A short grammar of Urama

Jason Brown, Alex Muir,
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Urama is a Papuan language spoken primarily on Urama Island in Papua New Guinea. It is spoken in the Gulf Province, in the vicinity of Deception Bay, in the Era River Delta. Urama is part of the Kiwai language family, which is distributed along the south coast of Papua New Guinea, and is a family with relatively sparse documentation. This work attempts a short grammar of Urama, and in doing so, it aims to be accessible to linguists by aiming for a rich description of a highly under-documented language. This book outlines the geographic, social, and anthropological background of Urama, and is comprised of chapters laying out the phonology, morphology, and syntax of the language. While many Urama language structures are also highly characteristic of neighbouring Papuan languages, the language also exhibits patterns that are in many ways exceptional. The more notable features include the use of a productive vowel harmony, the existence of a binary counting system, the presence of a definite article, an unusual organization of agreement morphology, and an extremely intricate tense system. Also included in this book are a set of representative narratives, as well as a lexicon of the language accompanied by an English finder-list.
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### List of abbreviations

| 1  | = first person               | N1  | = non-first person          |
| 2  | = second person              | NDECL | = non-declarative          |
| 3  | = third person               | NEG | = negation                  |
| ASS | = assertive                 | NFUT | = near future               |
| BEN | = benefactive               | NOM | = nominative                |
| CFACT | = counterfactual            | NPST | = near past                 |
| DEF | = definite article          | OBJ | = object                    |
| DFUT | = distant future            | PL | = plural                    |
| DPST | = distant past              | PROH | = prohibitive               |
| DU  | = dual                      | PRS | = present                   |
| EMPH | = emphatic                  | PST | = past                      |
| FUT  | = future                    | PUNCT | = punctiliar                |
| HAB | = habitual                  | PURP | = purposive                 |
| INT | = interrogative             | SG | = singular                  |
| ITER | = iterative                 | SUBJ | = subject                   |
| MID | = middle                    |  TR | = trial                     |
| MOD | = modal                     |  TRAN | = transitive                |
|    |                             |  Q | = question                  |
1 Introduction

Urama (ISO: 639-3 kiw) is a language spoken primarily on Urama Island in Papua New Guinea. It is spoken in the Gulf Province, in the vicinity of Deception Bay, in the Era River Delta. Urama is part of the Kiwai language family, which is distributed along the south coast of Papua New Guinea. The Kiwai family in turn belongs to the larger Trans New Guinea stock.\(^1\) Within the Kiwai family, Urama belongs to the North-Eastern group, along with Arigibi, Gibaio, and Kope (also referred to as Gope) (Wurm 1973). The name ‘Urama’ is used to refer to the language, the ethnic group, and the island. A native Urama individual is termed *Urama mere* ‘Urama person’.

Urama Island is in the Kikori district. Preliminary numbers for the 2011 census indicate the entire district has a population of 41,232. Official numbers of inhabitants on Urama Island are more difficult to obtain; however, Wurm (1971:139) has estimated the population of Urama speakers at around 1500. Foley (1986:233) estimated the population of North-Eastern Kiwai (presumably including Gibaio, Kope, and Urama, but not Arigibi, which Wurm & Hattori 1981 classify as a separate language\(^2\)) at 3700 speakers, as has Wurm & Hattori (1981), and according to Ethnologue (Lewis et al. 2014, based on Foley’s 2011 estimates), there are 6000 speakers of North-East Kiwai (which includes Gibaio and Urama-Kope\(^3\) together). The adjacent areas speak various Kiwaian languages, and there is some mutual intelligibility between them. As Tok Pisin is one of the lingue franche of Papua New Guinea and is an official language, it is often the language of communication between those from other areas.

2 Geography, history, and environment of Urama Island

Urama is spoken by the inhabitants of Urama Island and a fairly large area consisting of around 10 villages which are spread throughout the smaller islands. Urama Island is

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\(^1\) While Wurm (1971) considers the Kiwai family to be a sub-group of the larger Trans-Fly group, it is likely that the evidence for this relationship is not convincing (cf. Evans 2012). Furthermore, Ross (2005) has demonstrated that in his study of pronouns, no such group can be inferred, but that there is still good evidence for the smaller Kiwai group to constitute a family within the Trans-New Guinea stock.

\(^2\) Wurm (1973) considers the North-Eastern group to be made up of Urama, Kope, Gibaio, (which Wurm terms *Baravi*) and Maipu’a. Both Wurm (1973) and Wurm & Hattori (1981) consider Arigibi to be separate from this immediate grouping.

\(^3\) Wurm (1971) notes that the Kiwaian languages are structurally quite close, and considers Urama and Gope to be dialects of a single language, separate from the others in the North-Eastern group.
located at coordinates Latitude: 7° 36' 00" S, Longitude: 144° 37' 00" E. The only way to gain access to the other villages is by boat, primarily across the main rivers; however, when the weather is bad inhabitants are unable to cross the main river and instead travel through the smaller rivers on a longer, but much safer route. Nearby villages are spread around the area within the island; these include the villages of Gauri, Kinomere, Kivaumai, Larimia, Mirimailau, Oumaumere, Tovei, and Veraibari. The villages of Mairivepea and Avamu/Morovamu are also Urama-speaking villages, but are located on the other side of the mouth of the Era river, on other delta islands. Our primary consultant (and fourth author) estimates the population of the largest village, Kivaumai (alternatively spelled Kiwaumai), at around 3000, with around 1000 in each of the other larger villages. There are roughly 40 - 50 dwellings in Kivaumai, two churches, a primary school, and a “sub-health centre” (which is larger than an "aid-post") with 1 nurse and 3 community health workers. It also has a “long-house”, a customary magistrate and a chief.

Figure 1: Urama Island, situated in the Gulf Province of Papua New Guinea

Historically speaking, the Kiwai people migrated from the Fly River region to the Fly estuary (around Kiwai Island), then dispersed outward, including along the southern coast (Lawrence n.d.). Those more southern coastal Kiwai peoples were taught hunting and fishing by Torres Strait Islanders, and they inherited the exchange system.

Oral narratives concerning the settling of the area involve two brothers, Ninigi and Ainau, who came from the west approximately 7 or 8 generations ago and settled on Urama Island at the village site of modern-day Kinomere (Frankel & Vanderwal 1981:90-91). Frankel & Vanderwal (1981) have provided basal radiocarbon dating that puts the initial occupation of Kinomere at 410 +/- 80 BP, which is somewhat consistent with the oral narratives. The present village of Kivaumai was established before World War I, though it was situated further inland. After the wars, the village was moved closer to the coast, most likely due to it being a better location with better soil as there were many mangrove swamps inland. Another possible reason for the move was to
move away from cannibalism, a practice which has since ended in the area. Kivaumai and the nearby village of Kinomere (made up from people originally from Kivaumai) have been in existence the longest out of all of the villages on Urama Island. The other surrounding villages were made up of people who migrated from these original two villages. The villages of Aibigahe, Larimia, Mirmailau, Morovamu, and Veraibari broke away from Kivaumai, while Gauri, Mairevepea OmaiMere, and Tovei came from Kinomere. The reason for the creation of new villages was likely due to there being better fishing or just being a better location, or possibly population expansion.

The delta’s regional geography is characterized by saltwater mangroves, tidal mudflats and swamplands; a setting that is not conducive to agriculture (Barker et al. 2012) nor for gardens, so fishing is the preferred method of subsistence. Because of these reasons, the local economy has historically relied on sago processing, fishing, and collecting mudcrabs (Frankel & Vanderwal 1981). Frankel & Vanderwal (1981:88) report that in the past, the cash-based economy was based on the sale of materials to the government; this included artefacts to the Ministry of Commerce, and fish to the Department of Primary Industry. Dutton (1992) reports that the Urama people traded with Motuans indirectly; this trade route, however, did not develop until after European contact, when Motuans went to Urama Island (thus, Motu influence is relatively recent in the area) (cf. also Barker et al. 2012 on this point). The primary trade dynamic in this relationship involved Motuans trading clay pots for sago.

The main industry in the area is logging. Large logging ships often come through the area and many people are able to be employed by logging companies. The village of Gauri is where the logging campsite was historically located and where ships used to come and load the logs. The nearest main town with an airport and shops, Kikori, is a three hour boat ride away from Urama and is where people like teachers and other government employees make a fortnightly trip in order to collect their wages.

The Urama people work in many different jobs. Many people work as teachers, health care workers, church pastors and evangelists, or logging company workers doing clerical work, labour, or the women can work there as cooks. People typically don’t work much in fisheries, but do fish for their own subsistence.

People who grow up in a particular village generally stay in the village with their families, moving away only to study, work, or if they marry someone outside of the village. Newcomers to the villages are rare and people typically only move into the village if they marry someone from Urama. The land in the village is split into blocks according to families, and one only builds within their family land boundaries. Houses are built from materials from the forest and bush and some houses are semi-permanent and include iron sheet roofing and gutters to collect water into tanks.

Travel out of the island is fairly regular, with people travelling to Kikori or Baimuru a couple of times a week; they are both government stations. They are smaller than towns and have some shops, markets, schools, health care and an air strip. They also have government services such as a small sub-branch of the Bank South Pacific where salaries can be collected. There is also transportation available to take people to other main centres around Papua New Guinea, and ships often come to the towns bringing commercial goods.
3. Urama and neighboring languages

Over the years, Urama has come into contact with many other languages, all of which have had some influence. Speakers of neighbouring dialects of North-Eastern Kiwai come into contact with each other through trade. There is also the influence of the national, and most commonly spoken, languages of Papua New Guinea: Motu, Tok Pisin, and English. These languages have all had some effect on the Urama language and are the primary source of the loanwords which are now used.

Of the younger generation of Urama speakers, almost all speak Tok Pisin, which is used in social contexts and is spoken in towns and cities and also in some schools. Due to children learning English in school, individuals report Tok Pisin is relatively easy to learn because of the lexical similarities. The older generation however, do not speak English. They typically speak Hiri Motu, which was once the lingua franca of Papua – the southern region of Papua New Guinea. Hiri Motu is mainly spoken along the Papuan coast from the tip of Milne Bay to Port Moresby. The language originated in the Central Province in Port Moresby, and spread from there through trade, administration, and missionaries. The Kikori district is still a strong area for speaking Hiri Motu – more so than the rest of the Gulf Province. However, the use of Hiri Motu as a lingua franca is fading now that learning it as a second language is less common, and parents who speak it as a second language are not transmitting it to the younger generation.

As mentioned above, Urama and Kope are structurally very close, and are considered by some (i.e. Wurm) to be dialects of a single language. There is some mutual intelligibility between the varieties, and some of the words are very similar, such as Kope na'ura ‘what’ and Urama na'uro ‘what’. Other words have drifted apart semantically, such as Kope topi ‘stomach’ and Urama dopi ‘pregnant’, but overall the changes between the two languages have not been great. The nearest language which cannot be understood by the Urama people is Porome, which is spoken in Kikori and Guaribari, and also the languages spoken in and around Baimuru.

4. Language use, literacy, and education

Although Urama is the common language spoken in the home and village, Tok Pisin is the lingua franca for most of Papua New Guinea and the second language spoken by most people from an early age. Tok Pisin is used when people from different villages and language backgrounds interact. Hiri Motu is also spoken by a wide range of people and is considered the older lingua franca, while English is becoming more common now that it is the language of education and of the government. Tok Pisin is spoken especially by the younger generation who typically start learning it once they start school, where they acquire the language from their peers, or from older people in the villages who may be speaking it. Urama children begin learning English once they start attending primary school in grade 3. English is generally the only language allowed to be spoken within the school grounds and all literature is in English. Classes are taught in English from teachers who also learned English themselves at school in the same way. As already mentioned, Hiri Motu is the other widely spoken language in Papua New Guinea, and is a national language. In village life on Urama Island, however, it is only ever spoken when there is a visitor present who does not speak Urama. The one context where Hiri Motu is still in strong use is through the church. Although there is
no Bible in the Urama language yet, the church pastors in the villages are Urama and Gope/Kope speakers. Church services are given in the Urama language but the Bible is read in either English or Hiri Motu and is then translated into Urama.

Although there is only a relatively small population of Urama speakers, they see their language as being in a healthy state due to the strong emphasis placed on speaking the language in the villages. In higher grades at school children are not allowed to speak Urama, while in the village and at home they are encouraged to speak Urama, with the view that English can only be spoken at school. Although they are strict about not speaking English at home, they do think that English is important for communication with others.

Culturally, people would take offence if an individual knew the Urama language but chose to speak other languages instead. If all participants in a conversation can speak Urama and Tok Pisin, the attitude is that Urama should be spoken. An alternative language is only spoken when speaking to someone who is unable to speak Urama, and a language that all participants can understand is then used. That being said, the younger generation is showing a preference for speaking Tok Pisin within the peer group instead of the language their parents and older generations speak and understand.

Although schooling is available from elementary school right through to the university level, not all people can afford to be educated or to send their children to school. Education in Papua New Guinea is not compulsory, therefore it is up to parents whether or not they will choose to send their children to school. Unfortunately, those who are unable to afford the fees are unable to gain an education. For those who do not attend school, they typically stay home and help their parents with caring for their siblings, going fishing, crabbing, or hunting etc.

Children begin elementary school when they are around six years old and continue schooling for two years. Elementary school is held in the village and is taught in their mother tongue, so children in Urama are taught in Urama for the first two years of their education. After elementary school, children go on to study at a primary school. Primary school is for children aged approximately 8-14 years old, taking students from grade 3 to grade 8. From primary school onwards English is the language used for teaching, meaning that children do not become fully literate in Urama. The primary school in Kivaumai (Urama Primary School) was the first school on the island and was opened in the 1970s and is government operated. Kivaumai and Kinomere are the only villages on Urama Island that have primary schools. Most children from the other villages come to school for the week and go home on weekends. During the school week they either board with relatives or their parents build homes for the children near the school where the children take care of themselves, doing their own cooking - though sometimes the mothers might take turns staying for a week at a time.

Following primary school, children may attend a high school (grades 9-10) and then secondary school (grades 11-12). These are located outside of the island and students typically board or stay in a dormitory, coming home only during school holidays. However, it is only the students who receive good grades and who pass their exams who may be selected to attend high school after the completion of grade 8. This occurs again at the end of grade 10 for entry into secondary school. After grade 12, students may apply for university. Students are then selected for university depending on their proposed field of study and the grades they have achieved.
A major factor which determines whether or not children will attend school, and for how long, is whether the parents and family can afford it. The fees for school from grades 1-12 are fully paid by the parents and relatives of the student. With the financial limitations of families and the limited spaces and opportunities available in high school and secondary school, many children drop out after grade 8, 10 or finish after grade 12 without attending a university. This is one of the primary reasons for low literacy rates on Urama Island. By the time students reach university level, and choose to attend a university, fees are subsidized by the government and parents pay only partial fees.

Aside from the first two years of school, reading is not taught in the villages, and is not taught in Urama at all, as there are no written materials in the language. There is some literacy for those who are literate in English and have advanced schooling; for instance, some individuals do translation work (including the fourth author). Although children have the opportunity to gain literacy skills through schooling, there are no forms of adult education or literacy projects in or near the village. The older generation of Urama people are not literate in Urama and have not learned English. They did, however, grow up speaking Hiri Motu, and many older people are literate in Hiri Motu as they were taught in Hiri Motu at mission schools by early missionaries of the area. Although there are currently no literacy projects, the church holds events especially for women where they learn skills such as cooking and sewing. They also have Bible study lessons where they learn to read the Bible in English or Hiri Motu and where they translate those scriptures into Urama during devotion times.

5. Research on the language

Aside from MA theses by Brown (2009) and Craig (2014), an article by Brown et al. (2016), and the data collected in Wurm (1951), Urama has been largely undocumented. Ray (1923) provides an early comparative description of the languages of southern New Guinea, including the Kiwai languages, and Wurm (1973) conducted a comparative lexical study of all of the Kiwai languages. There are also works that provide documentation of related languages. Within North-East Kiwai, Clifton (1990, 1995) provides analyses of different aspects of Kope grammar. The most notable reference work in the Southern Kiwai languages is Ray’s (1933) grammar of Island Kiwai.

The Urama data cited in this grammar was collected by postgraduate students and staff at the University of Auckland over a period of two years. The data was collected mainly through elicitation sessions with a native Urama speaker. The data has also been checked by other Urama speakers in Papua New Guinea. The data includes elicited words and sentences, as well as a series of narratives.

This work attempts a short grammar of Urama. In doing so, it aims to be accessible to linguists by aiming for a description of an under-documented language. Thus, the overview of the grammar of the language is descriptive, and does not rely heavily on any given theoretical assumptions. The book contains the main components of

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4 See Clifton (1987) for a discussion of the role of orthography in language planning in Kope.
5 There exists a collection of narratives in Brown (2009); however, these narratives are not recognized as being in the Urama language by our language consultant and teacher (and the fourth author), despite some of the speakers of the narratives being closely related to her, and inhabitants of Urama Island.
grammar, including phonology (chapter 2), morphology (chapter 3), and syntax (chapter 4). In addition, there are representative narratives (chapter 5), and a lexicon (chapter 6) contained at the end of the book.
2 Phonology

1. Introduction

The segmental phonology of Urama is characteristic of many Papuan languages: it has a relatively simple consonant inventory and a canonical five-vowel system. Also characteristic of Papuan languages is the simple syllable structure of the language, which includes a (C)V template. In addition, Urama makes use of tonal patterns resembling pitch accents, and a set of prosodic morphological phenomena (including verbal templates and reduplication).

2. Consonants

The broad consonantal inventory of Urama is presented in Table 1. The consonant phonemes are all common, and resemble many other Papuan inventories (Foley 1986). Phonetically, glides [w] and [j] exist, as does a glottal stop [ʔ]. The glide [j] is not underlying in the phonological inventory, and the underlying status of the glottal stop and the glide [w] is questionable. These issues will be outlined below. The orthographic forms for all sounds are equivalent to their IPA values, except for the glottal stop, which is represented with the apostrophe <’>, and the flap, which is represented with <r>.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Bilabial</th>
<th>Labiodental</th>
<th>Dental</th>
<th>Alveolar</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
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<td>Glides</td>
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<td>j</td>
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</table>

As illustrated in Table 1, there is a contrast between voiced and voiceless stops, two fricatives, a set of nasals, and a flap. /s/ is marginal, and found primarily in loans. There is only a single occurrence of a lateral in the lexicon, in the word [lohia] ‘chief’, in free variation with [rohia]. The form is a loan; cf. lohia ‘leader’ in Hiri Motu (cf. the apparently unrelated [buraig] ‘chief’ in Island Kiwai). The flap is listed here as a liquid, although this is an arbitrary choice, as there are currently no patterns that it participates in to the exclusion of other consonants. Example (1) illustrates the consonantal contrasts in Urama. Each consonant is found in word- or morpheme-initial position in this set, followed by a low vowel:
Consonantal contrasts

bata ‘scale (N)’
dado ‘jellyfish’
gabo ‘path, road’
hato ‘only’
kava ‘kava’
mabo ‘armband’
nata ‘something’
pata ‘swamp’
rautu ‘with’
saku ‘bald’
-tato ‘less’
vadu ‘bamboo’

Very few allophonic patterns exist in the language; there are, however, some distributions worth noting. Wurm (1977) reports a lack of [v] in the phonemic inventory of Island Kiwai. Others, notably Ray (1933), have noted free variation between [w] and [v] in the Southern Kiwai languages (in contrast to Wurm, Ray posits [v] for Island Kiwai, alongside [w]). [v] is undoubtedly present in Urama, however there is a restriction on this sound in word-initial position, where the consonant only occurs before [i, e, a], and not before [o, u]. In all likelihood, a situation of free variation is being supplanted by an allophonic relationship, with [v] now showing up in previously unexpected positions, but not before rounded vowels (which appears to be a labial-labial co-occurrence restriction). An interesting exception to this involves the non-first person agreement marker [v-], which is free to occur on verbs such as odau ‘to go’ and o’u ‘to come’: [vodau], [voʔu]. This indicates that the restriction only holds of lexical roots, and not of productive morphemes (as these do not give rise to overt alternations).

Also noteworthy is a free variation of [t] and [k] in some words; cf. itiva ‘a tool for husking coconuts’, which has the variant ikiva.

The glottal stop [ʔ] does seem to be contrastive in the language, though it only appears in intervocalic environments. The primary function of the glottal stop appears to be to break up disallowed sequences of vowels and to prevent hiatus. For instance, there are no vowel-length contrasts in the language, and thus instances of identical vowels that would normally be adjacent, lexically or through morpheme concatenation, are broken up by a glottal stop (2), as well as vowel sequences that are prohibited from forming illicit diphthongs such as ne’ahu ‘constipation’ and pi’u ‘star’.

(2)

uta’a ‘to sleep’
iaho’oti ‘to count’
u’uai ‘to cut’
o’o ‘carve, make, shape’
abe’emai ‘open’
hi’i ‘underwear’
Glottal stops fail to surface when identical vowels are concatenated across a compound boundary; cf. hivioi-ioroi ‘sunrise’.

Wurm (1977) notes that there is a greater occurrence of [ʔ] intervocalically in words that have other consonants in cognates within the Kiwaian family. The implication is that other consonants (most prominently, [k]) have diachronically debuccalized. Wurm also links this historical change to the development of the tonal system of the language (to be discussed below). The change from [k] > [ʔ] has likely resulted in many forms that do not fit the pattern; i.e. exhibit a glottal stop between vowels that are normally allowed to form a diphthong (cf. ge’i ‘happy’ vs. baratei ‘wall’). The results of these diachronic changes have presumably created a system whereby the glottal stop appears phonemic. The examples below include pairs contrasting in sequences of vowels; those in (3) have the sequence interrupted by the glottal stop, those in (4) do not.

(3)  
hi’a  ‘very, a lot’
gana’u  ‘walking stick’
gi’epu  ‘heart’
hi’o  ‘meat, flesh’

(4)  
hiabau  ‘type, kind’
Ginau  name
giepu  ‘sad’
hio  ‘run, race’

The final two pairs of words in (3) and (4) constitute true minimal pairs, which argues in favor of an analysis of glottal stop as a contrastive phoneme, in addition to its role in hiatus resolution.

3. Vowels

The vowel inventory is also relatively simple, and resembles the canonical 5-vowel system characteristic of many languages of the world (Maddieson 1984), and also of Papuan languages generally (Foley 1986).

Table 2: Urama vowel inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>i</th>
<th>u</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e [ɛ]</td>
<td>o [ɔ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The vowels have roughly their expected phonetic manifestations, with the mid vowels, which are orthographically <e> and <o>, being phonetically [ɛ] and [ɔ]. The back mid vowel <o> in many instances tends to be realized higher than its normal range, sometimes approximating [u].
The following illustrates the contrastive status of each of the vowels. Each of the vowels is shown occurring in word- or morpheme-initial position, followed by the sequence […mo…].

(5) Vowel contrasts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vowel</th>
<th>Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>imo’a</td>
<td>‘spit (v)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emo</td>
<td>‘elbow’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amo</td>
<td>‘breast’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>omo</td>
<td>‘river’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=umo</td>
<td>‘PL’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, the language also makes use of several diphthongs, illustrated in (6).

