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3 Kaera

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1 The language scene

Kaera (*Bahasa Kaera* in Indonesian) is spoken by an estimated 5,500 people on the northeastern coast of Pantar island.¹ It has not been previously reported as a separate language, and hence has no ISO 639-3 code. Kaera speakers currently live in the following villages (the lexeme *abang* means ‘village’): Abang Iwang (~1,500), Padangsul and Bibit Gomi (~2000), Matgomi/Weniwa (~50), and Tamal Abang (~2000). In earlier times, Kaera speakers lived in Kaera Abang, Labi Abang, Xraner Abang, Silorang Abang, Uyumau Abang, and Tamai Abang (today’s Tamal Abang). The logonym Kaera is based on the ancestor village Kaera (originally named *Xai Er Abang* ‘Village at the *Xai Er* tree’). An alternative logonym is Dorit, after the name of the biggest clan that speaks the language.² The Kaera speaking region borders with Blagar to the north and south, and with Teiwa to the west. Kaera is lexically more similar to Teiwa than to Blagar. Together with Teiwa, Nedebang and Western Pantar, Kaera belongs to the Pantar subgroup of Alor-Pantar subgroup (Holton and Robinson forthcoming, Holton et al. 2012, Schapper and Klamer forthcoming).

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² Other Kaera speaking clans include the clans of Labi, Marggang, Uyumau and Malabo.

This description is based on primary data collected by the author, working with Marianus Waang, a native and fluent speaker of Kaera.³ The data on which this sketch is based include: (i) A lexicon of ~900 items, collected between 2005–2007; (ii) Three short narratives: a Frog Story (47 utterances); a Pear Story (32 utterances); and a narrative about palm wine (50 utterances);⁴ (iii) 450 elicited sentences/utterances, collected between 2005–2007.

After the first draft of this sketch was written, we met in Bali in July 2012 and were able to collaborate for several more days, primarily double-checking the language data presented here, and supplementing information relating to the verb classes discussed in §5.

Kaera speakers are fluent in Indonesian, but the language appeared to be relatively vigorous when I visited Abangiwang in 2007. Many of the children playing outside were using Kaera amongst themselves, and Kaera and Indonesian are both used in church, mostly depending on who is conducting the service: if it is a Kaera speaker, most of the service will be in Kaera; if it is a speaker from another language, it will be in Indonesian. Kaera is not allowed in school, Indonesian being the language of education.

2 Phonology

2.1 Consonants

Kaera has 16 consonants, as laid out in Table 1. Orthographical representations used later in this sketch which differ from IPA are given in angled brackets. The

³ As this sketch is mainly based on work with a single speaker, it is relevant to include some basic sociolinguistic data on that speaker. Born in Matgomi (1970), Waang grew up in a Kaera-speaking environment in Abang Iwang. From 1986–1989, he lived in Kalabahi (Alor), in an environment where Indonesian, Kaera, and Warsalelang (a dialect of Blagar) were spoken. In 1989, he left Kalabahi to study English in Kupang, and since then has not been living amongst Kaera speakers. In the Netherlands, Waang acquired a working knowledge of Dutch, Latin and Greek. From Sept 2005–Aug 2007 he stayed in The Netherlands to study Theology. During these years, we met nine times to work on Kaera for about half a day. In May 2007, I visited his home town Abang Iwang for about a week, when I was in Pantar for fieldwork on Teiwa (Klamer 2010). I recorded ~12 hours of video-recordings of narrative texts, sermons, conversations and songs, but as most of these materials still need to be annotated and analyzed, they have not been used for this sketch.

⁴ Metadata Frog story: speaker M. Waang, recorded in Kampen, The Netherlands, Nov 2005; Pear story: speaker M. Waang, recorded in Leiden, The Netherlands, April 2006; Palmwine narrative: speaker A. Puling, recorded in Abangiwang, Pantar, May 2007. All texts were transcribed and annotated in collaboration with M. Waang in The Netherlands.

brackets around the glottal fricative indicate its marginal status (see §2.1.2). The subsections below provide minimal pairs per consonant class.

Table 1: Kaera consonants

	BILABIAL		ALVEOLAR		PALATAL	VELAR		GLOTTAL
PLOSIVES	p	b	t	d		k	g	
FRICATIVES			s			x		(h)
NASALS		m		n			ŋ <ng>	
LIQUIDS				r				
				l				
APPROXIMANTS	w				j <y>			

The size of the Kaera consonant inventory is fairly typical for the languages of the Alor-Pantar group. Kaera differs from neighboring Teiwa, which has a larger inventory of 20 consonants (Klamer 2010). Atypical for the Alor-Pantar group is the lack of a phonemic glottal stop in Kaera.

2.1.1 Plosives

Minimal pairs for plosives are:

- (1) /p, b/ /pin-/ ‘hold’
 /bin-/ ‘not’
 /t, d/ /ta/ ‘on’
 /da/ ‘go up’
 /k, g/ /kiri/ ‘bone’
 /giri/ ‘companion(s), other(s)’

2.1.2 Fricatives

Of the fricatives, the velar fricative /x/ is a reflex of the proto-Alor Pantar uvular stop *q, which is still found in Teiwa, and became /k/, /g/, /ʔ/ or zero in Western Pantar, Blagar and Adang (Holton et al. 2012). The glottal fricative /h/ has a very minor phonemic status in the language. In my corpus it is attested in only a few words: the exclamations /he/ and /ɛh/ ‘hey!’, onomatopoeic words like /hɔŋ/ ‘woof’, and /hiŋɔ/ which expresses a negative response:

- (2) /s, x, h/ /sib/ ‘new’
 /xib/ ‘goat’
 /hiŋɔ/ ‘no, not like that’ (negative response)

2.1.3 Nasals

In initial position, /m/ and /n/ are contrastive. In final position, /m/, /n/ and /ŋ/ are contrastive.

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------|--------|--|
| (3) | /m, n/ | /ma/ | 'come'; 'house' |
| | | /na/ | 'consume, eat'; 'thing' |
| | /m, n, ŋ/ | /tam/ | 'sea' |
| | | /pan/ | 'kemiri (tree/nut)' (<i>Aleurites moluccana</i>) |
| | | /-tan/ | 'hand' |

There are only a few verbs ending in /n/, examples include *pin* 'take' and *nimin* 'die'. Such verbs can be inflected: *pin-o* 'take-FIN', *nimin-o* 'die-FIN'. Many verbs end in a final /ŋ/. Most of these verbs cannot take inflectional suffixes. Examples of such verbs are given in Table 18, §5.2.2., where it is suggested that the final /ŋ/ on verbs may be a (fossilized) suffix.

Some verbs ending in /ŋ/ can take suffixes, and then the velar nasal changes to [n]. An illustration is the verb *-(e)ng* 'give'. When this verb is not suffixed, it ends in /ŋ/, when it is suffixed, /n/ is used, as shown in (4)–(5).

- (4) *Egu met mi boom~boom g-eng gang na.*
 that.one.there take LOC RDP~old.respected.man 3SG-give 3SG eat/drink
 'Take that to the elders to drink.'

- (5) *Etang xar ut gang ge-saring g-en-o.*
 and ten four 3SG 3SG.POSS-birth.party 3SG-give-FIN
 'And [on] the 40th [day] she gave him⁵ his birth party.'

2.1.4 Liquids and approximants

Minimal pairs of liquids and approximants are given in (6):

- | | | | |
|-----|--------|-------|--------------------|
| (6) | /r, l/ | /riŋ/ | 'wait for someone' |
| | | /liŋ/ | 'grow' |
| | /j, w/ | /ja/ | 'go down' |
| | | /wa/ | 'leaf' |

⁵ For the third person singulars translated as male forms one can also read the female forms.

In root- or word-final position, high vowels that follow a vowel are realized as glides. Verbal suffixes like *-o /-ɔ/* 'FIN' (which encodes the clause-final position of verbs, see §7) only attach to consonant-final verbal roots, as shown in Table 2.⁶ Roots ending in a glide pattern with the other consonant-final roots by taking a vowel-suffix.

Table 2: Verbal bases taking inflectional suffix *-o* 'FIN'⁷

C-final verbs taking suffix		V-final verbs not taking suffix		
/wal-ɔ/	'buy-FIN'	/na/	*na-ɔ ⁸	'eat, drink, consume'
/-pɛk-ɔ/	'call-FIN'	/tɛ:/	*tɛ:-ɔ	'lie down, sleep'
/ɔr-ɔ/	'hang-FIN'	/wa/	*wa-ɔ	'go (from speaker)'
/-a:s-ɔ/	'feed-FIN'	/ma/	*ma-ɔ	'come to deictic center'
/bag-ɔ/	'cry-FIN'	/da/	*da-ɔ	'go up to deictic center'
/mis-ɔ/	'sit-FIN'	/ja/	*ja-ɔ	'go down to deictic center'
/xɛw-ɔ/	'peel-FIN'	/kɛri/	*kɛri-ɔ	'pull'
/saw-ɔ/	'stream out-FIN'	/tu:/	*tu:-ɔ	'scratch, peel'
/-wej-ɔ/	'bathe-FIN'	/wɾɛ/	*wɾɛ-ɔ	'carry'
/-jaj-ɔ/	'twist-FIN'			

Root-final consonants become the onset glide of any syllables created by suffixes; for example, /xɛw-ɔ/ 'peel-FIN' is syllabified as [xɛ.wɔ].

2.2 Consonant phonotactics

The distribution of Kaera consonants across syllables is summarized in Table 3. For notes on the distribution of /h/ see §2.1.2; the distribution of the nasals is discussed in §2.1.3.

Table 3: Kaera consonant positions in words and roots

POSITION	p	b	t	d	k	g	s	x	h	m	n	ŋ	r	l	w	j
#_V	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	(✓)	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
V_V	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
V_#	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	(✓)	✓	(✓)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

⁶ Roots ending in a velar nasal are the exception to this rule, see §2.1.3 and §5.2.2.

⁷ Hyphens on verbs signal their bound root status, i.e. that they take an obligatory inflectional prefix or suffix.

⁸ The consultant notes that these verbs can combine with the (phonetically identical) hortative particle *o /ɔ/*, as in *Na o!* 'Let's eat!'.
 6
 7
 8

Kaera has restrictions on consonant clusters. Within a morpheme, sequences of consonants are only allowed if they are word-initial, and involve a bilabial consonant followed by a sonorant /r, l/, as illustrated in (7a), or a voiceless stop followed by a sonorant, as in (7b). A voiceless velar stop can combine with /r, l/, a voiceless alveolar stop only combines with /r/. Other mono-morphemic consonant clusters are disallowed.

- (7) a. /plɔŋaŋ/ 'bunch'
 /prasi/ 'place to store corn'
 /bleliŋ/ 'open'
 /bram/ 'dust'
 /mrak/ 'sweet'
 /wrɛ/ 'carry'
- b. /kliki/ 'sour'
 /krabis/ '(to) claw'
 /trɛ/ 'shake sth. out of sth. else'

2.3 Vowels

Kaera has 5 vowels, all of which have a phonemically long counterpart, as represented in Table 4. In section 3 onwards, the long vowels are orthographically represented as double vowels; the mid vowels as /e, o/.

