
WAYS AND MEANS OF COMMUNICATION IN KARA

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0. Introduction

For a people with an oral tradition, adequate verbal communication is critical. Therefore when such a language is reduced to writing it is important to retain the flavor of the communication. This paper outlines the diagnostic features of the various modes of Kara communication that assist in the transferral of this communication flavor.

The Kara, a generous, friendly, inquiring people numbering about 2,500, live on the Northeast coast of New Ireland. Kara is an Austronesian language belonging to the Northern New Ireland subgroup of the Patpatar-Tolai family.

1. Transitivity and meaning

It is difficult to keep semantic and grammatical components of the language separate. Therefore we first discuss some of the associated problems of analyzing the distinctive features.

Transitivity, occurring as a spectrum, is a major factor in Kara grammar and is indicated by various kinds of phonetic changes. The most frequent change is from stop to fricative, but this is limited to the bilabial and velar obstruents only. It is best to theorize that the stop is the most basic, becoming a fricative in the more transitive uses of the verb. This also correlates with

the process of reduplication where a bilabial or velar stop word initial begins with the appropriate voiced fricative after reduplication. This applies mainly to verbal forms (including adjectival forms as well) and also to reduplicated nominals. However, when one form occurs as an adjective it is quite possible that the verbal form is basic and the adjective is the derived.

- (1) *kul*
shout
- (1a) *Fataapus nane kul.*
'Suddenly he shouted.'
- (1b) *xul-i-et*
shout-at-going.past
- (1c) *Nane xuliet naari pana rao i xawas.*
3s shout.at 3pl conc int 3s ride
'She shouted at them going past concerning wanting a ride.'
- (1d) *xu -kul -ai*
dur shout dist:trans

A frequent change occurs in the voiceless velar consonants, either word initial or word final.

- (2) *kuus* (2a) going to *xuus-e*
say tell 3so
- (3) *siak* (3a) going to *siax-e*
get get 3so

The word final change only occurs in the velars, for *siip* 'hit' does not go to **siif* or **siiv-e* but to *siip-e* 'hit-3so'. Because voiced stops and fricatives never occur word final we have no occurrences of /g/ alternating with /x/ nor /b/ alternating with /v/ in word final position. However they do occur word initially.

- (4) *buk* (4a) *No buk a so?*
want 2s want art what
'What do you want?'
- (4b) *bux -an -e* (4c) *Nane buxane.*
want trans 3so 3s want:trans:3so
'He wants it.'

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>(4d) <i>vu</i> <i>-bux</i> <i>-an</i> <i>-e</i>
 dur want want 3so
 ‘desire’</p> | <p>(4e) <i>Nane</i> <i>vubuxane.</i>
 3s dur:want:trans:3so
 ‘He desires it.’</p> |
| <p>(5) <i>vangut</i>
 ignorant:vi</p> | <p>(5a) <i>Nane</i> <i>vangut.</i>
 3s ignorant:vi
 ‘He didn’t know.’</p> |
| <p>(5b) <i>bangut</i>
 ignorant:adj</p> | <p>(5c) <i>a</i> <i>mataa</i> <i>bangut</i>
 art man ignorant:adj
 ‘an ignorant man’</p> |

At the top of the Transitivity Spectrum (T.S.) are the velars, as in *xuus* ‘tell.’ This verb requires an agent and a listener/patient. Since there are two participants involved there is a high degree of transitivity. The verb *kuus* ‘say’ has a source or initiator but no undergoer or experiencer. It is possible to ‘say’ something without anyone to listen or hear. So this form is much lower on the T.S. Both of these words may and frequently will be followed by a quote, either direct or indirect. Only one of these terms has been included in the following study of communication modes since their distinctive features, as depicted in this paper, are the same. The term *vangut* ‘ignorant:vi’ is lower on the spectrum than *kuus* because it does not have an agent, only an experiencer/patient. Likewise *bangut* ‘ignorant:adj’ is used as a description of a person and by losing its verbal or ‘active’ quality comes lower on the T.S. than *vangut*. This change is also marked by a positional change in the argument. Consider *ne vangut* ‘I am ignorant (I don’t know)’ vs. *a mataa bangut pi ta fanganan* ‘an ignorant man has no food.’

There is much more involved in the T.S., but hopefully our method will become clearer as we proceed.

