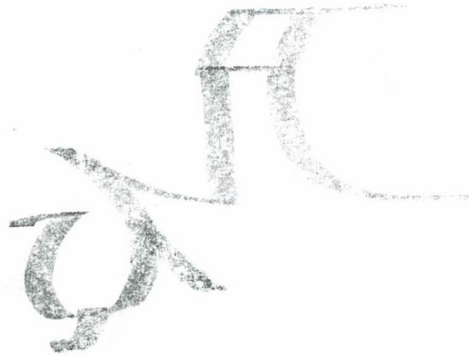


Wätere [wan.tɛ]

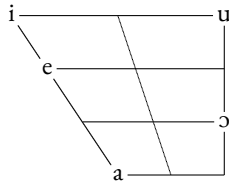
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March-April 2022

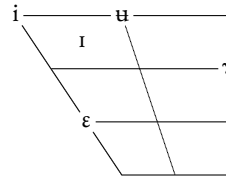


1 Phonology

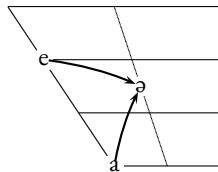
1.1 Vowels



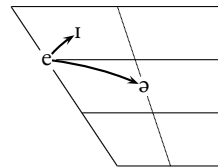
Standard Monophthongs



Palatalized Monophthongs



Standard Diphthongs



Palatalized Diphthongs

Wätere has seven phonemic vowels: five monophthongs and two diphthongs. It features front-back vowel harmony and palatalized vowels after palatal fricatives. If there are more front vowels than back vowels in a word, then all of the vowels in the word become front vowels. Likewise, if there are more back vowels in a word, then all of the vowels in the word become back vowels. Because there are four front vowels but only three back vowels, both /e/ and /eə/ back to /ɔ/, and /ɔ/ always fronts to /e/. The romanization is as follows:

Romanization		Non-palatalized		Palatalized	
Front	Back	Front	Back	Front	Back
i	u	i	u	ɪ	ɯ
e	o	e	ɔ	ɪ	ʏ
ë	(o)	eə	(ɔ)	eɪ	(ɣ)
a	ä	a	aə	ε	eə

1.2 Consonants

	Labial	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Nasal	(m)	(n)			
Plosive	p p ^h	t t ^h		k k ^h	
Fricative	f	s	ç ç ^h	x	h ^w
Approximant		l	j	w	

The sounds [m] and [n], found in parentheses in the chart, are realizations of /p/ and /t/ respectively, in the situations BpF/Fm/_ and BtF/Fn/_. See section 1.3.

Aspiration is typically held through the entire vowel, meaning that /p^ha/ is often realized as [p̚a]. The romanization of consonants is as follows:

Romanization	Base Phoneme	Romanization	Base Phoneme
p	p	ph	p ^h
t	t	th	t ^h
k	k	kh	k ^h
r	ç	rh	ç ^h
s	s	sh	ç
hw	h ^w	f	f
l	l	y	j
h	x	w	w

1.3 Phonotactics

Wätere has 15 base consonants and 7 base vowels, as described in sections 1.1 and 1.2, but these sounds can be realized differently in different situations. The most notable of these differences between orthography and pronunciation is that /p/ and /t/ become /m/ and /n/ respectively after a back vowel and before a front vowel, where the vowel before is fronted and the vowel after is deleted. However adjectives and verbs have very regular patterns that always harmonize by default (i.e. all back vowels or all front vowels), so this change cannot happen in either adjectives or verbs. Nouns and particles, on the other hand, have relatively unpredictable patterns, meaning that it is possible for a word like "wätere" [wãɛɪ] to exist, with the back vowel "ã" and the front vowel "ɛ."

Words in Wätere undergo a few more notable changes, including the palatalization of vowels after palatal consonants "r," "rh," and "sh;" [ç], [çʰ], and [ç] respectively. This is described in section 1.1.

Additionally, word-final front vowels are deleted. It is possible to have a consonant cluster with a nasal consonant followed by a non-nasal consonant because of the nasalization described earlier, nasal consonants in this situation assimilate to match the place of articulation of the following consonant exactly. Word final /m/ will also become [n]. Also, after a nasal consonant, fricatives will affricate, still in the same place of articulation.

