

NDYUKA

GEORGE L. HUTTAR
and MARY L. HUTTAR



DESCRIPTIVE GRAMMARS



Ndyuka

This volume constitutes what is perhaps the most thorough description of a creole language to date. Following the Descriptive Grammar Series outline, it provides detailed coverage of a full range of grammatical, phonological and lexical information, written with the interests of formalists and functionalists, creolists and students of language universals and typology in mind. Expressions of linguistic judgements by both naive and trained native speakers of Ndyuka combine with a close study of texts to provide a solid basis for the work. More than two thousand examples of constructions and forms are considered in context and these give the careful reader a rich picture of all the structural and functional aspects of this radical creole.

The authors' close acquaintance with the Ndyuka language community spans more than 25 years and allows the intuitions of Ndyuka speakers to show through clearly. Numerous cross references and an index of forms and topics of special interest supplement the detailed Table of Contents, facilitating the testing of hypotheses on language universals, typology, creolization, and processes such as clefting, relativization and verb serialization.

Descriptive Grammars

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EDITORIAL STATEMENT

Until quite recently, work on theoretical linguistics and work on language description proceeded almost entirely in isolation from one another. Work on theoretical linguistics, especially in syntax, concentrated primarily on English, and its results were felt to be inapplicable to those interested in describing other languages. Work on describing individual languages was almost deliberately isolationist, with the development of a different framework and terminology for each language or language group, and no feeding of the achievements of language description into linguistic theory. Within the last few years, however, a major rapprochement has taken place between theoretical and descriptive linguistics. In particular, the rise of language typology and the study of language universals have produced a large number of theoreticians who require accurate, well-formulated descriptive data from a wide range of languages, and have shown descriptive linguists that they can both derive benefit from and contribute to the development of linguistic theory. Even within generative syntax, long the bastion of linguistic anglocentrism, there is an increased interest in the relation between syntactic theory and a wide range of language types.

For a really fruitful interaction between theoretical and descriptive linguistics, it is essential that descriptions of different languages should be comparable. The *Questionnaire* of the present series (originally published as *Lingua*, vol. 42 (1977), no. 1) provides a framework for the descriptive of a language that is (a) sufficiently comprehensive to cover the major structures of any language that are likely to be of theoretical interest; (b) sufficiently explicit to make cross-language comparisons a feasible undertaking (in particular, through the detailed numbering key); and (c) sufficiently flexible to encompass the range of variety that is found in human language. The volumes that were published in the predecessor to the present series, the *Lingua Descriptive Studies* (now available from Routledge), succeeded in bridging the gap between theory and description: authors include both theoreticians who are also interested in description and field-workers with an interest in theory.

The aim of the Descriptive Grammars is thus to provide descriptions of a wide range of languages according to the format set out in the *Questionnaire*. Each language will be covered in a single volume. The first priority of the series is grammars of languages for which detailed descriptions are not at present available. However, the series will also encompass descriptions of better-known languages with the series framework providing more detailed descriptions of such languages that are currently available (as with the monographs on West Greenlandic and Kannada).

Bernard Comrie

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Ndyuka

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*Dedicated to the memory of
Da Jozef Akoeding Velantie*

1933–1994

whose friendship smoothed the way for
the beginning of this research, and
whose sons contributed significantly
to its continuation.

Da Jozef Akoeding Velantie! Wi enke mati fi yu, wi maiki yu nen poti ya, fu pakisei yu. Wi di fika a baka ya noiti sa feegete yu. Da so langa sama e leisi a buku ya, da den sa leisi yu nen tu. Wi Masaa Yeses Klestes sa gi yu wan teego losutu. Amen, na so a de!

Jozef Akoeding Velantie! We your friends have inscribed your name here to remember you. We whom you have left behind will never forget you. Whenever anyone reads this book, they will read your name too. Our Lord Jesus Christ will give you eternal rest. Amen, amen!

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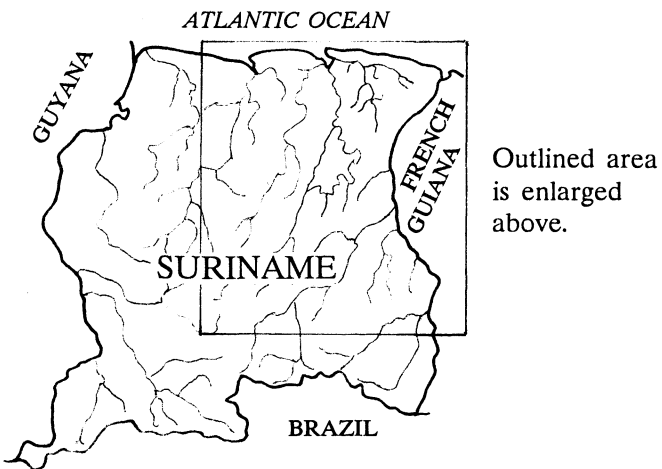
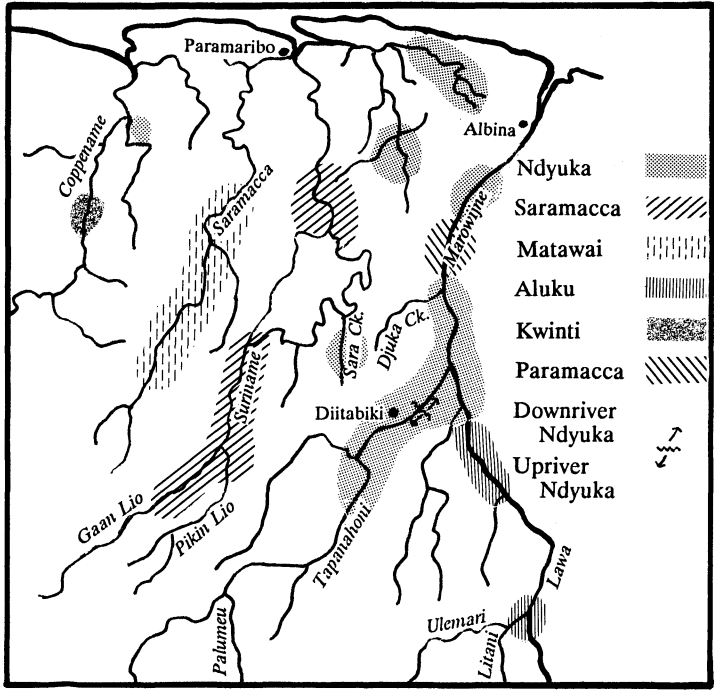
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ABBREVIATIONS

ABBREVIATIONS

1	first person
1/2pl	first and/or second person, plural
2	second person
3	third person
ANT	anterior (past) tense
BE	copula
CJ	conjunction
COMP	complementizer
CNT	continuative aspect
FUT	future tense
IRR	irrealis mood
LOC	general locative preposition
NEG	negative
pl	plural
REL	relative marker
s, sg	singular
sobl	singular oblique



Maroon languages of Suriname

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INTRODUCTION

Ndyuka¹ is a creole language spoken in eastern Suriname (see map). It appears to have stabilized in the first half of the eighteenth century when large numbers of slaves escaped from plantations (chiefly along the Cottica and Commewijne rivers) where a contact language drawing much of its lexicon from English was in use (see Price 1976 on the history of the Ndyuka and other “Maroon” societies in Suriname, and Thoden van Velzen and van Wetering 1988 for more specifically on Ndyuka history). Ndyuka reflects the influence of a variety of Amerindian, European, and African languages (see Hutter 1975, 1981, 1985, 1986a, 1989, 1991, 1993 for details on specific languages).

Ndyuka is lexically similar to Sranan, the creole spoken in Paramaribo, Suriname’s capital, and in much of the coastal region as a native language for some and a language of wider communication for many more. Although the Ndyukas are politically distinct from the Paramaccans and the Alukus (also known as Bonis) of eastern Suriname, the varieties spoken by these groups do not differ from one another more than do varieties recognized by Ndyukas within their own society. We thus include Paramaccan and Aluku among the dialects of Ndyuka, along with Upriver (*opu*), Downriver (*bilo*), Cottica River and Sara Creek dialects. Of the creoles spoken in central Suriname, Saramaccan and Matawai may well be as similar to one another as Ndyuka is to, say, Paramaccan, while Kwinti falls neatly into neither group, sharing some features with the eastern creoles on the one hand and with the other central creoles on the other.

This description is based primarily on our own fieldwork in Suriname carried out under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics and the Suriname Ministry of Education in 1968–1973, 1981, 1982, and 1988–1990. We have also profited from the fieldwork of James and Joyce Park and Louis and Lisa Shanks and discussions with them, as well as from discussion and writings in and about Ndyuka by native speakers of the language, some of whom are named below.

