

Yaaku grammar 1974

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Afrika und Übersee, Band LVIII

gyómágyi	= Gyomui
gázál	= Gazal
mbélággilíy	= Bulanjilim.

Diese Ortschaften liegen entlang der Ufer oder östlich des Yadzeram, wobei die Ansiedlungen Gulvu, Gazal und Mbelaggilim am Westufer bereits zum Damboa-Distrikt gehören. Damit läßt sich das Verbreitungsgebiet des Gwara als zwischen 13°20' und 13°30' S.L. und 11°05' und 11°17' n.Br. legend angeben. *Mádábá* (Mutube) und *Mbélággilíy* werden bereits bei Hoffmann (1963:1f.) als Margi-Ortschaften erwähnt.

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Notes on the Yaaku Language (Kenya)*

by Bernd Heine

The intention to study the Yaaku language was inspired by Oswin Köhler during a visit together to Mukogodo Division, Laikipia District, in November 1968. Since then I paid ten more visits to the Yaaku-speaking area but could stay no longer than two to three days each time, due to teaching commitments at the University of Nairobi.

In April 1970, I was able to persuade Mr. Koisa Ololengai, a 45 years old mother tongue speaker of Yaaku, to accompany me to Nairobi and work with me there as a language informant. After only three weeks in Nairobi, Mr. Ololengai disappeared. Police investigations were carried out all over Kenya in order to trace him but without success. It is most likely that he became the victim of a crime in one of Nairobi's suburbs. A continuation of my Yaaku studies was made impossible by the fact that the Yaaku people blamed me for the disappearance of Mr. Ololengai and refused to assist me any longer. The following notes on the Yaaku and their language are therefore fragmentary. They are dedicated to Koisa Ololengai.

*This research was made possible by a generous grant from the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft.

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1. Introduction

The Yaaku are a small tribe inhabiting the eastern part of the Mukogodo Division, Laikipia District, about thirty miles north of Mount Kenya. The first account of their language came from Charles Hobley in 1910 when he published a list of words and short phrases (Hobley 1910). In 1963, Joseph Greenberg used Hobley's data to determine the genetic position of this language. His conclusion that Yaaku belongs to the Cushitic branch of the Afro-Asiatic family (Greenberg 1963) has been supported by Christopher Ehret (1971) and is confirmed by our own analysis.

The Yaaku, who number less than 200 people, have been variously referred to as Mogogodo, Mokogodo or Mukogodo. They call themselves *yakunte*, pl. *yaaku* and their language *sisku*. They are one of the five "Dorobo" groups inhabiting the Mukogodo Division which all depended on hunting and gathering before they turned to pastoralism in the course of the last decades.

Yaaku society is divided into fifteen exogamous clans (*ciherokte*, pl. *herokte*). According to a survey we were able to carry out in 1989, these are:

Name	Number of circumcised members	Number of Yaaku-speaking members ²
(1) <i>mat'ungi</i>	approx. 10	3
(2) <i>leit'iko</i>	approx. 19	4
(3) <i>pardero</i>	13	3
(4) <i>losupoko</i>	7	6

¹ The mother's clan is called *ira'uhno*, pl. *ira'uhno'o*.

² For more information on language knowledge see under 1.2.

Name	Number of circumcised members	Number of Yaaku-speaking members
(5) <i>pokisa</i>	6	1
(6) <i>koins</i>	2	1
(7) <i>parmaç'u</i>	7	3
(8) <i>nankiri</i>	18	2
(9) <i>lemoile</i>	6	2
(10) <i>sak'ong</i> (<i>kar'aru</i>)	6	3
(11) <i>nukur</i>	6	2
(12) <i>kiba</i>	5	3
(13) <i>lent'olla</i>	12	15
(14) <i>biyoti</i>	2	2
(15) <i>su'aanga</i>	1	1
Total	120	51

The chief always comes from *mat'ungi*. The 'clan' forms the largest descent group. Ownership of land is confined to it but the clan is not a residential unit.

In addition, there are three larger political units which are non-exogamous and consist of several clans each. They are *orond'i*, which includes clan (1) to (5), *sialo*, which includes (6) to (9), and *luno*, which consists of (10) to (12). The clans (13), (14), and (15) are not part of this system³.

The Yaaku have an age set system which resembles that of the Maasai but differs from it in a number of instances, e.g. in the almost total lack of ceremonial apparatus (Rosen 1968). The Yaaku age sets (*heret*) are in chronological order (in parentheses are the approximate dates of circumcision):

<i>nyankusi</i> (around 1850)	<i>meruturot</i> (<i>t'areto</i>) (1910)
<i>pel'es</i> (1865)	<i>tiyeki</i> (1925)
<i>marikun'i</i>	<i>mekuri</i> (1939—1945)
<i>talala</i> (<i>tarito</i>) (1880)	<i>kimaniki</i> (1950—1955)
<i>m'erisho</i> (<i>nyankusi</i>) (1895)	<i>kishille</i> (1963)

Most of these names have been borrowed from Maasai.

³ David Rosen (1968) gives *oi doinyo lassos* as a fourth unit. According to my informants, *oi doinyo lassos* is the name of the people living near the mountain of the same name. They all belong to the *lent'olla* clan.

1.1. Notes on history⁴

Before the Maasai arrived on the Laikipia Plateau there are said to have lived three different peoples in the area surrounding the Mukogodo Forest. These groups are called Tatus, Larinkon, and Kirrimani by the Yaaku. The Larinkon and Tatus are referred to as "children of one mother" who lived in mud-walled houses dug into the slopes of hills and covered with grass, in which they also kept their cattle and goats. These houses must have been similar to the "tembes" of the Iraqw in Tanzania and the "Sirikwa holes" in the Kenyan Highlands. The Larinkon are said to have been of the same origin as the Tigania of Meru District.

The Kirrimani inhabited the territory east of the Mukogodo Forest, up to the rivers Ngare Ndare and Ewaso Ng'iro. They lived mainly on hunting but also kept goats⁵. When the Larinkon moved to the plains near the Kirrimani, the relations between the two groups were at first peaceful. Later on, the Larinkon desired the whole land. They defeated the Kirrimani, killing many of them. One part of the Kirrimani fled north and became the ancestors of the Rendille. Another part escaped to the Mukogodo Forest and founded the Yaaku nation⁶. The Yaaku usually insist that they are very closely related to the Rendille, who live some 70 miles north of them. This claim is not quite corroborated by linguistic findings. Although both Rendille and Yaaku are Cushitic languages, which, according to Greenberg even belong to the same subbranch of Cushitic (i.e. Eastern Cushitic), it is beyond doubt that the split between these two languages is rather old—at least 2000 years, but probably much more.

Neither the Tatus⁷ nor the Larinkon survived the military operations of the Maasai. The Tatus are said to have served the Maasai as

⁴ I am indebted to Alan Jacobs and Christoph Winter for many valuable comments and suggestions concerning Yaaku history. The mistakes are, of course, mine.

⁵ Some Yaaku claim that the Kirrimani had also some camels.

⁶ David Rosen (1968: 2), however, mentions a tribe called "Ikirimio" of whom he says: "Nowadays, Ilkonono are said to live in Samburu but in the past these blacksmiths are said to have been a tribe called Ikirimio who lived in the forest with the Mukogodo but were driven away during a series of wars between the two."

⁷ It is possible, though, that the Dadog (Tatoga) or the Iraqw of Tanzania, or even both, are modern descendants of the Tatus (Alan Jacobs, personal communication).

well diggers before they were absorbed by them. The Larinkon seem to have resisted the Maasai until they were defeated decisively.

The Yaaku claim to be the original inhabitants of the Mukogodo Forest area. This is not contradicted by their present neighbours who are the Tikirri, Mumonyot, Lograla, and Ng'wesi.

The origin of the Tikirri is unknown. They are said to have come from the Narok area. Before they took over Maasai as their mother tongue they had a language of their own which, as some Yaaku claim, was a Kalenjin dialect⁸. They were always hunters and gatherers who lived in symbiosis with the Maasai. They were pushed to the Mukogodo area by the Laikipiak Maasai at the time when the *meruturot* were warriors. When the *tiyeke* age set had succeeded the *meruturot*, the Tikirri crossed river Ngare Ndare and entered Mukogodo.

The Mumonyot reached Mukogodo earlier than the Tikirri, Lograla, and Ng'wesi. They are said to have been cattle breeders formerly, and many Yaaku insist that the Mumonyot are dispersed Laikipiak Maasai and Samburu who had lost all their cattle in times of war and drought. When the Yaaku met them near Loleroi, they had no domestic animals. The Yaaku taught them to prepare arrow poison, beehives, and to find honey. The Mumonyot acquired cattle and goats later by selling ivory and rhino horns, and by herding goats for the Samburu.

The Lograla (Loogolala, Ilwaso) are said to have always been Maasai-speaking Dorobo. Originally, they lived at Naibor Keju near Maralal. They reached Mukogodo about the time when the *merisho* were warriors, and settled at Doinyo Rasasi where the Tikirri later became their neighbours. Up to now they keep a remarkable number of beehives.