Thus, the syllable structure of Wätere is as follows:

Verbs and Adjectives: CV, CV(C)#

Nouns and Particles: #(C)V(N), CV(N), CV(N)C#

2 Morphology and Grammar

2.1 Roots

Wätere utilizes a root-template system, in which every word is derived from a root of usually three consonants, sometimes two consonants, and very rarely one consonant. Different vowels and sometimes different consonants are inserted into these roots to form different words with related meanings. For example, the root p-h forms the following words:

pah [pax]

n. nothing

pehe [pex]

adj. empty, voided, erased

piha [pix]

adj. alone, stranded, separated

piha [pix]

vi. be empty, be nothing, not count

päho [pæxɔ]

vt. skip over, overlook, make empty

paha [pax]

dm. now, so like

The way roots behave in different parts of speech will be explained in their respective sections.

2.2 Verbs

Each root may have up to two verbs derived from it. The two pattern sets are for less valent and more valent forms of the verb. Verbs inflect for evidentiality and tense, and the pattern of inflection is based on whether it is more or less valent.

The types of evidentiality are:

Speaker Participates - the speaker does the action, or participates in some way.

Speaker Watches - the speaker perceives the action being done, usually through sight

Speaker Hears About - the speaker hears that the action is being done, from another person or source

Common Knowledge - the action is common knowledge or from a story

Tenses are organized into three categories: future, modern, and old information. The names of all tenses are as follows:

Future Information		
Far Future	Near Future	Immediate Future
Months/years in the future	Next few days/weeks	Next few seconds/minutes

Modern Information			
Habitual, General	Immediate Past	Near Past	Far Past
Habitual/stative	Last few seconds/minutes	Last few days/weeks	Months/years ago

Old Information
Historical Past
Multiple years ago or earlier

2.3 Nouns and Adjectives

Nouns and Adjectives in Wätere are very simple. Nouns are almost completely unpredictable in their pattern, and thus there is no more for me to elaborate on.

Adjectives, on the other hand, are more regular. Here are some common patterns and their meanings:

1a2e3e	simple adjective I
u1o2o3u	simple adjective II
1a2i3a	simple adjective III, usually for human or living properties
1ä2o2u	adjective of origin, for people or things from or relating to a place or culture, adjective of nationality/origin

2.4 Discourse Markers and Prepositions

Wätere has a series of discourse markers, giving context to sentences. A chart of a few is given below:

Root	Word	English Equivalent	Meaning
p-h	paha	so like, now	introduces a new topic or change of topic
f-sh-t	fashat	you see	giving advice, emphasizing importance or unexpectedness
r-w-t	rawat	honestly, in my opinion	giving a contradictory opinion, particularly an unpopular one
s-p-l	sapal	N/A	(no specific meaning but implies respect to listener)
p-t-sh	patash	as we all know	showing common knowledge or making fun of the listener

Wätere uses prepositions, usually coming from 1- or 2-consonant roots, to show time and place of actions.

2.5 Sentence Structure, Subordinate Clauses, and Conditionals

Wätere has two main sentence types: transitive and intransitive.

Transitive sentences:

Simple: S khe O ra V

Inferred subject: O khe V

Inferred object: S la V

Intransitive sentences:

Simple: S ra V

Inferred subject: V

Content clauses in Wätere are formed by inserting "sa" into the object position of the sentence, then adding "ka" after the verb, and then the object of the content clause.

Relative clauses are simply made by inserting a relative adverb after the noun being modified, and then creating a transitive sentence with an inferred object.

Conditionals are made with the conjunction "fahe." "X fahe Y" means "If X, then Y."

3 On Wätoru Culture, Briefly

The Weterat [weteɕet], who spoke Wätere, were a group consisting of mostly farmers living in what is now northern China (Though, the language is considered to be an isolate, as it shares very few features with surrounding languages. However, the word "wätere" is cognate with Mandarin "wújīng."). Their name, Wätere, meaning "turnip," shows what they were most known for: growing turnips. The turnip was a symbol of Wätoru (adjective of origin for Wätere) food, and it was one of their most common ingredients.

4 Native Orthography

The Wätere alphabet, or käyeke [kajek], consists of 8 primary consonant symbols, each of which can have a small mark added to it to create a set of 8 new consonants, usually related to the base sound. Vowels are marked by attaching a symbol above, below, or through the consonant which it follows. It is traditionally written with ink on paper or wood, with a writing utensil whose tip is a horizontal line. This utensil may be emulated with a pencil held sideways and on its side. Symbols in a word connect by either the top or the bottom, depending on where each glyph ends and starts.

