Sociolinguistic Survey Report of the Nayi Language of Ethiopia

Written by: Aklilu Yilma

SII. International
2001
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1. Introduction

The Nayi (Na'o) language belongs to the Majoid (Dizoid) subgroup of the Omotic language family. Most of the speakers of this language live in the villages Goba, Gushi, Angela-Menesh, and Udadish of the Decha Awraja, which is part of the Kefa administrative region. The nearest town is Bonga.

Many Nayi speakers have migrated from the Decha Awraja to other parts of the Kefa province—either in search of fertile land or to flee the war and other conflicts in Decha area.

Some Nayi people—all of them farmers—also live in villages near Bonga. They came to these villages in search of fertile land during the time of Emperor Haile Sellassie.

A few Nayi people live in Dulkuma, a village of the Shoa Bench Wereda (formerly Shoa Gimira Wereda), where they have settled in areas traditionally inhabited by Me'en and Bench people.

And finally, as we found out in a field trip carried out December 8–10, 1993 by Ralph and Kati Siebert and myself, a number of Nayi people also live in the villages Aybera, Kosa, and Jomdos of the Sheko Wereda, an area traditionally inhabited by speakers of Sheko, Majang, Bench, and Kefa. This group is estimated to be about 500 to 600 people. They came to these villages to flee the 1976–1977 war between the feudal lords of Decha Awraja and the military government.

The Administrative Map shows the administrative areas at the time when the research was carried out, with Nayi as part of Keffa, or Zone 11. The Linguistic Map shows Nayi—an Omotic language—in its geographic relations to the neighboring Cushitic and Semitic languages. The sketch of the linguistic areas is based on the material prepared for the next edition (1996) of the *Ethnologue*.

*Linguistic Map*
(based on the *Ethnologue*, draft for the 1996 edition)

*Road Map*
2. Phoneme Inventory

For a detailed description of the Nøy phonology, and other information about the Nøy people, see Aklilu 1991.

2.1 Consonant Phonemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stops</td>
<td>vd.</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vl.</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>glott.</td>
<td>p'</td>
<td>t'</td>
<td>k'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricatives</td>
<td>vd.</td>
<td>z</td>
<td>z̜</td>
<td>z</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vl.</td>
<td>f</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>s̜</td>
<td>h</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affricates</td>
<td>vl.</td>
<td>ts</td>
<td>tʃ</td>
<td>tʃ [tʃ]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>glott.</td>
<td>tʃ'</td>
<td>tʃ' [tʃ']</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasals</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral</td>
<td>l</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trill</td>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semivowels</td>
<td>w</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>j</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2 Vowel Phonemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Central</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>i:</td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>e:</td>
<td>(ã)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The short mid central vowel (ã) is problematic. However, this vowel will be considered a phoneme in the present description.

2.3 Tone, syllabic nasals

Nøyi has three phonemic tones:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Mid [unmarked]</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Notation</td>
<td>á</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>à</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are two syllabic nasals: [m] and [n].

3. Noun Morphology

3.1 Number

Nouns are marked for plurality by suffixing the plural marker -kis to singular forms which are unmarked:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>boy</td>
<td>dòdù</td>
<td>dòdùkis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>person</td>
<td>jà:b</td>
<td>jà:bkis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bird</td>
<td>kà:f</td>
<td>kà:fkis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cloth</td>
<td>afal</td>
<td>afalkis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2 Gender

Nayi makes use of either lexical items or gender marking suffixes to distinguish gender. In most cases, where different lexical items are employed to distinguish gender, the final vowels seem to be -u for masculine and -i for feminine.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>father</th>
<th>bà:bù</th>
<th>mother</th>
<th>bà:jì</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>grandfather</td>
<td>èku</td>
<td>grandmother</td>
<td>ègi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elder brother</td>
<td>nonu</td>
<td>elder sister</td>
<td>nìjì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bull</td>
<td>zégu</td>
<td>cow</td>
<td>oti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yg. brother</td>
<td>ójìkì</td>
<td>yg. sister</td>
<td>ójìkin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In those cases where gender is expressed morphologically, the feminine marker -i is infixd in the noun root. Also, the noun is made definite by suffixing the feminine definite morpheme -n.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>relative m.</th>
<th>tósn</th>
<th>the relative f.</th>
<th>toisin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dog</td>
<td>keóńù</td>
<td>the bitch</td>
<td>keínù</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cock</td>
<td>kobù</td>
<td>the hen</td>
<td>koibìù</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he-goat</td>
<td>éskù</td>
<td>the she-goat</td>
<td>éskù</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he-rat</td>
<td>útnì</td>
<td>the she-rat</td>
<td>útnì</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3 Definiteness

Definiteness is expressed either by the definite masculine marker -s or the feminine marker -n.

