

THE KAUPELANESE LANGUAGE

Introduction

Kaupelanese (kpp), or *basa kaupèlan*, is the mother tongue for the majority of Kaupelanese people and, beside English, the official language of the Kingdom of Kaupelan. It is an Austronesian language descendant of *makuwa* (or old Kaupelanese), the lingua franca of the archipelago in the fifteenth century. Kaupelanese has five dialects, Kauta (the standard form), Haimarata (spoken in northern Kiwangar), Wisanyo (spoken in western Wisanu), Palayanga (spoken in Nilau) and Terong (spoken in Terong islands). Kaupelanese is written in *Kiwangar*, a writing system derived from an ancient Indian script introduced in Kaupelan in the tenth century. By influence of European colonizers, the Roman alphabet is also largely employed. Since 1960, an official transliteration of *Kiwangar* was adopted, replacing the existing variants.

History and Classification

Kaupelanese belongs to the Austronesian language family and is classified in the following subgroups: *Malayo-Polynesian*; *Central Eastern Malayo-Polynesian* and *Bandanic*. Inside the *Bandanic* group, Kaupelanese is included in the *Eastern Bandanic* subgroup.

According to lexicostatistical studies, the first Austronesian populations arrived to the archipelago three thousand years ago. Scholars reconstructed the first Austronesian language spoken in the archipelago, the [Proto-Bandanic](#) (PBN), based on the Bandanic languages and dialects. Though PBN did not have script, its words could be inferred by comparing its descendant languages and Old Kaupelanese, the only ancient languages of the group with written records. Thus, for example, the Kaupelanese words *tau* ('person'), *watu* ('stone') and *roa* ('two') are derived from the Old Kaupelanese words *tawot*, *watu* and *roa*, and are akin respectively to the words *tamot*, *hato* and *lū* from [Waimahui](#), another language of the group. The corresponding PBN words can be inferred as **tamwot*, **batu*, and **rua*.

With the dispersion of Austronesian population throughout the archipelago, many dialects derived from this protolanguage. These dialects, which already had influences of non-Austronesian languages, were adopted by local communities and absorbed lexical and grammatical characteristics of different aboriginal speeches. The Bandanic dialect spoken in the south of Kiwangar – which would originate Kaupelanese – showed a significant linguistic substratum attributed to a non-Austronesian language, the so-called [Hubian](#) (HU). From words like *kyawa* ('magic power'), *sawa* ('potion'), *silempi* ('bee') and *kuwimpi* ('ant'), for example, it is extracted the HU roots **auha* ('magic') and **impe* ('insect, bug'). So, *kyawa* is supposed to be derived from HU **k-ihī-auha* ('his magic power'), as well as *sawa* from **sə-auha* ('magic liquid'), *silempi* from **sila-impe* ('honey bug') and *kuwimpi* from **k-uuru-impe* ('earth bug').

Old Kaupelanese (until 1400) – The language in its earliest phase is called [Old Kaupelanese](#) (OK), or *basa makuwa*. The language of this period had a special feature: two distinct forms used according to the social class of the persons involved in the conversation. So, there was the Noble Speech, or *basa raja*, a refined language used exclusively by the royal family and the nobles; and the Common Speech, or *basa daʔē*, used by the people in general. The Noble Speech was considered the classical and literary form and it has, from the introduction of writing in the tenth century to the beginning of the fifteenth century, a remarkable literary production. The texts, mostly about the local nobility and religious matters, used euphemistic phrases and a large amount of Sanskrit and Old Javanese loanwords. But it was the *basa daʔē* that spread outside the kingdom of Kotamakuwa, specially due to traders and soldiers, to become the vehicular language of the sultanate of Rajakaopalan and that decisively contributed to the Modern Kaupelanese.

