AN INTRODUCTION TO THE DISTRIBUTION OF STATIVE CLAUSE TYPES IN HAUSA NARRATIVE

Kathy Cain
University of Texas at Arlington

This paper is an introductory investigation into the distribution in Hausa narrative discourse of stative clauses containing the non-verbal particles **nee/cee** 'be', **gàà** 'there is', and **àkwai** 'there exists.' The body of data is a collection of eleven folktakes from Kraft (1973) and Kraft and Kraft (1973) and the first part of the novel Magana Jari Ce 'Talk Is Money' (also from Kraft (1973)). The reader is referred to the texts of the folktales themselves in the Appendix for the examples in context; I include in the discussion here only the examples themselves. For the novel (hereafter MJC) when necessary I intend to include enough context to make the examples intelligible, although the entire text itself is not included. A brief summary of the portion investigated is included here by way of introduction (for a discussion of aspects in MJC see Burquest (forthcoming) from which the following is taken):

> Once there was a great chief, Abduramani, who was sad in spite of his wealth because although he had a daughter, he had no son. Even when his daughter gave birth to a son, Mahamudu, it had little effect on his unhappiness. But one day a great religious scholar came and told him of a dream in which a son was born to him. The chief carried out the instructions prescribed by the scholar, and a son, Musa, was born to his wife. Musa and Mahamudu were raised together like twins.
>
> But Abduramani's vizier was jealous, because Musa's birth meant he himself could not inherit the kingdom upon the chief's death. So he made a plan to separate the two so that he could kill Musa. Although it was a time of peace, he counseled the chief to war, and suggested that Mahamudu be sent back to his own home for training. But Musa expressed displeasure with the plan, so Abduramani rejected the idea and the matter was dropped, leaving the vizier unsuccessful.
>
> Meanwhile, the nearby chief of Senari sent his own vizier with a letter asking that his daughter and Musa be married. Abduramani was outraged at the idea and drove the emissary off. But his own vizier saw his chance, and he sent a message to the chief of Senari pledging his allegiance and telling him how to invade the country successfully.
>
> One day Abduramani was off riding with Musa and Mahamudu when they came across an Arab with a parrot for sale. Musa wanted it, and the chief made an offer, but the offer was rejected as too low because the parrot not only had the ability to speak, but was also clairvoyant. Abduramani gave the parrot various tests, all of which he passed. Finally he asked him what the future held for Musa. The parrot was evasive and did not answer until threatened--Musa would be the cause of great destruction in the country. This made Abduramani furious, and he was about to kill the parrot when a lone rider came up with the news that the chief of Senari had invaded the country. The parrot was consulted for advice, and he came up with a defense strategy which was successful, and the chief bought him.

Warfare continued, and the chief had to go to the battle. He left Musa and Mahamudu in the city, under guard, with the parrot ultimately responsible for them. But just as he was leaving, the vizier reminded him of his earlier promise to take Mahamudu with him to war, and so Musa was left alone, as the vizier wanted. That night Musa was able to escape from his imprisonment, but he had promised to tell the parrot everything, so he went to tell him he was following the troops to battle. The parrot responded that Musa had done well to come and tell him, for thus he showed that he was not like the little lion who did not follow the instructions of his superiors. Musa had not heard of the little lion, so he inquired about him, and the parrot spent all that night telling him the story.

In subsequent portions of the novel the plan of Musa is always to go join the fighting; the plan of the vizier is always to kill Musa when he does so; the strategy of the parrot is always to keep telling stories to delay Musa and thus protect him. It is the numerous folktales which result which form the main body of the novel itself. Because the portion studied provides an overall context for the whole, it has a degree of integrity which makes it suitable for investigation in its own right.

For reasons that will become clear, it is useful to distinguish the details of distribution for each type in non-quoted material, in indirect quotes, and in quoted material. The order of discussion here is **nee/cee** (occurring in non-quoted material, in indirect quotes, and in direct quotes), **gàà** (occurring in non-quoted material and in quotes), **àkwai** (occurring only in direct quotes), and finally **baà**, the negative of **àkwai** (occurring in non-quoted material and in quotes).