Table 4: Kaera vowels

	FRONT	CENTRAL	BACK
HIGH	i, i:		u, u:
MID	ɛ, ɛ:		ɔ, ɔ:
LOW		a, a:	

(Near-)minimal pairs showing the vowel length contrast are given in (8). Not many of these pairs exist in my corpus. This may be due to the limited size of the corpus, or suggest that phonemic vowel length does not play a major role in Kaera phonology. The fact alone that length is distinctive for all 5 vowels in Kaera is rather unusual in the Pantar context: Teiwa has a length distinction for only 3 vowels, and Blagar, Western Pantar and Adang have no phonemic vowel length at all.

(8)	/a, a:/	/war/	'rock'	/wa:r/	'hot'
		/bak-/	'cut thin'	/ba:k/	'long'
		/wat/	'coconut'	/-wa:t	'live'
	/u, u:/	/bum/	'flower'	/du:m/	'bird'
		/tub/	'burn (tr)'	/u:b/	'sugarcane'
	/i, i:/	/kir/	'hair comb'	/bi:r/	'flat'
	/ε, ε:/	/tε/	'grass, weeds'	/tε:/	'sleep'
	/ɔ, ɔ:/	/tɔr/	'main road'	/xɔ:r/	'women's betelnut and betelvine container'

2.4 Vowel phonotactics

Combinations of vowels occur both within a single morpheme, and across morpheme boundaries. The morpheme-internal combinations attested in my database are presented in Table 5. The sequences not attested within morphemes are indicated by the double dash '-'.

Table 5: Kaera vowel sequences within morphemes

V1/V2	a	i	u	ɔ	ε
a		30	12	-	-
i	11		2	1	2
u	10	10		-	2
ɔ	-	10	1		7
ε	-	10	1	-	

Illustrations of words with vowel sequences are given in Table 6, along with their phonetic realizations, which may vary in slow and fast speech as indicated.

Some distributional restrictions seem to apply on long vowels, which are mainly found in monosyllabic nouns or verb roots (CV:C, V:C, CV:) (26 of the 29 words/roots with long vowels in my lexicon are monosyllabic), while sequences of vowels are found in both disyllabic and monosyllabic forms. At this stage, I have insufficient data to allow an analysis of the phonology of long vowels in comparison to vowel combinations.

Table 6: Examples of vowel sequences within morphemes⁹

Initial vowel	Word	Meaning	Surface realization
/a/	/tamai/	'tamarind'	[ta.'maj]
	/tau/	'bean'	['taw]
	*aɔ		
	*aɛ		
/i/	/siax/	'chicken'	[si.'ax]
	/miu/	'owl'	[mi.'u]
	/tiɔkun/	'shake'	[tjɔ.'kun] (fast speech), [ti.ɔ.'kun] (slow speech)
	/kieb/	'wall'	['kʲɛb]
/u/	/nuan/	'cloth'	['nwan] (fast sp.), [nu.'wan] (slow sp.)
	/xubui/	'meat'	[xu.'bui]
	*uɔ		
	/nuɛlum/	'long'	[nwe.'lum] (fast sp.), [nu.ɛ.'lum] (slow sp.)
/ɔ/	*ɔa		
	/bɔi/	'river'	['bɔj]
	/tɔu/	'mug from coconut shell'	['tɔw]
	/bɔɛ/	'maybe'	[bɔ.'ɛ], *[bɔj]
/ɛ/	*ɛa		
	/bei/	'pig'	['bej]
	/xɛu/	'wind; cold'	['xɛw]
	*ɛɔ		

2.5 Structure of syllables and roots

The minimal Kaera syllable, and word, consists of a single vowel (V), the maximal syllable is CVVC. Most nominal or verbal roots consist of one or two syllables see (9) and (10).

While most tri-syllabic words are poly-morphemic, there are some that are morphologically simple, including /ɔjɔgi/ 'green, blue' /bagari/ 'yellow', /amara/ 'many', /biebun/ 'last night', and /ugugi/ 'recently'.

Morphologically complex trisyllabic words include inflected verbs, possessed nouns, and compounds like /n-uar sil/ '1SG.POSS-ear lobe' or /kɛi g-om/ 'rainy season' < 'rainy.season 3SG.POSS-inside'.

⁹ Primary stress is represented as <'> before the stressed syllable, secondary stress as <'>.

Mono-syllabic words

(9)	V	/i/	'sick'
	CV	/si/	'spoon'
	VV	/ei/	'canoe'
	CVV	/sei/	COMPLETIVE
	V:	[not attested]	
	CV:	/te:/	'sleep'
	VC	/ur/	'moon'; 'grass field'
	CVC	/bis/	'mat'
	VVC	/auk/	'wooden plate'
	CVVC	/rauj/	'water melon'
	V:C	/u:m/	'worm'
	CV:C	/du:m/	'bird'
	CCV	/wre/	'carry'
	CCVC	/bram/	'dust'

Di-syllabic words

(10)	V.CV	/aki/	[a.'ki]	'root'
	CV.CV	/buku/	[bu.'ku]	'mountain top'
	CVV	/bɔɛ/	[bɔ.'ɛ]	'maybe'
	V.CVC	/ibar/	[i.'bar]	'dog'
	CV.CVC	/banab/	[ba.'nab]	'foggy, cloudy'
	CV.VC	/bian/	[bi.'aŋ]	'sleepy'
	CV.CVV	/tenei/	[te.'neɪ]	'right' (opposite of 'left')
	CCV.CVV	/blibai/	[bli.'baj]	'hungry'
	CCV.CVC	/bleliŋ g-om/	[ble.'liŋ g-om]	'outside' (lit. 'open 3SG.POSS-inside')

2.6 Stress

Stress is not phonemic in Kaera. The domain of Kaera stress assignment is the root morpheme. Stress is on the final syllable of the root, as illustrated in (11), and adding prefixes or suffixes to a root does not alter the stress pattern. Stressed syllables may be open or closed, and light or heavy.

(11)	/xabi/	[xa'bi]	'spear'
	/isar/	[i'sar]	'salt'
	/kɛlikil/	[kɛli'kil]	'sour'

The stress pattern of a root with a possessive prefix is illustrated in (12). When a root is suffixed, stress remains on the ultimate root syllable and does not shift to the final syllable of the word. This is illustrated for a monosyllabic root in (13), and a disyllabic root in (14).

- (12) /gɔ-tɔxi/ [go.tɔ.'xi] '3SG.POSS-egg'
 (13) /jas-ɔ/ ['ja.sɔ] 'bad-FIN' *[ja'sɔ]
 (14) /patak-ɔ/ [pa.'ta.kɔ] 'cut-FIN' *[pa.ta.'kɔ] (see (141))

In noun collocations, primary (=word) stress is on the first lexeme, and secondary stress on the second lexeme, as illustrated in (15):

- (15) /g-ɔŋ kul/ ['gɔŋ kul] '3SG.POSS-head shell' 'his skullead'
 /g-ɔŋ wa/ ['gɔŋ wa] '3SG.POSS-head leaf' 'his hair'

2.7 Interaction between phonology and morphology

Various interactions exist between the phonological shape of words and roots, and processes of affixation. First, the shape of the initial syllable of a noun/verb determines the shape of the prefix that encodes the nominal possessor or the verbal patient. A consonant-initial noun/verb selects a syllabic (CV-) prefix, a vowel-initial noun/verb selects a consonantal (C-) prefix. (Verbal prefixes are presented in Table 7 in §2.7.1, nominal prefixes in Table 14 in §4.3.)

Second, the shape of the final syllable of a verb root determines its suffixing potential: except for verbal bases ending in *-ng*, all consonant-final verbs can host the inflectional suffixes that mark phrasal position and aspect. Verb roots ending in a vowel cannot be such hosts (see §4.1, Table 12; and §5.2.1, Table 17).

Third, the class of prefixing transitive verbs encodes their patient-like (P) argument with a prefix that shows vowel harmony with the verbal root vowel, as discussed in the following section.

2.7.1 Person-prefix allomorphy

Patient-like arguments in transitive clauses may be marked on the verb with a prefix encoding person and number. While the shape of the prefixes encoding plural Ps is invariable, prefixes encoding singular Ps depend on the phonological shape of the verb. As laid out in Table 7, C(onsonant)-initial verbs take a syllabic (CV) prefix (I or II), while V(owel)-initial verbs take a consonantal prefix (III).

The syllabic prefixes occur in two shapes: one where the vowel (V) harmonizes with the initial vowel of the verb (prefix I), and one whose vowel is /a/, independent of the vowel in the verb (prefix II).¹⁰ Most C-initial verbs take the harmonizing prefix I; prefix II is found on only a few verbs. Illustrations of the harmonic prefix I are given in Table 8, of the *a*-prefix II in Table 9, and of the consonantal prefix III in Table 10. Paradigm II with invariant vowel /a/ reflects the person prefixes reconstructed for proto-Alor Pantar (Holton et.al. 2012). Note that there are no differences between paradigms in the plural.

Table 7: Person prefixes encoding P

	C-initial verb		V-initial verb
	<i>Syllabic prefix</i>		<i>Consonantal prefix</i>
	I	II	III
1SG	/nV-/	/na-/	/n-/
2SG	/V-/	/a-/	/∅-/
3SG	/gV-/	/ga-/	/g-/
1PL.EXCL		/ni-/	
1PL.INCL		/pi-/	
2PL		/i-/	
3PL		/gi-/	

Table 8: Harmonic syllabic prefix I

	Ci- 'look after'	Cu- 'kiss'	Ca- 'leave, let loose'
1SG	/ni- rianj/	/nu- muni/	/na- dag/
2SG	/i- rianj/	/u- muni/	/a- dag/
3SG	/gi- rianj/	/gu- muni/	/ga- dag/
	Cε- 'expel-FIN'	Cɔ- 'push'	
1SG	/nε- tɛr-ɔ/	/nɔ- tɔbun/	
2SG	/ε- tɛr-ɔ/	/ɔ- tɔbun/	
3SG	/gε- tɛr-ɔ/	/gɔ- tɔbun/	

Table 9: Syllabic A-prefix II

	Ca- 'talk to'		Ca- 'quarrel with'	
1SG	/na- tutuk/	*/nu- tutuk/	/na- juran/	*/nu- juran/
2SG	/a- tutuk/	*/u- tutuk/	/a- juran/	*/u- juran/
3SG	/ga- tutuk/	*/gu- tutuk/	/ga- juran/	*/gu- juran/

¹⁰ The prefix vowel /a/ may be reduced to a central vowel in running speech.

Table 10: Consonantal prefix III

	C- 'feed-FIN'	C- 'order'
1SG	/n- as-ɔ/	/n- ilin/ ¹¹
2SG	/∅- as-ɔ/	/∅- ilin/
3SG	/g- as-ɔ/	/g- ilin/

Verbs that start with a glide /j, w/ use a combination of the consonantal paradigm III (Table 10) and the harmonizing paradigm I (Table 8). Illustrations are in Table 11: prefixes from paradigm III encode first and third person singular, prefixes from paradigm I encode second person singular. (Before /j/ the plural vowel /i/ is barely audible and may be deleted, so that the surface form of the inflected verb becomes disyllabic, e.g. [nⁱɔ.kuŋ] 'we shake'. Such plural vowel reduction does not occur before /w/, e.g. [ni.wɛ.ɔ] 'we bathe'.)