- house ?i: the house ?is
- dog keónù the dog keónùs
- the bitch keìmì
- father ba:bù the father ba:bùs
- mother ba:jì the mother ba:jì

3.4 Pronouns

3.4.1 Subject Pronouns

In the subject pronoun, Nayi distinguishes gender in the third person singular pronouns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ps.</th>
<th>Sg.</th>
<th>Pl.</th>
<th>Honorific</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>nà</td>
<td>nàkìs</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>jeta</td>
<td>itikìs</td>
<td>itì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3m.</td>
<td>isi</td>
<td>ìṣṣìkùfì</td>
<td>ìṣfì</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3f.</td>
<td>iʃì</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4.2 Vocative Pronouns

Ps.

2 masc neá
2 fem ne

3.4.3 Object Pronouns

Ps.  | Sg.    | Pl.     | Honorific |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>nákùì</td>
<td>nákùìa</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>jetkùì</td>
<td>ìtìkìs(n)ìa</td>
<td>itna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3m.</td>
<td>is(n)à</td>
<td>ìtìkùfì(n)à</td>
<td>ìtìfì(n)à</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The suffixes -a and -na are accusative case markers.
3.4.4 Possessive Pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ps.</th>
<th>Sg.</th>
<th>Pl.</th>
<th>Honorific</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>nākí</td>
<td>nākí</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>jetkí</td>
<td>itkiskí</td>
<td>itkí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3m.</td>
<td>iskí</td>
<td>?uʃkuʃkí</td>
<td>?uʃkí</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3f.</td>
<td>iʃkí</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4.5 Demonstrative Pronouns

Nayi demonstratives are composed of a root plus a gender marker: ha- the proximal root, translated as ‘this, those’, and nea/-ne- the distal root, translated ‘that, those’.

Masculine demonstratives are marked by the suffix -s, and feminine demonstratives by -jin. Nayi may also suffix the plural morpheme -kis to the singular demonstrative pronoun optionally.

this/those masc ha:s
- fem ha:jin
that/those masc neás
- fem ne:jin

3.4.6 Reflexive Pronouns

Reflexivity is formed by prefixing the pronominal morphemes and suffixing the dative case marker -iʃ to the word mòt ‘head’.

ní-mòt-iʃ myself
je-mòt-iʃ yourself
e-mòt-iʃ himself
iʃ-e-mòt-iʃ herself
ní-mòt-iʃ ourselves
itkis-mòt-iʃ yourselves
ekis-mòt-iʃ themselves
3.4.7 Interrogative Pronouns

In the interrogative pronoun system, gender is marked in the pronoun form 'which'.

who? ití
what? jírá
where? wosté
which? m. hákíbós/hákíbabé
       f. hákíbej/hákíbejé
how? àsté
for what purpose/reason,
why? jébej
how much,
how many? ambitsé
when? àsté
whose? itikí
whom? itiné

3.5 Possessive Pronominal Affixes

Singular

my child ń-dòdù
your child je-dòdù
his child is-dòdù
her child iš-dòdù

Plural

our child ń-dòdù
your child itikís dòdù
their child ŋufku f dòdù

The first person singular and plural possessive affixes of nouns are differentiated by tone.

3.6 Case

The Nayi language marks case in the following ways:
3.6.1 Nominative -i

jà:`i jù-b-a
person-NOM die-PAST
A man died.

3.6.2 Accusative -a/-na

isi keó:n-ù-s-a mútn-a
he dog-DEF-ACC hit-PAST
He hit the dog.

gá:bári-s ufá-na kom-tég-a
farmer-DEF horn-ACC take-go-PAST
The farmer took the horn.

3.6.3 Dative -if/-itʃ

isi keó:n-ù-s-iʃ á:jku át-s-a
he dog-DEF-DAT meat give-PAST
He gave meat to the dog.

je-nif na:k na át-s-a
woman-DAT money I give-PAST
I gave money to the woman.

