

Dialect Survey Report

of the

Odoodee Language

(Ethnologue code KKC)

Western Province

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SIL

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Introduction

This report includes many areas that were already covered in our Sociolinguistic and Literacy Study of the Odoodee Language Group (1999). Therefore it should be read in conjunction with this report. In areas that relate to the dialect situation, we have included the changes in the language situation since 1999.

1. Location

1.1 Summary of geographical area

The land on which the Odoodee people live is basically flat with some gentle hills, gradually becoming more hilly and mountainous toward the north in the area of the village of Tulusi. The entire area consists of thick rain forest and sago swamps.

Kalamo village is located somewhat near the Wawoi River and Wawoi Falls, though the village itself is about 2 kilometres from these. Hasalibi village is located on a high ridge in a bend in the Tomu River at the junction of Somali River. Tulusi village is located on the summit of a small mountain.

Generally, travel between villages is by foot over bush tracks. This is usually not a problem at any time of year, although in the rainy season the trails can be very slippery and full of leeches. People in Kalamo can either take an MAF airplane from the Wawoi Falls airstrip, or travel up and down the Wawoi River by dugout canoe or motor canoe. There is also an airstrip at Hasalibi, and the people there also travel by canoe or motor canoe to other villages along the Tomu or Strickland Rivers, such as to Nomad.

1.1.1 Location of language group map

See appendix for map: **1.1.1 Location of the language group**. This map shows the location of the Odoodee language group within PNG and within Western Province.

1.1.2 Language area map

See appendix for map: **1.1.2 Language Area**. This map shows the Odoodee language area, which also includes surrounding areas and travelling information. It also shows the location of the nearest towns.

1.1.3 Overview of Wawoi Falls

See appendix for map: **1.1.3 Overview of Wawoi Falls Area**. This map shows the Odoodee and Kamula villages at Wawoi Falls.

1.1.4 Surrounding languages

See appendix for map: **1.1.4 Language Boundaries** for names and locations of surrounding language groups.

Basically the Odoodee people know (to varying degrees) the neighbouring languages. There has been a tradition of bilingualism with them, which is still in use today. It does not seem as if Tok Pisin is replacing this tradition.

2. Linguistic Differences

2.1 Lexical Variation between dialects

The following chart displays the lexical variations that exist among the three villages in the Odoodee language group. Research was conducted using the SIL

Survey Word List (1999 revision). This is an exhaustive list of the variants found using the SIL Word List. However it is not a thorough comparison of all possible words (e.g. from the Odoodee-English Dictionary), but merely a sampling. All other elicitations from the word list were identical.

	Words elicited from: (village name)		
Gloss (English)	Kalamo (Wawoi Falls)	Hasalibi	Tulusi
head	wili'gi wələ'gi	wili'gi	ɔlu'gi ulu'gi
hair	wu'du	wu'du	u'du
knee	ɛ'bi	ɛ'bi	e'bi
back*	'waki	'waki	mɪl'ki
old person	'adaga 'ɔdoga	'ɔdoga	'ɔdog ^w a
give	te'ne	te'ne	tə'ne
(he) killed	wələ'mazɔ	wələ'mazɔ	ɔlə'mazɔ
(he) catches	dəu'ga	dəu'ga	dəu'g ^w a
full	'metamalaga 'metabalaga	'metamalaga	'metabalaga
cloud	kələ'bɔ	kələ'bo	kele'bɔ kele'bo
wind	ɸo	ɸo	ɸi'la ɸo
wing*	u	u	a'da
claw*	hɔmusu'gɔ hɔmɔsu'gɔ	hɔmusu'gɔ	di'gɔ̃ du'gɔ̃
arrow	tiɔ	tiɔ	tuɔ
what?	ɔ'gɔbɔ	ɔ'gɔbɔ	ɔ'gɔba
who?	ɔ'gumɔ	ɔ'gumɔ	ɔ'guma
when?	kɔpɔ'lɔnɛmɔ	kɔpɔ'lɔnɛmɔ	kɔpɔ'lɛnɛma
where?	ka'powɔ	ka'powɔ	ka'powa
we two	ãzã'lɔ̃	ãzã'lɔ̃	ãzã'zɔ̃

After comparing the information in the chart above, we have concluded that the main dialect is spoken in Kalamo and Hasalibi.