Table 11: Combination of prefix III and prefix II with verbs with initial glide [j, w]

	'shake'	'twist, turn around'	'bathe-FIN'
1SG	/n- ɔkʉŋ/	/n- jajɔ/	/n- wɛj-ɔ/
2SG	/o- ɔkʉŋ/	/a- jajɔ/	/e- wɛj-ɔ/
3SG	/g- ɔkʉŋ/	/g- jajɔ/	/g- wɛj-ɔ/
1PL.EXCL	/n ⁱ - ɔkʉŋ/	/n ⁱ - jajɔ/	/ni- wɛj-ɔ/
1PL.INCL	/p ⁱ - ɔkʉŋ/	/p ⁱ - jajɔ/	/pi- wɛj-ɔ/
2PL	/i- ɔkʉŋ/	/i- jajɔ/	/i- wɛj-ɔ/
3PL	/g ⁱ - ɔkʉŋ/	/g ⁱ - jajɔ/	/gi- wɛj-ɔ/

3 Basic clausal syntax

3.1 Constituent order in verbal clauses

I use the following primitives for core participants of an event in Kaera: S is the single argument of an intransitive predicate (verbal or non-verbal), A is the agent-like argument of a transitive clause, and P the patient-like argument of a transitive clause. Constituent order in intransitive clauses is S V(erb), as in (16), and in transitive clauses it is A P V, as in (17)–(20). P may be encoded as an NP, (17), a free pronoun, (18), or a prefix, (19). A P-prefix can co-occur with a co-referent NP, as in (20a); the prefix is obligatory (cf. (20c)). When there is no

¹¹ The initial vowel /i/ in a verb like /ilin/ fuses with the /i/ in the plural prefixes. The result is an identical surface form for 2nd person singular and plural: /∅-ilin/ 'order you (sg)' and /i-ilin/ 'order you (pl)' are both pronounced as [i. 'lin].

NP, the P-prefix functions as an anaphoric pronoun, as in (20b). For details on verbal prefixing, see §5.2.

- (16) *Gang bag-i si, abang g-om egat ya-t...*
 3SG cry-PFV so village 3SG.POSS-inside all go.down-IPFV
 'He cried, so all the villagers came down...'

- (17) *Gang tei patak-o.*
 3SG wood cut-FIN
 'He cuts wood.'

- (18) *Nang gang med.*
 1SG 3SG take
 'I marry him/her.'

- (19) *Gang ga-bang.*
 3SG 3SG-drop
 'He dropped it/him/her.'

- (20) a. *Gang uxai gu ga-bar.*
 3SG child that 3SG-kill
 'He killed that child.'

- b. *Gang ga-bar.*
 3SG 3SG-kill
 'He killed him/her/it.'

- c. **Gang uxai gu bar.*
 3SG child that kill
 Intended: 'He killed that child.'

In order to topicalize a P, the referring NP can be moved to precede A. This is illustrated in (21), where the P *netu egat* 'all my milk' precedes the A *nang* '1SG':

- (21) *Nang gi sei, ne-tu egat nang pin gi.*
 1SG go COMPL 1SG.POSS-milk all 1SG hold go
 'I went [and] all my milk I brought along.'

In imperatives, the addressee (A/S) is omitted, as in (22). Otherwise, the clausal structure of imperatives is identical to that of declaratives, where P precedes V, (23):

- (22) *Ma g-om mi da!*
 come 3SG.POSS-inside LOC go.up
 'Do come in!' [invitation; also applies when speaker and addressee are at same level]
- (23) *Pagang gu pin-o!*
 basket¹² that hold-FIN
 'Hold that basket!'

Oblique constituents expressing a location, goal, instrument or displaced theme are expressed as postpositional phrases with *mi* 'in', 'at', 'into, on' or *ta* 'on (top)'. They occur before the predicate, and cannot be moved to a post-predicate position, see §3.6.

Adjuncts such as time expressions are clause-initial, as in (24); or, if they are part of a focus constituent, move to a clause-internal position preceding the predicate, as in (25). Adverbs of manner such as *kali-kali* 'slowly' and *user-user* 'quickly' are also found in pre-predicate position, as in (26)–(27), as are adverbs of modality like *masu* 'maybe', see (39).

- (24) *Miag ang dumang.*
 yesterday 2SG swim
 'Yesterday you swam.'
- (25) *Ui gu gang miag la ma.*
 person that 3SG yesterday FOC come
 'That person came YESTERDAY.'
- (26) *Ging kali-kali tei baxi gu wang ekeng.*
 3PL RDP~slow tree branch that be climb
 'Slowly they climb on that tree branch.'
- (27) *Ilwang gang user-user bir bleling g-om mi eser-it...*
 Ilwang 3SG RDP~quick run open 3SG.POSS-inside LOC exit-IPFV
 'Ilwang quickly ran outside...'

¹² A *pagang* is a long basket made of leaves, with a rope hanging from the head, used to carry e.g. firewood.

3.2 Equational clauses

Equational clauses are verbal, as in (28)–(29),¹³ or non-verbal, as in (30)–(32). S precedes the predicate. Kaera has no copular verb, but there is a clear intonational break between the S, which has rising intonation and is followed by a pause, and the nominal predicate, which is pronounced with low intonation. In (30), S is expressed as a combination of both an NP and a pronoun, but it is equally grammatical to have S expressed only once.

(28) *Ge-kono gu xan-o.*
 3SG.ALIEN-shirt that black-FIN
 'His shirt [is] black.'

(29) *Boom ge-sur gu tamad-o.*
 respected.old.man 3SG.POSS-word that heavy-FIN
 'Words of the elders [are] serious.'

(30) *Ui gu (gang) guru.*
 person that 3SG teacher (Mly)
 'That person [is] a teacher.'

(31) *Nang n-en Paulus.*
 1SG 1SG-name Paulus
 'My name is Paulus.'

(32) *...gang lal-ang erang gu taung.*
 3SG see-CONT that.ANAPH that bee
 '[...] he saw that those [were] bees.'

3.3 Existential clauses

Existential constructions involve the existential verb *wang* 'be, exist', as in (33), or the locative verb *ming* 'be at X', as in (34). *Ming* is a mono-transitive verb whose arguments are aligned as A (located entity) and P (location), as illustrated in (34)–(35).

¹³ For a motivation why Kaera property words are analyzed as verbs, see §4.1.

- (33) *Siax wang.*
 chicken be
 'There are chicken(s)' [we know they are somewhere, not necessarily
 in sight]

A P

- (34) *Nang [ir boi] ming.*
 1SG water river be.at
 'I am in the river'

A P

- (35) [*Ir la*] *boi ming.*
 water FOC river be.at
 '[There] is water in the river'

The existential verb *wang* 'be' is also used to express nominal possession predicatively, as in (36)–(37). (Other possessive strategies are discussed in §4.3.)

- (36) *N-uax wang sei. Masik rax-o, umux nuk-o.*
 1SG.POSS-child be COMPL male two-FIN female one-FIN
 'I have children (lit. 'My children exist'). Two boys, one girl.'

- (37) *Masik wal gu gang ge-kriang wang.*
 man that 3SG 3SG.ALIEN-work be
 'That man has work.' (lit. 'That man, his work exists')

3.4 Negation

Kaera predicates are negated with the negator *bino* 'NEG', which always follows the predicate. Negative verbal predicates are illustrated in (38)–(39), negative nominal predicates in (40).

- (38) *Nang na na¹⁴ bino.*
 1SG it.thing consume NEG
 'I won't eat anything.'

¹⁴ *Na* 'consume' refers to consuming food or liquid, but its basic semantics relate to food; compare *na na* 'food eat' > 'eat' vs. *ir na* 'water drink' > 'drink'.

(39) *Gang masu ma bino.*

3SG maybe come NEG

'He may not come.'

(40) *Nang bino, gang bino.*

1SG NEG 3SG NEG

'Not me, not him.' [e.g. answering the question 'Who drank my coffee?']

Existence can be negated with *wang bino*, as in (41), or with the negative existential verb *ning* 'NEG.exist', as illustrated in (42)–(43).

(41) *Xalam nuku gu, xalam g-en wang bino.*

old.lady one that old.lady 3SG.POSS-name be NEG

'[There was] an old lady, she had no name.'

(42) *Siax ning-o.*

chicken NEG.exist-FIN

'There is/are no chicken(s).'

(43) *Lugum di ning-i si uxai masak nuk sepeda tang ma.*

long.time also NEG.exist-PFV then child male one bicycle(Mly) be.on come

'Not long [after that] a boy on a bicycle arrives.'

The intransitive negative verb *gasaing* 'NEG.can' expresses inability. It occurs clause-finally with transitive and intransitive verbs, as illustrated in (44)–(45).

(44) *Nang ang kup-it gasaing.*

1SG 2SG hit-IPFV NEG.can

'I can't hit you.'

(45) *Liwang gang tar-it gasaing.*

Liwang 3SG swim-IPFV NEG.can

Liwang, he can't swim.

A third negative verb is *-gay-* 'refuse'; this verb can be used in intransitive as well as transitive constructions. When it is used intransitively, S is expressed as both a free pronoun *and* a prefix, as in (46). The free pronoun is optional, the prefix obligatory. (See §5.3 for a discussion of intransitives that encode S with a prefix.) When *-gay-* appears in a transitive construction, as in (47), it is the P that is expressed as free pronoun and prefix (see §5.2.1); again the free pronoun is optional, and the prefix obligatory.

- (46) (Nang) *na-gay-o.* *Nang *gay-o.*
 1SG 1SG-refuse-FIN 1SG refuse-FIN
 'I refuse.'
- (47) *Gang (ing) i-gay-o.* **Gang ing gay-o.*
 3SG 2PL 2PL-refuse-FIN 3SG 2PL refuse-FIN
 'He doesn't like you (PL).'

Negative imperatives are expressed with *aki* 'NEG.IMP', as illustrated in (48). (*Gang* expresses the S of *maxo* 'bitter', and being co-referential to the clause topic *tu gu* 'that milk' it may be omitted.) Note that *aki* precedes the predicate.

- (48) *Tu gu aki er (gang) max-o.*
 milk that NEG.IMP make 3SG bitter-FIN
 'That milk, don't make (it) bitter.'

3.5 Questions

The identity of persons is questioned with the interrogative pronoun *yami* 'who'. Interrogative pronouns always combine with the focus marker *la*, and stay in the original position of the questioned nominal. Illustrations of questioned A and S arguments are (49)–(50), a questioned P argument is illustrated in (51).

- (49) *Yami la gareja ming?*
 who FOC church (Mly) be.at
 'Who is in the church?'
- (50) *Yami la gang kup-o?*
 who FOC 3SG hit-FIN
 'Who hit him?'
- (51) *Gang yami la kup-o?*
 3SG who FOC hit-FIN
 'Who did he hit?'

Questioned possessors are illustrated by (52a–b). The questions contrast in focus: in (52a) the possessor is focused, in (52b), it is the possessed NP.

- (52) a. *Yami la ge-buku ba?* b. *Yami ge-buku la ba?*
 who FOC 3SG.POSS-book fall who 3SG.POSS-book FOC fall
 'Whose book fell?' 'Whose book fell?'

Inanimate entities are questioned with *nab-* 'what', (53)–(54) and locations with *ita* 'where', (55). Note that *nab-* inflects for its position in a phrase or clause as being final or non-final, just like verbs do (see §7.1). The non-final suffix *-i* may optionally be omitted.

