

Dick Hudson, March 1977

I. Introduction and explanationDEPT. OF LINGUISTICS & AFRICAN LANGUAGES  
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The following notes are based on work I did in February and March 1977 with Simon Karaba, of Korr, at present working as an announcer on the Voice of Kenya Rendille service. My hope, however, is that they will form the basis of a joint article with Mrs Oomen, of the Dept of Linguistics in Nairobi University, who has been working for some time on Rendille with a different informant, and who gave me considerable help at the start of my short spell of work, by explaining various confusing phenomena (in particular those connected with focus) which might well have confused me even more than they did in fact. Otherwise we worked independently, so any similarities in our conclusions must be because of similarities in our data. There are many areas which she knows more about than I do, and I ended up writing the first draft of this paper simply because I had time and she didn't. She has been working under the supervision of Prof Bernd Heine, of the same department (inter alia), whose initial description of Rendille we have both drawn on extensively. (in Afrika und Uebersee, Vol LIX No.3, 1975/6, pp.176-223)

I acknowledge herewith both the help she and Prof Heine gave me (including their introduction to Simon Karaba) and also the excellent work of Simon Karaba, without whose intelligence Rendille would have seemed more ~~xxx~~ difficult than it turned out to be.

The transcription used here is not the same as that used by Heine, but rather one which seems to me to offer a better basis for a usable orthography which Rendille speakers themselves might use. It follows the transcription which Simon Karaba was using when we started work together, in that it uses Swahili-type representations (especially kh for Heine's x; and th/dh for the dental stops). However it differs from both in using double vowels to show length, and in having just one accent marker over high-pitch vowels (so that VV represents a long falling vowel). I am sceptical about Heine's claim that Rendille has three distinct tones (and also distinctive stress), but I am not at all confident that my more parsimonious analysis is nearer to the truth, either from the point of view of Rendille structure as a whole, or from the point of view of individual words represented in the following notes.

Moreover, expanding towards the end of the paper, the transcription tends to be morphophonemic (ignoring phonological alternations) rather than phonemic.







2b. Presence of elements

Objects: Objects are optional (~~puttingxxxxanotherxxxx~~ (or is it that they're only optional if they're understood to be definite - ie. if they'd be object pronouns in English? I.e. can a clause with a transitive verb but no object mean '...one' or '...something'?

Subjects: Subjects are optional in main clauses (possibly subject to the same query as objects), but not in subordinate clauses -

e.g. á-dóona 'He likes her' or uús á-dóona  
chírri uús dóono 'if he likes her' but not \*chírri dóono  
(other than imperatives)

Focus: In main clauses <sup>(see note)</sup> one element, and only one, must be marked as focus; in subordinate clauses no element must be so marked.

e.g. ínam makháabal á-dóona	S DO Foc-V
boy man Foc-likes	
ínam-é makháabal dóona	S-roc DO V
ínam makháabal-é dóona	S DO-Foc V
*ínam makháabal dóona	*S DO V
*ínam-é makháabal á-dóona	*S-Foc DO Foc-V
chírri ínam makháabal dóono,...	S DO V
if boy man likes	
*chírri ínam makháabal á-dóono...	*S DO Foc-V
*chírri ínam-é makháabal dóono...	*S-roc DO V

Copula: Some clauses containing a predicate (a noun-phrase, an adjective, a possessive or a relative construction) also contain a copula ('be'), others do not. If the focus is on the predicate, the copula is obligatory; if it is on the subject, it is impossible; and if there is neutral focus, it is optional (see further section 6 below).

e.g. dagáh futeét-é yihi	(focus on predicate)
stone light-Foc is	
dagáh-é futeét-é	(focus on subject)
stone-Foc light-Pred.	
dagáh á-futeét	} (neutral focus)
stone Focus-light	
dagáh futeét á-yihi	
stone light Focus-is	

\*Note: In the second of two conjoined clauses the focus is optional.  
 ínam íchów ínamé ísjaheen, ínam-la fínde (no focus in 2nd clause)  
 boy and girl fought boy and ran away.  
 ínam-é á-ge-la



## 2c. Cliticization

Although the order of elements is in general very free, there are some elements whose position is fixed relative to other words. One way of accounting for their position is to say that they are attached, as clitics, to these other words. This approach also explains why the postulated clitics often have different realisations according to the word they are added to (or vice versa). Postulated clitics are the following:

1. focus markers - are attached after <sup>the last word in a phrase</sup> a noun, or before a verb  
(see all the examples given above)
2. negation markers - are attached before a pre-verbal focus marker, if there is one; otherwise attached before the verb

e.g. makháabal iinám m-á-dóono  
man girl not-Foc-likes  
chírri makháabal iinám í-doonín  
if man girl not-likes

3. object pronouns - in their weak form are attached before the verb (the 'strong' form can only occur together with one of the weak forms); if there is also a focus marker the pronoun follows it (and any negative marker preceding it), but if there is a negative marker without a focus marker the pronoun precedes it. It also precedes

e.g. iinám-é náh-dóonta  
girl-Foc us-likes

iinám á-náh-dóonta  
girl Foc-us-likes

iinám m-á-náh-dóonto  
girl not-Focus-likes

chírri iinám náh-i-doonín  
if girl us-not-likes

verb 'prepositions' such as ká "in" and í "for".

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4. possessive pronouns - are attached after the possessed noun, before the focus marker if there is one.

e.g. mín-key  
house-my  
mín-kaáy-a  
house-my-Focus

5. determiners - like possessive pronouns, they are attached after the determined noun if there is one, before the focus marker if there is one.

min-kaa  
house-this  
min-kaas-e  
house-that-Foc

verb - prepositions - these are attached

before the verb

Class 1 adjectives: attached to the noun, after negative and focus.