The dialect spoken in Tulusi diverges only slightly from the main dialect, as seen from the following lexicostatistical observations from the SIL survey word lists which were gathered:

Among the three dialects, 90% of the words are completely identical.

A further 8% of the items that are not completely identical are still phonologically very similar.

Only 2% of the items are unrelated.*

It should be noted that all three unrelated words (*) do occur in the ‘main dialect’ as well. The words given by the Tulusi people were more general in scope. For instance, the word given for ‘claw’ in the Tulusi dialect is the general word for ‘nail’ (e.g. fingernail) in the main dialect, while the main dialect has a specific word for ‘bird’s claw’.

2.2 Phonological differences

The phonological differences that we noted are quite minor.

- 1) the Tulusi dialect elides word initial ‘w’
Main: [wɔlɔ'mazɔ] ‘(he) killed’
Tulusi: [ɔlɔ'mazɔ] ‘(he) killed’
- 2) Whereas the question markers (-*bo*, -*mo*, -*wo*) in the main dialect exhibit the vowel /ɔ/, the corresponding Tulusi dialect forms have /a/.
Main: [ɔ'gɔbɔ] ‘what’; [ɔ'gumɔ] ‘who’; [kɑ'powɔ] ‘where’
Tulusi: [ɔ'gɔbɑ] ‘what’; [ɔ'gumɑ] ‘who’; [kɑ'powɑ] ‘where’
- 3) Some items in the main dialect reflect a process of vowel harmony whereby the vowels preceding a final vowel come to agree with it in backness:
Main: [kɔlɔ'bɔ] ‘cloud’; [wili'gi] ‘head’
Tulusi: [kɛlɛ'bɔ] ‘cloud’; [ulu'gi] ‘head’
- 4) Some items in the Tulusi dialect, on the other hand, reflect a sporadic process of vowel harmony whereby the vowels in a root come to agree in their tenseness:
Tulusi: [kɛlɛ'bɔ] ‘cloud’; [e'bi] ‘knee’
Main: [kɔlɔ'bɔ] ‘cloud’; [ɛ'bi] ‘knee’

2.3 Grammatical structure differences

There are no differences in the grammatical structure between the two dialects.

3. Social Differences

Socially, the Odoodee are a very homogeneous group, with no social/political factions and no inter-clan rivalry.

3.1 Prestige areas

The village of Kalamo (Wawoi Falls) would seem to have a fair amount of prestige. There are many factors that contribute to this:

- a) Size: more than half of the language group lives here (240, compared to 113 in Hasalibi, and 71 in Tulusi)
- b) Education: there is a community school at Wawoi Falls, while there is none at either Hasalibi nor Tulusi.
- c) Health services: there is a Health Sub-Centre located at Wawoi Falls, while there is only an APO at Hasalibi, and no health services within a day’s walk of Tulusi.
- d) Development/commerce: a timber company is currently logging the Kamula land. The company has made logging roads, greatly increasing the mobility of the Odoodee people living at Kalamo so that they can purchase store goods and find work with the timber company. As a result, more money seems to be flowing into the Kalamo community.

This prestige is evident in that, in the past few years, we have seen several families from Hasalibi and Tulusi move to Kalamo in order to take advantage of the three previously mentioned points (i.e. education, health services, and development).

It should be noted that not everyone shares this view that Kalamo is the best place for the Odoodee to be living. Since the land around Wawoi Falls belongs to the Kamulas, many people living at Hasalibi want those living in Kalamo to move back to their traditional land (i.e. the land around Hasalibi).