- (53) *Egu nab-o?*
 that.one.there what-FIN
 'What is that?'
- (54) *Ang nab(-i) la lal-o?*
 2SG what-NFIN FOC see-FIN
 'What do you see?'
- (55) *"Liwang... Ang ita ming? Liwang..."*
 Liwang 2SG where be.at Liwang
 "Liwang... where are you? Liwang..."

Quantities are questioned with *idang* 'how many/much' as in (56). *Idang* is also used for questions about time, as in (57), where *wedi idang* 'how many days' acts as the subject of *gi* 'go'. The noun *wedi* 'day' may be omitted, probably because the expression has been conventionalized.

- (56) *Nang gelas idang wal-o?*
 1SG glass (Mly) how.many/much buy-FIN
 'How many glasses did/shall I buy?'
- (57) *(Wedi) idang gi ang gi?*
 day how.many/much go 2SG go
 'When will you go?' (Lit. 'How many days go [then] you go?')

Questions about reason or method use the word *tarang* 'why/how'. *Tarang* can be fronted as part of a focused constituent, as in (58), or occur post-predicatively, as in (59).

- (58) *Tarang la gang ma bino? Walsi¹⁵ gang i.*
 why/how FOC 3SG come NEG because 3SG sick
 'Why didn't he come? Because he is ill.'
- (59) *Siax ga siring tarang?*
 chicken this fry why/how
 'How is this chicken fried?'

3.6 Postpositional phrases

Kaera has two frequently used adpositions: *mi* 'LOC' ('in', 'on', 'at', 'into') and *ta* 'on'. Of these, *mi* is used most frequently and with the widest range of functions, marking oblique constituents of a wide semantic range, as illustrated in (60a)–(66). Oblique constituents must precede the verb; they cannot be moved to a postverbal position, (60b).

Mi encodes a location

- (60) a. [*Abang mi*] *ga-dag.*
 village LOC 3SG-leave
 'Leave him/her in the village.'
- b. **Ga-dag* [*abang mi*]
 3SG-leave village LOC
 Intended: 'Leave him/her in the village.'

Mi encodes a goal

- (61) *Ui gu gang [abang mi] gi.*
 person that 3SG village LOC go
 'That person goes to the village.'

Mi encodes an instrument

- (62) *Ui gu gang [ped mi] tei patak-o.*
 person that 3SG machete LOC wood cut-FIN
 'That person cut wood with a machete.'
- (63) *Gang [ga-tang mi] n-uax ga-taring.*
 3SG 3SG.POSS-hand LOC 1SG.POSS-child 3SG-point.at
 'S/he pointed at my child with her/his hand.'

¹⁵ The fixed expression *walsi* 'because' occurs clause-initially. It contains the conjunction *si*, which on its own can only occur clause-finally.

Mi encodes the theme argument of a 'transfer' event like 'feed', 'give', or 'show':

- (64) *Gang [naxar mi] n-aas-o.*
 3SG rice LOC 1SG-feed-FIN
 'S/he fed me rice.'
- (65) *Gang [naxar mi] n-eng nang na.*
 3SG rice LOC 1SG-give 1SG eat
 'S/he gave me rice to eat.'
- (66) *Gang [foto mi] na-taring.*
 3SG photograph (Mly) LOC 1SG-point.at
 'S/he showed me a picture.'

A clause can contain two postpositional phrases with *mi*, as illustrated in (67), where *mi* encodes both a theme (*gong kul* 'his skull') and a goal (*toples gom* 'inside a jar').

- (67) *Gang [g-ong kul mi] [toples gom mi] uru.*
 3SG 3SG.POSS-head shell LOC jar (Mly) inside LOC stick.into
 'He stuck his head into a jar.'

The postposition *mi* is etymologically related to the locative verb *ming* 'be at' illustrated in (68) (see also (34)–(35) in §3.2).

- (68) *Ne-na xas-i ula lemari ming.*
 1SG-thing split-PFV FOC closet (Mly) be.at
 'My clothes are in the closet.'

As an independent verb, *ming* occurs in clause-final position, and unlike *mi*, it does not need to combine with another verb. The contrast between the postposition *mi* and the verb *ming* is shown in the minimally contrastive sentences (69a–b).

- (69) a. *Ging abang mi mis-o.*
 3PL village LOC sit-FIN
 'They stay in the village.'
- b. *Ging abang ming gu, mis-o.*
 3PL village be.at that sit-FIN
 'Those [that are] in the village, [will] stay [there].'

The other simple postposition in Kaera is *ta* 'on', illustrated in (70). Like *mi*, *ta* is etymologically related to a locative verb; *tang* 'be on' in (71):

(70) *Gang a-bat ta ga-dag.*
 3SG 3SG.POSS-leg on 3SG-leave
 'She puts him on her lap.'

(71) *Gang a-bat tang.*
 3SG 3SG.POSS-leg be.on
 'He is on her lap.'

More precise locative relations are expressed by combining *mi* with a possessed noun such as *paning* 'front' in (72) and *abung* 'side' in (73). (In (73), the first *mi* is optional, the second *mi* is obligatory.)

(72) *Gang mampelei gu pagang ge-paning mi mey-o.*
 3SG mango that basket 3SG.POSS-front LOC put-FIN
 'He puts those mangoes in front of the basket.'

(73) *Pagang mi n-abung mi mey-o.*
 basket LOC 1SG.POSS-side LOC put-FIN
 'Put the basket next to me.'

In sum, the two frequently used adpositions *mi* and *ta* are related to the locative verbs *ming* and *tang* and synchronically encode oblique constituents.

4 Noun phrases

Kaera nouns are formally distinguished from verbs by their ability to take possessive prefixes (§4.3). Kaera nouns are not marked for number, gender, noun class or case. A non-possessed NP is composed as in (74). The initial head noun (N_{HEAD}) may be followed by an attribute (ATTR), a numeral or non-numeral quantifier (NUM/QUANT), a demonstrative (DEM) and a demonstrative particle (PART). An illustration is given in (75). If a numeral classifier (CLF) is used, it precedes the numeral, see (87)–(88) below; classifiers do not combine with non-numeral quantifiers.

Structure of the Kaera NP

- (74) [N
- _{HEAD}
- ATTR CLF NUM/QUANT DEM PART]
- _{NP}

The demonstrative particle *erang* 'that.ANAPH' refers anaphorically to entities in space, time or discourse. It can combine with a demonstrative particle; *ga* 'this' or *gu* 'that'. The demonstrative particles encode location of the referent with respect to the speaker as well as definiteness, as in *siax ga* 'this chicken', *siax gu* 'that chicken'. Two demonstrative pronouns are derived from the demonstrative particles: *ega* 'this one here', *egu* 'that one there'. The demonstrative pronouns can also function as adnominal attributes, as in *botol ega* 'this bottle here', *botol egu* 'that bottle there'.

- (75) *kunang masak utug erang gu*
 child male three that.ANAPH that
 'those three boys (mentioned earlier)'

In a possessed NP the head noun hosts a prefix encoding person and number of the possessor. It may be preceded by the possessor noun, as in (76). Adnominal possession is further discussed in §4.3.

- [[POSSESSOR Noun POSS-N] ATTR PART]_{NP}
 (76) *bur ge-tag iki ga*
 k.o.palm¹⁶ 3SG.POSS-stalk youngest this
 'this youngest *bur* palm offshoot'

4.1 Nominal attributes

Nominal attributes are nouns, as in (75), or verbs used in modification of a noun head in the NP, as in (77). Kaera has no morpho-syntactic class of adjectives. Words expressing properties like size, color or age, pattern like verbs. Just like verbs, they are grouped into two classes according to their suffixing potential: lexemes ending in a closed syllable, which can take suffixes, and lexemes ending in an open syllable, which cannot. Examples of both groups are given in Table 2 (§2.1) and Table 12 below. Note that the single vowel word *i* 'red' belongs to the suffix-taking class, while the homophonous verb *i* 'sick' does not.

¹⁶ *Bur* is translated in Indonesian as *pohon enau* (*Arenga saccharifera*).

Table 12: Kaera property verbs

Property verbs taking inflectional suffixes		Property verbs taking no inflectional suffixes	
<i>ten-</i>	‘ripe’	<i>ira</i>	‘ripe’
<i>wad-</i>	‘big’	<i>kiki</i>	‘small’
<i>mol-</i>	‘true’	<i>xaxui</i>	‘immature, small’
<i>xan-</i>	‘black, dark’	<i>oyogi</i>	‘green, blue’
<i>miex-</i>	‘white’	<i>bagari</i>	‘yellow’
<i>xow-</i>	‘good’	<i>iki</i>	‘youngest’
<i>xew-</i>	‘cold’	<i>mutu</i>	‘eldest’
<i>i-</i>	‘red’	<i>i</i>	‘sick’

In (77), *xan-o* ‘black’ takes an obligatory suffix, encoding it as the final lexeme in the phrase. In (78), *kiki* ‘small’ is also the final lexeme in the phrase, but does not take a suffix, because unlike *xan-*, *kiki* ends in an open syllable.

(77) *pagang xan-o* (**pagang xan*)
 basket black-FIN
 ‘(a) black basket(s)’

(78) *pagang kiki* (**pagang kiki-o*)
 basket small
 ‘(a) small basket(s)’

The suffixes that attach to verbs encode the position of the verb in the phrase as final or non-final. Lexemes in phrase-final position take the suffix *-o* ‘FIN(AL)’, lexemes in non-final position take the suffix *-i* ‘NON-FINAL’ (see also §7.1). The contrast is illustrated in (79). The intonation of both inflected verb forms differs significantly: the ending *-o* has rising intonation, while the ending *-i* has level intonation. Another illustration of the contrast between the final and non-final suffixes is the pair (80)–(81).

(79) a. [*kono xan-o*]_{NP}
 shirt black-FIN
 ‘(a) black shirt(s)’
 b. [*kono xan-i utug*]_{NP}
 shirt black-NFIN three
 ‘three black shirts’

- (80) *Egu jugut xow-o.*
 that.one.there road good-FIN
 'That one [is] the good road.'
- (81) *Nang ega jugut xow-i ga g-oyo.*
 1SG this.one.here road good-NFIN this 3SG-follow
 'I here follow this bad road.'

When a verb is used predicatively it takes the same suffixes, but now these encode its position as final or non-final in the clause rather than the NP, compare (82) with (79). Verbal inflections encoding clausal position are further discussed in §7.1.

- (82) *Kono gu xan-o.*
 shirt that black-FIN
 'That shirt [is] black.'

4.2 Number, quantification and enumeration

Kaera nouns are not morphologically marked for number. Bare nouns can be interpreted as singular or plural. Nouns are explicitly pluralized with the plural number word *namung* 'PL', compare (83a–b). Quantifiers follow the noun, (84).

- (83) a. *na-rat namung* b. *na-rat*
 1SG.POSS-grandchild PL 1SG.POSS-grandchild
 'My grandchildren' 'My grandchild(ren)'
- (84) *Mauxubar amara yas-it¹⁷ mis-o.*
 frog many bad-IPFV sit-FIN
 'Many frogs are sitting [there].'

Kaera numerals also follow the noun; the cardinals 1–12, 100 and 1000 are given in Table 13. The forms *nuk*- '1' and (*a*)*rax*- '2' take different inflections depending on whether their position in the phrase is final or not (cf. §4.1, 7.1). In their inflectional ability, these two numerals resemble verbs. Higher numerals that have *nuk*- and *rax*- in final position are also inflected. This includes *yesrax*- '7', which is historically composed of '5' and '2'.¹⁸

¹⁷ *Yas* 'bad' has developed a sense of "very" in combination with *amara* 'many'; it also occurs in negative terms of reference, see (95).

