

A Gentle Introduction to Tatari Faran

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Preface

This Gentle Introduction is intended to help the unacquainted beginner learn Tatari Fara, the language of Fara. Its primary aim is to cover the elementary principles and some basic vocabulary so that the reader will be adequately prepared to read more advanced texts such as the Tatari Fara reference grammar. As such, it does not attempt to address all questions about the inner workings of Tatari Fara grammar. Occasionally, the author may see fit to mention in passing some of the more advanced aspects of Tatari Fara grammar; however, these will not be treated in great detail. The interested reader is encouraged to consult the reference grammar for more in-depth discussion of such topics.

The manner of presentation we shall take is modeled after the writings of Donald E. Knuth, in that the general principle of an aspect of grammar is presented first, and exceptions to the rule are discussed later as they arise. The author feels that this approach is more suitable than overwhelming the reader with exhaustive lists of exceptions to every rule that she encounters right from the start. Therefore, the rules set forth in this Gentle Introduction are not meant to be taken definitively; if something is mentioned later that seemingly contradicts what has come before, it should simply be understood as a closer approximation to the truth.

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1 Overview

1.1 What is Tatari Faran?

Tatari Faran is the common language spoken by the inhabitants of Fara. The name *Fara* means “the Plain”, referring to the volcanically-active land where the speakers of Tatari Faran dwell. Tatari Faran has many words and expressions that reflect the widespread volcanism in this land.

1.2 Conventions

Throughout this Gentle Introduction, we shall use **this typeface** for Tatari Faran snippets that occur in running text. For example, **san tse** is the standard Tatari Faran greeting. Tatari Faran text that occur in quoted blocks appear in the following typeface:

san tse!

English text that occur in such blocks will be presented in the following typeface:

Greetings!

IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet) transcriptions will always appear in this format: [ˈsan tɕɛ].

1.3 Roman Orthography

We shall be using the *Roman orthography* for writing Tatari Faran. Tatari Faran, in fact, has its own native script; but for the purposes of this Introduction, we shall use the more familiar Roman script.

Tatari Faran has a much simpler set of sounds than English. It has only 13 consonants and 6 vowels.

Unlike many foreign language books, we shall use the *International Phonetic Alphabet* (IPA for short) to describe the sounds of Tatari Faran, rather than using English approximations. English pronunciation varies greatly from place to place: for example, the ‘a’ in “father” is not pronounced the same way in England as it is in the United States. English also does not have some of the sounds Tatari Faran has. Hence, using English spelling to describe Tatari Faran pronunciation would be unreliable and inaccurate.

1.3.1 The Consonants

Table 1 shows the 13 consonants of Tatari Faran.

<i>Classification</i>		<i>Orthography</i>	<i>IPA pronunciation</i>
<i>Stops</i>	<i>Unvoiced</i>	p	p
		t	t
		k	k
		ʔ	ʔ
	<i>Voiced</i>	b	b
		d	d
	<i>Nasal</i>	m	m
		n	n
<i>Fricatives</i>		f	f
		s	s
		h	h
<i>Affricates</i>		j	ɟ
		ts	ts
<i>Flaps</i>		r	r

Table 1: Tatari Faran Consonants

The observant reader will notice that there are actually 14 sounds listed in Table 1 even though we claimed that Tatari Faran has only 13 consonants. To understand this, it is helpful to distinguish between *phones* and *phonemes*.

Phones are actual, spoken sounds, the sounds we produce with our vocal apparatus. *Phonemes* are *sets* of phones that are considered to represent the same *logical sound* by native speakers of a language. For example, in English, the /t/ in “tall” is aspirated: [t^h]; but in “fatal”, it is unaspirated: [t]. Nevertheless, native English speakers consider these two as the same, logical sound. In fact, this is why these two sounds are written with the same letter in English.

Similarly, in Tatari Faran, **d** and **r** are the same phoneme. Tatari Faran speakers consider them to be the same sound, even though this phoneme is actually pronounced two different ways depending on where it occurs in a word. When it occurs *word-initially*,¹ it is pronounced [d]; when it occurs

¹At the start of a word.

medially,² it is pronounced [r]. In the native writing system, the same letter is used to represent this phoneme. However, the Roman orthography uses two different letters to write it, to remind Tatari Faran learners which sound is actually pronounced.

So a closer approximation to the truth is that Tatari Faran has 13 consonant *phonemes*, which are realized as 14 phones.

Another important feature to note is that the *glottal stop* is *phonemic*. This means that **ai** is not the same as **a'i**. Furthermore, it may also occur *word-finally*,³ so that **bata** is *not* the same as **bata'**. One should take care not to overlook that final apostrophe.

1.3.2 The Vowels

Tatari Faran has 6 basic vowels, as shown in Table 2.

<i>Orthography</i>	<i>IPA pronunciation</i>
a	a
e	ɛ
i	i
ue	u
o	ɔ
u	u

Table 2: Tatari Faran basic vowels

In addition to these basic vowels, there are also *long vowels* and *glides*, which are listed in Table 3. There are 9 of these in total.

1.3.3 Capitalization

Tatari Faran orthography does *not* use the uppercase letters in the Roman alphabet, not even at the beginning of a sentence. Only lowercase letters are used. Proper names are *not* capitalized.

²In the middle of a word.

³At the end of a word.

	<i>Orthography</i>	<i>IPA pronunciation</i>
<i>Long vowels</i>	aa	aː
	ei	eɨ
	ii	iː
	uu	uː
<i>Glides</i>	ai	aɨ
	au	ao
	ia	ja
	ua	wa
	ui	uj

Table 3: Tatari Faran long vowels and glides

2 Greetings

Now we look at our first Tatari Faran utterance.

san tse! [ˈsan tɕɛ] *Greetings!*

This is the standard way to greet people in Tatari Faran. The accent is on the first word.

2.1 Pitch Accent

At this point, the reader should note that Tatari Faran is *pitch-accented* rather than *stress-accented*. In English, an accented syllable is *stressed*: pronounced louder or with more emphasis. In Tatari Faran, however, accented syllables are pronounced with *high pitch*, and unaccented syllables are pronounced with *low pitch*.

So in the above greeting, **san** is pronounced with a high pitch, whereas **tse** is pronounced with a low pitch. In IPA notation, it may be written: [sán tɕɛ].

Now naturally, when there is a high-pitched syllable immediately followed by a low-pitched syllable, the actual pronunciation comes out as a *falling pitch*. Hence, the IPA for this greeting is actually [sân tɕɛ].

However, this amount of detail is unnecessary and distracting. So, unless indicated otherwise, we will continue using the IPA stress mark [ˈ] to indicate accented syllables in Tatari Faran. It should be understood that this use of

the primary stress mark actually means high pitch, and that high pitch may be realized in different ways depending on the surrounding pitches.

