémoires de l’Institut Français, t. LXVIII – Mélanges Maspéro*, volume 3, Le Caire.
- Laoust Emile (1932). *Siwa I. son parler*. Librairie Ernest Le roux & Paris.
- Leguil Alfonse (1986), Notes sur le parler berbère de Siwa, *Bulletin des Etudes Africaines de l’INALCO*, vol VI, n° 11, pp. 5-42, n° 12, pp. 97-124.