3.2 Attitudes towards dialects

There is a general impression given by the people that those living in Kalamo and Hasalibi speak the same, while those living in Tulusi speak a bit different. It is said that they speak the same language but they tend to turn the talk a bit. However, there are very few differences in the dialects, so when people from the different dialects meet, they speak their own dialect. Each group tends to think that their own dialect is the correct form of the language. Since the village of Tulusi is relatively small in number and they are the only ones who speak the different dialect, we have chosen to work in the main dialect.

When we visited the people of Tulusi, we stated that we would not be able to produce much literature in their dialect. They said that they would still be accepting of the literature written in the other dialect, and that it would not be difficult to read and understand. This acceptance has proven true in that the people from Tulusi have been eager to buy the vernacular materials we have produced in the main dialect.

If we were to produce materials in the 'Tulusi dialect', it is doubtful that the people living in Kalamo and Hasalibi would accept it. From this we can discern that the main dialect (spoken in Kalamo and Hasalibi), has higher prestige.

4. Effect of Lingua Franca, Church Language and Neighbouring Languages

4.1 Language stability

There are no signs of a language shift toward major languages nor toward any neighbouring languages.

The language situation seems to be a very stable multilingual state. The only change in the past few years has been a borrowing of a few words from other languages. Even though the Odoodee people living at Wawoi Falls have been living next to the Kamula people for over 25 years, there has not been any noticeable shift to using Kamula. Very few words have been borrowed from them. However, the people living at Hasalibi feel that they speak the 'pure' Odoodee, and that those living at Wawoi Falls have changed the language.

Perhaps the reasons for this stable condition are that the cultures and lifestyles of the Kamula and Odoodee people are somewhat different, they are not related linguistically, and the people do not regularly do things together. There have been only two Kamula-Odoodee marriages (another required due to sister exchange after the first one), and they have been viewed quite negatively.

We do not expect the situation to change radically in the next 10 or even 20 years. Some changes may come about if the younger people make their way off from the area to find work. But again, it is usually only the men who would search for work on the outside. Women will probably continue to remain in the village with their families. With the introduction of the vernacular elementary schools at both Wawoi

Falls and Hasalibi, we expect the use of the mother tongue to continue to remain strong.

4.2 Language prestige

Reportedly, English and Tok Pisin have a fair amount of prestige among the people. They feel that it is helpful to learn these languages, primarily for their own personal benefit in getting work or in travelling to other parts of PNG. We have also observed that some people enjoy speaking a few words of English or Tok Pisin in front of their friends perhaps to try and gain some respect in their friends' eyes.

It has also been observed that the Kamula language has some amount of prestige too. The Wawoi Falls area is Kamula ground, so it seems that the Odoodee people living in Kalamo village still consider themselves as outsiders. As outsiders, they feel they are expected to learn to communicate (at least a little) with the Kamula people in the Kamula language. This is mainly true of some of the Odoodee men. When an Odoodee man stops to talk with a Kamula man, they will speak in Kamula, and not the other way around. Odoodee women do not seem to know Kamula. It is also true that the small language groups surrounding the Wawoi Falls area tend to be bilingual in Kamula. Very few Kamula people are bilingual in the neighbouring languages.

Even though English, Tok Pisin, and Kamula may have some prestige, it is believed that the people still are proud of their own language. This is evidenced in several ways: 1.) the fact that they continue to use their language and are not shifting toward other languages, even after years of exposure to them, 2.) the people are also glad to have the vernacular elementary schools and support them and the teachers, 3.) the older people, especially in Hasalibi, are keen on learning to read and write in their own language as shown by their attendance at weekly literacy classes, and 4.) they held a big celebration in honor of receiving their first Scripture portion, Mark's Gospel.

4.3 Language use patterns

The entire Odoodee population use their own language in all domains when they are interacting within the language community. The following section is taken from the Sociolinguistic and Literacy Study describing domains:

Odoodee: People use their own mother tongue in all domains.