2.2 The Vocative

Let's examine our Tatari Faran greeting more closely. The word **san** means “person” or “human”. The word **tse** is a *vocative marker*: it marks the preceding word as a *vocative* (a term of address). In other words, the greeting **san tse** is simply the vocative form of “person”. You greet someone simply by addressing him or her.

Greetings need not be restricted to **san** alone. You can use the vocative marker **tse** to turn any noun into a vocative. For example, you can greet a young man by saying:

kiran tse! ['kiran tse]

kiran means “young man”. Similarly, you can greet a young woman by saying:

diru tse! ['diru tse]

diru means “young woman”. To greet an adult man or an adult woman, you can say, respectively:

samat tse! ['samat tse]

bunari tse! [buna'ri tse]

From now on, we shall present new vocabulary in the following format:

Vocabulary:

- san ['san] (*n.*⁴) *Person, human.*
- tse [tse] (*clitic*) *Singular vocative marker.*
- kiran ['kiran] (*masc. n.*⁵) *Young man.*
- diru ['diru] (*fem. n.*⁶) *Young woman.*
- samat ['samat] (*masc. n.*) *Adult man.*
- bunari [buna'ri] (*fem. n.*) *Adult woman.*

⁴Epicene noun.

⁵Masculine noun.

⁶Feminine noun.

2.3 The Plural Vocative

The attentive reader may have noticed that so far, we have only greeted individuals. The vocative marker **tse** can only be used in the *singular number*. To greet a group of people, we need to use the *plural vocative marker*, **huna** ['huna]. For example, the generic plural greeting is:

san huna! [san 'huna] *Greetings, people!*

Note that the accent is on **huna**, not on **san**.

As one might expect, the plural vocative marker may also be paired with any other noun to make plural vocatives. For example, you can greet a group of young men thus:

kiran huna! ['kiran huna]

Similarly, the following greetings may be used for the plural numbers of their respective nouns:

diru huna! ['diru huna] *Greetings, girls!*

samat huna! ['samat huna] *Greetings, men!*

bunari huna! [buna'ri huna] *Greetings, women!*

Greetings are not limited to people. One could greet animals, or even trees and stones, although the latter usually only in poetic contexts. Examples:

simani tse! ['simani tse] *Greetings, wolf!*

tiki tse! ['ti'ki tse] *Greetings, rabbit!*

tsuinit huna! [tsuj'nit huna] *Greetings, songbirds!*

Vocabulary:

huna ['huna] (*clitic*) *Plural vocative marker.*

simani ['simani] (*n.*) *Domestically-raised wolf.*

tiki ['ti'ki] (*fem. n.*) *Rabbit.*

tsuinit [tsuj'nit] (*fem. n.*) *Songbird.*

3 Noun Phrases

Now that we've learned how to greet people in Tatari Faran, we shall learn to name things. Things are referred to by *nouns*. For example:

simani so. ['simani sɔ] *A wolf.*

Note there are no articles in Tatari Faran. There is no equivalent of the English “the” or “a”. The above could also be translated as *the wolf*. So what does the word **so** mean?

3.1 The Case Clitic

Unlike English nouns, Tatari Faran nouns cannot stand alone. Nouns must be followed by either a vocative marker, as we've seen, or a *case clitic*, which in this case is **so**. This is why we need two words in our example:

simani so. ['simani sɔ] *A wolf.*

The case clitic is needed to form a proper utterance. It always comes at the end of the *noun phrase*:

tsira so. ['tsira sɔ] *Grass.*

tatis so. [ta'tis:ɔ] *A street.*

koronta so. [kɔ'rɔnta sɔ] *A frog.*

3.2 Gender

The case clitic is inflected for the *gender* of the noun. The attentive reader would have noticed that in the previous vocabulary lists, some nouns were associated with a particular gender. It should be kept in mind that this is *grammatical gender*, and does not always have a correspondence with actual, biological gender. Many inanimate nouns in Tatari Faran have masculine or feminine gender.

There are three genders in Tatari Faran: masculine, feminine, and neuter. The neuter gender can also be used as an *epicene*.⁷ The case clitic **so** is neuter. Let's look at the other genders:

⁷Can stand for either masculine or feminine.

tiki sei. [ˈtiˈki sej] *A rabbit.*

samat sa. [ˈsamat sa] *A man.*

The case clitic **sei** is *feminine*, whereas the case clitic **sa** is *masculine*. The case clitic must match the gender of the noun it is associated with. For example, it is wrong to say:

*tiki sa. (*Wrong*)

because the gender of the noun **tiki** is feminine, which does not match **sa**, which is masculine. Similarly, it is wrong to say:

*samat sei. (*Wrong*)

because the gender of the noun **samat** is masculine, which does not match **sei**, which is feminine.

Some nouns, however, do not have a fixed gender, and can be used with any of the three case clitics. One such noun is **san**, which, as we’ve seen, means “person”. For example, the following are all valid Tatari Faran:

san so. [ˈsan sɔ] *A person.*

san sa. [ˈsan sa] *A male person (i. e., a man).*

san sei. [ˈsan sej] *A female person (i. e., a woman).*

Vocabulary:

so [sɔ] (*clitic*) *Neuter/epicene case clitic.*

sa [sa] (*clitic*) *Masculine case clitic.*

sei [sej] (*clitic*) *Feminine case clitic.*

3.3 Plurals

Now that we know how to name individual things, let's learn how to name many things.

hesan so. [hɛ'san sɔ] *Many people.*

hesan, in fact, is *not* a new word. It is simply the familiar word **san**, but with **he-** prefixed to it. The prefix **he-** is the *plural prefix*. It may be added to any noun to turn it into a plural. For example:

hesamat sa. [hɛ'samat sa] *Many men.*

hebunari sei. [hɛbuna'ri sej] *Many women.*

hesimani so. [hɛ'simani sɔ] *Many wolves.*

hetiki sei. [hɛ'ti'ki sej] *Many rabbits.*

The next example may look unfamiliar:

heriru sei. [hɛ'riru sej] *Many girls.*

However, it is actually the same process of prefixing **diru**, which we've already seen before, with the plural prefix **he-**. Recall that **r** and **d** are the *same phoneme* in Tatari Faran. It is written **d** at the beginning of the word, and written **r** in the middle of a word. This is because its actual pronunciation is [d] and [r], respectively. Therefore, **heriru** is written that way because the initial **d** in **diru** has become medial and is now pronounced [r], so it is written as **r**.

3.4 Implicit Plurality

Having learned how to form plural nouns, one might be tempted to think that whenever we see a phrase such as **san so**, it must necessarily refer to a single person. This is not true.

In Tatari Faran, the plural prefix **he-** is used *only for emphasis*. The singular forms of nouns can refer to *either* a singular or plural number. The plural prefix is only used when the speaker wishes to make it unambiguously clear that he is referring to many things. Therefore, the phrase **san so** can

mean *either* “a person” or “many people”. Only when you wish to emphasize that you’re talking about many people would you say **hesan so**.

