

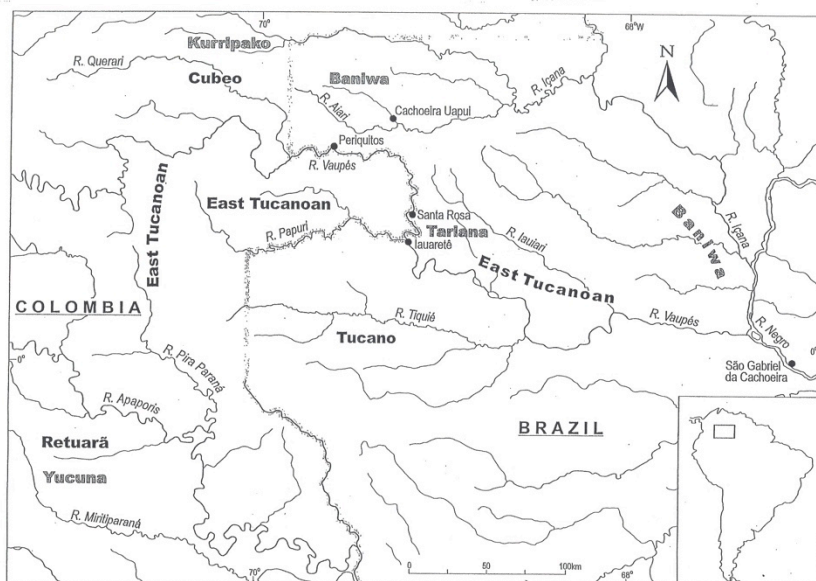
## 16 September 2020, LCRC Workshop on *Questions*

### Questions in Tariana (Arawak family, northwestern Amazonia, Brazil)

Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald

**1 Background.** Tariana is a highly endangered North Arawak language spoken by about 70 people in two villages (Santa Rosa and Periquitos, and now also São Gabriel da Cachoeira, an urban centre) within the linguistic area of the Vaupés River Basin in Brazil, known for its institutionalised multilingualism based on the language group exogamy operating between speakers of Tariana and of languages belonging to the East Tucanoan subgroup (including Tucano, Piratapuya, Wanano and Desano), and multilateral diffusion.

Map. Languages spoken in the Vaupés area and its surrounds



- There is a cultural inhibition against 'language mixing', that is, against any loan forms, especially from Tucano or any Tucanoan languages; many patterns, including sounds, intonation etc., are shared with Tucanoan languages. These inhibitions are getting relaxed.
- The absence of Tucanoan-like patterns in Tariana's close relatives (Baniwa-Kurripako, Guarequena and Piapoco) allows us to distinguish areally diffused and genetically inherited patterns. TT (Traditional Tariana) and IT (Innovative Tariana) have some morphological differences.

## 2 Tariana: typological profile and word classes

Tariana is agglutinating with some fusion, and is highly synthetic. Similarly to other Arawak languages, the only prefixes are cross-referencing markers, relative prefix *ka-* and its negative counterpart *ma-*. All other categories are expressed through suffixes or enclitics. Consonants and vowels are listed in Appendix 1.

Person-marking prefixes have the same form for A/Sa on verbs, and possessors on obligatorily possessed nouns, with one difference: verbs have four persons (1, 2, 3, and impersonal), and nouns have five (adding an 'indefinite' marker) — see Table 1.

**Table 1 Cross-referencing prefixes and pronouns**

	SINGULAR		PLURAL	
	cross-referencing	pronouns	cross-referencing	pronouns
1	<i>nu-</i>	<i>nuha</i>	<i>wa-</i>	<i>w(a)ha</i>
2	<i>pi-</i>	<i>piha, phia</i>	<i>i-</i>	<i>iha</i>
3nf	<i>di-</i>	<i>diha, dihya</i>	<i>na-</i>	<i>n(a)ha</i>
3f	<i>du-</i>	<i>duha, duhua</i>		
impersonal	<i>pa-</i>	<i>p(a)ha</i>	-	-
indefinite	<i>i-</i>	-	-	-

In contrast to almost all other Arawak languages, Tariana has differential case marking for core-arguments: -*ne/nhe* 'focussed A/S' and =*naku* (innovative =*nuku*) 'topical/definite non-subject'. One locative case -*se* covers location, direction and source ('from'). All these are 'very' Tucanoan features.

Verbal predicate is complex (with 20 suffixal and enclitic position and one prefix position: Appendix 2). Contiguous multiword serial verb constructions express directional, aspectual and modal meanings.

Open word classes are nouns and verbs. Underived adjectives constitute a closed class of about twenty members. Adjectives can be derived from nouns and from verbs, and are thus an open class through derivation.