## 5. verb-prefixes (noted in Heine 1975 under 'derivation') - e.g.

ka 'in', i 'for':

e.g. chaáy makháabal m-i-kéento 'She doesn't bring tea for the  
tea man not-for-she brings man'

mín ká makháabal á-ká-arge 'He saw the man in this house'  
house this man Focus-in-he saw

## 6. clitic adjectives (see 6h) - attached before the copula

e.g. ínam á-haagan-yihi 'The boy is good'  
boy Focus-good-is

## 7. subject pronouns - attached to certain subordinating conjunctions -

e.g. uú(s) 'when/since' - and certain relative-antecedent nouns  
used as subordinating conjunctions - e.g. chir- 'time (i.e. when)'

e.g. uus-án sookáho 'when I wake up'  
chírri-án sookáho 'when I wake up'  
(also: ch-án sookáho)

e.g. ínam kó an árgé 'the boy whom I saw'  
boy a I saw

kó an árgé 'the boy whom I saw'

ínam kó rúchul

boy a small

kó rúchul

'a small one'

ínam kó makháabal

'a son of the man'

ínam an árgé; ínam rúchul; ínam makháabal

ínam 'a boy' is correct.



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### 3. Outline of noun-phrase structure

#### 3a. Order of elements

All modifiers of a noun follow that noun, and if there is a focus marker it is added at the end of the whole noun-phrase.

e.g. iinám taas k'hoona t'uhum-e  
girl that (who) nut ate-Focus

Relative clauses, adjectives and possessors follow the determiners which introduce them (see below).

?Order of numbers relative to other elements.

?If a noun has several modifiers such as relative clauses and adjectives are there any constraints on their order?

#### 3b. Presence of elements

No noun is necessary - any of the other elements can stand on their own. (?If there's no noun is it possible to have, say, an adjective and a relative clause?) On the other hand, if there is a relative clause, an adjective or a possessor-noun-phrase, there must be a determiner, so if any of these elements is on its own, without a noun head, it isn't entirely on its own, since it has a determiner with it. (Possibly an exception needs to be made for cleft sentences, if these contain relative clauses, since the latter occur without a determiner; see discussion of cleft sentences below.) One possible analysis for explaining these facts would treat the determiner as head of a separate noun-phrase, which may occur either on its own or in apposition to a noun; and relative clauses etc would then only be allowed to have determiner-heads as antecedents. This possibility can be left open here, as it also has disadvantages.

e.g. iinám kó an áрге 'a boy whom I saw'  
boy a I saw  
kó an áрге 'this one whom I saw'  
iinám kó rúchul  
boy a small  
kó rúchul 'a small one'  
iinám kó makháabal 'a son of the man'

\*iinám an'arge; \*iinám rúchul; \*iinám makhaabal;  
but iinám 'a boy' is correct.



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On the other hand, where there is no relative clause, adjective or possessor, no determiner is necessary: inam on its own is correct, and usually means 'the boy' (not 'a boy', as one might expect from other languages).

### 3c. Determiners

Each determiner has one range of forms for masculine nouns and another for feminines. The masculines begin with k, h or zero, according to the phonological environment, and the feminines begin with t or s, again according to the phonological environment. The relevant environments are as follows (NB needs completing !)

masculine: k after h (realised as zero), m,

h after vowels

zero after b, d, t, y, l,

feminine: t after vowels, h, r

s after b, d, n, l, (all realised as s)

The following are the determiners, given in their masculine form beginning with k-:

- |        |                  |
|--------|------------------|
| - kí   | 'the' ??         |
| - kó   | 'a', 'some'      |
| - ká   | 'this'           |
| - kaás | 'that' (nearer)  |
| - kuús | 'that' (further) |

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(From examples in Heine 1975 it seems possible that numerals should also be classified as determiners, since they can be followed directly by adjectives - yeele lama aween 'two big boys' (literally: boys two big), which is ungrammatical if the number is removed and not replaced by one of the other determiners.)

The first determiner, ki, is peculiar in that it only occurs with a relative clause, adjective or possessor after it:

inam ki ruchul 'the small boy'

\*inam ki 'the boy'.

Since a noun without any determiner at all is understood as definite (see above), we might analyse such noun-phrases as containing a zero realisation of the definite article - in other words, the definite article has two realisations: either ki, or zero, according to whether or not there is a following relative clause, etc.



3d. Case

Only three 'cases' are distinguished: neutral, nominative and possessive; and these cases are distinguished morphologically only in feminine nouns. The nominative ends in -é if there is no vowel already at the end of the noun, otherwise it is ~~inúxtix~~ the same as the neutral case; and the possessive ends in -ét (just -t after a vowel). Unlike the focus marker, these endings are added to the noun, rather than to the last word in the noun-phrase, whatever that might be; if the last word in the noun-phrase is not the noun, then no case ending is added even to the noun.

neutral	nominative	possessive
iinám	iinamé	iinamēt
iinám tí rúchul	iinám tí rúchul	iinám tí rúchul
'the small girl'		

(unless the verb is positive optative, ~~for some reason~~)

The nominative case is used for the subject of a clause, the possessive is used in the possessive construction (consisting of the possessed noun, then a determiner, then the possessor - e.g. min ki iinamet 'the house of the girl' (lit.: 'house the girl')), and the neutral case is used in all other places.

However, a case distinction is made morphologically in ~~some~~ of the pronouns, for which see below.

3e. Pronouns

The pronouns distinguish gender only in the 3rd singular, and in the ~~first~~ first plural a distinction is made between inclusive and exclusive. The third person pronouns have zero realisation as clitic objects, so 'án á-dóona' can mean 'I like him or her or them' (but not 'I like you'). We distinguish the following:

1. long forms - can be used like ordinary noun-phrases, if subject, but only in apposition to a clitic pronoun if object (or possessive ?)
2. short subject forms - can be used like ordinary noun-phrases in subject position;
3. ~~xx~~ clitic objects - are attached before the verb, after the verb-focus marker if there is one, and before a negative marker if there's no focus marker;
4. clitic possessives - are attached after the noun, as though they contained a determiner (which is possible, since they all begin with the usual range of masculine and feminine k, h, t, s.)



- e.g. 1. átti á-dóonta 'You like him'  
 1,3 átti á-kí-dóona 'He likes you' (lit: You Focus-you-he likes)  
 2. át á-dóonta 'You like him'  
 4. mín k-áh 'your house'

The forms of the pronouns are as follows.