Whether a noun is referring to a singular or plural number is inferred from context. Often, there is no need to explicitly indicate the plurality of a noun. We have already seen the plural vocative markers, such as in the following example:

san huna! [san 'huna] *Greetings, people!*

It is clear from the plural vocative marker **huna** that **san** here is plural. Hence, there is no need to say **hesan huna** instead.

3.5 Nominal Conjunction

We’ve seen how to use the plural prefix **he-** to talk about many instances of the same thing. What if we want to talk about many *different* things?

samat sa kiran sa ei. *A man and a youth.*
[samat sa 'kiran sa ?ej]

Let’s examine this new utterance closely.

The first phrase **samat sa** means “a man”, as we have seen. The second phrase is **kiran sa**, “a youth”. The last word, **ei**, means “and”.

Unlike the English translation, however, the conjunction **ei** does not come *between* the noun phrases it joins; rather, it comes *after* the second noun phrase it joins. It is similar to the Latin suffix *-que*, which comes after the second noun it joins.

3.6 Euphony

Let’s see how we can join other noun phrases together:

kiran sa diru si’ei. *A young man and a young woman.*
[kiran sa 'diru si?ej]

What is happening here? Why is there an unfamiliar word **si’ei** in this sentence? Why does **diru** appear without a case clitic?

We are looking at our first instance of Tatari Faran *euphony*. Certain combinations of words sound ‘unpleasant’ to the Tatari Faran ear, and when these words are required by grammar to occur together, they *mutate* in order

to remain pleasant-sounding.⁸ In this particular case, the strange word **si'ei** is actually the *contraction* of the familiar feminine case clitic **sei** with the conjunction **ei**:

$$\text{sei} + \text{ei} \longrightarrow \text{si'ei}$$

We shall encounter other rules of euphony as we go on.

Vocabulary:

si'ei [si'ej] (*clitic*) *Contraction of sei and ei.*

4 Simple Sentences

4.1 Statements of Equivalence

We've learned how to greet and refer to things in Tatari Faran. Now we shall learn to talk about the things we refer to.

tara' sei fia. [ˈtaraʔ sej ˈfja] *She is Fia.*

Vocabulary:

tara' [ˈtaraʔ] (*pron.*⁹) *He, she.*

fia [ˈfja] (*fem. n.*) *Common female name.*

Here, we see our first full Tatari Faran sentence. It consists of the subject, **tara' sei**, and the predicate, **fia**. Note that the Roman orthography of Tatari Faran does not use uppercase letters, not even for proper names.

This is the paradigm for statements of the form “X is Y”. Unlike English, Tatari Faran has no equivalent of the verb “to be”. To say that X is Y, one simply says “X, Y.”

There are some other features of interest about sentences of this sort, that will be clearer if we look at more examples:

fei so beira. [ˈfej sɔ ˈbejra] *That is a stone.*

tara' sa bata'. [ˈtaraʔ sa baˈtaʔ] *He is the chief.*

⁸‘Pleasant-sounding’, of course, relative to the ears of native Tatari Faran speakers. It may or may not match a foreigner’s sense of aesthetics.

⁹Pronoun.

mei sei tiki. ['mej sej 'ti'ki] *This is a rabbit.*

Vocabulary:

fei ['fej] (*pron.*) *Third person inanimate pronoun; it, that.*

beira ['bejra] (*neut. n.*) *Stone.*

bata' [ba'taʔ] (*masc. n.*) *Chief.*

mei ['mej] (*dem.*¹⁰) *This.*

The perceptive reader will notice that nouns in the predicate do not have a case clitic associated with them. This is one exception where nouns do not require a trailing case clitic.

In statements of this sort, however, one often hears another type of word appended to the end of the sentence after the predicate. We shall discuss this next.

4.2 Finalizers

Tatari Faran has a class of words called *finalizers*, which have no equivalent in English. They are words that occur only at the end of a sentence, and are often synonymous with the predicate. The finalizer at the end of a sentence serves to *reinforce*, *reaffirm*, or *re-emphasize* the preceding predicate, and to give a sense of finality or conclusion to the end of the sentence. Finalizers are usually left untranslated, because there is no equivalent in English.

Let's take a look at a finalizer in action:

tara' sei fia ai. ['taraʔ sej 'fja ʔaj] *She is Fia.*

This is the same example as we've seen before, except that now the finalizer **ai** has been added to it.

By itself, **ai** is an interjection meaning "Yes". When used as a finalizer here, it adds strength to the statement: she is Fia *indeed*; or, *Yes*, she is Fia. It also serves to give a sound conclusion to the sentence, which is somewhat left hanging because of the omitted case clitic which would usually follow the proper noun **fia**.

Vocabulary:

¹⁰Demonstrative.

ai [ʔaj] (*fin.*) *Yes, indeed, it is so.*

The finalizer **ai** is most frequently used with statements of the form “X is Y”, such as the examples we have seen. With other types of statements, other finalizers are used. In fact, every verb and every adjective in Tatari Fara is paired with a finalizer. In a sense, the finalizer may be considered the ‘second half’ of the verb or adjective, needed to complete its meaning.

Here are some examples of the finalizers that go with adjectives:

sura sei pirat inai. [sura sej ʔirat ʔinaj] *The dress is yellow.*

bataʔ sa busan miin. [baʔtaʔ sa buʔsan min] *The chief is fat.*

simani so daharai kaʔuan. *The wolf is ferocious.*
[ʔsimani so daʔharaj kaʔwan]

Vocabulary:

sura [ʔsura] (*fem. n.*) *Traditional women’s garment in Fara.*

pirat [ʔpirat] (*adj.*¹¹) *Yellow.*

inai [ʔinaj] (*fin.*) *Bright.*

bataʔ [baʔtaʔ] (*masc. n.*) *Chief.*

busan [buʔsan] (*adj.*) *Fat.*

miin [min] (*fin.*) *Satiated.*

daharai [daʔharaj] (*adj.*) *Fearsome, ferocious.*

kaʔuan [kaʔwan] (*fin.*) *Muscular, mighty.*

Notice here that although we gave glosses for what each finalizer means, it is not included in the translations of the examples. While Tatari Fara finalizers are often quite meaningful, these meanings mainly function as nuances and connotations rather than as literal meanings. For example, in the third sentence, the predicate is the adjective **daharai**, “fierce”, and the finalizer is **kaʔuan**, which is glossed as “muscular” or “mighty”. This does *not* mean that the sentence is actually claiming that the wolf is muscular and mighty. Rather, the finalizer is intended to *illustrate, emphasize, or make vivid*, the

¹¹Adjective.

fierceness of the wolf. It adds no additional meaning to the sentence. It simply supports the main predicate. The sentence states only that the wolf is fierce; and although the finalizer adds vividness to this claim, it does not actually make the sentence also state that the wolf is in fact muscular and mighty.