Closed classes are specifier articles, demonstratives, **interrogative-distributive *kwa-/kwe-***, **quantifiers**, **manner adverbs** and **time-words**. (Word classes which include content interrogatives are in bold; interrogatives are in bold throughout this paper.) A member of any word class can occupy the predicate slot (with different possibilities). Any modifier can occur as NP head.

Grammatical facts particularly important for interrogatives:

**I.** Similarly to East Tucanoan languages, there is a complex system of **classifiers** in multiple environments: on adjectives, in possessive constructions, modifiers from closed classes (including specifier article, various types of demonstratives and interrogatives), as numeral classifiers, and as noun classifiers (as derivational morphemes on the noun) (underlined here). This is in addition to animacy (in demonstratives and interrogatives: see §4.1.4) and gender (in cross-referencing and derivation). (1) and (2) illustrate verbless clauses.

- (1) hĩ pa-ita tsinu hanu-ite nu-ite=nuka  
 this:ANIM one-NUM.CL:ANIM dog big-CL:ANIM 1sg-POSS+CL:ANIM=PRES.VIS  
 'This one big dog is mine'
- (2) ha-dapana di-tape-dapana wa-ya-dapana=nuka  
 this:INAN-CL:HOUSE 3sgnf-medicine-CL:HOUSE 1pl-POSS-CL:HOUSE=PRES.VIS  
 'This hospital (lit. house of medicine) is ours'

All animate nouns require the animate classifier (*-ita* for number words, *-ite* for the rest; a special form for a proximate demonstrative is in (1)). An additional feminine classifier *-ma* is used with adjectives, number words, possessives, and on nouns; it is not used with demonstratives and interrogatives. There are more than 100 classifiers, most of them with very specific meanings. A classifier cannot be omitted (the head noun can, and often is: Chapter 5 of Aikhenvald 2003).

**II.** Tariana has five evidentials (fused with three tenses) in declarative clauses, three evidentials (fused with three tenses) in polar and also content interrogative clauses, and one in imperatives. Evidentials have been developed as a result of East Tucanoan influence. Evidentials are underlined throughout.

- (3) tsinu kuphe=naku di-hña=ka *visual evidential*  
 dog fish=TOP.NON.A/S 3sgnf-eat=REC.PAST.VIS  
 'The dog has eaten the fish' (I have seen it)
- (4) tsinu kuphe=naku di-hña=mahka *non-visual evidential*  
 dog fish=TOP.NON.A/S 3sgnf-eat=REC.PAST.NONVIS  
 'The dog has eaten the fish' (I have heard it but haven't seen it)
- (5) tsinu kuphe=naku di-hña=nihka *inferred evidential*  
 dog fish=TOP.NON.A/S 3sgnf-eat=REC.PAST.INFERRED  
 'The dog has eaten the fish' (inferred based on visual signs: the fish is not there, I have seen the traces of dog's paws, and fish bones thrown around the fireplace where the fish was)
- (6) tsinu kuphe=naku di-hña=sika *assumed evidential*  
 dog fish=TOP.NON.A/S 3sgnf-eat=REC.PAST.ASSUMED  
 'The dog has eaten the fish' (the fish is gone, the dog seems happy, and who else would have stolen the fish?)
- (7) tsinu kuphe=naku di-hña=pidaka *reported evidential*  
 dog fish=TOP.NON.A/S 3sgnf-eat=REC.PAST.REPORTED  
 'The dog has eaten the fish, I have been told (recently)'

Evidentials (fused with tense) can be considered **MARKERS OF CLAUSE TYPES**. There are no evidentials in dependent clauses. This is shared with Tucano (but not with related Arawak languages). See Table 2.



- (9b) nu-na=mha tuki answer: *non-visual*  
 1sg-want=PRES.NONVIS a.little  
 '(Yes), I do want a little'

**I.** Questions in Tariana have rising intonation on the last word of a polar question, or the interrogative word in a content question, and 'eye-gaze' (in interaction).

**II.** Questions contain interrogative evidentials: polar questions always do, content questions do not 'have to' (for some speakers of Innovative Tariana).

**III.** Questions cannot contain pausal forms typical for declarative and imperative clauses, marked by vowel centralization, *-a > i*, e.g.

- (10a) nu-na=mhi [PAUSE] *non-visual declarative*  
 1sg-want=PRES.NONVIS:PAUSE  
 'I want it... [PAUSE; something else is expected to follow]

- (10b) \*pi-na=mhi? [PAUSE] *non-visual interrogative*  
 2sg-want=PRES.NONVIS.INTER

**IV.** The clitic =*sō* means 'strong doubt' in any type of question, and implies strong affirmation in declarative clauses (it is not used in imperative clauses). It can be used with any evidential.