(6) Diphthongs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diphthong</th>
<th>Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[oi] didimo</td>
<td>‘back’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ai] addede.ai</td>
<td>‘to bite’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[au] kaupubai</td>
<td>‘few’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ei] keihi</td>
<td>‘little, small’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The diphthongs that occur in normal and fast speech are underlying sequences of vowels, evident from their separation in careful speech. As an example, what is syllabified as [o.dau] ‘go’ in fast speech is syllabified as [o.da.u] in careful speech. If it can be assumed that since there is no vowel length contrast, and each vowel is represented with a single mora, then this implies that syllable structure is not relevant for the monophthong/diphthong distinction, as syllable breaks can occur between these sequences of vowels, and change under conditions of speech rate.

At first blush there appear to be no underlying consonantal glides in the language, though glides are sometimes derived from underlying vowels in some sequences. In these contexts, glides and vowels are in free variation. For instance, it is not uncommon for sequences such as /oa/ and /ua/ to surface as [owa] and [uwa], respectively. As an example, the form /tauo/ ‘old’ can surface as [tau.wo] or [tau.o]. By extension, there do not seem to be contrasts between forms like [wato] and [uato] ‘dry (ADJ)’, which would be expected if the glides were underlying in the language. There are, however, forms such as wadu ‘bamboo’ and wodi ‘nose’, which seem to be fairly clearly articulated with a [w], and not a [u]. Because of this, these forms have been entered into the lexicon as [w]-initial, though the underlying status of these sounds still remains to be fully worked out. Further support for the phonemic status of /w/, however, comes in the free variation between initial [w] and [v] that certain forms exhibit: wadu [wadu] ‘ship (N)’ has the variant [vadu]. The fact that [w] alternates with a consonant [v] argues strongly for an underlying, consonantal glide /w/. 
3.1. Vowel harmony

Given the strict (C)V syllable template (to be elaborated on in section 5.1 below), there are relatively few allophonic phenomena that are observed. However, one case of allophony, perhaps the most robust, is vowel harmony. Vowel harmony in the language is triggered by certain prefixes. One example involves the first person agreement prefix [n-], which induces epenthesis when preceding another consonantal prefix. The quality of this epenthetic vowel takes on the quality of the initial vowel of the root:

(7) \textit{No-m-ovou}.
   1-BEN-bring
   ‘Bring it to me.’

The past tense prefix [p-] exhibits similar behaviors. In cases where this prefix is stacked preceding other prefixes, and only consonantal material is present in the following prefix (as in 8), the epenthetic vowel takes on the quality of the initial vowel of the root. However, if the plural prefix [i-] intervenes, then epenthesis is blocked, as is vowel harmony (9):

(8) \textit{Mo ro bomo=i pa-n-aro ra}.
   1SG NOM pig=DEF PST-1-shot PST
   ‘I shot the pig.’

(9) \textit{Mo ro netua bomo=ti p-i-n-aro ra}.
   1SG NOM two pigs=DU PST-PL-1-shot PST
   ‘I shot both pigs.’

This alternation is illustrated by more forms below, where the epenthetic vowel surfaces due to prefixation. The argument for epenthesis, rather than deletion, is the fact that vowel+[i] sequences are generally tolerated in the language, while on the other hand, consonant clusters are never tolerated. If the vowel is underlying, then there is no motivation for deletion before vowel-initial stems. Thus, the vowel that surfaces is epenthetic, the purpose of which is to break up an underlying consonant cluster. This vowel is present in plural forms, but alternates based on the following vowel in non-plural forms:

(10) \textit{Nu Kara ha’o=i p-i-midai}.
    3SG Kara bag=DEF PST-PL-borrow
    ‘She borrowed Kara’s bags.’

(11) \textit{Nu go’ota ga’u=i po-do’ai}.
    3SG coconut one=DEF PST-pick
    ‘She picked one coconut.’
The behavior of the past tense and the first person agreement prefix stands in contrast to other bound forms which do not undergo vowel harmony. A prime example is the purposive clitic $ma=$. As illustrated in the examples below, the prefix is consistently realized with a low vowel [a] when the stem-initial vowel is a high vowel or a mid vowel, arguing strongly that the prefix vowel is underlying:

(15) **Teriki ata $ma=n$-ovai ro.**
    trick certain PURP-1-make 2SG.
    ‘I’ll try and play a trick on you.’
4. Suprasegmental phonology

There are two noteworthy phenomena that fall within the scope of suprasegmental phonology in Urama: tonal accents, and intonation. These will be dealt with in turn, but it will be noted that they may interact in interesting ways.

4.1. Tonal accents

Urama makes use of a sophisticated system of tonal accents. There are few minimal pairs that contrast tonally, though the nature of the contrasts is indicative of the larger effect that tone has in the language. The few minimal pairs\(^6\) that contrast with respect to tone are given in (16):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Surface contrasts in pitch} \\
{nimo} & \quad \text{‘us’} \quad \text{LH} \\
{nimo} & \quad \text{‘lice’} \quad \text{LL}
\end{align*}
\]

Given the sparse number of minimal tone pairs, and given that they are all disyllabic, this suggests that the tonal patterns in the language are not contrastive, but rather constitute a tonal accent. This analysis is along the lines of that proposed by Donohue (1997) for the related Northeastern Kiwaian language Arigibi. Donohue claims that the constraints on tonal melodies consist of the following restrictions: (i) every word must have a L tone, and (ii) every word may have a H tone. The Arigibi and Urama cognates are listed below (where there is no cognate, a phonologically similar word is used):

\[
\begin{array}{lll}
\text{Attested tonal melodies} \\
\text{Arigibi} & \text{Urama} \\
na: & \text{‘fish’} & \text{na} & \text{‘something’} \\
tutu: & \text{‘long’} & \text{tutu} & \text{‘long’} \\
umú & \text{‘dog’} & \text{umú} & \text{‘dog’} \\
nimo & \text{‘louse’} & \text{nimo} & \text{‘louse’} \\
vovoʔo & \text{‘bird’} & \text{kikio} & \text{‘bird’} \\
mudeɓe & \text{‘claw’} & \text{mudeɓe} & \text{‘claw’} \\
ivío & \text{‘sun’} & \text{hivío} & \text{‘sun’} \\
ŋgiʔep & \text{‘heart’} & \text{giʔepu} & \text{‘heart’} \\
ɛlaila & \text{‘hot’} & \text{erara} & \text{‘hot’} \\
ołaʔolá & \text{‘red’} & \text{oraʔará} & \text{‘red’} \\
tuníʔaʔ & \text{‘all’} & \text{tuníha} & \text{‘all’} \\
idóma.i & \text{‘eye’} & \text{idóma.i} & \text{‘eye’} \\
núʔ tama & \text{‘bark’} & \text{núʔatama} & \text{‘bark’}
\end{array}
\]

\(^6\) There are also a few other minimal pairs that seem to be based on vowel length. If this is the case, this is problematic, as there appears to be no true vowel length contrast in the language, which would relegate these forms to a small class of idiosyncratic exceptions.
Note that words can only have a single H tone, but that a H tone is not necessary (cf. monosyllabic words, where the condition cannot apply, as per condition (i) above). Therefore, words must have at least one L tone, but can have a single H accent (on any syllable).

The presence of the tonal accent in Urama has been argued by Wurm (1951) to be the result of diachronic processes that have eliminated consonants. Further detailed investigation of the neighboring Northeastern Kiwai languages will likely shed more light on this issue.

4.2. Intonation

Intonation in the language is still very under-explored; however, some preliminary generalizations have been reported by Mandal (2012). For example, while falling intonation is characteristic of declarative clauses, as in Figure 2, there appears to be a nuclear accent on the predicate in yes/no questions, as in Figure 3.

![Figure 2: Intonation profile of Uhoi Mevia ro puho ‘Mevia ate the fish.’](image-url)
5. **Prosodic structure**

This section presents the prosodic aspects of Urama, including syllable structure and prosodic morphological operations.

5.1. **Syllable structure**

Syllables in Urama consist of a vocalic nucleus, with an optional simple consonantal onset; e.g. (C)V. Examples are below:

\[(18) \quad \text{Urama syllables} \]

\[
\begin{array}{lcl}
V & CV \\
\text{a.bu} & \text{a.tu} & \text{‘to cross’} \quad \text{‘catfish’} \\
\text{o.ho} & \text{ni} & \text{‘to look for’} \quad \text{‘needle’} \\
\text{o} & \text{wa.po} & \text{‘yes’} \quad \text{‘tail, last’}
\end{array}
\]

The syllable template is enforced with loanwords, even for those that have entered the language fairly recently, such as [beredi] ‘bread’ or [basikoro] ‘bicycle’ (both from English).

As mentioned in section 2.3 above, there are constraints on vowels that interact with, but are not necessarily the result of, syllable structure. This includes /u/ and /i/ surfacing as [w] and [j] when they can form an onset to a syllable in fast speech, and the process of diphthong formation, which yields variation in the syllabification of a sequence of two vowels (i.e. as V.V in slow speech, or ‘diphthongal’ VV in fast speech).
5.2. Reduplication

In many languages, the reduplication of morphemes is used to mark number. Ray (1931:10) explains how in Island Kiwai, reduplication can sometimes be found with either the noun or the verb, and goes on to explain that the reduplicated words in Island Kiwai are most often adjectives, though we can see in the following examples that reduplication often occurs with nouns in Urama. Reduplication seems to primarily mark number in the language – though it can often be used as a derivational device: e.g. ora ‘blood’ can be reduplicated to form the semantically related ora–ora ‘red’. Below are a number of examples where the reduplication process has occurred, expressing a plural meaning:

(19)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{kere} & \quad \text{‘piece’} & \text{kere–kere} & \quad \text{‘pieces’} \\
\text{vati} & \quad \text{‘place’} & \text{vati–vati} & \quad \text{‘places’} \\
\text{na} & \quad \text{‘thing’} & \text{na–na} & \quad \text{‘things’} \\
\text{hivi} & \quad \text{‘root, vein’} & \text{hivi–hivi} & \quad \text{‘roots’} \\
\text{oro} & \quad \text{‘thorn’} & \text{oro–oro} & \quad \text{‘thorns’} \\
\text{pahe} & \quad \text{‘leaf’} & \text{pahe–pahe} & \quad \text{‘leaves’}
\end{align*}
\]

The term ubu ‘swelling’ or ‘bump (as on a head, etc.)’ reduplicates to yield the adjective ubu–’ubu ‘bumpy’ or ‘lots of bumps’. Although giri ‘tooth’ can be reduplicated as giri–giri, the change in meaning is not a dedicated plural; it also expresses the meaning ‘lots of sharp teeth’ such as a shark's teeth, or the sharp teeth on a saw (‘a thing with teeth’):

(20)  
\[
\text{giri–giri-na=i} \\
\text{teeth-thing=DEF} \\
\text{‘the saw’}
\]

Reduplication affects vade ‘word’ to yield the meaning of a ‘discussion’ or ‘meeting’, or more literally ‘lots of words/talking’. The reduplication of hivio ‘day’ or ‘sun’ yields the meaning ‘each day’:

(21)  
Tuniha hivio–hivioi himiha aibo ka. 
all day self like PRS

‘Every day is the same.’

There are several cases of monomorphemic reduplication, where there is no identifiable free-standing base. These forms include color terms:

(22)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{idi‘idi} & \quad \text{‘black’} \\
\text{guagua} & \quad \text{‘frog, green’} \\
\text{bogobogo} & \quad \text{‘white’}
\end{align*}
\]
This can be contrasted with the productive forms of reduplication in the language, as in (23).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>horo~horo</td>
<td>‘skinny, bony’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kere~kere</td>
<td>‘pieces’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>girl~giri</td>
<td>‘lots of sharp teeth’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>komu~komu</td>
<td>‘short, old (PL)’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For derived forms with affixes, it is obvious that reduplication copies only the material in the root, and not in the affix. This is illustrated below with the form horo~horo ‘white’. In this case, reduplication is fully copying the word, except for the definite article enclitic =i, which is not reduplicated:

(24) Hi'o beha=i ha horo~horo=i ikedui ri. meat only=DEF EMP bones=DEF OBJ.PL\throw.away COMP

‘Just the meat only – throw away the bones.’

In contrast, some affixes readily undergo reduplication. This is true for prefixes like the middle voice marker or-. Verbs such as u’uai ‘cut’ can form middles such as or-u’uai, or alternatively or~or-u’uai ‘cut oneself, be cut’. Occasionally the adjective that is formed through reduplication takes on a slightly different (pejorative, in the example below) sense when in prenominal vs. postnominal position (cf. horo-ku~ku ‘skinny, thin, wasted’):

(25) bomo horo~horo
pig skinny
‘thin/skinny pig’

(26) horo~horo bomo
skinny pig
‘rubbish/worthless pig’

Nearly all reduplicative forms in the language are cases of full reduplication. The only potential cases of partial reduplication come in the following forms:

(27) Possible partial reduplications
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mere kihi</td>
<td>‘child’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mere kekei</td>
<td>‘children’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>irihiati</td>
<td>‘hit’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iririhati</td>
<td>‘hit (PL)’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At least one other case seems to be an incomplete copy, with a relation between an initial [k] and a medial glottal stop: kiva’iva ‘curvy, bent’. These examples aside, reduplication in Urama makes use exclusively of a full copying strategy.
5.3. Verbal templates

Verbal roots are all vowel-initial (Brown 2009). The evidence for them being vowel-initial, rather than glottal-stop initial (as glottal stop does not contrast with zero in initial position) comes in diphthong formation: when the combination of a prefix vowel and verbal root-initial vowel is a licit diphthong, then a diphthong, rather than a $V?V$ sequence will surface. Cf. [viʔa] ‘porridge’ vs. [viʔai] ‘the porridge’ ($viʔa=i$ porridge=DEF).

Examples of verbal roots are in (28):

\begin{align*}
(28) & \quad abu & \text{‘to cross’} \\
& \quad aro & \text{‘to shoot’} \\
& \quad ekedua & \text{‘to throw’} \\
& \quad edai & \text{‘to get, obtain something’} \\
& \quad ibo & \text{‘to grow something’} \\
& \quad imaubo & \text{‘to walk’} \\
& \quad odau & \text{‘to go’} \\
& \quad omoti & \text{‘to wait’} \\
& \quad uho & \text{‘to eat’} \\
& \quad u’uai & \text{‘to cut’}
\end{align*}

In contrast to Island Kiwai (as reported by Ray 1931), there do not appear to be any sub-divisions of the verbal class into smaller sub-classes based on prosodic shape.
3 Morphology

1. Introduction
The nominal morphology of Urama is relatively sparse, comprising a few clitics, while the verbal morphology is much richer, including affixes, clitics, and particles, both inflectional and derivational. The morphological profile of the language approximates polysynthesis, with heavy argument indexing within the verbal complex, a characteristic typical of the Kiwaian languages.

2. Pronouns
Urama makes use of a series of personal pronouns, as well as a reflexive pronoun.

2.1. Personal pronouns
Pronouns are invariant across all grammatical roles. They do not encode gender. There is a full paradigm for all three persons with distinct forms for singular, dual, trial and plural numbers. Dual and trial forms are clearly derived from a pronominal base with the clitics =ti and =bi, respectively, though they are represented here without any internal morphological segmentation.

Table 3: Urama pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>singular</th>
<th>dual</th>
<th>trial</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>mo</td>
<td>nimoiti</td>
<td>nimoibi</td>
<td>nimo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ro</td>
<td>rioiti</td>
<td>rioibi</td>
<td>rio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>nu</td>
<td>niti</td>
<td>nibi</td>
<td>ni</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following examples illustrate the singular pronominal forms (for ease of exposition) in subject position:

(29)  
Ata hivio mo iraromo=i modobo=i haka.
some day 1SG remember=NMLZ can=NMLZ NEG
‘I can’t remember which day it was.’

(30)  
Ro gimo ka...
2SG sick PRS
‘You are sick…’
The following examples illustrate the use of the singular pronouns in object position:

(32)  Mere  ata  oho=i  ka  mo  ma=ovaba=i  ri.
     person  some  find=NMLZ  PRS  1SG  PURP=help=NMLZ  COMP
     ‘I’ll find another person to help me.’

(33)  Ro  hini  tabo  eve’a-i  n-o’u  ka!
     2SG  here  at  see=NOM  1-DFUT  PRS
     ‘That’s when I’ll see you here!’

(34)  Mo  ro  nu  odu’ai  modobo=i  haka.
     1SG  NOM  3SG  ask  can=NMLZ  NEG
     ‘I can’t ask her.’

2.2. Reflexive pronouns

There is one reflexive pronoun in Urama, himiha, which is used to form reflexives with an argument of any person or number:

(35)  Ginau  ro  himiha  er-eve’a.
     Ginau  NOM  SELF  MID-see
     ‘Ginau saw himself.’

(36)  ...mo  himiha  ito  n-aradu’uti  ka...
     1SG  self  ALL  1-talk  PRS
     ‘…I talked to myself…’

The reflexive pronoun cannot precede the antecedent it is coindexed with.

3. Articles

There are no indefinite articles in the language; however, ata ‘some, other’ can function as an indefinite and its meaning changes depending on whether it precedes or follows the head noun. For instance, na ata (lit. ‘some thing’) yields an indefinite reading, i.e. ‘something’, while ata na means ‘another thing’. Urama is uncharacteristic of many other Papuan languages in that it makes use of a true article (cf. Foley 1986, 2000).

The definite article in Urama is the clitic =i. The article is found enclitic to noun phrases, and is also used with demonstratives. The clitic status of this morpheme is inferred from the fact that it forms phonetic diphthongs with preceding words, it attaches to an entire phrase, and it is not pronounced separately in isolation. The
following conversational example illustrates how \(=i\) is used with nominals when reference is established in the discourse.

(37) \(\textit{Na‘u v-o\(\text{o}\) ra?}\)  
what N1-look NDECL  
‘What are you looking for?’

(38) \(\textit{Mo nu’a n-o\(\text{ho}\) ka.}\)  
1SG tree 1-seek PRS  
‘I’m looking for a tree.’

(39) \(\textit{Ro haiboi nu’a v-o\(\text{ho}\) ra?}\)  
2SG what tree N1-look NDECL  
‘What kind of tree are you looking for?’

(40) \(\textit{Mo nu’a n-o\(\text{ho}\) ka pe huna ma=ededeai ri.}\)  
1SG tree 1-seek PRS canoe big PURP=make COMP  
‘I’m looking for a tree to make a big canoe.’

(41) \(\textit{Nu’a huna ata Iroroma vati kekai ta; tree big some Iroroma place near LOC}\)  
\(\textit{aro’o nu’a=\(i\) modobo ka pe ededeai ri.}\)  
that tree=DEF can PRS canoe make COMP  
‘There’s a big tree near Iroroma’s place; that tree could make a canoe.’

(42) \(\textit{Ro iraromoi Iroroma ro nu’a=\(i\) mo ito ehe’ua=\(i\) a-v-a’\(\text{ai}\) ra?}\)  
2SG believe Iroroma NOM tree=DEF 1SG ALL sell=NMLZ  
Q-N1-do NDECL  
‘Do you think Iroroma will sell me the tree?’

The definite article is even available for proper names when the intended reference is an individual picked out of a set (e.g. the set of individuals named Ginau, in this example):

(43) \(\textit{Mo umuo Ginau=\(i\) tutu mere ka.}\)  
1SG know Ginau=DEF tall person PRS  
‘The Ginau I know is tall.’

Evidence that the article is a clitic to the noun phrase, rather than a nominal suffix, comes in the fact that it attaches to postnominal modifiers, such as adjectives:
Morphology 23

(44)  *Umu*  *gema=i mo umu=i ka.*
   dog  big=DEF 1SG dog=DEF PRS
   ‘The big dog is mine.’

While it is enclitic to noun phrases, the article never appears cliticized to the nominative case particle *ro*:

(45)  *Kikio=i ro uho=i ohiai ka.*
   bird=DEF NOM fish=DEF catch PRS
   ‘The bird caught the fish.’

4. Demonstratives

There are four demonstratives in the language. These include a proximal *this* (*na*), a distal *that* with anaphoric reference (*aro’o*), and two demonstratives that also encode visual reference (*i’a* and *ire*), where the referent is within sight of the speaker.

(46)  *na*  ‘this’
   *aro’o*  ‘that’
   *i’a*  ‘that; there’ (within sight)
   *ire*  ‘that’ (within sight)

These demonstratives can only occur initially in the noun phrase:

(47)  *Na*  *kika=i…*
   this  story=DEF
   ‘This story…’

(48)  *Inai*  *aro’o obo nahia=i …*
   but  that  woman  old=DEF
   ‘But that elderly lady…”

(49)  *i’a*  *hiba gema=i*
   that  crocodile  big=DEF
   ‘that big crocodile’

When used with full noun phrases, demonstratives nearly always co-occur with the definite article *=i*, as evidenced by the examples above.

5. Nouns

Nominal morphology in Urama is relatively sparse. There are no grammatical genders or nominal classifiers; nouns are only marked for number. There exists no derivational morphology to create verbal nouns or other nouns, aside from compounding. The
equivalent of forms such as hunt-er or runn-er in English are created through relativization in Urama; cf. Chapter 4, section 3.5 for relative clauses.

5.1. Case
There is only one case marker for core arguments, the nominative particle ro. Its status as a particle is evidenced by the fact that it appears outside of the noun phrase, it appears outside of the definite article clitic, and and it can be pronounced separately in speech. Also, while the definite clitic can appear inside of number clitics, the nominative particle cannot.

The particle is optional (see Brown 2009), and occurs with both transitive subjects (50) and intransitive, non-agentive subjects (51), indicating that it marks nominative, and not ergative case.

(50) Mo ro moto=i ididi modobo ka.
1SG NOM house=DEF build can PRS
‘I can build houses.’

(51) Vihai kehi ro orurudio ka.
rain small NOM cover PRS
‘A light rain is falling.’

5.2. Number
In terms of number, plural forms of nouns are usually unmarked on the nominal itself, and are more consistently marked as agreement on the verb. However, some nominals have unpredictable plural forms: e.g. singular porisi ‘police’ has the plural form porisioi ‘policemen’. These irregular plural forms generally refer to human agents and especially to kinship relations, as illustrated in (52).

(52) Singular Plural
mamu mamio ‘mother’
namu namio ‘big brother’
mabia mabiamo ‘big sister’
niavapo niamio ‘little sibling’
dubu dububai ‘man’

These plural forms exhibit a certain degree of similarity to their singular counterparts, but it is unclear how they are derived. In addition to the unpredictably derived plurals, there also exist some suppletive plural forms, such as mere ‘person’ and ubi ‘people’. As discussed in Chapter 2, section 5.2.1, some inanimate nouns have plurals derived by reduplication: kere ‘piece’, kere~kere ‘pieces’. This includes the demonstrative na ‘thing’, which when reduplicated yields na~na ‘things’.