1. Nee/cee

There are relatively few instances of **nee/cee** (**nee** is the masculine and plural form, **cee** the feminine form) being used in non-quoted narrative material in the literature consulted; it is used much more frequently in reported speech, as discussed below. In particular, it is important to note explicitly at the outset that, contrary to what might be expected, the construction is not used by the narrator to describe surroundings or situations, or time. Rather, the progressive aspect is used for that function, as the following examples indicate (here and elsewhere, titles refer to the folktale in which the example can be found, those with no such identification being from MJC):

1. **wata raanaa a-nàà ruwaa** (Squirrel and Porcupine)
   a day P water
   'One day it was raining.'

2. **wata raanaa dilaa ya-nàà cî-n kààzaa...** (Jackal and Heron)
   a day jackal P eating-of hen
   'One day Jackal was eating chicken...'

3. **wata kuuraa ta-nàà jî-n yunwàà...** (The Hyena and the Drum)
   a hyena P feeling-of hunger
   'A hyena was feeling hungry...'

4. **A-nàà nan, râ-n nan, sarkii...**
   P here day-def here chief
   'One day, the chief...'

5. **Wàlàhaa nàà yìì**
   9-10 am P do
   'It was mid-morning.'

On the contrary, clauses with **nee/cee** in non-quoted narrative serve to identify the thoughts and feelings of a character. In this way the construction is almost like an indirect quote, but instead of the words being spoken out loud, they are only thought. Note the following:

6. **...ya-nàà tsàmmanìì kwatancì-n-sà awaakii ukù nee**
   (The Evil Judge)
   P thinking proposal-of-his goats three be
   'He was thinking that his (=the defendant's) proposal was three goats.'

7. **...dà sukà gàmu ya ga, àshee màkaahòo nee.** (Blindman)
   rel RC meet RC see well blindman be
   '(At the time) when they came together he saw that, why, it was a blindman!'

8. **...duk dà hakà murnà-r-sà ràgaggiyaa cèè...**
   all with thus joy-of-his reduced be
   'Nevertheless, his joy was incomplete (because the son of a daughter cannot inherit)'

9. **...sarkii nàà jî-n-sà kàmar tààtsuunìyaa cèè...**
   chief P hearing-of-his like folktale be
   'The chief treated it (what the parrot said) like a folktale...'

Nee/cee follows the same pattern in the one example (in MJC) of an indirect quote:

10. **Ya zoo nèè, yà ìsad dà ùmùrnii...**
    RC come be S deliver command
    '(The teacher said) he came only to deliver the command...'

In this example, use of **nee** shows the teacher's thought and purpose for coming.

In quoted speech, **nee/cee** is used during moments of high tension. This is especially evident in speech exchanges during the inciting moment and peak of a story. Such exchanges are often confrontational in nature, and non-confrontational stories like 'Tortoise and Vulture' and 'Two Frogs' do not use **nee/cee** at all. The one non-tension instance of **nee/cee** in the folktales considered is in 'The Hyena and the Drum', in which **nee** is used in a proverb. Note the following examples:

11. **"Kai, dai, munaafùkii nèè."** (The Evil Judge)
    you hypocrite be
    "You're a hypocrite!"

12. **"`Ashee, dai, amoo bàà naamàà ba nèè."** (The Hyena and the Drum)
    well sound neg meat neg be
    "Why, sound isn't meat!"

13. **"K'arya-r-kì cee"** (Hen and Elephant)
    lie-of-you be
    "You liar!"

14. **"`Abi-n naa-kì bàà na laafiyàà ba nèè."** (Hen and Elephant)
    thing-of yours neg of good neg be
    "This thing of yours is not good!"

15. **"Ai, àbinci mài kyaù nee, bà naà reenàà ba."**
(The Gwari and the Teacher)
food of goodness be neg F2 despise neg
"Why, the food is good, I won't despise it.'"

16. **"`Ashee kàree nèè? Kaa k'i gayàà minì!"**
(The Gwari and the Teacher)
dog be C refuse telling to-me
"Why, was it dog? You didn't tell me!"

