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Iraqw

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Citation

Mous, M. P. G. M. (2020). Iraqw. In R. Vossen & G. J. Dimmendaal (Eds.), *Oxford Handbooks Online* (pp. 577-597). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199609895.013.47

Version: Publisher's Version

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Iraqw

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The Oxford Handbook of African Languages

Edited by Rainer Vossen and Gerrit J. Dimmendaal

Print Publication Date: Mar 2020 Subject: Linguistics, Languages by Region

Online Publication Date: May 2020 DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199609895.013.47

Abstract and Keywords

Iraqw is spoken in northern Tanzania and is the largest South Cushitic language, with roughly half a million speakers. The phonological inventory is characterized by, inter alia, the opposition of short vs. long vowels, the occurrence of lateral consonants—ejective affricate /tʎ/ and fricative /hʎ/—and a two-tone system which is grammatically (but not lexically) significant. Nominals are subject to a three-way gender distinction, which includes an interesting feature “plural” besides masculine and feminine. The gender of a noun is defined by agreement. The complexity of the Iraqw language lies in the rich inflectional element that forms a separate word independent of the verb, the so-called “selector”. Selectors are present in every sentence except for imperatives and are used with nominal and verbal complements and, for that reason, are to be seen as the root for inflectional forms.

Keywords: Iraqw, South Cushitic, Tanzania, gender, selector

44.1 The language and its speakers

IRAQW is spoken in northern Tanzania on the high plateau between Lake Manyara and Lake Eyasi. It is the largest Southern Cushitic language, with roughly half a million speakers. Its closest relatives are Gorwaa, Alagwa, and Burunge. These four languages form the southernmost group of Cushitic languages (see Kießling, chapter 24 of this volume). The dialect variation within Iraqw is negligible. Major linguistic sources for Iraqw are Whiteley (1958), Nordbustad (1988), Maghway (1989), Mous (1993), Berger and Kießling (1998), and Mous *et al.* (2002).

44.2 Phonology

44.2.1 Vowels

There are five vowels *i*, *e*, *a*, *o*, *u*, which have long counterparts *ii*, *ee*, *aa*, *oo*, *uu*; in addition there are two rising diphthongs *ay*, and *aw*.

In vowel coalescence the first vowel is dropped, except for *ou* and *ayu*, which both result in *o*. A rounded vowel preceded by a velar or uvular consonant and followed by a non-rounded vowel becomes a glide *w*.

Epenthetic vowels assimilate to the following vowel if the intervening consonant is “back” (glottal, pharyngeal, uvular, or velar), and to the preceding vowel if the intervening consonant is a glottal stop.

44.2.2 Consonants

The Iraqw consonant phonemes are given in Table 44.1. Few lexical items contain palatal consonants. Iraqw sounds very different from the surrounding languages, which is primarily due to the pharyngeal fricatives and the voiceless uvular stop, which can be realized as an affricate.

Table 44.1 Iraqw consonant phonemes in orthographical symbols

	labial	alveolar	palatal	lateral	velar	labialised velar	uvular	rounded uvular	pharyngeal	glottal
voiced stop	b	d	j		g	gw			/	'
voiceless stop	p	t	ch		k	kw	q	qw		
eject. affricate		ts		tl						
fricative	f	s	sh	hl	x	xw			hh	h
nasal	m	n	ny		ng	ngw				
resonant			l							
trill		r								

glide

y

w

(p. 578) The following non-IPA symbols and digraphs are used in this chapter: *ng* is a voiced velar nasal stop, and between vowels it is followed by an oral velar stop; *ts* is a voiceless ejective alveolar affricate; *tl* is a voiceless ejective palatal stop with lateral release; *hl* is a voiceless lateral fricative; *hh* is a pharyngeal voiceless fricative; *ʔ* is a pharyngeal voiced fricative followed by creaky voice.

Some of the most common phonological processes are the following:

- 1) If an alveolar consonant is added in morphology to another alveolar oral consonant, the first one is dropped, e.g. *dasi-r-dá'* (girl-F-DEM4) → *dasidá* 'that girl'.
- 2) The glottal consonants *ʔ* and *h* are dropped before an oral consonant, e.g. *duunga'-ká* → *duungaká* 'this nose'.
- 3) A glide or labialisation is dropped before a rounded vowel, e.g. *sidw-o* → *sido* 'pots' and before a labialized consonant, e.g. *masasakw-mo* → *masasakmo* 'ant'.

44.2.3 Tone

Iraqw is a restricted tone language with a high tone (´) and a low tone (left unmarked in this chapter), which have a grammatical function and virtually no lexical function. Some suffixes have a high tone; notably demonstrative and possessive suffixes are all high-toned. Tone plays a role in verbal inflection; for example, in the past tense all final vowels are high-toned. Tone is distinctive on final syllables only; by adding high-toned suffixes a series of high tones can occur, e.g. *ino'ín-á-dá'* (they-PL-DEM4) 'those ones', but there is maximally one tonal movement on a word: once the tone goes up, it remains high till the last syllable in the word, as in this example. The tone patterns are L* and L*H*. Most words have no (high) tone (L*), which is why I do not consider Iraqw a (pitch) accent language.

(p. 579) 44.2.4 Shape of syllables, roots, and words

All syllables have an onset (note that the glottal stop as word onset is not written); the peak consists of a long or short vowel, and the coda is empty or consists of a single consonant or a homorganic nasal-oral stop combination. The minimum word consists of a heavy syllable; a CV-structure cannot form an independent word if the vowel is short. The preferred pattern in noun roots is Ci/a/uC(C)ee/aa/ooC- or CV₁CV₁C-; the first pattern has a short high or low vowel in the first syllable and a long mid or low vowel in the second; the second pattern consists of identical vowels (any of the five). These preferred patterns are violated when morphemes are added or have been added historically, and are not valid for loans. Three subsequent syllables with short vowels are avoided by deleting the vowel of the middle syllable, e.g. *gawid-en* (difficult-PL) → *gawden*.