	1. long	2. short subj.	3. clitic obj.	4. clitic posses
1st sing.	áni	án	(i)i	key/kaay
2nd sing.	átti	át	ki	kah
3rd masc.	uusú	uus	∅	kis
3rd fem.	iché	íche	∅	kiche
1st incl.	íinno	íinno	(i)inno	keen
1st excl.	nahé	náh	nah	kenyo/kaany
2nd plur.	atiné	atín	(a)atin	kin/kiin
3rd plur.	ichó	ícho	∅	kicho

The alternatives in column 3 depend on whether or not there is a preceding focus marker: if there is, the longer forms are used (and in fact include the focus marker, which is normally a-). Similarly, the longer forms (ie. the second where there is an alternative) in column 4 are used before a focus marker.

Postscript: in addition to the above forms, there are special forms of the subject pronouns for use after certain 'conjunctions', to which they are cliticized. In particular, 'he' may be just ú (e.g. ichówka-ú sookáho 'until he wakes up'), and after ú's meaning either 'since/when' or 'Don't let...' (i.e. negative optative), 'he' can be even zero (or ú or ú's) - presumably because of its formal identity to the conjunction?



#### 4. Focus and its realisations

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##### 4a. The use of the focus markers

In every main clause other than imperatives, there is just one element which is ~~mark~~ accompanied by a focus marker. There are two kinds of marker: the kind which accompanies the verb (or other predicate), normally realised as á, and the kind which accompanies a noun-phrase (or adverbial ?), normally realised as é. We can call them predicate-focus and nominal-focus markers respectively. It seems that if a nominal-focus marker is used, then the rest of the clause goes out of focus, so to speak - it becomes a presupposition, in other words.

- e.g. ínam-é iinám dóona 'It's the boy who likes the girl'  
ínam iinám-é dóona 'It's the girl who the boy likes'

On the other hand, if the focus marker is a predicate-focus marker, this may or may not be true, as ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ this is the neutral marker, used when nothing is semantically presupposed.

- e.g. ínam iinám á-dóona 'The boy likes the girl'

As we should expect from their meaning, question words like ayo, 'who', are obligatorily focus (\*áyo iinám á-dóona 'Who likes the girl?', is not possible), but negatives also raise problems, as we shall see in section 7, since the negative marker ma excludes other focus elements. (which is normally used in main clauses.)

The predicate-focus markers are prefixed to the predicate, while the nominal-focus markers are suffixed to their noun-phrase. Since noun-phrases may be used as predicates, ~~xxxxxxxx~~ which type of marker is used depends on the function of the nounphrase.

- e.g. úús ~~ínam~~ makháabal-é dóona 'It's a man that he likes'  
úús á-makháabal 'He's a man'.

If two conjoined noun-phrases are in focus, the focus marker is added just once to the whole conjunction, not once to each of the noun-phrases.

- e.g. ínam ichów iinám-é áрге 'It was a boy and a girl that I saw'.



4b. Realisations of the focus markers

Predicate-focus: zero before a vowel

á otherwise.

Nominal-focus: á after a possessive pronoun;

nyé after a modifying adjective ending in a vowel;

zero otherwise after a vowel;

otherwise é.

e.g. verbal: án á-dóona 'I like him'

án Ø-árga 'I see him'

non-verbal: ínam-é dóona 'It's the boy that likes him'

muallimu-Ø dóona 'It's the teacher that likes him'

mín kí-buur-é-nyé án dóona 'It's the bighouse I like  
house the-big-Predicate-Focus I like like'

mín kaay-a án dóona 'It's my house I like'

4c. Other similarly realised categories

Not only is there difficulty in bringing together the varied realisations of the focus marker, but there are other categories which are formally similar to the focus and are liable to be confused with it. They are:

1. nominative case, in feminine nouns: also realised as -é, though this -e is added only to the noun, rather than to the end of the whole noun-phrase. (see 3d above)
2. non-focus-predicates (noun-phrases or some kinds of adjective - see section 6): realised as -e, but if the preceding word ends in a vowel it is the preceding vowel which is dropped, rather than the -e, as with the focus -é.

e.g. makháabal-é maalíim-e 'The man is a teacher'  
man-Focus teacher-Predicate (cf. maalíimu 'teacher')

3. plural number

4. incompleteness: if a clause has a subordinate clause depending on it it must have -é after its verb, and if it is followed by a conjoined clause it may be so followed. However, unlike the focus -é, this one alternates with -yé, which occurs after a vowel.

e.g. ínam ichów íiname ís-jáheen é ichówka ínam fírde  
boy and girl each other-fought Incomplete until boy ran away



At the present stage of our understanding it is hard to be sure how verbs should be classified as far as the rules of syntax are concerned, since different kinds of verb make different changes of distinctions in their morphology. The following classification keeps closely to the morphology, and should be seen only as a way of presenting the data clearly. On the basis of morphology and some syntax, we can distinguish the following kinds of verb:

- a. suffixing verbs - e.g. dhoon- 'like'
- b. prefixing verbs - e.g. h-m 'eat'
- c. copula ('be')

No attempt is made here to cover variations in the morphological realisations of the categories distinguished - irregularities, and differences between monosyllabic prefixing verbs, in particular. All we are concerned with are the categories distinguished.

#### 5a. Suffixing verbs

- Distinguished are:
- 1. present indicative (e.g. dhóona) 'I like'
  - 2. present subjunctive (e.g. dhóono)
  - 3. past indicative/subjunctive (e.g. dhóone)
  - 4. concessive (e.g. dhoonéy)
  - 5. imperative (e.g. dhóon 'like')
  - 6. infinitive/verbal noun (e.g. dhoonín)
  - 7. verbal noun (e.g. dhoonán)

All but the infinitive and verbal noun (6,7) distinguish persons and numbers as follows:

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
1s.	dhóon-a	o	e	éy		
2s.	ta	to	te	téy	ø	
3m.	a	o	e	éy		
3f.	ta	to	te	téy		
1p.	na	no	ne	néy		
2p.	tan	tan (NB)	ten	téy	a	
3p.	an	an (NB)	en	éy		

#### 5b. Prefixing verbs

- Distinguished are:
- 1. present indicative/subjunctive (e.g. áham 'I eat')
  - 2. past indicative/subjunctive (e.g. úhum)
  - 3. concessive (e.g. uhumyéy)
  - 4. imperative (e.g. áham)
  - 5. infinitive/verbal noun (e.g. umhán)
  - 6. verbal noun (e.g. )



Again all but the infinitive and verbal noun distinguish persons and numbers for the subject as follows:

	1.	2.	3.	4.
1s.	á-ham	ú-hum	ú-hum-yey	
2s.	tá	tú-		á-ham
3m.	yá	yú		
3f.	tá	tú		
1p.	ná	nú		
2p.	tá-mh-in	tú-mh-en		á-mh-a
3p.	yá-mh-in	yú-mh-en		

(The reversal of the h and m in the 2nd and 3rd plural are due to an automatic phonological metathesis rule preventing h from being syllable-final, noted in Heine 1975: 187.)