Kamula: Kamula is usually used only by men greater than 20 years old in conversations with people from this neighbouring language group. Other times include: on the first Sunday of each month, the churches (which are all ECPNG) at Wawoi Falls (Kalamo Local, Keseki Local, and Kulule Local) meet together for the morning worship service. They usually meet at the Keseki church since it is the District church. The service is conducted in Kamula, but the sermon usually gets translated into Odoodee. People from the neighbouring village of Werio are bilingual in Kamula and Kasua, so Odoodee speakers use Kamula (if they know it) when speaking with them. Some Kamula songs are also sung in the church services. Some Kamula speakers know Odoodee, so there is potential for conversations between the groups to be in Odoodee. However, Kamula is normally used. Otherwise Kamula is not used in the everyday life of the Odoodee people.

Biami: Biami is a strong regional church language in the Hasalibi and Tulusi areas. The pastor at Hasalibi is a Biami man. He preaches in Biami, which is then translated into Odoodee. Besides a few Biami songs in church, this language is not used in everyday life. If some of the Hasalibi or Tulusi people travel through Biami

land, those that know the language will use it when they come in contact with Biami people. The same is true if some Biami people pass through Hasalibi or Tulusi. The Odoodee people who know Biami would use that when talking with Biami folk. Very few Biami people know Odoodee.

Honibo: This is a neighbouring group to Hasalibi. Some Hasalibi people use this language when talking with Honibo people. Also some of the Honibo people know Odoodee, so conversations could take place in either language. Otherwise Honibo is not used in everyday life.

Seleya: This is a neighbouring group to Tulusi. Some Tulusi people use this language when talking with Seleya people. Also some Seleya people know Odoodee, so conversations could take place in either language. Otherwise Seleya is not used in everyday life.

Kaluli: This is a neighbouring group to Tulusi. Some Tulusi people use this language when talking with Kaluli people. Also some Kaluli people know Odoodee, so conversations could take place in either language. Otherwise Kaluli is not used in everyday life.

Gogodala: Gogodala is a strong regional church language in the Kalamo area. The former pastor at Kalamo was a native Gogodala speaker. He preached in Gogodala, which was translated into Odoodee. Besides a few Gogodala songs in church, this language is not used in everyday life.

English: The use of English has come about as a result of the community school, which began at Wawoi Falls in 1980. Normally English is only used in school, with outsiders who know English, and some songs are sung in church. Only people who have been to school (those about 25 and under) are able to speak English, with varying degrees of fluency. If some of the Odoodee people travel to areas of PNG which are mostly English speaking (in contrast to Tok Pisin), then someone in the travelling group would know English and act as an interpreter.

Tok Pisin: Tok Pisin is not very strong here, especially not in Kalamo. When people from the Highlands pass through, people converse in Tok Pisin, though not many people are fluent in it. Otherwise, a few Tok Pisin songs are sung in church. When Odoodee people travel to areas in PNG which use Tok Pisin, then someone in the travelling group would be able to speak Tok Pisin and act as an interpreter.

Obviously the only way some people become fluent in Tok Pisin is by coming in contact with people from outside the area who speak it. There does seem to be a fair amount of traffic passing through the area nowadays, especially as people come for employment with the timber company. Generally these are young men from the highlands, and so the younger men in the village are hospitable toward them. Therefore it is the younger men that become fluent in Tok Pisin through this contact.

Another way that the younger men become fluent in Tok Pisin is by working for the timber company. During their employment, they come in contact with other people from all over PNG, and they naturally and easily acquire the ability to speak Tok Pisin.

4.4 Loan words

Loan words in vernacular materials are derived from a variety of sources. Since we are using the draft of the Kamula New Testament as one of the source texts when we are translating Scriptures, the names of Bible books, people and places are generally derived from there. (It should be noted that Kamula has derived such words from Gogodala.) Other words denoting objects not known in the local language are

generally derived from English or Tok Pisin (e.g. sheep, government, cow, etc). All loan words are spelled according to the vernacular system.