17. **"Nii bàà dabbàà ba nèè."** (Bat and the Land Tax)
I neg animal neg be
"I am not an animal."

18. **"Nii bàà tsuntsuu ba nèè..."** (Bat and the Land Tax)
I neg bird neg be
"I am not a bird..."

Consider the following exchange from 'The Blindman with the Lamp':

19. **Man: "Daree dà raanaa bàà duk ɗaya su-kèè gàree kà ba?"**
night with day neg all one RP toward you neg
"Aren't day and night the same to you?"

Blindman: "Duk ɗaya nèè mànà..."
all one be indeed
"Exactly the same..."

Note that in this example the semantic content of the question and the reply is the same, though the progressive aspect occurs in the first and **nee** in the second.

Finally, note that the emphatic use of **nee** is seen also in quoted material (the first example shows emphasis of the entire clause, the others of the fronted nominal):

20. **"...naa rik'èè ta bàà don kaì-naa ba nèè,**
(The Blindman with the Lamp)
C hold it neg because head-my neg be
"...I don't carry it (the lamp) for myself,

àmmaa sabòdà irì-n-kù nee, maràsaa hankàlii...
but because type-of-you be lacking good-sense
but because of foolish people like you..."

21. **"Ai, naamà-n-kù nee na yankàà ma-sà."** (The Boy and the Dog)
meat-of-you be RC cut to-him
"Well, it's your meat I've been cutting for him."

22. **"Bàà kai nèè yànzu ka cí ba?"** (The Gwari and the Teacher)
neg you be now RC eat neg
"Aren't you the one who ate it (dog) just now?"

Because **nee/cee** in quoted speech occurs at points of high tension (Inciting Incident and Peak), there is a higher ratio in the compilation of folktales than in MJC. In the folktales, 16% of the clauses found in quoted speech are those with **nee/cee**, but in MJC the figure is only 5%. Since the eleven folktales are short and compact, they have less 'filler' than MJC, and most of them have both an Inciting Incident and a Peak. Assuming the purpose of **nee/cee** in marking points of tension, one folktale alone would

be expected to have fewer instances of **nee/cee** than MJC, but because there are eleven folktales, the total ratio is higher.

In MJC, **nee/cee** is used in quoted speech in two ways. One is for proverbs, such as in the case late in the portion studied, where Musa says:

23. **"Dà Bàak'o dà Tùkurà, ai, duk Umbutaawaa nèè."**
with Bako with Tukura all Ningi be
"It's six of one, half a dozen of the other."

Other such proverbial uses occur in MJC as well.

The primary use of **nee/cee**, however, follows that of the folktales, namely in moments of high tension and often conflict. Commonly its usage is either in an accusation, or in a reply to an accusation. In fact, the first occurrence of **nee** is in the very first conflict in MJC. The vizier has proposed that the chief separate Mahamudu and Musa by sending Mahamudu back to his home to be trained for warfare. Musa interrupts, with great feeling:

24. **"In, dai don à ɗaùkè Màhàmuudù ne, à bar nì--nii kaɗai--**
if so-that S take be S leave me I only
nii bà-n yàrda ba."
I neg-C agree neg
"If Mahamudu is going to be taken, and I left behind alone, I don't agree."

The next instance occurs when the chief is angry, after receiving a presumptuous letter from the chief of Sinari. He accuses the members of his court of losing heart, and the vizier defends himself. There are three instances of **nee/cee** in the exchange:

25. **Sarkii ya cèè, "Kai,maa, kaa kàrai nèè, kàmar Lìimân?"**
chief RC say you C lose-heart be like Liman
The chief said, "So have you too yourself lost heart, like Liman?"

Sai ya amsàà ceèwaa, "Bàà kàraayàà ba cèè.
RC answer saying neg losing-heart neg be
He answered, "It's not losing heart.

Ai, gàskiyaa cèè, àbî-n dà na-kèè faɗì yànzu..."
truth be thing-def rel RP saying now
Indeed, what I am saying now..."