#### 5c. Copula

Distinguished are: 1. present indicative/subjunctive variable (e.g. áhi 'I am')  
2. present indicative/subjunctive invariable

The term 'subjunctive' in the above refers to verb-forms which are found in subordinate clauses and also, in the case of present tenses, after the negative marker má. This classification can't be applied to the copula, since there are verb-forms which are used in subordinate clauses but not after the negative, and others which are used after the negative but not in subordinate clauses. ~~Consequently, whether a verb-form is used in subordinate~~ However, forms which can be used in positive main clauses can all be used in positive subordinate clauses too, so we need no main/subordinate distinction. Instead, we show which forms may be used after negative particles. Notice also that there is a pair of forms which are used specifically for the past tense negative in main clauses, distinct from the form used in negative subordinate clauses (whereas in other verbs these forms are the same).

Distinguished are: 1. present variable (e.g. áhi 'I am')  
2. present invariable (-e) (also used after negative particle: m-éé 'isn't')  
3. past invariable (íhit/íhinit) (also used after negative: mee íhit/ mee íhinit 'wasn't'; notice unusual form mee instead of m(a).)



4. imperative (e.g. atéh 'be')
5. infinitive ( (h)éynan ) (used after negatives in both subordinate and past tense main clauses)
6. <sup>imperative/</sup>verbal noun (iitaahán)

Of the above, only the present variable and the imperative vary according to the subject; their forms are as for a prefixing verb (áhi, tíhi, yíhi, tíhi, níhi, tíhiin, yíhiin; imperative: atéh, atéha).

Notice that the infinitive (5) is not also usable as a verbal noun, unlike the infinitive of other verbs - that is, it can't be used as object of dhonn- 'want' or as subject of an adjective like á suúj 'is bad'.

The above list does not include concessive forms -if they exist they will be noted below in the 'Postscript on concessives'. (Se)

#### 5d. Uses of verb-classes

##### 1. in main clauses (without clefting - see section 8):

present indicative	- not after negative má
present subjunctive	- only " " "
past indicative	- not " " "
infinitive (meaning: past)	- only " " "
imperative	- ?

##### copula:

##### 2.

present variable	- not after negative má
present invariable	- with/without negative má
past invariable	- " " " meé
infinitive (meaning: past)	- only after " "
imperative	- ?

(for details on use of copula forms, see section 6)

##### 2. in subordinate clauses

present subjunctive	- not after negative má or í
infinitive	- with/without " " "
verbal noun	- ?
concessive	- not after negative má or í

(see 'postscript on concessives' below)

##### copula:

present variable ?	- not after negative má or í
present invariable	- " " " " "



past invariable	- not after negative má or í
infinitive	- only " " " "
verbal noun	- ?

e.g. A: suffixing verbs (numbers indicate verb-class in 5a)

1. án iinám á-dhóona 'I like the girl'  
I girl Focus-like
2. án iinám má-dhóono 'I don't like the girl'
3. án iinám á-dhóone 'I liked the girl'
6. án iinám má-dhoonín 'I didn't like the girl'
5. iinám dhóon 'Like the girl!'
2. ichówka án iinám dhóono 'until I like the girl'
3. ichówka án iinám dhóone 'until I liked the girl'
6. ichówka án iinám má dhoonín 'until I don't/didn't like the girl'
4. án iinám dhooney láka 'even if I don't like the girl'
6. iinám dhoonín á-haagán-tíhi 'liking the girl is good'  
girl like Focus-good-is
7. iinám dhoonán á-haagán-yíhi 'Liking the girl is good'

B: copula (for numbers, see 5c)

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ixxxxxxxxaxaxaxaxax

1. án maalímu á-áhi 'I am a teacher'  
I teacher Focus-am
2. án-é maalím-e 'It's me that is a teacher'
2. án maalímu m-éé 'I'm not a teacher'
3. án maalímu á-íhit 'I was a teacher'
3. án maalímu meé-hit 'I wasn't a teacher'
4. maalímu atéh 'Be a teacher!'
5. án maalímu meé-héynan 'I wasn't a teacher'
1. ? ichówka án maalímu áhi 'until I am a teacher'
2. makháabal kí maalím-e 'the man who is a teacher'  
man the teacher-is
3. makháabal kí maalím-íhit 'the man who was a teacher'
5. ? ichówka án maalímu má-héynan 'until I'm not a teacher'
6. maalímu iitaahan á-haagán-tíhi 'Being a teacher is good'

The following are copulas syntactically like imperatives, except that the subject is not 2nd person (and cannot be 2nd person). Both positive and negative forms exist, but they are syntactically rather different so they will be treated separately here. It will



The following revisions need to be made to the above sections.

### 5e. Concessives

Concessives (e.g. *dhoonéy* 'if I should like') seem to be used in just two environments: before *laka* 'even', or in a coordinate structure embedded in a larger clause; meaning 'whether... or...':

e.g. *án iinám dhoonéy láka írda* 'Even if I like the girl I'll go'  
 I girl like even I go

*án dhoonéy ichów má dhooninéy írda* 'Whether I like it or not  
 I like it and not like it I go I'll go'

(NB the conjunction is *ichów* which otherwise means 'and'.)

There is no past/present distinction in concessives, which are morphologically more similar to the past than to the present but can refer to past, present or future. Concessives may be either positive or negative, and like the past indicative their negative is formed by using the infinitive after the negative marker *ma*. In both positive and negative, the marker of the concessive is *-éy* added to the verb, except that (a) this *ey* replaces the *-en* of the 2nd and 3rd plural in suffixing verbs, (b) in prefixing verbs *yéy* is added instead of just *éy*. (This pattern is not, however, found in the copula, whose positive concessive is *ihitéy*, formed from the past indicative by adding just *éy*.)