These are the base glyphs and which consonant they become when a mark is placed beneath them:

Base Glyph	Modified Glyph
p	ph
t	th
k	kh
r	rh
s	sh
hw	f
l	j
h	w

On the next page is attached the list of base consonants with every possible vowel. Please excuse the row incorrectly marked "ts," it should be marked "l."

a i u e o ä ë

p y i p p + k y

t i i i + k y

k u u u + k u

f u u u + k u

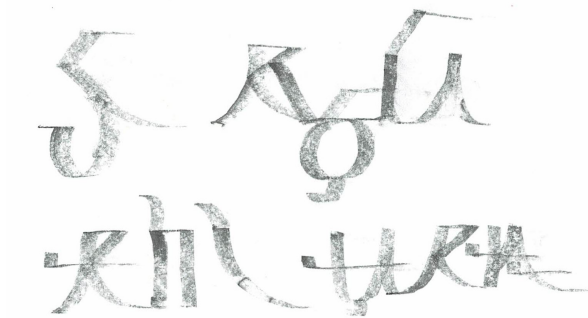
s o o o o o o

h^w z z z z z z

ts k k k k k k

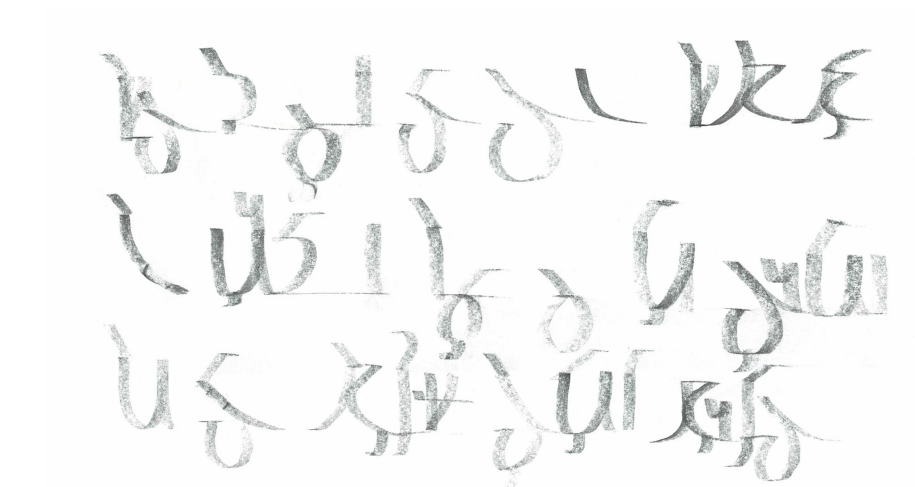
x o o o o o o

5 Sentences and Translations



We could see the reflection of ourselves in the water.

he yäsbeke yotut ra kboyporo
in water we V exist.WATCHES.FAR_PAST
[xe jaɛik jɔtut ɛ k^hɔjupɔɛɹ]
"It looked like we were in the water."



Now here, you see, it takes all the running you can do to keep in the same place.

paba, fashat, he har paläye ra khëhwet tashe sa khe wëket ka he yathupo wakhete jëthëb.
now, you_see, in here running V is_required.GEN so_that SUBORD.PRON OV is_able.GEN
that in place same stay.GEN
[paxa, faɛɛt, xe xaɛ palaj ɛ k^hɛəh^wet taɛ sa k^he wɛəkɛt ka xe jaət^hupɔ wak^het jɛət^hɛx.]
"Now, you see, in here running is required so that you are able to stay in the same place."

He will arrive soon.

pap ra rhätuloh

3S V come.WATCHES.NEAR_FUTURE

[pap ɛɛ ɛ^hɛätulɔx]

”I will see him come soon”

We walked very far.

tar sopäwo khefësek

for far_distance walk.PARTICIPATES.FAR_PAST

[taɛ sɔpaəwɔ k^hɛfɛəsek]

”We walked for a long distance.”

As we all know, cats can’t fly.

patash, lawaw khe sa wëket ka lëyet

as_we_all_know, cat OBJ SUBORD is_able that fly

[taɛ sɔpaəwɔ k^hɛfɛəsek]

”We walked for a long distance.”