- (11a) na-nu=nihka=*sō*? *polar question, visual*  
 3pl-come=REC.PAST.VIS.INTER=DOUBT  
 'Have they come indeed? (strong doubt they have)'

- (11b) **kwana** wyaka-se=naku na-nu=nihka=*sō*? *content question, visual*  
 who far-LOC=TOP.NON.A/S 3pl-come=REC.PAST.VIS.INTER=DOUBT  
 'Who may have come from far away?'

- (11c) hi=kayu=sika=*sō* *declarative, assumed*  
 this:ANIM=like=REC.PAST.ASSUMED=OBVIOUS  
 'This is how it obviously is (assumed)'

Differences between polar questions and content questions are summarised in Table 5.

**Table 5 Polar questions and content questions**

Properties	Polar questions	Content questions
Interrogative evidentials (Table 4)	obligatory	optional
Future	no	possible (as in (18) and (30))
Modal marker <i>-da</i> 'doubt'	possible (only with <i>-sō</i> )	possible
<i>-pada</i> 'counterexpectation', <i>-botha</i> 'conditional'	no	possible
Position of evidentials	on the predicate	on the interrogative word or the predicate
Constituent order	pragmatically motivated	interrogative words in clause-initially

#### 4 Content questions

Content interrogative words generally occupy clause-initial position in questions (and also in relative and complement clauses). They can be preceded by the clause-introducer *ne* 'then, so, hey' as in (12a) (a serial verb construction is in square brackets):

- (12a) *ne kani-se [pi-uka=nihka pi-nu] phia?*  
 then where/which-LOC 2sg-arrive=REC.PAST.VIS.INTER 2sg-come you  
 'So where have you come from?'

A topical constituent (A/S, normally) can be fronted, followed by a short pause:

- (12b) *phia [short pause] kuite=nha kepitana*  
 you INTER+NCL:ANIM=PRES.VIS.INTER REL+name  
 'You, what's your name?' ('name' is animate)

If used in a non-interrogative meaning, it can occupy any position.

**An aside:** Rafael Brito once translated a popular Brazilian song from Portuguese into Tariana and placed the interrogative word *kweka* 'why?' at the end of the sentence. Note the absence of evidentials.

- (13a) *kweka pi-matara? pi-matara kweka?* *Tariana translation*  
 why 2sg-stop/leave 2sg-stop/leave why?
- (13b) *porque parou? parou porque?* *Portuguese original*  
 why (you)stopped (you)stopped why?  
 'Why have you stopped?'

This did not get any further than a few posters we created...

#### 4.1 Interrogative words

Some interrogative words are derived from the interrogative-distributive stem *kwa-/kwe-*; others contain a submorphemic formative *ka-* (both are of North Arawak origin: *kwa-* forms are found in Baniwa-Kurripako, and *ka-* forms found mostly in Piapoco and also Baniwa-Kurripako) — Table 6.

**Table 6 Interrogative words in Tariana**

Form	In content questions	In non-interrogative clauses	Word class to which it is similar	Use with negation <i>ne</i>	Use in relative clauses
<i>kwa-na</i> (INTER-?)	who?	whoever	noun	<i>ne kwana</i> 'no-one'	yes
<i>kwa-ka</i> (15a-b)(INTER-?)	what, what type of?	everything, every; whatever	noun; adjective*	<i>ne kwaka</i> 'nothing, none'	yes
<i>ku-ite</i> (INTER-CL:ANIM)	which (animate)?	whichever	adjective	no	no
<i>kwe</i> (+CL)	what, which (inanimate)?*	whichever, each, every	adjective*	no	no
<i>kwe</i> (14a-b)	how come, why?	—	manner adverb	no	no
<i>kwe-wani</i> (how-CL:ABSTR)	why (on earth)?	—	noun	no	no
<i>kayda</i> (16a-b)	how much?	this much	quantifier	no	no
<i>kanapada</i> (17a,b)	how much, many?	many, indefinite (large) quantity	quantifier*	no	no
<i>kani(-se)</i> 'where/which (-LOC)'	where, where to, where from?	wherever	locational	no	yes
<i>kani-</i> +CL (19)	which one, the one from where?	—	adjective*	no	yes
<i>kwe-ka</i> (how-?)	why?	—	manner adverb	no	no
<i>kwe-maka</i> (how-?) (18)	when?	—	time word	no	no
<i>te kwemaka</i>	until when?	—			

\* indicates that the interrogative word may take classifiers — see §4.1.4.

(i) There are no interrogative verbs; and constituents in subordinate clauses (except purposive clauses, as in (15a)) cannot be questioned.

(ii) Questioning more than one constituent in a clause is not allowed. If a clause contains more than one interrogative, only one would have an interrogative meaning: others would have either a distributive/indefinite meaning (§4.1.1), or will be used as fillers (§5.2.3).