To avoid the dangers in either a naive reliance on what native speakers say about their judgements of possible strings in their language or in an uncritically gathered corpus not subject to native

INTRODUCTION

speaker confirmation, we have relied on a combination of native-produced language tokens and expressions of linguistic judgments. The “language data” in the first sense, some 300,000–350,000 words of written or transcribed material plus several hours of untranscribed recordings, include both prompted and spontaneous material, spoken and written, unedited and edited, from male and female speakers ranging in age from the teens to the eighties, mostly from the Tapanahony River (see map). Traditional tales, personal narratives, exhortations, expositions, how-to-do-it texts, palavers, proverbs and other genres are included. A selection of these texts has been deposited with the Oxford Text Archive.

The full range of material includes written Ndyuka translations from other languages. Most of these have been subjected to a much more thorough scrutiny for naturalness and meaningfulness than is usual for most language tokens, spoken or written. Nevertheless, we have labeled as such any phenomena that are attested only in translated material.

Native-speaker judgements likewise come from a variety of speakers, but primarily from somewhat urbanized men and women in their 20’s, some with some informal linguistic training. It is a pleasure to acknowledge our debt to such speakers, including Carlo Velantie, Irene Kwasi, Frank Velantie, and André Mosis. But special thanks must be given to Evert D. Koanting, without whose considered insights and creative interest many more questions about his language would still remain unanswered. Of course whatever errors remain in this description are our responsibility alone.

It is also our privilege to thank a number of others for their part in making this description possible. The Suriname Ministries of Education and of District Affairs, the Summer Institute of Linguistics, Commissioner and Minister Dr. R. Libretto, Ndyuka Paramount Chief Gazon Amatodja and the people of Drietabbetje have provided many forms of administrative, practical and moral support since 1968. Our research has been substantially forwarded by a concordance produced by the joint Linguistic Information Retrieval Project of the University of Oklahoma and the Summer Institute of Linguistics, supported by the National Science Foundation (Grant GS-270). Our fieldwork has been supported by the United States Air Force Office of Scientific Research (Grant AF-AFOSR-1252–67 and

INTRODUCTION

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NOTES

¹We choose this spelling of the name of the language in accord with native speaker preference and with its spelling in the orthography currently in use in publications in the language. The language has commonly been referred to in the English linguistic literature as Ndjuká, Ndjuka, and Djuka, and occasionally as Aukan.

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1. SYNTAX

1.1. GENERAL QUESTIONS

1.1.1. Sentence-types

1.1.1.1. *Direct vs. indirect speech*

(See also 1.1.2.2.3.–6.) Direct and indirect speech, defined pragmatically in terms of the hearer's interpretation of tenses and of pronoun and deictic reference, are not always formally distinguished. In some cases they are distinguished by prosodic means—see the end of 1.1.1.1.1. In the examples that follow, when the reference of pronouns, deictics, and tense markers does not disambiguate direct from indirect speech, we have sometimes been able to use broader contextual cues to make the distinction.

1.1.1.1.1. *Direct vs. indirect statements*

Both direct and indirect statements are optionally preceded by COMP *taki* (cf. *táki* 'speak'):

Direct with COMP, after *taigi* 'tell':

- (1) *Ne a bakaa_i taigi en_j taki, "I_j si, fa yu_j*
 CJ the-sg outsider say-give 3sobl COMP 2s see how 2s
e waka e lontu a goontapu ya, ne i_j doo
 CNT walk CNT round LOC world here CJ 2s arrive
wan peesi fu du san i_j lobi du, yu_j á mu du
 a place for do what? 2s like do 2s NEG must do
en, i_j yee?"
 3sobl 2s hear

'Then the white man told him, "You see, as you go traveling around in the world, and you arrive at a place to do what you like to do, you mustn't do it—you hear?"'

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Indirect with COMP, after *taigi* 'tell':

- (2) *Ne a_i taigi mi_j taki, fa mi_j e waka lontu*
CJ 3s say-give 1s COMP how 1s CNT walk around

ya mi_j á mu abi giili manii.
here 1s NEG must have greedy manner

'Then he told me that as I travel around here, I mustn't behave greedily.'

Direct with COMP, after *bali* 'call':

- (3) *A_i e bali taki: "Baala_j, gi mi_i mi_i fesi."*
3s CNT call COMP brother give 1s 1s face

'He was calling, "Brother, give me my face."'

Indirect with COMP, after *bali* 'call':

- (4) *Ne a_i opo bali a mma_j taki/*∅ a mma_j á*
CJ 3s rise call the-sg mother COMP the-sg mother NEG
mu muliki en_i moo.
must bother 3sobl more

'Then he got up and yelled at the old woman that she shouldn't bother him any more.'

The next two examples illustrate direct and indirect statements with COMP after the non-speech verb *fii* 'feel':

Direct:

- (5) *A_i e fii a futu taki, "A ya yu_i mu waka*
3s CNT feel LOC foot COMP BE here 2s must walk
go."
go

'He feels in his legs, "It's this way you should go."'

Indirect:

- (6) *Ne mi fii taki i e dwengi mi.*
 CJ 1s feel COMP 2s CNT coerce 1s
 ‘Then I felt that you were coercing me.’

If the verb of speech is *táki* ‘talk, say’, the complementizer *taki* is frequently omitted before both direct and indirect speech:

Direct without COMP:

- (7) *Ne ai táki, “Ai, tide mi seefi si anga mi ain.”*
 CJ 3s say yes today 1s self see with 1s eye
 ‘Then he said, “Yes, today I have seen it with my own eyes.”’

Indirect without COMP:

- (8) *Ne Gaanbaai táki, di ai o kisi Kooj moo, ai*
 CJ Big-Brother say when 3s FUT catch turtle more 3s
o kii enj.
 FUT kill 3sobl
 ‘Then Big Brother (Jaguar) said, when he caught Turtle again, he’d kill him.’

The next two examples illustrate indirect speech without COMP after *táki*, embedded within direct speech, also without COMP:

- (9) *Ne Da Msabi táki, “... Di fu dii aj táki, a*
 CJ Father Msabi say that for three 3s say the-sg
sani di mi lobi du tumisi mi á mu du
 thing REL 1s like do too-(much) 1s NEG must do
en.”
 3sobl
 ‘Then Mr. Msabi said, “In the third place he said that the thing I really like to do, I mustn’t do it.”’

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- (10) *A_i táki, “Ne i_j táki i_j nyan makonkon.”*
3s say CJ 2s say 2s eat grasshopper
‘He said, “And you say you ate grasshoppers.”’

Direct without COMP, in a proverb:

- (11) *Afiingi táki, “Fiingi mi_i osi?”*
dumpling say throw 1s 1/2pl-see
‘Afiingi (dumpling soup) says, “Throw me and let’s see what happens.”’

Indirect without COMP, in a proverb:

- (12) *Koo_i táki, a_i ná e abaa wataa a dee ten.*
turtle say 3s NEG CNT cross water LOC dry time
‘Turtle says he doesn’t cross the river in the dry season.’

COMP *taki* is not always omitted after *táki*, however, especially if other material intervenes:

Direct or indirect:

- (13) *Mi_i táki anga den_j taki mi_i e go puu a*
1s talk with 3pl COMP 1s CNT go remove the-sg
baana pikin.
plantain child
‘I talked with them, saying I was going to remove some plantain shoots.’ / ‘I talked with them, saying, “I’m going to remove some plantain shoots.”’

Direct (from translated material):

- (14) *Da a_i e táki anga en_i seefi taki, “Ofu mi_i sa*
CJ 3s CNT say with 3sobl self COMP if 1s IRR
oli soso en_j koosi namo, da mi_i sa kon bun.”
hold only 3sobl cloth only CJ 1s IRR come good
‘Then she said to herself, “If I can just hold his clothes, then I’ll be healed.”’

Indirect (from translated material):

- (15) *Da soseefi, den soutu sama de_i e táki anga*
 CJ likewise the-pl sort person there CNT say with
mofu taki, den_i sabi Gadu; ma den_i e lei.
 mouth COMP 3pl know God but 3pl CNT be-wrong
 ‘So in the same way, that sort of people claim that they know
 God, but they’re lying/are mistaken.’
- (16) *Konu na yu seefi táki taki sama di á be*
 king BE 2s same talk COMP person REL NEG ANT
lesipeki a weiti sa go a ini a leo koi.
 respect the-sg law IRR go LOC inside the-sg lion cage
 ‘King, it was you yourself who said that anyone who did not
 observe the law would go into the lion cage.’