The dative case marker -tʃ occurs in the first person singular and plural pronouns, as well as in the second person singular pronoun.

je-tʃi zungu hà:tʃn-a
you-DAT sheep I slaughter-PAST
I slaughtered a sheep for you.

c'ó:n't'ambe zanga hà-tʃi átsam-bef iʃ-jég-a
small sorghum I-DAT give reason she-come-PAST
She came to give me some sorghum.

3.6.4 Genitive -kn

Possession is usually expressed by a construction in which the possessor is followed by the possessed item.
keásì:
chief house
chief's house

Inalienably possessed nouns can also be expressed by the morpheme -kí optionally.

keónù atfuu/keónùkí atfù
dog tooth/dog tooth
dog's tooth

ɔt t'ámu/ɔtkú t'ámu
cow udder/cow udder
cow's udder

Alienable relations, however, cannot be marked by -kí.

*dòdùkú keónù
*Boy-INalienable-'s dog

Proper nouns suffix -ba to indicate possession.

wondim-ba afal
Wondemu's cloth

3.6.5 Locative -k’a

isi ha:j-k’a wút-a
he water-LOC fall-PAST
He fell in the water.

3.6.6 Directional -ta

gába-tá n-tég-a
market-DIR I-go-PAST
I went to the market.

tu:r ba-ta báj wu:t-a
earth on-DIR monkey fall-PAST
A monkey fell on the ground.
3.6.7 Vocative -e/-jo

ñ-dŏd-e
my-boy-VOCAT
Oh my boy!

ja:be-jo
man-VOCAT
Oh man!

ñ-dŏdli-s-kis-jo
my-child-DEF-PL-VOCAT
Oh my children!

3.7 The Numeral System

In arithmetical counting, numerals have the following forms:

1 jīs
2 tāgn
3 kādú
4 kubnī
5 útjaú
6 jāku
7 tusu
8 ziét
9 sāgn
10 támmu
From 11 to 19, the respective units are added after *tám* 'ten' and the conjunction is *-ka* 'and'.

11  támka jïsn
12  támka tà:gn
13  támka kâdú
14  támka kubnì
15  támka útf:jú
16  támka jâku
17  támka tu:su
18  támka zïét
19  támka sâgn

For multiples of ten, either the first part of the respective unit—or the entire unit—precedes the number *tám* 'ten'.

20  t'â tám
30  ka tám
40  kubnì tám
50  útf tám
60  jâku tám
70  tu:sn tám
80  zït tám
90  sâgn tám
For 20 to 90, there is a conjunction -ka between the multiples of ten and the units that follow.

21 tātāmkā jāsn
33 katāmkā kādū
55 útśaam úťśāi
82 zēttāmkā tā:gn
94 sāgg tāmkā kubrī

For 100 and its multiples, the word bāllā is employed, and the word for 1000 is wūna.

110 bāllā-ka tāmmuka
200 tā-bāllā
535 úťśāi bāllā-ka katām-ka úťśāi

3.8 Derived Agent Nouns

Agent nouns can be derived from nouns by suffixing the morphemes kāba/kābe or -bab/-bej.

gā?na wealth
gā?nakāba/gā?nkābe rich one, m.
gā?nakāba/gā?nabej rich one, f.
deāhn work (noun)
deāhnkāba/deāhnbab worker, m.
deāhnkābe/deāhnbej worker, f.

3.9 Postpositions

Postpositions always suffix either the direction case marker -ta or the locative marker -k’a.
here
there/over there
there (not far)
way down there
up there
under, below
in front of ('san' face')
above (most 'head')
near, beside
between
inside

astá
istá
eka hastá
wök ha:s-tá
sóha:s-tá
óštá
san-tá
mot-tá
gibuk'a
betnk'a/betntá
bażk'a

4. Verb Morphology

In Nayi, the verbal system basically has four tenses (past, present, future
and present progressive), six aspect-like distinctions (pluperfect, present
perfect, future perfect, past progressive, future progressive and immedi-
ate) and two moods (imperative and jussive).

4.1 The Copula

The copula plays an important role in the Nayi verb morphology. Its form
is te/-to-, and the elements -na present and -kn past, are suffixed to it to in-
dicate the state of the action. The copula ŏna has a meaning equivalent to
Amharic nāw or allā, and its past form tokn corresponds to the Amharic
nābbārā. However, unlike Amharic, the copula does not inflect for person,
number, or gender.

na téna
na tokn
jeta téna
jeta tokn

I am
I was
you are
you were

In addition, the copula has the following functions:

(1) It occurs in predicate sentences of the equational type:
isi koʃkuba téna
he farmer is
He is a farmer.

isi jəŋjə téna
he bad is
He is bad.