Similarly, in the second sentence, the finalizer **miin**, “satiated”, serves to illustrate the chief’s fatness, but it does not imply that the chief is actually satiated. It is the quality of fatness to which the finalizer “satiated” is applied, not the chief himself.

In the same way, the dress described in the first sentence may in fact be a *dull* yellow, but it is still **pirat inai** because the quality of being yellow is “bright”, yellow being a bright color. The finalizer is not making a factual statement, but is only illustrating and re-emphasizing the main predicate.

4.3 Simple Questions

So far, we’ve learned to greet in Tatari Faran, to name things, and to make statements of equivalence about things. Now we will learn how to ask about things.

minas sa sii? [mi'nas:a sī:] *What is your name?*

Vocabulary:

minas [mi'nas] (*masc. n.*) *Name.*

sii [si:] (*interrog.*¹²) *What.*

There are a few things to note here. Firstly, **minas** simply means “name”; although we translated the sentence with the pronoun “your”, this is only implied in the Tatari Faran, not explicit.

Secondly, the new word **sii** is an *interrogative*: a word that asks a question. It is pronounced with a rising tone, which we indicated by placing the ~ accent over the long **i**. From now on, we shall only use the IPA stress mark on **sii**, but the reader should keep in mind that the correct pronunciation is always with a rising tone.¹³

¹²Interrogative: a word that indicates a question.

¹³Thus, it may be thought of as saying in English, “See?”. However, there is no semantic connection with the English.

sii does not have any meaning on its own; it simply serves as a placeholder for the thing being asked for. One might answer this question in this way:

minas sa natua. [mi'nas:a na'twa] *My name is Natua.*

Notice that the structure of the answer is parallel to the structure of the question, except that **sii** is now replaced with the answer to the question.

Let's look at another closely-related question:

minein sei sii? [mi'nejn sej 'si:] *What is your name?*

Vocabulary:

minein [mi'nejn] (*fem. n.*) *Name.*

This question actually asks the same thing, except that **minein** is *feminine* whereas **minas** was *masculine*. In Tatari Faran, two different words are used to refer to the names of males and females. Obviously, one should use the one matching the gender of the person one is speaking to. The answer to this question is, as should be obvious by now:

minein sei misuu. [mi'nejn sej 'misu:] *My name is Misuu.*

Notice that in both cases, although the English translation has the pronouns “your” and “my”, the Tatari Faran omits them. When **minas** or **minein** is used in a question, it is understood to refer to the other party, and when they are used in a statement, it is understood to refer to the speaker.

But what if we find ourselves in a situation where this becomes ambiguous? Or what if, for some reason, we need to refer to our own name in a question, or the other party's name in a statement? In such cases, we may supply the pronouns explicitly:

minas huun sa sii? [mi'nas 'hu:n sa 'si:] *What is my name?*

minein tsen sei misuu. *Your name is Misuu.*
[mi'nejn tsɛn sej 'misu:]

Vocabulary:

huun [ˈhʊn] (*poss. pron.*¹⁴) *My*.

tsen [tsɛn] (*poss. pron.*) *Your*.

We can ask about things other than merely names, of course. It should be clear by now how to form such questions from the form of their answers. For example:

mei so sii? mei so beira. *What is this? This is a stone.*

tara' sa sii? tara' sa bata'. *Who is he? He is the chief.*

fei sei sii? fei sei tiki huun. *What is that? That is my rabbit.*

The perceptive reader may have noticed that the third example is a bit contrived. How does the questioner know to use the feminine case clitic **sei** in her question, since she does not know whether the answer will be a feminine noun? We have made the above examples such that the gender of the question agrees with the gender of the answer—this is the general rule in Tatari Faran. However, in cases such as in the last example, since **fei** may refer to any gender, and the gender of the answer cannot be predicted, the neuter/epicene gender is used:

fei so sii? fei sei tiki huun. *What is that? That is my rabbit.*

Recall that the neuter/epicene gender may refer to any of the three genders in Tatari Faran. It may be thought of as the “wildcard” gender. In the answer, of course, we switch to the feminine gender, because **tiki** is a feminine noun.¹⁵ This is one exception to the rule that the gender of the question should always match that of the answer.

4.4 Statements of Being

We shall now go on to look at our first Tatari Faran verbs. The simplest constructions with verbs are *statements of being*. Consider the following statement:

¹⁴Possessive pronoun.

¹⁵The perceptive reader will note that by using the feminine clitic **sei** for **fei** in the answer, the answering party has revealed the gender of **tiki**, which would otherwise not be obvious since the case clitic of **tiki**, which indicates its gender, is omitted.

san pikas sa kibas ham. *There are five men.*
[san 'pikas:a 'kibas ham]

Vocabulary:

pikas ['pikas] (*num.*¹⁶) *Five.*
kibas ['kibas] (*v.*¹⁷) *To breathe.*
ham [ham] (*fn.*) *To inhale or exhale.*

This particular usage of the verb **kibas...ham** is idiomatic. Tatari Faran does not have a true verb to-be; so it reuses the verb for breathing to mean existence. In this particular context, **kibas...ham** means “to exist”. Hence, the sentence states that five men live, or exist. (Notice how the masculine case particle **sa** specifies the gender for the generic noun **san**. Hence, we translate “five men” rather than “five people”.)

This use of the verb **kibas...ham** can only be used of breathing things, however. For non-breathing things, you would use the verb **tsuni...ira** instead:

kuen ni'as sa tsuni ira. *There are four trees.*
[kum niʔas:a 'tsuni ira]

Vocabulary:

kuen ['kum] (*masc. n.*) *Tree.*
ni'as ['niʔas] (*num.*) *Four.*
tsuni ['tsuni] (*v.*) *To find.*
ira [ʔira] (*fn.*) *To be found.*

Again, the verb **tsuni...ira** is used here in an idiomatic way. The literal meaning of this sentence is “four trees are found”. However, in the absence of a finder, it means “four trees exist”. This usage can also be applied to people and other breathing things, in *statements of location* such as the following:

kiran pikas sa tsuni kuen aba ira.
[kiran 'pikas:a tsuni 'kum ʔaba ʔira]
Five young men are under the trees.

¹⁶Numeral.

¹⁷Verb.

There are a few things to note here.

Firstly, we see a new construction involving **aba**: **aba** is a *postposition*. The Tatari Faran postposition is equivalent to the English preposition, except that it *follows* the modified noun rather than precede it (hence the name *postposition*).

Vocabulary:

aba [ʔaba] (*post.*¹⁸) *Under, underneath.*

The *postpositional phrase* **kuen aba** means “under the trees”. Hence, the literal meaning of this sentence is “five young men were found under the trees”. Of course the idiomatic meaning of **tsuni...ira** is intended here; so we translate it as “there are five men under the trees”.

(The attentive reader will notice that there is no indication of whether **kuen** here is singular or plural. It can be either. We translate it as a plural here because the previous example was talking about four trees, and we assume that we’re talking about the same trees here. Context is important in deciding whether something is singular or plural in Tatari Faran.)

