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There are sounds in Masai corresponding to the following letters of the alphabet:

\[ a, b, c, d, e, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, r, s, t, u, v, w, y \]

Besides these there are:

\[ \ddot{a}, \ddot{o}, \ddot{i}, \ddot{u}, s, h, s, s, r, a, i \]

The vowels are pronounced as in Italian and the consonants as in English.

The spelling adopted is, as far as possible, phonetic, and the accents merely the short and long. It is impossible to represent many words in Masai without accents, or to give any adequate idea of the pronunciation, without occasionally using the aspirate: as: \(-\text{oshiagi}\) = also, \(-\text{ishigo}\) = better, etc., in which words the aspirate is distinctly audible.

\( b \) and \( p \) are almost similar in pronunciation, and are practically interchangeable, as are also \( g \) and \( k \).

The voice is frequently sunk at the end of the word, and should the word end with a consonant it is sometimes so slightly pronounced that it is difficult to distinguish it.

The \( r \), which I have written as \( rr \), is very pronounced, being sounded with a marked burr.

The \( s \) at the end of a word, and occasionally in the middle of a word, is sharply sounded as in hissing. This sound I have written as \( ss \).

\( m \) and \( n \), when commencing a word, and when followed by a consonant, are sounds of almost all African languages. The nearest approximation to their pronunciation is the slight sounding of the \( m \) in “mutter,” and the \( n \) in “no.”

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they can neither be regarded as distinct syllables, nor must they be sounded as apart from the rest of the word.

The accent in Masai usually falls on the first syllable in words of two syllables, and in words of two or three syllables most usually on the second, but occasionally on the third. In words of more than three syllables the accent is usually on the second syllable. The accentuation is, however, not very regular, and in some words all the syllables are of equal value.

Abbreviation of words, and the cutting off of final vowels and even syllables is frequent and most confusing. In speaking, the words are not distinctly pronounced, but run on smoothly with no break, the syllables being often swallowed and the voice so sunk at intervals that it is difficult to catch all the words. The liaison is frequently used. The Masai have a strong feeling for euphony, and words are adapted and altered apparently for no other reason. Where two words, one ending and the other beginning with a vowel, follow one another, consonants (generally n, k, or b) are sometimes introduced, as ainyo berora = why sleep?

(1) The Personal Pronouns are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st person</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>nanu</td>
<td>we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thou</td>
<td>iye</td>
<td>log or eeog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he</td>
<td>nenye or ninyi</td>
<td>they</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it</td>
<td></td>
<td>nenje or ninji</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Questions are formed in Masai merely by using an interrogative tone of voice, as:

I am ill aemwi Am I ill? aemwi?

(3) Negations are formed by prefixing the word “not,” which is rendered by meti and its abbreviations mer, me and m, or by the words ete, etwa, etu.
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Meti is seldom used in full in conjunction with other words.

Mer is used, evidently for the sake of euphony, before words beginning with a consonant, except before those beginning with an s: for these me is used. m is used for words beginning with a vowel.

Not bad mer torono Not milk mer gule
Not good me sidai Not large me sabuk
I do not want maiu I do not know maiulu
I am not going etwaolo He will not bring eteaw
I am not tired etesawri

(4) There are no conjunctions in Masai. "And" is simply omitted, as:

The dog and cat orldia embarrie (literally dog, cat)
The man and woman eltungana engitok (man, woman)

O or oi are occasionally inserted between words supposed to be connected with a conjunction, but this is probably for the sake of euphony, as in most instances the final vowel of the first word is dropped, as: you and I = nan oyi, instead of nanu iye; he and you = neny oyi, instead of neny e iye. It must be admitted that in both these instances the altered form is the more euphonious.

For the prepositions "with" and "for" there appear to be no words at all.

The preposition "in" (atwa) always precedes the noun it governs.

atwa ngaji = in the house
atwa ngoshegi = in the stomach
atwa engang = in the kraal

(5) There are neither definite nor indefinite articles in Masai.

(6) There are three genders in Masai: masculine, feminine and neuter.

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The same word is used for male and female animals, with the exception of: sheep, goat, ass, cow, which have a different word for the male and female.

All inanimate objects are neuter.