The Ng'wesi originate from the eastern side of Mt. Kenya where there are still some of them left. They lived on hunting and honey gathering in the higher regions of Mt. Kenya. When they arrived in the Mukogodo area shortly before the *tiyeke* age set was circumcised they had no cattle. Their mother tongue was Meru which they gave up about 30 years ago in favour of Maasai. The Yaaku chief Silangei gave them land to settle in the area north of Timau, from where they were pushed up to the Katonga River by European settlers.

⁸ Tikirri (Digiri) is also the Karaba name for former Kalenjin-speaking Dorobo in their area (Ch. Winter, personal communication).

Originally, the Yaaku inhabited Doinyo Losos, Doinyo Sieku, Kiapai, Olokuruki, Shurdika, and Moror Ekenyitinyin. They had no villages but lived in single homesteads which were mostly caves high up in the hills. There were no domestic animals—dogs were not kept because their barking might have attracted enemies.

At the time when the *merisho* age set were warriors the first European administrator came and settled near Isiolo. The then chief Mairoo, father of Silangei, gave him beeswax as tax fee. Remarkable changes occurred after the members of the *meruhwet* (*fareto*) age set were circumcised. The Yaaku began to leave the forest and to settle along its fringes. The first domestic animals were acquired by selling honey, wooden gourds and giraffe tails to the Samburu, their neighbours to the north. Giraffe tails, which Samburu women made into necklaces, were paid with one goat each. Furthermore, a lively trade with the Somali, who offered cattle in exchange of ivory and rhino horns, developed.

When the *mekuri* age set was circumcised the Yaaku had partly given up hunting and gathering in favour of a Maasai-type cattle economy.

1.2. Sociolinguistic notes

The recent history of the Yaaku provides an example of language replacement—a process that is presently nearing completion. In November/December 1969, sociolinguistic interviews were conducted near Doldol in the western part of Mukogodo Forest. Among the 119 persons interviewed the following patterns of language knowledge were found:

Languages known	Percentage of persons interviewed
Maasai only	64
Yaaku only	0
Maasai + Yaaku	21
Maasai + Swahili	8
Maasai + Swahili + Yaaku	7
Total	100

This table suggests that all Yaaku are Maasai-speaking, while there are no monolingual Yaaku. Only a small part of the population knows Yaaku. The table below reveals which part this is:

Age	Percentage of Yaaku speakers		
	Male population	Female population	Total
0—15	0	0	0
16—30	6	17	10
40 and more	100	74	86
Total	29	27	28

A knowledge of Yaaku is virtually non-existent within the younger population. Language tests showed that those persons under 40 years who had claimed to speak Yaaku usually had only a very rudimentary competence in this language, their primary language being Maasai. Among the old people, on the other hand, Yaaku is generally spoken as primary language and mother tongue. The fact that only 74% of the old women declared to know Yaaku is due to the frequent occurrence of intermarriage between Maasai and Yaaku whereby Maasai women enter the Yaaku tribe without ever learning Yaaku.

About two generations ago the Yaaku decided to give up their language in favour of Maasai. The following reasons may be suggested:

(a) The Yaaku were surrounded by a Maasai-speaking population with whom they lived in symbiosis. It is likely that the Yaaku used Maasai as a lingua franca already prior to the time when their *kimaniki* age set gave up the use of the Yaaku language. The decision to replace their own language by Maasai is said to have been favoured by the low communicative yield of Yaaku which was spoken by less than one thousand persons.

(b) Since about 1930 the Yaaku acquired cattle and goats and began to change from their traditional hunting and gathering to cattle economy—a process which led to the almost overall adoption of Maasai social organization and culture. Language shift was felt to be a logical consequence of this process. The Yaaku language with its semantic emphasis on hunting was considered unfit for a cattle-breeding society.

(c) The Maasai look down upon the various Dorobo groups of whom they say: they live like animals. Although the Yaaku never adopted the Maasai value system in toto they have been strongly influenced by it. Since the Yaaku became aware of the advantages of cattle keeping they tended to range languages along a prestige scale where Maasai, the language of the wealthy cattle owners is on top whereas Yaaku, which is associated with the miserable existence of predatory

animals, is found near the bottom end. Language replacement was considered a necessity in order to adapt life to a new value system.

The decision to drop their own language was made almost overnight. It is reported that the Yaaku held a public meeting in the early thirties at which it was decided to teach the children henceforth Maasai as a first language and to forget about the Yaaku language. Resistance against this policy, if there was any at all, must have been minimal.

Today Yaaku functions as a kind of secret language among the elders who use it mostly for topics relating to traditional Dorobo culture.

The gradual extinction of Yaaku coincides with the expansion of Swahili as a lingua franca. Although in 1969 only 16% of the Yaaku were found to be Swahili speaking (28% of the male and 2% of the female population), there is a growing tendency to replace the traditional language pattern Yaaku + Maasai by the pattern Maasai + Swahili. There is no Yaaku speaker who has any knowledge of English.

2. Grammatical sketch

2.1. Phonology

Yaaku has the following phonemes:

2.1.1. Consonants

	Bilab.	Alveo.	Pal.- Alveo.	Palat.	Velar	Uvul.	Glott.
Plosive	<i>p</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>c</i>		<i>k</i>		<i>ʔ</i>
Ejective		<i>t'</i>	<i>c'</i>		<i>k'</i>		
Implosive	<i>ɓ</i>	<i>d</i>		<i>j</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>q</i>	
Fricative		<i>s</i>		<i>ʃ</i>	<i>x</i>		<i>h</i>
Lateral		<i>l</i>					
Rolled		<i>r</i>					
Nasal	<i>m</i>	<i>n</i>		<i>ny</i>	<i>ŋ</i>		
Semivowels	<i>w</i>			<i>y</i>			

Notes

- (1) /k/ is a post-velar stop;
- (2) /t/ tends to be pronounced as an affricate [tʰ];
- (3) /g/ is a voiceless uvular implosive;
- (4) /p/, /t/, /c/, and /k/ do not explode word-finally;

- (5) /p/, /t/, and /k/ are pronounced as voiced stops or voiced fricatives, unless in emphatic speech;
- (6) /k/ is pronounced [g] if followed by /t/.
- (7) /g/ is replaced by /c/ if followed by front vowels;
- (8) /u/ is replaced optionally by /ɯ/ if followed by /w/, /g/ or velar consonants;
- (9) /m/ is replaced by /n/ word-finally;
- (10) /s/ is replaced by /h/ if followed by consonants or word-boundary;
- (11) /b/ is pronounced as a bilabial fricative intervocally;
- (12) /r/ is a voiceless trill if in word-final position.

2.1.2. Vowels

i	u
e	o
ɛ	ɔ
ə	

Notes

- (1) /i/ and /u/ are pronounced [i] and [ʊ], respectively, if followed by /n/, /g/, and velar consonants;
- (2) /e/ and /o/ are replaced by /ɛ/ and /ɔ/, respectively, if the following syllable has a low vowel (/ɛ/, /a/, /ɔ/);
- (3) /e/ is pronounced [eʷ] (as a rounded front vowel) if followed by /g/;
- (4) /e/ is deleted if it precedes immediately /a/ or /o/.

That /e/ and /ɛ/ as well as /o/ and /ɔ/ are phonemically distinct can be seen from such minimal pairs as

lɛ'ɛ	come!	:	lɛ'ɛ	hit (until blood comes out)!
t'ɛɛ'ɔ	tree spec.	:	ʃɛɛhɔ	charcoal

2.1.3. Tone and stress

There are at least two distinctive tones: high (marked by an accent aigu, e.g. á) and low (left unmarked). Furthermore, mid (á), falling (á) and rising tone (á) will be marked, although it is not known whether they are distinct units.

Stress ('a) is a phoneme of its own.

2.2. The sentence

The Yaaku sentence consists of a verb and one or more dependent nouns. The basic surface order of sentence constituents is

subject	verb	indirect	direct	adverbial
		object	object	phrase

Yaaku thus differs from other Cushitic languages which usually place the verb in sentence-final position²:

<i>n'isni' naw'āzan damatu</i>	We see the woman.
(we see woman)	
<i>'iige' nhrefeta isi w'aa'</i>	I steal cows from him.
(I steal him cows)	
<i>'iige' nmuta ou ai</i>	I shall come out of the house.
(I come off house)	

There are, however, several optional permutations based on thematic distinctions. These permutations are:

(1) The direct object is placed sentence-initially, i.e. precedes the subject:

<i>damatu n'isni' naw'āzan</i>	We see a woman.
(woman we see)	
<i>moqoi damatūti aw'āzan</i>	The woman see a man.
(man woman-pl. see)	
<i>w'aa' 'iige' nhrefeta isi</i>	I steal cows from him.
(cows I steal him)	

(2) The verb is placed sentence-initially:

<i>naw'āzan n'isni' damatu</i>	We see the woman.
(see we woman)	
<i>aw'āzan damatūti moqoi</i>	The woman see a man.
(see woman-pl man)	

(3) The verb is placed sentence-finally:

<i>'iige' isi w'aa' nhrefeta</i>	I steal cows from him.
(I him cows steal)	
<i>damatūti moqoi aw'āzan</i>	The woman see a man.
(woman-pl man see)	

Yaaku has retained some remnants of its earlier word order when the object preceded the verb. There are some verbs left which have their object obligatorily in pre-verbal position, e.g. *sapare-kus* 'to tell lies', or *itoria-ik* 'to rule' ('to do ruling'):

<i>'iige' sapare kin'āu k'āso'</i>	I have told lies.
(I lies PERF tell)	
<i>isi itoria kii'ik</i>	He is ruling over me.
(he rule me do)	

² Apart from Yaaku, the only other Cushitic language deviating from this pattern is Ma'a (Mbugu), a Southern Cushitic language spoken in the Usambara Mountains of Tanzania (see Heine 1974).

