1 Introduction
There are several least-studied languages and dialects in Ethiopia. As a result of language contact, the majority of these languages are giving way to pressures of socially dominant languages, especially Amharic and Oromo. Among the least-studied and endangered languages and dialects are those spoken in Western Wellega along the Sudan border. This includes the Mao languages and dialects. The name Mao which refers to the very dark-skinned people of the area is given to them by the neighbouring Oromo people. In some of the languages spoken in the area, Mao simply means ‘people’ (Bender, 1975).

There are two Mao groups who speak two different languages. The first group is also known by the name Anfillo which designates both the people and their language. The name Anfillo is taken from the district’s name which they inhabit today. It is located in the southwestern part of Wollega, Oromiya Regional State. Among linguists, Anfillo is also known as Southern Mao so as to differentiate it from Northern Mao. According to Bender (1990), the Southern Mao people were originally speakers of a Nilo-Saharan language and were settlers of an area in Western Wollega around the Ethio-Sudan border.

The Mao people were conquered by the Busase warriors from Kefa at the beginning of the seventeenth century and passed through severe repression and slavery (Tesemma, 1980). This led the former to abandon their Nilo-Saharan language and shift to an Omotic language called Gonga, which was the language of the conquerors. After the first shift from a Nilo-Saharan to an Omotic language was completed towards the end of the nineteenth century, the Southern Mao people fled their original place and resettled around Anfillo at the heartland of Wollega. This new settlement brought about frequent contact with the dominant Oromo surrounding them. As a result, the Southern Mao people once again abandoned their Omotic language and became speakers of Oromo (Cushitic). That marked the second language shift (Moges, 1995). Recent reports have proven that the Mao people around Anfillo in Oromiya Regional State are all native speakers of Oromo today.

Historical sources verify that the earlier indigenous inhabitants of Western Wollega were speakers of Omotic and Nilo-Saharan languages such as Agadi, Gebeto, Kaza, Mesengo, Shiluk, Mao, Damoto, Ganga and Sinicho (Tesemma, 1980). The first six belong to the Nilo-Saharan language family whereas the remaining three belong to the Omotic phylum. Among these languages, Agadi and Ganga are completely dead after their complete assimilation to Oromo (Bender, 1976). Historians believe that speakers of the remnant languages in Western Wollega, including the Mao, were displaced and dispersed into small enclaves after the sixteenth century Oromo migration. Since then, small languages and dialects of the area are in a precarious situation giving their way to the swamping effect of Oromo.
The second group of Mao, which is the concern of this paper, is known as Northern Mao. The people call themselves Gwama and their language T’wa Gwama ‘mouth of Gwama’. The overwhelming majority of the Gwama people are Moslems whereas others follow traditional religions. The Gwama promote a subsistence way of life, mainly based on hoe cultivation of maize, millet, surghum, etc. They also supplement their life by hunting, fishing and rearing of a few domestic animals. Those who live close to the Oromo do some agriculture through ploughing by ox. Currently, the Gwama people are particularly centred in the Benishangul Regional State along the border areas between Ethiopia and Sudan (see the Map below). According to the 1994 population and housing census, the number of speakers of Northern Mao (Gwama) in Benishangul Regional State is only 2732.

![Map of Koman-speaking peoples](image)

The Koman-speaking peoples (Adopted from James (1979))

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1 Bender uses the name Kwama.
Berta, Gumuz, Shinasha, Gwama and Komo are the major ethnic groups of the region. Among the five languages spoken by the respective ethnic groups, the last two are almost unknown. The overwhelming majority of the Gwama people speak Komo. Burns and Guth wrote the following note regarding the frequent contact and interaction between Gwama and Komo speakers:

The Gwama (or Nokanoka, as they are sometimes called by the Koma, though this is actually the Koma name for the Gwama language), live cheek-by-Jowl with the Koma, often mixed up in the same village and under a common chief. They are not so numerous as the Koma in the Sudan but certainly are more numerous in Ethiopia, where they are known by the Bertas as ‘Amam’. Although speaking their own language (Nokanoka), most Gwama understand Koma (n.d:1).

James (1979) writes that languages such as Arabic and Oromo have undoubtedly exerted pressure on Gwama in addition to Komo. It is through religious contact that the Gwama people speak Arabic. Those who live adjacent to the Oromo people are bilinguals in Oromo. The Gwama have marriage contact with the Komo, Berta and Oromo. As a result, some Gwama also speak Berta. Those who are educated and live in towns speak Amharic. Therefore, it is not difficult to find a Gwama person speaking one or two languages in addition to his/her mother tongue. Though my informants believe that there are still remnant Gwama monolinguals deep in rural villages, James (1979) has mentioned that none of the tiny communities around the Ethio-Sudan border is monolingual. Generally, Gwama attracts the attention of linguists not only because it is a poorly documented language, but also because it is endangered.

Greenberg (1963) was the first scholar who classified Mao as a Nilo-Saharan language. His classification was based on limited linguistic data mainly taken from Southern Mao (Anfillo) which was later proved to be an Omotic language. Relatively recently, Bender (1983) has classified Gwama as a Koman language under the Nilo-Saharan language family together with Komo, Opo and Twampa.

This piece of work only attempts to describe the grammatical sketch and basic vocabulary of Gwama. Very little is known about the language so far. Fragmented information is available in various works of Bender on Nilo-Saharan in general and Koman in particular. I gathered the data from Abosh Must’afa and Muktar S’enar whom I met briefly in Addis Ababa in April, 2003.2 Whereas Abosh is a native speaker, Muktar speaks Gwama as a second language in addition to his mother tongue, Komo. Both of them speak Oromo and Amharic.3

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2 Whereas Abosh is a Moslem, Muktar is a Christian.
3 I am grateful to the Society for Endangered Languages (Gesellschaft für bedrohte Sprachen e.v. - GBS) based in Cologne, Germany, for sponsoring this research. I am indebted to Prof. M. L. Bender for providing me his unpublished material on Gwama and for his valuable comments on the first draft of the paper.
2 Phonology

2.1 Vowels
Gwama has five short vowels and five corresponding long vowels (see also Bender 1983).

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{i} & \text{u} & \text{ii} & \text{uu} \\
\text{e} & \text{o} & \text{ee} & \text{oo} \\
\text{a} & & & \text{aa}
\end{array}
\]

Table 1: Vowel chart.

The following examples show the position of occurrence of the vowels.

(1)  
ili  full eye yes!  ani  that uwuju  tail  oolo  cloth  
bit’ hand  k’ef  hear  tat  belly  kuru  donkey  hobol  lie  
si  bone  seere  white  kaala  sun  uugu  gourd  toto  liver  

The high and mid-central vowels \( \theta \) and \( \ddot{a} \) appear rarely in medial position as epenthetic vowels to avoid impermissible consonant clusters.

(2)  
s’owanzo  louse  bâk  hair  
s’owas’u  rub  s’âwan  moon/month  
wâss  sky  k’âsâ  red  
wosin  body  wârr  child  

These vowels are, therefore, simple phonetic realizations, not phonemes.

The long vowels occur in all environments: initially, medially, and finally.

(3)  
taatja  bamboo  anooko  good  
iimi  cow  k’uup  head  
seere  white  gaa  me  

In addition to their position of occurrence, the phonemic status of long vowels can be proven in the subject and object pronouns (see section 3.1.1 and 3.1.2).

Vowels which precede or follow, especially the palatal and velar nasal consonants, are pronounced with clear nasalization. Some examples are \( \text{wâ’} \ddot{a} \) ‘hen’, \( \text{pâ} \) ‘goat’, \( \text{u} \ddot{w} \text{u}’ \ddot{y}’u \) ‘tail’, etc. There are also few examples where nasalized vowels occur preceding or following oral consonants. These are \( \ddot{e} \ddot{v} \ddot{e} \) ‘yes!’ , sitkê ‘shepherd’ and \( \text{hâhâ} \) ‘sexual intercourse’. Though further data and analysis is needed, the existence of nasalized vowel phonemes in the language seems to be unequivocal.

Generally, vowel sequences are not allowed. As a result, the sequence \( \text{ua} \) results in labializing the consonant which appears immediately preceding it.

(4)  
k’uass  \rightarrow  k’wass  back  
t’ua  \rightarrow  t’wa  mouth  
kuata  \rightarrow  kwata  frog  
kuala  \rightarrow  kwala  ploughing  
buaşa  \rightarrow  bwaşa  snake  
tuasan  \rightarrow  twasan  three
kual → kwal  elephant  suala → swala  tree
kuaka → kwaka  fear  guama → gwama (language)

2.2 Consonants
There are 24 consonant phonemes. Bender (1983) has identified 22 of them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonant</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/p/</td>
<td>/puu/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/t/</td>
<td>/toto/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/k/</td>
<td>/kumtam/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/b/</td>
<td>/bak'/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/d/</td>
<td>/dor/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/g/</td>
<td>/gendel/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/f/</td>
<td>/fatfat/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/s/</td>
<td>/swal/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/z/</td>
<td>/ziinzi/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/h/</td>
<td>/hawa/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/m/</td>
<td>/map'i/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/n/</td>
<td>/map'i/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/l/</td>
<td>/map'i/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/r/</td>
<td>/map'i/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/w/</td>
<td>/wasan/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/y/</td>
<td>/wasan/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following list of words is suggestive of the phonemic status of the above consonants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonant</th>
<th>Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/p/</td>
<td>/puu/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/t/</td>
<td>/toto/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/k/</td>
<td>/kumtam/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/b/</td>
<td>/bak'/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/d/</td>
<td>/dor/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/g/</td>
<td>/gendel/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/f/</td>
<td>/fatfat/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/s/</td>
<td>/swal/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/z/</td>
<td>/ziinzi/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/h/</td>
<td>/hawa/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/m/</td>
<td>/map'i/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/n/</td>
<td>/map'i/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/l/</td>
<td>/map'i/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/r/</td>
<td>/map'i/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/w/</td>
<td>/wasan/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/y/</td>
<td>/wasan/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Consonant phonemes.
The only other word where the palatal nasal ŋ occurs is ɲũrũ ‘uncle (mother’s brother)’.