A third instance of **nee/cee** is that in which the chief's servant rebukes the Arab about the selling price of the parrot:

26. **"Ka-nàà tsàmmaanìì sarkii yaa tàmbàyee kà karì-n màganàà nee?"**
P thinking chief C ask you usage-of word be
"Do you think the chief asked you for fun (as playful talk)?"

The exchange which follows is very heated, and there are seven instances of **nee/cee**. A similar instance of heated dialogue is found later, when the parrot's prediction regarding Musa is proven correct, and the parrot confronts the chief:

27. **"Kai nèè, bà kà sanìì ba."**
you be neg C know neg
"You are the one who is ignorant."

However, the high tension manifested by **nee/cee** does not have to be open conflict. Note that it is used also when the chief prepares to go off to war without the boys and commands them to consult with the parrot for advice (a serious covenant):

28. **"`Abi-n dà ya cèè mu-ku, kùwaa, koo dà ku-nàà**
thing-def rel RC say to-you also with P
tsàmmaanìì kâ-n kuskurèè
thinking head-of error
"Whatever he says to you, even if you think it's a major blunder,
nee, kadà kù k'eetàree shi!"
be neg S cross him
don't neglect to do it!"

A few sentences later, the parrot accepts responsibility in a similar vein:

29. **`Akuu ya cèè, "Hakà nan nèè."**
parrot RC say thus here be
'The parrot said, "So be it." '

Note that in this context the chief is on very good terms with both the boys and the parrot, and there is no conflict; but there is still very high tension because of the danger and the solemnity of the oath. It is my conclusion that tension between two parties is the common denominator for the use of **nee/cee** in quoted speech in Hausa narrative literature.

2. Gàà

Non-verbal clauses with **gàà** 'there is' are rare in the texts consulted. In the folktales there is only a single instance of **gàà** in non-quoted narration:

30. **Jìm kàdan, maa, gàà curìì sòòsai.** (Two Frogs)
little there-is ball indeed
'After a while there was a real ball (of butter).'

In this instance **gàà** introduces a major prop to the stage; it is this ball of butter which will allow the surviving frog to escape. Similar examples are found also in MJC; used in conjunction with **sai, gàà** seems to indicate an unexpected (sudden) appearance of a minor character or prop:

31. **Za-ì faarà wata màganàà, sai gàà wani ya zoo...**
F begin a word there-is a RC come
'He (the vizier) was about to speak when someone (from the chief of Sinari) came...'

32. **Su-nàà huutàawaa, sai gàà wani Bàlaarabè...**
P resting there-is a Arab
'They were resting when an Arab appeared...'

33. **Sukà waigàà hakà, sai gàà wani mài dookìì...**
RC turn-head thus there-is a one horse
'They turned, and there appeared a horseman...'

34. **A-nàà nan...sai gàà wani dàgà cikin 'ya-n**
P here there-is a from inside children-of
k'warbâ-n dà sarkii ya àikaa...
warriors-def rel chief RC send
'(About 5 days later) one of those warriors which the chief had sent appeared...'

35. **Cikin darê-n nan, sai gàà baawà-n wàziirìi ya koom-oo.**
inside night-def here there-is slave-of vizier RC return-here
'During that night, the slave of the vizier returned.'

In each of these instances the appearance of the character marks a crucial point in the account. In the first, the message announces the arrival of the delegation from Sinari, which ultimately leads to war; the parrot the Arab brings is the hero of the story; the horseman who rides up brings news of the invasion; the warrior returning after having been sent by the chief brings a report of victory; the slave of the vizier brings news to him of the defeat of Sinari. This apparent usage of the **sai gàà** sequence invites investigation in other texts.

Without **sai**, **gàà** appears to be used in non-quoted material when referring to a thought that comes to a person. There are three instances of this function in MJC, each of which marks a turning point in the plot, with the clause with **gàà** presenting either the problem or the solution. In the first example the chief ponders whether or not to accept his vizier's suggestion and take Mahamudu along with him to war:

36. **Sarkii ya kaawoo iyaa wuyàà. Gàà bak'i-n cikin**
chief RC bring border neck there-is blackness-of inside
ràbuwaa dà ìyaalìi. Gàà, kumaa, wata màganà-r banzaa.
separating with family there-is also a word-of worthlessness
'The chief was fed up. He was very sad to be parting from his family. And now too there was this worthless suggestion.'