2.3. The noun

A noun can govern a number of dependant categories which are all placed behind it.

Depending on their gender and number features, nouns are divided into three classes: Masculine, Feminine, and Plural¹⁰.

2.31. Gender

Nominal gender is not marked overtly and can only be inferred from the dependant categories that accompany the noun. A number of nouns, i.e. most of those that contain [\pm SEX] in their semantic feature matrix, can be both Masculine and Feminine, depending on whether they refer to male or female beings. Most of these nouns denote animals, e.g. *kaken* 'dog' or *pes'e* 'buffalo', but there are also a few others like *c'āma* 'friend'.

The categories that distinguish gender and their respective agreement markers are:

	Masculine	Feminine	Plural
Possessive			
a. nominal	<i>c'i</i>	<i>t'i</i>	<i>k'es</i>
b. pronominal	<i>cl-</i>	<i>t'i-</i>	<i>xa-</i>
Adjective	<i>ci-, ke-</i>	<i>ti-</i>	<i>ke-</i>
Interrogative adjective	<i>c'ē</i>	<i>t'ē</i>	<i>se'tin</i>
Demonstrative			
a. Near	<i>qé</i>	<i>te</i>	<i>xa'a</i>
b. Far	<i>se</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>sa'a</i>
c. Reference	<i>qut</i>	<i>tuk</i>	<i>xa'an</i>
Relative	<i>ci</i>	<i>ti</i>	<i>ke</i>
Verb	<i>g</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>n</i>

2.32. Number

Nominal plural is usually derived from the singular by means of suffixes. The most common of these suffixes, which are very numerous, are:

-ai:	<i>dehmo</i>	pl. <i>dehm-ai</i>	cold
	<i>nuru</i>	pl. <i>nur-ai</i>	dance
	<i>wazn'o</i>	pl. <i>wazn-ai</i>	fence
-i:	<i>heektan</i>	pl. <i>heektan-i</i>	paradise flycatcher
	<i>lehen</i>	pl. <i>lehen-i</i>	fat
	<i>kuma</i>	pl. <i>kuma-i</i>	club

¹⁰ Gender is not distinguished in Plural.

-e:	ségil	pl. ségíl-é'	finger nail
	girá'ám	pl. girá'ám-e	dance
-n:	koko	pl. koko-n	fowl
	rigo	pl. rigo-n	gerenuk
-ndí:	c'áama	pl. c'áama-ndí	friend
	q'áro'	pl. q'áro-ndí	gall
-no:	pee'	pl. pee'-no'	buffalo
	ákú	pl. ákú-nú	cloth, dress
	íkú	pl. íkú-nó	fire
-nin:	nyabul	pl. nyabul-nin	chin
-mo:	kedil	pl. kedil-m'o'	gate of cattle kraal.

A number of nouns, however, derive their singular from the plural by means of a singulative suffix, which in most cases is -ni. These nouns denote concepts that usually occur in groups.

kít'í-ní	pl. kít'í	bee
hínsí-ní	pl. hínsí	fly
gúo-to	pl. gúo'	goat.

Most names of ethnic groups are of this type, e.g.

yaku-ní	pl. yaku	Yaaku person
lógráa-ní	pl. lógrááí	Lagrala (Gwaso) person
toróó-ní	pl. tor'óó	Dorobo person
nyéwí-óní	pl. nyéwí	Ng'wesi person.

Changes of tone, vowels and of glottal stop are another means of nominal number distinction:

c'au	pl. c'áau'	feather
daai	pl. dáái	fire-stick
t'a'ara	pl. t'á'ara'	dikdik
l'ouúó'	pl. l'ouúó	coccyx
lípe'	pl. lí'pe	donkey
moó'o	pl. múc'a'	bone.

2.33. Dependent categories

Categories depending on the noun are the possessive, adjective, numeral, demonstrative, interrogative, and relative. All, except the numerals from two onwards, agree with the governing noun in gender and number.

sóú t'éní'ém w'éhetu té	this one small knife
(knife small one this)	
damatú t'én w'éhetú	one big woman
(woman big one)	

yé' ke'in'éní xá'a	these big people
(people big these)	
kéd'én c'i'í cén	my big tree
(tree my big)	
damatú t'i'í t'éní'in	my small wife.
(woman my small)	

2.331. Possessive

a. Nominal possessive

The nominal possessive follows the governing noun and is preceded by an agreement marker which is c'í for Masculine, t'í for Feminine, and k'í for Plural:

ai t'í yie'	the house of the man
(house of man)	
lóáyo t'í yie'	the child of the man
(child of man)	
kéd'én c'í yie'	the tree of the man
(tree of man)	
waa c'í d'ámatu	the woman's cow
(cow of woman)	
lóoyimí k'í d'ámatu	the children of the woman
(child-pl of woman)	
óúano k'í yie'	knives of the man.
(knife-pl of man)	

b. Pronominal possessive

It follows the noun immediately and precedes all other nominal qualifiers. The pronominal possessive has an agreement prefix which is c'í for Masculine, t'í for Feminine, and xá for Plural. Singular and Plural have slightly different series of possessive pronouns which are:

	Singular	Plural		Singular	Plural
1st sg.	-í	-í	1st pl.	-ni	-'ánt
2nd	-kí	-áí	2nd	-kín	-'áknín
3rd	-sí	-áí	3rd	-hín	-'áhnín
Ex.					
kéd'én c'í-í	my tree		damatu t'í-í	my wife	
kéd'én c'í-kí	your tree		damatu t'í-kí	your wife	
kéd'én c'í-sí	his tree		damatu t'í-sí	his wife	
kéd'én c'í-ní	our tree		damatu t'í-ní	our wife	
kéd'én c'í-kín	your(pl) tree		damatu t'í-kín	your(pl) wife	
kéd'én c'í-hín	their tree		damatu t'í-hín	their wife	

<i>ké'ém'é xá-'i</i>	my trees
<i>ké'ém'é xá-'áyi</i>	your trees
<i>ké'ém'é xá-'dát</i>	his trees
<i>ké'ém'é xá-'áni</i>	our trees
<i>ké'ém'é xá-'ákinin</i>	your(pl) trees
<i>ké'ém'é xá-'áhnin</i>	their trees.

2.332. Adjective

The adjective follows the pronominal possessive and precedes all other nominal qualifiers. It has an agreement prefix which is *ci-* for Masculine, *ti-* for Feminine, and *ke-* for Plural. *ci-* and *ti-* lose their vowel if followed by another vowel.

Ex. *kéd'én ci-én* a big tree, *damatú ti-én* a big woman.

Common adjectives are:

<i>-ein</i>	pl. <i>-in'ini'</i>	big
<i>-ni'in</i>	pl. <i>nyn'áini'</i>	small
<i>-t'er</i>	pl. <i>-t'ére'</i>	bad
<i>-esbu</i>	pl. <i>-eskan</i>	good

Ex. *kéd'én ci-'eeko* a good tree, *ké'émé ke-t'ére'* bad trees.

2.333. Numeral

Numerals follow the adjective and precede the demonstrative. They do not distinguish gender except for the numeral 'one' which is *wehe* or *wehet* if governed by masculine nouns and *wehetu* with feminine nouns, e.g.

kéd'én wehe(t) one tree (maso.), *damatú wehetu* one woman (femina.).

The following is said to be a complete list of Yaaku-numerals. All informants claimed that counting does not go beyond twenty.

1 <i>wehe(t)</i> , <i>wehetu</i>	11 <i>qapon y w'éhe</i>
2 <i>c'e</i>	12 <i>qapon n c'i'e</i>
3 <i>aat</i>	13 <i>qapon y xáat</i>
4 <i>qwen</i>	14 <i>qapon n qwén</i>
5 <i>xoopi</i>	15 <i>qapon y xoopi</i>
6 <i>is</i>	16 <i>qapon n is</i>
7 <i>tisibo'</i>	17 <i>qapon n tisibo'</i>
8 <i>sité'</i>	18 <i>qapon n sité'</i>
9 <i>saakal</i>	19 <i>qapon n s'aakal</i>
10 <i>qapon</i>	20 <i>te'ta'</i>

Ex. *ké'émé xoopi* five trees, *yie' qapon n qwén* fourteen people.