Middle Kaupelanese (from 1401 to 1800) – The dialect of *basa daʔē* spoken in Kiwangar from the fifteenth century on is considered the Middle Kaupelanese, or *basa kiwangar*. The language received more influences of aboriginal speech and the lexicon was enriched with words from Malay and Arabic. *Basa raja* was no longer used as written standard, except by some priests or sages, as a kind of ritual or formal language. Both Kiwangar and an Arabic-based alphabet are employed in this period. The language began to diverge of the variants spoken in the islands of Wisanu, Nilau and Terong.

New Kaupelanese (since 1801) – The latest version of Kaupelanese – that is considered the standard form of the language spoken today – is the dialect of southern Kiwangan. In fact, *basa kiwangan* originated two different dialects, one Islamic in the north, called Haimarata, with greater Arabic and Malay influence, and the other Christian in the south, Kauta, with more accentuated Portuguese and English influence. The Kauta dialect was adopted as the national language since 1960.

Writing System

Kiwangan is an [abugida](#) script descendant of Brahmi alphabet. The basic symbols represent consonants followed by the vowel a. To form syllables with other vowels and/or with a consonantal sound at the end, diacritics are added to these basic symbols. The Latin alphabet can also be used, following the official transliteration.

Kiwangan	transliteration	phonetics	Kiwangan	transliteration	phonetics
ᮊ	a	/a/	ᮊ	fa	/fa/
ᮊᮀ	è	/ə/	ᮊᮁ	la	/la/
ᮊᮂ	ai	/aj/	ᮊᮃ	ma	/ma/
ᮊᮄ	e	/e/	ᮊᮅ	nga	/ŋa/
ᮊᮆ	i	/i/	ᮊᮇ	na	/na/
ᮊᮈ	au	/aw/	ᮊᮉ	pa	/pa/
ᮊᮊ	o	/o/	ᮊᮋ	ka	/ka/
ᮊᮌ	u	/u/	ᮊᮍ	ta	/ta/
ᮊᮎ	i	/i/	ᮊᮏ	wa	/wa/ or /va/
ᮊᮐ	ba	/ba/	ᮊᮑ	ha	/ha/
ᮊᮒ	ga	/ga/	ᮊᮓ	ra	/ra/
ᮊᮔ	da	/da/	ᮊᮕ	sa	/sa/
ᮊᮖ	ja	/dʒa or dja/	ᮊᮗ	ya	/ja/
ᮊᮘ	h or k	/h/ or /k/			
ᮊᮙ	tja	/tʃa/			

Diacritics

ॐ	/ta/	ॐ	/tə/ or /t/	ॐ	/taj/	ॐ	/te/	ॐ	/ti/
ॐ	/taw/	ॐ	/to/	ॐ	/tu/	ॐ	/ti/	ॐ	/tam/
ॐ	/tar/	ॐ	/tak/	ॐ	/taŋ/	ॐ	/tan/	ॐ	/tat/

Phonology

Consonants

Stops: p, b, t, d, k, g, ʔ

Affricates: dʒ

Fricatives: f, s, h

Approximants: v

Nasals: m, n, ŋ

Lateral and trill: l, r

Semi-vowels: j, w

Vowels

i, e, a, ə, o, u

Morphology and Syntax

Nouns

Nouns do not change with respect to gender. The so-called *class words* are frequently employed before the word to restrict its meaning. Examples:

ua nu "coconut" is formed with the class word **ua** ("fruit")

manu kibuma "cockatoo" uses the class word **manu** ("bird")

masan wana "tigress" uses **masan** ("tiger") as class word

Some feminine words ending in **i** are derived from Sanskrit feminine, like **puri** "princess" (from Sanskrit **putri**, feminine of **putra**, "prince").