Secondly, notice how the phrase **kuen aba** appears *between* the verb **tsuni** and its finalizer **ira**. In general, whenever there are more than one *verb arguments*, one will appear before the verb, and the rest between the verb and its finalizer.

Finally, note that when a noun is followed by a postposition, the case clitic is omitted. Hence, it is **kuen aba**, not ***kuen sa aba**.

5 Noun Cases

Now we’re ready to tackle one of the most unique features of Tatari Faran: its case system. Let’s begin by expanding on what we’ve seen of verbs so far.

5.1 The Receptive Case

samat na tsuni kiran sa kuen aba ira.

[samat na tsuni 'kiran sa 'kum ʔaba ʔira]

The men found the young men under the trees.

¹⁸Postposition.

Most of the words here should be familiar, but there is a lot more involved here that we should explain now.

The case clitics we have seen earlier are actually only the *conveyant case clitics*. They mark the noun as being in the *conveyant case*. There are two other cases in Tatari Faran: the *originative* and the *receptive*. The **na** in our latest example is one of the *receptive case clitics*. As the reader might infer, the receptive case clitics, like the conveyant case clitics, also come in 3 varieties, corresponding with the 3 genders:

Vocabulary:

na [na] (*masc. clitic*) *Receptive case clitic*.

nei [nei] (*fem. clitic*) *Receptive case clitic*.

no [no] (*neut. clitic*) *Receptive case clitic*.

What are the receptive case clitics used for? In our particular example, we see the receptive case clitic modifying **samat**, “man” or “men”. This marks **samat** as being in the receptive case. But what does that mean?

The receptive case is used for marking the noun which is acting as a *recipient*, *destination*, or *perceiver* relative to the verb. In this particular example, it marks **samat** as the *finder*.

What about **kiran sa**, which is in the *conveyant case*? The conveyant case is used for the noun acting as *transferee*, *thing in motion*, *undergoer*, or *patient* relative to the verb. In this particular example, it marks **kiran** as the *thing found*.

Hence, in our example sentence, the verb tells us that someone found something; the receptive case tells us who the finder is, and the conveyant case tells us who is found.

It is very important to understand that the case marking of nouns is chosen *semantically*. It doesn’t matter what order the nouns appear in; for example, the following sentence says exactly the same thing:

kiran sa tsuni samat na kuen aba ira.

[‘kiran sa tsuni ‘samat na ‘kuen ʔaba ʔira]

The young men were found by the men under the trees.

In the English translation, we have chosen the passive voice so that the order of the nouns most closely matches the Tatari Faran. However, Tatari Faran

does not have active or passive voices. Regardless of where each noun appears, their case marking is chosen based on their semantic relationship with the verb. The finder is *always* receptive, and the findee is *always* conveyant. We can even put “under the trees” at the front of the sentence, and it will still say the same thing:

kuen aba tsuni samat na kiran sa ira.
 ['kuen ʔaba tsuni 'samat na 'kiran sa ʔira]
Under the trees, the men found the young men.

In each of these cases, the emphasis of the sentence differs, but the *factual content* is identical. Moreover, *any* of the noun phrases may be *omitted* at will, and the resulting sentence remains grammatical:

kuen aba tsuni samat na ira. *Under the trees, the men found (something).*

kuen aba tsuni ira. *Under the trees, (they were) found.*

Of course, in these two examples, the factual content is not exactly the same. Some information has been omitted, which we supplied in the translations based on the context. Nevertheless, they are *factually consistent* with the full sentence that contains all of the noun phrases.

5.2 The Conveyant Case

We will continue our exploration of Tatari Faran cases by looking more closely at the conveyant case. Consider the following sentence:

samat pikas sa tapa kiran na bata.
 [samat 'pikas:a tapa 'kiran:a bata]

Vocabulary:

tapa [ta'pa] (*v.*) *To walk, to go.*
 bata [bata] (*fin.*) *To tread.*

It is clear that this sentence talks about *someone* walking. The question is, *who?* Can you tell by looking at which nouns are marked with which case? Remember what we said about the conveyant case and the receptive case:

The conveyant case is used for marking the noun which is acting as *transferee*, *undergoer*, *patient*, or *thing in motion*.

The receptive case is used for marking the noun which is acting as a *recipient*, *destination*, or *perceiver*.

Who is walking?

We see that the conveyant noun phrase in this sentence is **samat pikas sa**, “five men”. Hence, the “five men” are what is in motion in this sentence. Hence, it is the five men who are walking.

But what about **kiran na**? What does the receptive case signify in this case? It signifies that the young men are the *destination* of the five men’s walking. Therefore, we may translate the sentence into English as:

Five men walk to the young men.

Here, we see the use of the conveyant case to indicate thing or person in motion. These are the uses of the conveyant case that we’ve seen so far:

1. In isolated noun phrases, it is the ‘default’ case: **samat sa**—adult man; **tiki sei**—rabbit; **san so**—a person.
2. In statements of equivalence and statements of being, it marks the *subject*: **tara’ sei fia**—she is Fia; **fei so beira**—that is a stone; **kuen ni’as sa tsuni ira**—there are four trees.
3. With the verb **tsuni...ira**, it marks the *thing found*.
4. With the verb **tapa...bata**, it marks the *thing in motion*.

There are more uses of the conveyant case. For example:

huu na arap pireis sei ikat. *I pick up the chanterelle.*
[‘hu: na ʔarap ˈpirejs:ej ʔikat]

Vocabulary:

huu [‘hu:] (*pron.*) 1st person pronoun, I, me.
arap [ʔarap] (*v.*) To pick up, to take.
ikat [ʔikat] (*fin.*) To grasp, to hold in hand.

pireis [ˈpirejs] (*fem. n.*) *Edible yellow mushroom, chanterelle.*

We see here that the conveyant case is used to mark the thing being picked up. The thing being picked up is what is *transferred* from where it was into the picker’s hand; that’s why it is in the *conveyant* case. Notice also that the picker, being the *recipient* of the thing being picked up, is in the *receptive* case.

Now we look at one last example of the conveyant case, which will lead us to the next topic:

huu ka tampa pireis sei tuu. *I throw the chanterelle.*
[ˈhuː na tampa ˈpirejsːej tuː]

Vocabulary:

ka [ka] (*masc. clitic*) *Originative case clitic.*

tampa [ˈtampa] (*v.*) *To throw, to hurl.*

tuu [tuː] (*fin.*) *To be hurled through the air.*

As you can see, the conveyant case is used to indicate the object being thrown, **pireis sei**.

But what about **huu ka**? What is the function of the originative case in this sentence? We shall explore this in the next section.