Gemination of consonants occurs word medially and finally, but not extensively. Below are given some examples recorded in the data.

(7) ŋũ ŋũ k’aŋũ ŋũ red ŋũ ŋũ warr ŋũ ŋũ child
    gg    aggut    short    yy    mayyi    exited
    ss    k’wass    back    s’s’    was’s’    fish
    ll    kull    chief    nn    unnii    that

It is possible to ascertain the phonemic status of geminated consonants by taking a few examples like iya ‘where’ vs. iyya ‘water’, k’ũũ kuũ ŋũ ‘kill’ vs. k’ũũ ŋũ ‘neck’, kwall ‘elephant’ vs kwãnl ‘he did.’, and so on.

2.3 Consonant sequences
Consonant sequences occur medially and finally though the latter is not so frequent.

(8) Sonorant + Obstruent          Sonorant + Sonorant
    rk    sirko    true          nw    manwaŋa    chicken
    mt    kumtam    bee          ny    munyi    seed
    nz    saänza    property/cattle    nz    s’owanzo    louse
    mp’    k’ump’    claw (nail)          nt’    ant’    fire
    ng    gongo    skin          lm    almumum    dream
    nũ    ŋũnũ    nose          nũ    ŋũnũ    nose
    lũ    zelũser    lion          nk’    sink’    smoke
    nk    munkĩũũ    wet          nd    haanda    many

As we can see from the data, all the first members of the clusters show sonorants whereas the second are either obstruents or sonorants.
2.4 Tone
Gwama is a tonal language with rising and falling tone levels. The following examples prove the phonemic status of this feature in the language.

\[(9)\] t'òtò  liver     à ạ́  road     ŝí  tooth
   t'ót’ó  body waste     ạ́  spread out     ŝí  see

   sáanzà  property/cattle     ŝá  eat     túl  be angry
   sáanzà  bed     šá  dig     túl  call

   ni  antelope     f’all  fly
   ni  hide     f’all  wide

There are a few indications for the existence of a glide tone. However, this needs further investigation.

2.5 Syllable Structure
There are both open and closed syllable structures in Gwama.

\[(10)\]  Open    Closed
    si  bone     s’am  blood
    zi  eye     šul  beer
    ga  I     bit  bird

Generally, the following syllable types are identified.

\[(11)\] V  u-bu  gourd     i-li  fool     a-ʔe  this
CV  kaa-ma  wound     ka-ra  who     bi  what
VC  ak’-ošš  bad     wut-up’  husband     al-mumun  dream (v)
VC₁C₂  ant’  fire
VC₁C₁  uss  sew
CVC  bur-but  dust     mun-kišš  wet     bit’  hand
CVC₁C₁  warr  child     bas’s’  milk     kull  chief
CVC₁C₂  hins’  rain     šunšš  nose     sonk’  foot

In Gwama syllable structure, the nucleus can be either a long or short vowel. All consonants can appear in onset position. All but d, h, ŋ, w and y occur in coda position.

3 Morphology
3.1 Pronouns
3.1.1 Subject Pronouns
The following table shows the Gwama personal pronouns.

\begin{tabular}{ccc}
  Sg. & Pl. \\
  1 & ga & ma (exc.) \ miini (inc.) \\
  2 & ik & um \\
  3 m. & hall & hun \\
  f. & hap’p’ & \\
\end{tabular}
The typical feature of Nilo-Saharan a/i/e for the 1SG, 2SG and 3SG is partly maintained in Gwama. As Bender (2000) has mentioned, e is lacking in some of the languages of this phylum. Gwama is one of them where a occurs instead of e in the 3SG. The 2PL um and 3PL hun can be used as polite forms. Some sentential examples are given below.

(1)  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Pronoun</th>
<th>1SG</th>
<th>2SG</th>
<th>3SG</th>
<th>2PL</th>
<th>3PL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ga manša</td>
<td>‘I ate.’</td>
<td>ma mini manša</td>
<td>‘We ate.’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ik makša</td>
<td>‘You ate.’</td>
<td>um mamša</td>
<td>‘You ate.’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hall maša</td>
<td>‘He ate.’</td>
<td>hun maša</td>
<td>‘They ate.’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hap’p’ mabša</td>
<td>‘She ate.’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1.2 Object Pronouns

There is a formal similarity between the subject and the object pronouns. It is the lengthening of the vowels that makes the distinction between the two personal pronouns. Whereas in the former, the vowels are short, in the latter, they are long.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sg.</th>
<th>Pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>gaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>iik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 m.</td>
<td>haall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>haap’p’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compare the following sentential examples:

(2)  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Pronoun</th>
<th>1SG</th>
<th>2SG</th>
<th>3SG</th>
<th>2PL</th>
<th>3PL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ik šiggi gaa</td>
<td>‘You saw me.’</td>
<td>ik šiggi maa</td>
<td>‘You saw us.’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ik šiggi haall</td>
<td>‘You saw him.’</td>
<td>ik šiggi huun</td>
<td>‘You saw them.’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ik šiggi haap’p’</td>
<td>‘You saw her.’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.1.3 Possessive Pronouns

Possessive pronouns are derived from subject personal pronouns (note the exception in the 1SG).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sg.</th>
<th>Pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>a-na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>a-ke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 m.</td>
<td>a-dal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>a-dab</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The g of the 1SG subject pronoun changes to n in the possessive pronoun. In a similar vein, h changes to d in the 3SG. Due to the impermissibility of vowel sequencing, the expected forms a-ik and a-um in the 2SG and 2PL went through modifications. As a result, in the 2SG possessive pronoun, the vowel i of the subject pronoun is deleted and e inserted since no word ends in k. In the 2PL, k is inserted to avoid the impermissible sequences of vowels. Unlike the subject and object pronouns, the 3PL possessive pronouns exhibit different plural forms for masculine and feminine. Illustrative examples are given below.

(3)  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possessive Pronoun</th>
<th>Sg.</th>
<th>Pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>swal-a-na</td>
<td>house-POSS-1SG</td>
<td>‘my house’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swal-a-ke</td>
<td>house-POSS-2SG</td>
<td>‘your house’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swal-a-dal</td>
<td>house-POSS-3MS</td>
<td>‘his house’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swal-a-dab</td>
<td>house-POSS-3FS</td>
<td>‘her house’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swal-a-ma</td>
<td>house-POSS-1PL</td>
<td>‘our house’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zi-a-na</td>
<td>eye-POSS-1SG</td>
<td>‘my eye’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zi-a-ke</td>
<td>eye-POSS-2SG</td>
<td>‘your eye’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zi-a-dal</td>
<td>eye-POSS-3MS</td>
<td>‘his eye’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zi-a-dab</td>
<td>eye-POSS-3FS</td>
<td>‘her eye’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zi-a-ma</td>
<td>eye-POSS-1PL</td>
<td>‘our eye’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
swal-a-kum  house-POSS-2PL   ‘your house’   zi-a-kum  eye-POSS-2PL    ‘your eye’
swal-a-kun  house-POSS-3MPL   ‘their (m.) house’   zi-a-kun  eye-POSS-3MPL    ‘their eye’
swal-a-bun  house-POSS-3FPL   ‘their (f.) house’   zi-a-bun  eye-POSS-3FPL    ‘their eye’

The order is possessed + possessor. The morpheme -a- which appears between the two nouns is a possessive marker. Since vowel sequencing is not allowed in Gwama, y is inserted between the two vowels in the second paradigm resulting in zi-ya-na, zi-ya-ke, etc.

3.1.4 Demonstratives
Gwama demonstratives are complex. They are sensitive to gender distinction and relative distance of the object to the speaker. The following are the list of these demonstratives.

(4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Proximal</th>
<th>Distal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Singular</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uwe</td>
<td>‘this’ (masculine, living)</td>
<td>ute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aʔe</td>
<td>‘this’ (masculine, living)</td>
<td>uttee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muney</td>
<td>‘this’ (masculine, non-living)</td>
<td>ani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muno</td>
<td>‘this’ (feminine, non-living)</td>
<td>annii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>munto</td>
<td>‘this’ (feminine, non-living)</td>
<td>uni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aʔo</td>
<td>‘this’ (feminine, living)</td>
<td>unnii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>abaʔo</td>
<td>‘this’ (feminine, living)</td>
<td>halani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>halannii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>abanu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>abannuu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>abato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>abattoo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>munani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>munannii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hunaʔe</td>
<td>‘these’</td>
<td>hunatun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>hunattuun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>hunani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>hunannii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above demonstratives, the masculine gender is indicated by the morphemes u-, a- and hal- (cf. with the 3MS pronoun), and the feminine by o- and ab-. Non-living objects are identified by the morpheme mun- which means ‘thing’. Remoteness is indicated by the geminated consonants and long vowels. In the plural demonstratives, the pronoun hun- is attached to the singular demonstratives.

Demonstratives appear following their noun head.

(5)  uko munani      ‘that mountain’   uko munannii   ‘that mountain’
    uwarr ani        ‘that boy’        uwarr annii    ‘that boy’
    kikiyat abanu    ‘that woman’     kikiyat abannuu ‘that woman’
    makikiyat hunaʔe ‘these women’    makikiyat hunatun ‘those women’

There are rare instances where demonstratives are recorded preceding head nouns. Examples are uwe usit ‘this man’ and aʔe zelšer ‘this lion’, etc.
The proximal and distal markers of place deixis are: *ine* ‘here’ and *idono* ‘there’.