Some sentences of the above type have been recorded in which the copula is absent.

neáʃ jàːbah jisʃkn jàːb
that man-DEF good man
That man is good.

boanga jẽáts kàtãm
bonga big town
Bonga is a big town.

(2) It occurs following noun phrases which are in focus.

ʔuʃkuf m-aba ʃoala téna
they eat-REL injera is
It is injera what they ate.

(3) It also compounds with the aspectual morphemes (past, present/future, or present progressive) and the relative pronoun marker -ba, to form different types of verbal aspects.

nà m-aba téna
I eat-PAST-RP AUX
I have eaten.

nà m-aba tokn
I eat-PAST-RP AUX
I had eaten.

nà m-ki-ba téna
I eat-PROG-RP AUX
I have been eating.
The aspects of the Nayi verb forms are like embedded sentences; for instance, the first of the preceding examples (*na maba tena*) could be translated literall as ‘I, who eat it-is’.

### 4.2 Past

The past tense refers to a complete past action, and it is expressed by the suffix morpheme *-a*. In the following paradigm, only the first and third person pronominal markers are prefixed to the verb stem.

**Singular**

1. na jég-a/n-jéga  
   I come-PAST  
   I came.

2. jeta jég-a  
   you SG come-PAST

3m. is-jég-a  
   he-come-PAST

3f. if-jég-a  
   she-come-PAST

**Plural**

1. nákis jég-a/n-jéga  
   we come-PAST

2. itkis jeg-a  
   you PL come-PAST

3. ūškuʃ jég-a  
   they come-PAST

### 4.3 Present/Future

The present or future tense marker is *-am*; it expresses a present or future state of an action. However, the morphemes *ba/bej*, which are physically identical with the relative pronoun forms, are suffixed to the present/
future stem optionally. The exact meaning of these morphemes is not entirely clear, but it seems that they refer to an action that is going to be fulfilled.

**Singular**

1. nà jég-am(ba)/n-jégam(ba)
   I come-NON-PAST
   I come/shall come.

2. jeta jégam(ba)

3m. is-jégam(ba)

3f. if-jégam(bej)

**Plural**

1. nakis jégam(ba)

2. itkis jégam(ba)

3. ?uʃuʃ jégam(ba)

**4.4 Present Progressive**

The present progressive is formed by suffixing the verb of existence, -ki, to the verb root.

**Singular**

1. nà jé-ki/n-jéki
   I come-PROGR
   I am coming.

2. jeta jéki

3m. is-jéki

3f. if-jéki
Plural

1  nákis jéki
2  itkis jéki
3  ʔuʃkuʃ jéki

4.5 Aspect

As mentioned above, aspect is formed by compounding the various simple tense stems and the relative pronoun marker with the copula tena or tokn (cf. section 4.1, part (3)).

4.5.1 Pluperfect

The pluperfect is formed from the past stem by means of the relative pronoun and the copula tokn. The pronominal markers do not affix the verb stem in the aspect form.

Singular

1  nà jég-a-ba tokn
   I come-PAST-RP copula
   I had come.

2  jeta jégaba tokn

3m.  isi jégaba tokn

3f.  isi jégabej tokn

Plural

1  nakis jégaba tokn
2  itkis jégaba tokn
3  ʔuʃkuʃ jégaba tokn
4.5.2 Present Perfect

The present perfect is formed from the past stem, a relative pronoun, and the copula *ténà*.

Singular

1.  nà jég-a-ba ténà  
   I come-PAST-RP copula  
   I have come.

2  jeta jégaba ténà

3m.  isi jégaba ténà

3f.  ifi jégabej ténà

Plural

1  nákis jégaba ténà

2  itkis jégaba ténà

3  ?uskuj jégaba ténà

4.5.3 Future Perfect

The future perfect is formed from the present/future stem, the relative pronoun and the copula *ténà*.

Singular

1  nà jég-am-ba ténà  
   I come-NON-PAST-RP copula  
   I will have come.

2  jeta jégamba ténà

3m.  isi jégamba ténà

3f.  ifi jégambej ténà
22

Plural

1  nákis jégamba téna

2  itkis jégamba téna

3  Ṣuʃkuʃ jégamba téna

4.5.4 Past Progressive

The past progressive is formed from the present progressive stem, the relative pronoun and the copula tokn.