44.3 Nominal morphology

44.3.1 Gender of nouns

There is a three-way gender distinction, which includes an interesting feature “plural” (P) besides masculine (M) and feminine (F). The gender of a noun is defined by agreement. Subject agreement on the verb is purely with gender, not with number. The examples in (1) below show the three gender values defined by subject agreement. These examples are chosen to highlight some of the remarkable features of Iraqw. The word *daaqay* for ‘boys’ is plural in number, but it triggers 3SG.M agreement on the verb and hence is masculine in gender. The word *hhayse* for ‘tails’ is plural in number, but it triggers 3SG.F agreement on the verb and hence is feminine in gender. The singular of this word, *hhayso*, triggers 3PL agreement on the verb and hence is “plural” in gender even though it is singular in number. Note that singular and plural forms of the same lexical item do not need to have the same gender. These more general properties of Cushitic gender and number are discussed in some detail in Mous (2008).

(1)

- | | | | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|----------|------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| a. | <i>daaqay</i> | <i>i</i> | <i>giilín.</i> | <i>i</i> | <i>giilín.</i> |
| | boys | 3 | fight:3SG.M | 3 | fight:3SG.M |
| | ‘The boys are fighting.’ | | | ‘He is fighting.’ | |
| b. | <i>hhayse</i> | <i>i</i> | <i>harweeriirín.</i> | <i>i</i> | <i>harweeriirín.</i> |
| | tails | 3 | make.circles:3SG.F | 3 | make.circles: 3SG.F |
| | ‘The tails make circles.’ | | | ‘She is making circles.’ | |
| c. | <i>hhayso</i> | <i>i</i> | <i>harweeriiriná’.</i> | <i>i</i> | <i>harweeriiriná’.</i> |
| | tail | 3 | make.circles:3PL | 3 | make.circles:3PL |
| | ‘The tail is making circles.’ | | | ‘They are making circles.’ | |

Nominal modifiers agree in gender with the head noun. Demonstrative suffixes are preceded by a linker agreeing with the gender of the noun, *u* for M, *r* for F, zero for P, as shown in Table 44.2. Demonstrative and possessive pronouns agree in gender with the noun they refer to, but the agreement markers of M and P have merged to *ku*.

Table 44.2 Gender in demonstratives in Iraqw

Word	Meaning	Noun + demonstrative suffix	Demonstrative pronoun	Gender
tsamas	'giraffe'	tsamas-u-qá'	ku-qá'	M
dasi	'girl'	dasi-r-qá'	ta-qá'	F
hhayso	'tail'	hhayso-qá'	ku-qá'	P

(p. 580) The gender of a noun is not predictable, either by its shape or by its meaning. The singular and the plural of a noun are in general different in terms of gender. Words for male beings or entities can be feminine such as *hayda* (F) ‘bull’, *barisee* (F) ‘elders, older men’, and *na/ani* (F) ‘penis’, and the other way around, such as *latlaráy* (M) ‘old cows’, *dasu* (M) ‘girls’, and *isaangw* (M) ‘nipple, breast’.

From the shape of the noun one can guess its gender, but not predict it. There are two kinds of gender indications: number suffixes have their inherent gender; thus, the number suffix tells you which gender the noun has, but not all nouns contain a number suffix. A second kind of gender indication is that noun roots ending in *e* or *i* tend to be feminine, and those in *u* masculine. Loanwords from Swahili follow this pattern. Nouns ending in *a* or *o* can have any gender. Swahili loans in *a* tend to be feminine. Most nouns in fact end in a vowel. Nouns ending in *r* or *l* are masculine; those in *t* are feminine.

44.3.2 Number of nouns

Both singular and plural forms may be derived by suffixation; compare (2a, b) with (2e). There are many different suffixes forming a plural, and it is unpredictable which plural suffix a particular noun will take; compare (2a) with (2b). Moreover, not every noun has a singular and a plural form. Some nouns have no plural form, although this is not always evident from their meaning. Compare (2c) with (2d); the single number form is singular in (2c) but plural in (2e) and unspecified for number in (2f). Some nouns have several plural forms, sometimes with a difference in meaning, as in (2h), sometimes without a difference in meaning, as in (2g). The gender of the plural noun is often different from the gender of the singular noun. The fact that a singulative exists has no influence on the number interpretation of the base form, as (2i) illustrates. Most plural formations involve suffixation but some involve infixation of *-ee-* before the final root consonant as well, (2h).

(2)

- a. guhhul-áy M / guhhul-i’i P ‘stick, club’
- b. kukum-áy M / kukum-aawee F ‘sling’
- c. sori F ‘a reddish bird’ SG
- d. poqi F / poq-a F ‘red or yellow bishop’s bird’
- e. daaqay M ‘boys’ PL
- f. tluway M ‘rain’ SG/PL
- g. mashoot F / two derived plurals: masoo-du P or mashoot-ma’ P ‘leather bag’
- h. hhamhhamo M ‘one eyebrow’, hhamhham-’i P ‘eyebrows, -lashes, -lids of one person’, hhamhh6oe>m-o P ‘of many people’, hhamhham-i F ‘one hair’
- i. tsuunkáy M ‘dung’ SG, singulative: tsuunk-i F ‘one piece of dung’

(p. 581) **44.3.3 Number and gender agreement in adjectives**

There is a two-way number distinction in terms of agreement, singular and plural. The adjective follows the noun and is the only word class that agrees in number with the noun. Nouns that are plural in number agree with the plural form of the adjective in terms of gender, even if the noun itself is (F) or (M), and not (P), as in (3). The plural is formed by the suffix *-en*, or the suffix *-t*, which shortens the preceding syllable.