4.5 Impact of the Timber Company on Language Use and Prestige

Rimbunan Hijau (PNG) PYT Ltd., a Malaysian timber company, began working in the east-southeastern part of Western Province around 1983 by establishing a main base of operations about 80 kilometers southeast of Wawoi Falls. From that time up until the present, the company has been logging timber from the neighbouring language (Kasua) group's land. It has only been within the past year that the company began logging the Kamula land. The company has not yet begun to log the Odoodee land. In late 2002, the timber company completed a dirt road to the Wawoi Falls area, thus the local people can now access the main company base by truck (a three-hour drive).

People from many different parts of PNG have gone to work for this timber company. Over the past 10 years or so, a number of young Odoodee men have also gone to work for the company. The men stay and work at the base, or at other smaller logging camps located in the bush, for varied periods of time – ranging from two weeks to three months. They usually take breaks during their terms of employment to return to their home village to spend time with their families, bring back needed supplies, and distribute their wealth to their extended family.

Among the Odoodee, there still seems to be a high value placed on family life and working together as a family, especially due to the hard work involved just to live (e.g. building houses, hunting, making sago, making gardens, etc.). Therefore there has not been large numbers of men working for the company for extended periods of time. As a result, we don't believe that the presence of the company is putting some sort of economic pressure on the Odoodee people to learn Tok Pisin or English so that they can access jobs with the company. Most of the young men who do go to work for the company have already finished community school and have a good enough grasp of English to work there.

Parents who have been working at the timber company still teach their children Odoodee. Even though they may have been using Tok Pisin during their term of employment with the company, the parents still use Odoodee when at home. Since the company is not located in close proximity of any of the villages, the children do not have much, if any, contact with the other company workers. All of the logging is done in the bush, away from the village, far away from where the children usually are.

Overall, it is not believed that the presence of the timber company will change the language use stability in the area. The Odoodee people do not permit outsiders to live among them for periods greater than a few weeks. They very much keep to themselves. And given the fact that little has changed in regard to language stability in the past 10+ years that people have been working for the company, we do not foresee much change in the future.

5. Language Work Already Done

All linguistic analysis has been done by us. We have completed the Organised Phonology Data (1997) and Grammar Essentials (2002).

We have produced a variety of vernacular materials, including Shell books, locally authored story booklets and one Scripture portion. The response has generally been favourable.

There are no other individuals or groups producing vernacular materials.

6. Churches/Missions

Since writing the Sociolinguistic and Literacy Study, the church situation has remained the same, that is that the ECPNG is the only denomination and there are no new churches/missions/cults etc.

The attitude of the church leaders towards the use of the vernacular and vernacular materials remains positive. The pastors and leaders prefer that the Scriptures be in the local language. They said that they would encourage the use of the same. Since the Scriptures (the New Testament as a whole) are not available yet in the local language, they use whatever is available, and then someone translates it on the spot. As Scripture portions become available in the local language, they strongly encourage their use. They have this positive attitude because they know that people can better understand Scriptures in their own language rather than any other language.

The only Scripture portion that has been published at this time is the Gospel of Mark. During the first month after it was dedicated (October 2002), it was used quite regularly in the church services. But since that time, it has only been used sporadically.

The pastors and leaders also have a very positive attitude toward literacy. They believe that it is a very good thing for the people to learn to read and write, and in particular, to learn to read the Scriptures for themselves in their own language. The other church leaders (deacons and our co-translators) have also helped in the literacy programme.