(7) Adjectives in Masai are invariable, and are only altered for the sake of euphony: when, for example, an adjective commencing with a vowel follows a substantive ending with a vowel, it may, under these circumstances, take a consonant preceding the vowel, as:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Red cloth} & \quad \text{Enga kenyuki} \\
\text{Hot water} & \quad \text{Ngare nairogu}
\end{align*}
\]

(8) The place of the adjective is undefined: it may either precede or follow the substantive, as:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{A long house} & \quad \text{Ero nga} \text{i}ji \\
\text{A black goat} & \quad \text{Ndari naro}k
\end{align*}
\]

(9) The numeral adjectives always follow the substantive, and usually end the sentence:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{I see a hundred cows} \\
\text{Ara}dwa ngishu ifi
\end{align*}
\]

(10) The numeral adjectives are as follows:

1 = nabu
2 = ari or are
3 = ñi
4 = ungwun
5 = miët
6 = elle
7 = nábishána
8 = issiët
9 = nawdu or endörroi
10 = tomon
11 = tomon obbo
12 = tomon are
13 = tomon ogúni
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14 = tomon ungwun
15 tomon oimiet
16 tomon oiille
17 tomon nabishāna
18 tomon oissiet
19 tomon nawdo
20 tigitum
21 tigitum obbo
30 ossom
31 ossom obbo
40 arrtam
41 arrtam obbo
50 orrom
51 orrom obbo
60 = ḣp (which equals our 100. The Masai count in sixties, and a company of warriors is composed of 60 men)

Two sixties = ḣp ari
First = tangasaino
Last = korom.

Like all primitive peoples the Masai count on their fingers. The closed fist represents 5, the two closed fists 10. For higher numbers the fists are moved up and down until the multiplication has been made. To represent 60, or any higher figure, the fingers of one hand are snapped, but if the number be very large the fingers of both hands are snapped several times.

(11) Adjectives are capable of declension, and follow the same rules as verbs. They do not alter according to gender, but almost invariably for the sake of euphony: occasionally they take the same plural as the noun they qualify. In some instances the auxiliary verb is in no way represented, the adjective only being used with the personal
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pronouns. In other instances the auxiliary verb is used, the adjective in both instances being declined.

I am ill aenwi
Thou art ill emweye
He she or it is ill emwenenyе
We are ill kemwesiog
You are ill emweve ndai
They are ill ana imwiwi

I am tired aranaweи
Thou art tired atanauriyiе
He she or it is tired kerenau re nenye
We are tired keternau riawdisioг
You are tired anaura ndai
They are tired keran au ra ata nenje

I am well arabичro
Thou art well eraiyebичro
He she or it is well biero ossenenyе
We are well kera biot
You are well erana ndai biot
They are well aibio nenje

(12) The possessive adjective always follows the noun. The various words for each adjective are used for the sake of euphony:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Masai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our boma</td>
<td>engangang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our cows</td>
<td>ngishuuung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My father</td>
<td>baba lai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My hand</td>
<td>ngainai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>my</td>
<td>lai, elai or ai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thine</td>
<td>enino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>our</td>
<td>enuung, ung, oog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>his</td>
<td>enenyе, eno</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hers</td>
<td>their</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>its</td>
<td>анано, енгparing, енже</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(13) All verbs in Masai are conjugated, and with a certain degree of regularity. In some cases the abbreviations of “I” and “thou” (a or i) are used preceding the verb, but almost invariably the pronoun follows the verb, which commences
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the sentence. All negatives and interrogatives, however, precede the verbs:

I know I do not know What are you doing?
aiulu maaiulu aingyendobera?

The infinitive mood always commences with an n : frequently this n is simply prefixed to the first person singular, though the larger number of infinitives merely bear some general resemblance to the verb. Where the infinitive singular is formed by prefixing an n to the first person singular, the second and third persons singular also usually take an n instead of using the first person, as:

to go nalo 1st person
nilo 2nd person
nelo 3rd person
to come naiotu 1st person
nelotu 2nd and 3rd persons

The persons plural all use one word, though this is often distinct from the singular. In cases where the infinitive simply bears a general resemblance to the verb, all the persons singular use this word. In many verbs the singular and plural have slightly different infinitives, though both invariably have the n prefix, as:

to cut nadung nadjidung
to catch nebong negibong
to bathe naisoja ngesoja

(14) The present and future tenses of verbs are alike. The past tense is formed by prefixing the word aedeba (finished) to the verb, which thus becomes an auxiliary verb.