(3)

duunga' (P) 'nose'	duungáa ur 'big nose'
/ameena (F) 'women'	/ameenár uren 'big women'
garmo (M) 'boy'	garmóo niiná 'a small boy'
hhaysó tleer 'a long tail'	hhaysér tlet 'long tails'

Adjectival number agreement is semantically based with nouns that either refer to a collection (singular adjective) or a distribution of entities (plural adjective). For example, the loan *notay* (M, SG/PL) 'bank note(s), paper money' modified by a singular adjective *ur* 'big' refers to 'a lot of notes, a lot of money', *notóo úr*, but with a plural adjective the interpretation of distributed notes each of which is big or of high denomination is enforced, *notóo urén*.

Gender agreement of adjectives is purely tonal in nature. Adjectives following a (M) noun have a high tone on the final syllable. Adjectives following (F) or (P) nouns have a low final syllable, as in (3). Gender is also marked in the gender linker that is suffixed to the modified noun, which occurs in an antigenitive (construct) case form. The fact that adjectives have gender and number agreement independently shows that it is not possible to reanalyze the P gender as a value of number.

When used predicatively, adjectives follow the adjectival copula, which also agrees in gender with the head noun, as in (4):

(4)

na/ii	ki	ququmat.	hhayso	ki	ququumaar.
children.P	BE.P	short:P:PL	tail.P	BE.P	short:P
'The children are short.'			'The tail is short.'		

The P gender is in three ways related to plurality as an exponent of number marking:

- 1) The subject agreement on the verb for P nouns is that of the third person plural; see (1c).
- 2) All number suffixes which impose the gender value P have multiple reference but not all multiple reference suffixes are P, and P singular nouns do exist.
- 3) Coordinated nouns take P agreement on the verb, as in (5).

(5)

kitangw nee mesa i gwarangwarimit-iyá' asmá kunseeli.
chair and table BE shake-PL because earthquake
'The chair and the table shake because of the earthquake.'

44.3.4 Numerals

All numerals under ten are feminine and have a high tone: *wák* (F) 'one', *tsár* (F) 'two', *tám* (F) 'three', *tsiyáhh* (F) 'four', *koo'án* (F) 'five', *lahhóo'* (F) 'six', *faanqw* (F) 'seven', *dakáat* (F) (p. 582) 'eight', and *gwaléel* (F) 'nine'. The numerals for 10, 100, and 1,000 are masculine and have low tone: *mibangw* (M) 'ten', PL: *mibeeri* (F), *tsiiru* (M) 'hundred', PL: *tsiiree* (F); and *kuma* (M) 'thousand', PL: *kumee* (F). They form the basis for higher numbers and therefore have plural forms. The base of the numeral system is 'ten'. Higher numbers are made by addition of one of the lower numbers and multiples of 'ten', 'hundred', and 'thousand'. Multiplication is by juxtaposition, addition by *nee* 'and', which is used only once in a numeral expression. Multiplication by 'one' is not expressed for 'ten', but it is for 'hundred' and 'thousand'.

(6)

mibangw nee wák /10+1/ 'eleven'
kume tsár tsirú wák mibeeri tsár nee faanqw /1000.2 100.1 10.2+7/ '2127'

44.3.5 Pronouns

The personal pronouns are presented in Table 44.3. A cross-linguistically rare phenomenon of Iraqw is the presence of a sex distinction in the second person (singular) but not in the third person; the possessive suffixes show no sex distinction at all. In the object pronouns there is a gender/sex distinction in both third and second person (singular). The personal pronouns occur in the same syntactic environments as other nouns. The full forms can receive nominal suffixes, but the short forms cannot. The personal pronouns are used for contrast or emphasis only.

Table 44.3 Iraqw personal pronouns

Meaning	Full form	Short form
1SG	aníng	án
2SG.M	kúung	kú
2SG.F	kíing	kí
3SG	inós	ís
1PL	atén	át
2PL	kuungá'	-
3PL	ino'ín	inín

The possessive pronouns (Table 44.4) consist of the possessive suffix preceded by *ko*, if referring to a noun of the genders M or P, and by *to* if referring to F. The possessive suffixes are preceded by a linker which agrees in gender with the head noun. The possessive pronouns are used in sentences like (7).

Table 44.4 Iraqw possessives pronouns and suffixes

	M, P	F	possessive suffix	tsamas 'gi- raffe' M	dasi 'girl' F	hhayso 'tail' P
1SG	kwe'ée'	te'ée'	'ée'	tsamas-u-'ée'	dasi-r-'ée'	hhayso-'ée'
2SG	kók	tók	ók	tsamas-uw-ók	dasi-r-ók	hhays-ók
3SG	kós	tós	ós	tsamas-uw-ós	dasi-r-ós	hhays-ós
1PL	korén	torén	rén	tsamas-u-rén	dasi-rén	hhayso-rén
2PL	kohúng	tohúng	húng	tsamas-u-húng	dasi-r-húng	hhayso-húng
3PL	ko'ín	to'ín	'ín	tsamas-u-'ín	dasi-r-'ín	hhayso-'ín

(7)

hiimuwí a kwe'ée'. hiimuwí kwe'ée'
'This rope is mine.' 'this rope of mine'
dasirós a taqá'. dasirós taqá'
'His girl is that one.' 'that girl of his'

(p. 583) There are four degrees in deixis in the demonstratives (Table 44.5): 1. near me, 2. near you, 3. near him, but visible, 4. far away. Demonstrative suffixes 3 and 4 can be reduplicated. Demonstrative 4 is used for referential meaning. The proximal demonstrative for P gender nouns is *ká* and not *í*.