¹⁸ In all the languages of Pantar the numerals '7' to '9' are historically formed as additive base-five numerals: [5 2] = 7, [5 3] = 8, [5 4] = 9, see Schapper and Klamer (forthcoming).

Table 13: Kaera numerals

1 <i>nuku, nuk-</i>	6 <i>tiaam</i>	11 <i>xar nuk beti</i> ¹⁹ <i>nuku/nuk-</i>
2 <i>(a)rax-</i>	7 <i>yesrax-</i>	12 <i>xar nuk beti rax-</i>
3 <i>(i/u)tug</i>	8 <i>yentug</i>	
4 <i>ut</i>	9 <i>yeniut</i>	100 <i>ratu nuku/nuk-</i>
5 <i>isim</i>	10 <i>xar nuku/nuk-</i>	1000 <i>ribu nuku/nuk-</i>

In (85), the Kaera expressions for the months are given. They all involve numerals, but not all numerals take a suffix when they occur in phrase-final position.

(85) Kaera numerals as part of NPs referring to names of the months (*ur* 'moon')

<i>ur nuk-o</i>	'January'	<i>ur yesrax-o</i>	'July'
<i>ur rax-o</i>	'February'	<i>ur yentug</i>	'August'
<i>ur (i)tug</i>	'March'	<i>ur yeniut</i>	'September'
<i>ur ut</i>	'April'	<i>ur xar nuk-o</i>	'October'
<i>ur isim</i>	'May'	<i>ur xar nuk beti nuk-o</i>	'November'
<i>ur tiaam</i>	'June'	<i>ur xar nuk beti rax-o</i>	'December'

Ordinal expressions are created with an (alienable) possessive prefix and a locative adposition *mi* (§3.6), as in (86). This process applies regularly for numerals three and up.

(86) *Uxai ge-mi ut. Uxai ge-mi xar nuk-o.*
 child 3SG.ALIEN-LOC four child 3SG.ALIEN-LOC ten one-FIN
 'The fourth child. The tenth child.'

Ordinals 'first' and 'second' are expressed with the verbs *etu* 'be/go first' and *-murung* 'follow', as in *Ang etu* 'you are/go first', *ang gu-murung* 'you go/are second' (lit. 'you follow him').

Numerals in Kaera do not regularly combine with numeral classifiers, except when they provide additional specifying information, as in (87a–c). No classifier is used to count animals.

- (87) a. *wat ipi ut*
 coconut CLF.fruit four
 'four coconuts'
- b. *wat bai ut*
 coconut CLF.bunch four
 'four bunches of coconuts'

¹⁹ *Beti* is an operator word that signifies addition; it is only used in numerals.

- c. *wat er ut*
 coconut CLF.base four
 'four coconut trees'

Humans may be enumerated with *nam* 'CLF.HUM', as in (88a) and (89). The human classifier is optional, compare (88a-b), and in constructions with *nam*, the head noun may be omitted, (88c).

- (88) a. *ui nam arax-o, ui nam utug*
 person CLF.HUM two-FIN person CLF.HUM three
 'two people, three people'

- b. *ui arax-o, ui utug*
 person two-FIN person three
 'two people, three people'

- c. *nam arax-o, nam utug*
 CLF.HUM two-FIN CLF.HUM three
 'two people, three people'

- (89) *masuk wal (nam) nuk-o, masuk wal (nam) arax-o*
 man CLF.HUM one-FIN man CLF.HUM two-FIN
 'one man; two men'

When the lexeme *nam* 'CLF.HUM' takes a plural prefix and combines with a numeral, the result is a pronominal expression for groups of humans of any number.

- (90) *i-nam arax-o* *ni-nam arax-o*
 2PL-CLF.HUM two-FIN 1PL.EXCL-CLF.HUM two-FIN
 'you two' 'we two (excl. you)'

- pi-nam arax-o* *gi-nam arax-o*
 1PL.INCL-CLF.HUM two-FIN 3PL-CLF.HUM two-FIN
 'we two (incl. you)' 'they two'

- i-nam tug* *ni-nam tiaam*
 2PL-CLF.HUM three 1PL.EXCL-CLF.HUM six
 'you three' 'we six (excl. you)'

- pi-nam isim* *gi-nam ut*
 1PL.INCL-CLF.HUM five 3PL-CLF.HUM four
 'we five (incl. you)' 'they four'

4.3 Possession

This section focuses on possession that is encoded by prefixes attached to the possessed noun. Possession is also expressed predicatively with the existential verb *wang* ‘be’ (‘my children exist’ = ‘I have children’, §3.3), and with a dedicated possessive (‘genitive’) pronoun (§5.4).

Possessor prefixes mark person and number of the possessor on the possessed noun. They may combine with a lexical possessor, as in (91a), or a free pronoun referring to the possessor, as in (91b). The free pronoun is optional and encodes emphasis or contrastiveness.

- (91) a. *Ilwang g-abat* b. (*gang*) *g-abat*
 Ilwang 3SG.INAL-leg 3SG 3SG.INAL-leg
 ‘Ilwang’s leg(s)’ ‘his leg(s)’

Nouns are lexically specified as either alienable or inalienable; nouns for body parts and kin terms are typically inalienable. Alienable and inalienable possession is encoded differently, as laid out in Table 14.

Inalienable nouns have an obligatory possessor prefix; alienable nouns take optional possessor prefixes. While plural possessors are invariably marked with a prefix containing the plural vowel /i/ and do not distinguish between alienable and inalienable possession, singular possessors do. The singular possessor of an alienable noun is encoded with an *e*-prefix, while the prefix encoding the singular possessor of an inalienable copies the first vowel of the possessed noun, or, when the noun is vowel-initial, is just consonantal.

Table 14: Kaera alienable and inalienable possessor prefixes

	AL(IENABLE)	INAL(IENABLE)	
	C-initial & V-initial noun	C-initial noun	V-initial noun
1SG	<i>ne-</i>	<i>nV-</i>	<i>n-</i>
2SG	<i>e-</i>	<i>V-</i>	<i>∅-</i>
3SG	<i>ge-</i>	<i>gV-</i>	<i>g-</i>
1PL.EXCL	<i>ni-</i>	<i>ni-</i>	<i>ni</i>
1PL.INCL	<i>pi-</i>	<i>pi-</i>	<i>pi-</i>
2PL	<i>i-</i>	<i>i-</i>	<i>i-</i>
3PL	<i>gi-</i>	<i>gi-</i>	<i>gi-</i>

A noun cannot switch between the two types of possessor prefixes. For example, *g-abat* ‘3SG.INAL-leg’ can only take an inalienable possessor prefix: **ge-abat* ‘3SG.ALIEN-leg’ is ungrammatical, and cannot refer to e.g. the leg of an animal that has been cut from the body.

4.3.1 Alienable possession

The *e*-paradigm encoding alienable possession is illustrated in (92). This paradigm is used for both consonant-initial alienables such as *ma* ‘house’ and vowel-initial ones like *abang* ‘village’ or *ibar* ‘dog’. Note that *koi* ‘skin’ and *tu* ‘breast’ belong to the alienably possessed noun class despite referring to body parts.

Nouns with an alienable possessor prefix						
(92)	‘house’	‘village’	‘dog’	‘skin’	‘breast’	‘woman’
1SG	<i>ne-ma</i>	<i>ne-abang</i>	<i>ne-ibar</i>	<i>ne-koi</i>	<i>ne-tu</i>	<i>ne-umux</i>
2SG	<i>e-ma</i>	<i>e-abang</i>	<i>e-ibar</i>	<i>e-koi</i>	<i>e-tu</i>	<i>e-umux</i>
3SG	<i>ge-ma</i>	<i>ge-abang</i>	<i>ge-ibar</i>	<i>ge-koi</i>	<i>ge-tu</i>	<i>ge-umux</i>
1PL.EXCL	<i>ni-ma</i>	<i>ni-abang</i>	<i>ni-ibar</i>	<i>ni-koi</i>	<i>ni-tu</i>	<i>ni-umux</i>
1PL.INCL	<i>pi-ma</i>	<i>pi-abang</i>	<i>pi-ibar</i>	<i>pi-koi</i>	<i>pi-tu</i>	<i>pi-umux</i>
2PL	<i>i-ma</i>	<i>i-abang</i>	<i>i-ibar</i>	<i>i-koi</i>	<i>i-tu</i>	<i>i-umux</i>
3PL	<i>gi-ma</i>	<i>gi-abang</i>	<i>gi-ibar</i>	<i>gi-koi</i>	<i>gi-tu</i>	<i>gi-umux</i>

When the prefix vowel and the first vowel of the stem are not identical, they project different syllables; for example, /*ne-ibar*/ ‘my dog’ is pronounced with three syllables: [ne.i.bar]. However, when the prefix vowel and the stem vowel are identical, they are pronounced as a single long vowel, which may be abbreviated in running speech; for example /*pi-ibar*/ ‘our dog’ is pronounced as [pi:.bar] or [pi.bar].

4.3.2 Inalienable possession

The possession of inalienable nouns is illustrated in (93). Unlike alienables, inalienable nouns must always occur with a possessor prefix. Inalienable nouns that start with a consonant take a syllabic prefix, and the vowel of that prefix is a copy of the first vowel of the possessed noun. The items in (93) illustrate harmony of the five cardinal vowels /a, u, o, e, i/. Vowel-initial inalienable nouns such as *uax* ‘child, offspring’ take a consonantal prefix. For those items, the second person singular possessor remains unexpressed, as it lacks a consonant.

Nouns with an inalienable possessor prefix

(93)		'father'	'intestines'	'stomach'	'tongue'	'fontanelle'	'child'
1SG	<i>na-mam</i>	<i>nu-duyax</i>	<i>no-toku</i>	<i>ne-leb</i>	<i>ni-dimang</i>	<i>n-uax</i>	
2SG	<i>a-mam</i>	<i>u-duyax</i>	<i>o-toku</i>	<i>e-leb</i>	<i>i-dimang</i>	\emptyset - <i>uax</i>	
3SG	<i>ga-mam</i>	<i>gu-duyax</i>	<i>go-toku</i>	<i>ge-leb</i>	<i>gi-dimang</i>	<i>g-uax</i>	
1PL.EXCL	<i>ni-mam</i>	<i>ni-duyax</i>	<i>ni-toku</i>	<i>ni-leb</i>	<i>ni-dimang</i>	<i>ni-uax</i>	
1PL.INCL	<i>pi-mam</i>	<i>pi-duyax</i>	<i>pi-toku</i>	<i>pi-leb</i>	<i>pi-dimang</i>	<i>pi-uax</i>	
2PL	<i>i-mam</i>	<i>i-duyax</i>	<i>i-toku</i>	<i>i-leb</i>	<i>i-dimang</i>	<i>i-uax</i>	
3PL	<i>gi-mam</i>	<i>gi-duyax</i>	<i>gi-toku</i>	<i>gi-leb</i>	<i>gi-dimang</i>	<i>gi-uax</i>	

4.3.3 Possession and nominalization

Possessive prefixes can be used to create nouns from non-nominal base forms, as in (94). Such forms may be used to express selection from a set, such as when someone asks to take 'the black one' from a pile of shirts with different colors. Combined with the word *yas* 'bad', such nominalizations are used as negative terms of reference, as in (95).