COMP is optionally omitted after other verbs indicating speech also (although such omission is more common with some verbs than with others), and appears to be limited to direct speech:

Direct without COMP, after *yee* ‘hear’:

- (17) *Ne a_i yee a bakaaj bali en_i baka, “Eei!*
 CJ 3s hear the-sg outsider call 3sobl again hey
Msabi! Msabi! Kon!”
 Msabi Msabi come
 ‘Then he heard the white man call him again, “Hey! Msabi!
 Msabi! Come!”’

In narrative (including narrative elements in procedural discourse), the subject of *táki* introducing direct speech may be omitted, although some speakers reject such usage as ill-formed:

- (18) *Da yi e opo, yi e opo, yi e opo yi e*
 CJ 2s CNT open 2s CNT open 2s CNT open 2s CNT

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opo, a_j safu táki “*Oo, ai oo.*”
open 3s soft say oh yes oh

‘Then you keep opening it (the dugout) up wider and wider, it’s soft, (you) say, “Great!”’

- (19) *Táki* “*O, wee, hn, aai mati, oho, o we mi_i nyan*
say oh well hm yes friend oho oh well 1s eat

babun.”
howler-monkey

‘(He) said, “Oh, ahem, well, friend, well, er, oh, I ate howler monkeys.”’

Or *táki* can be reduced to *ta*:

- (20) *Ne a_i ta* “*We a di mi_i si a switimofu*
CJ 3s say well BE when 1s see the-sg sweet-mouth

di mi_i nyan na gaan switimofu bika
REL 1s eat BE great sweet-mouth because

babun bigi.”
howler-monkey big

‘Then he said, “Well, it’s because I saw that the delicacy that I ate was a big one, because howler monkeys are big.”’

Or both subject omission and *táki* reduction may occur:

- (21) *Ta* “*We mati, we fa y_j e lafu?*”
say well friend well how? 2s CNT laugh

‘(He) said, “Well, friend, well, how come you’re laughing?”’

Neither omission of subject nor reduction of *táki* occurs with indirect speech.

While COMP *taki* appears to have an underlying LL tone pattern in contrast with the HL pattern of the verb *táki*, the surface distinction between the two is not always clear, calling into question the maintainability of the underlying distinction of verb and COMP.

In the following example, from a printed source (in which *táki* and *taki* are both written *taki*), the first *taki*, whether taken as COMP or verb, introduces either direct or indirect speech (it happens that the second, the verb *táki*, introduces indirect speech):¹

- (22) *Bika na soso a_i e soso yu_j táki/taki, yu_j ná*
 because BE belittle 3s CNT belittle 2s say/COMP 2s NEG
o poi du san i_j taki yu_j o du.
 FUT be-able do what? 2s say 2s FUT do
 ‘Because what they’re doing is belittling you, saying you won’t be able to do what you said you would do.’

In sentences with the verb *táki*, the presence of a pause after the verb, with optional extra high pitch and length on the last syllable of the verb, signals direct speech. If these features are absent, what follows may be either direct or indirect speech. The following sentences, again from printed sources, are ambiguous in their written form in this regard (although the comma/colon after *táki* encourages a direct speech reading):

- (23) *Den_i taki, feifi yuu ten i_j yee pingo, yu_j á mu*
 3pl say five hour time 2s hear peccary 2s NEG must
go moo.
 go more
 ‘They said (that) around 5:00 if you hear peccaries, you mustn’t pursue them any more.’
- (24) *Den_i taki: Da na so a toli fu den_{ij} de.*
 3pl say CJ BE thus the-sg story for 3pl BE
 ‘They_i said (that) that’s how their_i/their_j business went.’

1.1.1.1.2. Direct vs. indirect questions

Indirect questions are described in 1.1.2.2.4. Direct question-word questions occur with and without COMP *taki* (see 1.1.1.1.1.), while direct yes-no questions apparently must take *taki* :

1. SYNTAX

Direct yes-no question with COMP:

- (25) *A akisi en taki "Bee nyan yu?"*
3s ask 3sobl COMP stomach eat 2s
'She asked him, "Does your stomach hurt?''

Direct question-word question with COMP:

- (26) *Ne a_i akisi en_j taki, "Fa den e kái a
CJ 3s ask 3s obl COMP how? 3pl CNT call the-sg
man
man
fi yu_j nen?"*
for 2s name
'Then he asked him, "What is your name?''

Direct question-word question without COMP:

- (27) *Mi akisi u bunbun, "San den o du anga wi?"*
1s ask 2pl good-good what? 3pl FUT do with 1/2pl
'I ask you politely, "What will they do with us?''

1.1.1.1.3. Direct vs. indirect commands

Indirect commands are described in 1.1.2.2.5. Direct commands occur with and without COMP *taki* (see 1.1.1.1.1.):

Direct command with COMP:

- (28) *Meke den_i begi den_j taki, "Gaantangi u_j á tyai
make 3pl beg 3pl COMP please 2pl NEG carry
nefi a saka moo."*
knife LOC sack more
'Let them beg them, "Please don't carry a knife in the sack anymore.''

Direct command without COMP:

- (29) *Mi_i e begi yu_j, "Ná go taampu na ondoo wan*
 1s CNT beg 2s NEG go stand LOC under a
suwa alanya bon."
 sour alanya tree
 'I beg you, "Don't stand under a sour *alanya* tree anymore.'

- (30) *Mi_i begi i_j baa, fu den feifitenti sama ede, i_j á*
 1s beg 2s ! for the-pl fifty people head 2s NEG
mu kii ala sama a ini a kondee.
 must kill all people LOC inside the-sg village
 'I beg you, please, for the sake of the fifty people here, you
 mustn't kill everyone in the village.'

1.1.1.2. *Interrogatives*

Both yes-no and question-word questions occur as complete sentences, as described in the following sections, and as parts of complex sentences:

Question-word question as second clause:

- (31) *We di i be kon, we san i be kon*
 well when 2s ANT come well what? 2s ANT come
suku, san i be wani?
 look-for what? 2s ANT want
 'Well, when you came here, what were you looking for, what
 did you want?'
- (32) *Baka di Masaa Gadu soi Daniyel a deen*
 after when Lord God show Daniel the-sg dream
san Daniyel du?
 what? Daniel do
 'After the Lord God showed Daniel the dream, what did
 Daniel do?'

1. SYNTAX

- (33) *Di a go na Aliyoki san a taigi en?*
when 3s go LOC Arioch what? 3s say-give 3sobl
'When he went to Arioch, what did he tell him?'

Yes-no question as second clause:

- (34) *Di mi taki anga yu moi moi, ne na kwali i e*
when 1s talk with 2s nice nice CJ BE quarrel 2s CNT
kwali anga mi?
quarrel with 1s
'When I talked to you so nicely, then what you're doing is quarreling with me?'
- (35) *Ná wan sama wani en ne yu di komoto te*
NEG one person want 3sobl CJ 2s REL come-out until
na yu osu e kon teke en?
LOC 2s house CNT come take 3sobl
'Not one person wants her, yet you who have come from way over at your place are coming to take her?'

A common pattern in palavers has the first clause separated from the question by the stylized response of the *piki man* 'answer person':

- (36) A: *Te a e taki,*
when 3s CNT talk
B: *Iya.*
yes
A: *... a e taki Matawai?*
3s CNT talk Matawai
B: *Nono.*
no
A: 'When he talks ...'
B: 'Yes ...'
A: '... is he talking Matawai?'
B: 'No.'

Question-word question as first clause:

- (37) *Oho, Masaa Gadu fa mi o du, mi ana fasi?*
 oho Lord God how? 1s FUT do 1s hand be-stuck
 ‘Oh, Lord God, what shall I do, my hand is stuck?’

- (38) *San konu du di Aliyoki go ne en?*
 what? king do when Arioach go LOC 3sobl
 ‘What did the king do when Arioach went to him?’

Yes-no question as first clause:²

- (39) *I o bai sani gi mi di i o go na*
 2s FUT buy thing give 1s when 2s FUT go LOC
Ameekan?
 American
 ‘Will you buy something for me when you go to America?’

Question after more than one other clause:

- (40) *A kosi yu ogii ogii a baka, a kosi a yu fesi*
 3s scold 2s bad bad LOC back 3s scold LOC 2s face
ogii ogii, san i o du?
 bad bad what? 2s FUT do
 ‘He curses you badly behind your back, he curses you badly to your face, what will you do?’