The plural of nouns can be obtained by the use of class words with collective meaning (**haima** "people" or **ngadya** "group", for instance), by the use of suffix **-ra** (**tau** "person", **taura** "persons") or by duplicating the noun (**iha** "fish", **iha-iha** "school of fishes"). The suffix **-ra** becomes **-èra** before *r* and makes final *l* become *i* or disappear (**syor** "gentleman", **syorèra** "gentlemen", **lakal** "potato", **lakaira** "potatoes"). In most cases, the word loses the final vowel (**tokingawa** "passenger", **tokingaura** "passengers", **kota** "city", **kotra** "cities") or moves the vowel to the last syllable (**wisi** "star", **wisrya** "stars"). Some are irregular (**wana** "woman", **watra** "women").

Prefixes **a-**, for objects, and **tw-** or **taw-** (or **to-** before consonant), for persons, are used to make nouns with the meaning of "agent". Class words, like **suik** "tool", can be used with the same purpose (**ayak** "to open" **ahayak** or **suik ayak** "opener", **kisa** "spear, weapon" **tokisa** "soldier", **wasi** "iron" **tawasi** or **twasi** "smith, blacksmith").

Suffix **-e** is used to transform verbs in nouns (**airi** "to isolate" **arye** "isolation", **dak** "to rule, to command" **dahe** "kingdom", **waikalu** "to simulate" **waikalwe** "simulation").

Some nouns can be derived from verbs or adjectives by reduplication (**dumu** "to grow" **dumdumu** "growth", **weru** "new" **werweru** "renovation").

Adjectives

Adjectives always follow the qualified noun. The comparative is made with **mais yen** or **-yu** (with pronominal prefix) following the adjective. The superlative is created with **sahera**. Analytical constructions are used to express the mood of the adjective. When adjectives follow nouns in noun phrases, plural suffixes are added to adjectives and not to nouns. Examples:

kar lama	"old car"
kar lamra	"old cars"
uma watu	"stone house"
basa franse	"French language"
huim lau walu ye	"these eight little cats"
ho matamra sedim ryu matangra	"your eyes are more beautiful than mine"
dami ye muri mais yen era	"this girl is younger than them"
tikityang mura sahera hi nurwese	"cheapest air ticket in the world"
waili ina nidan ninmu	"drinkable water"

Prefixes **ya-** and **ki-** are used to form adjectives from verbs and nouns (**sihai** "end" **yasihai** "last", **anti** "to wait" **yahanti** "pregnant", **ingya** "to inhale" **kingya** "inhaled", **wayari** "to drain" **kiwayari** "drained", **sulatu** "to prepare" **kisulatu** "prepared, ready, prompt"). Prefix **ya-** is also used to transform cardinal into ordinal numerals (**telu** "three" **yatelu** "third"). Prefix **yen-** is employed to transform nouns into adjectives with the meaning of "looks like, similar to" (**maya** "lie" **yenmaya** "incredible ("that looks like a lie"), **mas** "gold" **yenmas** "golden", **ira** "red" **yenira** "reddish").

Adverbs

The most part of the adverbs is adjectives that become adverbs due to its location in the phrase. Adverbs are usually placed after the verb. For example:

hami ti amhain kelaim wia	"we do not eat <i>good</i> food" (wia is adjective)
hami ti amhain wia	"we do not eat <i>well</i> " (wia is adverb)

There are several adverbs used for negation. Except for **ti** "no, not" and **humai** "do not (imperative)", they are usually placed after the main verb or at the end of the phrase. For example:

wasak i ti nwalani	"tomorrow he will not go home"
tofutbol nidan nèdauk nga	"the player cannot play <i>anymore</i> "
au ni ngahe hutryain walu mene	"I am <i>not yet</i> eighteen years old"
i ti ni ngahe hutroa rain sai	"he is <i>not</i> twenty-one years old"
syurita makilu hi ne	"the girl have <i>never</i> been there"
ho mwita bani ang?	"didn't you see <i>anything</i> ?"
wami mayo hi uma	" <i>nobody</i> was home"
humai mopuhu	" <i>do not</i> smoke"
Akeri nukain mea Santui	"Akeri <i>didn't</i> go to Santoi"