Clitics are optionally used for number marking on any noun phrase. The morpheme =ti marks dual number, and the evidence for its status as a clitic is apparent from the
fact that it attaches to the final element in the noun phrase, and not simply the head noun:

(53)  
\begin{align*}
\text{bomo} & \quad \text{‘pig’} \\
\text{bomo}=\text{ti} & \quad \text{‘both pigs’} \\
\text{bomo huna}=\text{ti} & \quad \text{‘both big pigs’}
\end{align*}

The clitic =\text{obi} optionally marks trial number on noun phrases, and exhibits behaviors similar to the dual marker:

(54)  
\begin{align*}
\text{Umi}=\text{obi} & \quad \text{ro} & \quad \text{pusi} & \quad p-\text{obodidio} & \quad \text{bi}=\text{mo}. \\
\text{dog}=\text{TR} & \quad \text{NOM} & \quad \text{cat} & \quad \text{DPST}-\text{chase} & \quad \text{TR}=\text{PL}
\end{align*}
\text{‘Three dogs chased the cat.’}

Within the noun phrase, the trial clitic =\text{obi} appears outside of the definite article clitic. (54) represents an associative trial:

(55)  
\begin{align*}
\text{Karika}=\text{i}=\text{obi} & \quad \text{asio} & \quad p-a’\text{ai} & \quad \text{bi}=\text{mo}. \\
\text{Karika}=\text{DEF}=\text{TR} & \quad \text{sneeze} & \quad \text{DPST}-\text{do} & \quad \text{TR}=\text{PL}
\end{align*}
\text{‘Karika and two others sneezed.’}

5.3. Compounds
Nominal compounding is a relatively productive word-formation strategy in the language. In compounds the order is always modifier-head, consistent with the general head-final tendencies in the language. Nouns can form compounds with other nouns, as in: urio-abea (spirit-father, ‘God’), muramura-dubu (medicine-man, ‘doctor’), hepu-vipa (earth-snake, ‘worm’), bui-dubu (bush-man, ‘bushman’). Nominal compounds can also result from nouns combining with adjectives: gimo-moto (sick-house, ‘hospital’), tana-moto (sacred-house, ‘church’).

6. Verbs
In contrast to the nominal morphology of the language, the verbal morphology is rich in affixes, clitics, particles and auxiliaries expressing contrasts in tense, aspect, modality, number, and person. All main verbs must begin with a vowel (cf. section 5.2.2. of Chapter 2), and the verbal stem serves as the base for all further inflection, and is identifiable as a unit based on morphological changes that affect segments of the stem.

6.1. Subject and object agreement
Subjects and objects are indexed on the verb by means of agreement prefixes; however, there are no dedicated morphemes for marking subjects and objects as grammatical roles. Instead, there is a system that marks number agreement for objects, a separate system for marking number agreement for subjects, and a system that marks for first
person and non-first person agreement (see Brown 2009 for an earlier analysis of agreement).

### 6.1.1. Number agreement

Agreement with plural objects is marked on the verbal stem with the prefix \textit{i}-. This prefix can either be directly attached to the stem (as in \textit{aho’o} \textit{i-aho’o} ‘to ask’) or the first vowel of the stem is replaced by [i] (as in \textit{obodidio} \textit{ibodidio} ‘chase’). This modification of the stem often depends on the quality of the stem-initial vowel, where the low vowel tends to resist replacement. When one of the valency-changing prefixes is attached to the verb, the plural object agreement prefix generally appears outside of this prefix, or changes the first vowel of the prefix, and not the verb root:

\begin{align*}
\text{(56)} & \quad \text{Aro’o umu gema=i ro p-i-v-oroho vadio} \\
& \quad \text{that dog big=DEF NOM DPST-PL.OBJ-CAUS-go.around HAB} \\
& \quad \text{umu keke=i.} \\
& \quad \text{dog little=DEF} \\
& \quad \text{‘That big dog used to lead the little dogs around.’}
\end{align*}

In some instances plural agreement which triggers vowel replacement in the verb stem will have the effect of determining the quality of epenthetic vowels through the process of vowel harmony outlined in chapter 2 (section 3.1). Epenthetic vowels produced by the concatenation of person agreement and tense prefixes (in particular, the sequence of the prefixes \textit{p-} and \textit{n-}) will undergo vowel harmony to match the derived [i] of the stem; e.g. \textit{uho} ‘eat one thing’ vs. \textit{ih} \textit{o} ‘eat more than one thing’ vs. \textit{p-i-n-ih} \textit{ho} ‘I/we ate more than one thing’.

\begin{align*}
\text{(57)} & \quad \text{Mo taitui ai-pi-n-ih} \text{vadio ra.} \\
& \quad 1SG yams ASS-PST-1-PL.OBJ\text{eat HAB PST} \\
& \quad \text{‘I used to eat yams.’}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
\text{(58)} & \quad \text{Umia epu=i i-v-ihebo.} \\
& \quad \text{leaf head=DEF PL.OBJ-N1-PL.OBJ\text{break.off} } \\
& \quad \text{‘Break the tips off the green leaves.’}
\end{align*}

Unlike the other agreement affixes, the plural object marker still appears in subordinate clauses and in negative utterances (cf. the singular form of the verb \textit{evea}):

\begin{align*}
\text{(59)} & \quad \text{Mo ro pusi=oti ivea=i haka.} \\
& \quad 1SG NOM cat=DL PL.OBJ\text{see=NMLZ NEG} \\
& \quad \text{‘I didn’t see both cats.’}
\end{align*}

Subject number agreement markers are enclitics that attach to the verb or verbal predicate. Singular forms are unmarked. The form for trials and plurals is identical,
trials are optionally marked with the morpheme \textit{bi=} which is proclitic to postverbal particles, and which is identical to the suffix found on trial pronouns.

\textbf{Table 4:} Subject number agreement clitics

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
Singular & Dual & Trial & Plural \\
\hline
=Ø & =(i)do & (bi)=...=(u)mo & =(u)mo \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

The bracketed vowels indicate that they appear in some contexts but not in others. They do not surface when directly following the verb root in some tenses. Subject number agreement affixes appear in all tenses of verbs in affirmative clauses. They normally do not appear at all in negative or subordinate clauses.

The following illustrates the different number agreement forms:

\begin{enumerate}
\item[(60)] \textit{Nu nahuai abodo ka.}
\quad 3SG song sing PRS
\quad ‘S/he is singing a song.’
\item[(61)] \textit{Niti nahuai abodo ka=ido.}
\quad 3DL song sing PRS=DL
\quad ‘They both are singing a song.’
\item[(62)] \textit{Nibi nahuai abodo bi=ka=umo.}
\quad 3TR song sing TR=PRS=PL
\quad ‘Those three are singing a song.’
\item[(63)] \textit{Ni nahuai abodo ka=umo.}
\quad 3PL song sing PRS=PL
\quad ‘They are singing a song.’
\end{enumerate}

\textbf{6.1.2. Person agreement}

There are only two overt person markers in Urama. One of them marks the first person of all numbers. The other one marks the second and third person of all numbers and as such is a “non-speaker” form. Both have a limited distribution, but the non-speaker form is much more rarely used than the first person marker.

The first person agreement morpheme occurs in the relevant contexts in all affirmative declarative and interrogative utterances with main or auxiliary verbs, but not with modals, predicate adjectives, or predicate nominals. It is a prefix and takes the following form: \textit{n-}. This morpheme marks the first person of any argument, whether it is a subject, direct object or indirect object. First person agreement appears in all tenses in affirmative clauses, and precedes the valency-changing prefixes. First person agreement is triggered by first person arguments regardless of number:
Brown, Muir, Craig & Anea

(64)  
\[ Mo \ nahua=i \ n-abodo \ ka. \]
1SG  song=DEF  l-sing  PRS
‘I am singing the song.’

(65)  
\[ Nimoiti \ nahua=i \ n-abodo \ ka=ido. \]
1DL  song=DEF  l-sing  PRS
‘We both are singing the song.’

(66)  
\[ Nimoibi \ nahua=i \ n-abodo \ ka=umo. \]
1TR  song=DEF  l-sing  PRS=PL
‘The three of us are singing the song.’

(67)  
\[ Nimo \ nahua=i \ n-abodo \ ka=umo. \]
1PL  song=DEF  l-sing  PRS=PL
‘We are singing the song.’

There is no first person marking in modal expressions with the modals modobo or niro, despite a lexical verb being present.

(68)  
\[ Mo \ ro \ moto=i \ ididi \ modobo \ ka. \]
1SG  NOM  house=DEF  build  can  PRS
‘I can build houses.’

First person agreement is likewise lacking in negative expressions:

(69)  
\[ Mo \ ova’ati \ haka. \]
1SG  work  NEG
‘I didn’t work.’

Second and third person subject agreement occurs in interrogative clauses only. This agreement comes in the form of a prefix: \( \nu \)-.

(70)  
\[ Rio \ hatitoi \ \nu-odau \ du=mo? \]
2PL  whither  N1-go  TENSE=PL
‘Where are you all going?’

In yes/no interrogatives the prefix is preceded by the interrogative prefix \( a \)-:

(71)  
\[ Rioiti \ kava \ obo=i \ a-v-idio \ ra=ido? \]
2DL  kava  water=DEF  Q-N1-drink  NDECL=DL
‘Did you both drink the kava?’

This marker also appears on auxiliaries if the interrogative is in the future tense:
The only other environment that the prefix occurs is in conditional clauses. The link between conditionals and interrogatives (as non-assertive clause types) is discussed further in Chapter 4, Section 2.7.

\[(73) \quad Ro \; ro \; merekeke=i \; ai-a-v-i-arodia \; ra...\]
\[
2S \; NOM \; children=DEF \; ASS-Q-N1-PL.OBJ-care.for \; NDECL
\]
\[
‘If you look after the children…’
\]

The distribution of this marker is further delimited by tense. It can be used in future and present tense interrogatives and also in the near past, but not in the other (remote) past tenses.

### 6.2. Tense

Taking affirmative declarative main clauses as the unmarked clause and examining them for tense distinctions, six simple tenses can be observed in Urama. Five of these tenses express degrees of remoteness from the time of utterance. Since the time of utterance serves as the reference point for these tenses, they are all absolute tenses. The cut-off points between the tenses can best be described in terms of “days” from now.\(^7\)

How strictly the boundaries of each tense are observed is not entirely certain, but tenses with non-matching temporal adverbials are judged as ungrammatical or only marginally acceptable by native speakers.

The six tenses include present, near future (i.e. ‘up to tomorrow’), distant future (i.e. ‘from tomorrow onwards’), near past (i.e. ‘extending back to yesterday’), intermediate past (i.e. ‘yesterday’) and distant past (i.e. ‘extending back from the day before yesterday’). The near tenses, the intermediate past and the distant future mirror each other in terms of their temporal distance from the present moment; however, there does not exist a future tense that mirrors the distant past. The result is an asymmetrical system beyond the near tenses, with more tenses in the past than in the future. The entire system is illustrated in Figure 4:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distant Past</th>
<th>Intermediate Past</th>
<th>Near Past</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Near Future</th>
<th>Distant Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;Yesterday</td>
<td>Yesterday</td>
<td>Last night/AM</td>
<td>Today</td>
<td>Later Today</td>
<td>≥Tomorrow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 4**: Schematic of tense distinctions in Urama

Several different types of morphemes play a part in the tense marking system, where the form of the tense is determined by how these morphemes combine. These

\(^7\) As some support for this position, the word for ‘today’, *do’ou*, also means ‘now’.\]
morphemes include dedicated tense markers and also person markers which can appear or be omitted from the verb phrase to create tense distinctions. There are particles involved in tense formation which also function to indicate illocutionary status (forming interrogative, imperative or declarative utterances). The illocutionary particles in question are \( ka \) and \( ra \). \( Ra \) is most frequently used to mark utterances as interrogatives, but can also be used when the speaker is less committed to or is seeking confirmation of the truth of a statement by the addressee, or in imperatives. \( Ka \) marks utterances as declarative but also marks the tense as present, or having some reference to the time of utterance (so can often be interpreted as present perfect). Craig (2014) provides an in-depth overview of the different functions and distributions of these particles. A similar particle \( du \) is a bound morph appearing only with dual, trial and plural number markers \( =do, bi= \) and \( =mo \) respectively, so it has the most restricted range. Apart from playing a role in distinguishing tenses it is unclear whether it has any other function. Periphrastic future tenses are formed with verbal auxiliaries \( a’ai \) and \( o’u \).

The same tenses are available for interrogative utterances, but they are often formed with different combinations of the morphemes appearing in declaratives. Therefore interrogatives and declaratives will be treated together. As far as negative clauses are concerned, Urama has a much simpler bipartite system consisting only of a future and non-future tense. Thus, negative sentences will be treated separately. Imperative clauses do not exhibit any tense marking, so their present tense status is a pragmatic inference. They will not be considered in the following sections on tense.

What follows is a discussion of tenses in main clauses. In most subordinate clauses verb forms do not usually mark person, number or tense. The main exception is some (but not all) clauses introduced by bridge verbs (e.g. say, think, see) in which case the verbal morphology is not obviously different from that of main clauses. See Chapter 4, section 3.1 for discussion.

6.2.1. Tense in affirmative and interrogative clauses

6.2.1.1. Present

The particle \( ka \), which is used to mark the majority of declarative clauses (Brown 2009), is in part the marker of present tense (although it also has other illocutionary functions; cf. Craig 2014, Brown et al. 2016). It appears finally in the verb phrase, unless subject number markers are cliticized to it. A typical example is as follows:

(74) \[ \text{Mo keihibo uho n-ohiai ka}. \]
\[ \text{1SG small fish 1-catch PRS} \]

‘I am catching a little fish.’

A point to make about utterances with the particle \( ka \) is that they can often be interpreted as present perfect. In (74) above the translation could also be ‘I have caught a little fish.’ Although the time of an event may not be contiguous with the point of the utterance time, the reference point is the present, a state of affairs similar to other languages (cf. German \( Ich \) bin seit zwei Stunden hier, lit. ‘I am for two hours here’). Thus, \( ka \) marks present tense, but can have perfect or past implicatures. Furthermore, forms with \( ka \) are rejected as ungrammatical with time adverbials like \( detu \) ‘yesterday’
or *diata* ‘more than two days ago to a week ago’, further support for the analysis of *ka* as marking present. Apart from *ka* the present tense has no distinctive marking.

In present tense questions asked of a singular addressee the most common particle marking the utterance as an interrogative is *ra*. Example (75) illustrates a typical second person singular question, which along with *ra* is marked with the subject agreement morpheme for second and third person, *v*-

\[(75) \quad Ro\ \ hobou\ \ a-v-a’o\ \ ra?\]

2SG lie Q-N1-say NDECL

‘Are you telling lies? (Are you talking nonsense?)

This form is not limited to interrogatives in the present tense; it can also be used for perfect and near past tense interrogatives. In this way, the particle *ra* cannot then be considered to have intrinsic tense on its own. Rather, the tense of an utterance with *ra* is induced from context and in combination with the other affixes in the verb stem, in this case the person markers:

\[(76) \quad Ro\ \ ro\ \ nika=i\ \ tuniha\ \ a-v-imidai\ \ ra?\]

2SG NOM papaya all Q-N1-pick NDECL

‘Have you picked all the papayas?’

When interrogatives have subjects that are non-singular (i.e. second and third person dual, trial and plural) the particle *ra* is replaced by the bound morpheme *du*:

\[(77) \quad Rioibi \ maketi\ \ to\ \ a-v-odau\ \ bi=du=mo?\]

2TL market ALL Q-N1-go TL=TENSE=PL

‘Are you three going to the market?’

Thus, *ra* is used in present tense interrogatives for singulatings.

### 6.2.1.2. Near Future

The near future is formed with the auxiliary *a’ai*, which also exists as a main verb meaning ‘make’ or ‘do’. This auxiliary is fully inflected for person, number and illocutionary status (i.e. it is followed by the declarative particle *ka*).

\[(78) \quad Mo\ \ wapoi\ \ ta\ \ emeha=i\ \ n-a’ai\ \ ka.\]

1SG after LOC leave=NMLZ 1-do PRS

‘I’m going to leave later today.’

The boundary point for this usage is the day after the point of utterance, at which time its use becomes marginally acceptable with temporal adverbs such as *doutu* ‘tomorrow’.
Near future in interrogatives is formed in the same way as the interrogative present, except that the morphology is positioned in relation to the future auxiliary verb a’ai, which is finite, instead of the non-finite main verb. In addition to the auxiliary, singulars are formed with the particle ra, while duals, trials, and plurals are not marked with ra, and instead are marked with clause-final number agreement.

6.2.1.3. Distant Future

The interpretation of the distant future tense begins the day after the utterance time and is formed with the auxiliary verb o’u, which when used as a main verb means ‘to come’.

Apart from the auxiliary verb, the morphemes in the distant future are the same as those for the near future. Distant future interrogatives have the same forms in non-singular as the near future tense interrogative forms, except for the auxiliary verb, and where singulars are marked with ra.
The position of the trial clitic bi= is optionally preceding the auxiliary, and optionally preceding the final cluster of tense and number agreement morphology (i.e. odaui (bi=)vo’u (bi=)du=mo ‘to go’), though it is not realized simultaneously in both positions.

6.2.1.4. Near Past

The near past tense begins from prior to the utterance time and extends back to the day before. The cut-off point is not rigid, and near past interpretations appear to be marginally acceptable with detu ‘yesterday’, though these interpretations are definitely not grammatical with diata ‘from the day before yesterday to about a week ago’ or with any other time adverbial for more distant points in the past. The near past tense is formed with the particle vaka, which follows the verb. This morpheme appears to be composed of a morpheme va with the declarative particle ka; however, there is no independent evidence for va existing as a free morpheme or attaching to any other word-forms. An example is:

(84) Du=i tauohi’a itai ri ovaharo bi=vaka=umo!

food=DEF early cook COMP begin TR=RPST=PL

‘You three started cooking a long time ago (and you’re still cooking)!

Near past singulars are formed with the particle ra, and so these forms are identical to those used for present tense interrogatives; however ra is also used with the non-singular number agreement clitics and this clearly distinguishes this tense from the present interrogative. As noted above, tense is determined by the combination of affixes, including the person agreement marker and the particle.

(85) Rioiti do’ou duoduo=i maketi to a-v-odaun ra=ido?

2DU today morning=DEF market ALL Q-N1-go PST=DU

‘Did you both go to the market this morning?’

6.2.1.5. Intermediate Past

The intermediate past tense is used for events that took place on the day before the utterance time. Unlike the present, the particle ka is not used to mark the intermediate past. In third person singular forms there is no particle at all, which could mean the bare stem has intrinsic past tense. In first or second person singular forms the final particle is ra while the bound tense morpheme du appears in the non-singular numbers. Example (86) below illustrates this with the first person singular form of the verb, with the first
person prefix n-. Examples (87) and (88) illustrate second person singular and third person plural forms, respectively, which despite the appearance of the particle ra, do not employ the non-speaker (second and third person) agreement prefix v-. This is in contrast to interrogative forms typically ending in ra. Finally, example (89) shows the third person singular intermediate past form, which consists of a bare verb.

(86) \( Mo \ detu \ n\text{-}erde\text{’a} \ ra. \)
1SG yesterday 1-arrive PST
‘I arrived yesterday.’

(87) \( Ro \ detu \ ha’ima \ ere\text{’a} \ ra. \)
2SG yesterday tired feel PST
‘You were feeling tired yesterday.’

(88) \( Mo \ turana=i \ detu \ erede\text{’a} \ du=mo. \)
1SG friend=DEF yesterday arrive TENSE=PL
‘My friends arrived yesterday.’

(89) \( Nu \ detu \ erede\text{’a}. \)
3SG yesterday arrived
‘S/he arrived yesterday.’

The interrogative forms of this tense differ in form from the present and near past interrogatives in that the second and third person forms lack the distinctive non-first person agreement prefix v-:

(90) \( Ro \ detu \ hatitoi \ odau \ ra? \)
2SG yesterday whither go PST
‘Where did you go yesterday?’

Like the present tense interrogatives, the particle du appears in non-singular forms. In this case the absence of an affix (the agreement prefix v-) rather than the combination of affixes makes the tense morphologically distinctive in non-first person forms. First person forms are identical with the present tense interrogatives, as the first person agreement prefix n- is obligatory throughout the paradigm in affirmative utterances.

6.2.1.6. Distant Past

The interpretation of the distant past tense begins from the day before ‘yesterday’ (if the utterance time is ‘today’) and is used for all temporal reference from that point back. It is formed with the past tense prefix p- which is ordered before all other verbal prefixes (except the assertive prefix ai-).

In first and second person forms the verb is followed by the particle ra, which is redundant in terms of determining tense:
In third person forms there is no particle (ra or du), either on its own or in combination with number agreement markers.

(92)  
\[
\text{Ri'o ha' o p-imidai ra=umo.} \\
2\text{PL bag DPST-borrow.PL PST=}\text{PL}
\]
‘You borrowed bags.’

Utterances with a time adverbial such as detu ‘yesterday’ appear to be marginally acceptable (94); however, this is the only acceptable construction for other time adverbials such as diata ‘from the day before yesterday to about a week ago’.

(94)  
\[
? \text{Mo detu ha' ima pe-n-ere'a ra.} \\
1\text{SG yesterday tired DPST-1-feel PST}
\]
‘I was feeling tired yesterday.’

Interrogatives marked for the distant past differ from declaratives in that the first person agreement prefix p- is absent and there is no final particle such as ra or du anywhere in the paradigm, which distinguishes this tense from the other tenses found in interrogatives. This reinforces the point that the absence of a morpheme is as important as the presence of one, or the combination of affixes and particles, in creating tense distinctions.

6.2.2. Tenses in negative clauses

The tense system in negative utterances is radically different from affirmative utterances, and for that reason they warrant separate treatment. The most common morphemes of negation also appear to be inflected for tense. There are just two such morphemes: haka, used in non-future contexts and taho’o aika, used in future tense contexts.
Haka appears as the final element of the verb phrase and does not host any subject agreement affixes. The verb itself is never inflected with the first person agreement prefix n- or the non-first person agreement prefix v-. If the location in time of the event described has to be more accurately defined than simply “non-future”, then it must be inferred from the context with the help of a time-adverbial. Two examples follow:

(97)  
Rioiti ro obo=i idio=i haka  
2DU NOM water=DEF drink=NMLZ NEG

‘Neither of you drank / are drinking the water.’

(98)  
Kikio=i imumuio=i haka.  
bird=DEF fly=NMLZ NEG

‘No birds are / were flying.’

While there is no person or number agreement on the verbs or any other tense morphemes in these clauses, aspectual morphemes can still form part of the verb phrase. In (99) the habitual marker appears before the negative particle, which without a time adverbial is likely to produce the inference that the situation described holds at the utterance time:

(99)  
Mo taitu=i iho vadio=i haka.  
1SG yam=DEF PL.OBJ\eat HAB=NMLZ NEG

‘I don’t eat yams.’

Negative non-future interrogatives are formed with the final particle hara or more emphatically with haka ha.

(100)  
Ro na’u iho vadio=i hara?  
2SG what PL.OBJ\eat HAB=NMLZ NEG.INT

‘What don’t you eat?’

The future negative tense is formed with taho’o aika. Aika may be a form of the near future auxiliary a’ai ka, but counter-evidence comes in the fact that it takes no person agreement prefixes. It also has a variant form aike, which is used on its own to form negative imperatives. Unlike haka, subject number agreement morphemes can be cliticized to taho’o aika as in (102), but this appears to be optional, and somewhat rare.

(101)  
Mo raisi itai taho’o aika  
1SG rice cook NEG.FUT NEG.FUT

‘I won’t cook rice.’

(102)  
Nimoiti warupi itai taho’o aika=umo  
1DU sweet.potato cook NEG.FUT NEG.FUT=PL

‘Neither of us will cook the sweet potatoes.’
The reason for keeping the two negative future markers (taho’o and aika) separate in
the discussion up to this point is that it is possible to form a negative interrogative with
the distant future auxiliary o’u directly following taho’o:

(103)  *Río* taitu=i iho=i taho’o v-o’u du=mo?
     2PL yam=DEF PL.OBJ:eat=NMLZ NEG.FUT N1-come TENSE=PL
     ‘Won’t you eat the yams?’

