

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

CV Metathesis in Kwara'ae

by

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This thesis examines the phonological process of CV metathesis in Kwara'ae (Austronesian) between the Citation and Normal speech registers in the light of my work with a native speaker. CV metathesis is especially robust in Kwara'ae because it may occur multiple times within a word. For example, the Citation form of 'bed' is [$ʔi.fi.ta.ʔi$], whereas the Normal form is [$ʔi.h.taḿʔ$]. I show that there is a third form of many words in particular syntactic environments, which I dub the Focus Final form; e.g. the Focus Final form of 'bed' is [$ʔi.h.taḿʔi$]. The proposed analysis, in the framework of Optimality Theory, relates the loci of CV metathesis to the stress patterns in the language, which are analyzed without metrical feet (c.f. Gordon (2003)). Specifically, I propose that the language prefers stressed syllables to be heavy (i.e. the language prefers to satisfy the Stress to Weight Principle (Prince 1992, Kager 1999) than to be faithful to underlying linear order. Alternatives to the Stress to Weight Principle are considered, and some of the problems with the correspondance-theoretic notion of linearity (McCarthy and Prince 1995) are exposed.