Numerals

1. sai	21. hutora rain sai
2. roa	30. hutelu
3. telu	40. huha
4. ha	50. hutima
5. ima	60. hunem
6. nem	70. huhitu
7. hitu	80. hutwalu
8. walu	90. husia
9. sia	100. atu sai
10. hutisai or huti	200. atu roa
11. hutryain sai*	300. atu telu
12. hutryain roa*	400. atu ha
13. hutryain telu*	500. atu ima
14. hutryain ha*	1,000. riun sai
15. hutryain ima*	2,000. riun roa
16. hutryain nem*	1,000,000. yuta sai
17. hutryain hitu*	1994. riun sai, atu sia, husia rain ha
18. hutryain walu*	first. yanarik
19. hutryain sia*	second. yaroa
20. hutora	third. yatelu

* colloquial form; literary form is “hutisai rain...”

Some examples of usage:

hudak yatelu "third track"

hudak telu "three tracks"

hudak telu or **hudak (wam)telu** "track 3 or track (number) 3"

sai hi hutwalu "1/80"

hunem pèrsen "sixty percent"

Pronouns

Personal pronouns can be used as actor and undergoer pronouns. The first person plural has two forms, **hami**, exclusive (he, she, it or they and me), and **wiri**, inclusive (you and me). The personal pronouns are:

1 sg	au
2 sg	ho
3 sg	i
1 pl incl	wiri
1 pl excl	hami
2 pl	hora
3 pl	era

Interrogative pronouns are **saha** "what", **isaha** "who", **ngiwa** "when", **hira** "how much", **sui** "where", **nguya** "how" and **du saha** "why". The particle **ang** can be used to emphasize questions when the interrogative pronouns are not present in the phrase.

ho hi ne waba ang?	"have you been there yesterday?"
ho ni indi hira?	"how many dogs do you have?"

Possessive Constructions

In Kaupelanese, like other Austronesian languages spoken in Eastern Indonesia and by influence of Papuan languages, the possessive construction follows the rule "*possessor-possession*", in the so-called inverted order. The *possessor* can be a noun or a personal pronoun.

Inalienable possessions (body parts, inherent, inseparable or kinship relationships) are formed with the suffixes **-ng** (1sg), **-m** (2sg, 1pl excl, 2pl) or **-n** (3sg, 1pl incl, 3pl) added to the possession. Words ending in consonant remain unchanged (without the suffix). Some words like **ngara-** "name", **sawa-** "spouse" and **ima-** "hand" are never used without the possessive suffix, default is the 3rd singular **-n**. On the other hand, some nouns have the suffix of the 3rd person **-n** fossilised with the root, like **yan** (soul, spirit) and **kan** (body). They remain unchanged for every person, like **hami yan** or **au kan**. The personal pronouns are used before the possessions to avoid ambiguity, except the 1st person singular which can be omitted. Some examples: **matang** "my eye", **hami ninam** "our mother", **au uraman** "my brain", **ho sawam** "your spouse", **karau huluk** "buffalo skull". When the plural suffix **-ra** is used in the inalienable possession, it follows the possessive suffix: **imangra** "my hands", **hora waruhimra** "your parents", **era ngaranra** "their names", **wiri anginra** "our children".

Alienable possessions (temporary, separable, alienable, non-consanguineal kinship relationships) are formed with the possessor, or personal pronoun followed by the particle **ni**. Plural of *possessor* can be constructed with the particle **nira**. The personal pronoun **hami** becomes **nami** on inalienable constructions and the particle **ni** is omitted. Thus, **wiri ni telwijun** "our television set", **i aman ni kewalura** "his/her father's horses", **Ismail ni kar** "Ismail's car", **manik ni uma yunti** "prince's big house", **haima ye ni basa** "the language of this people", **Gilan nira Nai** "The Lord of the Rings", **ni ratwin** "his/her queen", **nami tana** "our country".