An alternative future negative is formed by suffixing -tato to the verb which is then
followed by the distant future auxiliary o’u ‘come’. The auxiliary is inflected for person
and is followed by the particle ka and any number markers if the subject is non-
singular. This form of the negative then aligns with the distant future in affirmatives. It
does not appear to be as common as the future negative form taho’o aika. Two
examples of its usage follow:

(104)  *Nimo* taitu=i iho-tato n-o’u ka=umo.
     1PL yam=DEF PL.OBJ:eat-NEG 1-DFUT PRS-PL
     ‘None of us will eat the yams.’

(105)  *Ro* na’u iho-tato v-o’u ra?
     2SG what PL.OBJ:eat-NEG N1-DFUT NDECL
     ‘What won’t you eat?’

6.3. Aspect

The final vowel of the verb stem in part determines the aspect of the predicate, though it
is not clear that alternations in the final vowel constitutes a morpheme. The use of mid
and high vowels (i.e. [-low] vowels) give a durative aspectual reading to the verb; these
are opposed to stems with the [+low] vowel or the diphthong /ai/, which makes the verb
punctiliar, encoding a single, brief action or event (cf. Brown 2009:17-18). Aspectual
pairs of verbs can be formed on this basis:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbs ending in low vowels</th>
<th>Durative</th>
<th>Punctiliar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>imumuio</td>
<td>‘flying’</td>
<td>imumuai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iadede</td>
<td>‘biting (many things)’</td>
<td>adedeai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iahio</td>
<td>‘cutting (many things)’</td>
<td>ahiai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>idimo</td>
<td>‘removing (many things)’</td>
<td>idimai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>odomo</td>
<td>‘cleaning / fixing’</td>
<td>odomoiai</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that most verbs end in [–low] vowels and not all of them have a corresponding
partner with the punctiliar ending. Such verbs include verbs of motion like odau ‘go’
and o’u ‘come’. Transitive verbs in this category include oho ‘seek’ and a’o ‘say,
speak’. There are also some verbs for which the opposite is true – they have punctiliar
forms but no corresponding durative form; for instance, adiai ‘set alight’ does not have
a corresponding durative form. This type of behavior, where the segmental
(specifically, vocalic) content of a verbal root determines roughly which aspectual class the verb belongs to, is also characteristic, though in different ways, to Island Kiwai (Ray 1932).

Habitual aspect is marked with the particle *vadio* which can be used with tensed verbs. In the present tense *vadio* gives the verb a gnomic reading, a reading which the verb phrase ending in *ka* without *vadio* lacks. In other words, present tense in Urama has a different range of meanings than it does in English.

(107) *Tuia=i  p-oroho  vadio  uho=i  i-oho=i  ri.*

```
sea=DEF  DPST-visit  HAB  fish=DEF  PL.OBJ-seek=NMLZ  COMP
```

‘He always went around in the sea to look for fish.’

There is a restriction on using the habitual marker *vadio* with the perfective or punctiliar forms of aspectual pairs of verbs.

In order to encode perfectives or inchoatives, Urama uses full verbs in matrix clauses such as *oropoio* ‘finish’ and *ovaharo* ‘begin’. The verbs they govern are in subordinate clauses, so these aspects fall under the syntactic, not the morphological system of the language. Examples are:

(108) *Ni  du=i  ihoiai  ovaharo  ka=umo.*

```
3PL  food=DEF  eating  begin  PRS=PL
```

‘They have all started eating.’

(109) *Ro  du=i  itai  hatihivio  oropoioi  v-a’ai  ra?*

```
2SG  food=DEF  cook  when  finish  N1-do  NDECL
```

‘When will you finish cooking?’

6.4. Modality

Modality in Urama is expressed by different types of morphology, including prefixes, clitics, and lexical words.

Deontic modality is expressed lexically rather than morphologically. The two most important of these modals express ability and volition. They are *modobo* ‘can’ and *niro* ‘want’. *Modobo* can be used in polite requests, and *niro* can take the intensifying adjectival suffix *-hia* to express strong desire.

(110) *Nu  ro  modobo  ka  moto=i  ididi.*

```
3SG  NOM  can  PRS  house=DEF  build
```

‘He can build the house.’

(111) *Ni  niro-hia  ka  ni  himiha  moto=i  ma=ididi  ri.*

```
3PL  want-very  PRS  3PL  self  house=DEF  PURP  =build  COMP
```

‘They all really want to build their own house.’
Note that the subordinate clause has the subordinator ri and the verbal clitic ma=, which expresses purpose. These are not obligatory:

(112)  Mo niro ka obo oru'o=i.
1SG want PRS water bathe=NMLZ
‘I want to swim.’

In these cases, the main predicate appears postposed, following the modal and the postverbal particle ka. (Note that obo oru’oi is an example of a verb compounded with a modifying noun – a common form of verbal derivation; cf. section 6.6 below.)

To express obligation adverbs are generally used: aiha and ita. The latter has a stronger sense of obligation and the pair may be used together to re-inforce this:

(113)  Nu do’u aiha ita o’u nimo moto=i oito.
3SG today must must come 1PL house=DEF ALL
‘S/he (really) must come to our house today.’

Various forms of epistemic modality are expressed by the auxiliary a’ai and a subordinate clause, as in (114). In some contexts the auxiliary a’ai can have the modal force of “try” (in terms of Foley’s [1986:152] definition of modality extending beyond an actor’s intention or attitude to her manner of performance of an action).8

(114)  Ro moto=i ididi ri a’ai vaka.
2SG house=DEF build COMP do RPST
‘You were trying to build a new house.’

There appears to be a prefix ap- which can be used to express doubt or possibility and counterfactuality. Examples include:

(115)  Mo dubu=i dohoi du=i epu=i ta
1SG husband=DEF evening food=DEF before=DEF LOC
o’ou ap-a’ai ka.
come MOD-do PRS
‘My husband may come before dinner.’

(116)  Nupa bomo=i diata nu ro ap-aro.
maybe pig=DEF days.ago 3SG NOM MOD-shoot
‘He might have been the one who shot the pig a couple of days ago.’

---

8 This sentence can also be interpreted as expressing future-in-the-past tense: ‘You were going to build a house’. The event (what the addressee was intending) is in the near past, hence the use of vaka, but the reference point (building the house) is posterior to that event, which would explain the use of the auxiliary normally used for expressing future tense.
One possible explanation for the diachronic source of this prefix, though speculative, is that the combination of the interrogative prefix a- and the distant past prefix p- were compounded to form a new modal prefix.

One modal prefix, the assertive ai-, precedes all other prefixes in the finite verb stem. It is used when the speaker wants to assert that an event has indeed occurred, and may be evidential if not modal in force:

(117)  Mo  ro  bomo=i  ai-n-apehemai  ka.
       1SG  NOM  pig=DEF  ASS-1-miss  PRS
‘I’ve missed the pig.’

Other elements that have modal force, such as aiha and ita ‘must’ are proclitics or adverbs that appear before all the preverbal morphemes mentioned above. In the case of non-finite verbs in subordinate clauses the proclitic ma= can often be found, where it appears to mark purpose:

(118)  Mo  erai  n-ivahoti  ka  muko  ma=adiai  ri.
       1SG  firewood  1-PL.OBJ-chop  PRS  fire  PURP=light  COMP
‘I chopped firewood to make a fire.’

6.5. Valency-adjusting morphology

Those affixes that change the argument structure or valency of the verb are most closely bound to the verbal root. These include prefixes that increase the valency of the verb, making intransitive verbs transitive or causative (e.g. changing the semantics from ‘go’ to ‘make go’) or that make transitive verbs ditransitive; or prefixes that decrease valency, making transitive verbs reflexives or middles.

6.5.1. Causative

The causative prefix in Urama is Vv-, with the quality of the vowel determined by the vowel of the verb stem (cf. chapter 2, section 3.1). Examples of verb stems with the causative prefix include the following:

(119)  odau  ‘to go’  ov-odau  ‘to make go, to take’
  ioro  ‘to climb’  iv-ioro  ‘to take up’
  o’u  ‘to come’  ov-o’u  ‘to bring’

The causative prefix is iw in Island Kiwai (Ray 1932). Given the shift of some instances of [w] to [v] in Urama, a correspondence between these morphemes would be unsurprising.

6.5.2. Applicative

There is one applicative prefix in the language, which marks benefactives. This prefix takes the form em- when prefixed to verbs beginning with front vowels, for example
ado’a ‘to water’ → em-ado’a ‘to water (plants) for (someone).’ When prefixed to verbs beginning with [o] or [u], vowel harmony takes place, for example: ov-odau ‘to take’ → om-ov-odau ‘to take for (someone)’.

(120) Nu kokoro kere om-u’uai!
3SG chicken piece BEN-cut
‘Cut a piece of chicken for him.’

If the verb is also a derived causative, the benefactive prefix precedes the causative prefix as in ov-ou ‘bring’ vs. om-ov-ou ‘bring x for y’, illustrated in (121).

(121) …nu du amia ma=om-ov-ou=i ri.
3SG food some PURP=BEN-CAUS-bring=NMLZ COMP
‘…to bring her some food.’

Some verbs appear to be lexicalized from forms prefixed with this morpheme. For example, the verb ema’ai ‘to give’ is transparently related to the verb a’ai ‘to do’.

6.5.3. Middle
The middle voice prefix is Vr-, with vowel harmony determining the quality of the vowel. (122) illustrates some active/middle alternations:

(122) aditi ‘to rub’ ar-aditi ‘to wipe, dry oneself’
ematuhia ‘to trick’ er-ematuhia ‘to lie’
otho ‘to break s.t.’ or-otho ‘to break, be broken’

Middle forms are illustrated in the sentences below:

(123) Hoho=i ar-aditi.
face=DEF MID-wipe
‘Wipe your face.’

(124) Mo hura=i or-otho ka.
1SG egg=DEF MID-break PRS
‘My eggs smashed.’

With verbs beginning with /u/ the prefix takes a slightly different shape whereby the vowel is [o] (suggesting the form is underlyingly /or-/): ur-ai ‘to cover, close’ → or-urudio ‘to be closed’. In still other contexts, the prefix is reduplicated: u’uai ‘to cut’ → or~or-u uai ‘to be cut, cut oneself.’ There are currently too few examples of verbs beginning with /u/ and which have middle voice forms to be certain about the underlying shape of the prefix in this case.

9 This may be a suppletive form but is likely from a durative stem of urai with a suffix -dio attached making the verb stative in this case.
6.6. Verbal derivation and compounding

In order to derive new verbs from borrowed words or native nouns and adjectives, various strategies are employed. One of these is to delete the initial consonant (totomu ‘advice’ yields otomu ‘to advise’), or by reduplicating the vowel of the nucleus of the first syllable and prefixing it to the consonantal onset of a noun or adjective(e.g. umumu ‘to fan’ from mumu, ‘fan’; obobo ‘to dig’ from bobo ‘ditch’). This is because there is a restriction on verbs that stipulates they must begin with a vowel. That this is a case of vowel insertion rather than vowel deletion in order to create nouns is supported by the quality of the epenthetic vowel, which is identical to the following vowel. This method of deriving verbs, however, appears to be of limited productivity.

Another means of deriving verbs is by compounding nouns with disyllabic “light” verbs. The most frequent one is a’ai ‘do’, but a’o ‘say’ and i’i ‘to become’ also appear in compounds.

(125)  
sikuru a’ai  ‘to study’
piro a’ai    ‘laugh’
vari a’ai    ‘to joke, to laugh’
sikuru a’o  ‘to learn’
dodo i’i     ‘to forget’
hoa i’i      ‘to be surprised’

The example in (126) illustrates this type of synthetic compounding in context.

(126)  
Mo vari n-a’ai ka!  
1SG laugh 1-do PRS
‘I’m joking!’

Noteworthy is the position of the modifier pupuo ‘hard’ and postposition ito in the following example, both of which occur between the auxiliary and the nominal:

(127)  
Ohiobai (hiro) sikuru=i pupuo ito a’o ka=umo.  
boys many school=DEF hard ALL say PRS=PL
‘(Many) boys study hard.’

Compounded verbs are also able to take objects, which show up in the expected preverbal position:

(128)  
Umu=i ro mo du=i piro a’ai ka.  
dog=DEF NOM 1SG food=DEF theft do PRS
‘The dog is stealing my food.’

(129)  
Ni bogo~bogo-vade sikuru a’o ka=umo.  
3PL white-speech school say PRS=PL
‘They’re learning English.’
Deriving new verbs does not exhaust the productive uses of nominal-verb compounding. More complex (non-light) verbs can also form compounds with nouns, as in *obo-oru’o* water-wash, ‘wash in water’ or *hete-oma* dance (N)-dance, ‘shake/dance a dance’. More examples illustrate:

(130)  
\[
\text{Ginau tuniha hivio}=i \text{ obo oru’o vadio}=i \text{ ka.}
\]
Ginau every day=DEF water wash HAB=NMLZ PRS
‘Ginau bathes every day.’

(131)  
\[
\text{Ade ro hete oma ka.}
\]
Ade NOM dance shake PRS
‘Ade is dancing.’

7. Adjectives

Adjectives can be structurally distinguished from nouns by their position modifying the head of the noun phrase, as well as by taking adjectival morphology such as suffixes. In the case of multiple adjectival modifiers, the adjectives can appear both preceding and following the noun:

(132)  
\[
\text{Ade ro Ginau ora’ara uho gema}=i \text{ ema’ai.}
\]
Ade NOM Ginau red fish big=DEF give
‘Ade gave Ginau the big red fish.’

(133)  
\[
\text{idī–īdī umu nahia}=i
\]
black dog old=DEF
‘the old black dog’

(134)  
\[
\text{ge’i umu kehi(bo)}
\]
happy dog little
‘a happy little dog’

The ordering of some adjectives is fixed. In the case of *ha’o nahia gema=i* ‘the big old bag’, the adjectives *gema* ‘big’ and *nahia* ‘old’ can only appear after the head they are modifying; cf. *Nahia ha’o gema=i*. The following further exemplifies this pattern, where two postnominal adjectives modify a noun:

(135)  
\[
\text{Ora’ora ha’o orio gema}=i \text{ mea-hia ka.}
\]
red bag new big=DEF good-very PRS
‘The big new red bag is very good.’

There is a lexical class of underived adjectives in the language, and there are also strategies for deriving adjectives from nouns. These include reduplication and suffixes that are attached to adjectives. These will each be discussed in turn.
Some adjectives appear to be derived from nouns by reduplication: *ibi* ‘shell-less crab’ vs. *ibi—ibi* ‘weak’. Some apparently reduplicated adjectives have variants without the reduplication: *kiva–kiva* ‘curved’ has the variant form *kiva*, with the same meaning. Another variation found with sound changes in the reduplicated consonants is the replacement of a [k] with a glottal stop: *kivakiva* ~ *kiva’iva*. Reduplication on at least one adjective produces a plural reading: *komu* ‘small, old, worn-out’ has a plural form *komukomu*, as in *hipura komukomu* ‘old clothes’.

Adjectives can also be derived from nouns, as with the derivational suffix -*tato* ‘without’ (roughly equivalent to the English suffix -less). For example, suffixation of the noun *idomai*, ‘eye’ yields *idomaitato* ‘blind’ (lit. ‘eyeless’).

(136) **Adjectives derived with -tato**

- *pupuo-tato* ‘without strength, weak, helpless’
- *moto-tato* ‘homeless’
- *ovabai-tato* ‘not helpful, selfish’
- *wapo-tato* ‘tail-less’
- *urio-tato* ‘shocked’ (literally ‘spirit-less’)

Finally, adjectives can be derived from nouns through a simple process of conversion. An example of this may be the compound of *horo* ‘bone’ and *kuku* ‘stick’ producing the adjective *horo-kuku* ‘very thin’.

There are several adjectival suffixes in the language. Intensive forms are derived with the suffix -*hi’a* (cf. *mea* ‘good’; *mea-hi’a* ‘very good’) or its variants -*ha* (*ahu* ‘strong’; *ahu-ha* ‘very strong’) and -*hi’aha* (*tira–tira* ‘rough’; *tira–tira-hiaha* ‘very rough’). The use of *hia* as a particle is often employed in superlatives:

(137) **Nu ibi~ibi hia ka.**

3SG weak very PRS

‘She is the weakest.’

Another intensifying suffix is -*ri*, but this suffix has a more limited distribution than the suffixes -*hi’a* and its variants. It is commonly used with the adjective *mea* ‘good’; the derived form *mea-ri* means ‘quite good’.

Some adjectival particles can modify the meanings of lexical adjectives. For instance, *aibo* is an adjective meaning ‘similar’ or ‘like’, and can be used to qualify adjectives to give the sense of ‘rather’ or ‘-ish’. Examples include *tutu* ‘tall’, *tutu aibo* ‘rather tall’; *awo* ‘distant’, *awo aibo* ‘quite distant’ (cf. *awo aibo vati* ‘quite a distant place’). It is also noteworthy that *aibo* can be used in degrees of comparison; for example:

(138) **I’a dubu=i mo tutu=i aibo ka.**

that man=DEF 1SG tall=DEF like PRS

‘That’s the man who I am taller than.’
This usage may be the source of variant forms of adjectives ending in -bo that do not appear to modify the meaning of lexical adjectives so clearly; e.g. komubo from komu ‘short’, keihibo from keihi ‘little’, and ga’ubo, another form of ga’u ‘one’. (140) illustrates this usage, while the lack of -bo in (140) does not seem to alter the semantics. It should be noted that the form with -bo in this case is pre-nominal, while the form without it is post-nominal, the only significant syntactic difference between the two forms.

(140) Ro keihi-bo uho ohiai ka.
2SG small fish catch PRS
‘You have caught a little fish.’

(141) Ro uho keihi ohiai ka.
2SG fish little catch PRS
‘You have caught a little fish.’

Finally, there is a suffix -ha, which occurs with adjectives (and possibly other categories, such as verbs): tutu ‘tall’ vs. tutu-ha ‘a tall type of thing.’

(142) Mo ro tutu-ha mere pe-n-ev’a ra.
1SG NOM tall-type person DPST-1-see PST
‘I saw a tall type of person.’

8. Adverbs
There are underived lexical adverbs in the language. These include forms such as do’u ‘today’ and doutu ‘tomorrow’. They can be used to form compound adverbs, such as do’u duoduo ‘this morning’ (lit. ‘today morning’). Discourse markers are often adverbial, such as inamo, ‘like, you know’.

(143) Mo ai-po-n-o’u ra, inamo,
1SG ASS-DPST-1-come PST like

tureni ta ma=oroi ri moto=i tabo.
train LOC PURP=board COMP house=DEF LOC
‘I came, like, you know, to get on the train from home.’

(144) Ka mo ro… inamo… tureni
and 1SG NOM like train
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\[ ta \ i-n-oroi \ ta \ o’u \ ka \ eme’ei \ ka. \]
LOC DPST-1-board LOC come and sit PRS

‘And I…like you know, got on the train and sat down.’

Some markers of epistemic modality such as \textit{nupa} ‘maybe’ and \textit{ita} ‘must’ are adverbials in Urama (similar to English).

(145) \textit{Nupa uho aibo vi’a=i niroi ta itai ri.}
maybe fish like porridge=DEF inside LOC cook COMP

‘Maybe something like fish to put into the porridge to cook.’

Apart from lexical adverbs of time, manner, etc., some adverbs can be formed by combining adjectives with the postposition \textit{to}; for instance: \textit{imini} to ‘slowly’ (cf. \textit{imini} ‘slow’), \textit{keihibo} to ‘quietly’ (cf. \textit{keihibo} ‘little’). (146) further illustrates:

(146) \textit{Du=i itai pauo ka, nuri ro imini}
sago=DEF cook labour PRS that’s why 2SG slow

\textit{to itai ka.}
ALL cook PRS

‘Cooking sago is hard work, so you have to cook it slowly.’

The behavior and distribution of the adverbs in Urama is prime material for further study.

9. Numerals

There are only two basic numerals in the language: \textit{ga’u} ‘one’ and \textit{netua} ‘two’. They behave like adjectives and can follow or precede the head word. The numerals can also take suffixes (e.g. \textit{ga’u-bo} and \textit{netua-ti}; the first suffix (-bo) has no meaning; the second is the dual number clitic used in noun phrases). Numbers higher than 2 are expressed by combining the two base numerals, resulting in a 2-cycle system (Lean 1991). Used together, they can express higher numbers like three (\textit{ga’u netua}), four (\textit{netua netua}), etc.

(147) 1 \textit{ga’ubo}
2 \textit{netua}
3 \textit{netua ga’u}
4 \textit{netua netua}
5 \textit{netua netua ga’u}
6 \textit{netua netua netua ti ata}
7 \textit{netua netua netua ti ata ire ka ga’u}
8 \textit{netua netua netua netu ata}
9 \textit{netua netua netua netua ire ka ga’u}
10 \textit{netua netua netua netua netua ta}
Numerals above 5 often have an optional periphrastic expression; the forms listed here were offered during an elicitation of the numerals. Use of the dual clitic with ata ‘again’ (lit. ‘both again’) is used in some numerals, while ire ka ga’u is used after other numerals to mean ‘and with one’. The form for 10 ends in ta ‘with’. It is likely that there exists stylistic variation in the forms of the numerals above 5.

Lean (1991:13-14) notes that while Urama is a 2-cycle system, it is unusual in that it does not have a “hand” morpheme that is lexicalized to express the numeral 5. As is common with other Papuan languages (Lean 1991), however, Urama makes use of a body-part counting system that complements the numerals. The word tu means ‘both arms/hands’ and the phrase hapuo tu means ‘half of both hands’, and both can be used to express five, e.g. hapu tu umo ‘five dogs’. The hand-counting system begins at the number five:

\[
\begin{align*}
5 & \text{ hapuo tu} & \text{Lit. ‘one hand’} \\
6 & \text{ hapuo tu ga’u ire ka ga’u} & \text{‘one hand and one finger’} \\
7 & \text{ hapuo tu ga’u ire ka netua} & \text{‘one hand and two fingers’} \\
8 & \text{ hapuo tu ga’u ire ka netua ga’u} & \text{‘one hand and three fingers’} \\
9 & \text{ hapuo tu ga’u ire ka netua netua} & \text{‘one hand and four fingers’} \\
10 & \text{ tuoti} & \text{‘two hands’} \\
11 & \text{ tuoti ire ka ga’u} & \text{‘two hands and 1 finger’}
\end{align*}
\]

Higher numerals are not usually articulated, for the reason given that nothing typically needs to be counted that high. Instead, plurals are typically used for larger quantities (cf. section 2.2.2).

10. Postpositions

Apart from the optional nominative particle ro, the only case marking morphemes in the language are postpositions, which in addition to their normal locative function, also mark oblique arguments. Postpositions can also appear with nouns in some constructions to yield a relational nominal structure. Simple pospositional uses will be outlined first, followed by the relational nominal uses.

The postposition ta (optionally pronounced [da]) marks locatives and instrumentals. The instrumental use is illustrated in (149), and the locative use in (150-151):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{(149)} & \quad \text{Mo maketi oito wapea=i ta n-odau vaka.} & \text{1SG market ALL boat= DEF LOC 1-go RPST} \\
& \text{‘I went to the market by boat.’} \\
\text{(150)} & \quad \text{Pe=i obo=i ta ovadidio ka.} & \text{canoe=DEF water=DEF LOC float PRS} \\
& \text{‘The canoe is floating on the water.’} \\
\text{(151)} & \quad \text{Nu ha’o=i ta ibiti.} & \text{3SG bag=DEF LOC pack\^ITER} \\
& \text{‘He packed them into his bag.’}
\end{align*}
\]
The postposition to (with variants ito, oito, ido) marks oblique arguments as allative, or can mark beneficiaries:

(152) *Neduahe=ti moto=i to odau ka=ido.*
    twin=DU house=DEF ALL go PRS=DU
    ‘The twins are going to the house.’