Ordinal numerals are treated as adjectives: they take the prefixes *ci-* for Masculine and *ti-* for Feminine. Apart from the numeral 'first' which is *mítche* all ordinals are identical with the cardinal numerals.

Ex. <i>kéd'én ci mítche</i>	the first tree
<i>kéd'én ci c'i</i>	the second tree
<i>kéd'én ci x'áat</i>	the third tree.

2.334. Demonstrative

Of all nominal qualifiers, demonstratives are usually placed last. There are three distinct categories:

	Masculine	Feminine	Plural	
a. Near	<i>gé</i>	<i>te</i>	<i>xa'a</i>	this
b. Far	<i>se</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>sa'a</i>	that
c. Reference	<i>qut</i>	<i>tuk</i>	<i>xa'au</i>	that (referred to earlier)

Ex. *damatú té* this woman, *damatúti sa'a* those women.

There is a nominal form of the demonstrative which is used when the governing noun is deleted. It differs from the demonstrative adjective in that the vowel of the singular form is doubled. The plural forms do not change:

	Masculine	Feminine	Plural	
a. Near	<i>gee</i>	<i>tee</i>	<i>xa'a</i>	this one
b. Far	<i>see</i>	<i>see</i>	<i>sa'a</i>	that one
c. Reference	<i>quuk</i>	<i>tuk</i>	<i>xa'au</i>	that one (referred to)

Ex. *gee aie's* this one (e.g. man) comes, *naw'áxe' tee* I see this one (e.g. woman).

2.335. Interrogative

Only one interrogative adjective has been found. It is the interrogative 'which?' and has the following gender-sensitive forms:

Masculine *c'é*, Feminine *t'é*, Plural *se'tán*.

Ex. *yie' c'é* which man?, *damatú t'é* which woman?, *damatúti se'tán* which women?

2.336. Relative clause

A noun can also govern a relative clause which is introduced by a relative particle *ci* for Masculine, *ti* for Feminine, and *ke* for Plural¹¹.

¹¹ *ke* is replaced by *ke* if the following syllable has an open vowel (see 2.12 (2)).

Ex. <i>naw'axe' yie' o' deeto</i>	I see a man who eats.
<i>naw'axe' damatu ti xind'a</i>	I see a woman who goes (away).
<i>naw'axe' damatati ke deetan</i>	I see women who eat.

2.34. Pronouns

The place of the noun can be taken by one of the following isolated pronouns:

1st sg.	'iige' ('iigə, i')	I
2nd	'adçuk' ('açu, á)	you
3rd	isi	he, she, it
1st pl.	n'inni'	we
2nd	áin	you (pl)
3rd	isin	they

These pronouns are used both as subject and object. As the finite verb of Yaaku has an obligatory expression of person (2.511), the use of isolated pronouns is, with one exception, optional:

<i>n'inni' na-xaini nairóbi'</i>	'We went to Nairobi.
(we we-go Nairobi)	
or <i>na-xaini nairóbi'</i>	
<i>damatu a-i-waxat 'iige'</i>	The woman saw me.
(woman she-me-see me)	
or <i>damatu a-i-waxat</i>	

The use of the isolated pronoun is obligatory if it is a third person object pronoun:

<i>damatu a-waxat isi</i>	The woman sees him/her.
(woman she-see him)	
<i>('iige') na-q'as' isin</i>	I killed them.
((I) I-kill them)	

2.4. The adverbial phrase

It consists of an adposition and a noun. The adposition is either a preposition followed by the Feminine possessive marker *ti* or a postposition. The following adpositions are used both as postpositions and prepositions:

Ex. <i>kéden dli</i>	or <i>dli ti k'eden</i>	in the tree
<i>ái hráqai</i>	or <i>hráqai ti áí</i>	on the house
<i>ái sin</i>	or <i>sin ti áí</i>	in the mid of the house
<i>kéden dípéré</i>	or <i>díp'ére ti k'eden</i>	under the tree.

The adpositions *lé*¹² 'to' and *boo* 'outside' are used as prepositions only, whereas *dápa* 'at, near' occurs only as postposition:

<i>isi azani lé ti d'amatú</i>	he went to the woman
<i>'iige' xana lé ti-si</i>	I go to him
<i>boo ti ai</i>	outside the house
<i>boo ti l'aata</i>	outside the kraal
<i>ai dápa</i>	at, near the house
<i>kéden dápa</i>	at, near the tree.

Whereas the above adpositions can be called semi-nominals some of which also occur as nouns, there are other adpositions which are genuine prepositions:

'n' with, together with, *eh* with, by means of, *ou* from, out of.

Ex. <i>'iige' nmaala 'n' adçuk</i>	I agree with you.
(I I-agree with you)	
<i>'iige' n'eka ékto' eh kiji'ko'</i>	I eat with a spoon.
(I I-eat food with spoon)	
<i>'iige' napó'on kui eh iku</i>	I burn the thing with fire.
(I I-burn thing with fire)	
<i>'iige' nals'e óu w'aa'</i>	I am coming from the cows.
(I I-come from cattle)	
<i>isi mulei ou ai</i>	He comes out of the house.
(he come-out from house)	

eh and *ou* can be placed optionally in front of the verb:

<i>'iige' n-eh'eka ékto' kiji'ko'</i>	I eat with a spoon.
<i>'iige' na-h-pó'on kui iku¹³</i>	I burn the thing with fire.
<i>isi ou-mulei ai</i>	He comes out of the house.

Both *eh* and *ou* occur in the following sentence, where *ou* is a preposition and *eh* precedes the verb:

<i>isin a-h-pe'eno' ou soax¹³</i>	They are frightened of the rain.
(they they-with scared from rain)	

2.5. The verb

The Yaaku verb has the following structure:

(Neg)	Tense/	Subject	(Object	Verb	Subject
	Aspect	Prefix	Prefix)	Stem	Suffix

¹² This preposition is derived from the noun *lé* 'place'.

¹³ *eh* is shortened to *h* if preceded by a vowel.

Ex. *y-é-é-n-é-é-n* I did not drink
(Neg-Tense-I-drink-I)
a-ini-wáxát-t she sees us.
(she-us-see-she)

2.51. Basic patterns

2.511. Personal pronouns

Whereas the isolated and possessive pronouns distinguish between six persons only (2.331; 2.34), there are more distinctions made in the verbal pronoun. The verbal pronouns of Yaaku are:

	Subject	Direct Object	Direct Object in word-initial position
1st sg.	<i>n---</i>	<i>-i---</i>	<i>éi---</i>
2nd	<i>a-t</i>	<i>-ku---</i>	<i>oku---</i>
3rd masc.	<i>(a)---</i>	<i>---éi</i>	<i>---éi</i>
fem.	<i>(a)-t</i>	<i>---éi</i>	<i>---éi</i>
1st pl.	<i>n--n</i>	<i>-ni---</i>	<i>éni---</i>
2nd	<i>a--in</i>	<i>-kni---</i>	<i>okni---</i>
3rd	<i>(a)---n</i>	<i>---éin</i>	<i>---éin</i>
Indefinite	<i>t---</i>		

The indirect object pronoun differs from the direct object pronoun in having a prefixed syllable *si-*:

1st sg.	<i>-sei---</i>	1st pl.	<i>-seini---</i>
2nd	<i>-suku---</i>	2nd	<i>-sukni---</i>
3rd	<i>-si---</i>	3rd	<i>-si---éin</i>

The form of the subject pronoun varies remarkably depending on the verb stem and the tenses.

Ex. Subject pronoun

n'-éq-a I am drinking *n'-éq-ón* we are drinking
a'-éq-ot you are drinking *a'-éq-ótán* you (pl.) are drinking
'éq-oi he is drinking *'éq-an* they are drinking.
'éq-oi she is drinking

Direct object pronoun

a-i-wáxát she sees me *a-ini-wáxát* she sees us
a-ku-wáxát she sees you *a-kni-wáxát* she sees you (pl.)
a-wáxát íst she sees him *a-wáxát ístín* she sees them.

Indirect object pronoun

a-sei-erek'áa yie' you (will) send me somebody
n-suku-erek'áa yie' I send you somebody
n-si-erek'áa íst yie' I send him somebody
a-seini-erek'áa yie' you send us somebody
n-sukni-erek'áa yie' I send you (pl.) somebody
n-si-erek'áa ístín yie' I send them somebody.

The indirect object pronoun usually functions as a benefactive, e.g.

a-i-j'áto you throw (some- BUT *a-sei-j'áto* you throw
thing) at me (something) for me.

If the object pronoun refers to the same person as the subject pronoun then the reflexive prefix *-si-* is used:

na-si-w'áax I see myself *na-si-wáxán* we see ourselves
a-si-w'áaxát you see yourself *a-si-wáxín* you(pl)see yourselves
a-si-wáx'é he sees himself *a-si-wáxán* they see themselves.

The reflexive prefix is identical with the third person indirect object prefix. The two are distinguished in that the indirect object prefix usually implies the presence of the benefactive suffix *---á-* (see 2.5523), cf.

n-si-j'áto I throw it BUT *n-si-j'áto áa* I throw for myself.