### 3.2 The Verb

Gwama verb stems appear to be mostly monosyllabic. Verbs inflect for person, number, gender and tense/aspect markers. These grammatical elements tend to appear as prefixes and suffixes.

#### 3.2.1 Person, number and gender

Gwama verbs are inflected for subject markers. The person, number and gender features of the subject are expressed by the same morpheme.

(6) gan-a-\(\textit{śiśa}\)  
\(1\text{SG-IMP-eat}\)  
‘I (will) eat.’

ag-a-\(\textit{śiśa}\)  
\(2\text{SG-IMP-eat}\)  
‘You (will) eat.’

hal-a-\(\textit{śiśa}\)  
\(3\text{MS-IMP-eat}\)  
‘He (will) eat(s).’

ab-a-\(\textit{śiśa}\)  
\(3\text{FS-IMP-eat}\)  
‘She (will) eat(s).’

man-a-\(\textit{śiśa}\)  
\(1\text{PL-IMP-eat}\)  
‘We (will) eat.’

am-a-\(\textit{śiśa}\)  
\(2\text{PL-IMP-eat}\)  
‘You (will) eat.’

an-a-\(\textit{śiśa}\)  
\(3\text{PL-IMP-eat}\)  
‘They (will) eat.’

As we can see in the above conjugation, the subject suffixes are the exact replica of the subject personal pronouns mentioned in section (3.1.1) above. As the example illustrates, Gwama present and future behave alike and are indicated by the imperfective prefix \(\textit{a-}\).

In another imperfect conjugation, the morphemes which stand for person, number and gender change in form and position.

(7) a-n-\(\textit{źiśiš}\)  
\(\text{IMP-1SG-sleep}\)  
‘I (will) sleep.’

a-k-\(\textit{źiśiš}\)  
\(\text{IMP-2SG-sleep}\)  
‘You (will) sleep.’

a-\(\textit{pźiśiš}\)  
\(\text{IMP-3MS-sleep}\)  
‘He (will) sleep.’

a-b-\(\textit{źiśiš}\)  
\(\text{IMP-3FS-sleep}\)  
‘She (will) sleep.’

a-n-\(\textit{źiśiš}\)  
\(\text{IMP-1PL-sleep}\)  
‘We (will) sleep.’

a-m-\(\textit{źiśiš}\)  
\(\text{IMP-2PL-sleep}\)  
‘You (will) sleep.’

a-n-\(\textit{źiśiš}\)  
\(\text{IMP-3PL-sleep}\)  
‘They (will) sleep.’

Whereas the person/number/gender markers in (6) precede the aspect marker, in (7), they follow. Unlike (6) above, the 1SG, 1PL and 3PL are represented by a similar prefix in (7). On the bases of the above two conjugations, we can deduce the following subject markers in the imperfective.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SG</th>
<th>PL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>gan-(-n)</td>
<td>man-(-n)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ag-(-k)</td>
<td>am-(-m)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^4\) In Gwama, there are three forms to express an act of eating. The eating of Chat (*Catha edulis*) and toasted cereals is expressed by the verb *k’i*- and that of boiled cereal by *s’um*- . The act of eating all other things is expressed by the verb *śa*-.
The subject markers in the past conjugation below are derived from the consonant segments of personal pronouns and hence are similar with the conjugation given in (7).

(8) ma-n-ša PS-1SG-eat ‘I ate.’ ma-n-t’op’ PS-1SG-drink ‘I drank.’
ma-k-ša PS-2SG-eat ‘You ate.’ ma-k- t’op’ PS-2SG-drink ‘You drank.’
ma-∅-ša PS-3MS-eat ‘He ate.’ ma-∅-t’op’ PS-3MS-drink ‘He drank.’
ma-b-ša PS-3FS-eat ‘She ate.’ ma-b-t’op’ PS-3FS-drink ‘She drank.’
ma-m-ša PS-2PL-eat ‘You ate.’ ma-m-t’op’ PS-2PL-drink ‘You drank.’
ma-n-ša PS-3PL-eat ‘They ate.’ ma-n-∅-t’op’ PS-3PL-drink ‘They drank.’

In (7) and (8), the 3MS is marked by a zero morpheme and the 1SG is derived from the possessive pronoun. The past marker in the above conjugation is ma-.

The subject markers in the remote past are identical with the examples given in (7) and (8) above.

(9) ga ma-n-ša-gi-ša I PS-1SG-eat-PS-eat ‘I had eaten.’
ik ma-k-ša-gi-ša you PS-2PL-eat-PS-eat ‘You had eaten.’
hall ma-∅-ša-gi-ša he PS-3MS-eat-PS-eat ‘He had eaten.’
hap’p ma-b-ša-gi-ša she PS-3FS-eat-PS-eat ‘She had eaten.’
ma ma-n-ša-gi-ša we PS-1PL-eat-PS-eat ‘We had eaten.’
um ma-m-ša-gi-ša you PS-2PL-eat-PS-eat ‘You had eaten.’
hun ma-n-ša-gi-ša they PS-2SG-eat-PS-eat ‘They had eaten.’

As shown in the conjugation, the remote past is expressed by prefixing the past marker ma-, by reduplicating the verb stem and by suffixing -gi. As we shall see in the sections that follow, -gi is a highly multifaceted particle in Gwama and other related languages (cf. Koma (Hilke and Burns (n.d) and Uduk (Tucker and Bryan, 1966).

The subject markers in the present continuous are similar to those in the above conjugations. The only difference exhibited in a continuous action is that the 2SG is marked by -g instead of -k.

(10) ga zala-ša-n-a-ša I CONT-eat-1SG-IMP-eat ‘I am eating.’
ik zala-ša-g-a-ša you CONT-drink-2SG-IMP-eat ‘You are eating.’
hall zala-ša-∅-a-ša he CONT-drink-3MS-IMP-eat ‘He is eating.’
hap’p zala-ša-b-a-ša she CONT-drink-3FS-IMP-eat ‘She is eating.’
As can be seen, a present continuous is shown by the prefix *zala-*, the imperfect marker *–a* plus reduplication of the verb stem. Below is given a past continuous verb conjugation. Both continuous verbs show similar subject markers. However, whereas the prefix *zala-* and reduplication of the verb are maintained, the past action is shown by *–ga/-gi*.

Generally, since verbs carry inflected subject markers, an overt subject in Gwama sentences is optional. This property makes the language a pro-drop one.

In only one conjugation, a verb is recorded being inflected for object marker suffixes.
SOV. On the other hand, my informants have proved (13) to be original on the basis of the usual word order.

(13) ga ši-n usit ‘I see the man.’ ga ši-n ma-sit ‘I see the men.’
    ga ši-n kikiyata ‘I see the woman.’ ga ši-n ma-kikiyata ‘I see the women.’
    ga ši-n up’idill ‘I see the stone.’ ga ši-n ma-p’idill ‘I see the stones.’

The data provided in (12) is most likely triggered by the influence of Oromo which has an SOV word order. This needs more data and texts in order to reach to generalizations.

3.2.2 The Copula
In Gwama, object pronouns (see section 3.1.2) can function as copula. Hence, gaa, iik, hall, etc. can have the meaning ‘I am’, ‘you are’, ‘he is’ and so forth.

The present copula can be derived from the respective pronouns.

(14) ga ga-p’i I COP-strong ‘I am strong.’
    ik i-p’i you COP-strong ‘You (SG) are strong.’
    hall al-p’i he COP-strong ‘He is strong.’
    hap’p’ ap’-p’i she COP-strong ‘She is strong.’
    ma ma-p’i we COP-strong ‘We are strong.’
    um um-p’i you COP-strong ‘You are strong.’
    hun un-p’i they COP-strong ‘They are strong.’

    ga ga-noko I COP-good ‘I am good’
    ik i-noko you COP-good ‘You (SG) are good.’
    hall al-noko he COP-good ‘He is good.’
    hap’p’ ap’-noko she COP-good ‘She is good.’
    ma ma-noko we COP-good ‘We are good.’
    um um-noko you COP-good ‘You are good.’
    hun un-noko they COP-good ‘They are good.’

As shown in the conjugation, a- is derived from ga (1SG), i- from ki (2SG), al- from hall (3MS), ap’- from hap’p’ (3FS) and un- from hun (3PL) by eliding the first segments of the pronoun forms. This structure, however, would lead us to assume that the above constructions could also mean ‘I become strong.’, ‘You become strong.’, ‘He becomes strong.’, etc.; ‘I become good.’, ‘You become good.’, ‘He becomes good.’, etc.

The copula kono, which is used when answering a question ‘who?’, was also recorded.

(15) ga kono ‘I am.’ ma kono ‘We are.’
    ik kono ‘You are.’ um kono ‘You are.’
    hall kono ‘He is.’ hun kono ‘They are.’
    hap’p’ kono ‘She is.’

Bender (unpublished material) has recorded the following data where the copulas appear as optional constituents.
The above data also reveal that the copulas are derivatives of pronouns. Hence, \( \text{\textit{c}} \) is derived form \( \text{\textit{hall}} \) (3MS), \( \text{\textit{ab}} \) from \( \text{\textit{hap'p'}} \) (3FS) and \( \text{\textit{un}} \) from \( \text{\textit{hun}} \) (3PL).

As the following example illustrates, it seems that there is no clear evidence of an independent past copula in Gwama.