The following example is from translated material:

- (41) *I sa gudu te i gudu, te i abi ala a gudu*
 2s IRR rich until 2s rich until 2s have all the-sg rich
fu hiihii goontapu, ma efi i lasi i libi, da san i
 for entire world but if 2s lose 2s live CJ what? 2s
wini?
 win

1. SYNTAX

‘You can become extremely rich, till you have all the wealth of the whole world, but if you lose your life, then what have you gained?’

Question after imperative (example from written material):

- (42) *Go, dini i Gadu fi yu, ma sama o go anga yu?*
go serve 2s God for 2s but who? FUT go with 2s
‘Go ahead and serve your God, but who will go with you?’

Question-word question and yes-no question in same sentence:

- (43) *Oho, Baa Anainsi, on fa baala, i á e*
oho Brer Spider which? how? brother 2s NEG CNT
fii moo?
feel more
‘Oh, Brer Spider, what’s the matter, brother, you aren’t feeling (for fish) any more?’

Both yes-no and question-word questions occur in elliptical form, ending in *no* (cf. 1.1.1.2.1.2.1.), usually beginning with a conjunction, and with the interrogative clause itself omitted, being available from the previous context, including within the same sentence:

- (44) *A: Ape mi siibi tudewooko.*
there 1s sleep Tuesday
B: A taa neti no?
the-sg other night TAG
A: ‘I slept there Tuesday night.’
B: ‘What about the next night?’

The following example is from translated material:

- (45) *Ma efi i fende fotenti sama no?*
but if 2s find forty person TAG?
‘But what if you find forty people?’

1.1.1.2.1. *Yes-no questions*1.1.1.2.1.1. *Neutral questions*

Neutral yes-no questions may be complete or incomplete sentences. Both are marked differently from declarative sentences only by their final rising intonation (under which lexical tone differences are neutralized—see 3.3.4.1.), which can extend back over most of the sentence:

- (46) *I wani?*
2s want
'Do you want it?'
- (47) *So, Mineli, i kaba anga mi fu mi gwe?*
thus sir 2s finish with 1s for 1s leave
'So, sir, are you through with me so I can leave?'
- (48) *Na yu kon bigi so?*
BE 2s come big thus
'Is this you that has grown so big?'
- (49) *A dagu de a pakaa meke, a ibi a*
BE dog BE LOC backpack make 3sn heavy the-sg
ibi de?
heavy there
'Is it that there is a dog in the backpack that makes it so heavy?'

1.1.1.2.1.2. *Leading questions*1.1.1.2.1.2.1. *Expecting the answer yes*

These may be formally indistinct from neutral questions, the expectation of a yes response being obvious from the pragmatic-cultural context. Perhaps because a particular answer is expected, these are almost always rhetorical questions or some other type of indirect speech act (1.1.1.5.).

1. SYNTAX

- (50) *Na wasi i e wasi so?*
BE wash 2s CNT wash thus

‘Washing, is that what you’re doing?’ (when it obvious to all that the addressee is washing—see 1.1.1.5.)

Final *so* often occurs on questions expecting a yes response, although the presence of the *so* does not unambiguously signal that expectation:³

- (51) *A: Oo, a wan bofoo mi anga en miti anda; mi*
Oh BE a tapir 1s with 3sobl meet over-there 1s
anga a bofoo be e feti so.
with the-sg tapir ANT CNT struggle thus

B: A bofoo i e sutu so?
BE tapir 2s CNT shoot thus

A: Ai.
yes

A: ‘Oh, it was a tapir that I encountered over there; the tapir and I were struggling like that.’

B: ‘Was it a tapir you were shooting, then?’

A: ‘Yes.’

Expectation of a positive response can be explicitly marked by inclusion of NEG *á* and/or a final *no* tag. Such questions, despite the expectation of a yes answer, generally function as genuine questions:

- (52) *Da Akoiyoo i á yee?*
Father Akoiyoo 2s NEG hear

‘Father Akoiyoo, you heard, didn’t you?’

- (53) *Yu o gwe a kampu no?*
2s FUT go-away LOC camp TAG?

‘You’ll be going off to your camp, won’t you?’

- (54) *Mineli i ná abi wan wooko gi mi no?*
sir 2s NEG have a work give 1s TAG?

‘Sir, do you happen to have a job for me?’

- (55) *Ma, Gadu, yu á sa meke mi si wan fisi, no?*
 but God 2s NEG IRR make 1s see a fish TAG?

‘But, God, won’t you make me see a fish?’

The negative and the *no* may have more than one clause as their scope (example from written material):

- (56) *Yu á be akisi mi paadon, ne mi be teke tyali*
 2s NEG ANT ask 1s forgive CJ 1s ANT take sorrow
ati puu a gaan paiman gi yu, no?
 heart take-out the-sg great fine/debt give 2s TAG?

‘Isn’t it so that you asked me for forgiveness, and so I had pity on you and forgave you your big debt?’

The *no* tag is not specific to yes-no questions. It also occurs at the end of question-word questions (1.1.1.2.2.), statements, and commands/requests (1.1.1.3.1.2.). In all these cases, including with yes-no questions, it suggests a certain degree of shared information or agreement between speaker and addressee.

1.1.1.2.1.2.2. *Expecting the answer no*

Very rarely a yes-no question has *efu* ‘if, whether’ before the subject (cf. 1.1.1.2.3.3. yes-no question echo questions), implying the unlikelihood of what is asked (example from translated material):

- (57) *Kee, mi dda, a gaan banoutu di mu kon*
 alas 1s father the-sg great difficulty REL must come
a mi tapu ya, efu a poi wai?
 LOC 1s on here whether 3s be-able move

‘Alas, my father, this great trouble that must come upon me, could it possibly be removed?’

Generally, however, yes-no questions expecting a negative response are formally indistinct from neutral yes-no questions, the expectation of a no response being obvious from the pragmatic-cultural context. As with questions expecting a positive answer (1.1.1.2.1.2.1.), these are always, or almost always, indirect speech acts, usually functioning to emphatically deny what is questioned:

1. SYNTAX

- (58) *I o nyan?*⁴
2s FUT eat

‘You don’t think you’re going to get anything to eat from me, do you?’

In the following example, it is the truth of the complement clause that is indirectly emphatically denied:

- (59) *I denki taki mi sa lei?*
2s think COMP 1s IRR be-wrong

‘You don’t think I’d lie/be mistaken, do you?’

1.1.1.2.1.3. *Alternative questions*⁵

Alternative questions asking whether something is true or not, explicitly mentioning both alternatives, are rare in Ndyuka. The following example is from written Ndyuka, and can be taken as either a direct or an indirect question:

- (60) *Ne a akisi den taki, a bun fu deesi sama*
CJ 3s ask 3pl COMP BE good for medicine person
a kina dei efu a á bun, iya efu nono?
LOC taboo day or 3s NEG good OK or no

‘Then he asked them, “Is it good to heal someone on the taboo day or is it not good, yes or no?”’

For alternative questions asking for which of various possible events, states, objects, etc. something may be true, a common strategy consists of two or more NPs joined by *ofu/efu* ‘or’ or *anga* ‘and’, followed by a complete clause⁶ with a question word, usually *ondi* ‘which?’ but sometimes *sama* ‘who?’ or (*on*) *soutu* ‘what kind?’ (the first following example is from translated material):

- (61) [*A bon*]_{NP} *ofu* [*a gaan foto anga sama a*
the-sg tree or the-sg great city with person LOC
ini di a kibii]_{NP} *ondi moo abi waiti?*
inside REL 3s hide which? more have worth

‘The tree, or the big city with people in it that he spared, which has more value?’

- (62) *Da [a baala di sutu]_{NP} anga [a mindii*
 CJ the-sg brother REL shoot and the-sg middle
baala, di go teke a meti pasa na a
 brother REL go take the-sg animal pass LOC the-sg
kuguu olo]_{NP}, anga [a sisa]_{NP}, da ondi moo
 bullet hole and the-sg sister CJ which? more
koni?
 clever

‘Well then, the brother who shot the gun, the middle brother who went and got the dead animal and brought it back through the bullet hole, and the sister, which of them is the cleverest?’

- (63) *We [Masaa Gadu]_{NP} anga [wi libi sama di e*
 well, Lord God and 1/2pl live person REL CNT
meke pikin]_{NP}, sama moo gaandi?!!
 make child who? more aged

‘Well, the Lord God, or we human beings who have children, who is older?’

- (64) *Fa fu [a ofalandi fu boon begi Gadu]_{NP} anga*
 how? for the-sg offering for burn ask God and
[alitali baakoto fu sani boon begi Gadu]_{NP}? Soutu
 altar shelf for something burn ask God sort
wan e meke a taa wan tyai nen fu Gadu
 one CNT make the-sg other one carry name for God
sani di abi kina?
 something REL have taboo

‘What about the offering burned in prayer to God and the altar to burn such offerings on? Which one makes the other one count as a taboo religious object?’