Singular

1  nà jég-ki-ba tokn
    I come-prog-rp copula
    I was coming.

2  jeta jékiba tokn

3m. isi jékiba tokn

3f. işi jékibej tokn

Plural

1  nakis jékiba tokn

2  itkis jékiba tokn

3  Ṣuʃkuʃ jékiba tokn

4.5.5 Future Progressive

The future progressive is formed by compounding the progressive verb stem and the relative pronoun with the copula aṣa.
Singular

1       na jég-am-ne-ki
       I come-PRES/FUT-PROGR
       I am about to come.

2       jétá jégamneki

3m.    isi jégamneki

3f.    isi jégamneki

Plural

1       nákis jékiba téna

2       itkis jékiba téna

3       ʔuʔkuʃ jékiba téna

4.5.6 Immediate Aspect

The immediate aspect is formed from the present/future tense stem, the auxiliary -ne which marks the inception of an action, and the verb of existence (the present progressive tense marker) -ki.
Plural

1  nakis jégamneki
2  itkis jégamneki
3  ŋuskuŋ jégamneki

4.6 Negation

There are two negative markers, -oa and -kaj. These markers alternate freely in various tenses and aspects. Generally, it seems that the negative past tense and the pluperfect are formed by suffixing -oa to the verb root or stem.

gadn isi jégoa
He did not come yesterday.

na fadn-oa
I did not count.

na jégabo tokn
I had not come.

The negative pluperfect, future perfect of the third person sg. fem. is formed by changing the third person sg. relative marker -bej to -boj. Compare the following sentences.

iʃi jégabej tokn  She had come.
iʃi jégaboj tokn  She had not come.
iʃi jégaboj tena  She will not have come.

Negative present/future tenses and negative predicative sentences of the equational type are expressed by the morpheme kaj which means 'there be/will not/has not'.

nà fadn-a kaj
I count-INF NEG
I do/will not count.
beárn nà je kaj
tomorrow I come NEG
I will not come.

neá-s ja:b-us ši:kns kaj
that-MASC man-DEF good NEG
That man is not good.

iškí gida kaj
she-GEN force NEG
She does not have strength.

goibi ṭeáts kätám kaj tēna
Goba big town NEG copula
Goba is not a big town.

4.7 Imperative

The singular imperative is the basic form of the verb. It may take an optional suffix -n(e).

m/m-ne
Eat!

jäg/jé-ne
Come!

täg/té-ne
Go!

The plural imperative is formed by suffixing -(n)it or -te to the singular imperative form. The plural imperative suffix -te occurs following the syllabic nasal -n.

mit
Eat! (pl.)

ténit
Go! (pl.)
jénit  
Come! (pl.)

Şuşkn-te  
Wash! (pl.)

átm-te  
Hold! (pl.)

Negative imperatives infix the auxiliary -k’o, the verb ‘to remain’, between the verb root and the imperative morphemes.

Singular       Plural

tāk’on         tāk’onit
Do not go!

jék’on/jégâk’on       jék’onit/jégâkonit
Do not go!

The imperative suffix -te does not seem to occur in the negative plural imperative.

4.8 Jussive

The jussive form has a singular imperative stem plus the pronominal affixes in the second person. The first person has a pronominal prefix followed by an infinitive verb. The negative jussive in the second person is formed from the negative imperative stem and the person marking suffixes. The first person, however, has a prefixed pronominal marker, plus the verb root, the auxiliary -k’e ‘to remain’, and the present/future tense marker -am.

Affirm./Negative

Singular

1    n-tāg-a/n-tāg-k’e-ām
l-go-INF/l-go-AUX-PRES/FUT
Let me go/don’t let me go
3m. té-is/tä-k’on-is
    go-IMP-he/go-AUX-he
    Let him go/don’t let him go

3f. té-iʃ/tä-k’on-ίʃ
    go-IMP-she/go-AUX-she
    Let her go/don’t let her go

Plural

1  ni-tä-g-a/ní-täg-k’e-am
    we-go-INF/we-go-AUX-PRES/FUT
    Let us go/don’t let us go

3  té-n-ʔuʃ/ta-k’on-ʔuʃ
    go-IMP/go-AUX-they
    Let them go/don’t let them go

4.9 Passive

The passive morpheme is -ʔ/-t. These two forms of passive markers seem to occur in free variation. Observe the following examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>m</th>
<th>mt’a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eat!</td>
<td>was eaten</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| wuʃ́ | wuʃ́ta     |
| Kill!| was killed |

| éʃk | éʃkut’a |
| Call!| was called |

4.10 Reciprocal

The reciprocal morpheme is -k’u. The reciprocal verb stem has the following structure:

VB ROOT + -k’u + PASS (PL/IMPV) (TENSE)
fá:ž-k’u-t-nit
insult-RECIPR-PASS-PLIMPV
Insult each other!