2.512. Tense and aspect

The tense/aspect system of Yaaku is divided into an indefinite and a definite aspect. They are distinguished in the following way:

a. The verbal subject pronouns are:

	Definite aspect	Indefinite aspect
1st person	<i>na-</i>	<i>n-</i>
2nd person	<i>a-</i>	<i>a-</i>
3rd person	<i>u-</i>	<i>o-</i>

b. There are different sets of verbal suffixes for the two aspects. It seems hardly possible to generalize on the shape of these suffixes as almost every verb has a set of its own. The following are examples of such sets:

Indefinite aspect	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1st sg.	<i>-a</i>	<i>-a</i>	<i>-a</i>	<i>-a</i>	<i>-a</i>
2nd	<i>-it</i>	<i>-u(t)</i>	<i>-ot</i>	<i>-i(t)</i>	<i>-u(t)</i>
3rd masc.	<i>-ei</i>	<i>-ui</i>	<i>-oi</i>	<i>-ei</i>	<i>-ai'</i>
fem.	<i>-it</i>	<i>-u(t)</i>	<i>-ot</i>	<i>-i(t)</i>	<i>-u(t)</i>
1st pl.	<i>-in</i>	<i>-un</i>	<i>-on</i>	<i>-in</i>	<i>-an</i>
2nd	<i>-an</i>	<i>-tan</i>	<i>-otan</i>	<i>-an</i>	<i>-tan</i>
3rd	<i>-can</i>	<i>-can</i>	<i>-can</i>	<i>-can</i>	<i>-an</i>

Definite aspect	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1st sg.	-o	-i	-e'	-i'	-e'
2nd	-ito	-ti	-e'	-it	-at
3rd masc.	-o	-i	-e'	-i'	-e'
fem.	-ito	-ti	-ot	-i(t)	-at
1st pl.	-ino	-in	-on	-in	-an
2nd	-ino	-in	-on	-in	-in
3rd	-ino	-in	-on	-in	-an

In the definite aspect, the first person singular and the third person singular Masculine are identical, and so are the first person plural and the third person plural. Identity usually exists between the second person singular and the third person singular Feminine, too, both in the indefinite and the definite aspect.

There are six tense/aspect forms in Yaaku of which two are indefinite and four definite:

Indefinite	I	Indefinite Present	g---
aspect:	II	Future	ke---
Definite	III	Definite Present	g---
aspect:	IV	Past	aa---
	V	Past Progressive	maa---
	VI	Perfect	na---

V is probably composed of a progressive element *me-* and the past tense marker *aa-* (see 2.521).

There is a comitative feature of time associated with the indefinite/definite distinction: indefinite tenses have the feature [— PAST], whereas definite tenses and aspects have [— FUTURE].

2.5121. Affirmative tenses and aspects

I Indefinite Present

It expresses actions that take place or may take place presently or in the near future.

<i>g-wázá</i>	I see	<i>n-d'ecia</i>	I eat
<i>a-wázá</i>	you see	<i>a-d'ecia</i>	you eat
<i>wázá'</i>	he sees	<i>d'écet</i>	he eats
<i>wázat</i>	she sees	<i>d'écet(i)</i>	she eats
<i>g-wázan</i>	we see	<i>n-d'ecin</i>	we eat
<i>a-wázan</i>	you (pl) see	<i>a-d'ecin</i>	you(pl) eat
<i>wázan</i>	they see	<i>d'écen</i>	they eat

<i>n-éga</i>	I drink
<i>a-égot</i>	you drink
<i>'égot</i>	he drinks
<i>n-égon</i>	we drink
<i>a-égotin</i>	you(pl) drink
<i>'ecan</i>	they drink.

II Future

<i>kég-w'áza</i>	I shall see	<i>kén-d'écia</i>	I shall eat
<i>ká-w'ázat</i>	you will see	<i>ká-d'écet</i>	you will eat
<i>ké-w'ázá'</i>	he will see	<i>ké-d'écet</i>	he will eat
<i>ké-w'ázat(i)</i>	she will see	<i>ké-d'écet(i)</i>	she will eat
<i>kég-w'ázan</i>	we shall see	<i>kén-d'écin</i>	we shall eat
<i>ká-w'ázatan</i>	you(pl) will see	<i>ká-d'écin</i>	you(pl) will eat
<i>ké-w'ázan</i>	they will see	<i>ké-d'écen</i>	they will eat.

III Definite Present

It is used if the speaker has no doubt that the action described takes or took place.

<i>na-w'ázé'</i>	I see	<i>na-d'écit'</i>	I eat
<i>a-wázat</i>	you see	<i>a-d'écit'</i>	you eat
<i>a-w'ázé'</i>	he sees	<i>a-d'écit'</i>	he eats
<i>a-w'ázat</i>	she sees	<i>a-d'écit(i)</i>	she eats
<i>na-wázán</i>	we see	<i>na-d'écin</i>	we eat
<i>a-wázán</i>	you (pl) see	<i>a-d'écin</i>	you(pl) eat
<i>a-wázan</i>	they see	<i>a-d'écin</i>	they eat
<i>na-'éce'</i>	I drink		
<i>a-'éce'</i>	you drink		
<i>a-'éce'</i>	he drinks		
<i>a-égot</i>	she drinks		
<i>na-égon</i>	we drink		
<i>a-égotin</i>	you(pl) drink		
<i>a-égon</i>	they drink.		

IV Past

<i>áná-wázé'</i>	I saw	<i>áná-d'écit'</i>	I ate
<i>aa-wázat</i>	you saw	<i>aa-d'écit'</i>	you ate
<i>aa-wázé'</i>	he saw	<i>aa-d'écit'</i>	he ate
<i>aa-wázat</i>	she saw	<i>aa-d'écit'</i>	she ate
<i>áná-wázan</i>	we saw	<i>áná-d'écin</i>	we ate
<i>aa-wázán</i>	you(pl) saw	<i>aa-d'écin</i>	you(pl) ate
<i>aa-wázan</i>	they saw	<i>aa-d'écin</i>	they ate

<i>adná-'éce'</i>	I drank
<i>aa-'éce'</i>	you drank
<i>aa-'éce'</i>	he drank
<i>aa-'éqé'</i>	she drank
<i>adná-'éqé'</i>	we drank
<i>aa-'éqé'</i>	you(pl) drank
<i>aa-'éqé'</i>	they drank

V Past Progressive

<i>mínda-w'áze'</i>	I was seeing	<i>min'aa-d'etí'</i>	I was eating
<i>máá-w'áze'</i>	you were seeing	<i>maá-deetí'</i>	you were eating
<i>máá-w'áze'</i>	he was seeing	<i>maá-deetí'</i>	he was eating
<i>máá-w'áze'</i>	she was seeing	<i>min'áa-deetín'</i>	we were eating
<i>mínda-w'áze'</i>	we were seeing	<i>máá-d'etín'</i>	you(pl) were eating
<i>máá-w'áze'</i>	you(pl) were seeing	<i>máá-d'etín'</i>	they were eating
<i>máá-w'áze'</i>	they were seeing		

VI Perfect

<i>náa-wáze'</i>	I have seen	<i>náa-d'etí'</i>	I have eaten
<i>na-wáze'(t)</i>	you have seen	<i>ná-d'etí'</i>	you have eaten
<i>ná-wáze'</i>	he has seen	<i>ná-d'etí'</i>	he has eaten
<i>ná-wáze'</i>	she has seen	<i>ná-d'etí'</i>	she has eaten
<i>náa-wáze'</i>	we have seen	<i>náa-d'etín'</i>	we have eaten
<i>náa-wáze'</i>	you(pl) have seen	<i>ná-d'etín'</i>	you(pl) have eaten
<i>náa-wáze'</i>	they have seen	<i>ná-d'etín'</i>	they have eaten

2.5122. Negative tenses and aspects

The negative marker is *ge-* for all tenses and aspects except the Perfect which has *n'áa*.

Indefinite and definite aspects are again distinguished by means of verbal subject prefixes and suffixes. The prefixes are the same as for the affirmative tenses and aspects. But there are different sets of suffixes which seem to be identical for most, if not all, verbs. They are:

	Indefinite aspect	Definite aspect
1st sg.	---e	---n
2nd	---(t)e	---n
3rd masc.	---e	---n
fem.	---(t)e	---n
1st pl.	---n	---nen
2nd	---ten	---nen
3rd	---en	---nen

There are few distinctions of person in these suffixes. Only in the plural of the indefinite aspect is person regularly distinguished. The definite aspect is characterized by the presence of a consonant *n* which is preceded, and sometimes also followed, by a vowel. The quality of these vowels is probably predictable from the shape of the verb root, but the examples available are too few to allow for a generalization.

There are fewer negative tenses and aspects than affirmative.

Those are:

Indefinite aspect:	I Indefinite Present	g---
	II Definite Present	ne---
	III Past	a---
	IV Perfect	g---

The vowel *e* of both the negative marker *ge-* and the Definite Present marker *ne-* is replaced by *a* if the following verbal prefix contains *a*.