Some of the ways of communication have not been included here because they fall into subsets of a more general mode which is already listed:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>(6) <i>ferawai</i>
 speak</p> | <p>(6a) <i>ferawai</i> <i>fa</i> <i>-kasal</i>
 speak cause threat
 ‘threaten or annoy’</p> |
| <p>(7) <i>xuus</i>
 tell</p> | <p>(7a) <i>xuus</i> <i>fa</i> <i>-texaas</i>
 tell caus know
 ‘inform’</p> |

- (8) *fī* (8a) *fī fa -soraak*
 ask ask caus insist
 'ask insistently'

2. Discussion of diagnostic features

A study was made to contrast the diagnostic features that would separate the different modes the most quickly and efficiently. The first components considered were a contrast of [VOICED] versus [VOICELESS]. This was used to distinguish 'thought' communication and whistling from other forms. The next division was a contrast between [VERBAL] and [NON-VERBAL]. This separated out hoots and humming. Each of these were further divided into categories such as [ALERT] which includes warnings or attention getting devices, [REQUEST] encompassing ask and beseech, [STATEMENT] including speak, tell, shout and command or advise. Also included here is 'thinking to oneself'. Finally on this level [DECEPTION], i.e., deceive and to talk-behind-someones-back were separated as categories. Under many of these components further divisions are possible. For example under [STATEMENT] an intermediate level of [TWO WAY] versus [ONE WAY] flow of communication is noted. In [TWO WAY] there are two people actively involved in the conversation act, but in [ONE WAY] there may be two people present but only the speaker is actively involved as agent and the other is perceived of as only a listener or experiencer. Many of the components can be divided into [+INTENSE] versus [-INTENSE], a category which distinguishes between such things as ask and beseech. Finally there is the feature labelled [NON-NORMAL VOLUME]. This does not conflict with features [VOICED] or [INTENSE] because it has to do with the loudness of the speech rather than the quality of it.

3. Diagnostic features of the modes of communication.

The modes for making a request include *fī* a voiced, verbal, non-intense request, which is used in seeking information. This would include asking where a person is going, what time it is, or for any general type of information. However, to ask a favor, or for something that is beyond one's means (such as asking for money or the use of the car or when praying to the spirits) then the mode *nung*, the voiced, verbal, intense request is used.

- (9) *Nane fīn -au* "*Nane paan xe faa?*"
 3s ask 1so 3s go to where
 'He asked me, "Where did he go?"'

- (10) *Nane nung a mus pana veowa.*
 3s beseech art spirit conc shark
 'He beseeched the spirit concerning shark.'
- (11) *Re fe nung xe sina Piran.*
 3dl go beseech to 3s:poss God
 'They went (to) beseech of God.'

The ALERT component includes four modes: *xel* 'call for' a voiced, verbal general alert is used to request someone to accompany you. It has an underlying meaning of 'get', with a human object.

- (12) *Na Yon xel na Pita xe la uma.*
 art John call art Peter to loc garden
 'John called for Peter (to go) to the garden.'

A second mode is illustrated by *ras* 'warn' as a voiced, verbal, intense ALERT verb. One occurrence of *barase* 'rebuke:scold:admonish' was found. No separate meaning for *ba* has been discovered. However, no other occurrences of the form have been found, so this could be a different but related word.

- (13) *Na Lobo a ras -au "Ai, Malak, na uaam laui*
 art Lobo 3s warn 3so hey Malak art old.one up

xo falet saa!"
 there.now goes too
 'Lobo warned me, "Hey, Malak, the old thing up there is going too!"'
- (14) *Na Xaraak xo a barase "No yangan no sau ua!"*
 art Xaraak now 3s scold 2s sing you what huh
 'Xaraak now scolded her, "What are you doing singing huh!"'

A third mode used is a voiced, nonverbal ALERT *tef*. This describes a hoot that is used out in the bush to let others know you are coming or to find out where they are. The final form in this study is a voiceless, nonverbal, alert *feo*. This is whistling which is a somewhat limited form of communication. It is usually a single note or a set series of notes. A *rongan* 'spirit of the dead man' may whistle a short single note at night or the *silipato* 'a dwarf like spirit man', will whistle in descending order as they march along at night in single file. However, rarely do people whistle because if someone whistles there won't be any fish, or if they are working sago they won't get much sago.

Also whistling is used to call the spirits. Occasionally people will whistle when out in the bush alone but this may be a form of protection.