(iii) A distinction between inanimate and animate forms is marked in an idiosyncratic way on nominal interrogatives, *kwa-ka* (INTER-?) 'what?' and *kwa-na* (INTER-?) 'who?' (used for humans and all animates; a formative *-na* in interrogative/indefinite 'who?', someone' is found in Piapoco, a closely related language).

(iv) Noun-like interrogatives have most syntactic properties of nouns. They can be used in A, Sa/So, VCC, VCS, CS functions and as obliques, and as possessors, e.g. *kwana ite=nha* (who POSS+CL.ANIM=PRES.VIS.INTER) 'whose (animate object) is it?' (cf. (1)).

They are not used as copula complements and possessives. In contrast to nouns, they cannot be modified by adjectives, demonstratives, or any other modifiers; neither can they be pluralised (see **viii**).

(iv) Some interrogative words are also used in an indefinite-distributive sense (§4.1.1)

(v) When accompanied by negative *ne* some interrogative words are used as negative indefinite pronouns (§4.1.2).

(vi) All except *kwewani* 'why on earth?' are used in complement clauses (§4.1.3). Only some can be used in relative clauses.

(vii) 'Adjective-like' interrogative words (that is, those which can be used as modifiers and also headlessly) and one interrogative-indefinite quantifier agree with the noun they modify in number and in classifier; they take a somewhat idiosyncratic set of classifiers (§4.1.4).

(viii) The animate interrogative word 'who' requires plural agreement on the verb (see (11b)). That is, plural is like an 'unmarked' choice to avoid choosing between feminine and non-feminine form(s) in agreement.

(This is not the case for all Tariana dialects: in Santa Terezinha 3sgnf is used)

(ix) Interrogative modifiers always precede the head noun when they are used in the interrogative meaning. If they are used as indefinites, they may precede their head noun if it is a topical or a specific head noun. If it is not, they follow. This principle applies to other modifiers in NPs.

(x) Further uncommon features:

(a) different forms for asking about qualities: *kwaka* 'what (type of)?'; *kuite* (for animates), *kwe-CL* (for the rest) 'which?'; *kani-CL* 'which one (of a given set), one from where?'

(b) two interrogative quantifiers: 'how much (precise quantity/value)?' (*kayda*), 'how much/many (can refer to any quantity)' (*kanapada*; also takes classifiers and number).

(c) a number of ways of asking for 'reason': §4.2.

#### 4.1.1 Interrogative words in declarative clauses

Interrogative and non-interrogative meanings are easily distinguished by the use of evidentials: in the Traditional language, all interrogative clauses contain interrogative evidentials.

When used in non-interrogative clauses, six of eleven interrogatives can be used with an indefinite/distributive meaning (considering *ku-ite* and *kwe-CL* as one: Table 6).

(14a) **kwe-peri**                      yaphini=tha                      hĩ?                      *interrogative reading*  
 INTER-PL:INAN                      thing=PRES.NONVIS.INTER                      this:ANIM  
 'What sort of things are these (that he loves so much)?'

(14b) hunay yape    kasiwa-pe                      **kwe-peri**                      na-de-nipe                      *indefinite reading*  
 type.mandioc    juice    cane.whiskey    INTER-PL:INAN    3pl-have-NOM





- (19) **kani-ma=nha** ketemi-ma  
 which.on.of.a.set-CL:FEM=PRES.VIS.INTER remaining-CL:FEM  
 'Which (woman of a set of king's daughters) is a remaining one?'

#### 4.1.2 Interrogative words as negative indefinites

Interrogative words *kwana* 'who?' and *kwaka* 'what?' can be used as negative indefinites if accompanied by the proclitic negator *ne* (of a rather mysterious origin: it is shared by many Vaupés languages, and bears an uncanny similarity to Portuguese *nem*). If there is a predicate, it has to be negated:

- (20a) **ne=kwana** sede-wani-se=pidana di-ña di-yã=nhi  
 NEG=who NEG.EXIST-CL:ABSTR=LOC-REM.PAST.REP 3sgnf-live 3sgnf-stay=ANT  
 'He used to (reportedly) live in an area (where) no one lives'

A one word-answer to (11b) can be simply (see Aikhenvald 2014; note omission of the evidential).

- (20b) **ne=kwana**  
 NEG=who  
 'no-one'

Note that *ne* is the only negator here.

#### 4.1.3 Interrogative words in relative and complement clauses

All interrogatives (except *kwe-wani*) are used as markers of complement clauses with verbs of attention, speech, knowledge and perception (further details are in Aikhenvald 2006: 192-5). They use declarative evidentials. (No other dependent clauses have evidentiality specifications of their own).