I Indefinite Present

<i>gén-waze</i>	I do not see	<i>gén-ece</i>	I do not drink
<i>gá-waze</i>	you do not see	<i>gá-egote</i>	you do not drink
<i>gé-waze</i>	he, she does not see	<i>gé-ece</i>	he does not drink
<i>gén-wazé</i>	we do not see	<i>gé-egote</i>	she does not drink
<i>gá-wazén</i>	you(pl) do not see	<i>gén-egóni</i>	we do not drink
<i>gé-wazén</i>	they do not see	<i>gá-egóten</i>	you(pl) do not drink
		<i>gé-ecen</i>	they do not drink

II Definite Present

<i>génén-wázén</i>	I do not see
<i>gána-wázén</i>	you do not see
<i>géné-wázén</i>	he, she does not see
<i>génén-wázén</i>	we do not see
<i>gána-wázén</i>	you(pl) do not see
<i>géné-wázén</i>	they do not see

<i>génén-éqón</i>	I do not drink
<i>gána-éqón</i>	you do not drink
<i>géné-éqón</i>	he, she does not drink
<i>génén-éqón</i>	we do not drink
<i>gána-éqón</i>	you(pl) do not drink
<i>géné-éqón</i>	they do not drink

III Past

<i>gááná-wááán</i>	I did not see
<i>gáá-wááán</i>	you did not see
<i>gáá-wááán</i>	he, she did not see
<i>gááná-wááán-én</i>	we did not see
<i>gáá-wááán-én</i>	you(pl) did not see
<i>gáá-wááán-én</i>	they did not see.

IV Perfect

<i>n'ala-wááán</i>	I have not seen
<i>n'ala-wááán</i>	you have not seen
<i>n'ala-wááán</i>	he, she has not seen
<i>n'ala-w'ááán-én</i>	we have not seen
<i>n'ala-w'ááán-én</i>	you(pl) have not seen
<i>n'ala-w'ááán-én</i>	they have not seen.

If different persons are to be distinguished, then the isolated pronouns are prefixed, e.g.

<i>'úgè' n'ala-égon</i>	I have not drunk
<i>isi n'ala-wááán</i>	he, she has not seen.

2.513. Imperative

The imperative form of the second person singular is usually identical with that of the verb stem. In some cases, however, a vowel *-i* is suffixed:

<i>-deet-</i>	to eat	: <i>deet</i>	eat!
<i>-ég-</i>	to drink	: <i>ég</i>	drink!
<i>-lé'e-</i>	to come	: <i>lé'i</i>	come!
but: <i>-zan-</i>	to go	: <i>zán-i</i>	go!
<i>-ék-¹⁴</i>	to eat	: <i>ék-i</i>	eat!

The second person plural imperative is derived from this form by means of an ending *-o*, or *-n* if the singular ends in *-i*:

<i>deet-o</i>	eat(pl)!	<i>zán-i-n</i>	go(pl)!
<i>ég-o</i>	drink(pl)!	<i>ék-i-n</i>	eat(pl)!

The verb *-lé'e-* has, together with a number of other verbs, an irregular plural: *lé'é* come(pl)!

There is a first person plural imperative which differs from the second person plural form only in having a prefix *n-*:

¹⁴ *-ék-* differs from the synonymous verb *-deet-* in that it requires an obligatory object.

<i>n-deet-o</i>	let us eat!
<i>n-ég-o</i>	let us drink!
<i>n-ék-én¹⁴</i>	let us eat!

2.52. *me-* and *ke-*

If the verb is preceded by constituents other than the subject, then it takes a prefix *me-* or *ke-*. Such pre-verbal constituents may be conjunctions, interrogative words, or object nouns.

The vowel of these prefixes may become *e*, *a*, *i*, or disappear altogether, depending on the phonological environment.

2.521. *me-*

The presence of *me-* usually implies a progressive action. *me-* is obligatorily used when the sentence is introduced by either *kémó* 'why?' or *nte* '(at the time) when'.

<i>kémó (isi) me-le'e</i>	why is he coming?
<i>nte mi-n-le'e</i>	when I am coming
<i>nte m-a-le'e-to</i>	when you are coming
<i>nte me-le'e</i>	when he is coming
<i>nte me-le'e-to</i>	when she is coming
<i>nte mi-n-le'e-no</i>	when we are coming
<i>nte m-a-le'e-tíno'</i>	when you (pl) are coming
<i>nte me-le'e-no'</i>	when they are coming.

Past <i>kémó (isi) me-e-le'e</i>	Why was he coming?
<i>nte me-e-n-le'e</i>	when I was coming
<i>nte m-a-le'e-to</i>	when you were coming
<i>nte me-e-le'e</i>	when he was coming
<i>nte me-e-le'e-to</i>	when she was coming
<i>nte me-e-n-le'e-no</i>	when we were coming
<i>nte m-a-le'e-tíno'</i>	when you (pl) were coming
<i>nte me-e-le'e-no'</i>	when they were coming.

The Past marker *aa-* seems to be reduced to *-e*¹⁵.

Perfect <i>kémó (isi) me-ne-le'e</i>	Why has he been coming?
<i>nte me-ne-n-le'e</i>	when I have been coming
<i>nte m-a-le'e-to</i>	when you have been coming
<i>nte me-ne-le'e</i>	when he has been coming
<i>nte me-ne-le'e-to</i>	when she has been coming

¹⁵ *me-* does, however, also occur with the full form of the Past in the Past Progressive (see 2.512.).

<i>nle me-ne-n-le'e-no</i>	when we have been coming
<i>nle ma-n-a-le'e-tino'</i>	when you(pl) have been coming
<i>nle me-ne-le'e-no'</i>	when they have been coming.

The verbal subject prefixes show that all tenses and aspects are in the indefinite aspect. Apart from these three there do not seem to exist other tenses or aspects.

Instead of being prefixed to the verb, *me-* can also introduce a subordinate clause:

<i>n'ini' na-zaini nairobi' me isin le'eno</i>
(we we-go Nairobi me they come)
We go to Nairobi while they are coming.
<i>n'ini' na-zaini nairobi' ma 'adpuk d'etti(i)</i>
(we we-go Nairobi me you eat)
We go to Nairobi while you are eating.

2.522. *ke-*

ke- is used i.a. if interrogative words like *iyó* 'who?', (*di*)*nyoh* 'what?' and *sélé* 'where?' occur, or if the object obligatorily precedes the verb.

<i>iyó ka-a-lé'e</i>	Who was coming?
<i>isí dinyoh ka-a-wax</i>	What did he see?
<i>isí sélé ka-a-ranyé'</i>	Where did he go?
<i>isí itoria ká-a-'ih damatúti</i>	He ruled over women.
(he rule he-made women)	

The *ke-* form seems to be used with all tenses and aspects except the Future, which itself has a prefix *ke-*.

Indefinite Present

<i>sapare ké-y-kúsiáá</i>	I tell lies
<i>sapare k-á-kúhtáá</i>	you tell lies
<i>sapare ké-kúsiáá</i>	he tells lies
<i>sapare ké-kúhtáá</i>	she tells lies
<i>sapare ké-y-kúhtáá</i>	we tell lies
<i>sapare k-á-kúhtáá'</i>	you(pl) tell lies
<i>sapare ké-kúsiáá'</i>	they tell lies.

Definite Present

<i>sapare ki-na-k'áso'</i>	I tell lies
<i>sapare k-á-k'áhtó'</i>	you tell lies
<i>sapare k-á-k'áso'</i>	he tells lies
<i>sapare k-á-k'áhtó'</i>	she tells lies

<i>sapareki-na-k'áhtó'</i>	we tell lies
<i>sapare k-á-k'áhtó'</i>	you(pl) tell lies
<i>sapare k-á-k'áhtó'</i>	they tell lies.

Past

<i>sapare k-áá-nú-k'áso'</i>	I told lies
<i>sapare k-áá-kúhtó'</i>	you told lies
<i>sapare k-áá-kúso'</i>	he told lies
<i>sapare k-áá-kúhtó'</i>	she told lies
<i>sapare k-áá-nú-k'áhtó'</i>	we told lies
<i>sapare k-áá-kúhtó'</i>	you(pl) told lies
<i>sapare k-áá-kúhtó'</i>	they told lies.

Past Progressive

<i>sapare ki-mi-ná-á-k'áso'</i>	I was telling lies
<i>sapare ki-má-á-k'áhtó'</i>	you were telling lies
<i>sapare ki-má-á-k'áso'</i>	he was telling lies
<i>sapare ki-má-á-k'áhtó'</i>	she was telling lies
<i>sapare ki-mi-ná-á-k'áhtó'</i>	we were telling lies
<i>sapare ki-má-á-kúhtó'</i>	you(pl) were telling lies
<i>sapare ki-má-á-k'áhtó'</i>	they were telling lies.