As we saw in examples (9) and (11), the appearance of the particle \( \text{\textit{gi-}} \) and the reduplication of the adjective is the property of past verbs. Hence, the adjective in (17) above can be taken as a verbal adjective with the meaning ‘I became strong.’, ‘You became strong.’, etc.

The form \( \text{\textit{weyit}} \), as a past copula, was recorded from one of my informants.

The verb ‘to have’ is inflected only for the subject marker morphemes. The same pattern operates in inalineable possessions.
3.3 The noun

3.3.1 Case

As in the other Koman languages, the case morphology in Gwama is poor and hence is not discussed in detail. Nominative and accusative cases are not morphologically marked. In other words, they are identical with the absolutive form. Adpositions do the job for semantic cases (cf. sections 3.20 and 4.1 on adpositions).

3.3.2 Number

Nouns are marked for number in at least two categories: singulative and plural.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Singulative</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>warr</td>
<td>u-warr</td>
<td>ma-warr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sit</td>
<td>u-site/u-sitte</td>
<td>ma-sit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p’idill</td>
<td>u-pidill-e</td>
<td>ma-p’idill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swal</td>
<td>u-swal</td>
<td>(ma)-swal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Plural in nouns is almost uniformly marked by the prefix *ma*-

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<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>t’wa</td>
<td>ma-t’wa</td>
<td>‘mouths’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ši</td>
<td>ma-ši</td>
<td>‘teeth’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zi</td>
<td>ma-zi</td>
<td>‘eyes’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k’ondol</td>
<td>ma-k’ondol</td>
<td>‘horses’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dure</td>
<td>ma-dure</td>
<td>‘cats’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faala</td>
<td>ma-faala</td>
<td>‘pots’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kikiyata</td>
<td>ma-kikiyata</td>
<td>‘females/women/wives’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kikeezi</td>
<td>ma-kikeezi</td>
<td>‘males/husbands’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ńiru</td>
<td>ma-ńiru</td>
<td>‘uncles (mother’s brother)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s’ull</td>
<td>ma-s’ull</td>
<td>‘rivers’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only one noun is recorded with a suppletive form: *warr* ‘child’ vs. *man* ‘children’. In Bender’s unpublished material, the following nouns are recorded with similar forms in the singular and plural.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>swal</td>
<td>swal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sull</td>
<td>sull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kaana</td>
<td>kaana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, all the above irregular forms have been supplied with the plural marker *ma*- in my data.
3.3.3 Gender
Gwama is among the few Nilo-Saharan languages where there is gender marking (see also Bender, 1989). As shown in sections, 3.1 and 3.2.1, gender is distinguished in the 3SG in pronouns and verbs. In nouns, gender distinction is marked by the words kikiyata ‘female’ and kikeezi ‘male’. Compare the following examples from Bender’s unpublished material.

(24) k’ondöl-kikeezi ‘stallion’ k’ondil-kikyaata ‘mare’
baaka-kikeezi ‘sheep’ baaka-kikyaata ‘sheep (F)’
k’wöl-kikeezi ‘elephant’ k’wöl-kikyaata ‘elephant (F)’.
iimi-kikeezi ‘ox’ iimi-kikyaata ‘cow’
wørr-kikeezi ‘boy’ wørr-kikyaata ‘female child (girl)’

Bender has recorded huru as an alternative form for kikeezi.

In the following example, feminine is marked by the suffix -to(-ta) and masculine by either a zero morpheme or -zi.

(25) kikee-zi ‘male’ kikiya-ta ‘female’
kul ‘king/judge/chief’ kul-to ‘queen’
warr ‘child/boy’ warr-to ‘girl’
sitšin ‘soldier (M)’ sitšin-to ‘soldier (F)’
baga ‘sheep (M)’ bag-to ‘sheep (F)’
ŋa ‘goat (M)’ ŋa-to ‘goat (F)’

The other gender markers which appear with adjectives are al- and ab- for masculine and feminine respectively.

(26) gut ‘short’ al-gut ‘short (M)’ ab-gut ‘short (F)’
p’i ‘strong’ al-p’i ‘strong (M)’ ab-p’i ‘strong (F)’
tu ‘long’ al-tu ‘long (M)’ ab-tu ‘long (F)’
teyendi ‘fat’ al-teyendi ‘fat (M)’ ab-teyendi ‘fat (F)’

3.4 Some nominal derivations
Gwama, like lots of others in Nilo-Saharan, seems to be not rich in derivational morphology. In the following examples, the verb stem serves as a result nominal.

(27) k’ut cut k’ut cut piece
koboš steal koboš stealing
doozo teach doozo teaching
k’us’ be dry k’us’ drought
matja be hungry matja hunger

Agent nominals can be formed from verbs by attaching nouns such as sit ‘man’, warr ‘child’, etc.

(28) koboš steal sit-koboš thief (stealing person)
doozo learn warr-doozo student (learning child)
wondoozo teach sitwon-doozo teacher (teaching person)

The infinitival nominal is identical with the verb stem.
Abstract nominals are identical with simple nouns. Rarely, however, they can be derived by prefixation, reduplication and modification:

(30) sit 'man'  sin  'manhood'
warr 'child'  warrwarr  'childhood'
noko  'kind'  ninoko  'kindness'

3.5 The Passive
The passive is marked by the prefix ba- as in the following examples.

(31) Active   Passive
ša ‘eat’  ma-ba-l-ša   PS-PASS-3MS-eat  ‘was eaten’
s’it  ‘catch’  ma-ba-l-s’it  PS-PASS-3MS-catch  ‘was caught’
t’op  ‘drink’  ma-ba-l-t’op  PS-PASS-3MS-drink  ‘was drank’
gi ‘work’  ma-ba-l-gi  PS-PASS-3MS-work  ‘was worked’
k’uš ‘kill’  ma-ba-l-k’uš  PS-PASS-3MS-kill  ‘was killed’
k’obo ‘cut’  ma-ba-l-k’obo  PS-PASS-3MS-cut  ‘was cut’
t’uš  ‘tie’  ma-ba-l-t’uš  PS-PASS-3MS-tie  ‘was tied’

Gwama passive verbs have a TN + PASS + SUBJ + VERB structural pattern.

(32) u-muzu ma-ba-  l-  ša.  u-bwaša ma- ba-  l-  k’uš.  
the banana  PS-PASS-3MS-eat  the snake  PS-PASS-3MS-kill  
‘The banana was eaten.’  ‘The snake was killed.’
sitkoboš ma-ba-  l-  s’it.  bas’s ma-ba-  l-  t’op.  
the thief  PS-PASS-3MS-catch  milk  PS-PASS-3MS-drink  
‘The thief was caught.’  ‘The milk was drank.’

3.6 The Reflexive
The reflexive is shown by the possessive pronouns (see section 3.1.3) attached to the noun k’uup  ‘head’.

(33) ga k’uup-a-na  I head-POSS-my  ‘I myself’
ik k’uup-a-ke  you head-POSS-your  ‘you yourself’
hall k’uup-a-dal  he head-POSS-his  ‘he himself’
ap’p’ k’uup-a-dab  she head-POSS-her  ‘she herself’
ma k’uup-a-ma  we head-POSS-our  ‘we ourselves’
um k’uup-a-kum  you head-POSS-your  ‘you yourself’
hun k’uup-a-kun  they head-POSS-their  ‘they themselves’
The structure, therefore, is PRONOUN + POSSESSIVE NP.

3.7 The Causative

The causative is marked by the discontinuous morpheme ti-n.

(34) ti-nun-ma-n-tul CAUS-1SG-PS-CAUS-call ‘I caused to call.’
    ti-gun-ma-n-tul CAUS-2SG-PS-CAUS-call ‘You caused to call.’
    ti-wun-ma-n-tul CAUS-3MS-PS-CAUS-call ‘He caused to call.’
    ti-bun-ma-n-tul CAUS-3FS-PS-CAUS-call ‘She caused to call.’
    ti-nun-ma-n-tul CAUS-2PL-PS-CAUS-call ‘We caused to call.’
    ti-mun-ma-n-tul CAUS-3PL-PS-CAUS-call ‘They caused to call.’

The causative verb structural pattern is: CAUSATIVE + SUBJECT MARKER + TENSE + CAUS + VERB. Some sentential examples are given below.

(35) hall ti- wun- ma- n- tul uwarr. CAUS-3MS-PS-CAUS-call the child
    ‘He caused the child to be called.’
    ga ti- nun- ma- s’it usitkoboš. CAUS-1SG-PS-CAUS-catch the thief
    ‘I caused the thief to be caught.’
    ma ti- nun- ma- k’už ušifta. CAUS-1PL-PS-CAUS-kill the bandit
    ‘We caused the bandit to be killed.’

3.8 The Jussive

The jussive marker is ta- and appears preceding the person marker inflections only in the third person. In the first person, it is represented by a zero morpheme.

(36) ga Ø-n-hoyo I JUSS-1SG-come ‘Let me come.’
    hall ta-Ø-hoyo he JUSS-3MS-come ‘Let him come.’
    hap’p’ ta-b-hoyo she JUSS-3FS-come ‘Let her come.’
    ma Ø-ni-hoyo we JUSS-1PL-come ‘Let us come.’
    hun ta-ni-hoyo they JUSS-3PL-come ‘Let them come.’
    ga Ø-n-hoho I JUSS-1SG-come ‘Let me go.’
    hall ta-Ø-hoho he JUSS-3MS-come ‘Let him go.’
    hap’p’ ta-b-hoho she JUSS-3FS-come ‘Let her go.’
The negative jussive looks like the following.