7. Summary and Conclusions

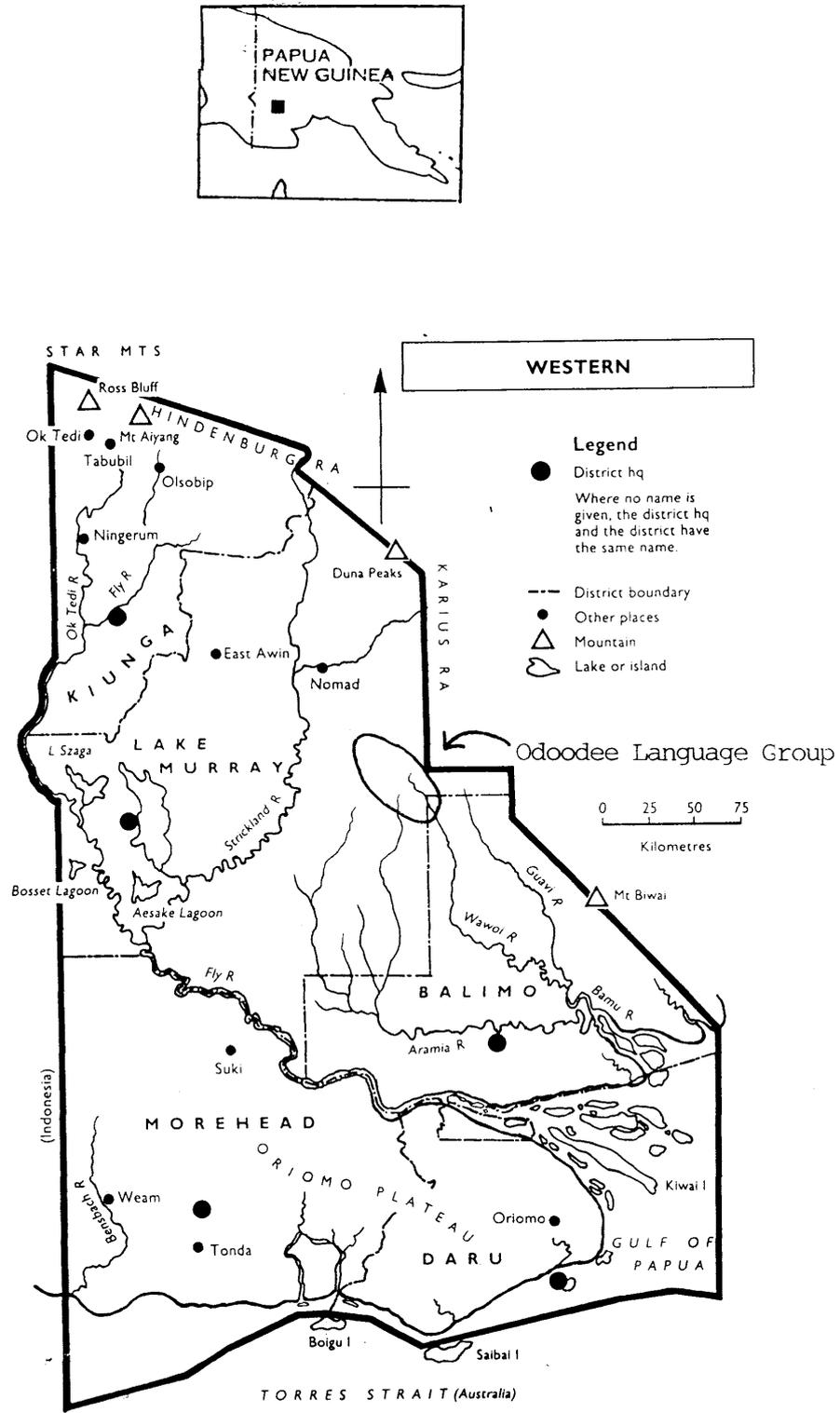
In conclusion, our research seems to indicate that there are two dialects spoken by the Odoodee people: the main dialect, spoken by those living in Kalamo and Hasalibi, and the Tulusi dialect. However, the variation between the dialects is minimal, and the speakers of the different dialects have no difficulty in understanding each another.