Perfect

<i>sapare ki-n'á-á-k'áso'</i>	I have told lies
<i>sapare ki-ná-á-k'áhtó'</i>	you have told lies
<i>sapare ki-ná-á-k'áso'</i>	he has told lies
<i>sapare ki-n'á-á-k'áhtó'</i>	we have told lies
<i>sapare ki-ná-á-kúhtó'</i>	you(pl) have told lies
<i>sapare ki-ná-á-k'áhtó'</i>	they have told lies.

In the negative, *ke-* is deleted and the verb forms are indistinguishable from the other verb conjugation patterns:

<i>sapare yé-y-kuséé</i>	I do not tell lies
<i>sapare yé-ne-y-kúsiáá</i>	I do not tell lies
<i>sapare yááá-kúsiáá</i>	I did not tell lies
<i>sapare n'áá-kúsiáá</i>	I have not told lies.

2.523. Narrative

A narrative is formed by placing *ke-* and the subject prefix in sentence-initial position rather than immediately in front of the verb:

<i>ke-ti le'e</i>	and somebody came
<i>ke-n ('iige') xani'</i>	and I go
<i>k-a ('adpuk) xante'</i>	and you go

<i>ke (isi) xanyis'</i>	and he goes
<i>ke (isi) xaniu'</i>	and she goes
<i>ke-n (n'isi) xaine'</i>	and we go
<i>k-a (áin) xantin</i>	and you(pl) go
<i>ke (isin) xanyin</i>	and they go.

2.53. 'to be' and 'to have'

2.53.1. 'to be'

The copula 'to be' is *ke*:

<i>kéd'én kè c'éin</i>	The tree is big.
<i>ké'émé' ke 'in'ini'</i>	The trees are big.
<i>isi ke çou</i>	It is a knife.
<i>n'ini' ke yaaku</i>	We are Yaaku.

Instead of *ke*, two series of pronoun-sensitive copula forms are optionally used, which are:

	A	B		A	B
1st sg.	<i>kon</i>	<i>kon</i>	1st pl.	<i>kon</i>	<i>koyku</i>
2nd	<i>kau</i>	<i>ke</i>	2nd	<i>kau</i>	<i>kaku</i>
3rd	<i>ke</i>	<i>ke</i>	3rd	<i>ke</i>	<i>keke</i>

A is used if the copula is followed by a noun or a numeral whereas B has been found only with following adjective:

A	'içe' <i>kon yakunte</i>	I am Yaaku
	'adçuk <i>kau yakunte</i>	you are Yaaku
	<i>isi ke yakunte</i>	he, she is Yaaku.
	<i>n'ini' kon yaaku</i>	we are Yaaku
	<i>áin kau yaaku</i>	you(pl) are Yaaku
	<i>isin ke yaaku</i>	they are Yaaku.
B	'içe' <i>kón c'éin</i>	I am big
	'adçuk <i>káu c'éin</i>	you are big
	<i>isi ké c'éin</i>	he, she is big
	<i>n'ini' koyku in'ini'</i>	we are big
	<i>áin káu in'ini'</i>	you(pl) are big
	<i>isin keke in'ini'</i>	they are big
	<i>áin káu/ké çapon</i>	you(pl) are five
	'içe' <i>kón/ké wéhé</i>	I am one, I am alone
	<i>n'ini' koyku/ke m'óje</i>	we are many.

The negative copula series are:

	A	B		A	B
1st sg.	<i>yón</i>	<i>yón</i>	1st pl.	<i>yón</i>	<i>yóyku</i>
2nd	<i>yáu</i>	<i>yáu</i>	2nd	<i>yáu</i>	<i>yáku</i>
3rd	<i>yó</i>	<i>yó</i>	3rd	<i>yó</i>	<i>yóku</i>

<i>isi yó yie'</i>	He is not a man.
<i>'adçuk yáu c'éin</i>	You are not big.
<i>isin yóku t'ere'</i>	They are not bad.

All these forms refer to the Indefinite Present. There is one more tense and one aspect, which are Past and Perfect, respectively.

The Past is formed by adding an infix *-a-* which, depending on its environment, can become *-o-* or zero:

'içe' <i>koon l'óyo'</i>	I was a child
'adçuk <i>kau l'óyo'</i>	you were a child
<i>isi ke l'óyo'</i>	he was a child
<i>n'ini' koon l'óyoni</i>	we were children
<i>áin káu l'óyoni</i>	you(pl) were children
<i>isin ke l'óyoni</i>	they were children.

The Perfect is characterized by an infix *-na-* which changes to *-no-* and *-n-*, respectively, under the same conditions as the Past tense marker *-a-*:

'içe' <i>kanon l'óyo'</i>	I have been a child
'adçuk <i>kanau l'óyo'</i>	you have been a child
<i>isi ke n l'óyo'</i>	he, she has been a child
<i>n'ini' konón l'óyoni</i>	we have been children
<i>áin kándu l'óyoni</i>	you(pl) have been children
<i>isin ke n l'óyoni</i>	they have been children.

All the above conjugation patterns denote the indefinite aspect only. The definite aspect is derived by adding a suffix *-u*.

Present	'içe' <i>konu l'óyo'</i>	I am a child
	'adçuk <i>kau l'óyo'</i>	you are a child
	<i>isi kou l'óyo'</i>	he is a child
	<i>n'ini' konu looyon'ide'</i>	we are children
	<i>áin kau looyon'ide'</i>	you(pl) are children
	<i>isin kou looyon'ide'</i>	they are children.

Past	'iŋe' koonu l'oyoyi' 'aduk kaau l'oyoyi' 'isi koon l'oyoyi' etc.	I was a child you were a child he, she was a child.
Perfect	'iŋe' kononu l'oyoyi' 'aduk kanau l'oyoyi' 'isi konou l'oyoyi' etc.	I have been a child you have been a child he, she has been a child.

The noun following the copula has a suffix *-i* in the Singular and *-de* in the Plural. It is not known why this obligatory suffix is used in the definite aspect.

2.532. Comparison

The comparative is formed by means of copula sentences plus an adverbial phrase which is governed by the preposition *ou* 'from':

<i>isi ke c'én ou 'i'</i> (he is big from I)	He is bigger than I.
<i>damatúti keke 'in'ini ou l'oyoyi</i> (woman-pl are big from child-pl)	Women are bigger than children.
<i>kéd'en ké c'én ou ai</i> (tree is big from house)	The tree is bigger than the house.

Superlatives are formed by adding the intensifier *inon* 'very' to the adjective:

<i>isi ke c'én inon</i> (he is big very)	He is the biggest.
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2.533. 'to be somewhere'

The verb *-gwe-* preceded by the locative preposition *ou* is used in order to form the locative copula. Only Present, Past and Perfect seem to occur:

Present	<i>onu/nou gwe'e nairóbi'</i> <i>au gwe'e(t) nairóbi'</i> <i>ou gwe'ei nairóbi'</i> <i>ou gwe'e(t) nairóbi'</i> <i>onu/nou gwe'en nairóbi'</i> <i>au gwe'etan nairóbi'</i> <i>ou gwe'en nairóbi'</i>	I am in Nairobi you are in Nairobi he is in Nairobi she is in Nairobi we are in Nairobi you(pl) are in Nairobi they are in Nairobi.
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Past	<i>oon'ú gwe'e nairóbi'</i> <i>aan gw'e'e(t) nairóbi'</i> <i>'oou gw'e'e nairóbi'</i> <i>'oou gw'e'e(t) nairóbi'</i> etc.	I was in Nairobi you were in Nairobi he was in Nairobi she was in Nairobi.
Perfect	<i>onon'ú gwe'e nairóbi'</i> <i>an'au gw'e'e(t) nairóbi'</i> <i>on'ou gw'e'ei nairóbi'</i> <i>on'ou gw'e'e(t) nairóbi'</i> etc.	I have been in Nairobi you have been in Nairobi he has been in Nairobi she has been in Nairobi.

3.534. 'to have'

'to have' is expressed by means of the verb *-lo'o* which differs from other verbs in that it does not distinguish personal suffixes. The plural suffix is for both indefinite and definite aspect *-ni*. Past and Perfect markers are *ee-* and *ene-* rather than *aa-* and *na-*, respectively.

Indefinite Present	<i>n-l'ó'o' w'aa'</i> <i>-al'ó'o' w'aa'</i> <i>l'ó'o' w'aa'</i> <i>n-lo'óni' w'aa'</i> <i>a-lo'óni' w'aa'</i> <i>lo'óni' w'aa'</i>	I have cattle you have cattle he, she has cattle we have cattle you(pl) have cattle they have cattle.
Definite Present	<i>na-lo'o' w'aa'</i> <i>a-lo'o' w'aa'</i> <i>u-lo'o' w'aa'</i> <i>na-lo'óni' w'aa'</i> etc.	I have cattle you have cattle he, she has cattle we have cattle.
Past	<i>een-ló'o' w'aa'</i> <i>aa-ló'o' w'aa'</i> <i>ee-ló'o' w'aa'</i> <i>een-ló'óni' w'aa'</i> etc.	I had cattle you had cattle he, she had cattle we had cattle.
Perfect	<i>enen-ló'o' w'aa'</i> <i>anú-ló'o' w'aa'</i> <i>ene-ló'o' w'aa'</i> <i>enen-ló'óni' w'aa'</i>	I have had cattle you have had cattle he, she has had cattle we have had cattle.