5.3 The Originative Case

It is probably easier to understand the originative case if we expand the last example to include the receptive case as well:

huu ka tampa pireis sei diru nei tuu.
[ˈhuː ka tampa ˈpirejsːej ˈdiru nej tuː]

Here we see all three noun cases in action: “I”, originative; “chanterelle”, conveyant; “girl”, receptive. The interpretation should be obvious. “I throw the chanterelle to the girl.” The conveyant case, as we’ve seen, marks the *thing being thrown*; the receptive case marks the *destination*, or *target*, of the throwing; and the originative case marks the *thrower*.

The originative case indicates *source*, *origin*, *active agent*, or *source*. Therefore, it is used here to mark the *thrower*, the starting point of the

thrown object. Just as with the conveyant and receptive cases, the originative case is chosen *semantically* rather than syntactically.

Let's look at another use of the originative case:

samat ka juerat huu na diru ni'ei itu.
[samat ka dzu'rat 'hu: na 'diru ni?ej ?itu]
The men looked at me and the girl.

Vocabulary:

juerat [dzu'rat] (*v.*) *To look at, to stare at.*
itu [?itu] (*fin.*) *To cast a stare at.*
ni'ei [ni?ej] (*clitic*) *Contraction of **nei** and **ei**.*

Here, we see that the *looker*, **samat**, is in the originative case, and the people looked at, **huu** and **diru**, are in the receptive case. This should be straightforward enough.

It is tempting to regard the originative as the 'subject' and the receptive as the 'object' based on this example. However, as the next example will show, this is not true in Tatari Faran:

samat na hamra diru kei pireis ki'ei aram.
[samat na hamra 'diru kej 'pirejs ki?ej ?aram]
The men see the girl and the chanterelle.

Vocabulary:

kei [kej] (*fem. clitic*) *Originative case clitic.*

The unfamiliar-looking word **ki'ei** is actually the contraction of the *feminine originative case clitic*, **kei**, with the conjunction **ei**. It is another example of euphony.

$$\text{kei} + \text{ei} \longrightarrow \text{ki'ei}$$

Notice that **samat**, "men", here is in the *receptive* case, not the originative case, and that **diru** and **pireis** are in the *originative* case. What's going on here? Why is the looker in the previous example in the *originative* case, but the seer here is in the *receptive* case?

To understand this, one should stop trying to fit Tatari Faran typology to the standard European model. It simply does not work that way. It

does not work in terms of subjects and objects. Instead, it chooses from its 3 noun cases based on the *semantic* relationship of the noun with the verb. The reason the receptive is used here is because the verb **hamra** is an *involitional* verb—seeing is the passive reception of visual information from your environment, as opposed to the active act of looking in a particular direction.

When you look at something, you are *directing* your eyes towards it—therefore, the looker is in the *originative* case for the verb **juerat**. The thing being looked at is the *target* of your looking; therefore, it is in the *receptive* case.

The result of looking is that you see the visual image of that thing; i. e., you *receive* sight of it. Hence, the seer is in the *receptive* case for the verb **hamra**. The thing being seen is what *originates* the sight that you see; therefore, the thing being seen is in the *originative* case.

Because of this distinction in Tatari Faran, it is important not to confuse looking and seeing. In English, it is common to hear phrases such as “see that dog!” and “I am going to see him”. However, what is *really* meant is “*look at* that dog!” and “I am going to *meet* him”, respectively. Tatari Faran uses the verb **juerat**, *not* **hamra**, for the former, and another verb altogether, **mihat**, which is unrelated to seeing, for the latter.

A similar conflation in English that may cause trouble with Tatari Faran is the verb “to smell”. In English, there are actually two different meanings of this verb. “The dog smells me” can be understood two ways: the dog *sniffs at* me, or the dog *catches a whiff of* my *scent*. In Tatari Faran, two completely different verbs are used for these two meanings, with completely different noun case assignments.

simani dirun ko huena hiim. *The girl’s wolf sniffs.*
 ['simani dirun kɔ 'huena hiim]

simani dirun no fahun samat ka uen.
 ['simani dirun nɔ fa,hun 'samat ka ʔum]
The girl’s wolf smells the men.

Vocabulary:

dirun ['dirun] (*n.*) *Genitive case of diru.*
 ko [kɔ] (*neut. clitic*) *Originative case clitic.*

huena...hiim [ˈhuna hiim] (v.) *To sniff at, to smell. The sniffer is in the originative, and the thing sniffed at in the receptive.*

fahun...uen [faˈhun ʔuun] (v.) *To catch the scent of, to smell. The smeller is in the receptive, and the cause of the smell in the originative.*

Notice how the verb **huena** is used for the directing of the wolf's olfactory senses toward something, and how **fahun** is used for the receiving of olfactory sensations from something.

To complete our discussion of the originative case, we show how it is used with a verb of motion:

simani so aipam samat na inui, samat sa hena pamra simani ko itan.

[ˈsimani so ʔajpam ˈsamat na ʔinuj . ˈsamat sa hena ˌpamra ˈsimani ko ʔitan]

The wolf chases the men, and the men run away from the wolf.

Vocabulary:

aipam...inui [ˈʔajpam ʔinuj] (v.) *To pursue, to chase away.*

hena [hena] (conj.) *And, and then.*

pamra...itan [ˈpamra ʔitan] (v.) *To run away, to flee.*

Here we see how the originative case is used in the second sentence to indicate *origin*: the men ran away *from the wolf*.

The conjunction **hena** joins two *clauses*, and should be distinguished from **ei**, which joins two *noun phrases*. It appears *after* the first noun phrase of the second clause, unlike “and” in English, which appears between the two joined clauses. It implies a *sequence* from the first clause to the second.

5.4 Introducing yourself

We have now learned enough to be able to introduce ourselves in Tatari Faran. An English translation follows, as an aid.

san tse. minas sa natua. huu sa tapa fara ko bata. mei sei tiki huun. mei sei timai tsin. huu ka tsi'ai mei nei jinai. minein sei sii?

Vocabulary:

natua [na'twa] (*masc. n.*) *Natua, a common masculine name.*

fara [fa'ra] (*neut. n.*) *Fara, “the plain”.*

timai tsin ['timaj tsin] (*adj.*) *Adorable, cute.*

tsi'ai...jinai ['tsiʔaj dʒinaɪ] (*v.*) *To love.*

Here is the English translation:

Hi! My name is Natua. I come from Fara. This is my rabbit.
It is adorable. I do love it. What is your name?

6 More on Questions

We've already seen the simplest type of questions: that of asking what something is. Now we'll go on to look at other types of questions.

In general, there are a few different types of questions that one may ask, depending on the kind of information sought for. For example, in questions such as “What is she holding?”, or “What is that over there?”, or “Who is in the house?”, the asker is seeking to know a particular object, or, more precisely, a noun referent. The simple questions that we've seen in section 4.3 are examples of what-questions.

Sometimes, a different type of question is asked. For example: “Is that a rabbit?”, or, “Did she talk to the chief?”. In these questions, the information sought isn't any particular object, but rather a “yes” or “no” answer, i. e., an *affirmation* or a *denial* of the statement. We call this type of questions *confirmative questions*.