### 5f. Future tense

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The copula (and apparently only the copula) has a distinct tense which refers to the future and not to the present, in addition to the normal present tense, which can also refer to the future. Its forms are based on *-ateh*; *yáteh* 'he will be', *náteh* 'we shall be' etc. (It is possible that these forms can also be used for the positive optative, for which see 5g.) The future can be used both in main clauses and in subordinate clauses:

e.g. *maaliméyo á náteh* 'We shall be teachers'  
*ichówka uús maalímu yáteh intáne fíddiya*  
 until he teacher will be here he'll stay.

### 5g. Optative mood and 'subjunctive'

The following are ~~xxx~~ semantically like imperatives, except that the subject is not 2nd person (and cannot be 2nd person?). Both positive and negative forms exist, but they are syntactically rather different so they will be treated separately here. It will



be seen that the discussion is relevant to the discussion of subjunctives in earlier sections.

### Positive optatives

Forms: The form for suffixing verbs seems to be the same as for the present subjunctive (dhóonto 'let her drink', etc.), in which case it will be unnecessary to distinguish subjunctive and optative for these verbs. However, for prefixing verbs the optative seems to be different from the present subjunctive/indicative - for instance, the 3rd feminine singular for drink 'let her drink(water)' is túbhaabe (cf. tábhub, present indic/subjunctive; túbhub, past indic.), and similarly for 'eat' (túmhe, as against táham and túhum) and 'come' (timaáte, as against tamiít and tímiy). For the copula, one attested form is eéti, found after á plus adjective (e.g. á haagán eéti 'Let him/her etc be good'), but it is possible that the future form yáteh etc can also be used (since the subject marker is optional with this form, and as we shall see it does not occur with optatives whereas it does with other tenses including (presumably) the future.) However, yáteh cannot occur after á plus adjective - it is only attested after a noun-phrase (e.g. iinám(á) aráto táteh 'Let the girl be a mother' - literally 'girl (no subject marker) mother be').

Uses: It is only ~~attested~~ found in main clauses, and occurs with a focus marker (unlike imperatives), though it may be that this focus is always the neutral preverbal a. The most unusual fact about positive optatives, however, is that the subject is not in the normal subject case (marked in feminine nouns by -é - see 3d), but in the neutral case.

e.g. iinám á-dámto 'Let the girl drink'

iinám ínam khóona á-síichto 'Let the girl give the boy a nut'

iinám á-timaáte 'Let the girl come'.

### Negative optatives

Forms: Like most negatives, these are built on the infinitive; in this case, however, there is no negative marker as such (cf Somali?), but instead a 'conjunction' is added at the beginning of the clause (whereas negative markers always precede the verb, otherwise). The conjunction is uu(s), which otherwise means 'when' or 'since'.

Uses: Apart from the fact that they are used on their own, clauses containing negative optatives are syntactically like subordinate clauses (including clauses introduced by uu(s) 'when'), in that



they must contain a subject, and if the subject is a pronoun it is attached to the conjunction as a clitic. Moreover, just as with the subordinating conjunction uu(s)<sup>(see section 7.1)</sup> 'when', if the subject is ax̄x̄ 'he' it may be realised as ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxrealisationsxxxxxxxincluding~~ zero (which otherwise is not found in subordinate clauses) -

- e.g. uús-uú damín 'Don't let him drink it!'  
uús-Ø damín 'Don't let him drink it!'  
uús iiname damín 'Don't let the girl drink it!'

It will be seen from the last example that the subject is in the normal subject case (iinamé, not iinám), in contrast with positive optatives.

### 5h. Negative imperatives

These seem to be formed, once again, from the infinitive, but this time the negative marker is a before the infinitive (which otherwise is used as the focus marker in positive clauses!). If the infinitive begins with a vowel, however, the negative has zero realisation. On the other hand, it seems that in at least some cases the position of the accent on the infinitive is different between the negative imperative and other uses of the infinitive.

As in positive imperatives, a distinction is made between singular and plural, and this is made by adding -a (or sometimes -na?) to the infinitive in the plural. Taken together with the change in accentual patterns, <sup>this fact means that</sup> it will probably be best to separate the forms used here from the infinitives proper, and call them 'negative imperatives'. The following are some examples, with the past tense negative in brackets to show the normal form of the infinitive.

		Negative imperative		Past negative
		singular	plural	
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come	Ø-iimaátan	Ø-iimaatána	(mǎ-iimaatán)	
drink	á-damín	á-damína	(mǎ-damín)	
drink water	Ø-bhaában	Ø-ubhaábana	(mǎ-ubhaabán)	
eat	Ø-úmhan	Ø-úmhana	(mǎ-úmhan)	
like	á-dhoónin	á-dhoonína	(mǎ-dhoonín)	
go	Ø-iirán	Ø-iiránna	(mǎ-iíran)	
be	Ø-iitaáhan	Ø-iitaahána	(mǎ-iitaahan)	



6a. Permitted predicates

'Predicate' is used here to cover only predicates other than verbs - those with which the copula may be used, both in English and in Rendille, though in Rendille the copula is not always ~~xxxxxxxx~~ necessary. The following are possible as predicates in Rendille:

- A. noun-phrases e.g. maalímu 'a teacher'
- B. a noun-phrase consisting just of a determiner plus relative clause e.g. kí iinám dhóono 'the one who likes the girl'
- C. a noun-phrase consisting just of a determiner plus possessor noun-phrase e.g. kí iinamét 'the one of the girl'
- D. an adjective of one class (called 'clitic adjectives' for reasons which will become apparent below) e.g. haagán 'good, beautiful', rúchul 'small'
- E. an adjective of the other class, called 'non-clitic adjectives' e.g. buúr 'big', kulél 'hot'

'Prepositional phrases' (i.e. phrases containing a postposition like ka 'in') cannot occur as predicates.

The problem in defining rules for use of predicates in Rendille is that the presence or absence of a copula, and which form of the copula if it is present, depends partly on the type of predicate concerned (A-E in the above list) and partly on the relation of the predicate to the focus in the clause, and also partly on the presence or absence of a negative marker. To simplify the discussion, we shall discuss the various constructions that occur, and state the conditions under which they occur.