(37) ga ∅-dab-ga-hoyo I JUSS-NEG-1SG-come ‘let me not come.’
    hall ta-∅-bir-hoyo he JUSS-3MS-NEG-come ‘let him not come.’
    hap’p’ ta-bi-bar-hoyo she JUSS-3FS-NEG-come ‘let her not come.’
    ma ∅-ni-bir-hoyo we JUSS-1PL-NEG-come ‘let us not come.’
    hun ta-ni-bir-hoyo they JUSS-3PL-NEG-come ‘let them not come.’

The pattern in the negative jussive is: JUSSIVE + SUBJECT MARKER + NEGATION + VERB. Like in (36) above, the jussive is not morphologically marked in the first person.

3.10 Imperative
The imperative for the 2SG is shown in two ways: by a zero morpheme (by the verb stem) or by reduplication. In the 2PL, the prefix mi- is attached to the 2SG imperative form.

(38) hoyo ‘come’ ho ‘go’
    hoyo ‘come!’ 2SG huho ‘go!’ 2SG
    mi-hoyo ‘come!’ 2PL mi-huho ‘go!’ 2PL
    ūa ‘eat’ t’op’ ‘drink’
    ūa’a ‘eat!’ 2SG t’op’at’op’ ‘drink!’ 2SG
    mi-ūa’a ‘eat!’ PL mi-t’op’at’op’ ‘drink!’ 2PL

As the examples show, whereas monosyllabic verbs reduplicate, dysyllabic ones remain as they are in the 2SG imperative. When the verb has a CVC syllable structure, reduplication takes place with a linking element a.

The negative imperative has the following pattern where the prefix bir- stands as a negative marker.

(39) Positive Negative
    ūa’a ‘eat!’ (2SG) bir-ūa ‘do not eat! (2SG)’
    mi-ūa’a ‘eat!’ (2PL) mi-bir-ūa ‘do not eat! (2PL)’
    hoyo ‘come!’ (2SG) bir-hoyo ‘do not come! (2SG)’
    mi-hoyo ‘come!’ (2PL) mi-bir-hoyo ‘do not come! (2PL)’
    huho ‘go!’ (2SG) bir-ho ‘do not go! (2SG)’
    mi-huho ‘go!’ (2PL) mi-bir-ho ‘do not go! (2PL)’

The negative imperative has the pattern NEGATION + VERB in the 2SG and IMPERATIVE + NEGATION + VERB in the 2PL. Note that the verbs in the negative imperatives do not reduplicate.
3.11 Negation

Verbal negation is marked by the morpheme *hil-* prefixed to the verb before person markers.

(40) Positive                  Negative
    ma-n-ša  PS-1SG-eat     ‘I ate.’            hil-ga-ša NEG-1SG-eat ‘I did not eat.’
    ma-Ø-ša  PS-3MS-eat     ‘He ate.’          hil-a-ša NEG-3MS-eat ‘He did not eat.’
    ma-b-ša  PS-2FS-eat     ‘She ate.’         hil-ba-ša NEG-2FS-eat ‘She did not eat.’
    ma-n-ša  PS-1PL-eat     ‘We ate.’          hil-li-ša NEG-1PL-eat ‘We did not eat.’
    ma-m-ša  PS-2PL-eat     ‘You ate.’         hil-mi-ša NEG-2PL-eat ‘You did not eat.’
    ma-n-ša  PS-3PL-eat     ‘They ate.’        hil-li-ša NEG-3PL-eat ‘They did not eat.’

The negative marker *dab-* is recorded in the following imperfect conjugation (see also the negative jussive in (37) above).

(41) Positive                  Negative
    ga-n-hoyo IMP-1SG-come ‘I will come’      dab-ga-hoyo NEG-1SG-come ‘I will not come.’
    a-k-hoyo IMP-2SG-come ‘You will come’      dab-gi-hoyo NEG-2SG-come ‘You will not come.’
    a-Ø-hoyo IMP-3MS-come ‘He will come’      dab-a-hoyo NEG-3MS-come ‘He will not come.’
    a-b-hoyo IMP-3FS-come ‘She will come’      dab-bi-hoyo NEG-3FS-come ‘She will not come.’
    a-n-hoyo IMP-1PL-come ‘We will come’      dam-ni-hoyo NEG-1PL-come ‘We will not come.’
    a-m-hoyo IMP-2PL-come ‘You will come’      dam-mi-hoyo NEG-2PL-come ‘You will not come.’
    a-n-hoyo IMP-3PL-come ‘They will come’      dam-ni-hoyo NEG-3PL-come ‘They will not come.’

The change of *b* to *m* in the negative marker in the plural is a result of progressive nasal assimilation. In his unpublished material, Bender recorded the morpheme *ab-* for the present negative and *yil-* for the past and perfect negative.

(42) (Present)            (Past)            (Perfect)
    das’ini (ga)ab-ni-ša    aka yil-ni-ša akama  ga-yil-ni-ša   ‘I do not eat now.’
    das’ini ik-ab-gi-zala-ša ik yil-gi-ša akama  ik-yil-gi-ša   ‘You do not eat now.’
    das’ini hal-ab-zi Ellis-ša hal yil-a-ša akama  hal-yil-a-ša   ‘I did not eat yesterday.’
    ‘I do not eat now.’      ‘You did not eat yesterday.’

The particle which shows negation in the copula is –*bə*(weet) (data from Bender’s unpublished material).

(43) a-noko  ‘it is good’      a-bə-noko  ‘it is not good’
     a-k’ošš   ‘it is bad’        a-bə-k’ošš  ‘it is not bad’
Note that $\alpha$- in the two columns represent the copula.

### 3.12 Interrogation

The interrogative morpheme in the past is - $?\alpha$.

(44) ma-n-\(\alpha\) PS-1SG-eat ‘I ate.’ ma-n-\(\alpha\)-?a PS-1SG-eat-INTER ‘Did I eat?’
ma-k-\(\alpha\) PS-2SG-eat ‘You ate.’ ma-k-\(\alpha\)-?a PS-2SG-eat-INTER ‘Did you eat?’
ma-O-\(\alpha\) PS-3SG-eat ‘He ate.’ ma-O-\(\alpha\)-?a PS-3MS-eat-INTER ‘Did he eat?’
ma-b-\(\alpha\) PS-3FS-eat ‘She ate.’ ma-b-\(\alpha\)-?a PS-3FS-eat-INTER ‘Did she eat?’
ma-n-\(\alpha\) PS-1PL-eat ‘We ate.’ ma-n-\(\alpha\)-?a PS-1PL-eat-INTER ‘Did we eat?’
ma-m-\(\alpha\) PS-2PL-eat ‘You ate.’ ma-m-\(\alpha\)-?a PS-2PL-eat-INTER ‘Did you eat?’
ma-n-\(\alpha\) PS-3PL-eat ‘You ate.’ ma-n-\(\alpha\)-?a PS-3PL-eat-INTER ‘Did they eat?’

The same morpheme appears as interrogative marker in the imperfective.

(45) ga-n-\(\alpha\)-i IMP-1SG-eat ‘I (will) eat.’ ga-n-\(\alpha\)-i?a IMP-1SG-eat-INTER ‘Will/Do I eat.’
a-ga-\(\alpha\)-i IMP-2SG-eat ‘You (will) eat.’ a-ga-\(\alpha\)-i?a IMP-1PL-eat-INTER ‘Will/Do you eat.’
a-O-\(\alpha\)-i IMP-3MS-eat ‘He (will) eat.’ a-O-\(\alpha\)-i?a IMP-3MS-eat-INTER ‘Will/Do he eat.’
a-ba-\(\alpha\)-i IMP-3FS-eat ‘She (will) eat.’ a-ba-\(\alpha\)-i?a IMP-3FS-eat-INTER ‘Will/Do she eat.’
a-na-\(\alpha\)-i IMP-1PL-eat ‘We (will) eat.’ a-na-\(\alpha\)-i?a IMP-1PL-eat-INTER ‘Will/Do we eat.’
a-ma-\(\alpha\)-i IMP-2PL-eat ‘You (will) eat.’ a-ma-\(\alpha\)-i?a IMP-2PL-eat-INTER ‘Will/Do you eat.’
a-na-\(\alpha\)-i IMP-3PL-eat ‘You (will) eat.’ a-na-\(\alpha\)-i?a IMP-3PL-eat-INTER ‘Will/Do they eat.’

The suffix -\(\alpha\)-i which has a meaning of ‘what about?’ also marks interrogation.

(46) ga-\(\alpha\)-i 1SG-INTER ‘what about me?’
\(\alpha\)-\(\alpha\)-i 2SG-INTER ‘what about you?’
hall-\(\alpha\)-i 3MS-INTER ‘what about him?’
hap’p’-\(\alpha\)-i 3FS-INTER ‘what about her?’
ma-\(\alpha\)-i 1PL-INTER ‘what about us?’
um-\(\alpha\)-i 2PL-INTER ‘what about you?’
hun-\(\alpha\)-i 3PL-INTER ‘what about them?’

The other forms of interrogative involve question words. The underlined words in the following data are the commonly used question words.

(47) hall hoyi gi-vabsi ‘when did he come?’ swal a\(\alpha\)e akara ‘whose house is this?’
hall hoyi gi-yya ‘from where did he come?’ ik \(\\alpha\)aggi bi ‘what is the one which you ate?’
hall howa iyya ‘where did he go?’ sa\(\alpha\)ati zala k‘iya lit. ‘how many became the time?’
u-kara aboiyial lit. ‘who is the one who came?’ s’itgi man k‘iya ‘how many children do you have?’
a\(\alpha\)e akara ‘whose is this?’
Intonation plays a role in the interrogative. Whereas in the affirmative, the intonation is level, in the interrogative, it is high.