- | | | | |
|---------|---|----|--|
| (94) a. | <i>ge-xan-o</i>
3SG.ALIEN-black-FIN
'(the) black one' | b. | <i>ge-bagari</i>
3SG.ALIEN-yellow
'(the) yellow one' |
| c. | <i>ge-wad-o</i>
3SG.ALIEN-big-FIN
'(the) big one' | d. | <i>ge-kiki</i>
3SG.ALIEN-small
'(the) small one' |
-
- | | | | |
|---------|--|----|---|
| (95) a. | <i>ge-bag</i> <i>yas-o</i>
3SG.ALIEN-cry bad-FIN
'cry baby' | b. | <i>ge-taxau</i> <i>yas-o</i>
3SG.ALIEN-steal bad-FIN
'thief' |
| c. | <i>ge-akal</i> <i>yas-o</i>
3SG.ALIEN-cheat bad-FIN
'cheater' | | |

5 Pronouns and person prefixes

Kaera has free pronouns and prefixes encoding person and number. The free pronoun forms are given in Table 15. Free pronouns may encode a transitive agent (A) (§5.1), a patient (P) (§5.2), an intransitive subject (S) (§5.3), or a possessor (§5.4). The prefixes encoding P are presented in Table 16; the paradigm shapes

are further discussed in §2.7.1. There are no differences between paradigms in the plural. The possessor prefix forms were presented in Table 9 above (§4.3).

Table 15: Free pronouns

	Pronouns encoding A, P, S	Possessor pronouns	
1SG	<i>nang</i>	<i>neg</i>	'mine'
2SG	<i>ang</i>	<i>eg</i>	'yours (sg)'
3SG	<i>gang</i>	<i>geg</i>	'his/hers/its'
1PL.EXCL	<i>ning</i>	<i>nig</i>	'ours'
1PL.INCL	<i>ping</i>	<i>pig</i>	'ours'
2PL	<i>ing</i>	<i>ig</i>	'yours (pl)'
3PL	<i>ging</i>	<i>gig</i>	'theirs'

Table 16: Person prefixes encoding P

	C-initial verbs		V-initial verbs
	I	II	III
1SG	<i>nV-</i>	<i>na-</i>	<i>n-</i>
2SG	<i>V-</i>	<i>a-</i>	<i>∅-</i>
3SG	<i>gV-</i>	<i>ga-</i>	<i>g-</i>
1PL.EXCL		<i>ni-</i>	
1PL.INCL		<i>pi-</i>	
2PL		<i>i-</i>	
3PL		<i>gi-</i>	

The syntactic alignment in Kaera basically follows an accusative pattern, encoding A and S with free pronouns (§5.1, §5.3), while Ps may be encoded as verbal prefixes or lexical NPs depending on which class the verb belongs to (§5.2). Kaera has traces of a split-S system: while the typical function of the verb prefixes is to encode P, a few intransitive verbs (also) encode S as a verbal prefix (§5.3).

5.1 Pronouns to encode A, S, P and Possessor

A and P can both be expressed as free pronouns, as in (96). The referent of third person *gang* may be animate or inanimate. Whether P is expressed as a free pronoun or a verbal prefix depends on the verb class (§5.2.1). When P is a prefix, it may co-occur with an optional pronoun, as in (97). A possessive prefix may also co-occur with an optional pronoun, see §4.3.

- A P
 (96) *Nang gang lal-o*
 1SG 3SG see-FIN
 'I see him/her/it.'

- A P P-V
 (97) *Nang (gang) ga-samang.*
 1SG 3SG 3SG-decorate
 'I decorate it (e.g. a cake)'; 'I dress him/her up.'

In (98), S is a semantic controlling agent, in (99) it is a non-controlling under-goer. In both cases, S is encoded as a free pronoun preceding the predicate. The examples also illustrate that full pronouns can co-occur with lexical NPs, including personal names, to make their referent explicit.

- (98) *Ilwang gang user-user bir bleling g-om mi eser-o.*
 Ilwang 3SG RDP~quickly run open 3SG-inside LOC exit-FIN
 'Ilwang quickly ran outside.' (lit. '...ran out to (the) open's inside')

- (99) *Ui gu gang i.*
 person that 3SG sick
 'That person is sick.'

5.2 The encoding of P

The encoding of P depends on the lexical class to which the verb belongs. Kaera has three classes of transitive verbs: Class 1 encodes P only as a free constituent, and never as a prefix. Class 2 takes an obligatory prefix for P. Class 3 expresses P either with a prefix, or as a free constituent. The three transitive verb classes are discussed in §5.2.1. In addition, Kaera has a class of labile verbs, discussed in §5.2.2, which can be used transitively or intransitively without changing the morphological shape of their base: with a prefix they are used transitively, without a prefix they are used intransitively.

5.2.1 Transitive verbs and the encoding of P

The first class of transitive verbs encodes P only as a free constituent, and never as a prefix. Examples are presented in Table 17.

Table 17: Transitive verbs that only take a free P-constituent

VERB	MEANING	VERB	MEANING
<i>an-</i>	'sell'	<i>xew-</i>	'peel'
<i>wal-</i>	'buy'	<i>tuu</i>	'scratch, peel'
<i>ye</i>	'scoop up'	<i>kup-</i>	'hit (thing, person)'
<i>is-</i>	'scoop (water, rice)'	<i>xax-</i>	'itch, sting'
<i>wati</i>	'hear, listen, obey'	<i>si</i>	'bite (to hurt)'
<i>lal-</i>	'see'	<i>kik-</i>	'bite (to eat)'
<i>tarak-</i>	'choose, pick (person, thing)'	<i>med</i>	'take (thing), marry (person)'
<i>xas-</i>	'split, break'	<i>na</i>	'eat, drink, consume'
<i>bak-</i>	'cut in small pieces'	<i>(ei) bli</i>	'pull (canoe) on shore'
<i>patak-</i>	'cut down (e.g. tree)'	<i>keri</i>	'pull'
<i>pay-</i>	'slice'	<i>ap-</i>	'sweep'
<i>gaing</i>	'order'	<i>os-</i>	'lift (up)'
<i>er</i>	'do, make'	<i>wre</i>	'carry'
<i>tabag-</i>	'to bundle'		

The following sentences illustrate that verbs expressing P only as a free constituent (which can be a pronoun or a lexical NP) do not encode P as a verbal prefix: compare (100a–b), (101a, c, d)–(101b) and (102a, b)–(102c).

- (100) a. *Nang gang kup-o.*
 1SG 3SG hit-FIN
 'I hit him/her/it.'
- b. **Nang gu-kup-o.*
 1SG 3SG-hit-FIN
 Intended: 'I hit him/her/it.'
- (101) a. *Nang gang wati.*
 1SG 3SG hear
 'I hear / listen to him.'
- b. **Nang g-wati.*
 1SG 3SG-hear
- c. *Nang ga-mang wati.*
 1SG 3SG-voice listen
 'I hear his voice.'
- d. *Nang presiden wati.*
 1SG president (Mly) hear
 'I obey the president.'
- (102) b. *Gang tei patak-o.*
 3SG tree cut
 'He cuts a tree.'
- b. *Gang nang patak-o.*
 3SG 1SG cut-FIN
 'He cuts me.'
- c. **Gang na-patak-o.*
 3SG 1SG-cut-FIN
 Intended: 'He cuts me.'

The second class of transitive verbs has an obligatory prefix for P, see Table 18.

Table 18: Transitive verbs with an obligatory P-prefix

VERB	MEANING	VERB	MEANING
-yay-	'twist, turn around'	-tobung	'reject, push away (person, thing)'
-od	'throw to'	-wal-	'fill'
-tutuk	'talk, speak to'	-yurang	'quarrel with'
-pek-	'call'	-iling	'urge, incite, invite'
-wey-	'bathe'	-riang	'look after'
-aas-	'feed'	-yokung	'swing, shake'
-tuu	'precede'	-eng-	'give to'
-ter-	'chase (away), expel'	-bang	'drop (person, thing)'
-dag	'let go, release (animal, person)'	-tering	'let float'
-bar	'kill'	-samang	'decorate, dress up'
-koli	'let roll'	-bung	'be near (person, thing)'
-tuki	'peck at'	-oyo	'follow'
-tub-	'burn, roast, light (up)'	-taring	'point at, show to'
-ada	'frighten'		

In (103), it is shown that the object of *-aas* 'feed' must be encoded as a prefix; it cannot be expressed as only a lexical NP or pronoun. The same is illustrated for the prefixing verb *-iling* 'urge' in (104).

- (103) a. *Nang uxai gu g-aas-o.*
 1SG child that 3SG-feed-FIN
 'I feed that child.'
- b. **Nang uxai gu / gang aas-o.*
 1SG child that 3SG feed-FIN
 Intended: 'I feed that child / him.'
- c. **Nang gang g-aas-o.*
 1SG 3SG 3SG-feed-FIN
 Intended: 'I feed him.'
- (104) a. *Gang n-iling nuang mi an-o.*
 3SG 1SG-urge cloth LOC sell-FIN
 'He urged me to sell cloth.'
- b. **Gang nang iling nuang mi an-o.*
 3SG 1SG urge cloth LOC sell-FIN
 Intended: 'He urged me to sell cloth.'

Observe that the verbs in the right hand column of Table 18 all end in *-ng*, while in Table 17 we have just one verb ending in *-ng* (*gaing* 'order'). This suggests a correlation between the presence of a final nasal and the transitive cum prefixing character of a verb. More specifically, there are indications that final *-ng* is a (fossilized) causative suffix in at least some of these verbs. The verb *-ba-ng* 'drop' can be analyzed as the causative of *ba* 'fall', compare (107a–b). And in Blagar, the direct neighbor of Kaera, a transparent causative suffix *-ng* is found (Steinhauer, this volume).

- (105) a. *Wat nuk ba ser-o.*
 coconut one fall descend-FIN
 'A coconut fell down.'
- b. *Gang e-wat ga-ba-ng.*
 3SG 2SG-coconut 3SG-fall-CAUS
 'He dropped your coconut.'

For other verbs ending in *-ng* I do not have similar evidence to suggest that final *-ng* is a causative suffix. For example, the verb *dumang* 'swim' is a labile verb that is used in both transitive and intransitive constructions, without changing the morphological shape of its base, (106) (see §5.2.2).

- (106) a. *Uxai gu dumang pati.*
 person that swim CONT
 'That person is swimming.'
- b. *Gang uxai gu gu-dumang.*
 1SG person that 3SG-swim
 'I made/help/let that person swim.'

In short, the class of verbs taking an obligatory prefix has many members ending in *-ng*, and this consonant may be a fossilized causative suffix in (some of) the verbs. Synchronically, however, causatives are derived by an analytical construction (see §6.4).

The third class of transitive verbs express P either with a prefix, or as a free constituent. Examples include *pin* 'hold' in (107)–(108), and *tub* 'burn' in (109)–(110). A P-prefix can co-occur with a co-referent NP, as in (107) and (109), or occur on its own, (110b).