In the second instance the vizier thinks his problem is solved because not only is Mahamudu being removed from the scene, but Musa's protective father himself will be gone too, leaving Musa alone:

37. **Dà wàziirìi ya ga an rabà Muusaa dà Màhàmuudù--gàà shi,**
with vizier RC see C separate with there-is it
kumaa, sarkii baa yàà nan...
also chief neg P here
'When the vizier saw that Musa and Mahamudu had been separated--and, too, the chief was not there...'

Finally, the parrot debates with himself as to how to respond to Musa's request for permission to follow Mahamudu--if he reacts negatively, Musa will kill him (as he had just seen him do the female parrot bought for him as a mate); but if he allows Musa to go, the chief will kill him when he returns:

38. **Toò, gàà shi--sarkii ya bar ma-sà àmaanà-r yaaròò...**
there-is it chief RC leave to-him alliance-of boy
'So, here's the deal--the chief had left him in charge of the boy...'

It appears, then, that the use of clauses with **gàà** in non-quoted material is highly significant: used with **sai** the construction introduces minor participants to the stage, used without **sai** it marks a crucial thought by one of the characters.

In the folktales **gàà** is used only a single time in a direct quote:

39. **"Gàà àbìncí nân, àmmaa kadà kà cí kàree-na."**
there-is food here but neg S eat dog-my
"Here's some food, but don't eat my dog."

(The Gwari and the Teacher)

In a similar fashion, within MJC **gàà** in quoted contexts carries a low functional load, mainly to list people or objects, or in descriptions, or (with **can/nan** 'there/here') to refer to the presence of a person or object at a specific location. Nevertheless, **gàà** occurs fifteen times in quoted speech in the portion studied, although twelve instances are relatively uninteresting. Three, however, are worthy of special attention. First, when a bloodied refugee from the fighting returns with the news of the invasion, the parrot responds:

40. **"Aí, gàà ta nan."**
there-is her here
"Here it is!"

The point here is that the parrot's prediction has been proven true. The second crucial instance is when the chief makes the parrot promise to care for the boys while he goes off to war:

41. **"Kai, kumaa, gàà àmaanàà nân."**
you also there-is alliance here
"You have a part in this agreement too."

This statement is followed immediately by the utterance of the chief regarding a curse to follow if the agreement is broken. Finally, when the parrot is trying to assuage Musa, to keep Musa from killing him or escaping, he says:

42. **"Gàà shíi--kaa san, níi, bàà koomee ba nèè."**
there-is it C know I neg something neg be
"Look--you know that I myself am nothing."

This is followed by an appeal to Musa to obey his father, with an exhortation that this is the culturally valued form of behavior.

I cannot find anything in particular in the structure of these sentences to make them different from the ordinary existential/descriptive use of **gàà**. Perhaps **gàà** in a quotation is the unmarked existential usage, and the three highlighted passages above are marked by other features. It is perhaps not insignificant that in both of the examples of the words of the parrot, there is a high-tension emphatic **nee** in the sentence, and in the chief's quote, the next sentence contains a threat.

3. `Akwai

The word **àkwai** 'there exists' never occurs in the folktales or in MJC except in quotations, and even there it is rare, with but three occurrences each in the folktales and MJC. Note the following examples:

43. **"...àkwai wurî-n dà zâ-n fakèè?"** (Squirrel and Porcupine)
there-exists place-def rel F shelter
"Is there a place where I can find shelter?"

44. **"...cikin talakaawa-n sarki-n dabboobii àkwai mài fiffikèè?"**
(Bat and the Land Tax)
inside subjects-of chief-of animals there-exists one wing
"...among the subjects of the chief of the animals, are there any with wings?"

45. **"...cikin tsuntsàayee àkwai mài hak'òòraa...?**
(Bat and the Land Tax)
inside birds there-exists one teeth
"...among the birds, are there any with teeth...?"