3.13 The Cardinal Numerals
The Gwama digits (1-10) are the following.

(48) sene ‘1’  kuba-sene ‘takes/lends/brings one’ (6)
siyya ‘2’  kuba-siyya ‘takes/lends/brings two’ (7)
twasan ‘3’  kuba-twasan ‘takes/lends/brings three’ (8)
bis’in ‘4’  kuba-bis’in ‘takes/lends/brings four’ (9)
kuumut’ ‘5’  k’uziya ‘ten’

Whereas the digits 1-5 are simple numerals, 6-9 are compounds based on a quinary system. The numeral 5 in 6-9 is expressed by an action verb kuba which means ‘takes/lends/brings’. This makes the Gwama number system similar to Komo and Opo (see Zelealem forth.). The word k’uziya ‘10’ refers to ‘fingers’.

Higher numerals from 11-30 follow.

(49) k’uzat sene  11   yisa sene ṭo sene  21
k’uzat siyya  12   yisa sene ṭo siyya  22
k’uzat twasan  13   yisa sene ṭo twasan  23
k’uzat bis’in  14   yisa sene ṭo bis’in  24
k’uzat kuumut’  15   yisa sene ṭo kuumut’  25
k’uzat kuba sene  16   yisa sene ṭo kuba sene  26
k’uzat kuba siyya  17   yisa sene ṭo kuba siyya  27
k’uzat kuba twasan  18   yisa sene ṭo kuba twasan  28
k’uzat kuba bis’in  19   yisa sene ṭo kuba bis’in  29
yisa sene  20   saddoma  30

The word for ‘20’ means ‘body/one person’. It also means ‘pair’ which refers to the pairs of the two limbs. The body part, as a conceptual template, was used up to 100:

(50) yisa sene gi k’uziya ‘one person and fingers’  ‘30’
masit siyya ‘two persons’  ‘40’
masit siyya gi k’uziya ‘two persons and fingers’  ‘50’
masit twasan ‘three persons’  ‘60’
masit twasan gi k’uziya ‘three persons and fingers’  ‘70’
masit bis’in ‘four persons’  ‘80’
masit bis’in gi k’uziya ‘four persons and fingers’  ‘90’
masit kuumut’ ‘five persons’  ‘100’

However, this vegesimal system has been replaced by a decimal system as a result of the frequent contact with speakers of Oromo. As shown below, beyond 30, whereas the digits remain Gwama, the bases are all borrowings from Oromo.

(51) saddoma sene  31   afurtama sene  41
saddoma siyya  32   afurtama siyya  42
The pattern of numerals is [higher + smaller] and shows predominantly a decimal system inherited from Oromo.

### 3.14 The *a-gi*- relativizer

This discontinuous morpheme, which plays the role of a relativizer, is split by the verb stem and the subject markers.
There are also instances where the relativizer and subject suffixes interchange their position as in the following.

(53)  a-dul-gi-ga REL-buy-REL-1SG ‘which I bought’
a-dul-gi-ik REL-buy-REL-2SG ‘which you bought’
a-dul-gi-hall REL-buy-REL-3MS ‘which he bought’
a-dul-gi-hap’p’ REL-buy-REL-3FS ‘which she bought’
a-dul-gi-ma REL-buy-REL-1PL ‘which we bought’
a-dul-gi-um REL-buy-REL-2PL ‘which you bought’
a-dul-gi-hun REL-buy-REL-3PL ‘which they bought’

Note that the a- prefix alone is similar to the possessive genitive marker mentioned in Section 3.1.3.

In the imperfective, however, the morpheme ako- which is prefixed to the verb plays the role of a relativizer instead of the a-gi- morpheme. Hence, the examples in (52) and (53) have the following conjugational pattern in the imperfective.

(54)  ako-n-šiši  REL-1SG-see ‘which I see’
ako-k-šiši  REL-2SG-see ‘which you see’
ako-Ø-šiši  REL-3MS-see ‘which he sees’
ako-b-šiši  REL-3FS-see ‘which she sees’
ako-n-šiši  REL-1PL-see ‘which we see’
ako-m-šiši  REL-2PL-see ‘which you see’
ako-n-šiši  REL-3PL-see ‘which they see’
ako-dul-ga  REL-buy-1SG ‘which I buy’
ako-dul-ik  REL-buy-2SG ‘which you buy’
ako-dul-hall REL-buy-3MS ‘which he buys’
ako-dul-hap’p’ REL-buy-3FS ‘which she buys’
ako-dul-ma  REL-buy-1PL ‘which we buy’
ako-dul-um REL-buy-2PL ‘which you buy’
ako-dul-hun REL-buy-3PL ‘which they buy’
3.15 The *(g)ama-* subordinator
This subordinator expresses the conditional verb.

(55)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1SG-if-1SG-eat</th>
<th>‘if I eat’</th>
<th>1SG-if-1SG-sleep ‘if I sleep’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>if-1PL-eat</td>
<td>‘if you eat’</td>
<td>if-1PL-sleep ‘if you sleep’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if-3MS-eat</td>
<td>‘if he eats’</td>
<td>if-3MS-sleep ‘if he sleeps’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if-3FS-eat</td>
<td>‘if she eats’</td>
<td>if-3FS-sleep ‘ifshe sleeps’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if-1PL-eat</td>
<td>‘if we eat’</td>
<td>if-1PL-sleep ‘if we sleep’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if-2PL-eat</td>
<td>‘if you eat’</td>
<td>if-2PL-sleep ‘if you sleep’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if-3PL-eat</td>
<td>‘if they eat’</td>
<td>if-3PL-sleep ‘if they sleep’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note the exception in the 1SG where *g*, which is part of the 1SG pronoun, is added to the conditional marker. Interestingly, the conditional marker *ama* seems to be a fusion of the imperfect marker *a* and the past marker *ma*.-

3.16 The *g øda-* subordinator
This subordinator indicates a stative action or temporal simultaneity.

(56)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I while-come-1SG-come</th>
<th>‘while I come’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>you while-come-2SG-come</td>
<td>‘while you come’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he while-come-3MS-come</td>
<td>‘while he comes’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>she while-come-3FS-come</td>
<td>‘while she comes’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we while-come-1PL-come</td>
<td>‘while we come’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you while-come-2PL-come</td>
<td>‘while you come’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they while-come-3PL-come</td>
<td>‘while they come’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above constructions can also express the temporal meaning: ‘when I come’, ‘when you come’, ‘when he comes’, ‘when she comes’, and so on.

3.17 The *gi-* subordinator
In addition to the multiple grammatical functions mentioned so far, the particle *gi-* also serves as a subordinator in the ‘that-clause’.

(57)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>He knows that I was sick.</th>
<th>He knows that we were sick.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘He knows that you were sick.’</td>
<td>‘He knows that you (PL) were sick.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘He knows that he was sick.’</td>
<td>‘He knows that they are sick.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.18 Adverbs
The following time adverbials have been identified in Gwama.

(58) akama ‘yesterday’ giwotko ‘tomorrow’
      tabko ‘quickly’ kene ‘today’
      hilagom ‘suddenly’ daas’ine ‘now’
      gek’alba ‘slowly’

These adverbs appear following the verb they modify.

(59) ga anhoy giwotko. hall ho?aga akama.
    ‘I will come tomorrow.’ ‘He went yesterday.’

hap’p’ šabga tabtabko. ga manguss gek’alba.
    ‘She ate quickly (intensified) I ran slowly’

3.19 Adjectives
Simple adjectives include the following:

(60) koozo ‘old’ nooko ‘good’ teyendi ‘fat’
      seere ‘white’ ašull ‘far’ didišš ↔ ‘new’
      ak’ošš ‘bad’ ziinzi ‘thin’ šwala ‘black’
      kiiśi ‘near’ găšer ‘big’ k’eyabiko ‘narrow’
      warkin ‘small’ gut ‘short’ fall ‘wide’
      tu ‘long’

These adjectives play an attributive role following their head N.

(61) oolo koozo ‘old cloth’ oolo didišš ‘new cloth’
      k’ondol gašer ‘big horse’ k’ondol warkin ‘small horse’
      sit nooko ‘good person’ sit k’ošš ‘bad person’
      surgan tu ‘long trousers’ surgan gut ‘short trousers’
      warr teyendi ‘fat child’ warr ziinzi ‘thin child’

3.20 Adpositions
Gwama has predominantly prepositions. The most common ones are the following:

(62) iwis- ‘on’ gi- ‘with/by’
     iš- ‘under’ tat- ‘through/in’ (lit. belly)
     izal- ‘at’ isiga- ‘near/around’
     ak’aš- ‘for’ gimo- ‘like’
     iziya- ‘in front of’ i- ‘at’
     duši- ‘toward’ t’a- ‘outside’
     k’wass- ‘behind/out of’ daak- ‘middle’
There are only a few postpositions.

(63) -dušeemi ‘side of’ -dušiida/šele ‘beyond’
-šušu ‘at the side’ -dušik’was ‘after’
-dušizi ‘before’

Some of the above prepositions are derived from the existing lexicon through grammaticalization. These include the words k’wass ‘back’ and tat ‘belly’. Some sentential examples of prepositional phrases are given in section 4.1 below.

3.21 Comparison
Gwama is one of those languages which show comparison by the action schema (see Heine et al. (forth.) on comparatives in African languages).

(64) k’ondol paša kana.
horse exceed dog
‘The horse is bigger than the dog.’ (lit. The horse exceeds the dog.)

uduul muney tuwa paša udul munani.
stick this long exceed stick that
‘This stick is longer than that stick.’ (lit. This stick exceeds that stick.)