Table 44.5 Iraqw demonstrative pronouns and suffixes

	M	F	P	sfx	hiima (M) 'rope'	hhasam (F) 'dile- ma'	gi'i (P) 'ghost'
DEM1	kwí	tí	kuká	í, ká	hiimuwí	hhasamarí	gi'iká
DEM2	kwisíng	tisíng	kusíng	síng	hiimusíng	hhasamasí ng	gi'isíng
DEM3	kuqá'	tiqá' ¹	kuqá'	qá'	hiimuqá'	hhasamar- qá'	gi'iqá'
DEM4	kudá'	tidá'	kudá'	dá'	hiimudá'	hhasamadá ,	gi'idá'

¹ Also taqa'.

The demonstrative pronouns are used to replace the head noun, but also if the head noun is already modified by another (possessive) suffix.

44.3.5.1 Indefinite pronouns and suffixes

The indefinite suffixes (Table 44.6) are used only if the speaker considers it important to mark that the noun is not specific. Nouns can be indefinite without the indefinite suffix. The indefinite suffixes have a low tone, while the inherently definite demonstrative and possessive suffixes all have a high tone.

Table 44.6 Iraqw indefinite suffixes and pronouns

Indef sfx	Gender	Example	Meaning	Pronoun
ko	M	tsamas-u-ko	'a giraffe'	koo-ko
ka	F	dasi-r-ka	'a girl'	too-ka
kaariya'	P	hhayso-kaariya'	'a tail'	koo-kaariya'

(p. 584) There are no relative pronouns in the language. Instead, the relative clause follows the head noun immediately and the head noun is marked with the antigenitive (construct) case (section 44.3.5.2).

44.3.5.2 Interrogative pronouns and other question words

Most question words (but not the last four in Table 44.7) are based on nouns and formed by the addition of a high-toned suffix *-má* or *-lá*.

Table 44.7 Iraqw question words

Question word	Meaning	Base	Meaning
diimá	‘where’	di (F)	‘place’
aamá	‘where’	aamo (F)	‘place’
heemá	‘who’	hee (M)	‘man’
adoomá	‘how’	adoo (F)	‘manner’
idoomá	‘how’	idoo (F)	‘manner’
daqmá	‘at what time’	daqa (F)	‘moment’
gaalá	‘which’	ga (F)	‘thing’
xaylá	‘when’		
milá	‘what’		
magá’	‘how many’		
gaalay	‘where, why not’		

44.3.6 Noun phrase structure, antigenitive (construct) case

In a typological sense, the structure of the noun phrase is not in line with the verb-final basic word order, as modifiers follow the head noun in Iraqw. The head noun that is modified by an adjective, another noun, a numeral, or a relative clause is marked as being modified by an antigenitive case marker termed construct case (CON) (see Table 44.8). This marking consists of a gender linker and a final high tone on the noun. If the head noun is understood, it may be replaced by a construct pronoun (8c). Relative clauses are

final within the noun phrase but possessives precede demonstratives or indefinite modifiers.

Table 44.8 Construct case suffixes and pronouns in Iraqw

Construct sfx	Gender	Example	Meaning	Construct pronoun
-u-H	M	tsamas-ú	'a giraffe'	oo
-r-H	F	dasír	'a girl'	ar
-a-H	P	hhaysá	'a tail'	awa

(8)

- a. tiqtí-r hlee-r-ós
 disease:CON-F COW-F-3SG.POSS
 ‘the disease of his cow’
- b. mará tam awa ur-en
 houses:P:CON three CON.P big-PL
 ‘three big houses’
- c. tsir/i tam ar wák ar [aa dakúus]
 bird even CON.F ONE CON.F 3:PF miss:M:PAST
 ‘a bird, even one, that he missed’

44.4 Verbal morphology

There are two types of verbs, the verbs ‘to be’ and other verbs. Every sentence has to contain a verb ‘to be’ (also those containing other verbs), whether the complement is nominal or verbal, as in (9) and (10). The verbs ‘to be’ are discussed in section 44.4.2 below.

(9)

tlee/usee a Manda.
 potters BE Bantu
 ‘Potters are Bantu.’

(10)

aníng a goo’-íim.
 1SG BE write-DUR:1SG
 ‘I am writing.’

44.4.1 Verbal inflection

There are three conjugation classes: verbs ending in a nasal, verbs ending in a short vowel plus *w*, and other types. The first class contains verbs with the durative suffix *-im*; the

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second contains verbs with the inchoative suffix *-uw*. The third class is the most numerous.

Verbs are inflected for person and gender features of the subject. The third person singular feminine form is always identical to the second person singular form. There are two third person plural forms for verbs of the third class, *-ir* and *-iyá'*, which do not differ in meaning.

Verbs are also inflected for tense (present or past) and for mood (indicative or subjunctive). The paradigms for the three verb classes in the indicative present are given in Table 44.9.