1. SYNTAX

The NPs may be parts of nominalized clauses:

- (65) *We, [taagi a sama ya [obo waka go a*
 well, say-give the-sg person here rise walk go LOC
osu]s]NP, ofu [mi gi yu paadon fu ala den ogii
 house or 1s give 2s forgive for all the-pl bad
sani di i be du]s, ondi fu den tu
 something REL 2s ANT do which? for the-pl two
wooko sa moo taanga fu du?
 work IRR more difficult for do

‘Well, to say to this person “Get up and go home,” or “I forgive you all the evil things you’ve done,” which of the two jobs would be harder to do?’

Rather than two NPs, the notion of alternative can be implied by a semantically plural NP:

- (66) *Fu ala den sama di poti den libi gi Masaa*
 for all the-pl person REL put 3pl live give Lord
Gadu fu tii, ondi na a moo hei wan gi
 God for control which? is the-sg more high one give
Masaa Gadu?
 Lord God

‘Of all the people that put their lives under the Lord God’s control, who is the most important one to him?’

Alternatively, the question may come first, followed by the alternatives, with *ofu*, never *anga*, as the conjunction:

- (67) *Ondi yu wani: baaka ofu tyuwi?*
 which? 2s want black or pastel
 ‘Which do you want: dark or light?’
- (68) *San i wani mi gi yu? Moni ofu san ne en?*
 what? 2s want 1s give 2s money or what? BE 3sobl
 ‘What do you want me to give you—money, or what is it?’

Subordinate clauses can occur as alternatives, and need not be grammatically parallel:

- (69) *San a weiti fu u taki i mu du na a*
 what? the-sg law for 1/2pl say 2s must do LOC the-sg
kina dei? A taki fi i yeepi wan sama meke a
 taboo day 3s say for 2s help a person make 3s
tan a libi, ofu na so fika en fu a dede?
 stay LOC live or BE thus leave 3sobl for 3s dead
 ‘What does (y)our law say you must do on the taboo day?
 Does it say for you to help someone, and cause them to stay
 alive, or on the other hand to leave them to die?’

Whole clauses as alternatives and both preceded and followed by question:

- (70) *On soutu wooko i mu du na a dei ya? I*
 which? sort work 2s must do LOC the-sg day here 2s
mu du bun, ofu i mu du ogii? I mu deesi
 must do good or 2s must do bad 2s must medicine
sama fu a kon bun, ofu i mu fika en fu
 person for 3s come good or 2s must leave 3sobl for
a dede? Ondi fu den tu wooko moo bun fu
 3s dead which? for the-pl two work more good for
du na a dei ya?
 do LOC the-sg day here
 ‘What kind of work should you do on this day? Should you
 do good, or should you do evil? Should you treat someone
 so he gets better, or should you leave him to die? Which of
 the two jobs is better to do on this day?’

The second strategy includes the alternatives (two or more clauses, or parts of clauses), conjoined with *ofu/efu* ‘or’, within the question itself:

- (71) *Yu de [na a se fu wi]PP efu [na a se*
 2s BE LOC the-sg side for 1/2pl or LOC the-sg side

1. SYNTAX

fu wi feyanti]_{PP}?
for 1/2pl enemy

‘Are you on our side, or on our enemies’ side?’

1.1.1.2.2. Question-word questions

These are all marked by one of the following question words occurring initially (i.e., preceded only by vocatives, conjunctions, and governing prepositions):

Questioning elements of the main or dependent clause:

- | | | | | |
|------|---------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------|
| (72) | <i>sama</i> | ‘who?’ | <i>(on) san</i> | ‘what?’ |
| | <i>(on) pe</i> | ‘where?’ | <i>(fu) san ede</i> | ‘why?’ |
| | <i>on ten, on yuu</i> | ‘when?’ | <i>fa</i> | ‘how?’ |
| | <i>on te pe, on pe te</i> | ‘up to where?’ | | |
| | <i>ondi, ondu</i> | ‘which (one(s))?’ | | |

Questioning elements of a noun phrase or adverbial phrase:

- | | | | | |
|------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| (73) | <i>on</i> | ‘which?’ | <i>(on) soutu</i> | ‘what kind?’ |
| | <i>ondi, ondu</i> | ‘which?’ | <i>onmen</i> | ‘how many/much?’ |
| | <i>(fu) sama</i> | ‘whose?’ | <i>on langa</i> | ‘how long?’ ⁷ |

(*On, ondi, ondu* can be considered interrogative adjectives; *onmen*, an interrogative quantifier.)

Questioning objects of prepositions:

- | | | | | |
|------|-------------|--------|------------|---------|
| (74) | <i>sama</i> | ‘who?’ | <i>san</i> | ‘what?’ |
|------|-------------|--------|------------|---------|

1.1.1.2.2.1. Elements of the sentence that can be questioned

1.1.1.2.2.1.1. Elements of the main clause that can be questioned

Subject:

- | | |
|------|--------------------------|
| (75) | <i>Sama á sabi dati?</i> |
| | who? NEG know that |
| | ‘Who doesn’t know that?’ |

- (76) *Baala Anainsi, on san ibi so?*
 brother Spider which? what? heavy thus
 ‘Brother Spider, just what is it that’s so heavy?’

Direct Object:

- (77) *San a du di a weki mamanten?*
 what? 3s do when 3s wake morning
 ‘What did he do when he woke up in the morning?’
- (78) *Sama den suudati kii?*
 who? the-pl soldier kill
 ‘Whom did the soldiers kill?’

Indirect Object:

- (79) *Sama mi taigi?*
 who? 1s tell
 ‘Whom did I tell?’

Benefactive:

- (80) *Gi sama i e bai a sani de?*
 give who? 2s CNT buy the-sg thing there
 ‘On whose behalf, as whose agent, are you buying that?’

Without stranding of *gi*, as in the example just given, only a benefactive reading holds. With *gi* stranded, both benefactive and indirect object readings are possible:

- (81) *Sama i e bai a sani de gi?*
 who? 2s CNT buy the-sg thing there give
 ‘Who are you buying that thing for?/On whose behalf are you buying that thing?’

1. SYNTAX

Complement of copula *na*:

- (82) *Sama na a sama?*
who? BE the-sg person
'Who's that?'
- (83) *San na a sani ya?*
what? BE the-sg thing here
'What is this thing?'

Constituent of adverbial of time:

- (84) *On dei a o kon?*
which? day 3s FUT come
'What day will he come?'

Constituent of adverbial of extent of time:

- (85) *On langa a sani ya de na a pikin
tapu kaba?*
which? long the-sg something here BE LOC the-sg child
on already
'How long has this thing been burdening the child already?'

Manner/means:

- (86) *Fa den e kai mi nen?*
how? 3pl CNT call 1s name
'What do people call me?'
- (87) *Fa a e go?*
how? 3s CNT go
'How's it going?'
- (88) *Fa i o tyai en gwe?*
how? 2s FUT carry 3sobl leave
'How will you carry it away?'

Fa with more than one clause in its scope (translated material):

- (89) *We, fa a be e yeepi taa sama, ma a á*
 well, how? 3s ANT CNT help other person but 3s NEG
poi yeepi en seefi?
 be-able help 3sobl self

‘Well, how is it that he was always helping others, but he can’t help himself?’

Preverbal *du* in *fa* (‘how’)-questions asking how something comes about implies some surprise at its coming about:

- (90) *Fa den du tyai den kon dise, no?*
 how? 3pl do carry 3pl come this-way TAG
 ‘How did they manage to come this way, eh?’

Instrument:

- (91) *Anga san a e wooko?*
 with what? 3s CNT work
 ‘What is he working with?’

Comitative:

- (92) *Anga sama a e go?*
 with who? 3s CNT go
 ‘Who is he going with?’

Location:

- (93) ((*Na*) *on*) *pe i mma de?*
 LOC which? where? 2s mother BE
 ‘Where’s your mother?’

1. SYNTAX

The same forms are used for direction to and direction from:

- (94) ((*Na on*) *pe i e go?*
LOC which? where? 2s CNT go
'Where are you going?')

- (95) ((*Na on*) *pe i e komoto?*
LOC which? where? 2s CNT come-out
'Where are you coming from?')

If the question is asking "to whose place?", the question element is often simply *sama* 'who?' without adposition:

- (96) *Sama den e go?*
who? 3pl CNT go
'Whose place are they going to?')

Location is also expressed by *fa fu*:

- (97) *Fa fu a kabiten?*
how? for the-sg captain
'Where/How is the captain?')