6b. Predicate alone

e.g. ínam-é haagán

Irú  
'The boy<sup>is</sup> good'

- conditions: a. Predicate is a clitic adjective, or a possessor NP; (??)
- b. Focus is ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ not on the predicate (as when Focus is on subject in a main clause, or when there is no Focus, as in a subordinate clause)

e.g. ínam kí haagán 'the good boy'  
boy the good



6c. Predicate plus invariable present copula

- e.g. makháabal-é maalímu-e 'It's the man who is a teacher'  
 man-Focus teacher-is  
 mín-e buúr-e 'It's the house which is big'

conditions: a. Predicate is either a noun-phrase or a non-clitic adjective

- b. as 6b above, no Focus on Predicate, except that there ~~may~~ may be a negative m- combined with the copula to give mee 'isn't'; this precludes focus elsewhere, as usual with negatives; *and cannot occur in subordinate clauses;*  
 mín buúr m-éé  
 house big not-is

Since modifying adjectives are in effect relative clauses, the copula appears in them too:

- mín ki buúr-e 'the big house'  
 house the big-is

6d. Negative (ma) plus Predicate

- e.g. ínam máa haagán 'the boy isn't good'

conditions: a. Predicate is a clitic adjective

- b. clause contains a negative and no other focus.

6e. Focus (a) plus Predicate

- e.g. makháabal á-maalímu 'the man is a teacher'  
 mín á-buúr 'the house is big'

conditions: a. Predicate is a noun-phrase, including noun-phrases consisting just of a determiner plus relative clause or possessor, or it is a non-clitic adjective.

- b. Focus is permitted to precede the Predicate (i.e. there's no focus elsewhere and it's not in a subordinate clause).

6f. Predicate (plus Focus) plus copula

('copula' here includes all forms other than the present invariable)

- e.g. makháabal maalímu á-yíhi 'the man is a teacher'  
 man teacher Focus-copula  
 maalímu makháabal-e yíhi 'It's a man that the teacher is'

conditions: a. Predicate is a noun-phrase

- b. Construction 6c is not possible, either because there's a focus on the predicate or copula, or



in a subordinate clause and is preceded by the negative marker.

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6g. (Focus plus) Predicate plus copula

'copula' again excludes the present invariable.)

e.g. ínam á-haagán yíhi

conditions: a. Predicate is a clitic adjective

b. Construction 6b above isn't possible, for reasons like those given under 6f.

6h. Explanation of 'clitic adjectives'

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Construction 6g is odd in that the Focus marker a , which normally immediately precedes the verb, in this case is separated from the verb by the adjective. Similarly, in negative subordinate clauses the negative i is separated from the verb by the adjective, and the negative ma in main clauses (past tense) is separated from the verb by the adjective:

ínam kí í-haagán-áynan 'the boy who isn't good'

ínam má haagán-íhit 'the boy was not good'

One possible explanation of this set of facts is to say that the adjective is attached to the verb as a clitic, and is therefore allowed to come between the verb and the focus or negative markers (which are also clitics) in much the same way that verb prefixes líék/ka 'in' and 'i 'for' do. This analysis also explains two other facts: clitic adjectives, unlike non-clitic adjectives, cannot follow the verb or be separated from it in any other way; and the copula assimilates phonologically to ~~the~~ a preceding clitic adjective although it does not do so if the predicate is of another type:

clitic adj: á-rúchul-tíhi (l-t realised as ss)  
Focus-small-she is

other: iinám taáy-a iinám tí rúchul tíhi 'It's my daughter who is  
girl my-Focus girl a small she is a small girl'  
(l-t realised as lt, not ss)

6i. Clitic and non-clitic adjectives

The following is a list of adjectives classified according to whether they are clitic adjectives or non-clitics.

clitic adjectives

rúchul	small	deér	tall/long	soóriyow	yellow
haagán	good/beautiful	gaabán	short/low	gudhdhan	red
ulhaw	green	borgudhan	brown	dhakhan	white
	black				



non-clitic adjectives

buúr	big	futeét	light	dabákh	cheap	khóbo	cold
kulél	hot	huleés	heavy	suúj	bad	rendhílle	Rendille
						kórró	Samburu

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7a. Overview of syntactic relations

It is relatively easy to make a three-way distinction for Rendille as follows:

- A. coordination
- B. embedding
- C. subordination.

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That is, there are these three possible relations between clauses. Coordination means that the clauses are both of the same kind (e.g. both are main clauses, ignoring the presence of the 'incompleteness marker' discussed below), and are syntactically treated as equal sisters. Embedding means that one clause is actually part of the other - contained within it, that is - and they are likely not to be of the same kind. Subordination is an intermediate position, according to which the two clauses are separate (neither is a part of the other) but one is subordinate to the other, so they are likely to be of different types.

The easiest way of making this distinction is with reference to the 'incompleteness marker', which is (e) added to the verb. A If the clauses are coordinated, then the incompleteness marker is optional in the first of them; if one is subordinated to the other, the incompleteness marker is obligatory in the ~~main~~ clause; which is superordinate; and <sup>B</sup> if one clause is embedded within the other, the incompleteness marker is impossible in either clause (unless, of course, the main clause happens to be coordinated to another or to have another clause subordinate to it).

- eg. A. *ínam ichów iinámé Ø-ísjáhen-é, ínam-la fírde*  
boy and girl Focus-fought together-Incomplete, boy-and ran away.  
*ínam ichów iinámé Ø-ísjáhen, ínam-la fírde* (same meaning)
- B. *chír kí makháabal cháý dáme írte* 'when the man drank tea he left  
time that man tea drank he left
- C. *ínam ichów iinámé Ø-ísjáhen-é ichówka ínam fírde*  
boy and girl Focus-fought-Incomplete until boy ran away.