- (21) [nu-a=de nu-ka] {**kanapada** nawiki na-nu=mha}<sub>COMPL.CL</sub>  
 1sg-go=FUT.CERT 1sg-see how.many people 3pl-come=PRES.NONVIS  
 'I will go look how many people have come'

Innovative speakers employ a complement clause containing the interrogative *kwe* 'how/what?', in the O slot of perception verbs whose predicate is marked with the complementizer =*ka*, as in (22):

- (22) {**kwe** di-a=ka}<sub>COMPL.CL</sub> wa-ka wha *Innovative Tariana*  
 how/what 3sgnf-go=COMPL 1pl-see we  
 'Let's see what happens; we'll see what happens'

In Traditional Tariana this would also mean: 'whatever happens, let's see (it)'.

Content interrogatives *kwana* 'who', *kwaka* 'what' and *kani(-)* 'where' can occur as markers of relative clauses if the shared argument is the A/S of the relative clause, and often if the shared argument has a generic meaning 'whoever, whatever', as in (23a). The predicate of the relative clause contains a relative form. This

usage is widespread in Innovative Tariana, and is mostly likely to stem from the areal influence of Portuguese/Tucano:

(23a) {**kwana** ka-yeka-kani} <sub>REL.CL</sub> hĩ kayu=na *Innovative Tariana*  
 who REL-know-PAST.REL.PL this:ANIM thus=REM.PAST.VIS  
 na-sape  
 3pl-speak  
 'Those who knew used to talk like this'

(23b) {ka-yeka-kani} <sub>REL.CL</sub> hĩ kayu=na na-sape *Traditional Tariana*  
 REL-know-PAST.REL.PL this:ANIM thus=REM.PAST.VIS 3pl-speak

Innovative speakers use *kwaka* in cleft constructions (all such examples are from personal letters):

(24a) Sacha nu-ketji-do phia **kwaka** pehpani Australia-se  
 Sasha 1sg-relative-FEM you what 2sg+work Australia-LOC  
 'Sasha, my relative, you are the one who works in Australia, (help me with money)'

Compare the Portuguese 'prototype' — in the same letter:

(24b) Sacha minha parenta você é que trabalha  
 Sacha my:FEM relative:FEM you are what works  
 na Austrália  
 in+ARTICLE:FEM Australia  
 'Sasha, my relative, you are the one who works in Australia'

#### 4.1.4 Classifiers with interrogative words

The interrogative *kani-* 'which one, one from where?' occurs with all classifiers. Other interrogative words used as modifiers take somewhat aberrant sets of classifiers:

(i) Interrogatives *kwaka* 'what, of what type', *kwe-* 'which: inanimate' and *kuite* 'which: animate' occur with all classifiers except *-ma* 'feminine'.

(ii) The interrogative quantifier *kanapada* 'how much?' occurs with all classifiers except *-ma* 'feminine' and *-hipa* 'human'.

(iii) *Kuite* 'which: animate' has a somewhat irregular plural form *kuita-peni* (which+CL:ANIM(used with number word 'one')-PL:ANIM) 'which ones?'

This can be interpreted as (a) an idiosyncratic feature of some interrogative words; or as (b) different classifier subsets in the interrogative context (an issue for the typology of classifiers...).

#### 4.2 On many ways of asking 'why?'

In Tariana 'why' questions can be formed in several ways: this is where we can see Tucano influence.

*Kwe?* 'how come, why' (asking about a process and the reason leading to it):

- (25) **Kwe=mha**                      yalana-sado                      yaseniku  
 how/why=PRES.NONVIS.INTER      white.man-woman      in.Tucano.language
- du-sape=mha?                      **kwaka=mha**                      yaphini=mha?  
 3fem.sg-speak=PRES.NONVIS.INTER      what=PRES.NONVIS.INTER      thing=PRES.NONVIS.INTER
- di-a=pidana  
 3sgnf-say-REM.PAST.REP  
 'How is it that a white woman speaks Tucano? What is it?, he said (a man who encountered a spirit in the shape of a white woman in the jungle)

*Kweka?* 'why (asking just for the reason)'

- (26) **kweka=nihka**              hĩ                      mehtade  
 why=REC.PAST.VIS      this:ANIM      NEG+bring+NEG  
 'Why did you not bring it?'

This is shared with Baniwa-Kurripako (Bezerra 2014) and other related languages.

- (27) kwawada      pi-dehni-ka                      li:nai?                      *Kurripako*  
 why                      2sg-work-SUB                      3sgnf+with
- 'Why do you work with him?'

An East Tucanoan-like strategy 'how do' is more and more in use by innovative speakers. The 'how do' part is cross-referenced for person and marked with the complementizer =*ka* or the intentional -*kasu*. This question is followed by a long answer explaining why the man who was sitting in his hut was upset.