Extent of direction:

- (98) *On pe te a go?*
which? where? until 3s go
'As far as where did he go?')

- (99) *On te pe a go?*
which? until where? 3s go
'As far as where did he go?')

Reason:

- (100) *San ede den e pai yu?*
what? head 3pl CNT pay 2s
'Why do they pay you?')

A final *du* added to ‘why’ questions implies a negative evaluation:

- (101) *San ede yu e suku toobi anga a taa*
 what? head 2s CNT look-for trouble with the-sg other
wan du?
 one do

‘Why in the world are you looking for trouble with the other person?’

- (102) *San ede meke den kon fuuku so du?*
 what? head make 3pl come early thus do

‘What in the world made them come so early?’

A purpose adpositional phrase, which begins with *fu* in statements, does not always have the *fu* in questions:

- (103) *San u e kái wi?*
 what? 1/2pl CNT call 1/2pl

‘What are you calling us for?’

(Cf.

- (104) *Den e kái wi fu wan toli.*
 3pl CNT call 1/2pl for a story

‘They are calling us for a story.’)

1.1.1.2.2.1.2. *Elements of subordinate clauses that can be questioned.*

Constituents of a variety of subordinate clauses, or of constituents of subordinate clauses, can be questioned. The questioned element then occurs at the beginning of the main clause, rather than at the place in the subordinate clause where the corresponding nonquestion element would occur.

In finite subordinate clauses, the element occurring immediately after the subordinating conjunction is usually the subject, which can be questioned (see, e.g., the first example below). In nonfinite subordinate clauses, this is the verb or preverbal marker, which cannot be questioned.

1. SYNTAX

Constituents of clauses, or of clause constituents, in indirect speech (1.1.1.1.) can be questioned:

Subject:

(105) *Di mi o go, sama mi mu taki sende mi kon?*
when 1s FUT go who? 1s must say send 1s come
'When I go, who must I say sent me?'

(106) *San i denki (taki) switi gi mi?*
what? 2s think COMP sweet give 1s
'What do you think is pleasant to me?'

Subject complement of copula *na*:

(107) *Ma sama u dati e denki taki na mi?*
but who? 1/2pl that CNT think COMP BE 1s
'But as for you, who do you think that I am?'

(108) *On sama den e pakisei a mi?*
which? person 3pl CNT think BE 1s
'Which/what sort of person do they think I am?'

Subject complement of copula *de* (example from translated material):

(109) *Di u be e yee taki Yohanes de a
when 1/2pl ANT CNT hear COMP John BE LOC
sabana, di u be go luku, san u si a
savanna when 1/2pl ANT go look what? 1/2pl see 3s
de?
BE*

'When you'd heard that John was in the wilderness, when you'd gone to look, what did you see that he was?'

Direct object:

- (110) *San i denki (taki) a e leli den?*
 what? 2s think COMP 3s CNT teach 3pl
 ‘What do you think he is teaching them?’

Indirect object:

- (111) *Sama i denki (taki) a e leli Ingiisi?*
 who? 2s think COMP 3s CNT teach English
 ‘Whom do you think he is teaching English?’

Benefactive:

- (112) *Gi sama i denki (taki) a e leli Ingiisi?*
 give who? 2s think COMP 3s CNT teach English
 ‘To/for whom do you think he is teaching English?’

Instrument:

- (113) *Anga san i denki (taki) a e wooko?*
 with what? 2s think COMP 3s CNT work
 ‘What do you think he is working with?’

Comitative:

- (114) *Anga sama i denki (taki) a e go?*
 with who? 2s think COMP 3s CNT go
 ‘Who do you think he’s going with?’

Manner complement of copula *tan*:

- (115) *Fa i denki (taki) a tan?*
 how? 2s think COMP 3s stay
 ‘What do you think it’s like?’

Manner adverbial constituent of noncopular clause (example from translated material):

1. SYNTAX

- (116) *Da fa u pakisei u bunbun dada Masaa*
CJ how? 1/2pl think 1/2pl good-good father Lord
Gadu a tapu e du gi sama di e begi
God LOC top CNT do give person REL CNT ask
en?
3sobl

‘Then how do you think our good Lord God in heaven acts toward those who pray to him?’

Constituent of subject:

- (117) *Onmen sama i denki (taki) sa kon tide?*
how-many? person 2s think COMP IRR come today
‘How many people do you think will come today?’
- (118) *Ondi fu den baala ya i denki mu libi anga*
which? for the-pl brother here 2s think must live with
a uman?
the-sg woman

‘Which of these brothers do you think should live with the woman?’

Constituent of direct object:

- (119) *Soutu wini u pakisei wan sama wini, ...?*
sort win 1/2pl think a person win
‘What sort of gain do you think someone gains, ...?’

Constituent of complement of copula *de*:

- (120) *Sama bakapikin u pakisei a de?*
who? descendant 1/2pl think 3s BE
‘Whose descendant do you think he is?’

Constituent of object of *gi* as argument of adjectival/stative verb:

- (121) *We ondi fu den i denki a moo switi gi?*
 well, which? for 3pl 2s think 3s more sweet give
 ‘Well, for which of them do you think it is more pleasant?’

Reason:

- (122) *San ede i denki (taki) a sa kon?*⁸
 what? head 2s think COMP 3s IRR come
 ‘Why do you think he may come?’

Elements of a *wani (taki)* clause within an indirect statement can be questioned:

- (123) *San u denki taki a taki ya wani taki?*
 what? 1/2pl think COMP the-sg talk here want say
 ‘What do you think that this speech means?’

Elements of a nonfinite *fu*-clause within an indirect statement can be questioned:

- (124) *San i pakisei (taki) mi kon fu du?*
 what? 2s think COMP 1s come for do
 ‘What do you think that I’ve come to do?’

Elements of an object clause of *wani (fu)* ‘want’ can be questioned:

- (125) *San i wani mi gi yu?*
 what? 2s want 1s give 2s
 ‘What do you want me to give you?’
- (126) *On dei yu wani fu den todo kon kaba na*
 which? day 2s want for 3pl toad come finish LOC
a kondee?
 the-sg country
 ‘What day do you want the frogs to disappear from the country?’

1. SYNTAX

Elements of a nonfinite *fu*-clause subordinate to another clause can be questioned:

- (127) *San konu sende Aliyoki fu go du?*
what? king send Arioch for go do
'What did the king send Arioch to go do?'

Arguments of one or more verbs of a serial verb construction (SVC) can be questioned:

- (128) *Oho, san mi o fende wei a sikin tu?*
oh what? 1s FUT find wear LOC body too
'Oh, and what will I find to wear?'

1.1.1.2.2.1.3. Elements of noun phrases that can be questioned

Quantity is questioned with *onmen* 'how many?':

- (129) *Dda onmen yali i abi?*
father how-many? year 2s have
'Sir, how old are you?'

Possessor is questioned with *sama* 'who?' in the prehead modifier position of the noun phrase:

- (130) *Sama muntolu yu o tyai?*
who? motor 2s FUT carry
'Whose motor will you take with you?'

- (131) *Sama se yu de?*
who? side 2s BE
'Whose side are you on?'

On 'which?' or (*on*) *soutu* 'what kind?' in that same position questions modifiers in general:

- (132) *On se i e go?*⁹
 which? side 2s CNT go
 ‘Which way/where are you going?’
- (133) *On soutu uman moi so?*
 which? sort woman nice thus
 ‘Who’s this woman that’s so pretty?’
- (134) *Soutu wooko yu e du?*
 sort work 2s CNT do
 ‘What kind of work do you do?’

On can even occur preceding a personal pronoun (2.1.2.1.):

- (135) *A: Oho mati sama a disi?*
 oh friend who? BE this
B: A mi.
 BE 1s
A: On mi?
 which? 1s
 A: ‘Oh, friend, who’s this?’
 B: ‘It’s me.’
 A: ‘Which “me”?’

Partitive is questioned with *ondi/ondu fu* ‘which one of?’:

- (136) *Ondi fu libi sama fu goontapu sa taki a e du*
 which? for live person for world IRR say 3s CNT do
Masaa Gadu wani?!
 Lord God want
 ‘What human being in the world can say he does the Lord
 God’s will?!’
- (137) *Iya, ma ondu fu den pikin a yu?*
 OK but which? for the-pl child BE 2s
 ‘OK, but which of the children are you?’