The superlative is encoded by the quantifier ‘all’.

(65) kwal paša mun ku-kum.
elephant exceed thing from-all
‘The elephant is the biggest of all.’ (lit. The elephant exceeds all things.)

hall teyendi paša mun ku-kum.
he fat exceed thing from all
‘He is the fattest of all.’ (lit. He exceeds from all things in fatness.)

4 Word order
The basic order of constituents in simple declarative sentences is SVO. Following the typological classification of African languages (Heine, 1976), Gwama is a type A language.

(1) ubunga mak’uš zelšar. ga manši haall.
Bunga killed the lion I saw him
‘Bunga killed the lion.’ ‘I saw him.’

ukaana mafiš uduration.
the dog chased the cat he saw me
‘The dog chased the cat.’ ‘He saw me.’

In the following sentences with bi-transitive verbs, indirect objects appear preceding direct objects.

(2) ubunga tutaga haap’p’ tut. uhall tiya gaa šin siya.
Bunga asked her a question he gave me spears two
‘Bunga asked her a question.’ ‘He gave me two spears.’
4.1 Prepositional Phrases

Some examples of prepositional phrases are given below (see also 3.20).

(3) iwus-swal ‘on the tree’ gi-gaa ‘with me’
iš-kojo ‘under the table’ itat-maskotí ‘through the window’
itat-iyá ‘in the water’ izal-t’ut’úmbu ‘at the door’
isiga-s’ul ‘near the river’ gi-kuru ‘by donkey’
iswal-dušene ‘nearer from the forest’ i-swál-dušidda ‘beyond house’
išušu-dušini ‘farther from the forest’ gimo-ukum ‘like his father’
aj’áš-usit ‘for the man’ gimo-usit ‘like the man’
i-tokén-šušu ‘at the side of the forest’ ik’was-das’ne ‘after now’
kene-dušizi ‘before today’ iziya-masgidi ‘in front of the mosque’
ik’was-swal ‘behind/out of the house’ gi-gaango ‘by mule’

The morpheme doši ‘to’ which is optional marks the allative case.

(4) hall howa (doši)-asosa. ga gewotko ganho (doši)-addis ababa.
he went to-Asosa. I tomorrow will go to Addis Ababa
‘He went to Asosa.’ ‘I will go to Addis Ababa tomorrow.’

The morpheme gi- marks the ablative case.

(5) hall hoyi gi- asosa. hap’p’i hobi gi-addis ababa.
he came from-Asosa. she came from-Addis Ababa
‘He came from Asosa.’ ‘She came from Addis Ababa.’

The morpheme gi- also marks instrumental case.

(6) ga songu kurum gi- ōn. hall ŋegu baga gi-šigi.
I stab the pig with-spear he slaughtered the sheep with-knife
‘I stabbed the pig with a spear.’ ‘He slaughtered the sheep with a knife.’

gi- also marks commutative case.

(7) ga hon gi- gu-baba. usit aho gi- kikiyata.
I went with my father the person went with the woman
‘I went with my father.’ ‘The person goes with the woman.’

4.2 The Noun phrase

By and large, Gwama is a head-initial language. As the following simple NPs illustrate, head nouns appear preceding their complements.

(8) uswal munani maswal naala swal twasan
house that house many house three
iiales ‘that house’ ‘many houses’ ‘three houses’

uswal gašer munani maswal seere siyya warr faš sene
house big that houses white two child big one
‘that big house’ ‘two houses’ ‘one big child’

28
The pattern seems to be strict regarding demonstratives which must appear preceding all modifiers. Others such as adjectives and numerals can interchange their positions without bearing any meaning change.

Bender (unpublished material) has recorded the following data where the head N appears following other modifiers except numerals.

(9) u-noko šwala šwala iim-siyya maaya-ni t’wassenəkən innəkə tuntu me-sit
    the good black  black cow-two those two of them good tall people
    ‘The two fine black cows.’  ‘Those three good tall people.’

On the other hand, though they do not reject it completely, my informants prefer the two head nouns to appear initially in the above sentences.

The following gentive NPs also show a similar Head + Modifier structural pattern.

(10) swal a-aster    ‘Aster’s house’  bak’ aster    ‘Aster’s hair’
    swal aw-kasa    ‘Kasa’s house’  bak aw-kasa    ‘Kasa’s hair’
    šin aw-sit      ‘man’s spear’    bas’ s’ a-ja    ‘goat’s milk’
    sum a-iimi      ‘cow’s meat’     swal twat’a    ‘mud house’
    dušt oolo       ‘cotton cloth’

As shown in the examples, the possessive morphemes *a-* (cf. section 3.1.3) and *aw-* are attached to the feminine and masculine head nouns respectively. In the source genitives, these morphemes are neutralized and therefore the possessive is indicated by a zero morpheme.

The usual HEAD + REL pattern can be seen in complex NPs such as the following:

(11) oolo gadulliga kama makina agerghill
    cloth which I bought yesterday car  which he drove
    ‘The cloth which I bought yesterday’  ‘The car which he drove’

Generally, Gwama can be taken as a head-initial language. Whether or not it follows a strict head + complement pattern in an NP needs further investigation.

4.3 The Verb phrase
In the following VPs, the constituents are the Vs and adverbial complements.

(12) kikiyata hobi kene ga-gi- ik anho giwotko
    the woman came today  I  and you  we will go tomorrow
    ‘The woman came today.’  ‘I and you will go tomorrow.’

The syntactic pattern of the above VPs is: V + ADV.
In the following VPs, a direct object appears as complement following its head.

(13) ga šingi uum zelšer k’ag usit
    I saw  you (PL)  lion ate  person
    ‘I saw you.’  ‘The lion ate the person.’
When a VP contains a direct and an indirect object NP, the latter, which is structurally a PP, appears preceding the former.

(14)  hall ak’aš-hap’ mati munšiša.  hall ak’aš-hun mati munšiša.
he for her he gave food   he for them he gave food
‘He gave her food.’   ‘He gave them food.’

hall ak’aš-ma mati munšiša.
he for-us he gave food
‘He gave us food.’

hall ak’aš-um mati munšiša.
he for you he gave food
‘He gave you (PL) food.’

Gwama VPs, therefore, have a HEAD + COMPLEMENT pattern.

4.5 Connectives
The two connectives are gi ‘and’ akwako ‘or’. The following examples show the occurrence of gi conjoining two nouns.

(15) ga gi ik   ‘you and me’
    ga gi hall  ‘I and he’
    ma gi hun   ‘we and they’
    asosa gi addis ababa ‘Asosa and Addis Ababa’
    baga gi ŋa   ‘sheep and goat’

In the following constructions, akwako ‘or’ is the connective (data from Bender’s unpublished material):

(16) ga akwako ik       agašer akwako awarkini
    I or you       the big one or the little one
    ‘I or you.’    ‘either the big one or the little one’

Another conjunctive recorded is kama ‘but’.

(17) hall algašer kama alkwaka.
    he is big but is coward
    ‘He is big but he is a coward.’

    was’s’ ŋa nènoko kama gadabgaša.
    fish food is good but I do not eat
    ‘Fish is good food but I do not eat it.’

    (ga) gamanša kama gahilgasfis.
    I ate but I am not satisfied
    ‘I ate but I am not satisfied.’

It is not always the case that connectives appear in all sentences. In the following compound sentences, clauses appear without bearing any connective element.

(18) hall maša mayiš.  ga t’omnigit’op’ gamanzal.
    he ate he slept   I drank I sat down
    ‘He had eaten and slept.’   ‘I had drank and sat down.’
In the following sentences too, connectives are lacking. The converb appears first followed by the main verb. In such constructions, the action performed first appears preceding the action that follows.

(19) ga t’omnigit’op’ mašnimaaša. ma t’obnigit’op’ mašnimaaša.
I, having drank, became intoxicated we, having drank, we became intoxicated
‘I, having drank, became intoxicated.’ ‘I, having drank, became intoxicated.’

ik t’obgigit’op’ mašgimaaša. um t’ommigit’op’ mašnimaaša.
you, having drank, you became intoxicated you, having drank, you became intoxicated
‘You, having drank, became intoxicated.’ ‘You, having drank, became intoxicated.’

hall t’obagit’op’ mašamaaša. hun t’omnigit’op’ mašnimaaša.
he, having drank, he became intoxicated they, having drank, they became intoxicated
‘He, having drank, became intoxicated.’ ‘They, having drank, became intoxicated.’

hap’p’ t’obbigit’op’ mašbigimaaša.
she, having drank, she became intoxicated
‘She, having drank, became intoxicated.’

4.6 Complex Sentences
In complex sentences where there are subordinate and main verbs, the former occurs preceding the latter. In the following sentences, the pattern is: subject of the subordinate verb + subject of the main verb + the subordinate verb + ADV + main verb.

(20) (ga) usida gašingiši akama mas’i. (ga) gima ik makša mank’ep.
I man whom I saw yesterday died I that you ate I heard
‘The man whom I saw yesterday died.’ ‘He knows that I am sick.’ ‘I heard that you ate.’

(hall) baga adulagidul mas’i. (swala) aswalgu ubunga anooko.
he sheep which he bought died house which he built Bunga is good
‘The sheep which he bought died.’ ‘The house which Bunga built is good.’

The same phenomenon of subordinate + main clause pattern applies in complement clauses.

(21) (hall) gima ga hunihunu alaʔala. (ga) gima ik makša mank’ep.
he that I am sick he knows I that you ate I heard
‘He knows that I am sick.’ ‘I heard that you ate.’