Another type of question lies somewhere between these two. It is the *alternative question*. For example, “Is it the duck or the rabbit that she saw?” This type of question resembles the confirmative question, in that the asker seeks confirmation as to which alternative is true. It also resembles the what-question, in that it asks for the object for which the statement is true.

6.1 What-questions

We've already seen how to form what-questions from statements of equivalence. Now let's look at a verbal statement and see how we can turn it into a question:

tiki kei hamra diru nei aram.
[ˈtiˈki keɪ hamra ˈdiru neɪ ʔaram]
The girl sees a rabbit.

Here is one way of forming a question from this statement:

sii kei diru nei hamra? *What does the girl see?*
[ˈsiː keɪ diru neɪ ˈhamra]

Recall that **sii** is an *interrogative noun*: it does not refer to anything on its own, but serves as a placeholder for the expected answer.

Notice that the verb **hamra** appears at the *end* of the sentence, rather than following the first noun-phrase, and that the finalizer is omitted. This different word order is called the *interrogative word order*, and is an indication that the sentence is intended to be a question. The finalizer is always omitted in a question, because it serves as a reinforcement of a factual statement—and a question is not a factual statement.

The answer to this question is simply a noun phrase *matching in case* with the interrogative noun **sii**:

tiki kei. [ˈtiˈki keɪ] *(She sees) a rabbit.*

6.2 Who-questions

There is another interrogative noun which is sometimes used in place of **sii**. This is the interrogative **sia**, which can only refer to people. For example:

sia ko diru nei tsana? *Who spoke to the girl?*
[ˈsja ko diru neɪ ˈtsana]

The perceptive reader may remember from section 4.3 that **sii** was used in asking who someone is:

tara' sa sii? tara' sa bata'. *Who is he? He is the chief.*

Why was **sia** not used there instead of **sii**?

The answer is that the question in the second example is not really asking about the *identity* of the person, since the pronoun **tara'** already refers to him. Rather, the question is about *what* that person's status or occupation is. In other words, he is already standing there, and we have already singled him out; what we want to know is not which of the many people around

us he is, but what *kind* of person he is, whether a chief, or something else. Hence, **sii** is used as the interrogative.

The question in the first example, on the other hand, is truly a question of identity: “*Who* was the one who spoke to the girl?” In this case, we cannot point to the person who spoke to the girl, since we do not know who it is, even if the person is present. What we want to know in this case is, which of the many people there are is the person that we’re interested in? Therefore, **sia** is used.

In other words, when asking who someone is, **sia** is used when we have not yet singled out which of the many people around us that someone may be, and **sii** is used when we have already singled out the person we’re referring to, but wish to know something more about that person.

6.3 Confirmative Questions

Let’s look at another way to question the statement introduced earlier:

tiki kei hamra diru nei aram.
[‘ti’ki kej hamra ‘diru nej ‘aram]
The girl sees a rabbit.

We may question whether or not this event actually took place:

tiki kei diru nei hamra ta? *Does the girl see the rabbit?*
[‘ti’ki kej diru nej ‘hamra ta]

This form of the question is the confirmative question. The *interrogative particle* **ta** modifies the verb **hamra**, and indicates a yes/no question. Again, we see that the verb comes at the end of the sentence, and the finalizer is omitted, because this is a question and not a statement of fact.

The answer to this question can be either: **ai** (yes), or **bai** (no).

ai. [‘ai.] *Yes (she sees it).*

bai. [‘bai.] *No (she doesn’t see it).*

There is more than one way of asking a confirmative question. Instead of questioning the verb (“did the girl really see?”), we can also question one of the noun phrases. For example:

tiki kita diru nei hamra? *Is it the rabbit that the girl sees?*
[ˈtiˈki kita diru nej ˈhamra]

diru nita tiki kei hamra? *Is it the girl who sees the rabbit?*
[ˈdiru nita tiki nej ˈhamra]

The unfamiliar-looking words **kita** and **nita** are, in fact, contractions of the feminine case clitics with the interrogative particle **ta** for euphonic reasons:

$\text{kei} + \text{ta} \longrightarrow \text{kita}$

$\text{nei} + \text{ta} \longrightarrow \text{nita}$

This particular contraction only happens with the feminine case clitics. The masculine case clitics do not contract with **ta**, and so if masculine nouns were used in the question instead, **ta** simply follows the subject noun-phrase:

samat na ta tiki kei hamra? *Is it the man who sees the rabbit?*

samat ka ta diru nei hamra? *Is it the man whom the girl sees?*

In this second form of the confirmative question, the interrogative **ta** modifies the subject noun-phrase rather than the verb. The verb still comes at the end of the sentence, since this is the interrogative word order.

6.4 Alternative Questions

Now let's look at how to construct an alternative question:

tiki kita samat ka ta diru nei hamra?
Is it the rabbit or the man that the girl sees?

Notice that this is simply an expanded form of the second type of confirmative question, with a second subject noun-phrase added. Both alternatives are modified by the interrogative **ta** to indicate that they are being questioned.

This form of the question gives a choice over two options. One may either answer:

tiki kei. *(It is) the rabbit.*

Or,

samat ka. *(It is) the man.*

Note that the originative case of the nouns being questioned is retained.

6.5 Other Questions

There are other types of questions that we haven't covered yet, such as “why”, “where”, or “when” questions. Generally, these other types of questions all fall under the category of what-questions in Tatari Faran, with the help of various postpositions.

For example, to ask a “why” question, we make use of the postposition **utu**, “for the purpose of”, “in order to”:

sii utu diru sei itsan no tapa? *Why does the girl go to the cinder cone?*

Here, the phrase **sii utu** means “for what purpose”.

A similar construction is used for “where” questions. The postposition **ipai**, “at (a location)”, is used to modify the interrogative **sii** to mean “where”, or, “at what place”:

sii ipai diru sei? *Where is the girl?*

Likewise, “when” questions are constructed using the postposition **iti**, “during”:

sii iti diru sei itsan no tapa? *When does the girl go to the cinder cone?*

“How” questions are constructed using the postposition **i'i**, “according to” or “after the manner of”:

sii i'i buneis sei baripai? *How do you cook giant mushrooms?*
[si: iʔi bunejs sej ba'ripaj]

Literally, “after what manner are giant mushrooms prepared?”.

7 Complex Sentences

Now we are ready to look at more complex sentence constructions in Tatari Faran.

7.1 The Conjunctive Verb

So far, the utterances that we have learned only consist of a single *clause*: only a single verb is used to describe the subject of the sentence. What if we want to describe more than one action associated with the subject?

To understand this, let's look at two sentences sharing the same subject, and see how they can be put together:

kiran na arap beira so ikat. *The young man picks up a stone.*

kiran ka tampa beira so jamba nei tuu.
The young man throws the stone at the snake.