Given the fact that there is good social harmony among the Odoodee people, and that the main dialect is spoken by about 83 % of the population, we will continue to produce vernacular literature in the main dialect. We believe that those people who speak the Tulusi dialect should have little or no problem reading materials written in the main dialect.

1.1.1 Location of the language group

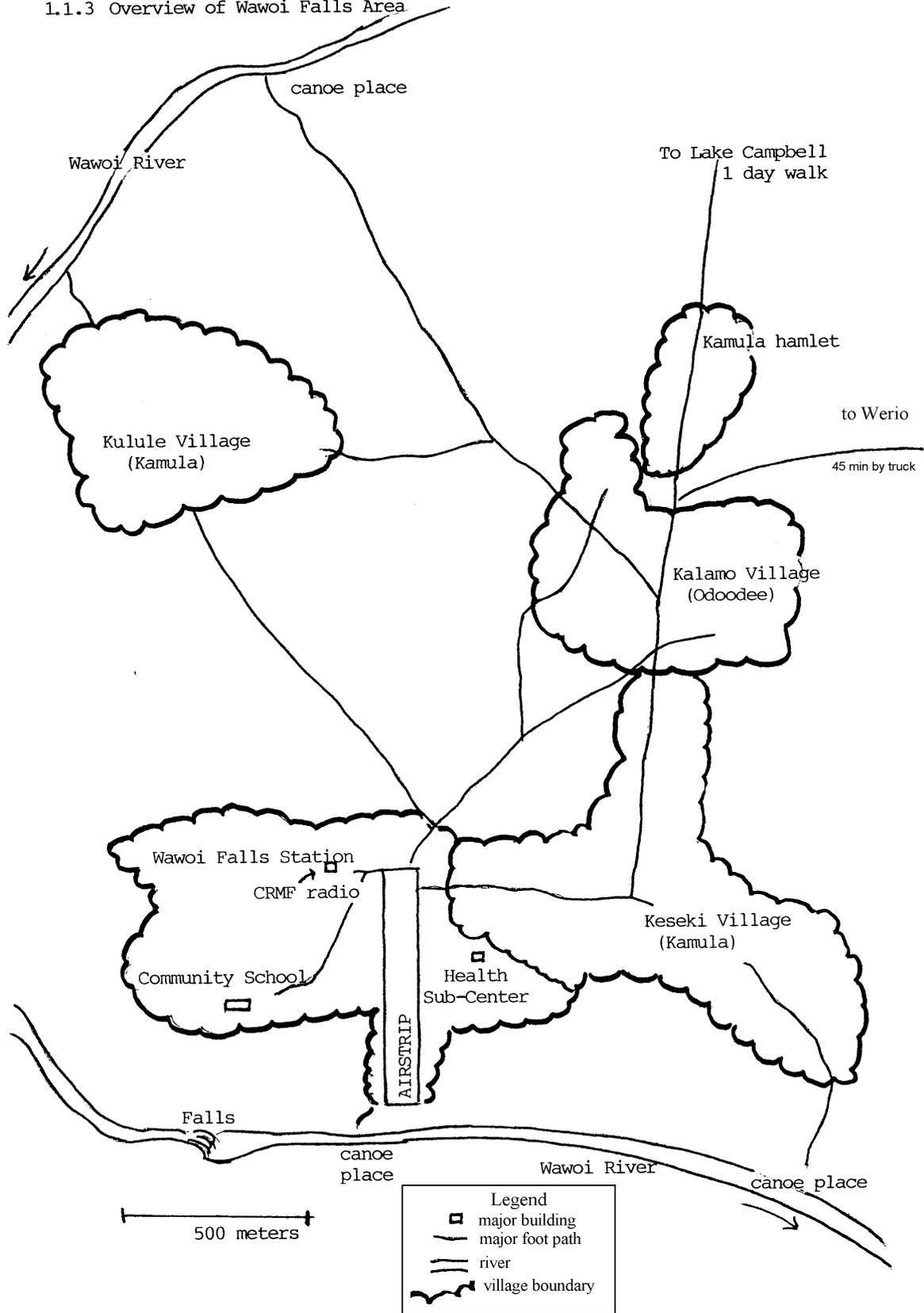
- within PNG
- within Western Province

The following map of Western Province was photocopied from Rannells (1990, 188). A solid line has been drawn around the approximate locations of Odoodee.