Some words, like **uma** (house), **dahe** (kingdom) or **nai** (lord), can be used either as alienable or inalienable, depending on the context. So, we can say **au ni dahe** or **daheng** to emphasise something beloved, permanent.

The direct order "*possession-possessor*" can be obtained using the word **umana** ("belonging to") between them. So, instead of **ho mangim ni buk** "your sister's book", **buk umana ho mangim** "the book of (belonging to) your sister".

Possessive phrases are usually done without possessive verbs like "to own", "to possess", "to have", but only with possessive pronouns. Some auxiliary words like **rang** ("with") or **bani** ("nothing"), **mayo** ("nobody") respectively for animate and inanimate possessions can be used in these constructions.

ho angin hira?	"how many children (do you have)? "
i mari-mangin ang?	"does he (have) siblings? "
tongar (rang) nira wahu roa	"the fishermen (have) two boats"
au ni kar bani	"I don't have car"
i ti angin - i angin mayo	"he doesn't have children"

Verbs

Similar to other Eastern Indonesian languages, Kaupelanese verbs are conjugated using pronominal prefixes. Basically, they are divided in two classes, the *U-class*, for verbs starting with consonants,

including most verbs starting with h (called strong h verbs), and *W-class* for those starting with vowel and some verbs starting with h (weak h verbs).

Some examples of *U-class verbs*:

	nawek "to plant"	kilak "to fly"	hain "to eat"	waimai "to bring"	yang "to breathe"	ngawa "to carry"
1 sg	au unawek	au ukilak	au uhain	au uwaimai	au uyang	au ungawa
2 sg	ho monawek	ho mokilak	ho mohain	ho mwaimai	ho moyang	ho mongawa
3 sg	i nènawek	i ngilak	i ngain	i nwaimai	i nyang	i ngawa
1 pl i	wiri tanawek	wiri takilak	wiri tahain	wiri twaimai	wiri tyang	wiri tangawa
1 pl e	hami amnawek	hami amkilak	hami amhain	hami amwaimai	hami amyang	hami angawa
2 pl	hora monawek	hora mokilak	hora mohain	hora mwaimai	hora moyang	hora mongawa
3 pl	era ranawek	era rakilak	era rahain	era rwaimai	era ryang	era rangawa

Some examples of *W-class verbs*:

	huwai "to make"	alu "to get"	inmu "to drink"	ukrama "to dive"
1 sg	au uwai	au walu	au winmu	au aukrama
2 sg	ho muwai	ho mwalu	ho mwinmu	ho mukrama
3 sg	i nuwai	i nalu	i ninmu	i nukrama
1 pl i	wiri tuwai	wiri talu	wiri tinmu	wiri tukrama
1 pl e	hami muwai	hami malu	hami minmu	hami mukrama
2 pl	hora muwai	hora mwalu	hora mwinmu	hora mukrama
3 pl	era ruwai	era ralu	era rinmu	era rukrama

Imperative is made with the prefix of the 2nd person, **mo-/m-**. To the negative imperative, the word **humai** "don't" precedes the verb.

The verb **ma** "to come" is irregular and conjugated as "**au ma, ho moma, i nèma, wiri tèma, hami ma, hora moma and era rèma**", instead of the expected pattern: "**au uma, wiri tama, hami ama and era rama**" of *U-class* verbs.

The copula between the subject and the complement is normally done without a linking verb. So, for instance, **ye kani** means "this (is) personal" and **kumu nguwa rang ho** "may the force (be) with you". Stative verbs are formed with the patient marker (personal pronoun) postponed: **huna au**, "I'm hungry", **yunti i**, "he is big". Some phrases are also made with the personal pronoun prefixes: **ungulak au**, "I bathe". Numerals also can have pronoun prefixes: **hami amwalu**, "we are eight".