(153) *Aro’o dubu=i to n-ema’ai ra titi.*
    that man=DEF ALL 1-give PST letter
    ‘That’s the man who I gave the letter to.’

(154) *Mo merebehe=i sikuru oito odau ka.*
    1SG daughter=DEF school ALL go PRS
    ‘My daughter goes to school.’

These two postpositions are by far the most frequent; however, there are also other postpositions available that express other meanings. One such postposition is *rautu* ‘with’.

(155) *Umu to’o=i rautu p-emidio vadio.*
    Dogs lots=DEF with DPST-live HAB
    ‘He lived with lots of dogs.’

In addition to the simple postpositions, there are compound postpositions, which are formed with a noun and the simple postposition *ta*. The combination of the postposition with a noun forms a relational noun, where the semantics is not necessarily compositional. This includes (156) *didimoi ta* (lit. ‘at back of’) ‘behind, after’; (157) *epui ta* (lit. ‘at the head of’) ‘before’; (158) *goroi ta* ‘below, underneath’; (159) *ohui ta* ‘on, on top of’; and (160) *vapoi ta* (lit. ‘at the tail’), ‘after’.

(156) *ioropoio pura=ti didimoi tabo*
    last week=DU back at
    ‘A couple of weeks back’

(157) *Ro mo epu=i ta emehai vaka.*
    2SG 1SG head=DEF LOC leave RPST
    ‘You left before me.’

(158) *Nimoitti bu’i goroi=i ta n-emidio ka=ido.*
    2DU bush under=DEF LOC 1-stay PRS=DU
    ‘We are both hiding in the bush.’

(159) *Merekehi keta=i ohu=i ta p-em’ei.*
    child mat=DEF top=DEF LOC DPST-sit
    ‘A child sat on the mat.’
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(160)  \( Ro \)  \( mo \)  \( vapo=i \)  \( ta \)  \( emehai \)  \( ka. \)  
2SG  1SG  tail=DEF  LOC  leave  PRS
‘You left after me.’

Ne’ei ta ‘from’ appears to be a compound postposition, but ne’eme does not have a transparent ablative meaning (in one of its meanings it appears to signify the end of a sago tree that is not used to make sago meal).

(161)  \( Nu \)  \( turana=i \)  \( ne’e=i \)  \( da \)  \( buka \)  \( amia \)  
2SG  friend=DEF  end=DEF  LOC  book  some

\( imidai \)  \( vaka. \)  
PL.OBJ\get  RPST
‘She borrowed some books from a friend.’

11. Complementizers

Complementizers appear clause-finally. The primary complementizer in the language is \( ri. \) Like the other complementizers, \( ri \) plays the dual function of postposition and also introducing subordinate clauses.

(162)  \( Ka \)  \( pani \)  \( i-v-ede’ao \)  \( erera \)  \( ovai \)  \( ri. \)  
and  pot  PL.OBJ-N1-place  hot  make  COMP
‘And you place the pot to warm it up.’

Subordination can also involve complementizers that are identical with the simple and complex postpositional heads and which have temporal as well as locative meanings.

(163)  \( Mo \)  \( ro \)  \( Ginau \)  \( arato \)  \( didimo=i \)  \( ta \)  \( nu \)  
1SG  NOM  Ginau  ask.about  back=DEF  LOC  3SG

\( n-eve’a \)  \( ka. \)  
1-see  PRS
‘Just after I was asking about Ginau I saw him.’

Subordination is discussed at length in Chapter 4, section 3.

12. Conjunctions

The conjunctions that coordinate noun phrases are \( ra, \) \( ka, \) and less commonly, \( ire. \) Noun phrases are infrequently coordinated with \( rautu \) ‘with’. Clauses can be coordinated with \( inai \) ‘but’, \( mabu \) ‘because’, and \( ita \) ‘and then’. Noun phrases are coordinated with the conjunction morpheme appearing as an enclitic to the noun phrase, while clausal coordinators appear as particles. The distribution of these conjunctions and their syntax will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4, section 4.
13. Question words

Question words in Urama are for the most part morphologically simplex, and are as follows: wotu ‘who’, na’u ‘what’, hati ‘which’, meda ‘how many’, and haiboi ‘how, what’. Some phrases that might be translated as ‘why’ are morphologically complex involving the form for ‘what’ followed by the particle iri: na’u iri ‘why’. Much the same is holds for hatitoi ‘whither’, and hatihivio ‘when’, which is transparently derived from hati ‘which’ and hivio ‘day’.
1. Introduction

Many of the syntactic structures of Urama are characteristic of Papuan languages generally. For instance, a fairly strict head-final order and the existence of postpositions are characteristic of Papuan languages (cf. Foley 1986, 2000). The basic syntactic structures of Urama will be outlined here. This includes the word-order patterns, the discourse-pragmatic conditions that can influence non-canonical word-orders, the internal syntax of nominal, verbal, and adpositional phrases, and other properties of the clause. This is followed by a brief section on the syntax of compound verbs. This overview of the clausal phenomena will lead to a discussion of complex clausal structures, including coordinated and subordinate clauses.

2. The clause

Word order at the level of the unmarked clause, whether main or subordinate, is the same for declaratives, interrogatives and negatives: SOV (i.e. head-final). While SOV is the neutral basic word order, other orders are possible, and driven by pragmatics. These will be discussed in section 3.5.

2.1. Non-verbal clauses

Both nominal and adjectival predicate structures are available in Urama. There is no special marking, and no overt copula in these constructions, though the tense marker $ka$ appears in its normal, clause-final position. A nominal predicate is exemplified in (164), and an adjectival predicate in (165).

(164) $I'a$ merehio=${i}$ mo namu=${i}$ ka.
that boy=DEF 1SG older.brother=DEF PRS
‘That boy is my older brother.’

(165) $Na$ mere komubo ka.
this person short PRS
‘This person is short.’

The fact that these nominals and adjectives do not take regular verbal morphology (including person and number agreement) indicates that they are not verbs.

Existential constructions are formed with a non-verbal predicate; there is no overt copula in the language, as illustrated in (166-167):

(166-167)
Negation in non-verbal clauses involves the clause-final negator *haka*, which is discussed in detail in Chapter 3, section 6.2.2.

### 2.2. Intransitive clauses

The canonical order for intransitive clauses is Subject-Verb. This is the same for unaccusatives and for unergatives, and there is no special morphological marking that distinguishes these forms. Examples (169) and (170) exemplify intransitive structures.

(169) *Bomo=i ai-aruruti ka.*

pig=DEF ASS-run PRS

‘The pig is running.’

(170) *Nimoiti suga=i a-v-oropoio ra?*

1DL sugar=DEF Q-N1-finish NDECL

‘Has our sugar run out?’

Since posture verbs are canonically intransitive states, these are provided to further illustrate intransitive clauses. This includes *uta’a ‘lie down’, eme’ei ‘sit’, and *oti ‘stand’:

(171) *Nu oro uta’a ka.*

3SG asleep lie PRS

‘She is asleep.’

(172) *Merekehi keta=i ohu=i ta p-eme’ei.*

child mat=DEF top=DEF LOC sit

‘A child sat on the mat.’

(173) *I’a nu’a paipai ro oti ka=umo*

there tree big NOM stand PRS=PL

‘There are some big trees standing over there.’
Controlled and non-controlled events are syntactically formally similar. A predicate expressing an uncontrolled state like *asio* ‘sneeze’ is illustrated in (174).

(174) \[ \text{Mo asio n-a’ai ka.} \]
\[ 1SG \text{ sneeze 1-do PRS} \]
‘I am sneezing.’

2.3. Transitive clauses

The canonical order for transitive clauses with two core arguments is Subject-Object-Verb. This is illustrated in (175), where the predicate-final nature of Urama clausal syntax is apparent.

(175) \[ \text{Rio ro baba’o i-ohiai ka=umo.} \]
\[ 2PL \text{ NOM butterfly PL.OBJ-catch PRS=PL} \]
‘You all are catching butterflies.’

Subject arguments can be omitted if they are recoverable from discourse:

(176) \[ \text{Nika=i tuniha n-ime’ede ka.} \]
\[ \text{papaya=DEF all 1-pick PRS} \]
‘I’ve picked all the papayas.’

Transitive verbs must generally have an overt object, though objects can also be omitted if they are recoverable from the preceding discourse. This is especially likely if the referents are third person and inanimate:

(177) \[ \text{Ni ro kava obo=i idio vaka=umo;} \]
\[ 3PL \text{ NOM kava water=DEF drink NPST=PL} \]
\[ \text{inai nimoiti ro idio=i haka.} \]
\[ \text{but 1DL NOM drink=NMLZ NFUT.NEG} \]
‘They drank the kava but we two didn’t drink it.’

2.4. Ditransitive clauses

Transitive clauses with three core arguments including an unmarked beneficiary or indirect object have the word order S-IO-DO-V. In these cases the indirect object is indexed on the verb with the benefactive prefix *em-,* as discussed in Chapter 3. The indirect object generally precedes the direct object:

(178) \[ \text{Mo ro merebehe=i o’apo n-em-a’ai ra.} \]
\[ 1SG \text{ NOM girl=DEF flower 1-BEN.give PST} \]
‘I gave a flower to the girl.’
Indirect objects that are not indexed on the verb become oblique arguments marked with a postpositional phrase and are then treated as adjuncts. See below for their position within the clause (NB: the following sentence is imperative but has the same form as a yes/no question):

(179) \textit{Buka a-v-ovo’u mo ido!}  
book Q-N1-bring 1SG to  
‘Bring me a book!’ (lit. ‘Can you bring me a book?’)

2.5. Oblique arguments

Oblique arguments in Urama can either precede the verb phrase or follow it. Obliques usually follow core arguments and are marked by postpositional phrases. In many types of oblique argument, such as instrumentals, locatives and sometimes ablatives, this postpositional phrase consists of \textit{ta}.

(180) \textit{Mo ro pe=i konau=i ta}  
1SG NOM canoe=DEF rope=DEF LOC  
\textit{n-otohiai ka nu’a=i ta.}  
1-tie PRS tree=DEF LOC  
‘I’ve tied the canoe with the rope to the tree.’

(181) \textit{Nika=i tuniha n-ime’ede ka}  
papaya=DEF all 1-PL.OBJ.pick PRS  
\textit{nika nu’a to’o=i ta.}  
papaya tree lots=DEF LOC  
‘I picked all the papayas from all the papaya trees.’

If the sense of motion towards something is highlighted then the postposition will either be \textit{to} or one of its variants (\textit{ato, ido, ito, oito}), or a phrase headed by \textit{to}.

(182) \textit{Mo maketi oito wa pea=i ta n-odau vaka}  
1SG market ALL boat=DEF LOC 1-go NPST  
‘I went to the market by boat.’

2.6. Non-canonical constituent orders

While the neutral word order in Urama is SOV, there are several factors that can yield a non-canonical order. These factors are pragmatic in nature, and include topicalization and focus.
2.6.1. Topicalisation

Topicalisation may yield an OSV word order in the Urama equivalent of an English passive. In Urama there is no true passive construction marked by morphology. The patient can be raised to topic or subject clause-initial position and is followed by the agent, which cannot be deleted and is marked (perhaps obligatorily) with the nominative clitic ro. The verb remains in its transitive form.\(^{10}\)

(183) *Mo goario=i ro n-uho vaka.*

1SG wasps=DEF NOM 1-bite RPST

‘I was stung by wasps.’

(184) *Mo kekai ita obo nahia ata ro p-em e’e i.*

1SG close LOC woman elderly some NOM DPST-sit

‘An elderly woman sat down close to me.’

(185) *Bomo=i bare ne’e=i mo ro ovaredioi n-a’ai ka.*

pig=DEF bottom end=DEF 1SG NOM carry 1-will PRS

‘I’ll carry the bottom end of the pig.’

Urama appears to conform to the cross-linguistic observation that old information precedes new. If a new referent is introduced into the discourse then word order can reflect this by placing the new referent clause-finally:

(186) *Mo radio=i i-n-orovidio ra itabo o’u vaka Karika.*

1SG radio=DEF PL.OBJ-1-listen PST when come RPST Karika

‘I was listening to the radio when in came Karika.’

If the new referent is a grammatical subject, it can be introduced in the normal subject position but an adverbial (e.g. *nuato* ‘that’s when’, ‘on condition’) highlights the fact that something new or additional has happened:

(187) *Mo radio=i i-n-orovidio ra ita*

1SG radio=DEF OBJ.PL-1-listen PST when

*Karika nuato o’u vaka.*

Karika that’s when come PST

‘I was listening to the radio (and that’s) when Karika came in.’

\(^{10}\) There is a middle voice verb form that can have reflexive or reciprocal interpretations. It also makes the verb intransitive, so that any external agent involved in the action can only be implied; the agent is not realized by an oblique argument.
2.6.2. Focus

Focused constituents exhibit somewhat different patterns, appearing in preverbal position. The following examples illustrate this with both subject and object focus, where each would be an appropriate response to a wh-interrogative.

Subject focus

(189) Mevia uho=i Ginau ro ema’ai ka.
\[\text{Mevia fish=DEF Ginau NOM give PRS}\]
\[\text{It was Ginau who gave the fish to Mevia.}\]

Object Focus

(190) Ginau ro uho=i Mevia ema’ai ka.
\[\text{Ginau NOM fish=DEF Mevia give PRS}\]
\[\text{It was Mevia who Ginau gave the fish to.}\]

This same pattern is exemplified in (191) with the use of beha, the equivalent of English ‘only,’ a focus-associated particle, which provides additional evidence that the movement is for the purposes of focus. In (191), beha associates with the focused subject John, in pre-verbal position, and the focused noun phrase marked with beha is illicit in its (canonical) non-preverbal position.

(191) Go’ota=i John beha ro iho ka.
\[\text{coconut=DEF John only NOM eat PRS}\]
\[\text{Only JOHN is eating the coconuts.}\]

2.7. Valency-adjusting operations

Causative constructions can be formed morphologically or lexically. The causative prefix only appears on stems of intransitive verbs of motion and makes them transitive. The prefixed verb can then introduce a single direct object. For example, causativization of the intransitive verb root oda’u ‘go’ illustrates this dynamic:

(192) Ginau ro na wapea=i ov-oda’u=i o’u ka.
\[\text{Ginau NOM this boat=DEF CAUS-go=NMLZ come PRS}\]
\[\text{Ginau will take this boat}\]

The prefix is causative in that the original motion verb is still interpretable in the derived form, which has the sense of making something move in the direction indicated by the verb stem (‘to go’ becomes ‘to make something go’; ovo’u ‘to bring’ is derived from the verb root o’u ‘to come’). There have been no cases found of already transitive
verbs being prefixed with $Vv$- to create causatives in the ditransitive sense of “making x do y”.

There is also a lexical strategy of causativization in the language. To express making or having someone or something do something, Urama uses the verb $oduai$ ‘to tell’ with an animate direct object and a subordinate clause of purpose:

(193) $Mo$ ro mu n-oduai vaka mo epumohoi

$1SG$ NOM $3SG$ 1-tell RPST $1SG$ hair

$ma=ahiai$ $ri$.
PURP=cut COMP
‘I had him cut my hair.’

There is also a syntactic strategy for forming ditransitive clauses. If no benefactive morphology is marked on the verb, then beneficiaries appear as oblique arguments marked with a postposition:

(194) $Buka$ a-v-ovo’u mo ido!

book Q-N1-bring $1SG$ ALL
‘Can you bring me a book?!’

This is in contrast to morphologically-formed benefactives, where beneficiaries are unmarked:

(195) ...$ka$ nuato ubi disi i-v-im-e’ede.

and that’s when people dish PL.OBJ-N1-BEN-collect
‘…and that’s when you get dishes for the people.’

The middle prefix $Vr$- makes a transitive verb intransitive, such as when an event affects the subject and the subject has the semantic role of patient. In this case there is no overt agent, and as such, this construction does not express a true passive voice and so is better described as a middle voice. An example can be observed with the verb $otoho$ ‘to break (TRAN)’, from which is derived $or-otoho$‘break (itself), be broken’:

(196) $Mo$ hura=i ai-n-i-(o)toho ka.

$1SG$ egg=DEF ASS-1-PL.OBJ-break PRS
‘I have smashed the eggs.’

(197) $Mo$ hura=i or-otoho ka.

$1SG$ egg=DEF MID-break PRS
‘My egg has smashed.’

Middles often express a reflexive or a reciprocal action. In these cases it is often associated with the reflexive pronoun $himha$, which might be considered to be an overt object; however, as seen below this can be followed by the nominative marker $ro,$
excluding this possibility. An example of this prefix used to express a reciprocal meaning is derived from the verb *opui’a* ‘to hit, beat up’:

(198) \[ \text{Ni himiha ro or-opui’a ka}=umo. \]
\[ 3\text{PL self NOM MID-hit PRS=PL} \]
‘They’re all hitting each other.’

An example of pure reflexive meaning is also possible:

(199) \[ \text{Mo himiha n-ar-apui ka!} \]
\[ 1\text{SG self 1-MID-point.to PRS} \]
‘I select myself/volunteer!’

### 2.8. Clause types

Different clause types are outlined here. Declaratives are formally marked differently from imperatives, interrogatives, and conditionals. Thus, the use of *ra*, while an important component of the tense-marking system (cf. Chapter 3, section 6.2), also appears to play a clause-typing function, appearing on illocutionary utterances (and not strictly propositions). This includes interrogatives, conditionals, directives, and imperatives. A discussion of negative clauses is also included in this section.

#### 2.8.1. Declaratives

The vast majority of declarative clauses are marked with the tense marker *ka* (Brown 2009), though as discussed in Chapter 3, this particle is used to express both present tense and illocutionary force. Declarative clauses encode assertion, which sets them apart from interrogatives, imperatives, and conditionals, which are morphologically marked with the particle *ra*.

#### 2.8.2. Interrogatives

In question word interrogatives, wh- phrases tend to appear in preverbal position. This is illustrated with subject (200), object (201), and indirect object (202) wh-phrases:

(200) \[ \text{Mevia uho}=i \text{ hotu ro v-ema’ai ra?} \]
\[ \text{Mevia fish}=\text{DEF who NOM N1-give NDECL} \]
‘Who gave the fish to Mevia?’

(201) \[ \text{Ginau ro Mevia na’u v-ema’ai ra?} \]
\[ \text{Ginau NOM Mevia what N1-give NDECL} \]
‘What did Ginau give to Mevia?’
(202)  *Ginau ro uho=i wotu v-ema’ai ra?*
    Ginau NOM fish=DEF who N1-give NDECL
    ‘Who did Ginau give the fish to?’

Yes/No questions have the same word order as declarative clauses and are distinguished from declaratives both by intonation and morphology. Yes/No questions are generally marked with the non-speaker verbal prefix *v-* and the interrogative prefix *a-* (which is often deleted, particularly in future tense questions).

(203)  *Rioiti taitui a-v-ihoh vadio du=do?*
    2DL yam Q-N1-PL.OBJ eat HAB TENSE=DL
    ‘Do you two eat yams?’

(204)  *Nu raisi itai v-o’ou ra doutu?*
    3SG rice cook N1-DFUT NDECL tomorrow
    ‘Will she cook rice tomorrow?’

Tag questions are marked with the emphatic particle *ha*, which appears at the end of the clause. The use of this morpheme does not affect word order.

(205)  *Na pe gema=i Gino pe=i ra ha?*
    this canoe big=DEF Gino canoe=DEF NDECL EMPH
    ‘This big canoe is Gino’s, isn’t it?’

2.8.3.  Imperatives

Imperative clauses conform to the SOV word order of declaratives, except that the subject is usually omitted. Adjuncts and/or adverbs can follow the verb:

(206)  *Mo kika n-em-ado!*
    1SG story 1-BEN-tell
    ‘Tell me a story!’

(207)  *Odau i’a hini oito!*
    go that there ALL
    ‘Go over there!’

(208)  *Na hini oito o’u!*
    this here ALL come
    ‘Come over here!’

Although the verb form is often bare, the particle *ra* can appear clause-finally in imperative utterances, as can subject number markers if the subject is non-singular:
First person imperatives can also be formed with first person pronouns, person and number agreement markers, and a finite verb. In this textual example, the hunter in the story calls his dogs so they can go hunting together with him:

(211)  
\[O'u=mo,\ nimo\ n-odau=mo.\]  
\[
\begin{array}{llll}
\text{come=} & \text{1PL} & \text{1-go=} & \text{PL}
\end{array}
\]  
‘Come, let’s go.’

Negative imperatives are formed with the negative particle \textit{aike}, which appears clause-finally:

(212)  
\[Hobou\ a'o=i\ aike!\]  
\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{lie} & \text{say=}\text{NMLZ} & \text{NEG}
\end{array}
\]  
‘Don’t tell lies!’

Directives exhibit the same form as imperatives, making use of the clause-final nondeclarative particle \textit{ra}.

(213)  
\[Na\ orio=i\ emahibai\ ra.\]  
\[
\begin{array}{llllll}
\text{this} & \text{game=} & \text{DEF} & \text{try} & \text{NDECL}
\end{array}
\]  
‘You should try out this game.’

2.8.4. Conditionals

Conditional clauses are marked with \textit{ra}, further evidence that \textit{ra} functions to mark non-assertive clauses. The fact that \textit{ra} also marks imperatives and interrogatives supports this view.

(214)  
\[Ro\ ro\ pa'eia\ ai-v-fo\ ra,\]  
\[
\begin{array}{llllllll}
\text{2SG} & \text{NOM} & \text{garden} & \text{ASS-N1-eat} & \text{NDECL}
\end{array}
\]  
\[
\begin{array}{llllllll}
\text{ro} & \text{gimo} & \text{ro} & \text{ohiai} & \text{taho'o} & \text{aike}.
\end{array}
\]  
\[
\begin{array}{llllllll}
\text{2SG} & \text{sickness} & \text{NOM} & \text{catch} & \text{FUT.NEG} & \text{FUT.NEG}
\end{array}
\]  
‘If you eat your vegetables, you will not get sick.’
(215)  
\[ Ro \quad ro \quad merekeke=i \quad a-v-i-arodio \quad ra, \]
\[ 2\text{SG} \quad \text{NOM} \quad \text{children=}\text{DEF} \quad Q-N\text{1-PL.OBJ-look.after} \quad \text{NDECL} \]
\[ mo \quad ro \quad du=i \quad itai \quad n-a’ai \quad ka \]
\[ 1\text{SG} \quad \text{NOM} \quad \text{food=}\text{DEF} \quad \text{cook} \quad 1\text{-do} \quad \text{PRS} \]
‘If you look after the children, I will cook the meal.’

2.8.5. Negatives

Clausal negation is marked with the morpheme *haka*. Negation exists only at the clausal level – there are no negative pronouns (e.g. ‘none’ or ‘nobody’) or adjectives (‘no’) that can negate constituents such as noun phrases. Clauses like the English ‘he saw snakes but no crocodiles; would have to be rephrased in Urama as ‘he saw snakes but he didn’t see crocodiles’. Negative clauses are usually formed with clause-final particles as outlined in Chapter 3, and these particles take scope over the entire clause:

(216)  
\[ Ata \quad na \quad aratu’a=i \quad haka. \]
\[ \quad \text{some} \quad \text{thing} \quad \text{disappear=}\text{NMLZ} \quad \text{NEG.NFUT} \]
‘Nothing disappeared.’