Vocabulary:

jamba ['ɟamba] (*fem. n.*) *Snake.*

Notice that the subject of the first sentence, **kiran sa**, is in the conveyant case, whereas the subject of the second sentence, **kiran ka**, is in the originative case. Now let's put the two together:

kiran na arap beira so, katampa beira so jamba nei itu.
The young man picks up a stone, and throws the stone at the snake.

The unfamiliar-looking word **katampa** is simply a contraction of the case clitic **ka** and the verb **tampa**. This form of the verb is called the *conjunctive verb*, and gives a further description of the previous subject. The prefixed case clitic indicates the role of the subject relative to this second verb, since it often is different from the role relative to the original verb. In this particular case, since the masculine originative clitic is used, the verb is said to be *masculine originative conjunctive*.

As the reader can guess by now, the verb can contract with any of the 9 possible case clitics. Using **tampa** as an example, here are the possible conjunctive forms:

ka + tampa	→	katampa
kei + tampa	→	kitampa
ko + tampa	→	kotampa

sa + tampa	→	satampa
sei + tampa	→	sitampa
so + tampa	→	sotampa
na + tampa	→	natampa
nei + tampa	→	nitampa
no + tampa	→	notampa

Notice that when the feminine clitics contract with the verb, their long vowel **ei** shortens to **i**.

More than one conjunctive verb can be appended a sentence, of course. The finalizer may be omitted from all but the last clause. For example:

diru sei saba, sitapa buta' kei, nihamra bata' ka, hena kei tsana
bata' na aniin.

The girl rose, went from the house, saw the chief, and spoke to him.

Vocabulary:

saba...anan ['saba ʔanan] (v.) *To rise up.*

sitapa [sita'pa] (v.) *Fem. conveyant prefixed form of **tapa**.*

buta' [bu'taʔ] (fem. n.) *House, hut.*

nihamra [ni'hamra] (v.) *Fem. receptive prefixed form of **hamra**.*

The last clause uses the explicit conjunction **hena** to which the case clitic attaches; so **kei** is not contracted onto the verb **tsana**. The finalizer is omitted for all except the last clause, which lends a dramatic effect to it.

7.2 Elaborations

7.2.1 With eta

In English, it is common to say things like: “The man who came to my house is tall and swift” or “I saw the girl who came from the village”. In Tatari Faran, however, there is no direct translation for such sentences. Instead, multiple shorter sentences are preferred, for example:

kiran sa kirat tepan, tara' sa eta tapa buta' huun nei bata.
The young man is tall and swift, [the one who] came to my house.

Notice the little word **eta** in the second sentence. This word is a conjunction that tells the listener that this second sentence is an *elaboration* of the first sentence, not something independent. Its purpose is to give us more information about the first sentence; in this case, it elaborates on the man who came to my house.

In our gloss we put “[the one who]” in square brackets, because literally the Tatari Faran says “he”, but if we were to translate the sentence simply as “the young man is tall and swift, he came to my house,” it might be misunderstood that the main action here is his coming to my house. In Tatari Faran, however, the conjunction **eta** clearly marks this second clause as something subsidiary, a tangent, not part of the main thought in the conversation. The main idea is the first sentence, “the young man is tall and swift”; his coming to my house is merely an elaboration. It’s merely a clarification on which young man we’re talking about—the one who came to my house, not the one sitting next to me, for example.

Vocabulary:

eta [eta] (*conj.*) *Marks an elaboration of the previous sentence.*

kirat...tepan ['kirat tepan] (*adj.*) *Tall and swift.*

7.2.2 An Aside: Polysemous Adjectives

As a little tangent,¹⁹ **kirat** is one of several *polysemous* adjectives in Tatari Faran: adjectives that describe two or more things at once. While there *is* a way to say “tall” and “swift” separately, Tatari Faran prefers using **kirat** when these two attributes occur together. This is because the native speakers regard certain combinations of attributes as prototypical of a particular ideal or stereotype. In this case, the prototype of a young man is that he is tall and swift, so the single adjective **kirat**, which is cognate with **kiran** (“young man”), is employed here.

Note that one should never confuse an adjective with its finalizer; it is *not* the case that **kirat** means “tall” and **tepan** means “swift”. Rather, **kirat** itself means both “tall” and “swift”. The finalizer **tepan** only serves

¹⁹In Tatari Faran we would say **eta** here.

to reinforce the meaning of **kirat**, and does not actually carry any factual content.²⁰

Now, since **kirat** is prototypical of a young man, it's not used to describe young women. Instead, another adjective is employed:

diru sei jini dam. *The girl is thin and tall.*

Vocabulary:

jini...dam [ʔɰini dam] (*adj.*) *Tall and thin.*

The native speakers regard the prototypical girl to be tall and thin, so a single adjective **jini** is used to describe her. As with **kirat**, the word **jini** carries *both* meanings of “tall” and “thin”; the finalizer **dam** does not carry any factual content.

7.2.3 With ena

But coming back to our discussion of elaborations in Tatari Faran, **eta** isn't the whole story. There's another conjunction **ena** that has a similar function:

huu na hamra diru jini kei, tara' sei ena tapa misanan kei bata.
I see the tall and thin girl who came from the village.

In the English translation we used a dependent clause “who came from the village”. But in Tatari Faran, these are two separate sentences: “I see the tall and thin girl, she came from the village”. The conjunction **ena**, however, marks the second sentence as something tangential, not part of the main thought, whereas in English the literal translation might be wrongly understood to mean that I saw the girl and then she came from the village.

But why did we use the word **ena** in this case, rather than **eta**? The reason is that in this case, **tara'** refers to **diru** in the first clause, which is not the subject of the sentence but one of its arguments. The rule is that when an elaborating clause refers back to the subject of the previous

²⁰On its own **tepan** *does* carry the connotations of “handsome” or “majestic”—this is another part of the native speakers' prototypical young man. However, as we explained on page 17, as a finalizer **tepan** does not actually add “handsome” or “majestic” to the characteristics attributed to the young man. The young man could be ugly and debased, but still be **kirat tepan**. The finalizer reinforces only the adjective, and does not modify the predicate.

sentence, we use the conjunction **eta**; but when the elaboration refers not to the subject but one of the arguments, then we must use **ena** instead.

In many cases this distinction isn't really important, but there are cases where an ambiguity may arise, and this distinction helps us to disambiguate:

samat na hamra kiran ka aram, tara' sa eta bata' misanaran.

The man who is the chief of the village sees the young man.

samat na hamra kiran ka aram, tara' sa ena bata' misanaran.

The man sees the young man who is the chief of the village.

Here, **tara' sa** in the second clause could refer to either **samat** “man” or to **kiran** “young man” in the first clause. Which one is it? When we say **eta**, it must refer to the subject of the first clause, which is **samat**. So the first sentence is saying that the (older) man is the chief. But when we say **ena**, then the pronoun **tara'** must refer to someone who *isn't* the subject, that is, the young man. So the second sentence is saying that the young man is the chief.