Future	<i>kén-l'ó'o' w'aa'</i>	I shall have cattle
	<i>l'ó'o' w'aa'</i>	you will have cattle
	<i>ké-l'ó'o' w'aa'</i>	he, she will have cattle
	<i>kén-ló'óni' w'aa'</i>	we shall have cattle.
	etc.	

The negative of 'to have' is either formed by means of the invariable word *kélóí* 'have/has not' or by the verb *-t'et'* which occurs only in the Indefinite Present.

<i>damatú kélóí booyoni</i>	The woman has no children.
<i>'iige' kélóí w'aa'</i>	I have no cattle.
<i>n-t'et'a w'aa'</i>	I have, had, will not have cattle
<i>a-t'et'e w'aa'</i>	you have, had, will not have cattle
<i>t'et'ei w'aa'</i>	he has, had, will not have cattle
<i>t'et'e w'aa'</i>	she has, had, will not have cattle
<i>n-t'et'in w'aa'</i>	we have, had, will not have cattle
<i>a-t'et'án w'aa'</i>	you (pl) have, had, will not have cattle
<i>t'et'án w'aa'</i>	they have, had, will not have cattle.

2.54. Complex verbs

If a verb governs another verb then there are two alternative constructions: either the governed verb is placed behind the governing verb in what may be called an auxiliary-infinitive construction:

<i>n-jeej-á pon</i>	I want to sleep
<i>n-xan-á pon</i>	I go to sleep.

The ending of the "infinitive" is usually zero, *-ei*, or *-ai* but other suffixes also occur:

<i>n-xana éq</i>	I go to drink
<i>n-xana ji-ei</i>	I go to throw
<i>n-xana p'dag-ei</i>	I go to break
<i>n-xana k'áa-ei</i>	I go for a short call
<i>n-xana w'dx-ai</i>	I go to see.

-ei and *-ai* can be optionally replaced by *-di*, e.g.

<i>n-xana w'áx-di</i>	I go to see
<i>n-xana p'dag-di</i>	I go to break
<i>n-xana k'áa-di</i>	I go for a short call
<i>n-xana q'áá-di</i>	I go to kill.

Alternatively, both verbs receive the full set of inflexional affixes and are connected by *k'ó*:

<i>n-jeej-a</i>	<i>k'ó m-pon-i</i>	I want to sleep
<i>a-jeej-it</i>	<i>ko 'á-pon-ti</i>	you want to sleep
<i>jeej-i</i>	<i>k'ó pon-i</i>	he wants to sleep
<i>jeej-it</i>	<i>k'ó pon-ti</i>	she wants to sleep
<i>n-jeej-in</i>	<i>k'ó m-pon-i</i>	we want to sleep
<i>a-jee-tán ko</i>	<i>a-pon-tin</i>	you(pl) want to sleep
<i>jee-an ko</i>	<i>pony-in</i>	they want to sleep.

2.55. Derivation

2.551. Verbal nouns

Nouns are derived from verbs by means of the suffix *-to'*:

<i>-xanum-</i>	to go habitually	<i>xan'án-to'</i>	going habitually, a walk
<i>-ek-</i>	to eat	<i>ek-to'</i>	food
<i>-wax-</i>	to see	<i>wax-to'</i>	seeing, a view.

2.552. Verbal extensions

2.5521. Causative

Causatives are formed by suffixing *---a-* to the verb root:

<i>-qag-</i>	to be full	<i>-qag-s-</i>	to fill
<i>-wax-</i>	to see	<i>-wax-s-</i>	to show
<i>-deet-</i>	to eat	<i>-deet-s-</i>	to feed (e.g. cattle)
<i>-eek-</i>	to recover	<i>-eek-s-</i>	to cure.
	(one's health)		

2.5522. Venitive

A suffix *---'á-* (*---o* in the definite aspect) is used to express that the action takes place in direction toward the speaker or the place specified by the speech context, rather than away from the speaker:

<i>-xan-</i>	to go	<i>-xan-'á-</i>	to come (back)
<i>-pelkis-</i>	to take away	<i>-pelkis-'á-</i>	to bring here
<i>-maat'-</i>	to sell	<i>-maat-'á-</i>	to buy.

2.5523. Benefactive

Exactly the same suffix *---'á-* (*---o* in the definite aspect) has the function of a benefactive case, expressing that the action is done in favour of somebody:

<i>-gai-</i>	to kill	<i>-gai-'á-</i>	to kill for somebody
<i>-doort-</i>	to look at	<i>-doort-'á-</i>	to look at for somebody.

2.5524. Intransitive

Sometimes there appears a suffix *-m-* which renders a transitive verb intransitive, e.g.

-paag- to break (tr.) : *-paug-m-* to break (intr.).

2.5525. Habitual

An habitual aspect is formed by partially or totally reduplicating the verb stem. Partial reduplication can involve either the first part or the last part of the stem.

Partial reduplication

<i>-suk-</i>	to pull	: <i>-si-sik-</i>	to pull habitually
<i>-eitis-</i>	to precede	: <i>-eit-itis-</i>	to precede habitually
<i>-esks-</i>	to prepare	: <i>-ek-esks-</i>	to prepare habitually
<i>-pom-</i>	to sleep	: <i>-pom-am-</i>	to sleep habitually
<i>-mut-</i>	to go out	: <i>-mut-at-</i>	to go out habitually
<i>-gat-</i>	to cut	: <i>-gat-et-</i>	to cut habitually

Total reduplication

<i>-zan-</i>	to go	: <i>-zana-zan-</i>	to go habitually
<i>-wax-</i>	to see	: <i>-waxa-wax-</i>	to see habitually
<i>-deet-</i>	to eat	: <i>-deetu-deet-</i>	to eat habitually
<i>-gai-</i>	to kill	: <i>-gaia-gai-</i>	to kill habitually
<i>-tir-</i>	to push	: <i>-tira-tir-</i>	to push habitually
<i>-maal-</i>	to like	: <i>-maia-mal-</i>	to like habitually
<i>-pom-</i>	to sleep	: <i>-poma-pom-</i>	to sleep habitually
<i>-tu-</i>	to hit	: <i>-tu-tu-</i>	to hit habitually

Some verbs suffix an optional *-t-* the function of which is unclear:

<i>-waxa-wax-</i>	or <i>-waxa-wax-t-</i>	to see habitually
<i>-tira-tir-</i>	or <i>-tira-tir-t-</i>	to push habitually
<i>-maia-mal-</i>	or <i>-maia-mal-t-</i>	to like habitually

2.6. The question

Various types of questions have been discussed in the preceding sections (2.335; 2.521; 2.522). We have seen that the interrogative adjective follows its governing noun, and that words like *kémó* 'why?', *alé* 'where?', and *(di)nysh* 'what?' usually precede the verb.

Sentence questions are distinguished from statements only by a rising tone and stress on the last syllable, e.g.

<i>is' ale's</i>	he is coming	: <i>is' ale'is</i>	is he coming?
<i>damatú ale'ito</i>	the woman	: <i>damatú ale'it'o</i>	is the woman coming?

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(to be concluded)

Buchbesprechungen

Hetzron, R., *The Verbal System of Southern Agaw*. University of California Publications. Near Eastern Studies 12. University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1969. X + 123 S.

Seit den 80er Jahren des vorigen Jahrhunderts, als L. Reinisch einen beachtlichen Vorstoß zur Erforschung der sogenannten Agaw-Sprachen, einer aus eng miteinander verwandten Sprachen bestehenden Gruppe der kuschitischen Sprachen Nordost-Afrikas, unternahm, sind nur wenige weitere Beiträge auf diesem Gebiet erschienen. Und doch handelt es sich nicht nur um Sprachen eines eigentümlichen Typus, auf deren Bedeutung für die hamitischsemitische Sprachforschung bereits in den älteren, genannten, Quellen hingewiesen ist, sondern auch um die Substrate, die den in Äthiopien eingedrungenen semitischen Sprachen, vor allem dem Amharischen und dem Tigrinya, zu Grunde liegen und somit für die Äthiopisten besonders aufschlußreich sind. Es ist daher sehr zu begrüßen, daß Herr Hetzron mit modernen Methoden einen bis jetzt offensichtlich noch recht unvollkommen bekannten Teil dieser Gruppe, den südlichsten, das Awiya (ein ungeeigneter Ausdruck, den der Verfasser durch Southern Agaw, also Süd-Agaw, ersetzt), unter die Lupe nimmt und mit Erfahrungen, die auf 1965/66 in Äthiopien gemachten Feldstudien beruhen, in die vielen Ecken hineinleuchtet, die das morphologische Gebäude dieser Sprache aufweist.

Es ist in diesem Rahmen nicht möglich, die Arbeit Hetzrons in allen Einzelheiten zu würdigen. Ich möchte daher nur einige Probleme