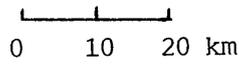
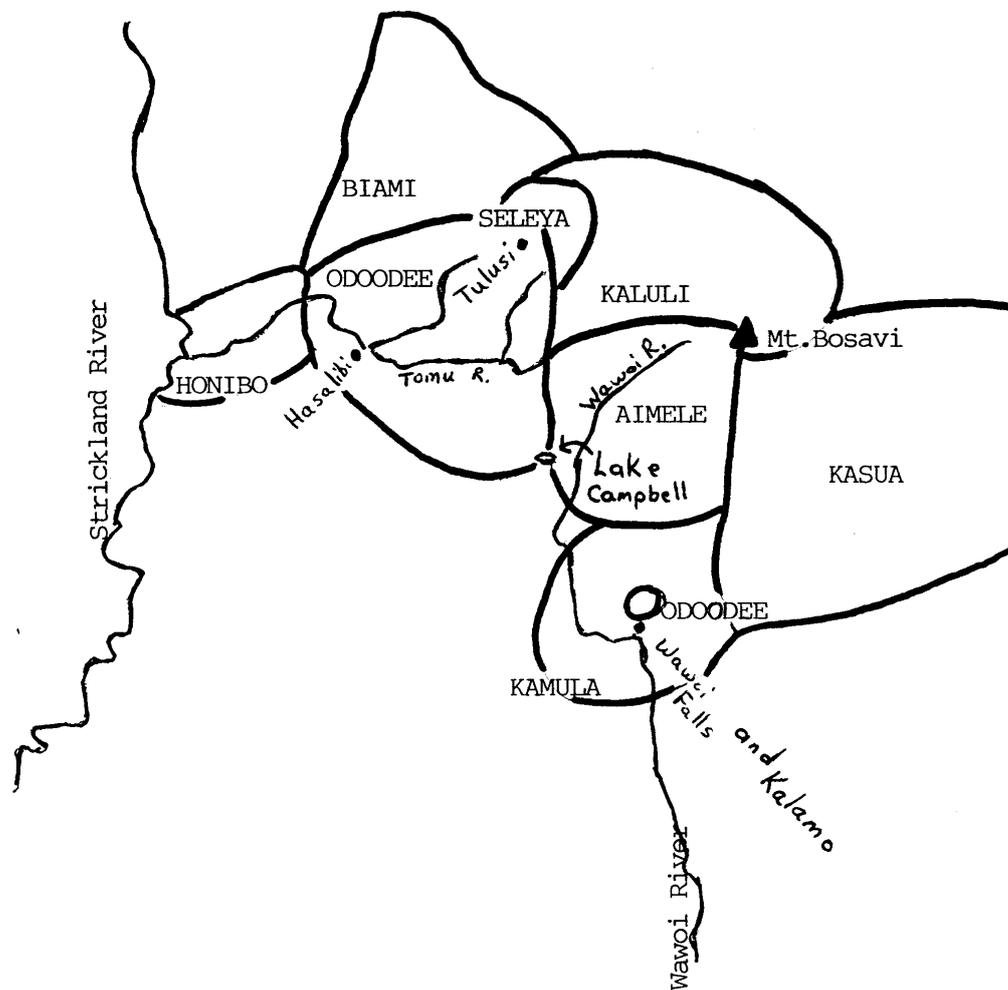


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1.1.3 Overview of Wawoi Falls Area



1.1.4 Language Boundaries



Legend	
•	Village
~	River
—	Language boundary
▲	Mountain
KASUA	Language name (in caps)
Hasalibi	Place/village name