Other differences seem to support this distinction. For one thing, the relative order of the two clauses is relevant: in coordination, the clause with the incompleteness marker must precede the other, and their constituents must be kept apart from each other; in embedding, the embedded clause has the same freedom of movement within the main clause as other elements do; and in subordination, the subordinate clause must either precede or follow the whole of the



main clause (as we should expect given the analysis of them as separate clauses); Moreover, ~~xxxxxx~~ the distinction between coordination and the other two relations is supported by the fact that 'subjunctives' occur in the latter where they do not occur in the former - that is, both clauses may contain indicative verbs if they are coordinated but not if one is subordinated to the other. ~~Also, in embedded and subordinate clauses, a subject is obligatory or embedded within it.~~ Similarly, ~~the distinction between subordination and embedding is supported by the fact that~~ <sup>many</sup> embedded clauses have the structure of relative clauses while subordinated clauses do not.

It should be noted, with apologies, that the term 'subordinate' has been used in a rather different way in earlier sections, to include both subordinated and embedded clauses in contrast with main clauses - as for instance where the use of verb-forms was being discussed. In this section we shall reserve the term 'subordinate' strictly for ~~xxxxx~~ clauses which are subordinated in the sense defined at the start of the section - clauses which are not part of the main clause.

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#### 7b. Relative clauses

As noted in section 3b, every relative clause is introduced by a determiner, which may or may not in turn modify a noun (the relative clause's antecedent). Nothing seems to be gained from treating the determiner as a 'relative pronoun' (especially since a determiner is also required in possessive constructions, where the 'relative pronoun' analysis does not seem possible). Instead, we can say that the element corresponding to the antecedent within the relative clause is either a zero pronoun (if it is object), or absent, if it is subject, or an ordinary anaphoric pronoun, if it is a possessor. Where there is a pronoun referring to the antecedent, it occurs in its normal place in the relative clause.

e.g. ínam kíyé iinamé khóona tiís túhum 'the boy whose nut the  
boy the girl nut his she ate girl ate'.

One peculiarity distinguishes the determiner before a relative clause from a determiner ~~without~~ on its own, namely that the former may optionally be followed by -yé (-é after a consonant),

Note: Two more differences between subordinated and embedded clauses on the one hand and coordinated clauses on the other (and main clauses) are that in the former a subject is obligatory, and that in the former a focus-marker is not possible.



and frequently are so followed. (cf the last example above). No meaning has been found for this suffix, which also occurs, again with no identifiable meaning, after determiners before possessive constructions. 25

Like other embedded and subordinated clauses, relative clauses must contain a subject, but if this would be uús 'he' and the demonstrative ends in -uús, the former is allowed not to be separately realised (cf. also the discussion below of uús 'when', and the discussion of uús introducing negative optatives, in 5g.); this is the case when the demonstrative is kuús 'that'.

e.g. kuús áрге á-yímiy 'That one which he saw came'  
that he saw Focus-came

Also like other embedded and subordinated clauses, relative clauses must not contain any focus-marker.

One distinguishing characteristic of relative clauses (also found in 'adverbial relative clauses' discussed in the next section) is that the marker of negation is not the usual ma, but i. As usual in embedded or subordinated clauses, the negative marker is followed by the infinitive of the verb, and no tense-distinction is made. e.g. ínam kí iinamé í-dhoonín 'the boy whom the girl doesn't like.'  
boy the girl not-like

As for the order of elements within relative clauses, it seems that any order is permitted, subject to the following restrictions:

1. no element may follow the relative clause's verb;
2. the ~~xxxxxx~~ relative clause's subject must follow the determiner - ie. we might say that the relative clause's 'body' must end with the verb and must also contain the subject, and must follow the antecedent and determiner. However, there seems to be freedom of movement for any ~~xxxx~~ element other than the verb, inside or to the left of the body of the clause, and if even the subject may be moved out and to the left provided a pronoun is left to replace it.

e.g. ínam ínam kí kóona síiche Ø-írte 'The boy who gave the girl a nut has left'.  
girl boy the nut gave Focus-left

ínam iinám tí uús kóona síiche Ø-írte 'The girl to whom the boy gave a nut left'.  
boy girl the he nut gave Focus-left

It is even possible for an element which is moved leftwards out of the relative clause in this way to be treated as the focus of the containing clause, even though the relative clause itself may not contain a focus of its own. (This is a general phenomenon,







### 7e. Embedded noun clauses

Noun-clauses - that is, clauses acting with nominal functions such as subject or object of a higher clause - seem to be of three main types:

#### A. those containing a verbal noun

e.g. iinám dhonnán-é haagán-yíhi 'It's loving a girl which is good'  
girl love-Focus good-is

biíche úbhaabán á-dhóona 'I want to drink water'  
water drink-Focus-I want

Another verb which allows a verbal noun as object is way- 'fail'

#### B. those containing a relative clause with a noun like id 'way' as antecedent

e.g. íd kí iinám ahúlluwte Ø-árgé 'He saw that(?) the girl was angry'  
way the girl was angry Focus-he saw

#### C. main clauses embedded as direct quotations

e.g. iiname án khóona dhóona á-tidah 'The girl said she wanted a nut'  
girl I nut want Focus-said

Too little is known about any of these constructions to expand on the above.

### 7f. Subordinate clauses

The only conjunction known to introduce subordinate clauses is ichówka 'until' (cf. ichów 'and'). Like ~~other~~ embedded clauses, these require a subject, and like non-relative embedded clauses they form their negative with ná rather than i. As noted in 7a, they can only ~~exist~~ occur either before or after the main clause, and the latter must have the incompleteness marker attached to its verb.

### 7g. Coordinate clauses

Little need be added to what has already been said about coordinated clauses in 7a, except that the second conjunct need not contain a focus marker, and that optionally either (or both?) of ichów and la may be added to the second conjunct. Ichów is added at the beginning of the clause, but la is added as suffix to any individual element within it, especially the first element. (Query: is ichów used between clauses, as well as between phrases?) Another conjunction is ómos 'or'

e.g. án gób Ø-írida ómos imtáne fíddiya 'I'll go home or stay here'  
I home Focus-go or here stay.

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7h. Serial verbs

A verb of motion can be used immediately before another verb with no kind of mark of coordination between them.

e.g. írde fól dikhde 'I went and washed my face'  
I went face I washed

mín kiís soógile Ø-órronde 'I entered his house and sat  
house his entered Focus-sat down down'

It may be that such constructions are covered by the rules, such as they are, for coordinate structures, but in the second of the above attested examples there seems to be no focus marker in the first conjunct (and possibly none at all in the first example, in either conjunct), so it would be worth investigating them further.