Person	'ask'	'leave'	'hoe'
1SG	a firíim	a tláw	a dóohl
2SG	a firíin	a tléer	a dóhl
3SG.M	i firín	i tláy	i doohl
3SG.F	i firíin	i tléer	i dóhl
1PL	a firiimáan	a tlawáan	a doohláan
2PL	a firiindá'	a tleerá'	a dohlá'
3PL	i firiná'	a tlayá'	i doohliyá'
3PL			i doohlír

Note that all forms end in a high tone, except the 3SG.M form of verbs like *doohl*, i.e. those of the third class. The indicative past is characterized by a final high tone, distinctive only for the 3SG.M form of verbs like *doohl*, and by *-é'* in 2PL and 3PL instead of *-á'*. The past tense is also marked on the verb 'to be'. The subjunctive present is characterized by a final low tone and a suffix *-i* for the 3SG.M form of verbs like *doohl*. The past of the subjunctive is identical to the indicative past.

(p. 586) The second person singular shows a number of different forms due to some historical processes involving the original alveolar stop as second person marker.

The second and third person plural forms are based on their corresponding singular forms, e.g. *firin-a'* (3SG.M-PL). The first person plural forms of some verbs have a short

vowel in the stem-final syllable. This is an indication that the first person singular is marked by vowel lengthening.

The simple imperative is just the verb stem with a high tone; no ‘to be’ verb is used for the positive imperatives. Other imperative forms are the plural (of addressee), the transitive forms (with an object), and the hither forms (towards me or to my benefit). When the imperative is negated, the only remaining distinction is singular versus plural addressee. Sentences with a negative imperative (or prohibitive) verb form also require a prohibitive mood morpheme on the ‘to be’ verb (see Table 44.10).

Table 44.10 Imperative forms in Iraqw

Form	Meaning	Suffix	Gloss
dóohl	‘Dig!’		
doohl-é’	‘Dig!’ (to many)	-é’	IMP.PL
doohl-eek	‘Dig it!’	-eek	IMP.O.SG
doohl-aak	‘Dig it!’ (to many)	-aak	IMP.O.PL
doohl-áng	‘Dig for me!’	-áng	IMP.HITH.SG
doohl-aré’	‘Dig for me!’ (to many)	-aré’	IMP.HITH.PL
huw-ang	‘Bring it to me!’	low tone	O
huw-are’	‘Bring it to me!’ (to many)	low tone- aré’	O- IMP.HITH.PL
ma doohl-aar	‘Do not dig!’	-aar	NEG.IMP.SG
ma doohl-ara’	‘Do not dig!’ (to many)	-ara’	NEG.IMP.PL

44.4.2 The verbs ‘to be’ or so-called “selectors”

The complexity of the Iraqw language lies in the rich inflectional element that forms a separate word independent of the verb. Bradfield (1977) presents his analysis as a game to (p. 587) account for endless numbers of different surface forms. These so-called selectors are present in every sentence except for imperatives and are used with nominal and verbal complements and for that reason I see a verb ‘to be’ as the root for these inflec-

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tional forms. With nominal complements four different types can be distinguished. The first type is a copulative. The sentence is an equation. The form of ‘to be’ is *a*.

(11)

iraqw a doohlitee.
Iraqw BE farmers
‘Iraqw are farmers.’

The second type is a locative. The complement is a locative expression. The form is *a* for first and second person subjects and *i* for third person subjects.

(12)

inós i bará qaymo.
s/he BE in field
‘S/he is in the field.’

The third type is a temporal construction. The complement expresses the state into which the subject enters or has been. The form is *ta*. The suffix *-wa* in (13) is an aspect marker indicating simultaneous actions, here glossed as “background”.

(13)

án ta-wa na/ay.
I BE-BGND child
‘When I was a child.’

(14)

ta-y dí-r af-kú tlawi.
BE-DIR place:CON-F mouth-M1:CON lake
‘They get at the edge of a lake.’

The fourth type is adjectival in nature. The complement is an adjective. The verb ‘to be’ agrees with the subject in person and gender.

(15)

inós ku hhóó’. inós ka hhoo’.
3SG BE.M nice 3SG BE.F nice
‘He is nice.’ ‘She is nice.’

These verbs ‘to be’ are also used with a verbal complement. The main verb inflects for subject and tense, which makes the complement verbal and not nominal(ized). The copulative ‘to be’ is used in the perfect with a perfect aspect marker *-(g)a* suffixed to ‘to be’, (16). The locative ‘to be’ is used in the present tense (17), in the expectative “tense” with an aspect marker *-n*, and in the imperfective past with an aspect marker *-na* suffixed to ‘to be’. The temporal ‘to be’ is used for subjunctive mood (18), simultaneous aspect *-wa*, and consecutive aspect *-ri*. The adjectival ‘to be’ is used in “passive” sentences, (19).

(p. 588)

(16)

inós a-a /áay.
3SG BE-PF eat.3SG.M:PAST
‘He has eaten’

(17)

inós i /ét gawá xa’ano-wa alé.
3SG BE.3 fall:3SG.F on tree-ABL RESPRO
‘She falls from the tree.’

(18)

ta dohl.
BE.2SG dig:2SG:SBJV
‘You should dig.’

(19)

qaymo ka doohl.
field BE.F dig
‘The field is cultivated.’

To these four different verbs ‘to be’ a number of affixes and clitics may be added to form the inflection complex. These affixes are presented in Table 44.11.