As evidenced from the nominalizing suffix on the verb in (216), negation serves as an intransitive matrix predicate. The role of nominalization in subordinate structures will be discussed in section 3.

2.8.6. Illocutionary force

As mentioned in above and in Chapter 3, section 6.2, the particles *ka* and *ra* play a role in the tense paradigm and also function in part to mark clause types. There are, however, other illocutionary uses attributed to these particles by Craig (2014) and Brown et al. (2016). Craig (2014) opts for classifying these particles as evidentials, and cites minimal pair contexts as evidence. For example, given the context: *While Mevia was out of the room, Ginau slipped on something and fell over. When Mevia returned, Ginau is already back to work and Mevia is not aware that anything happened*. Ginau could conceivably say to Mevia the sentence in (217):

(217)  
\[ Mo \quad ai-n-omoa \quad ka. \]
\[ 1\text{SG} \quad \text{ASS-1-fall} \quad \text{PRS} \]
‘I fell.’

In contrast, given the context: *While Mevia was out of the room, Ginau slipped on something and fell over. Mevia returns in time to see Ginau getting back up on his feet*. Ginau could conceivably utter (218) to Mevia:
While both (217) and (218) have the same propositional content, they express a difference in illocutionary force. Brown et al. (2016) claim that the particle ka functions in conversation to mark the knowledge of the speaker in addition to what the speaker assumes the addressee already knows. In this way the use of ka helps to track information that is in the common ground of discourse.

3. Subordination

Subordinate clauses are typically nominalized with the clitic =i. This clitic does not seem to be used when the verb is fully finite and inflected (including with the particles ka or ra). If the verb is negated or has an imperative marker like aike, or is the complement of a postposition, modal, or another verb, then the subordinate clause will be nominalized with =i.

In subordinate structures, the verb phrase of the subordinate clause typically surfaces without subject number or person agreement, nor tense or aspect morphology. The clause is also marked with the nominalizing enclitic =i:

(219) Umu=i obo=i imapeduo=i modobo=i haka.
    dog=DEF water=DEF float=NMLZ can=DEF NEG.NFUT
    ‘The dog can’t swim.’

When temporal complementizers are used to introduce subordinate clauses, the clauses tend to precede the matrix verb:

(220) Mo hora=i eida=i ta hiba=i n-eve’a ka.
    1SG breath=DEF get=NMLZ LOC crocodile=DEF 1-see PRS
    ‘When I was having a rest I saw a crocodile.’

Subordinate clauses with null complementizers also appear in the core argument position of verbal complements, which along with the null TAM and agreement marking indicates the clause has been nominalized. Apart from nominalizing clitic =i, there is no morpheme which marks the verb as a gerund or infinitival form. As with constituent order in main clauses, the position of the subordinate clause canonically appears preceding the matrix verb, but this is by no means obligatory.

(221) Umu=i obo=i imapeduo=i modobo=i haka.
    dog=DEF water=DEF swim=NMLZ can=NMLZ NEG
    ‘The dog cannot swim.’
Another strategy for subordination is simple juxtaposition of the subordinate clause next to the matrix clause, especially in clauses of reported speech. In this type of subordination the verb of the subordinate clause is fully inflected for TAM and subject agreement.

(223)  
\textit{Nu ro a’o ka nu moto=i to odau ka.}  
3SG NOM sayPRS 3SG house=DEF ALL go PRS  
‘He says he is going to the house.’

The selection of the type of subordination strategy appears to depend on the degree of semantic dependence of the subordinate clause on the matrix clause. A verb unmarked for TAM or person agreement indicates a high degree of dependence while a fully inflected verb indicates a low degree of dependence.

3.1. Complement clauses

This section deals with what are traditionally defined as complement clauses, which behave in the same manner as core arguments of matrix verbs. The subordinate verb is highly dependent on the matrix verb for the interpretation of tense, aspect, and the interpretation of null arguments. There are several types of complement clause, each discussed in turn.

With sensory predicates such as ‘see’, ‘hear’, and ‘feel’, Urama has several clause linkage strategies, such as subordination without a complementizer (224), relativization (225), and subordination with a complementizer (226).

(224)  
\textit{Turana=i ro eve’a ka hiba=i}  
friend=DEF NOM seePRS crocodile=DEF  
\textit{mo obodidio=i.}  
1SG chase=NMLZ  
‘A friend saw a crocodile chasing me.’

(225)  
\textit{Moto=i ubu=i orou pusí a-v-eve’a ra?}  
house=DEF top=DEF lie.on cat Q-N1-see NDECL  
‘Do you see the cat lying on the roof?’
In the first example a clause with an uninflected verb that has been nominalized becomes the object of the matrix verb. If the subordinate clause were independent, the verb would have the first person prefix and the present tense marker ka following it (i.e. Hiba mo n-obodidio ka). In the second example the strategy used is to relativize the object noun pusi, rather than to create a complement clause. The final example illustrates a different strategy altogether, whereby an adverbial clause is used and the translation might be: ‘Kaio’o saw Ginau and Mevia when they were running scared of a crocodile’.

The next subtype of complement taking predicates are phasals such as ‘start’, ‘continue’ and ‘finish’. They are closely integrated with the semantics of their complements in that the state or event of the main clause is part of the action of the subordinate clause. The syntax is the same as for modobo:

(227) Ni du=i ihoa=i ovaharo ka=umo.
    3PL food=NOM eat=NMLZ start PRS=PL
    ‘They all started eating food.’

(228) Ni du=i ihoa=i oropoio.11
    3PL food=DEF eat=NMLZ finish
    ‘They all finished eating.’

Another complement clause construction is the causative. As noted above in section 2.6, Urama makes use of a lexical causative. The verb oduai ‘tell’ can be used both in the sense of instructing someone to do something and of making someone do something:

(229) Mere ro o’u=i ri n-oduai.
    person NOM come=NMLZ COMP 1-tell
    ‘A person told me to / made me come.’

In causatives the complementizer ri appears to be obligatory, which suggests a slightly lower level of semantic integration than in the previous predicate types. The verb is uninflected and occurs with the clitic =i, and so is nominalized.

11 Note that the verb “finish” is in the middle voice and has no following particle ka, so it is in the intermediate past tense form and the complement clause is in fact the subject, so the literal translation would be “their eating food (was) finished.”
A different strategy is used with psych predicates and verbs of utterance. Psych predicates, including verbs such as ‘think’ and ‘doubt’ and predicates such as ‘say’ induce complementation whereby the semantic integration between the matrix and dependent clauses is low. In these cases the complement clause is simply juxtaposed without a complementizer and the verb of the complement is fully inflected and could be used in an independent declarative clause:

(230) \[ \text{Niti \ ra \ } p-\text{orovai=}d\text{o} \ \text{rioibi \ meari \ reke} \]
\[
3\text{DL} \quad \text{NOM} \quad \text{DPST-hear=}d\text{L} \quad 2\text{TL} \quad \text{very.good} \quad \text{net}
\]

\[ \text{ivadidio \ vadio \ } k\text{a=}um\text{o.} \]
\[
\text{PL.OBJ} \quad \text{make} \quad \text{HAB} \quad \text{PRS=}\text{PL}
\]
‘They both heard that you three make excellent nets.’

Verbs of utterance that exhibit these behaviours include reported statements (231), indirect wh-questions (232), and reported yes/no questions (233):

(231) \[ \text{Kaio'oo \ ra \ } p-\text{a}'o \ \text{Ginau \ ra} \ \text{Mevia \ ra}, \]
\[
\text{Kaio'oo \ NOM} \quad \text{DPST-say} \quad \text{Ginau \ CONJ} \quad \text{Mevia \ CONJ}
\]

\[ \text{Moresby \ ato \ } \text{sikuru \ a'}ai \ \text{ka=}ido. \]
\[
\text{Moresby \ ALL} \quad \text{school \ do} \quad \text{PRS=}\text{DL}
\]
‘Kaio’oo said Ginau and Mevia were studying in Moresby.’

(232) \[ \text{Mevia \ } a\text{-arato \ } k\text{a} \ \text{nimo \ } ova'ati \ \text{hatihivio} \]
\[
\text{Mevia \ ASS-ask} \quad \text{PRS} \quad 1\text{PL} \quad \text{work \ when}
\]

\[ \text{ovaharo=}i \quad n-a'\text{ai} \quad \text{du=}mo. \]
\[
\text{begin} \quad 1\text{-do} \quad \text{TENSE=}\text{PL}
\]
‘Mevia asked me when we would begin work.’

(233) \[ \text{Ginau \ } ro \ \text{ro} \ \text{arato \ } k\text{a} \ \text{maketi} \ \text{oit\text{o}} \ \text{v-a'ai \ ra}. \]
\[
\text{Ginau \ NOM} \quad 2\text{SG} \quad \text{ask} \quad \text{PRS} \quad \text{market \ ALL} \quad \text{N1-do} \quad \text{PST}
\]
‘Ginau is asking if you will go to the market’

Verbs of utterance can also take complement clauses headed by the postposition \textit{ri} acting as a complementizer, as seen in the following examples:

(234) \[ \text{Nu \ } ro \ \text{o'u=}i \quad \text{ri} \quad a'o \ \text{vaka.} \]
\[
3\text{SG} \quad \text{NOM} \quad \text{come=}\text{NMLZ} \quad \text{COMP} \quad \text{say} \quad \text{RPST}
\]
‘He said he would come.’
There are two possible explanations why subordinate clauses dependent on verbs of utterance may be headed by the complementizer ri. According to Wurm, ri is a future marker in the closely related Island Kiwai language (Wurm, 1977:338). No cases have been found of ri being used as a future marker in independent declarative clauses in Urama, however, so its current use may be explained as grammaticalization from an earlier stage of the language. It should be noted that the subordinate clauses in the two examples above have future reference in relation to the point in time of the matrix verb. The other explanation comes from the semantics of the postposition cum complementizer ri. As noted above it is used in contexts of intention and/or purpose. Intention certainly lies within the semantic field of these examples as far as the speaker is concerned, and so the complement clauses have a greater degree of dependence on the matrix clause than in clauses which are simply reports without an overlay of the speaker’s attitude towards them.

3.2. Adverbial clauses

Adverbial clauses are unlike complement clauses in that they are not core arguments of the matrix predicate. Nevertheless, in Urama, verbs of adverbial clauses are typically devoid of tense and agreement marking, consistent with other subordinate clauses. Some of the main types of adverbial clause are listed below (see also Brown 2009:33-36).

A subset of adverbial clauses involves temporal clauses, including ‘when’, ‘before’, and ‘after’. Simple temporal clauses which are contemporaneous with the matrix clause are typically headed by the locative postposition ta. This is replaced by complex postpositions (e.g. epui ta ‘before’ or wapo1 ta ‘after’) when the time reference of the subordinate clause differs from that of the matrix clause:

(236) Mo na hinita erediai ta ro tau emehai vaka.
    1SG this here arrive LOC 2SG already leave NPST
    ‘When I arrived you had already left.’

While verbs heading subordinate clauses are typically devoid of tense/aspect/mood marking, as can be seen from the examples below, they can sometimes take agreement marking:
(237)  

\[\text{Kaio' \, ro \, Sam=obi \, p-ive'a \, hiba=i \, toe}\]

Kaio' NOM  Sam=TR  DPST-PL.OBJ=see crocodile=DEF  scare

\[\text{odaudio=bi \, ta.}\]

flee=TL  LOC

‘Kaio’ saw Sam and the other two when they ran away in fear of the crocodile.’

(238)  

\[\text{Mo \, nika=i \, i-n-ime’ede=i \, ta \, nata \, ro}\]

1SG  papaya=DEF  PL.OBJ-1-collect=NMLZ  LOC  something  NOM

\[\text{pu-n-uho.}\]

DPST-1-bite

‘When I was picking papayas something bit me.’

The verbs of these subordinate clauses are not necessarily simple nominalized forms. These verbs can take agreement morphology; however, subordinate verb phrases are still marked with the nominalizing clitic \(=i\). The forms in the examples above are rare, and appear to be participles, exhibiting both nominal and verbal properties.

Reason clauses make use of the complementizer \(mabu\), which appears to have been grammaticalized from a noun meaning ‘root’ or ‘origin’. These clauses are an oddity in the language because \(mabu\) appears to be clause-initial, rather than clause-final, as would be expected in an SOV language, and which is consistent with the distribution of the other complementizers. However, the clauses headed by \(mabu\) cannot be the first in the utterance:

(239)  

\[\text{Mevia \, o’u=i \, haka \, mabu \, nu \, Karika \, ovabai \, ka.}\]

Mevia  come=NMLZ  NEG  because  3SG  Karika  help  PRS

‘Mevia didn’t come because she was helping Karika.’

The subordinate verb is inflected for TAM and person and subject number agreement. Alternatively, clauses headed by the complementizer \(ri\) can express cause, in which case it can be the first clause in the utterance.

(240)  

\[\text{Obo=i \, aru=i \, ri \, dububai \, ro \, pe=i}\]

water=DEF  high=DEF  COMP  men  NOM  boat=DEF

\[\text{i-otomai \, ka=umo.}\]

PL.OBJ-pull.up  PRS=PL

‘Because the tide is high the men are pulling up the canoes.’

Purpose clauses can be regarded as the goal of the main clause action, and exhibit optional marking of the purposive clitic \(ma=\) on the subordinate verb:
The proclitic ma= is not restricted to appearing only in subordinate clauses, but is relatively rare in main clauses.

The only adverbial clause-type where the dependent clause cannot be construed as an object is the conditional clause. The subordinate clause of a conditional is cognitively construed as an event independent of the matrix clause rather than as an object, and so unsurprisingly the verb is fully inflected:

(242) Roro merekekei a-v iarodio ra,
2SG NOM kids Q-N1-watch NDECL
mo ro du=i itai n-a’ai ka.
1SG NOM food=DEF cook 1-do PRS
‘If you looked after the kids, I would cook the meal.’

(243) Roro merekekei detu i-arodio ato,
2SG NOM kids yesterday OBJ.PL-watch if
mo maketi oito he’e n-odau ka.
1SG market ALL CFACT 1-go PRS
‘If you had looked after the kids yesterday, I would have gone to the market.’

The protasis in (242) is indistinguishable from a yes/no question, and is simply juxtaposed like the clauses in complements of verbs of utterance. In the example in (243) the word ato appears to be a complementizer meaning ‘if’. A variant rato has also been found with the same function. In past tense counterfactuals the adverb he’e appears in the main clause to express counterfactuality, as there is no indication from the tense of the verb that the event it describes is unreal.

3.3. Relative clauses

The last type of subordinate clause to be discussed is the relative clause. Relative clauses are simply positioned before the head of the noun phrase; there is no overt relativizer. The verb appears to have different inflections for tense compared with finite verbs in main clauses.

For relatives in the present tense, ka, the normal particle used for marking present tense in matrix clauses, is lacking.
Hepukere=i ta emidio ubi mea-hia ka.

island=DEF LOC stay people good-very PRS

‘The people who live on the island are very friendly.’

The paradigm for present tense in relative clauses thus involves no explicit marking for present. Subject number agreement clitics appear to be optional in non-first person duals and trials, and also first person plurals, and are absent in non-first person plurals. There are also no person markers:

Mo do’u e’a dubu=i Kikori ato emidio vadio ka.

1SG today see man=DEF Kikori ALL stay HAB PRS

‘The man I’m seeing now lives in Kikori.’

The verb in the example above is a suppletive form of the verb eve’a ‘see’. The use of eve’a in (245) would change the interpretation of the expression to ‘have just seen’. With other verbs the present tense forms can also be used with near past tense meanings.

While there are near and distant future tenses formed with the same auxiliaries as in main clauses, ka still does not appear in relative clauses with future reference. Furthermore, there is no number or person agreement in these forms.

Mo ro vapoi ta eve’a a’ai dubu=i

1SG NOM after LOC see do man=DEF

Kikori ato emidio vadio ka.

Kikori ALL stay HAB PRS

‘The man I’ll see later lives in Kikori.’

Verbs in the near future in relative clauses are nominalized and appear with the auxiliary a’ai ‘do’; those in the distant future are nominalized and appear with the auxiliary o’u ‘come’.

Urama can use the same forms as the present tense for relative clauses when the temporal reference is the near past. An example of the usage of present tense forms with near past temporal reference in a relative clause is in (247):

Mo ro do’ou duoduo=i otoho koimo=i Karika

1SG NOM this morning=DEF break cup=DEF Karika

koimo=i ka.
cup=DEF PRS

‘The cup I broke this morning is Karika’s cup.’

There is another set of forms that also encodes near past temporal reference, whose main distinguishing feature is person agreement markers (n- for first person and v- for
non-first person) throughout the paradigm and a prefixed \( i- \) which appears to be a tense marker, not a plural object marker in this case. Example (248) presents an example of a near past tense form for relative clauses:

(248) \[ \text{Do'du}=\text{duduo}=i \quad \text{du}=i \quad \text{i-v-itai} \quad \text{ra} \quad \text{obo}=i \]
\[ \text{mo} \quad \text{mamu}=i \quad \text{ka}. \]
\[ \text{1SG} \quad \text{mother}=\text{DEF} \quad \text{PRS} \]

‘The woman who was cooking food this morning is my mother.’

It is unclear what, if any, semantic difference there is between the two near past tense structures.

As noted above, the \( i- \) prefixed to verbs in relative clauses appears to be a tense marker for intermediate and distant past tenses as well as for the near past (i.e. in this sense the intermediate and distant past are syncretic). Intermediate and distant past tense forms are largely identical apart from the absence of the particle \( ra \) in first and second person singular of the distant past. They differ from the near past tense forms in the absence of the non-first person agreement prefix and some of the forms of the number agreement clitics. Examples of relative clauses with intermediate and distant past tense forms include the following:

(249) \[ \text{Mo}=\text{ro} \quad \text{Iroroma} \quad \text{ro} \quad \text{i-evea} \quad \text{merebehe}=i \]
\[ \text{1SG} \quad \text{NOM} \quad \text{Iroroma} \quad \text{NOM} \quad \text{PST-see} \quad \text{girl}=\text{DEF} \]
\[ \text{oapo} \quad \text{n-ema’ai} \quad \text{ra}. \]
\[ \text{flower} \quad \text{l-give} \quad \text{PST} \]

‘I gave a flower to the girl Iroroma saw.’

(250) \[ \text{Ro} \quad \text{i-n-oduai} \quad \text{ra} \quad \text{dubu}=i \quad \text{ka} \quad \text{i’a}. \]
\[ \text{2S} \quad \text{PST-1-tell} \quad \text{PST} \quad \text{man}=\text{DEF} \quad \text{PST} \quad \text{there} \]

‘There’s the man who I was telling you about.’

(251) \[ \text{Nu}=\text{(ro)} \quad \text{detu} \quad \text{i-eve’a} \quad \text{dubu}=i \quad \text{Kikori} \quad \text{ato} \]
\[ \text{3SG} \quad \text{NOM} \quad \text{yesterday} \quad \text{PST-see} \quad \text{man}=\text{DEF} \quad \text{Kikori} \quad \text{ALL} \]
\[ \text{emidio} \quad \text{vadio} \quad \text{ka}. \]
\[ \text{stay} \quad \text{HAB} \quad \text{PRS} \]

‘The man he saw yesterday lives in Kikori.’
(252)  
\[
\begin{array}{lllllllll}
Nu & ro & diata & i-oho & buka=i & bogobogo & vade & buka & ka.
\end{array}
\]

3SG NOM day PST-search book=DEF white speech

‘The book he was looking for a few days ago is an English book.’

Unrestricted relative clauses are identical in form with restricted relative clauses:

(253)  
\[
\begin{array}{llllllllll}
Detu & i-n-evea & du=mo & Sam & mea-hia & ka.
\end{array}
\]

yesterday PST-1-see PST-PL Sam good-very PRS

‘Sam, whom we met yesterday is very nice.’

Finally, since the nominal head is always final in the relative clause, the nominative marker ro helps to disambiguate the subject of the clause, as in (254) and (255).

(254)  
\[
\begin{array}{llllllllll}
Mo & ro & detu & i-n-obodidio & ra & bomo=i & huna-hia & ka.
\end{array}
\]

1SG NOM yesterday PST-1-chase PST pig=DEF big-very PRS

‘The pig I chased yesterday is very big.’

(255)  
\[
\begin{array}{llllllllll}
Mo & detu & i-n-obodidio & ra & bomo=i & huna-hia & ka.
\end{array}
\]

1SG yesterday PST-1-chase PST pig=DEF big-very PRS

‘The pig who chased me yesterday is very big.’

4. **Coordination**

Noun phrases can be coordinated with the conjunctions ka and ra, and less commonly, ire:

(256)  
\[
\begin{array}{llllllllll}
...go’ota, & umia & ka & napu...
\end{array}
\]

cocnut green.leaf and protein

‘…coconut, green leaves and protein…’

(257)  
\[
\begin{array}{llllllllll}
...i-v-ovia & umia & ra & du...
\end{array}
\]

PL.OBJ-N1-put green.leaf CONJ sago

‘…together with the leaves and the sago…’

(258)  
\[
\begin{array}{llllllllll}
...go’ota=i & ire=i & uho=i...
\end{array}
\]

cocnut=DEF and=DEF fish=DEF

‘…the coconut and the fish…’

It is noteworthy that in example (258) both conjuncts are marked with the definite article, and the conjunction is also marked in a similar fashion.
The conjunctions \textit{ka} and \textit{ra} tend to surface as enclitic to the noun phrase; as such, they are represented here either as particles, or as clitics. When enclitic, the conjunctions precede the definite article clitic \textit{=i}:

\begin{align*}
\text{(259)} & \quad Mo & \text{pe=ra} & \quad \text{aibi=ra=}=i & \quad ta & \quad \text{n-odau} & \quad \text{ka}. \\
& \quad 1\text{SG} & \quad \text{canoe}=\text{CONJ} & \quad \text{paddle}=\text{CONJ}=\text{DEF} & \quad \text{LOC} & \quad 1\text{-go} & \quad \text{PRS}
\end{align*}

\begin{itemize}
\item ‘I’m going with a canoe and a paddle.’
\end{itemize}

In some cases, particularly with proper nouns, the conjunction clitics can appear on each coordinated noun phrase:

\begin{align*}
\text{(260)} & \quad \text{Ginau}=\text{ra} & \quad \text{Karika}=\text{ra} & \quad \text{taitui} & \quad \text{iho} & \quad \text{ka}=\text{id}o. \\
& \quad \text{Ginau}=\text{CONJ} & \quad \text{Karika}=\text{CONJ} & \quad \text{yam} & \quad \text{PL.OBJ.eat} & \quad \text{PRS}=\text{DL}
\end{align*}

\begin{itemize}
\item ‘Ginau and Karika are eating yams.’
\end{itemize}

Infrequently, \textit{rautu} ‘with’ can be used to coordinate noun phrases:

\begin{align*}
\text{(261)} & \quad Mo & \quad \text{rautu} & \quad \text{nimoiti} & \quad \text{nu} & \quad \text{araduo}i. \\
& \quad 1\text{SG} & \quad \text{with} & \quad 1\text{DU} & \quad 3\text{SG} & \quad \text{talk}
\end{align*}

\begin{itemize}
\item ‘She and I, we both were talking.’
\end{itemize}

Clauses can also be coordinated with the particles \textit{ka} and \textit{ra}:

\begin{align*}
\text{(262)} & \quad \text{Idomai} & \quad \text{imodo’ia} & \quad \text{ka} & \quad \text{uro}=\text{i} & \quad \text{uta’ai}. \\
& \quad \text{eye} & \quad \text{PL.OBJ.shut} & \quad \text{and} & \quad \text{asleep}=\text{NMLZ} & \quad \text{fall}
\end{align*}

\begin{itemize}
\item ‘He closed his eyes and he went fast asleep.’
\end{itemize}

The clausal coordinator \textit{ka} is homophonous with the present tense or declarative marker \textit{ka} (see Chapter 3, section 6.2). The tense morpheme \textit{ka} is also very frequently used in narratives along with the distant past tense. As this \textit{ka} is often clause-final, it is sometimes difficult to tell whether it is marking the present tense of the preceding verb or coordinating the entire preceding clause with the following one, as sometimes it appears that one or the other is deleted if they are adjacent. A following complementizer \textit{ita} makes it clear, however, that a new clause has been introduced:
‘The police found him and then caught him and searched his things and found lots of money.’