ʔu[kuʃ fá:ž-k’u-t-a
they insult-RECIPR-PASS-PAST
They insulted each other.

ú-fá:ž-k’u-t-a
we-insult-RECIPR-PASS-PAST
We insulted each other.

ʔu[kuʃ mú:t-k’u-t-a
they hit-RECIPR-PASS-PAST
They hit each other.

5. Syntax

5.1 Word Order

The usual sentence word order is SOV. Observe the following examples:

bà:jã-s keô:nû-s-a wuʃ:-a
lion-DEF dog-DEF-ACC kill-PAST
The lion killed the dog.

keô:nû-s bà:jã-s-a wuʃ:-a
dog-DEF lion-DEF-ACC kill PAST
The dog killed the lion.

jeib-ã keô:nû-s-iʃ aʃku áts-a
woman-DEF dog-DEF-DAT meat give-PAST
The woman gave meat to the dog.

5.2 Relative Clauses

The relative clause is marked by the morphemes -beʃ in the third person feminine, and by -ba in other persons.
godn jég-a-ba ja:bu-s ñub-a
yesterday come-INF-RM man-DEF die-PAST
The man who came yesterday died.

bà:jà-s wuf-m-bej oit-ù dep-t'-a
lion-DEF kill-INF cow-DEF bury-PASS-PAST
The cow which the lion killed was buried.

5.3 Adverbial Clauses

Adverbial clauses are formed from the verb root, the verb of existence -ki,
and the participle marker -te, or a morpheme -n which expresses an imme-
diate sequential action.

ì:ta jé-ki-té ku:t-tá if-wu:t-a
house-DIR come-PROGR-PARTIC road-DIR she-fall-PAST
She fell on the ground when she was coming home.

nà fetu-ki-n ñ-wút-am
I run-PROGR-SEQU 1-(will) fall
When I am running I (will) fall.

5.4 Conditional Clauses

Conditional clauses are indicated by the morpheme -k'ata.

isi fet-k'ata is-wút-am
he run-if he-fall-PRES/FUT
If he runs he will fall.

m-k'eá-k'ata ñ-nca-am
eat-AUX/REMAIN-if I thin-PRES/FUT
If I do not eat I will remain thin.

5.5 Reason Clauses

The morpheme -bef is added to the verb stem to express purposive action.

ñ-a[ku-na is-komt-a-bef keónù-s-a ñ-mútn-a
I meat-ACC it-take-INF-because dog-DEF-ACC 1-hit-PAST
I hit the dog for the reason that it took my meat.
dambáka jifkn if-wor-n-bej if-a ni-utn-a
very good she-happen-INF-because she-ACC I-love-PAST
I loved her because she is very beautiful.

ka:lu-na wo:?am-bej ni-ha:jn-ki
coffee-ACC drink-PRES/PUT-because I-want-PROGR
I want to drink coffee.

5.6 Conjunctions

The morpheme -ka is suffixed to all noun phrases which are coordinated.

nà-ka jet-ka hæs-ka neas-ka
I and you this and that

iʃi keonu-s-ʃif aʃk-ka ha:j-ka áts-a
she dog-DEF-DAT meat-and water-and
She gave meat and water to the dog.

Noun phrases of alternative types are conjoined by wæje in declarative sentences and by the morpheme ma in questions.

nà wæje jeta nà mæ jeta
I or you. I or you?

ʃeala mā gobẹa jeta ha:jn-ki
injera or taro you want-PROG
Do you want injera or taro?

When consecutive clauses which have the same subject are conjoined, the antecedent verb takes the convert verb (participle form) obligatorily.

kaj-te ń-deh-a
rise-having we-work-PAST
We got up and worked.

aʃk-ʃa kom-te ita té-ne
meat-DEF-ACC take-having house-DIR go-IMPV
Take the meat and go home!
Bibliography

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