- (28) **kwe**      pi-ni=ka                      kawalikupeda=ka                      pi-hwa=nha                      phia  
 how      2sg-do=COMPL                      be.sad=COMPL                      2sg-sit=PRES.VIS.INTER                      you
- 'Why (or: how come) you are sitting here being sad?'
- The construction 'how do' for 'why' in Tucano is in (29) (Ramirez 1997, Vol. 1: 275):

- (29) de'ró      weé-go                      du'ti-ápa-ri                      *Tucano*  
 how      do-fem.sg                      run-REC.PAST.INFER-INTER
- 'Why did she run away?' (lit. how doing did (she) run away?)

Questions like the one in (28) warrant a longer reply. This is an example of language enrichment through areal diffusion.

## 5 Functions of questions, and the meanings of evidentials in questions

- Questions are used for seeking information, 'with care': §5.1.
- Questions are not used as 'conversation initiators' in 'pre-sequences' (the term from conversation analysis); polar question-like forms are 'conversation sustainers': §5.2.

• There are no rhetorical or tag questions. One can ask a question of no-one in particular, or of oneself, as in (25). In stories and in interactions, one encounters questions which are pronounced as questions but are more like exclamations, as in (30) (Ricardo Brito about a jaguar):

- (30) **Kwe**=mhade            di-ni=sō!            nu-a=na  
 what/how=FUT            3sgnf-do=DOUBT            1sg-say=REM.PAST.VIS  
 'What will he do???, I said (to myself)'

## 5.1 Potential implications of evidentials in questions

- Evidentials in Tariana questions reflect the information source of the answerer.
- The most basic principle behind the use of evidentials is the requirement to be precise in your information source (if you breach this principle, you may be considered incompetent, or, worse, a sorcerer who knows things through secret means and is thus dangerous).
  - One asks a question if one knows the answerer's information source (as in (11a), (12a), and (16a)). Or one can sound bossy and intrusive, as in (26).
  - A questioner may be viewed as 'imposing' their assumption on the answerer; therefore questions may be considered intrusive and potentially face-threatening.
  - And this is why it is not culturally appropriate to bombard people with questions...

## 5.2 Non-information-seeking functions of question forms

### 5.2.1 Questions used in conventionalized greetings and in laments

Conventionalised question-reponse pairs — similar to phatic communication:

To someone coming back from the river in the morning:

- |      |  |              |                   |
|------|--|--------------|-------------------|
| (31) | Pi-pita= <u>nihka</u><br>2sg-bathe=REC.PAST.VIS<br>'Have you bathed?'        | phia?<br>you | <i>'Question'</i> |
|      | Nu-pita= <u>ka</u><br>1sg-bathe=REC.PAST.VIS<br>'I have bathed'              |              | <i>'Response'</i> |
| (32) | pi-uka= <u>nihka</u><br>2sg-arrive=REC.PAST.VIS.INTER<br>'Have you arrived?' | phia?<br>you | <i>'Question'</i> |
|      | nuka= <u>ka</u><br>1sg+arrive=REC.PAST.VIS<br>'I have arrived.'              |              | <i>'Response'</i> |

Someone who has just arrived or an equivalent to 'hello' (cf. Kasia on Murui!)



'Hey, hey, younger sister, are you awake? You must be sleeping a lot, what are you doing? Having drunk coffee (lit. black water), are you awake?'

### 5.2.2 Polar questions forms used as conversation sustainers

Interrogative clauses in Tariana (compare Tables 3 and 4) do not have a 'reported' specification. That the distinction between reported and inferred evidentials is in fact neutralized in interrogative clauses in Tariana, and the 'inferred' specification is used instead, comes from the 'conversation sustainer' question-response pattern. This is the most common strategy of showing a listener's participation in conversational interaction.

When A (speaker) tells a story, B (listener) is expected to give feedback, after just about every sentence, by repeating the predicate (or the last verb within a serial verb construction) accompanied by an interrogative evidential. These pseudo-questions do not have question intonation. For Tariana and most East Tucanoan languages, the correspondences are as shown in Diagram 1. The matching of question-response patterns in Tariana and in East Tucanoan languages are quite striking.

#### Diagram 1. Evidentials in question-response: Tariana and East Tucanoan

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A: visual	B: visual
A: non-visual	B: non-visual
A: inferred	B: inferred
A: reported	B: inferred
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- (37) A:    haw    di-a=ka *Tariana*  
           OK    3sgnf-say=REC.PAST.VIS  
           'He said, OK'
- B.    di-a=nihka  
           3sgnf-say=REC.PAST.VIS.INTER.VIS  
           'He said it?'