‘They just watched the big pig, and then when Iroroma came, the big pig started chasing him.’

‘…that big dog used to lead the smaller ones around.’

‘…and take them to the beach and then…’
(267) ...inai aro'o obo nahia=i nu niro=i haka.
but that woman old=DEF 3SG want=NMLZ NEG
‘...but that elderly lady didn’t want…’

(268) Bihai p-a'ai ivoubudioi ri mabu...
difficult DPST-do get.up COMP because
‘It was a struggle trying to get up because…’

(269) Ita umu kekei ro...
and.then dog little NOM
‘And then the little dogs…’

Two separate clauses can be contrasted with the form inai ‘but’, or they can simply be juxtaposed:

(270) Mo Urama ato n-emidio ka inai Mosubi ato
1SG Urama ALL 1-stay PRS but Moresby ALL

n-ova’ati ka.
1-work PRS
‘I live in Urama but I work in Moresby.’

Contrasted clauses are used for comparison, as Urama adjectives have no comparative forms. The concept that “X is more/less Y than Z” is expressed as “X is Y (but) Z is not Y / but Z is W”:

(271) Nu moto=i mea-hia ka mo moto=i
3SG house=DEF good-very PRS 1SG house=DEF

mea haka.
good NFUT.NEG
‘Her house is better than mine.’

(272) Mo abia=i tauto mere ka inai nu mamu=i
1SG father=DEF old person PRS but 3SG mother=DEF

orio mere ka.
young person PRS
‘Her father is older than her mother.’
5. Possession
Possessive phrases are formed without any special morphology, and there are no possessive pronouns. Possessors precede the possessum, consistent with the head-final order exhibited by the language:

(273) \textit{Rio niro ra rio mamu=i?}  
\textit{2PL love NDECL 2PL mother=DEF}  
‘Do you (all) love your mother?’

(274) \textit{Ro ro modobo ra nu ha’o=ti om-ovaredio=i}.  
\textit{2SG NOM can NDECL 3SG bag=DL BEN-carry=NMLZ}  
‘Please bring him both his bags’

(275) \textit{Nimo ro modobo ra nimo turana=i}  
\textit{1PL NOM can NDECL 1PL friend=DEF}  
\textit{titi om-otiodai=umo}.  
\textit{letter BEN-send=PL}  
‘We will send a letter to our friend if we can.’

(276) \textit{Ro hoho=i umuo dohobo ka}.  
\textit{2SG face=DEF know familiar PRS}  
‘Your face looks familiar’

Predicative possessives are formed similar to existential constructions, such that “That dog is mine” would have the form “That dog is my dog” with the possessed noun occurring in both the argument and the predicate position.

(277) \textit{I’a umu=i mo umu=i ka}  
\textit{that dog=DEF 1SG dog=DEF PRS}  
‘That dog is mine.’ (lit. ‘That dog is my dog’)
1. Green leaf porridge recipe

This narrative was selected because of its procedural nature. The narrative is a telling of a recipe for green leaf porridge, a dish prepared on Urama Island that uses umia, the green leaves from a tree species. The narrative relies heavily on second person forms of address, which involves non-speaker person agreement in the verbal morphology.

(1) Umia vi‘a=i itai hapuo i araduo i n-a’ai ka,

leaf porridge=DEF cook way tell 1-NFUT PRS

ro ro umia vi‘a=i haibo i itai ra.

2SG NOM leaf porridge=DEF how cook NDECL

‘I’ll be telling you how to cook green leaf porridge, how you cook green leaf porridge.’

(2) Epu=i to ro ro umia=i i-hebo i ka.

first=DEF ALL 2SG NOM leaf=DEF PL.OBJ-break PRS.

‘First you pick the green leaves.’

(3) Umia epu=i i-v-ihebo ka na~na=i

leaf head=DEF PL.OBJ-N1-break.off PRS things=DEF

i-me’edei ka vi‘a=i itai.

PL.OBJ-collct PRS porridge=DEF cook

‘Once you have broken off the tips of the green leaves, then you collect other things to cook the porridge.’

(4) Na~na=i du=i ire du=i i-v-eidai ra

things=DEF sago=DEF and sago=DEF PL.OBJ-N1-get NDECL

go’ota umia ka... napu.

cocoanut leaf and... protein

‘Things like sago, and once you’ve got the sago, coconut, green leaves and… protein.’

(5) Nupa uho aibo vi‘a=i niro=i ta itai ri.

maybe fish like porridge=DEF inside=DEF LOC cook COMP

‘Maybe something like fish to put into the porridge to cook.’
(6) Ka na-na=i idedeai ka ro obo=i and things=DEF PL.OBJ\prepare and 2SG water=DEF

i-v-ahu odio  pan=i niro=i tabo muko=i adoroi ka.
PL.OBJ-N1-pour pan=DEF inside=DEF LOC fire=DEF build PRS.
‘And prepare things, and you pour water into the pot and you build the fire.’

(7) Ka muko=i ohu=i ta pan=i i-v-ede’a and fire=DEF top=DEF LOC pan=DEF PL.OBJ-N1-put

obo=i rautu.
water=DEF with
‘And on the fire you place the pan with the water.’

(8) Obo=i huna ovai aike. Nupa kaupu aibo.
water=DEF big make FUT.NEG maybe little like
‘Don’t put in too much water. Maybe like a little.’

(9) Ka obo=i ogohuti ta, ogohuti ri omoti ta and water=DEF boiling LOC boiling COMP waiting LOC

umia=i i-v-ihu’uti ra disi komu niro ato leaf=DEF PL.OBJ-N1-strip NDECL dish old inside ALL

ka go’ota=i ive’iti.
and coconut=DEF PL.OBJ\scrape
‘And when the water is boiling, and while waiting for it to boil, remove the leaves from the stalk into an old dish, and scrape the coconuts.’

(10) obo=i ahu’odidio go’ota=i era ka water=DEF pour.out coconut=DEF dry PRS
‘The coconut whose water you pour out is dry.’

(11) Go’ota era=i i-v-iri hati ra ka ika=i coconut dry=DEF PL.OBJ-N1-break NDECL and shell=DEF

ta ive’iti ka mabu ro ro oriori ta LOC PL.OBJ\scrape PRS because 2SG NOM scraper LOC

(at)-a-v-iveiti ra ka go’ota=i ASS-Q-N1-PL.OBJ\SCRAPE NDECL and coconut=DEF
‘You break the dry coconut and you scrape it with a shell because if you scrape it with a scraper the coconut juice will splash away.’

‘When you scrape with a shell the juice will stay well inside.’

‘And when the water is boiling, you put the leaves into the pot and you boil the leaves.’

‘Don’t boil for long, maybe for a little time.’

‘And with the fish you put it in and when the fish is cooked you scoop it out into another dish to prepare it.’

‘Just the meat only – throw away the bones.’
‘And when the porridge is boiled onto the leaf tips you throw in the sago.’

‘And with the scoop you stir, keep stirring with the scoop.’

‘While stirring the cooking sago, see whether the sago is cooked.’

‘Then you put the pot to the side.’

‘You put the coconut and the fish into one dish and you mash them.’

‘When it’s juicy you put it into the pot together with the leaves and the sago and mix it all up in the pot with the coconut juice.’
You squeeze it to make the porridge watery and not very sticky.’

‘So when people drink the porridge it doesn’t stick to their mouth.’

‘And when you’re stirring the porridge, when the fire dies down to make embers you put the pot on to warm it up.’

‘And here if you have mixed the porridge well, that’s when you get dishes for the people to serve it to them and give them the porridge.’

‘And here’s the end of the story.’
2. Train narrative

This narrative was selected for inclusion because it is a personal re-telling of an incident that happened to the narrator while on a train. The result is heavy use of first and third person forms, as the story is told from the first person point of view.

(1) *Mo kika ata aradou n-a’ai ka; mo ro obo*

1SG story certain tell 1-NFUT PRS; 1SG NOM woman

*nahia ata i-n-eve’a kika=i.*

old some PST-1-see story=DEF.

‘I’m going to tell a certain story; it’s a story about an elderly lady.’

(2) *Orohi po-n-odau ra nupa ioropoio pura=ti didimoio*

tour DPST-1-go PST maybe last week=DU behind

*tabo.*

at.

‘I was going in to look around maybe a couple of weeks back.’

(3) *Ata hivio mo iraromo=i modobo=i haka.*

certain day 1SG remember=NMLZ can=NMLZ NEG

‘I can’t remember which day it was.’

(4) *Hivio ata ka, mo at-po-n-o’u ra, inamoi,*

day certain PRS 1SG ASS-DPST-1-come PST, like,

*tureni ta ma=oroi ri moto=i tabo.*

train LOC PURP=board COMP house=DEF LOC

‘One day, I came, like, you know, to get on the train from home.’

(5) *I-n-o’ui ta oroi ka mo niro tauni ito*

PST-1-come at board PRS 1SG want town ALL

*oroho=i ma=o’ui ri.*

tour=NMLZ PURP=come COMP

‘When I came I boarded as I wanted to come to town to have a look around.’

(6) *Ka mo ro... inamoi... tureni ta i-n-oroi ta*

and 1SG NOM... like... train LOC PST-1-board LOC

*o’u ka eme’ei ka mo se’a ata to.*

come PRS sit PRS 1SG chair certain ALL.

‘And I ... like, got on the train, came and sat down in my seat.’
And there was close to me an elderly lady who sat down and saw me.

She was looking at me.

And said to herself that I’m someone maybe … umm … from Papua New Guinea, some person.

She said (to herself)…But that elderly lady didn’t want to ask me.

‘Umm…in her mind she was thinking whether she, you know, would say something to me.’

‘Oh. She said - maybe - I can’t ask her… Ummm,’

‘I’ll try and play a trick on you.'
Narratives 83

(14) Ka nu ro nu inamoi eidei ka.
and 3SG NOM 3SG like get PRS.
‘And she - she somehow she got it (an idea).’

(15) Ka vade ata araduo=i nu ro himiha
and word certain speaking=NMLZ 3SG NOM SELF
p-aradu’uti himiha ido …i... pidgin tabo kauka...
DPST-speak\ITR self to umm pidgin LOC enough…
‘And speaking some words, she herself was speaking to herself …umm…in Pidgin, okay?’

(16) I, nu vade=i orovai ta mo ro erehe’eai
umm 3SG word=DEF hear LOC 1SG NOM turn
ka nu eita ka vari ai-pe-n-emai’ai ra.
PRS 3SG LOC and laugh ASS-DPST-1-give PST.
‘Um, when I heard her words I turned towards her and gave her a smile.’

(17) Kauka nu ro mo eve’ai tabo nu ro
enough 3SG NOM 1SG see LOC 3sg NOM
a’o=i ka ‘are! Ro hati mere ro?
say=NMLZ PRS “oh! 2SG which person 2SG
‘Okay, when she saw me she said “Oh! Where are you from?”

(18) ka mo ro a’oi mo ...iii... PNG mere ka.”
and 1SG NOM say 1SG umm PNG person PRS.”
‘And I said…umm…I’m from Papua New Guinea’

(19) “O mo ro tau n-eve’a vaka ro
“Oh 1SG 2SG already 1-see NPST 2SG
inai mo niroi haka ro ...i... oduai ...i...
but 1SG want NEG 2SG umm ask umm
“Oh; I’ve already seen you but I didn’t want to …umm… ask you’

(20) Imini hato n-iraromo ka itabo mo ro himiha
mind only 1-think PRS and.then 1SG NOM self
mo himiha ito n-aradu’uti ka mo vade komu
1SG self ALL 1-talk PRS 1SG word short
Brown, Muir, Craig & Anea

**Pidgin vade komu.**  
Pidgin language short  
‘I thought to myself then that I would start talking to myself some short phrases in my language, Pidgin.’

(21)  

\[
\begin{align*}
Umuo=\text{i} & \quad \text{ta} & \quad \text{nu} & \quad n-araduo & \quad \text{ka} & \quad \text{ita} & \quad \text{ro} & \quad \text{himiha} \\
\text{know=} & \quad \text{NMLZ} & \quad \text{LOC} & \quad 3\text{SG} & \quad 1-\text{tell} & \quad \text{PRS} & \quad \text{and.then} & \quad 2\text{SG} & \quad \text{self} \\
\text{erehe} & \quad \text{eai} & \quad \text{ta} & \quad \text{mo} & \quad \text{ro} & \quad \text{umuo} & \quad n-i'i & \quad \text{ka} & \quad \text{aro'oo} \\
\text{turn} & \quad \text{loc} & \quad 1\text{SG} & \quad \text{NOM} & \quad \text{know} & \quad 1-\text{become} & \quad \text{PRS} & \quad \text{that} \\
\text{vati} & \quad \text{mere} & \quad \text{ka}. \\
\text{place} & \quad \text{person} & \quad \text{PRS}. \\
\end{align*}
\]

‘If she knows Pidgin when I speak it to her you yourself will turn to me and I’ll know for sure she’s a person from that place.’

(22)  

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Mo} & \quad \text{rautu} & \quad \text{nimoiti} & \quad \text{nu} & \quad \text{araduo}=\text{i} & \quad \text{ka} & \quad \text{mo} & \quad \text{vare} & \quad \text{nu} \\
\text{1SG} & \quad \text{with} & \quad 1\text{DU} & \quad 3\text{SG} & \quad \text{talk=} & \quad \text{NMLZ} & \quad \text{and} & \quad 1\text{SG} & \quad \text{laugh} & \quad 3\text{SG} \\
\text{ka} & \quad \text{mo} & \quad \text{vare} & \quad \text{nu} & \quad \text{vare} & \quad \text{nimoiti} & \quad \text{vare} & \quad \text{n-a'ai}=\text{do} & \quad \text{ka}. \\
\text{and} & \quad 1\text{SG} & \quad \text{laugh} & \quad 3\text{SG} & \quad \text{laugh} & \quad 1\text{DU} & \quad \text{laugh} & \quad 1-\text{do=} & \quad \text{DU} & \quad \text{PRS}. \\
\text{She} & \quad \text{and} \text{ I we both were talking} & \quad \text{and} \text{ I laughed, she laughed, we both were} & \quad \text{laughing.’} \\
\end{align*}
\]

(23)  

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Ka} & \quad \text{hinitabo} & \quad \text{vade} & \quad \text{aradu'uti} & \quad \text{ha} & \quad i-n-o'u}=\text{ido} & \quad \ldots\text{i...} \\
\text{and} & \quad \text{here.at word} & \quad \text{talk}\text{\textbackslash ITER } & \quad \text{EMPH} & \quad \text{PST-1-}\text{come=} & \quad \text{DU} & \quad \text{umm} \\
\text{And} & \quad \text{we were still talking,’} \\
\text{tureni} & \quad \text{oropoio} & \quad \text{vati} & \quad \text{tabo} & \quad \text{hinita} & \quad \text{nu} & \quad \text{a'oi} & \quad \text{ka}: \\
\text{train} & \quad \text{finish} & \quad \text{place} & \quad \text{LOC} & \quad \text{here.at} & \quad 3\text{SG} & \quad \text{say} & \quad \text{PRS}. \\
\text{And} & \quad \text{we were still talking when it arrived – umm – the train at its destination} & \quad \text{and} \quad \text{the elderly lady said:} \\
\end{align*}
\]

(24)  

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Mo} & \quad \text{ubi} & \quad \text{mo} & \quad \text{n-omotidio} & \quad \text{ka}=\text{umo} & \quad \text{mo} & \quad \text{ai-n-odau} & \quad \text{ka}; \\
\text{1 SG} & \quad \text{people} & \quad 1\text{SG} & \quad \text{1-wait} & \quad \text{PRS=} & \quad \text{PL} & \quad 1\text{SG} & \quad \text{ASS-1-go} & \quad \text{PRS} \\
\text{ro} & \quad \text{mea-ri} & \quad \text{hivio} & \quad \text{ha} & \quad \text{ita} & \quad \text{oroho} & \quad \text{ra} - \\
\text{2SG} & \quad \text{good-very} & \quad \text{day} & \quad \text{EMPH} & \quad \text{LOC} & \quad \text{go.around} & \quad \text{NDECL} \\
\text{mo} & \quad \text{ai-n-odau} & \quad \text{ka}. \\
\text{1SG} & \quad \text{ASS-1-go} & \quad \text{PRS}. \\
\text{My} & \quad \text{people} & \quad \text{are waiting for me so I’m going; you have a really good day going} & \quad \text{around - I’ve arrived.’}
\end{align*}
\]
3. Traditional story of Iroroma

This narrative is a traditional story from Urama Island. This story is set in the past about a protagonist, Iroroma, and so involves storytelling in a third person narrative. Given the nature of this narrative, the interplay of tenses is also noteworthy, where many forms are set in the distant past, but where subsequent mentions are set in the present.

(1) Na kika=i kika ata ka go’oto ata ato. this story=DEF story some PRS village certain ALL
‘This story it’s a story about a certain village.’

(2) Aro’o go’oto=i davarai ta p-o’a vadio that village=DEF beach LOC DPST-locate HAB
go’oto ka. village PRS
‘That village is a village that was located near the beach.’

(3) aro’o go’oto=i tabo p-emidio vadio dubu ata. that village=DEF LOC DPST-live HAB man certain
‘In that village there lived a certain man.’

(4) dubu nahi’a ata nu pomo p-oroho vadio man old certain 3SG hunt DPST-go.around HAB
dubu ka. man PRS
‘A certain old man - he was a man who went hunting.’
(5) *Nu moto=i umu hiro-hia ka.*
3SG house=DEF dog many-very PRS.
‘At his home there were a lot of dogs.’

(6) *Umu to’o=i rautu p-emidio vadio.*
dog lots=DEF with DPST-live HAB
‘He lived with lots of dogs.’

(7) *Ka ata hivio-i nu aro’o umu to’o-i tuiai*
and one day=DEF 3SG those dog lots=DEF among
*ta ga’ubo umu ata nu aro’o umu-i nu*
LOC one dog certain 3SG that dog=DEF 3SG
*huna-hia gema ka.*
big-very big PRS
‘Then one day among all those dogs there was one dog who was a very big dog.’

(8) *Ka aro’o umu gema=i ro p-ivoroho vadio*
and that dog big=DEF NOM DPST-PL.OBJ\take HAB
*umu keke=i ka nu davarai ivodau=i*
dog small=DEF and 3SG beach PL.OBJ\take=NMLZ
‘And that big dog used to lead the smaller ones and take them to the beach.’

(9) *Ka ivodauo ka ita, ivodoroi ka bu’i*
and PL.OBJ\take PRS then PL.OBJ\take.into PRS bush
*bomo o bu’i oroho na=i p-ivoto vadio.*
pig or bush living thing=DEF OBJ.PL.OBJ\kill HAB.
‘And he took them along the beach and then into the bush to hunt pigs or other wild animals.’

(10) *Ok, hivio ga’u ata ato aro’o umu gema=i*
Ok, day one certain LOC that dog big=DEF
*gimo ro ohiai ka.*
sickness NOM catch PRS.
‘Ok, one day the big dog fell sick.’

(11) *Ka aro’o hivio=i aro’o dubu=i, aro’o dubu=i,*
and that day=DEF that man=DEF that man=DEF,
paena=i ka Iroroma; nu paena=i ka Iroroma.

‘And that day that man, that man’s name was Iroroma—that was his name… Iroroma.’

(12) Ka aro’o dubu=i ro aro’o hivio=i tabo umu
and that man=DEF NOM that day=DEF LOC dog
gema=i oduai ka ro, ro gimo ka, emidio ra,
big=DEF tell PRS 2SG 2SG sick PRS, stay NDECL,
moto=i tabo.
house=DEF LOC.
‘So that man on that day told the big dog, “you’re sick, stay in the house.”’

(13) Ka nu ro moto=i tuniha goho=i iruruti ka
and 3SG NOM house=DEF all hole=DEF close PRS
umu keke=i i-atohotai ka
dog small=DEF PL.OBJ-call PRS
‘And he shut up all the holes in the house and called the little dogs,’

(14) “O’u=mo, nimo n-odau=mo, pomo ora’oi.”
come=PL 1PL 1-go=PL hunting go.around.
“Come, let’s go hunting.”

(15) I, umu gema=i emeheidioi ka.
umm dog big=DEF stay PRS.
‘Umm, the big dog stayed home.’

(16) Ka aro’o umu keke=i rautu davarai p-o’u,
And that dog small=DEF with beach DPST-come,
p-odau i-odau.
DPST-go PST-go
‘So that man with the little dogs came to the beach and they went along.’

(17) Kiaukia umoi ka bu’i, bu’i tabo.
enough go.in PRS bush, bush LOC
‘And then they went in the bush, into the bush.’

(18) pomo-i p-oroho ita umu keke=i ro
hunting=DEF DPST-go.around then dog small=DEF NOM
bomo gema=i eve'ai ka.
pig big=DEF see PRS.
‘And while he was hunting the little dogs saw a big pig.’

(19) Kiaukia nuha p-emathiai=mo aro’o bomo gema=i
enough no.hesitation DPST-chase= PL that pig big=DEF
obodidioi ri.
chase COMP
‘And then they without hesitation started chasing that big pig to catch him.’

(20) Ita bomo gema=i erehe’eai ta umu keke=i
then pig big=DEF turn LOC dog little=DEF
ibodioi ka.
PL.OBJ\follow PRS.
‘And then the big pig turned around and chased the little dogs.’

(21) Ita umu keke=i ro bomo gema=i i-erehe’eai
and.then dog little NOM pig big=DEF PL.OBJ-turn
tabo ni pupu=ai ha p-im-apoio.
LOC 3PL strength=DEF completely DPST-PL.OBJ\BEN\finish
‘And then the little dogs, when the pig turned to chase them, their strength left them.’

(22) Ka umu keke=i ha’imai erehe’ei ka kekai ta
and dog small=DEF tired turn and close LOC
p-emidio=umo bomo gema=i ha p-arodio=umo.
DPST-stay= PL pig big=DEF EMPH DPST-watch= PL
‘So the little dogs felt tired and turned off to the side and sat and just watched the big pig.’

(23) Ka ita Iroroma nama v-o’u ra ita bomo
c and then Iroroma when N1\come NDECL the pig
gema=i ro emati’iai ka.
big=DEF NOM charge PRS.
‘And then when Iroroma came the big pig started chasing him.’