Table 44.11 Affixes to selectors in Iraqw

MOOD-	BE	-ASPECT	-ADVERBIAL	-TENSE
bar-		-n	-ar	-a
tam-		-na	-as	
m-		-(g)a	-i	
m-		-ri		
		-wa		
<i>bar</i> conditional <i>tam</i> concessive <i>m</i> questioning <i>m</i> prohibitive		<i>n</i> expectational <i>na</i> past <i>(g)a</i> perfect <i>ri</i> consecutive <i>wa</i> background	<i>r</i> instrumental <i>s</i> reason <i>i</i> directional	<i>a</i> past

It is impossible to cover the range of different forms of the selectors. I present just a few cases to illustrate the complexity and the richness of the system. In sentence (20) the first selector is *una*, in which the object pronoun *u* refers to the masculine object that precedes it. If the object follows the selector, no object pronoun is used. The shape also reveals that the subject is first or second person, because a third person subject would have required a third person subject prefix. The object pronoun replaces the verb ‘to be’ or merges with it (*au* → *u*) depending on one’s analysis. The form is suffixed with a past tense marker *-na*. The second selector in the sentence is *nguri* with the consecutive marker *ri* which is typical for such a sequence of events; the initial velar nasal shows that the selector is from the dependent series which is required by the consecutive marker; *u* refers again to the stone that is used as instrument; the fact that the object is an instrument is indicated by the (p. 589) case clitic *r*, which is positioned immediately before the verb *tsaxaar* and which cliticizes to the left onto *dayshimo* ‘snake’ (and which happens not to be the complement of the instrumental clitic). The base of the third selector, *iri*, is *i*, the most common selector indicating third person subject. This *i* is the same form for main and dependent clause selectors but this would be different for other subjects.

(20)

tla/ano	u-na	tataáhh;	ng-u-ri	dayshimo-r
stone	O.M-PAST	take:IPFV	DEP.O3-O.M-CSEC	snake-INST
tsaxáar;	i-ri	gwáa’.		
hit	3-CSEC	die		

‘I took a stone and hit the snake with it; it died.’

Sentence (21) has *niwa* as first selector. The suffix *wa* is used to mark the clause as background to the next clause. This suffix requires the dependent base, which is *ni* for first person (*ta* for second person). This *ni* is homophonous with the hither selector *ni*, and because the verb *hardah* ‘arrive’ tends to take the hither form, I have decided to gloss it as ‘hither’. The second selector is *i* for third person subject. There is an object in this clause but it follows the selector for backgrounding: the activity is essential, not the object, the letters, which are an automatic result of the activity.

(21)

aníng	ni-wa	hardáh /isá,	inós	i	barwadá	go’-ín.
1SG	HITH-BGND	arrive	yesterday	3SG	3 letters:P:CON	write-DUR:3SG

‘When I arrived yesterday, he was writing two letters.’

In sentence (22), the feminine object indicated by *a* is the following clause and the prefix *g-* indicates that there is a third person subject. The dependent clause has the dependent selector, *ni* for first person and is marked for background by *-wa*.

(22)

baabá g-a hlaa' ni-wa doohl.
 father O3-O.F want S1.DEP-BGND cultivate
 'Father wants me to cultivate.'

The dependent selector can be used in main clauses, as in (23) for optative or prohibitive clauses. This clause is of the latter type, as is evident from the prohibitive mood prefix *m-*; the necessary vowel that follows this prefix is a copy of the following vowel from the first person plural object pronoun referring to *atén*, which could have been left out without changing the meaning. Grammatically, the subject of (23) could be the first person singular, as this would render the same verb form and the same selector form but semantically this interpretation would be odd without a proper context.

(23)

atén mi-ti-wa múux.
 1PL PROH-O1.PL-BGND beat
 'He is not to beat us.'

The other mood prefixes are illustrated in the next examples. The conditional *bar-* is shown in (24), where the vowel is assimilated to a following vowel *i* for third person subject but this (p. 590) vowel is subsequently deleted by the reduction rule affecting three subsequent CV syllables. The concessive *tam-* is illustrated in (25), and the questioning prefix *m-* in (26); the selector with the questioning prefix *m-* asking for 'what?' does not contain an object pronoun.

(24)

ino'in bir-na hamtlin'i, a tlaw-aan.
 they COND:3-PAST bath:3PL:INF 1/2 leave-1PL
 'If they have bathed, we will go.'

(25)

atén tam-ta-wa gilaaliim-áan,
 we CONCES-DEP-BGND fight:IPFV-1PL
 ta baló wakaawak-aan-ii-ká.
 DEP ever hate:IPFV-1PL-INF:PAST-NEG
 'We may be fighting, we never hated each other.'

(26)

laarí	m-a	/ay-áan?
today	QUES-1/2	eat-1PL

‘What are we eating today?’

44.4.3 Verbal derivation

The verbal derivational morphemes include a durative suffix *-m*, reduplication of the penultimate stem consonant for imperfective, reduplication of the initial root consonant for frequentative, middle suffix *-t*, causative suffix *-s*, and inchoative suffix *-w*. The durative and middle morphemes exclude each other. The inchoative suffix can combine with reduplication but not with a durative suffix. Only one of the two types of reduplication is possible at a time. The causative suffix has to occur at the end of the verb; this also holds in the case of a frozen causative. The vowel preceding the final derivational suffix, whether *-m*, *-t*, or *-s*, is *ii*. This vowel *ii* assimilates to *a* or *u* in the preceding syllable if the intervening consonant is back, i.e. glottal, pharyngeal, uvular, or velar (van der Hulst and Mous 1992); this same vowel becomes *uu* after a rounded consonant (which becomes unrounded), e.g. *tsaakuum* /tsaakw-iim /scoop-DUR/. Verbalizing suffixes include the causative, durative, stative, and inchoative derivation but preceded by *uu* or *ee* rather than *ii*.

(27)

wa/aari	i	aníng	tiq-m-iis-iyá’.
vomiting.P	3	1SG	be:ill-DUR-CAUS-P

‘Vomiting is making me ill.’