Compare:

- (38) A    ii       niî-ami *Tucano*  
           OK    say-REC.PAST.VIS.3sgnf  
           'He said, OK'
- B    niî-a-ti  
           say-REC.PAST.VIS-INTER  
           'He said it?'

This is another example of areal diffusion, in interactional patterns.

### 5.2.3 Content interrogatives as fillers

Interrogative words *kwaka* 'what' in the meaning of 'what's name (of an inanimate entity)' and *kuite* 'which' in the meaning of 'what's name of someone animate' are used as fillers (if the speaker cannot quite remember

the name or the word). These forms are used without interrogative evidentials or interrogative intonation, and there may be a brief pause before or after.

- (39) **hĩ**                    **kuite**                    Garaci-peri    di-kalite=na  
 this:ANIM        what's.his.name        Graci-OLD    3sgnf-tell=REM.PAST.VIS  
 'This, what's his name, the old Graci(liano) told (a story like this one)'
- (40) [wesa                    wa:=na]                    te        **kwaka-se**                    wa-patu=na  
 1pl+go.upstream 1pl+go=REM.PAST.VIS        until    what's.its.name-LOC    1pl-embark=REM.PAST.VIS  
 'We went upstream until we arrived at what's its name' (a river)

The inanimate *kwaka* 'what's name?' may take a classifier (if the person remembers the shape of the object) but does not have to:

- (41) **Kwaka-da**                    pa-swa-ni-da                    sapea  
 what's.its.name-CL:ROUND    IMP-put-PASS-CL:ROUND        hat:PORTUGUESE  
 na:-ni-da                    du-sueta=pidana  
 3pl+say-PASS-CL:ROUND        3sgnf-put+CAUS=REM.PAST.REP  
 'He put on what's its name-round one, the one one puts on, called 'hat' (Portuguese *chapéu*)'

A filler can take a case marker, e.g.

- (42) te        **kwaka-se**                    Içana-se        wa-wa        wa:-na  
 up.into what's.it-LOC                    Içana-LOC        1pl-enter        1pl+go-REM.P.VIS  
 'We entered, what's name, the Içana river'

One can have two fillers in one clause (comma indicates a very short pause).

- (43) **Kwaka,**                    sesta feira-ka                    nusa        nu-a-mhade                    Sao Gabriel-se  
 what's.it                    Friday:PORTUGUESE-SUB        1sg-go.up 1sg-go-FUT.UNCERT São Gabriel-LOC  
 'What's name, on Friday I may go up to São Gabriel'

Hĩ                    **kwaka,**                    **kuite**                    nurinu                    [duha  
 this:anim        what's.it                    which+CL.ANIM        1sg+son+wife she  
 bosa familia                    duha duhpa-ka]        [nu-a nu-wapa-de]  
 allowancefamily:PORTUGUESE        she 3sgf-+get-SUB 1sg-go 1sg-wait-FUT.CERT  
 'This, what's name, which is it, my daughter-in-law, I will wait for her to get the family allowance'  
 (lit. as she gets family allowance, I will wait)

## 6 Replies to questions

- There are no words 'yes' or 'no'.
- Positive replies to questions are achieved through a positive with a full verb, or a noun in the predicate slot (as in (8b) and (9b)).



- A one-word negative reply can contain the negative proclitic *ne=* as in (20b), or *hãida* 'I don't know'. Note that an evidential can be omitted in a response, if it is clear from the context.
- A pro-sentence *haw* 'OK' (as in (37)) is not used as a positive response to a polar question; it expresses acquiescence with a statement or a command.
- A Tucano-style answer involves the verb 'do', lit. 'I am not doing':

(42a) **kwe** pi-ni pi-nu=nha phia?  
 how 2sg-do 2sg-come=PRES.VIS.INTER you  
 'Why have you come?' (lit. you do what you come)

(42b) ma-ni-kade=nuka  
 NEG-do-NEG=PRES.VIS  
 'Just like that, for nothing' (lit. I am not doing)

(43a) **kwaka** pi-yana=nha phia  
 what 2sg-cook/boil=PRES.VIS.INTER you?  
 'What are you cooking?'

(43b) ma-ni-kade=nuka  
 NEG-do-NEG=PRES.VIS  
 'Nothing much' (lit. I don't do)

- A silence may follow a question one does not want to answer; or it may be a pause; and then the speaker switches to something else.

## 7 To summarise — the most notable features of Tariana interrogative clauses

- I. The existence of a special set of evidentials in interrogative clauses.
- II. Special sets of classifiers with interrogatives.
- III. Phatic uses of interrogative clauses as conversation sustainers.
- IV. Evidence for the impact of Tucanoan patterns in questions and answers.
- V. Pervasive use of question words 'what' and 'which' as fillers.