The verb *bit* 'deceive' is a voiced, verbal, non-intense deception. It is used both for joking and for more serious forms of lying or deceiving. The phrase *ngut kasam* has the idea of talking maliciously behind someone's back. It is described as a voiced, verbal, intense deception.

The feature [STATEMENT] assumes there is no intention of eliciting a response but simply asserts a fact. The fact as stated may generate some discussion, however, that is not the purpose of the statement. The verbs *ferawai* 'to speak' and *fepialai* 'criticize:berate' illustrate a counter example to the general assumption due to a productive grammatical process affixing a *fe-ai* to a verb in order to express co-ordinated/reciprocal actions. The speaking verb *ferawai* 'to speak' is a voiced verbal statement requiring a two-way non-intense exchange of information. Obviously this requires two or more participants. As mentioned, this is marked on the verb by the use of the double reciprocal morpheme as follows:

(15) *fe -raw -ai*
rec sound dist:trans

(15a) *Re ferawai fa -xuvul.*
3dl speak caus accom
'They two speak together.'

or it can be used as:

(15b) *Ne ferawai xuvul pa Yon.*
1s speak accom inst John
'I speak with John.'

The verb *fepialai* 'criticize' is a voiced verb statement with two-way intense flow. This is not a performative verb which expects a result of the criticism but describes the type of action where two people are very angry with each other and are freely elaborating on one another's shortcomings.

Unaffixed verbs present a more orthodox picture of the diagnostic feature [STATEMENT]: verbs such as *ilisai* 'think to oneself', *kuus* 'say' and *xukulai* 'shout'. The voiceless, verbal *ilisai* relates to a situation where a person reiterates his thinking about a certain matter. In a sense he is quoting his own mental processes.

We work with our liver for everything. - Masul Saakawa

0. Introduction

Papua New Guinean languages are rich in body image concepts expressing qualities of personality and other traits of character (McElhanon 1977:8), or emotion and thoughts. Each language, however, has its own set of body image concepts which are culture specific. In the Mauwake² language, speakers use body parts to express psychological realities and certain abstract concepts. By choosing a certain body part for focus and adding to it verbal or adjectival forms, a person's feelings, state of mind, etc. are expressed.

Kema 'liver' is by far the most productive body part for generating terms which express emotion, physical condition, mental activity, opinion and will. There are at least 60 such expressions in Mauwake, more than all the other body parts, which generate from one to 12 expressions.

This paper discusses expressions with the body part *kema* 'liver'. Section one describes the semantic scope of expressions which contain this word. Section two outlines the semantic and grammatical features which add distinct meanings to expressions involving *kema*. This paper is followed by an appendix giving the list of expressions using *kema* 'liver'.

1. The semantic scope of *kema*

The physical organs referred to as *kema* include the inside of the chest above the diaphragm, as well as the various internal organs within the chest:

- (1) *kema mumua*
liver seed
'heart'
- (2) *kema fofola*³
liver foam
'lung'

² The Mauwake language of Papua New Guinea is a non-Austronesian language belonging to the Kumilan family, Pihom Stock, Adelbert Range Super-stock and Madang-Adelbert Range sub-phylum. It is spoken by approximately 2,000 people, in 15 villages and hamlets in the Bogia Sub-Province of Madang Province, in an area about 120 km north-west of Madang on the North Coast Road and reaching about 18 km inland.

³ Some speakers say *kema kofora* instead of the regular form *kema fofola*.

APPENDIX

Chart of Diagnostic Features

	Voiced	Verbal	Alert	Req	Stat	Decep	Intense	Non-Normal Volume
<i>fi</i>	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	-
<i>nung</i>	+	+	-	+	-	-	+	+
<i>xel</i>	+	+	+	-	+	-	-	-
<i>ras</i>	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	+
<i>baras</i>	+	+	-	-	+	-	+	-
<i>tef</i>	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	+
<i>feo</i>	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
<i>bit</i>	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	-
<i>ngut kasan</i>	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	-
<i>iliai</i>	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-
<i>ferawai</i>	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	-
<i>fepialai</i>	+	+	-	-	+		+	+
<i>kuus</i>	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	-
<i>xukulai</i>	+	+	-	-	+	-	+	+
<i>sei</i>	+	+	-	-	+	-	+	-
<i>ngaxa</i>	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	-