(28)

ur	‘big’	uraw
boo/	‘black’	boo/aw
gawid	‘difficult’	gawduw
niina	‘small’	niinawuw

The suffix *-m* expresses duration (27). Verbs with the middle suffix *-t* are often used for verbs which have a subject that does not control the action, and for verbs that cannot have a (p. 591) person as subject, but the body itself, e.g. *yuqumiit* ‘to be cold’ (subject is the body, not the person); see Mous and Qorro (2000). The meaning of the suffix can also be durative, habitual, or stative, e.g. *siiqiit* ‘to be cutting’; the suffix has an overlapping meaning with the durative suffix *-m*.

The expression of imperfective aspect through derivational markers is interesting. The interpretation depends on which derivations are available for a given verb lexeme. I distinguish a first and second imperfective: The first derivation is durative in interpretation; the second is habitual. Thus, it is not the actual form of the morpheme that determines durative or habitual, but whether the form constitutes a first or a second derivation. A second derivation is always built on an existing first derivation and consists of reduplication of the penultimate stem consonant. If there is no second derivation, the first derivation covers the entire domain of imperfective aspect. The various ways to arrive at a first imperfective derivation are presented in Table 44.12.

Table 44.12 The first imperfective in Iraqw

Stem	1st imperfect	Meaning	Process
al/aay	al/agiim	'deceive'	durative <i>-m</i>
/akuut	/akwmiit	'jump'	infix DUR
aahh	aahhiit	'hate'	middle <i>-t</i>
ya/aam	ya/a/aam	'agree'	reduplication of penultimate
goo'iim	goo'ii'iim	'write'	reduplication and <i>ii</i>
waa/	wa/aamiim	'vomit'	<i>-aamiim</i>
huu'	huuhu'uum	'fall'	durative <i>-m</i> and reduplication
dah	darah	'enter'	infixation of <i><ar></i>

Nouns can be incorporated into the verb, as in (49) in section 44.5.2, and from this construction noun-verb compounds arise. There is a small set of semi-productive preverb compound elements. The most common is *al* 'together':

(29)

atén a al-doohl-áan.
 1PL 1/2 together-cultivate-1PL
 'We cultivate together.'

44.4.4 Adverbials

44.4.4.1 Verbal adverbs

Iraqw has a closed set of verbal adverbs that occur in the preverbal position and modify the verb. These are adverbs like *ada* ‘quickly’, *lak* ‘almost’, *mal?* ‘again’, the common emphasis marker *qoo* (see Elders and Mous 1991), and the evidential adverb *hhoo* (Mous and Qorro 2008). Comparison is expressed using the verbal adverb *ak*, (30). A verbal adverb like *lówa* ‘very’ is used to modify an adjective, in which case it requires the construct case just like the head noun, (31).

(p. 592)

(30)

ayto'o-r-í ka ak hhó' ta ak
 maize-F-DEM1 O.3:IMPS:O.F more nice:PL than more
 dír to-qa'-ee.
 place:CON-F INDEP.F-DEM3-BGND

‘This maize is better than that maize there.’

(31)

i-na amó-r lo'wá-r saaw káy.
 3-PAST place:CON-F very:CON-F far go:3SG.M
 ‘He went very far.’

44.4.4.2 Case clitics

The position of case clitics is immediately before the verb: *-i* directional, (32), *-wa* ablative, *-ar* instrumental, and *-as* reason. The clitics attach to the host preceding them; see also the discussion of example (20) above. If the host is a noun, there is no gender linker preceding the case clitic, except for feminine nouns. Moving the case-marked constituent outside the verbal complex requires the addition of a resumptive verbal element *alé*, (33).

(32)

tsir/i i gawá daandú awi iwiiwíit.
 bird BE top:of back:of bull:DIR sit:DUR:3SG.M
 ‘The bird is on top of the bull.’

(33)

44.4.4.4 Interjections

Interjections are used in direct speech in addressing people only. Some interjections are *xáygan*, which is used to call the attention of somebody, *ar'ee*, expressing pity and sympathy, and *are*, when offering somebody something.

44.4.4.5 Ideophones

Ideophones are often used as complement of verbs 'to say'. Verbs can be formed on the basis of ideophones by adding one of the verbal derivational suffixes:

(37)

ta-na óo': xáhl; ta-na xahlmíit.
 IMPS-PAST say:3SG.M xahl IMPS-PAST keep:silent:DUR:3SG.M
 'They said: *xahl* (sound of silence); they kept silent.'

44.5 Syntax

44.5.1 Constituent order and basic syntactic structures of simple sentences

Every sentence needs an inflectional element that is a word category on its own, the verb 'to be', termed "selector" by Whiteley (1958). This phenomenon is not unusual among Cushitic languages. The lexical base of these INFL-words can be characterized as verbs 'to be' since the various bases occur with nominal complements, as well as in verbal sentences: see section 44.4.2 above. The core of an Iraqw sentence consists of a verbal complex which is a brace with 'to be' as the left edge and the verb as the right edge. Within this brace the following phrases occur in any combination and in any order: the object (O), an adverbial case clitic with its complement (oblique object or OO), or a verbal adverb (Adv), as is characterized in (38) with an example in (39).

(38)

verbal complex: Infl O/Adv/OO Verb

(p. 594)

(39)

inós i hhartá hhawati malé hanmiis.
 s/he BE:3 stick:F:CON man:DIR again give:DUR:PRS:he
 INFL O OO Adv Verb
 'He is giving a stick to the man again.'