In the above two sentences, the optional independent subject pronoun appears first, followed by the subordinate that-clause and then the main verb.
5 Concluding remarks
This piece of work is a preliminary sketch of a little-known language. The objective is to provide some grammatical information for the detailed work of the grammar which lies ahead. If one seriously examines by applying the ± ATR features, the number of distinctive vowels might exceed the five long and five short vowels already identified. Given the scarcity of data, the analysis of tone needs special attention since Gwama is indeed a tonal language. High and low tones have been identified. However, I suspect the existence of glide tones as well. The verb conjugation, which seems to be complex, needs more data and careful analysis. Reduplication, which seems to be multifaceted, needs deeper investigation. Case is not well described. Both inflectonal and derivational morphology need more attention. Given the fact that Gwama is a much-neglected language, the present material would give some linguistic insight about the language. More data and texts should be collected in order to fill-in the gaps witnessed in this paper. Above all, it is possible to have a reliable and comprehensive data now before the language suffers from severe structural reduction as a result of the strong pressure from dominant languages of the area.

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The following abbreviations are used in the paper: 1PL/2PL/3PL = first, second and third plural; 1SG/2SG/3SG = first, second and third singular; SING = Singulative; CAUS = Causative; PASS = JUSS = Jussive; Passive; NP = Noun Phrase; VP = Verb Phrase; PS = Past; ASP = Aspect; IMP = Imperfect; PER = Perfect; POSS = Possessive; ADJ = Adjective; ADV = Adverb; NEG = Negation, INTER = Interrogative; REL = Relative; CONT = Continuous

**Gwama Vocabulary**

kùm  all
gis’ìn  alone
kál kùkùm  always
p’ikìn  ashes
tüt  ask
zi sònk’  ankle (eye foot)
kwáp’á  arm
piiss  arrow
t’ùl  angry, be
fàns’  axe
itti  ape
p’`ass  add more
ní  antelope
k’ék’épàasà  ant
nìi  antelope
pi  bear (child)
pùunzù  beard
tiini  baboon/monkey
tàaà  bamboo
gòolò  basket
kwaśa  bean(s)
sànzà  bed
tàk’as’  bed bug
kùmtàm  bee
šúl  beer
k’ìrì  break
kàb  bring
k’wàss  back
ák’òósh  bad
kàss  blow
gòk’òósh  bark
tát  belly
w`ësìn  body
g`aš’er  big
bitibiti  butter fly
šiš  boil
bit  bird
suns’  bite
šiš  boil
šuwàlà  black
s’am  blood
sí  bone
s’úp’  breast
šinši  breathe
šáa  burn
šũšúmo  big snake
wòrkwàm  brother
dürè  cat
k’òol  chew
m’anwàŋá  chicken
kùll  chief
k’òol  chew
k’úk’út  cough
tòŋás  chest
fiši  chase
siizi  crocodile
k’òkòl  cheek
náamá  change
k’aš  close
oolò  cloth
dòrr  cry
sáanzá  cattle/property
s’ís’in  charcoal
k’ùmp’  claw (nail)
w’arr  child
ùwùkù  cloud
s’úf  cold
höyò  come
iímí  cow
k’ùut  cut
kùrù  donkey
ãlmùmùn  dream
k’éyéndí  dark
s’í  die
šà  dig
káaná  dog
t’òp’  drink
k’ús’  dry
t’ùt’ùmbù  door
t’ót’ó  dirt (of body)
ùunzù  dirt (generic)
búrbút  dust
kwáł  elephant
sit’úp  enemy
s’éyé  ear
šá  eat
yáss  earth
símp’  egg
zi  eye
yi  exit
kis’s’  enter
t’ùš  excrement
fì  fall
àšúll  far
t’òzzì  face (mouth + eye)
téyéndí  fat/thick
kwáakà  fear
tàafkò  fast
p’iš  find
k’úndú  finish
t’ís’  forget
kwátà  frog
ánt’  fire
w’as’s’  fish
šájá  field
kúumùt’  five
yáazò  friend
bis’in  four
wárjú  fox
íli  full
f’all  fly
sònk’  foot
ŋá  goat
úugú  gourd
gólò  granary
s’ílí  green
bóʔàš  grave
tí  give
yéré  God
áanzá  gold
hó  go
'ànòokò  good
šūšū  grass
b’ak’  hair
p’ì hard/heavy/strong
bit’ hand
inè here
sùt hang down
wàšàl hare
nì hide
šàp hit
k’àndà hate
kwáp’ horn
t’òš hot, be (v.)
máŋà hunger
šáp’ hit
nì hide
tàm honey
swál house
k’úup head
géndél hive
k’ép hear
k’óndól horse
t’òš hot
wùtùp’ husband
gá I
búk’ jump
kúl judge
k’úš kill
dúgúll knee
?àlà know
tòtò liver
t’áfán lick
zèlš’er lion
s’il lough
golí left
hòbòl lie/mistake
šùnù love
tù long
s’òwànzò louse
hàandá many
súumm meat
kikéezi male
nàa/ìnì mother
s’awàn moon
tìnì monkey
t’wá mouth
sìt man/person
b’as’s’ milk
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kò</td>
<td>mountain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wéyéré</td>
<td>mad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twát'à</td>
<td>mud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bùušù</td>
<td>malaria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kíisi</td>
<td>near</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sónk’</td>
<td>name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>màafà</td>
<td>needle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k’úšš</td>
<td>neck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>didíšš</td>
<td>new</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ánzúgún</td>
<td>night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>šúnš</td>
<td>nose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dàas’ìnè</td>
<td>now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ásiyéné</td>
<td>one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k’òšš/gàatà</td>
<td>old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sitgàatà</td>
<td>old person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kálà</td>
<td>open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>síyá</td>
<td>penis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>šù</td>
<td>pull</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tùš</td>
<td>push</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kò</td>
<td>put</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t’al’aš</td>
<td>pour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kwálà</td>
<td>plough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dòwòkò</td>
<td>potato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bóoló</td>
<td>pumpkin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sitùnù</td>
<td>patient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yill</td>
<td>play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p’ènzè</td>
<td>pay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hins’</td>
<td>rain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s’i</td>
<td>rat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k’`ašš</td>
<td>red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k’åanà</td>
<td>right</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>šùdùl</td>
<td>rope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>güss</td>
<td>run</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>àŋà</td>
<td>road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s’áns’</td>
<td>root</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s’úl</td>
<td>river</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s’úwàs’ù</td>
<td>rub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pùušù</td>
<td>sand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t’`ašš</td>
<td>salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k’ùns’</td>
<td>scratch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ñss</td>
<td>sew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>güt</td>
<td>short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kwákó</td>
<td>say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ši</td>
<td>see</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>múny’e</td>
<td>seed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
gòngò  skin
wúss  sky
t’ìšší  smell
hát’ìš  sneeze
p’í  strong
àk’ât’  smooth
ší  spear
?iší  sleep
sink’  smoke
bwášá  snake
k’éyém  speak
zúugú  stand
k’éñés’  soil
kàamà  scar
sitkē  shepherd
bizin  star
p’idill  stone
káalá  sun/day
sàn’  swim
k’ap  take away
k’óziyà  ten
âní  that
íní  there
góm  think
kóló  throw
t’úš  tie
š’al  turn
k’ik’ìší  tortoise
úwúŋú  tail
ziinzi  thin
á?è  this
únannì  those
kànjà  thorn
kènè  today
twásàn  three
f’at  touch
t’ákáll  tongue
šii  tooth
swálá  tree
sìyà  two
zéláfárá  tiger
giwótkò  tomorrow
sírkó  true
dús’  urine
nìru  uncle (mother’s brother)
bwábwár uncle (father’s brother)  
pit vulva  
fagas’ vomit  
búulù worm  
giyabsí when  
káss wind  
iyá where  
iyyà water  
münkisì wet  
šùt whistle  
bi what  
s’eeere white  
kárà who  
swasant’ wood  
káamá wound  
kikiyàtà woman/wife  
gi work  
f’all wide  
háwá yawn  
ëyë yes!  
ákàmá yesterday  
nàatà year

**Days of the week**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Days</th>
<th>First day</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kaala sene</td>
<td>first day</td>
<td>‘Monday’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kaala siyya</td>
<td>second day</td>
<td>‘Tuesday’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kaala twasan</td>
<td>third day</td>
<td>‘Wednesday’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kaala bis’in</td>
<td>fourth day</td>
<td>‘Thursday’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kaala kuumut’</td>
<td>fifth day</td>
<td>‘Friday’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kaala kuba sene</td>
<td>sixth day</td>
<td>‘Saturday’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kaala kuba siyya</td>
<td>seventh day</td>
<td>‘Sunday’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Months of the year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Months</th>
<th>First month/moon</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>s’awan sene</td>
<td>first month/moon</td>
<td>‘September’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s’awan siyya</td>
<td>second month/moon</td>
<td>‘October’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s’awan twasan</td>
<td>third month/moon</td>
<td>‘November’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s’awan bis’in</td>
<td>fourth month/moon</td>
<td>‘December’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s’awan kuumut’</td>
<td>fifth month/moon</td>
<td>‘January’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s’awan kuba sene</td>
<td>sixth month/moon</td>
<td>‘February’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s’awan kuba siyya</td>
<td>seventh month/moon</td>
<td>‘March’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s’awan kuba twasan</td>
<td>eighth month/moon</td>
<td>‘April’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s’awan kuba bis’in</td>
<td>ninth month/moon</td>
<td>‘May’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s’awan k’oziya</td>
<td>tenth month/moon</td>
<td>‘June’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s’awan k’uzat sene</td>
<td>eleventh month/moon</td>
<td>‘July’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s’awan k’ozat siyya</td>
<td>twelfth month/moon</td>
<td>‘August’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>