1. SYNTAX

Question words questioning part of a noun phrase can function as the entire noun phrase:

- (138) *Ondi i wani?*
which? 2s want
'Which do you want?'
- (139) *Onmen u sa pai mi, fu yeepi u kisi*
how-many? 1/2pl IRR pay 1s for help 1/2pl catch
Yeses?
Jesus
'How much will you pay me to help you catch Jesus?'
- (140) *Ondi i e taki?*
which? 2s CNT say
'Which are you saying?'
- (141) *On soutu i e taki?*
which? sort 2s CNT say
'Which one are you saying?'

Elements of noun phrases that are constituents of larger noun phrases can be questioned:

- (142) *[[On soutu dede sama]_{NP} bon]_{NP} de ya so no?*
which? sort dead person bone BE here thus TAG
'What sort of dead people's bones are here like this, eh?'

The head of the noun phrase cannot be questioned apart from the rest of the noun phrase:

- (143) *Tin pingo lon ne en baka.*
ten peccary run LOC 3sobl back
'Ten peccaries chased him.'

- (144) *Onmen pingo lon ne en baka?*
 how-many? peccary run LOC 3sobl back
 ‘How many peccaries chased him?’
- (145) **Tin san lon ne en baka?*
 ten what? run LOC 3sobl back
 ‘Ten what chased him?’ (OK as echo question)

1.1.1.2.2.1.4. *Elements of adpositional phrases that can be questioned*

Object of *gi* or *fu* as argument of adjectival verb:

- (146) *Sama a switi gi?* *Gi sama a switi (*gi)?*
 who? 3s sweet give give who? 3s sweet give
 ‘For whom is it pleasant?’
- (147) *Fu san den foo ipi tumisi?*
 for what? the-pl bird much too-(much)
 ‘What are the birds too many for?’

Fu-complement of *oli* ‘consider’:

- (148) *Da fu san den oli mi?*
 CJ for what? 3pl hold 1s
 ‘Then what do they take me for?’

Object of locative adpositions:

- (149) *(Na) tapu san i poti a goni?*
 LOC on what? 2s put the-sg gun
 ‘On top of what did you put the gun?’

The elements of a noun phrase that can be questioned, described in 1.1.1.2.2.1.3., can be questioned when the noun phrase is the object of an adposition:

1. SYNTAX

- (150) *Fu ondi osu den foo ipi tumisi?*
for which? house the-pl bird much too-(much)
'For which house are the birds too many?'
- (151) *Na ondoo ondu fu den bedi a kakaaka go?*
LOC under which? for the-pl bed the-sg cockroach go
'Under which of the beds did the cockroach go?'
- (152) *(Na) ondu fu den bedi ondoo a kakaaka go?*
LOC which? for the-pl bed under the-sg cockroach go
'Under which of the beds did the cockroach go?'
- (153) **Na ondu fu den bedi a kakaaka go ondoo?*
- (154) *Ma fu soutu sama u be oli en?*
but for sort person 1/2pl ANT hold 3sobl
'But what sort of person did you take him for?'

The scope of *soutu* can extend over a coordinate noun phrase:

- (155) *Anga soutu nen anga kaakiti yu e du a wooko*
with sort name with power 2s CNT do the-sg work
ya?
here
'By what sort of name and authority are you doing this deed?'

1.1.1.2.2.1.5. *Elements of coordinate structures that can be questioned*

A coordinate subject can include a question word as one of the constituents, a nonquestion NP as the other:

- (156) *Sama anga Da Weiti e tyai a gadu?*
who? with Father Weiti CNT carry the-sg god
'Who and Mr. Weiti are carrying the oracle?'

- (157) *Sama anga u e go?*
 who? with 1/2pl CNT go
 ‘Who and you are going?’

A coordinate nominal with both parts question words indicates plural:

- (158) *Sama anga sama e go?*
 who? with who? CNT go
 ‘Who all is going?’
- (159) *Sama anga on sama e go?*
 who? with which? person CNT go
 ‘Who all is going?’

Within an indirect speech clause (cf. 1.1.1.2.2.1.2.):

- (160) *Ma san anga san i pakisei abi a nen, fu*
 but what? with what? 2s think have the-sg name for
kái bun seefi?
 call good self
 ‘But what things do you think have the right to actually be called good?’

Likewise, a coordinate object can include a question word and a nonquestion NP:

- (161) *Alisi anga san i nyan tide?*
 rice with what? 2s eat today
 ‘Rice and/with what did you eat today?’

The following is also heard, but is less acceptable to some speakers:

- (162) *?San anga alisi i nyan tide?*
 what? with rice 2s eat today
 ‘What with/and rice did you eat today?’

1. SYNTAX

Location:

- (163) *Pe anga pe den be go?*
where? with where? 3pl ANT go
'Where all did they go?'

Time:

- (164) *On dei anga on dei i be wooko gi en?*
which? day with which? day 2s ANT work give 3sobl
'What days did you work for him?'

1.1.1.2.2.1.6. *Questioning more than one thing in a sentence*

Except for question-word echo questions in response to question-word questions (1.1.1.2.3.2.), sentences with more than one element questioned do not occur.

1.1.1.2.2.2. *Position of the questioned element*

The questioned element always occurs initially, except for its governing preposition and certain conjunctions, interjections, and vocatives.

With preceding conjunction:

- (165) *Da san na a toli di den be e gi fu*
CJ what? BE the-sg story REL 3pl ANT CNT give for
Pingo no?
peccary TAG
'Then what is the story that they would tell about peccaries, eh?'

With preceding interjection:

- (166) *We, san u pakisei wan dataa de fu du?*
well what? 1/2pl think a doctor/nurse BE for do
'Well, what do you think a doctor exists to do?'

With preceding interjection and conjunction:

- (167) *We da sama na a sama di den e taki e*
 well CJ who? BE the-sg person REL 3pl CNT say CNT

du den somen sani di mi e yee ya?
 do the-pl many thing REL 1s CNT hear here

‘Well then, who is the one who they say is doing the many things that I hear about?’

Question-word object of preposition is initial with its preposition(s), which can never be stranded.

Instrument:

- (168) *Anga san a e wooko?*
 with what? 3s CNT work

‘What does he work with?’

- (169) **San a e wooko anga?*

Comitative:

- (170) *Anga sama a e go?*
 with who? 3s CNT go

‘Who is he going with?’

- (171) **Sama a e go anga?*

Some syntactic contexts (probably definable in terms of the verb) allow/require stranding of *gi* (cf. *gi* ‘give’), the introducer of benefactives (2.1.1.4.1.), while others do not permit stranding. In this respect *gi* retains some verbal qualities, and thus is not here considered to be a preposition. Thus this *wh*- element is either first (formally indirect object) or preceded by *gi* (formally benefactive):

- (172) *Sama a leli Ingiisi?*
 who? 3s teach English

‘Whom did he teach English?’

1. SYNTAX

- (173) *Gi sama a leli Ingiisi?*
give who? 3s teach English
'To whom did he teach English?'
- (174) **Sama a leli Ingiisi gi?*
- (175) *We da den somen sani di i seeka poti ape,*
well CJ the-pl many thing REL 2s prepare put there
da sama i fika den gi?
CJ who? 2s leave 3pl give
'Well then, the many things that you got ready and put there,
who did you leave them for?'

A topicalized questioned element occurs as the complement of copula *na* (for details see 1.12.1.5.5.):

- (176) *Sama a den sama di de anga i ya?*
who? BE the-pl person REL BE with 2s here
'Who are the people who are here with you?'
- (177) *Sama na a sama di i e si de?*
who? BE the-sg person REL 2s CNT see there
'Who's the one that you see there?'
- (178) *Sama (na a sama di) i e tyai a sani*
who BE the-sg person REL 2s CNT carry the-sg thing
de kon gi?
there come give
'Who (is the one that) are you bringing that thing for?'

1.1.1.2.3. Echo questions

1.1.1.2.3.1. Yes-no echo questions

These do not differ formally from yes-no questions generally, except for a probably greater tendency for ellipsis of all but the questioned part:

(179) *A: Mi e go a wowoyo.*
 1s CNT go LOC market

B: A wowoyo?
 LOC market

A: 'I'm going to market.'

B: 'To market?'

1.1.1.2.3.2. *Question-word echo questions*

These keep the same order as declaratives, with extra high pitch and stress on the interrogative word:

(180) *A. A bai komukomu.*
 3s buy cucumber

B. A bai san?
 3s buy what?

A. 'He bought cucumbers.'

B. 'He bought WHAT?'

Question-word echo questions in response to question-word questions can include more than one questioned element:

(181) *A. San a sutu eside?*
 what? 3s shoot yesterday

B. San a sutu on dei?
 what? 3s shoot which? day

A. 'What did he shoot yesterday?'

B. 'What did he shoot WHICH DAY?'

1.1.1.2.3.3. *Yes-no question echo questions*

These begin with *efu/ofu* 'if, whether' (see 1.1.2.2.4. indirect questions and 1.1.2.4.2.5. conditional clauses):

(182) *Efu mi e go a foto?*
 whether 1s CNT go LOC city

'(Did you ask) if I'm going to town?'