- (107) *Nang dur gi-pin-o.*
 1SG mouse 3PL-hold-FIN
 'I caught (the) mice.'
- (108) *Gang gelas pin-o.*
 3SG glass (Mly) hold-FIN
 'He holds (a) glass.'
- (109) *Kabakut gu gu-tub-o.*
 cigarette that 3SG-burn-FIN
 'Smoke that cigarette.'
- (110) a. *Nang lampu tub-o.* b. *Nang gu-tubo.*
 1SG lamp burn-FIN 1SG 3SG-burn-FIN
 'I light (the) lamp(s).' 'I burn him.'
- c. *Nang gang tub-o.*
 1SG 3SG burn-FIN
 'I burn him.'

5.2.2 Labile verbs

Kaera labile verbs can be used in both intransitive and transitive clauses. As intransitives, they take no prefix (see §5.3); as transitives, they take a P-prefix. Examples are given in Table 19, and illustrations in (111)–(113). An exception is *-gay-* which takes a prefix both when it is used as an intransitive, encoding S ('refuse'); and when it is used as a transitive ('not like something'), encoding P. Illustrations are given in (46)–(47) above.

Table 19: Verbs that occur in both intransitive and transitive constructions

VERB	MEANING	VERB	MEANING
<i>tutuk</i>	'talk, speak'	<i>ming</i>	'be'
<i>-tutuk</i>	'talk, speak to X'	<i>-ming</i>	'be at X, be put at X'
<i>pek</i>	'yell'	<i>dumang</i>	'swim'
<i>-pek-</i>	'call X'	<i>-dumang</i>	'help / let X swim'
<i>obo-</i>	'return'	<i>-gay-</i>	'refuse'
<i>-obo-</i>	'return X'	<i>-gay-</i>	'not like X'

- (111) a. *Ui gu tutuk pati.*
 person that talk CONT
 'That person is talking.'
- b. *Ui gu ga-tutuk pati.*
 person that 3SG-talk CONT
 'That person is talking with him.'
- (112) a. *Nang pek-o, etang kodok.*
 1SG call-FIN and jump
 'I yell and jump.'
- b. *Nang ge-pek-o, etang kodok.*
 1SG 3SG-call-FIN and jump
 'I call him and jump.'
- (113) a. *Ui masik gu gang obo-t eser...*
 person male that 3SG return-IPFV climb.down
 'That man climbs down again...'
- b. *Nang ge-topi gu g-obo-t pin wa-t...*
 1SG 3SG-hat that 3SG-return-IPFV hold go-IPFV
 'I return with his hat...'

5.3 Encoding of S

Most Kaera intransitive verbs encode S with a free pronoun. Illustrations are given in Table 20. The verbs express active or non-active events. Additional examples of intransitive verbs are the deictic verbs in Table 21. The two patterns of marking S are illustrated in (114) and (120).

Table 20: Intransitive verbs with free pronoun S

VERB	MEANING	VERB	MEANING
<i>mulai</i>	'play'	<i>ba</i>	'fall'
<i>bir</i>	'run'	<i>tee</i>	'sleep'
<i>tar-</i>	'swim (to catch fish)'	<i>ekeng</i>	'climb up (tree, wall)'
<i>kodok</i>	'jump'	<i>eser</i>	'climb down (tree, wall); exit'
<i>amar</i>	'go, move' (e.g. on a bicycle)	<i>nimin</i>	'die'

Table 21: Intransitive deictic verbs with free pronoun S

	MOTION AWAY FROM DEICTIC CENTER		MOTION TOWARDS DEICTIC CENTER	
UP	<i>ip</i>	'go up from DC'	<i>da</i>	'go up to DC'
DOWN	<i>mid</i>	'go down from DC'	<i>ya</i>	'go down to DC'
SAME LEVEL	<i>wa</i>	'go from DC'	<i>ma</i>	'come to DC'
REMOTE	<i>gi</i>	'go far'		

(114) *Nang ekeng. *(Nang) n-ekeng.*
 1SG climb.up 1SG 1SG-climb.up
 'I go up.'

(115) *Nang sepeda wang amar.*
 1SG bicycle (Mly) be move
 'I go on/with a bicycle.'

Kaera also shows remnants of an alignment system where a non-controlling undergoer S is encoded like P, with a verbal prefix. Illustrations of such verbs attested in my corpus are given in Table 22. Examples (116)–(120) show how they are used in context. In a clause, the S must be expressed with a free pronoun alongside the prefix, see (116)–(118).

Table 22: Intransitive verbs with S prefix

VERB	MEANING	VERB	MEANING
<i>-waat</i>	'live'	<i>-uabung</i>	'faint, be unconscious'
<i>-kuru</i>	'be silent'	<i>-asu</i>	'think, want, intend'
<i>-lagur</i>	'jump up'	<i>-iya</i>	'give birth'

(116) *Ang a-lagur. (*A-lagur.)*
 2SG 2SG-jump.up
 'You jump up.'

(117) *Gang gu-kuru. (*Gu-kuru.)*
 3SG 3SG-be.silent
 'He is silent.'

(118) *Nang n-uabung. (*N-uabung.)*
 1SG 1SG-faint
 'I faint.'

- (119) *Gang g-iya-t gang ge-sil tuning met or-i sei.*
 3SG 3SG-go.down-IPFV 3SG 3SG-rope placenta take hang-PFV COMPL
 'Giving birth, she took his umbilical cord [and] hung [it up].'
- (120) *N-uax nimin-i sei, nang yedi n-waat. (*Nang yedi waat.)*
 1SG-child die-PFV COMPL 1SG still 1SG-live 1SG still live
 'My child is dead already, I still live.'

There is no apparent relation between the semantics of the verb or S, and the ability of S to be expressed as a prefix; compare agentive, controlled 'jump up' in (116) and uncontrolled 'faint' in (118) which both take a prefix; and -*waat* 'live' in (120), which is prefixed, while *nimin* 'die' in (120) is not.

5.4 Possessor pronouns

A nominal possessor is expressed as a prefix on the possessed noun, and may combine with a coreferent lexical NP or free pronoun (see §4.3). In addition, there is a set of dedicated possessive pronouns, listed in Table 23. Illustrations of how these pronouns are used in context are (121)–(122). Free pronouns can combine with possessor pronouns. This is illustrated in (123)–(124). The free pronoun is optional and encodes emphasis or contrastiveness.

Table 23: Possessor pronouns

1SG	<i>neg</i>	'mine'	1PL.EXCL	<i>nig</i>	'ours'
			1PL.INCL	<i>pig</i>	'ours'
2SG	<i>eg</i>	'yours (sg)'	2PL	<i>ig</i>	'yours (pl)'
3SG	<i>geg</i>	'his/her/its'	3PL	<i>gig</i>	'theirs'

- (121) *Egu neg eg bino.*
 that.one.there mine yours NEG
 'That's *mine*, not yours.'
- (122) *Ang eg erang gu ita ming?*
 2SG yours that.ANAPH that where be.at
 'Where's *yours*?'
- (123) *Nang neg erang gu ita ming?*
 1SG mine that.ANAPH that where be.at
 'Where's *mine*?'

- (124) *Boom gu gang gen Bak Leng Tuko*
 old.man that 3SG his Bak Leng Tuko
 'That *man's* name was Bak Leng Tuko.'
 (contrasting with a woman's name mentioned in the preceding sentence.)

6 Serial verb constructions and related predicates

6.1 Serial verb constructions (SVCs)

A serial verb construction (SVC) expresses a single conceptual event by a combination of two or more lexical verbs, which share at least one argument, and occur under a single intonation contour. Kaera SVCs often combine a verb expressing an action, motion or posture with a deictic verb expressing the direction or purpose of the event. Illustrations are (125)–(127).

- (125) *Pagang xan-i nuk pi da.*
 basket black-NFIN one go go.up
 'Bring a black basket up here.'
- (126) *Sei gi, ning ga bir da.*
 COMPL go 1PL.EXCL this run go.up
 'After that, we ran up.'
- (127) *Ge-topi di ba ser-o, ...*
 3SG.ALIEN-hat (Mly) also fall descend-FIN
 'His hat also falls...'

Kaera SVCs also function to introduce additional participants into a sentence. Examples include serializations with existential *wang* 'be' (§6.2) and transitive *pin* 'hold' and *met* 'take' (§6.3), causative serializations (§6.4), and grammaticalized serializations with *-(e)ng* 'give' (§6.5)

6.2 SVCs with *wang* 'be, exist'

The verb *wang* 'be, exist' (§3.3) combines with intransitive and transitive verbs. In SVCs, *wang* is developing into an adpositional-like element. The verb *ekeng* 'climb up' in (128) is intransitive. In combination with such a verb, *wang* intro-

duces a goal; compare (128a) with (128b), where *tei baxi gu* 'that tree branch' is the goal.

- (128) a. *Ging kali-kali ekeng.*
 3PL RDP~slow climb.up
 'They climb up slowly.'
- b. *Ging kali-kali tei baxi gu wang ekeng...*
 3PL RDP~slow tree branch that be climb.up
 'Slowly they climb up onto that tree branch...'

The only way to encode a goal with an intransitive verb is in combination with *wang*, compare (129a–b). (Intransitive verbs can also combine with goals that are part of a postpositional phrase with *mi*, see §3.6)

- (129) a. *Wer bir~bir ming, gang ekeng abang wang gi.*
 sun RDP~run be 3SG climb.up village be go
 'At midday, she went up to the village.'
- b. **Wer bir~bir ming, gang ekeng abang gi.*
 sun RDP~run be 3SG climb.up village go

Wang 'be' also combines with transitive verbs. In such constructions, it functions to express that the object is less affected, or less easily available. For example, in (130a–b) it marks the difference between holding a glass in one's hand and touching a glass that is still on the table. In (131a–b), using *wang* implies that the candle nuts are less easily available, e.g. because they are in a pile mixed with various other items.

- (130) a. *Gang gelas pin-o.*
 3SG glass (Mly) hold-FIN
 'He holds a glass (in his hand).'
- b. *Gang gelas wang pin-o.*
 3SG glass (Mly) be hold-FIN
 'He touches a glass (standing on the table).'
- (131) a. *Pan tarak-o.*
 candle.nut pick-FIN
 'Pick candle nuts.'

- b. *Pan wang tarak-o.*
 candle.nut be pick-FIN
 ‘Pick candle nuts [by selecting them from a pile that also contains other stuff]’

6.3 SVCs with *pin* ‘hold’ and *met* ‘take’

When used in a serial verb construction, the verbs *pin* ‘hold’ and *met* ‘take’ introduce displaced theme participants. For instance, in (132), *pin* ‘hold’ introduces *mauxubar* ‘frog’, the item brought home.

- (132) *Ilwang mi Liwang unang mauxubar gu pin ma mi gi.*
 Ilwang OBL Liwang together frog that hold house LOC go
 ‘Together Ilwang and Liwang take that frog home.’ (lit. ‘...hold that frog go home’)

SVCs with *met* ‘take’ are illustrated in §6.5. *Met* is the grammaticalized variant of *med* ‘take’. It only occurs in SVCs and preceding *mi* ‘LOC’.

6.4 Causative SVCs with *er* ‘make, do’

The productive synchronic strategy to derive causatives in Kaera is with a SVC that contains the verb *er* ‘do, make’, as in (133a). (Traces of a morphological causative are discussed in §5.2.1.)