Note that these are all rhetorical questions, not genuine requests for information. The two examples which occur in MJC appear to be rhetorically specialized too. In the first, in response to the chief's rebuke of the parrot for his arrogance at their first meeting, the parrot says (perhaps sarcastically):

46. **"`Akwai, kùwaa, Allàà yà jaa zàmaanì-n-kà."**
there-exists also God S pull period-of-your
"There is a good reason for God to prolong your life."

In the second, the chief expresses his opinion that the chief of Sinari must have had help to be able to make use of a little-known road, because the locals had not known it:

47. **"Cikin 'ya-n gàrii. . .àkwai wani...dà ya san**
inside children-of town there-exists one rel RC know
wannàn hanyàà...?"
this road
"Among the people of the town, is there anyone who knows the road...?"

And in the third, the vizier responds to the defeat of the Sinari army by saying:

48. **"Lallee, mutàane-n Sìinaarìi, àkwai mùnàafùkai."**
indeed people-of there-exists hypocrites
"Indeed, the people of Sinari are hypocrites."

In this last instance, we might more easily expect a construction with **nee/cee**, but we find **àkwai** occurring instead.

4. Baà

However, although **àkwai** does not occur outside of quotation contexts in the texts examined, the negated form **baà** 'there does not exist' occurs more widely. In particular **baà** appears to be used to convey comments by the narrator on the setting or situation, commonly occurring with a nominal modified by a relative clause, emphasizing the non-existence of a crucial entity. Note the following examples from the folktales:

49. **`Ammaa baà àbî-n dà za-ì yi...** (Bat and the Land Tax)
but neg thing-def rel F do
'But there was nothing he could do...'

50. **Baà yaddà zaa-sù iyàà sù fìta.** (Two Frogs)
neg that-which F be-able S get-out
'There was nothing they could do to get out.'

There are three parallel instances in MJC, included here without context:

56. **...baà wani wandà za-ì ganii...**
neg a rel F see
'...there was no one for him to look to...'

57. **Baà àbî-n dà kèè rabàà su.**
neg thing-def rel RP separate them
'There was nothing that could separate them (Musa and Mahamudu).'

58. **...baà wandà bà sù cikà ba.**
neg rel neg C fill neg
'...there wasn't a (village) that they (the soldiers) didn't fill.'

However, there is one instance in the folktales, and two in MJC, in which **baà** occurs without a relative clause modifying the nominal, though non-existence is clearly still in focus:

59. **Baà daamaa!** (Two Frogs)
neg chance
'No chance (to escape)!'

60. **Yaa zoo baà koo sirdìi. Duk jìki-n-sa jinaa-jìnàà.**
C come neg even saddle all body-of-his bloody
'He came without even a saddle. His whole body was bloody.

Abî-n baà kyâ-n ganii.
thing-def neg goodness-of seeing
It wasn't a pleasant sight.'

There are no instances of **baà** in quoted speech in the folktales, but there are nine such cases in MJC. Eight of these are parallel to those cited above (four with a nominal modified by a relative clause, and four as evaluations of the speaker); these are not presented here. There is one unusual case, however, in which **baà** precedes an action noun:

61. **"Na yinì nan baà mòòtsii."**
RC spend-day here neg movement
"I spent the whole day there without moving."

It seems clear, however, that **baà** in quoted speech does not have a prominent role in narrative discourse in terms of ranking of events.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, there have been some very striking facts discovered with regard to the specific uses of stative clauses in Hausa narrative. In particular, **nee/cee** is used in non-quote material to indicate a shift to the character's thoughts, and to emphasize a fronted element in a clause; in quoted material, **nee/cee** is used during moments of high tension between two participants in dialogue. The sequence **sai gàà** is used in non-quote material to introduce a minor character to the stage, and **gàà** by itself is used when a crucial thought comes to a major character and for introduction of a crucial prop; within a quotation, **gàà** seems unmarked and has low discourse functional load. **`Akwai** never occurred in the data consulted outside of a quotation; in a quote it is used for rhetorical questions and seems to be used in ironic statements. Its negative counterpart **baà** outside a quote seems to be used for comment and evaluation by the narrator, and in a quote for evaluation by the speaker, but on a low-level irrealis usage.