Tense is not normally marked, but some auxiliary words can be used for this purpose and also to mark mood and aspect. The order *mood – (conjugated) verb – aspect* must be observed. Tense particles can be placed either before the verb or in the end of the phrase. The following particles are used for tense: **kena** for the future, **dahuk** or **da** ("already") for the past perfect and **wami** ("then") for the imperfect. These particles are used for mood: **kidai** for "conditional", **kumu** for "imperative", **nidan** for "potential", **kui** for "exhortative". For aspect, the particles are: **dumu** for continuous action, **sahi** for increasing action, **ayau** for ceasing or evanescent action, **leyai** for repetitive action ("again") and **wal** for concurrent action ("also, too, again").

Below, some examples:

<i>mokina mosong</i>	"please come in (humble request)"
<i>mokina tukain hi ne</i>	"let's (you and I) go there"
<i>mokina hami amsong ang?</i>	"may we come in?"
<i>au wamu winmu</i>	"I want to drink"
<i>hami kumu amsong</i>	"we must come in"
<i>i nidan nètetem ye</i>	"he can work on this"
<i>Akeri nèbumuk nukain Santui dahuk</i>	"Akeri had to go to Santoi"
<i>era kidai rita dumu ye</i>	"they would keep looking at this"
<i>dam lau telu a ne ramu duwit</i>	"those three little boys want money"
<i>wahulangi nèkira nèmitu ngi kuhul aur hitu</i>	"the plane should arrive at seven o'clock"

Prefix **wai-** is used to transform intransitive verbs, adjectives, nouns and adverbs into "causative verbs". This prefix can also be added to some transitive verbs (**song** "to enter" **waisong** "to make enter, to place", **yunti** "big" **wayunti** "to make bigger, to enlarge", **waha** "to suffer" (transitive) **waiwaha** "to make suffer, to punish, to submit").

Word Order

SVO

Dialects

Kaupelanese has five major dialects and many subdialects. Below, a brief description of them:

Kauta - is the dialect of most prestige and considered the standard form of the language, or *Standard Kaupelanese*. It is the mother tongue of more than 70% of the Kaupelanese people and learned as the second language by virtually the rest of the population in the Kingdom of Kaupelan. It is native in the south of Kiwangar, southeast of Wisanu and northwest of Nilau.

Haimarata - is spoken in the north of Kiwangar by around 430,000 people. It is closely related to Kauta and both dialects are considered as belonging to the Kiwangar branch of the language. For a long time it was considered, in a derogatory sense, as a corrupted form of Kaupelanese, spoken by uncultured people of the inland. Haimarata was strongly influenced by Taumelan (Taumlang), the Malay dialect spoken in northeast Kiwangar and received some influence from Arabic, mostly religious terms, considering that most Haimarata speakers are Muslim. The language also kept some archaisms from Old Kaupelanese.

Wisanyo - In the island of Wisanu only Bandanic languages are spoken (Kaupelanese and Waimahui). There is a controversy about a language, Libaru, allegedly spoken long ago by a pygmy tribe in the mountainous forests of the inland, but this was not proved so far. Nevertheless, Wisanyo which is spoken by 150,000 people in that island is the less homogeneous of the Kaupelanese dialects, varying from village to village in a linguistic continuum, in some parts closer to Kauta dialect, in others similar to Waimahui. Although phonetically and lexically different of the standard form, Wisanyo is closer to the Kiwangar branch than the other dialects, Palayanga and Terong.

Palayanga - Palayanga, spoken by 210,000 people in the south of Nilau, was heavily influenced by aboriginal languages Moinate and Suduk. Intelligibility between Kauta and Palayanga speakers is difficult, considering that, beside phonetic and lexical differences, there are some grammatical changes too.

Terong - The dialect spoken in the eastern islands of Terong by around 60,000 people is the most divergent of the Kaupelanese dialects and possibly the earlier to differentiate from Old Kaupelanese. Terong was influenced by another Bandanic language, Old Narikese, by Papuan languages spoken in the islands and by Portuguese.