- (133) a. *Gang nuang gu er bagari.*
 3SG cloth that make yellow
 ‘He made that cloth yellow.’
 b. **Gang na-bagari-ng*
 3SG 3SG-yellow-CAUS

6.5 Grammaticalized SVCs with the verb *-(e)ng* ‘give’

Kaera has no underived ditransitive verbs. If an event has three participants, one participant is encoded as an oblique constituent with the postposition *mi* (§3.6), or it is introduced into the sentence with a separate verb *wang* ‘be’ or *pin* ‘hold’, as discussed above (§6.2–6.3).

Three participant constructions denoting a 'give'-event are grammaticalized SVCs with the verb *-(e)ng* 'give'. The recipient (R) of *-(e)ng* 'give' is encoded with a prefix on the verb, and the displaced theme (T) is marked as oblique with the postposition *mi*, as in (134). In addition, 'give' constructions may involve a particle *me*, as in (134)–(135). *Me* is an optional element that may be a further reduced form of the serial verb *met* which in turn derives from *med* 'take'.

- (134) *Gang buku mi n-eng.*
 3SG book (Mly) LOC 1SG-give
 'He gave me a book.'

- (135) *Gang kono wad-i la nuk mi me n-eng.*
 3SG shirt big-NFIN FOC one LOC PART 1SG-give
 'He gave me a big shirt.'

The verb *-(e)ng* 'give' often combines with *met* 'take' and *mi* 'LOC' in fixed expressions, as in (136)–(138). Note that the first clause in (138) contains the independent verb *med* 'take', while in the second clause *met* is combined with *mi* and *-(e)ng*. The function of *mi* is unclear.

- (136) *Gang ge-topi gu med a,*
 3SG 3SG.ALIEN-hat that take CONJ
 'He takes that hat of his,
xabi mampelei utug met mi kunang masik namung gu gi-ng.
 then mango three take LOC children male PL that 3PL-give
 then takes three mangoes to give to the boys.'

- (137) *Egu met mi boom~boom g-eng gang na.*
 that.one.there take LOC RDP~old.man 3SG-give 3SG eat
 'Take that one there to the elders to eat.'

- (138) *Ge-topi gu g-obo-t pin wa-t met mi me g-eng.*
 3SG.ALIEN-hat that 3SG-return-IPFV hold go-IPFV take LOC PART 3SG-give
 '[They] return with his hat and give it to him.'

7 Encoding clausal position and aspect of verbs

Kaera verbs take suffixes that mark the clausal position of the verb as final or non-final; most but not all of them also have an aspectual function. In addition,

aspect is expressed lexically by aspectual adverbs. In §7.1 I first discuss the distribution of the suffixes encoding clausal position of the verb, followed by a sketch of the semantics of aspectual suffixes and adverbs in §7.2. The analysis presented here is preliminary; many details of the position and aspect suffixes and their interaction with aspectual adverbs are still unclear.

7.1 Distribution of verbal suffixes marking clausal position and aspect

Kaera verbal suffixes mark the clausal position of the verb to which they attach, as laid out in Table 24. The suffix *-o* only occurs on clause-final verbs; it signals the end of a clause and has no aspectual function. In contrast to this, the perfective and imperfective suffixes occur on non-final verbs only, but also have an aspectual meaning. The continuative suffix can occur on both final and non-final verbs.

Table 24: Inflectional suffixes encoding verbal position

	<i>-o</i>	<i>-i</i> 'PFV'	<i>-(i)t</i> 'IPFV'	<i>-ang</i> 'CONT'
NON-FINAL	–	✓	✓	✓
FINAL	✓	–	–	✓

While the suffix *-o* 'FIN' is restricted to occur on clause-final verbs, it is not the case that all clause-final verbs take this inflection. Some verbs do not take inflectional suffixes at all, examples are given in §2.1 (Table 2), §4.1 (Table 12) and §5.2.1 (Table 17, Table 18). The suffix only attaches to verbs that end in a consonant;²⁰ it never occurs on verbs ending in a vowel. There are a few exceptional verbs, an example is *tutuk* 'talk, speak to', which is consonant-final but does not take a suffix.

In what follows some of the contrasts encoded by the verbal suffixes are further demonstrated. The verb *patak* 'hit' in (139) ends in a consonant and occurs in clause-final position, therefore it takes *-o*. This clause contrasts with (140)–(141), where the verbs are non-final and have different aspects as also expressed by the different aspectual adverbs (see §7.2). In (142), the verb inflected with continuative *-ang* is final; such verbs can also be non-final as shown in (143).

²⁰ The exception to this rule is verbs ending in *-ng*: while they are consonant-final, most of them do not allow suffixing. This reflects the fact that final *-ng* on verbs may represent a (historical) causative suffix, and is not part of the verb base, see §5.2.1.

- (139) *Ging tei gu patak-o.*
 3PL tree that cut-FIN
 'They cut that wood.'
- (140) *Ging tei gu patak-it pati. (*sei)*
 3PL tree that cut-IPFV CONT
 'They are cutting that wood.'
- (141) *Ging tei gu patak-i sei. (*pati)*
 3PL tree that cut-PFV COMPL
 'They have cut that wood.'
- (142) *Ging tei gu patak-ang.*
 3PL tree that cut-CONT
 'They are cutting that wood.'
- (143) *Ang tar-ang erang gu, nang ang lal-ang.*
 2SG swim-CONT that.ANAPH that 1SG 2SG see-CONT
 '[While] you were swimming, I saw you.'

In (144), the first clause ends in a verb *yas-o*, while in the second clause *yas-* is non-final as it is followed by the aspectual particle *bedo* 'INCOMPL'. Therefore it must be inflected with one of the non-final suffixes, in this case *-i* 'PFV'. (It is not possible to combine an imperfective verb taking the suffix *-(i)t* with *bedo* 'INCOMPL'.)

- (144) *Ma ge-ega yas-o,*
 house 3SG.POSS-this.one.here bad-FIN
 'This house here is broken,
- ma ge-memo yas-i (*yas-o; *yas-it) bedo.*
 house 3SG.POSS-there bad-PFV INCOMPL
 the house over there is not yet broken.'

Another illustration of how the suffixes differ according to the position of the verb is given in (145)–(147), with the verb *wal-* 'fill'.

- (145) *Ipai botol nuk g-wal-o.*
 oil bottle (Mly) one 3SG-fill-FIN
 'One bottle of oil.' (lit. 'Oil filling one bottle.')

- (146) *Botol ega g-wal-i sei.*
 bottle (Mly) this.one.here 3SG-fill-PFV COMPL
 ‘This bottle here is already full.’
- (147) *Botol ega g-wal-it yas-o.*
 bottle (Mly) this.one.here 3SG-fill-IPFV bad-FIN
 ‘This bottle here is very full.’

In sum, verbal suffixes in Kaera encode both clausal position and aspect of the verb.

7.2 Semantics of aspectual suffixes and adverbs

Kaera aspect is encoded by verbal suffixes (148) and aspectual adverbs (149).

Aspectual suffixes

- (148) *-it, -t* IMPERFECTIVE
-i PERFECTIVE
-ang CONTINUATIVE

Aspectual adverbs

- (149) *sei* COMPLETIVE, ‘already’
pati CONTINUATIVE, ‘continuously’
bedo INCOMPLETIVE, ‘not yet’

Examples (150)–(153) illustrate the aspectual inflections and adverbs. The imperfective typically combines with the particle *pati* ‘CONT’, and the perfective with *sei* ‘COMPL’ or *bedo* ‘INCOMPL’.

- (150) *Yami la tar-it pati la gu?*
 who FOC swim-IPFV CONT FOC that
 ‘Who is swimming over there?’
- (151) *Yami la tar-i sei la gu?*
 who FOC swim-PFV COMPL FOC that
 ‘Who has swum over there?’
- (152) *Yami la tar-i bedo?*
 who FOC swim-PFV INCOMPL
 ‘Who hasn’t swum yet?’

- (153) *Yami la tar-ang la gu?*
 who FOC swim-CONT FOC that
 'Who swims over there?'

Sentences (154)–(156) are additional illustrations of the different semantics of the adverbs.

- (154) *Nang buku g-obo-t mi g-eng sei.*
 1SG book (Mly) 3SG-return-IPFV LOC 3SG-give COMPL
 'I have already returned the book to him.'

- (155) *Nang buku g-obo-t pati.*
 1SG book (Mly) 3SG-return-IPFV CONT
 'I am returning the book.'

- (156) *Ma ega yas-i bedo.*
 house that.one.there bad-PFV INCOMPL
 'That house is not broken yet.'

Of the three aspectual suffixes, imperfective *-(i)t* and perfective *-i* occur in the corpus much more frequently than continuative *-ang*. Why this is so remains to be established. Constructions with *-ang* and *-it (pati)* are semantically similar: the consultant gave the examples in (157a–b) and (158a–b) as synonyms.

- (157) a. *Gang masu erex-ang ba e... tarang ba..*
 3SG maybe scared-CONT only eh how only
 'Maybe he is scared, or...'

- b. *Gang masu erex-it pati ba e... tarang ba..*
 3SG maybe scared-IPFV CONT only eh how only
 'Maybe he is scared, or...'

- (158) a. *Gang ging lal-ang ba. Gang gi-wang takan-i bino.*
 3SG 3PL see-CONT only 3SG 3PL-be ask-PFV NEG
 'He just looks at them. He doesn't ask them.'

- b. *Gang ging lal-it ba. Gang gi-wang takan-i bino.*
 3SG 3PL see-IPFV only 3SG 3PL-be ask-PFV NEG
 'He just looks at them. He doesn't ask them.'

8 Discussion

The phonology of Kaera, and the size of its consonant and vowel inventory is fairly typical for the languages of the Alor-Pantar group. The Kaera velar fricative /x/ is a reflex of the proto-Alor-Pantar uvular stop *q, which is still found in Teiwa, but became /k/, /g/, /ʔ/ or zero in Western Pantar, Blagar and Adang (Holton et al. 2012). In the Pantar context, Kaera is unusual in having distinctive vowel length for 5 vowels: Teiwa has a length distinction for 3 vowels only, and long vowels are completely lacking in Blagar, and Western Pantar. Atypical for Alor Pantar is the absence of a phonemic glottal stop in Kaera.

While the syntactic alignment in Kaera basically follows an accusative pattern, as in Teiwa and Blagar (but not in Western Pantar), Kaera shows traces of a split-S where a non-controlling undergoer S is encoded like P – with a verbal prefix (§5.3). In transitive clauses, the encoding of P varies according to the lexical class of the verb: verbs in class 1 encode P only as a free constituent, and never as a prefix; verbs in class 2 always encode P as a prefix; and verbs in class 3 express P either as a prefix, or as a free constituent (§5.2).

Kaera differs from its neighbor Blagar in having no productive causative or nominalizing morphology. However, what makes Kaera stand out in comparison to other Pantar languages such as Teiwa (Klamer 2010) and Western Pantar (Holton, this volume) is that it has a relatively complex morphology which shows multiple types of interaction between both syntax and phonology. First, the syntactic position of a verb as clause final, or non-final, is reflected by the verbal suffix. Second, interaction with phonology is evident in the person-prefix allomorphy, where the shape of the initial syllable of a noun/verb determines the choice of allomorph. Third, the shapes of verbs also determine their suffixing properties: verbs that end in a consonant can host aspectual suffixes, while those ending in a vowel cannot. Fourth, in almost all the person prefixes, the vowel harmonizes with the first vowel of the host verb or noun. Kaera and Wersing (Schapper and Hendery, this volume) are the only AP languages with vowel harmony.

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