1. SYNTAX

The same form of answer occurs in response to a request in imperative rather than interrogative form:

(183) A: *Teke tyali da i yeepi wi.*
take sorrow CJ 2s help 1/2pl

B: *Efu mi sa yeepi yu?*
whether 1s IRR help 2s

A: 'Have pity and help us.'

B: 'You're asking if I will help you?'

An echo question in response to a yes-no question can also be an incomplete sentence, repeating some of the yes-no question:

(184) A: *San i taki? Fungu mila de na a baakoto?*
what? 2s say fungu ant BE LOC the-sg shelf

B: *O, fungu mila?*
oh fungu ant

A: 'What did you say? Are there *fungu* ants on the shelf?'

B: 'Oh, *fungu* ants?'

1.1.1.2.3.4. Question-word question echo questions

These do not differ from question-word questions in general:

(185) A: *Pe i e go?*
where? 2s CNT go

B: *Pe mi e go?*
where? 1s CNT go

A: 'Where are you going?'

B: '(Did you ask) where I'm going?'

1.1.1.2.3.5.-7. Types and number of elements subject to echo-questioning

Any element of a sentence or of a noun phrase that can be questioned can be echo-questioned. It is probable that more than one element can be echo-questioned at once.

1.1.1.2.4. *Answers*

1.1.1.2.4.1. *Answers as distinct type of speech act*

1.1.1.2.4.1.1. *Answers to yes-no questions*

One sort of answers to yes-no questions may be considered a distinct speech act type by virtue of their inclusion of one of the response forms listed in 1.1.1.2.4.2.1.1.

Other responses to yes-no questions, however, have no special formal features:

(186) *Mi á sabi.*
1s NEG know
'I don't know.'

(187) *Na so.*
BE thus
'That's right.'

Frequently answers to such questions repeat some of the material of the question:

(188) *A: I sa poi?*
2s IRR be-able
B: Mi ná o poi.
1s NEG FUT be-able
A: 'Will you be able to do it?'
B: 'I won't be able to.'

1.1.1.2.4.1.2. *Answers to question-word questions*

These do not constitute a distinct form of speech act. See 1.1.1.2.4.2.2.

1. SYNTAX

1.1.1.2.4.2. *Incomplete sentences as answers*

The form *abíí*, with the final vowel lengthened, high in pitch, and sometimes slightly rounded, constitutes an answer to anything, not only questions. In response to a vocative, it means ‘I’m listening; what do you want?’. More generally, it means ‘What did you say?’.

1.1.1.2.4.2.1. *In response to yes-no questions*

Other than the one-word answers listed in 1.1.1.2.4.2.1.1., answers to yes-no questions are never less than a grammatically complete sentence, but can be the brief but grammatically complete:

- (189) *Na so!*
BE thus
‘That’s right!’

1.1.1.2.4.2.1.1. *Words for ‘yes’, ‘no’, ‘maybe’*

‘Yes’ words that can constitute complete answers to yes-no questions are *ai*, *iiya*, *eeyé*, and *nní*; *hóó!* is an emphatic ‘Yes, more than you’d expect!’, while *we(e)no* means ‘yes, of course’.

‘No’ words are *nono*, *eéé*, and *nín*; *kwetikweti* is an emphatic ‘no, not at all!’, *kande* is ‘maybe’.

An answer can consist of both a positive and a negative answer word. Such an answer shows agreement with a negative statement of the previous speaker, whether that statement is expressed in the grammatical form of a question (see rhetorical questions, 1.1.1.5.1.) or a statement:

- (190) A: *I sa poi?*
2s IRR be-able
B: *Iiya, nono. (Mi ná o poi.)*
yes no 1s NEG FUT be-able
A: ‘Will you be able to?’
B: ‘You’re right, I won’t. (I won’t be able to.)’

1.1.1.2.4.2.1.2. *Answers to leading yes-no questions*

Positive and negative answers to questions expecting a ‘yes’ answer are the same as answers generally, except that they are more apt to include an emphatic sentence particle (1.1.1.1.3.):

- (191) A: *I e kon?*
 2s CNT come
 B: *Mi e kon yee/ baa/ oo/ ai!*
 1s CNT come hear EMPH EMPH yes
 A: ‘Are you coming?’
 B: ‘I am certainly coming!’

Ai is the least polite of these, indicating annoyance or anger; an answer with *baa*, *yee*, or *oo* is more polite than one with no particle.

With a negative answer, only *baa* and *oo* are possible:

- (192) A: *I e kon?*
 2s CNT come
 B: *Nono baa/ oo/ *yee/ *ai!*
 no EMPH EMPH hear yes
 A: ‘Are you coming?’
 B: ‘No, I certainly am not.’

Baa is more polite than *oo*.

1.1.1.2.4.2.2. *Answers to question-word questions*

These are often grammatically incomplete sentences, omitting material mentioned in the question. If the questioned item is the object of a preposition or of *gi* functioning as a preposition, the preposition or *gi* may be repeated or omitted; the latter is less polite and less usual.

- (193) A: *Anga sama i o go a foto?*
 with who? 2s FUT go LOC city

1. SYNTAX

B: (*Anga*) *mi dda.*
with 1s father

A: 'With whom will you go to the city?'

B: '(With) my father.'

(194) A: *Pe u komoto so?*
where? 1/2pl come-out thus

B: (*A*) *Diitabiki.*
LOC Drietabbetje

A: 'Now where did you come from?'

B: '(From) Drietabbetje.'

(195) A: *Anga san i meke a sani de?*
with what? 2s make the-sg thing there

B: (*Anga*) *sedee.*
with cedar

A: 'What did you make that thing with?'

B: '(With) cedar.'

(196) A: *Sama i tyai dati kon gi?*
who? 2s carry that come give

B: (*A/ Gi*) *m' dda.*
BE give 1s father

A: 'Who are you bringing that for?'

B: '(It's/for) my father.'

If the questioned element is subject or nominal direct object, the answer can consist of a nominal alone, but it is much more usual and more polite to make it the complement of the copula *na* in a complete sentence:

(197) A: *San i go koti a goon tide?*
what? 2s go cut LOC field today

B: (*Na*) *alisi.*
BE rice

A: 'What did you go harvest in your field today?'

B: '(It was) rice.'

(198) A: *Sama e kon de so?*
 who? CNT come there thus

B: *(Na) m' dda.*
 BE 1s father

A: 'Now who's coming there?'

B: '(It's) my father.'

If the questioned element is a direct object the answer to which is verbal rather than nominal, the answer can consist of just a verb (or a verb with its following arguments and adjuncts), though again it is more polite and usual to include a subject and appropriate tense, etc. markers:

(199) A: *San i e du?*
 what? 2s CNT do

B: *(Mi e) nyan.*
 1s CNT eat

A: 'What are you doing?'

B: '(I am) eating.'

(200) A: *San i e du?*
 what? 2s CNT do

B: *(Mi e) meke boto.*
 1s CNT make boat

A: 'What are you doing?'

B: '(I am) making a boat.'

1.1.1.3. Imperatives

We include here hortatory and request forms as well as direct commands. Three different structures are commonly used for these functions. The first (the "basic imperative" below) involves an intonational difference from statements and, in specified environments, absence of subject. The second begins with *meke* 'make, let', in a causative-like construction. The third has the form of statements with *mu* 'must, ought' immediately following the subject (or negative, if present). A mixed sort begins with *kon* 'come' as a basic imperative and then switches to other constructions.

1. SYNTAX

1.1.1.3.1. *Positive imperatives*

Basic imperatives

In the basic imperative, singulars are marked by lack of subject (in most cases; see below) and higher final pitch than statements. Plurals begin with the pronoun *u* '1st/2nd plural' as subject, and thus are distinguished from statements only by the final higher pitch:

(201) (*I) *Gwe!*
2s leave
'You (singular) leave!'

(202) *U gwe!*
1/2pl leave
'You (plural) leave!'

In contrast with the case in statements, the *u* cannot be modified by preceding or following elements:

(203) **U ala gwe!* **Ala u gwe!*
1/2pl all leave
'You all leave!'

The subject can be preceded by a conjunction:

(204) *Ma u yee ya!*
but 1/2pl hear here
'But listen here!'

A few modals (2.1.3.4.) can occur before the verb:

(205) (*U*) *sete fu/*∅ gwe!*
1/2pl start for leave
'Start leaving!'