**Abbreviations:** ABSTR - abstract (classifier); ANIM - animate; ANT - anterior; COLL - collective; COMPL - completiser; fem, FEM - feminine; FUT - future; FUT.CERT - certain future; INAN - inanimate; INT - intentional; INTER - interrogative; LOC - locational case; NEG - negative; nf - nonfeminine; NOM - nominalisation; NUM.CL - numeral classifier; OBJ - object; PASS - passive; pl - plural; POSS - possessive; PRES.NONVIS - present nonvisual; PRES.NONVIS.INTER - present nonvisual interrogative; PRES.VIS - present visual; PRES.VIS.INTER - present visual interrogative; REC.PAST.INFER - recent past inferred; REC.PAST - recent past; REC.PAST.NONVIS - recent past nonvisual; REC.PAST.VIS - recent past visual; REL - relative form; REM.PAST.REP - remote past reported; REM.PAST.VIS - remote past visual; sg - singular; SUB - subordinator; TOP.NON.A/S - topical nonsubject case; VOC - vocative.

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## Appendix 1.

**Table A. Consonants in Tariana**

	bilabial	apico-dental	apico-alveopalatal	laminopalatal	dorso-velar	glottal
voiceless stop	<i>p</i>	<i>t</i>			<i>k</i>	
aspirated voiceless stop	<i>ph</i>	<i>th</i>			<i>kh</i>	
voiced stop	<i>b</i>	<i>d</i>			( <i>g</i> )	
aspirated voiced stop		<i>dh</i>				
voiceless fricative			<i>s</i>			<i>h</i>
voiceless affricate				<i>tʃ</i>		
nasal	<i>m</i>	<i>n</i>		<i>ɲ</i>		
aspirated nasal	<i>mʰ</i>	<i>nʰ</i>		<i>ɲʰ</i>		
flap			<i>r</i>			
lateral			<i>l</i>			
semi-vowel	<i>w</i>			<i>y</i>		
aspirated semi-vowel	<i>wʰ</i>					

**Table B. Vowels in Tariana**

	FRONT			CENTRAL			BACK		
	short	nasalised	long	short	nasalised	long	short	nasalised	long
HIGH	<i>i</i>	<i>ĩ</i>	<i>i:</i>	<i>ɨ*</i>			<i>u</i>	<i>ũ</i>	<i>u:</i>
MIDDLE				<i>e</i>	<i>ẽ</i>	<i>e:</i>	<i>o*</i>	<i>õ*</i>	
LOW				<i>a</i>	<i>ã</i>	<i>a:</i>			

Vowels marked with \* occur in non-native items and in onomatopoeia only.

## Appendix 2.

### Scheme 1 Predicate structure in Tariana: affixes and root

1. Cross-referencing prefixes (A/S<sub>a</sub>) or Negative *ma-* or Relative *ka-*
2. ROOT
3. Thematic syllable
4. Causative *-i*
  - {4a. Complete involvement of O *-ta* (only after *-i*)}
5. Negative *-(ka)de*
6. Reciprocal (rarely: reflexive) *-kaka*
7. *-ina* 'almost, a little bit'
8. Topic-advancing *-ni*, or Passive *-kana*, or Purposive nonvisual *-hyu* or Purposive visual *-karu*
9. Verbal classifiers (only if slot 8 is filled)
10. Benefactive *-pena*
11. Relativizers, nominalizers

### Scheme 2 Predicate structure in Tariana: enclitics

12. Intentional, 'be about to' =*kasu*
13. Mood (imperative, declarative, interrogative fused with evidentiality and tense) and modality (frustrative, conditional, apprehensive)
14. Aspect 'zone' I
  - 14a. Habitual prescribed =*hyuna* 'what you do and what you ought to do'
  - 14b. Customary =*kape*
  - 14c. Habitual repetitive =*nipe*
  - 14d. Anterior =*nhi*
15. \* Evidentiality and tense, e.g. =*mha-na* 'non-visual-remote.past'; future
16. Epistemic =*da* 'doubt', =*pada* 'isn't it true that'
17. Aktionsart (manner or extent of associated action, e.g. 'split open', 'step on and feel pain', 'wag one's tail', 'away');
18. \* Degree: augmentative (also meaning 'indeed'), diminutive, approximative ('more or less'), excessive
19. Aspect 'zone' II
  - 19a Prolonged, ongoing =*daka* 'yet, still', =*sida* 'on-going'
  - 19b Perfective =*sita* 'already accomplished'
  - \* 19c Repetitive =*pita*, =*ta* 'once again'
  - \* 19d Completive =*niki* 'totally, completely'
20. Switch-reference and clause-chaining
21. \* Emphatic enclitics =*a/ya*, =*wani*; confirmation of evidence =*sõ*; degree enclitics: augmentative (also meaning 'indeed'), diminutive, approximative ('more or less'), excessive