### 8. Negation and cleft sentences

In this section we shall review various phenomena which make the division of a sentence into clauses problematic, all involving negation. We start with a look at ordinary cases of negation.

#### 8a. Negation and its realisations

The chart below summarises the relations between positive and negative clauses, where other aspects of the clause are kept constant. Since the negative marker normally occurs just before the verb, in the position where the focus-marker a could otherwise occur, the table shows the focus-marker in those positive forms where it can occur; it should be remembered that it may not in fact occur before the verb, as it may be attached to some nominal element instead.

<u>in main clauses</u>		<u>in non-main clauses</u>	
<u>positive</u>	<u>negative</u>	<u>positive</u>	<u>negative</u>
1. <u>a</u> -present indic.	<u>ma</u> -pres.subjunc.	present subj.	<u>ma/i</u> -infinitive
2. <u>a</u> -past	<u>ma</u> -infinitive	past	" "
3. ----	----	concessive (past- <u>ey</u> )	<u>ma</u> -neg.concessive ( <u>ma</u> -infinitive- <u>ey</u> )
4. imperative	<u>a</u> -infinitive(?) (see section 5h)	----	-----
5. <u>a</u> -optative	<u>uu(s)</u> ...infinitive	----	-----
<u>COPULA ONLY</u>			
6. <u>a</u> -future	?	future	?
7. - <u>e</u> pres.invar.	<u>ma</u> -pres.invar.	-----	-----
8. <u>a</u> -past invar.	<u>mee</u> -past invar.	-----	-----

#### Notes

to 1/2: the negative marker in non-main clauses is i only in relative clauses.

to 3: maybe the suffix -ey should be treated as a separate element in syntax, rather than as the morphological reflex of a special 'concessive' verb-class.

to 4: maybe the verb-form used in negative imperatives is not the infinitive, but a special 'negative imperative' form.

to 5: the dots after uu(s) show that it is clause-initial, not cliticised to the verb.

to 7: the -e in the first column is the nominal focus marker attached to the verb (required for the present invariable positive to be used).



### 8b. Negation and focus

In clauses which may contain a focus-marker (i.e. in main clauses other than imperatives) the ma negative marker excludes any (other) focus-marker, so it is reasonable in such cases to assume that it contains within itself the focus-marker a (which is otherwise the form of the focus-marker when attached before the verb). This analysis would also explain the position of the negative ma relative to the verb and to clitic pronoun objects: as explained in 2c, ma precedes clitic pronouns, whereas i (found in relative clauses, where there is no possibility of a focus marker) follows them. Since the focus-marker on its own also precedes the clitic pronouns, we can say simply that the negative ma takes its position from the position of the focus marker which it contains, whereas i, which contains no focus marker occupies a different position.

A problem for this analysis is that ma also occurs in clauses where no focus is possible, namely non-relative embedded and subordinated clauses. In such cases we shall presumably need to say that ma does not contain the focus-marker a. What needs to be investigated is the position where this ma occurs relative to clitic pronouns.

### 8c. Cleft sentences

Assuming that ma does contain the focus-marker, we can also explain another phenomenon: if a main clause needs to contain both a negative marker and a focus on some other element, its entire structure changes into one resembling that of a relative clause. For instance, if it contains a question word like áyo 'who', this must obligatorily be treated as focus, so the negative marker must not also contain the focus marker. Instead, the relative clause marker i is used, and this (we may assume) brings with it all the rest of the properties of relative clauses (except one, which we shall note below).

e.g. *inamé áyo iché í-dhconín*      'Who doesn't the girl like?'  
          girl      who she not-like

The part of the sentence following áyo is just like a relative clause: it contains i instead of ma as negative marker; it uses the infinitive as verb-form even in the present tense; and it has to contain a subject in the 'body' of the relative clause (see the discussion of relative clauses in 7b), even if there is a subject



which has been moved leftwards out of the body of the clause.- hence the pronoun iche 'she' which is obligatory in this example, replacing iiname 'the girl' (which, incidentally, is marked as subject by the nominative case suffix -é).

The obvious difference between such examples and true relative clauses is that the latter have to <sup>follow</sup> ~~contain~~ a determiner, whereas the former can't (see the rules for noun-phrase structure in 3b). In other words, if we wanted a translation of 'the one the girl doesn't like', with 'the girl' moved out to the left, it would have to be introduced by a determiner (ki):

iiname.....ki iche i-dhoonin  
girl                    the she not-like

Because of this difference, it is quite unclear whether we should in fact analyse sentences like the one above as simple or complex - ie. do they contain any kind of embedded clause at all, or do they consist just of a main clause to which the rules for relative clause structure have somehow been transferred? And if the latter is the case, how can we apply to a single main clause the notion of 'body' of a clause, given that as we have defined 'bdoy' everything in the clause would have to be its body and we could not say that iiname had been 'moved out'?

Similar constructions arise under other circumstances than negative 'wh' questions. First, if the focus is put on a nominal element in a negative sentence:

e.g. inam iinam-e uus i-dhoonin 'It's the girl that the boy doesn't  
boy girl-Focus he not-like like'

And secondly, in a construction which deserves much more attention, which we can call 'negation of existence' constructions, whose meaning involves the negation of an existential quantifier.

e.g. toor an khabo mee-le 'I have no spear'  
spear I have not-is

(The verb-form here, mee-le, is otherwise used to mean hasn't, as in makhaabal mee-le 'She has no husband'; it is not covered by the discussion of verb-forms in 5, but seems to contain the invariable copula mee 'isn't'.) Unlike the previous examples, this one has the negative in the (apparent) main clause rather than in the (apparent) relative clause, but otherwise it is similar in containing an apparent relative clause structure (e.g. the subject an is obligatory and there is no focus except the mee). We might translate the example above more literally as 'I haven't a spear which I have',



except that, once again, there is no determiner to introduce the relative clause. (Another fact about such sentences, and also about sentences containing ordinary mee-le 'haven't', is that nothing is allowed to be moved out of the clause to follow mee-le, whereas in other cases elements can be moved freely after the verb, albeit with an intonation break.)

We leave this as a problem with no solution as yet.