(15) The verbs “to be” and “to have” always precede the noun: all other verbs follow it. The past tenses of these two verbs, if existent, are not in general use. The usual
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method of expressing their past tense is by using the present tense with an adverb denoting time, as:

I am yesterday       I have a cow last night
I am in Naivasha last moon.

The present tense of “to be” is:

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{Singular} & \text{Plural} \\
\text{I am} & \text{we are} \\
\text{thou art} & \text{you are} \\
\text{he} & \text{they are} \\
\text{she is} & \text{ana or eranenge or weji}
\end{array}
\]

The present tense of “to have” is exactly the same as the present tense of “to be”: there is no distinction between the two verbs.

(16) There is an imperative mood, both singular and plural, to all verbs. The imperative singular almost invariably commences with t and the plural with en: both usually resemble the verb. Examples:

\[
\begin{array}{lll}
\text{Imp. Sing.} & \text{Imp. Plural} \\
\text{I sing} & \text{arrany} & \text{tarranya} \\
\text{I climb} & \text{atakedu} & \text{taged} \\
\text{I break} & \text{agil nanu} & \text{tegi} \\
\text{I say} & \text{etojo nanu} & \text{toojo}
\end{array}
\]

(17) Nouns in Masai form their plurals by affixes, though occasionally the middle syllables of the word may also be altered.

(18) There are nine regular methods of forming the plural; they are as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Sing.} & \quad \text{Plural} \\
1 & \text{ndap} = \text{hand} \\
& \text{ndapi} \\
2 & \text{oriöro} = \text{goat (male)} \\
& \text{oriörooi} \\
3 & \text{essurdia} = \text{carring} \\
& \text{essondai} \\
4 & \text{oldület} = \text{bottle} \\
& \text{oldületa} \\
5 & \text{engela} = \text{clothes} \\
& \text{engelani}
\end{align*}
\]
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Sing.       Plural
(3) u, tu   ingobirr  ingobirru = feather
        emurrt  emurrtu = neck
        oldonyi  elōnitu = skin
(4) n, in   ossesi  essessin = body
        örgenes  organessin = crocodile
        mbarrda  mbarrdan = horse
(5) k, ak, ok ngorrason  ngorrasiok = woman
        emoworr  mowarrak = horn
        orlāmonon  lamonok = beggar
(6) g        ngaina  ngaieg = arm
        ndāridigi  ndāridig = bird
(7) r or rr  ngera  ngerr = sheep
        emossori  emossorr = egg
        endōlu  endōler = axe
(8) o        olasho  olasho = calf
        endōlit  endōlo = marrow
(9) t        ollogurrt  ollogurrt = caterpillar
        engumoru  engumurrt = hole
        engias  engiaset = work

(19) Two words—mother and twig—form their plurals by prefixes:
yeyu
loom

I have found no trace of nouns forming their plurals with the prefixes ku or k.

(20) A large number of nouns form their plurals quite irregularly; some alter the first syllable or middle syllables, but in many instances the whole word is changed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sing.</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tick</td>
<td>orromashere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dance</td>
<td>ingirugira</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hippopotamus</td>
<td>ollomagaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>breast</td>
<td>orrigena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mark</td>
<td>orrbornoto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chair</td>
<td>oloirika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kudu</td>
<td>emalo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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(21) Some nouns are alike both in singular and plural:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Masai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sun or suns</td>
<td>ngolong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beard or beards</td>
<td>ornümünyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flea or fleas</td>
<td>loisusu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fire or fires</td>
<td>ngima</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>father or fathers</td>
<td>baba</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(22) When used in conjunction with verbs of negation nouns are capable of conjugation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Masai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have not anything</td>
<td>maadatoki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thou hast not anything</td>
<td>mieraísietoki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He she or it has not anything</td>
<td>meeraasenenyé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have not anything</td>
<td>mieraíog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have not anything</td>
<td>mieraarasendai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They have not anything</td>
<td>keera nenje</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(23) The interrogatives “why” and “what” (ainyo) when preceding a noun, pronoun, adjective or verb, insert b, be, or ba between the two words, as: why sleep? ainyo berora? The entire interrogative may be omitted, with the exception of the final o, and written oberora, or even further abbreviated to oba.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Masai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why go?</td>
<td>ainyo belo?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why good?</td>
<td>ainyo basidai?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why drink?</td>
<td>ainyo belök?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>