Subject and tense are obligatorily marked on the verb. The subject is also marked on 'to be' but here the distinction is only between speech participants (first and second person) versus third person. Tense is marked both on the verb and on 'to be'. Tense marking on the verb is marginal but obligatory. Objects are often moved leftwards. The semantic motivation of the leftward movement of the object is foregrounding. This movement is very common in past or perfect tenses (40), and rare in present tense forms, in line with cross-linguistic focus patterns. Present tense is not marked and is actually non-past; future or intention is the unmarked interpretation for non-past sentences with a foregrounded object, as (41) shows. Note that the object inside the verbal complex requires construct case. Sentences that focus on simultaneous action do not show object foregrounding, (42). Objects of negative sentences tend to be foregrounded, (43). Inherent objects, (44), and objects in general statements are not foregrounded, (45). The object is preferably external and sentence-initial in sentences with impersonal subjects, since the object is naturally the theme if the subject is not to be mentioned, (46). In (47) it is more appropriate for the object to be external because otherwise the meaning would be that work in general is finished once and for all, which is not intended.

(40)

baynu g-i-na /aymís.
 pigs O.3-O.P-PAST feed:3SGF
 'She fed the pigs.'

(41)

aníng kasiis a huurím.
 1SG potatoes O.F cook:1SG
 'I'll cook potatoes.'

aníng a kasiir huurím.
 1SG BE1/2 potatoes:F:CON cook:1SG
 'I cook potatoes.'

(42)

kar ís i hikwá dáaf, dasi i-n /akmamít.
 well 3SG BE3 cattle:CON return girl BE3-EXPEC run:3SGF
 'While he returns the cattle, the girl is running.'

(43)

dóo úr g-w-a tleehh-ii-ká.
 house:CON big:M O.3-O.M-PFV build-INF:PAST-NEG
 ‘He didn’t build a big house.’

(44)

a fa/ár huuriind-a-ká.
 BE1/2 porridge:F:CON cook:2SG-INF-NEG
 ‘You are not going to cook porridge.’

fa/a a huuriind-a-ká.
 porridge O.F cook:2.SG-INF-NEG
 ‘You don’t cook porridge.’

(p. 595)

(45)

a kahawú wáh. kahawa u wáh.
 BE1/2 coffee:CON drink:1.SG coffee O.M drink:1SG
 ‘I drink coffee.’ ‘I drink coffee.’

(46)

yaamu k-i-na piimúus.
 land:P O.3:IMPS-O.P-PAST measure:PAST
 ‘The land was measured.’

(47)

gadyéet ga faak.
 work O.3:O.F finish:3SGM:PRS
 ‘He finishes the work.’

Complements of adverbial case clitics are fronted for foregrounding purposes and just as with objects such a movement requires an object pronoun in the selector. The case clitic itself is not fronted and stays behind in the verbal complex, cliticizing to its leftmost element even if this is the object of the verb rather than to the complement of the case clitic; see the discussion of (20) above.

Adverbs and oblique objects (i.e. noun phrases with an adverbial case clitic) can be moved to the right of the verb, in which case the moved constituent must be followed by the resumptive pronoun *alé*. The adverbial clitic moves along with its complement in this rightward displacement; see *tluwosa alé* ‘because of rain’ in (33) above.

Bare noun objects (no construct case) can incorporate into the verb to form a noun-verb compound, (48).

(48)

anága	hee-gaas.
1SG:1/2-PF	man-kill
‘I committed manslaughter.’	

44.5.2 Negative clauses and questions

A clause is negated by adding a nominalizer (glossed INFinitive) and a negative marker *ka* to the verb, which is mostly the final word in the sentence. The infinitive marker is *ii* for third person masculine and for past tense, (43), otherwise *aa*, (44).

Polar questions are formed by sentence-final question intonation and the same infinitive marker on the verb. The question intonation entails an extra-high tone on the penultimate syllable and a subsequent fall. Yes/no questions are often used to avoid a negative statement: yes/no questions are often leading questions to ‘no’, as (49) illustrates.

(49)

a	axâs-a?	
1/2	listen:2SG:Q-INF	
‘Do you listen?’		(Expected answer: ‘no’)

Content questions can be formed by adding the questioning prefix to the selector (example (26) above), or by using a question word. No question intonation is used. A common strategy for question formation is according to the model “the man who is talking to you is who?” (51); that is to say a copula clause consisting of a general noun (*hee* ‘man’) and a question word built on that general noun and a question suffix (*hee-má* with a relative clause added to the initial general word. One can leave out the second part, copula plus question word, and the incomplete sentence consisting of a general head noun plus relative clause is still interpreted as a question. Questions can also be formed by a nominal clause consisting of a noun plus copula plus question word as in (50). But one can also stop at the end of the relative clause, in which case one ends up with the questioning element sentence-initially and an incomplete sentence marking it as a question, (51).

(50)

do'ók a gaalá?
 house-your COP which
 'Which is your house?'

(51)

hée kúung u axwées (a heemá)?
 man:CON you.M O.M say.M COP who
 'Who is talking to you?'

44.5.3 Complex sentences

Complement clauses are arguments and can trigger the use of an object pronoun, as in (22) above. Complement clauses can also consist of a head noun like *adoo* 'manner' plus a relative clause translation like "how+clause". The Datooga loan *gidabá* 'that' is used as a complementizer, as (52) illustrates.

(52)

inós g-a alk/iit gidabá i tláy.
 3SG S3-O.F tell:3M:PAST that 3 leave:M
 'He said that he is leaving.'

A common way to link clauses as consecutive action is by use of the consecutive suffix to the selector of the second clause, as in (20) above, or by marking the first clause as backgrounded with the background suffix added to the selector, (21). Consecutive clauses are often linked by the general preposition/conjunction *nee* 'and, with'.

The conceptual link between clauses can be indicated by adverbs such as *asma* 'because' (see (36) above) and *bar* 'if'.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Khalid Mourigh for extensive comments and suggestions for more clarity.

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