(24) Bomo gema=i ro Iroroma p-obodidio.
pig big=DEF NOM Iroroma DPST-chase
‘The big pig chased Iroroma.'
Iroroma imagauriai nu’a ata ioroi ka. ‘Iroroma jumped up and climbed into a tree.’

Go’ota; arō’o go’ota=i p-ioro. ‘It was a coconut tree; he climbed up that coconut tree.

Ioro ohu=i tabo kiaukia bomo gema=i ro. ‘He climbed to the top, and then the big pig started cutting the coconut tree down.’

Go’ota=i p-ahiai ita arō’o go’ota=i omo’ai. ‘He cut that coconut tree down and when it was about to fall, Iroroma flew onto another coconut tree.’

Bomo gema=i va ierehe’edioi ta arō’o go’ota=i. ‘Then the big pig turned and he started chopping down that coconut, too.’

I-ahiai ka arō’o go’ota=i omo’ai ri a’ai. ‘He kept chopping and when that coconut was about to fall, he flew to another coconut.’
Hinibauha p-odau i-odau kauka ka go’otai
in.this.manner DPST-go PST-go enough and coconut

ipoioi ka.
PL.OBJ/finish PRS
‘He went on in that manner until he finished the coconut trees.’

Ka ianai nu imagauriai ka nu’a huna
and finally 3SG jump PRS tree big
gema=i oito.
big=DEF ALL
‘And finally he jumped onto a very big tree.’

Kaukua hini tabo iana nu’a=i ka, ata nu’a
ok, here LOC final tree=DEF PRS, other tree
ata otidioi haka kekai.
other standing NEG side
‘And then, from there that’s the last tree; there’s no other tree standing beside it.’

Kiauka aro’o bomo gema=i rautu nu emeheai haka.
enough that pig big=DEF with 3SG leave NEG
‘But then that big pig didn’t leave him, either.

Aro’o nu’a gema=i ahiai ri ovaharoi ka.
that tree big=DEF cut for begin PRS
‘He started chopping down that big tree’

I-ahiai, i-ahiai itabo Iroroma ro nu’a=i
PST-chop PST-chop and.then Iroroma NOM tree=DEF

i-eve’ai ta taitai ka nu’a=i omoai ai ka,
PST-see LOC near PRS tree=DEF fall NFUT PRS,
‘He chopped and chopped and when Iroroma saw the tree was about to fall.’

kiaukia Iroroma ro Nahua=i abodoi ka.
enough Iroroma NOM song=DEF sing PRS
‘Okay, Iroroma started singing a song.’

Nahua-i p-abodo ita nu Nahua=i tuiai tabo,
song=DEF DPST-sing then 3SG song=DEF middle LOC
When he was singing in the middle of the song he called his big dog’s name.

‘That big dog’s name was Iroroma.’

With his own name he named that big dog.

‘And when he was singing he was calling the dog’s name.’

The dog heard the song.

The wind carried the song to the village, to his house.

‘And that big dog, when he heard the song and heard his name in the song, that big dog said,'
(45) *Are, nupa mo abea=i kerere ata (ro)*

oh, maybe 1SG father=DEF trouble some NOM

*ap-o’a ka.*
MOD-be.in PRS

‘Oh, perhaps my father must have got into some kind of trouble.’

(46) *Mo paena=i n-aho’o ka.*

1SG name=DEF 1-call PRS

‘He’s calling my name.’

(47) *Mere ata=i haka - mo abea=i ro n-aho’o*

person some=DEF NEG 1SG father=DEF NOM 1-call

*ka mo paena=i.*
PRS 1SG name=DEF

‘It isn’t another person – it’s my father calling my name.’

(48) *Kiauka aro’o umu gema=i erehe’edioi tabo*

enough that dog big=DEF turn LOC

*ohuodidio vati p-oho moto=i niro=i.*
get.out place DPST-look house=DEF inside=DEF

‘And when that big dog turned, he looked for a place to escape from inside the house.’

(49) *I-orohoi ta ata vati ata eve’ai haka.*

PST-go.around LOC some place some see NEG

‘Going around he couldn’t find another place at all.’

(50) *Nu ro odaui ka ana’apu=i muko=i inamo*

3SG NOM go PRS stove=DEF fire=DEF you.know

*vadio vati hini tabo obodoi ka goho=i p-obodo*

usual place here LOC dig PRS hole=DEF DPST-dig

*hin(i)tabo imagauriai ka moto-i goro-i.*
here.at jump\PUNCT PRS house=DEF under=DEF

‘He went around to the place where the cooking fire is usually made and there he started digging, and dug out a hole and jumped out under the house.’
(51)  
\[\text{Kiauka} \ hio \ p\text{-}odau \ nahua=i \ ha \ p\text{-}obodo\]

\[\text{enough} \ \text{run} \ \text{DPST-GO} \ \text{song=DEF} \ \text{EMPH} \ \text{DPST-follow}\]

davarai.

beach
‘And then he quickly ran following the song along the beach.’

(52)  
\[\text{Nu} \ abea=i \ nu'a=i \ ohu=i \ ta \ m(a)=\text{emidio} \ ka,\]

\[3\text{SG} \ \text{father=DEF} \ \text{tree=DEF} \ \text{top=DEF} \ \text{LOC} \ \text{PURP=sit} \ \text{PRS}\]

\[\text{nahua}=i \ \text{p-abodo} \ i \ bomo \ gema=i \ rautu \ nu'a=i\]

\[\text{song=DEF} \ \text{DPST-sing} \ \text{um} \ \text{pig} \ \text{big=DEF} \ \text{with} \ \text{tree=DEF}\]

\[ai-p-ahiai \ \text{emehai} \ haka.\]

\[\text{ASS-DPST-cut} \ \text{leave} \ \text{NEG}\]
‘His father was sitting on top of the tree and still singing the song and the pig too was still chopping down the tree and wouldn’t leave it.’

(53)  
\[\text{Ka} \ i\text{-odau} \ itabo \ aro'o \ umu \ gema=i, \ \text{Iroroma}\]

\[\text{and} \ \text{PST-go} \ \text{LOC} \ \text{that} \ \text{dog} \ \text{big=DEF} \ \text{Iroroma}\]

\[\text{umu} \ gema=i \ \text{odaui} \ ka \ nu \ abea=i \ nahua=i\]

\[\text{dog} \ \text{big=DEF} \ \text{go} \ \text{PRS} \ 3\text{sg} \ \text{father=DEF} \ \text{song=DEF}\]

\[i\text{-abodo} \ \text{ne'ei}.\]

\[\text{PST-sing} \ \text{place}.\]
‘And when he went that big dog - that’s Iroroma the big dog went to where his father was singing the song.’

(54)  
\[\text{Na} \ nu \ idomai \ i\text{-eheu'ai} \ ta \ bomo \ gema=i\]

\[\text{and} \ 3\text{SG} \ \text{eye} \ \text{PL.OBJ-throw} \ \text{LOC} \ \text{pig} \ \text{big=DEF}\]

\[eve'ai \ ka.\]

\[\text{see} \ \text{PRS}\]
‘And when he cast his eyes about he saw the big pig.’
‘And then when he ran, when that big dog went running, he cut the pig right through the middle of his belly.’

‘And then that big pig let go of the tree and they both the dog and the pig started fighting.’

‘And then the dog knocked the pig down dead and he kept killing him.’

‘And then the little dogs too turned and helped - they helped the big dog.’
(60) *Ni umu keke=i ro tuniha bomo gema=i*  
3PL dog little=DEF NOM all pig big=DEF  

*a’iai ka, i-a’iai=umo nitu*o.  
kill PRS PST-kill=PL dead  
‘The little dogs all killed the big pig, they fought him to death.’

(61) *Kiaukia hinitabo umu=i abea=i, ire dubu-i nu’a-i*  
enough here.at dog=DEF father=DEF, that man=DEF tree=DEF  

*ohu-i tabo oruoi ka*  
top=DEF LOC climb.down PRS  
‘Hereupon the dog’s father, that man on top of the tree climbed down.’

(62) *I-oruo hepu=i odaui ka nu umu gema=i*  
PST-come.down ground=DEF went PRS 3SG dog big=DEF  

*omomai ka ita nu ro p-a’o*  
hug PRS and 3SG NOM DPST-say  
‘He came down to the ground and went and hugged his big dog and he said:

(63) ‘*are mere=i ro tua*ha ra’ato kiaukia do’ou mo*  
oh person= DEF 2SG bare if enough today 1SG  

*nu ihiai ka’.  
EMPH dead PRS.  
‘Oh my child – if you hadn’t been here today I would have been dead.’

(64) *Ita umu gema=i ro nu hete vapo=i ha*  
them dog big=DEF NOM 3SG dance tail=DEF EMPH  

*p-ema’ai.*  
DPST-give  
‘And then the big dog gave him a big wag of his tail.’
1. Introduction

This lexicon of Urama constitutes the current set of all lexical items encountered in texts and elicitation sessions, in total around 1060 entries. For each entry, the headword is in bold, followed by the word class and any relevant linguistic information, including pronunciation for any forms with idiosyncratic phonological properties, the existence of variant forms, and related derived forms. The definition is followed by example sentences from elicitation and texts, and occasionally by example phrases. Example material is followed by any cross-referenced words, and then by any notes, which may include etymological information, special meanings associated with derived forms, or notes of cultural significance. While third person pronouns in Urama are not marked for gender, the English translations are at times expressed with a feminine or masculine pronoun; this is an artefact of the context in which the sentence was originally elicited.

In addition to the Urama-English lexicon, there is also an English-Urama finderlist provided in section 3. This finderlist only contains the relevant Urama headwords, and for ease of searching, only lexical words have been included. Where there is some ambiguity with respect to word class in the English form, nouns have been left as is, verbs have been indicated with the English infinitive form (cf. itai ‘to cook’), and those that are derivationally related (i.e. listed as both noun and verb) have been left with the bare form (cf. ‘smell’ for the noun nibo and the verb ibodio). Thus, some forms which are semantically related, but different word forms altogether, have been listed separately (cf. hete ‘dance’, aramaunti or oma ‘to dance’).

Abbreviations used only in the lexicon include the following: adj. = adjective, adv. = adverb, aux. = auxiliary, conj. = conjunction, dem. = demonstrative, det. = determiner, inter. = interrogative, interj. = interjection, n. = noun, num. = numeral, pref. = prefix, post. = postposition, pref. = prefix, pron. = pronoun, quant. = quantifier, suf. = suffix, v. = verb.

2. Urama-English lexicon

A - a

a’ai, v., (iter. a’aituti), 1. do. aux., 2. nfut
a’apuai, v., (iter. iaputi, pl. iapuai), touch. Nu ro mo aina’apuai ka. She’s touching me. See: o’apuai
a’atai, v., (pl. iatai), pick, lift up (onto shoulder)

abea, n., (var. abia, pl. abiamio), father
abeda, n., flounder
ab’ea, v., (mid. arabe’ea), break open. Mo ha’oi aiarabe’ea ka! My bag has broken open!
Thieves broke into the store last night.

**abia**, *n.*, sago bag. [Note: a basket into which sago pulp is placed and squeezed to get the remaining juice out.]

**abidio**, *v.*, paddle. *Mo ro pei aibi ta nabidio ka.* I’m paddling the canoe with a paddle.

**abo**, *n.*, house post

**abodo**, *v.*, (iter. *iabotuti*, pl. *iabodo*), sing. *Ro atu iabotuti nahu’ai oropoio ra!* Stop singing the same song s over and over!


**adiai**, *v.*, light (a fire)

**adimo**, *n.*, evening


**ado’a**, *v.*, (pl. *iado’a*), water. *Nu’amate imado’a!* Water the plants (for her/him)!

**adoroi**, *v.* build. *Mukoi adoroi! Build a fire!

**a’erai**, *v.* (var. *a’arai*, *ia’raido*, mid. *ara’erai*, iter. *a’eraituti*, pl. *ia’erai*), open. *Duarai himiha (ai)ara’erai ka.* The door has opened (itself). *Ro ro modobo ra mo duarai ema’eria?* Could you please open the door for me? [Note: *ia’raido* is also used for plural objects]

**aha’o**, *v.*, (iter. *iaha’oututi*, pl. *iaha’o*), get angry and swear. *Nu ro ni iaha’o ka.* He’s getting angry and swearing at them.

**ahau**, *v.*, (pl. *iahau*), come out

**ahiai**, *v.*, (iter. *iahiotuti*, mid. *arahiai*, pl. *iahio*), cut. *Mo ro nu’ai niahio ka.* I’m cutting up the logs. *Nu’ai arahiai ka.* The tree broke/was blown over (lit. The tree was cut).


**aho’o**, *v.*, (pl. *iah’o*), ask. *Nu aho’o! Ask him!*

**ahu**, *adj.*, tough, strong. *Aho ova’ati ka.* It is hard work.

**ahuha**, *adv.*, strongly

**ahu’odioi**, *v.*, (mid. *arahu’odidioi*), pour. *Nu ro obo erarai ahu’odio ka.* She poured out the hot water. *Are! Obo erarai aiarahu’odidio ka!* Oh! The hot water has spilled!

**ahurai**, *v.*, (pl. *iahurai*), adopt. *ogagami mereti iahurai adopt a pair of orphans.*

**ahuta**, *n.*, smoke, steam

**ahu’ututi**, *v.*, refuse. *Nu ro dui emahu’utit ka.* He is refusing my food. [Note: The benefactive form implies a rejection of something given by someone.]

**ai**-*, vpref., ass

**aia**, *adv.*, in the past. [Note: used in the style of "once upon a time"]

**ai’a**, *v.*, see. *Mo koimo ai’a?* Have you seen my cup?

**aiaradi**, *v.*, shine. *Pi’ui aiaradi kaumo.* The stars are shining.

**aiaro**, *v.*, be admired, admirable. *Nu aiparo.* He was admired.

**aiau**, *n.*, cockatoo

**aibi**, *n.*, paddle

**aibo** 1. *adv.* about, almost. *post,* 2. like
aïha¹, adv., must. Mo ro motoi to aiha nodau ka. I must go home. [Note: Aiha is used for present or future obligation. Use of the intermediate past tense can also mean past obligation.]
aïha², adv., continue, really. Viha aiha a’o ka. It’s still / really raining.
aihiai, n., death
ai’i, v., heal. Umai ai’i ka. The wound is healing.
ai’iai, v., (mid. arai’iai), kill, hurt. Mo ro himiha narai’ia ka irai ta. I hurt myself with an axe.

aike, part., don’t. See: aika

aike, part., don’t. See: aika

aimidai, v., win, gain

aipau, n., seagull


amia¹, quant., (pro. [aː mia]), 1. other, some. 2. most

amia², n., (pro. [amiː a]), lime, white paint

amo, n., breast. Bomo kekei amoi idio kaumo. The piglets are suckling at the breast.

amoho’o, v., shake. Gorai amoho’o ra! Shake the rattle!

amoihhi, n., breast milk, milk

amotoba, n., (var. amotoboa), centipede


ana’apu, n., cooking place, stove

anegai, n., anchor

a’o, v., speak. Ni bobobogovade a’o kaumo. They’re speaking English.

a’oia, v., choke. Nu uhohoroi ro a’oia ka. He is choking on a fish bone.

aoidio, v., leave open. Na hini kavaia ka; durai aia avaoiido ra? It’s windy in here; has the door been left open?
aplehemai, v., miss. Mo ro bomoi ainapehemai ka. I’ve missed the pig.
apui, v., (ben. emapui, mid. arapui, pl. iapui), select, point to. Mo himiha narapui ka! I volunteer! (lit. I select myself). Ro abiai uriioi nemapui! Show me a picture of your father! (lit. Point to a picture of your father).
aradi, v., burn. O, mukoi aiaradi ka! Yes, the fire is (still) burning!
araduo, v., (iter. [i]aradu’uti), tell. Mo kika ata araduoi na’ai ka. I’m going to tell a certain story.
arahue, v., call. Nu iamo arahue ka. He is screaming in pain (lit. He is calling out a howl).
arai’iai¹, n., accident. [Note: Specifically, an event where one is hurt.]
arai’iai², v., fight. Nu ni rautu arai’ia kaumo. He is fighting with them (i.e. they are fighting each other). See: hiavo

aramauti, v., dance. Nimo hete naramauti kaumo. We are all dancing (a dance/dances). See: omai

aramu, n., (pl. aramio), grandparent

arateai, v., (var. arate, dur. aratei), stick. Tuai nu’ai ta arate kaumo. The lizards are stuck to the tree.
arato, v., (var. ara’o, pl. iarato), ask, inquire. Nu mo motoi ri ara’o arato ka. He is inquiring about my house.

are, interj., oh!

aredio, v., crawl. Nu mere bamoi aiaredio ka. Her baby is crawling. [Note: Also used for snakes.]
aro¹, v., (pl. iaro), shoot
aro², v., (pl. iaro), plant
arođio, v., (pl. iarodio), look after, watch, look at
aroipi, n., log
aromo, n., sky
aro’o, dem., that
aru, adj., high. Oboi arui ri dububai ro pei itomai kaumo. Because the tide is high the men are pulling up the canoes.
aruruti, v., run
asio, n., sneeze. Mo asio na’ai ka. I’m sneezing.
ata, adj., other, again. Ro ata avo’u ra? Are you coming again?
atana, n., something, another thing. Mo atana rautu ka. I have something.
atanatato, n., nothing
ate, v., fill. Pani ta oboi ate! Fill the pan with water! See: emate
atimai, v., (iter. iatimuti, mid. aratimai, npunct. iatimo, pl. iatimai), cover. Mo hipurai ta naratimai ka. I’m covering myself with a sheet. [Note: Nonpunctiliar form used mainly for garden work, e.g. filling in holes. For covering many things one at a time, it implies many sheets, i.e. a distributive reading.]
ato, conj., if. See: rato
atohotai, v., (pl. iatohotai), call
atu, n., catfish
atuha, adj., together. Niti kimai atuha podau ido. They both went fishing together.
atuhivio, conj., simultaneously, at the same time
atu’uti, v., (ben. ematu’uti, mid. aratu’uti, pl. iatu’uti), mash up. Ro niro ra mo ro ro dubai ematu’uti? Do you want me to mash up a banana for you? [Note: The middle form can mean ‘step on oneself’.

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a’ubai, v., (iter. ia’ubuti), pull out, remove. [Note: Iterative form means ‘to pull out many things many times’, e.g. weeds.]
aubo, n., wave.
auboigae, n., foam (lit. ‘wave spit’)
a’umo, v., (mid. ara’umo), drown. Auboi ro pei aia’umo. The waves swamped the canoe (lit. The waves drowned the canoe). Pei aiara’umo ka. The canoe has sunk (lit. drowned).
aupai, v., 1. swell. Mo tui aiaupai ka. My arm is swelling up. n., 2. a swelling.
avavo, adj., stupid, naughty. Nu avavo na ova’ati vadio ka. S/he is always doing silly things.
awo, adj., far. omoti awoi the distance between two rivers.

B - b

babame’e, n., (var. babao), butterfly. Rio ro baba’o iohiai kaumo. You all are catching butterflies.
babao, n., tree fungus
baibu’u, n., gecko
baketa, n., bucket
bamu, adj., newborn, soft. kikio bamu baby bird, hatchling. Ro bamu mere aibo ra! You’re acting like a baby! (i.e. being immature). [Note: Used for things that are tender or fragile.]
bana, n., mangrove
banekai, n., (savings) bank
bara, n., 1. riverbank. 2. side. peibara side of a canoe.
baratei, n., wall
bare, n., bottom. Bomoi bare ne’ei mo ro ovaredioi na’ai ka. I’ll carry the bottom end of the pig.
baribari, n., (var. bari), shoots, young leaves
basikoroi, n., bicycle
bata, n., scale (of a fish)
bedea, n., healing. *Nu gimoi bedeai ta mea ovai*. His sickness was cured by healing.

bedeamere, n., witch doctor, healer. [Note: Traditional healer has positive connotations.]

beha, adv., only
behe, adj., female
bena, n., shoulder
berebere, n., lightning
beredi, n., bread
beru, n., liver
beru pa pa, n., lungs (lit. ‘slack liver’)
bi=, vclitic. tr
bidibidi, n., belt. [Note: Traditional belt with shells attached, worn around the waist, arms or neck.]

bihaito, n., (var. bihai), difficulty. *Mo omoi abui ri bihaito na’ai vaka mabu oboi pupuo hia ka*. It was too difficult for me to cross the river because the current was very strong.

biko, n., crabbing stick. [Note: A hook on the end of a stick to pull crabs out of their holes.]

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bikobiko, n., uvula

biri, n., (pro. [biri:]), 1. door (of house). 2. wall
bito, n., possum, cuscus
bobo, n., dry ditch
bodomo, n., (var. bodo, pl. bodobodo), welt, bruise

bogobogo, adj., (var. bogo), white
bogobogowade, n., English (lit. ‘white language’). See: bogobogo

bomo, n., pig, pork
bomohu’a, n., boar’s tusk
boromokau, n., cow
bua’ea, n., sweat
bubu, n., rule, custom, law
buburo, n., sandfly sp. [Note: A large species of sandfly with a painful bite.]

buhai, n., girls. See: mere behe.

bu’, n., bush. [Note: Can be used for wild animals, e.g. bu’ibomo ‘wild pig’.]
do’ou duoduo, adv., this morning
do’ou duoi, n., tonight
dopi, adj., pregnant. [Note: Only used pre-nominally.]
dopiobo, n., pregnant woman
doutu, adv., tomorrow
du, n., 1. sago. 2. food. [Note: Sago is the staple food of Urama. Starch is extracted from it to make a form of bread or porridge. Du is the generic term for food.]
dua, n., jaw
duamo, n., sago stick (‘sago breast’). [Note: a stick of sago wrapped up in nipa palm leaves for cooking.]
duara, n., door. See: biri
dubai, n., banana(s)
dubi, adj., someone else’s. Dubi ha’o eidai ka. You’ve taken someone else’s bag.
dubitu, n., tongs (lit. ‘someone else’s hands’)
dubu, n., (pl. dububai), man, male
duho, n., pus
du’i, adj., 1. dark. du’i ri i’i. to get dark (clouds, night). n., 2. shade. Nu nu’ai du’i ta emidio ka. He is sitting in the shade of a car.
dumotoi, n., kitchen
duniro, adj., hungry. Mo duniro ka. I’m hungry.
duo, n., night
duodu, n., morning

**E - e**

e’a, v., see. Na’u ve’a ra? What are you seeing? See: eve’a. [Note: Used in present continuous senses as a suppletive form of eve’a.]
ebebeai, n., 1. river passage. 2. shortcut
ebiha, n., black magic, sorcery. Nu ro nu niromama’e mere ebih a ovai / ema’ai. He used sorcery on the person he was upset with (i.e. the one he hated, his enemy).
ebo, n., 1. heel. 2. elbow
ebugama, adj., muscular, strong. Nu ebugama ka. He’s a muscular, strong person.
ede’a, v., (pl. ide’a), put down, place. Uburoi i’a hinita ide’a. Put the baskets down over there.
ededecai, v., (mid. eredecai, pl. idedecai), make, fix. Mo rekei ededecai ri na’ai ka. I’m trying to mend the net.
e’ebo, v., (iter. i’ebuti, pl. i’ebo), fell. Mo ro nu’ai ni’ebuti ka. I felled the trees.
e’ediai, v., mix, stir, twist. Mo sipuni ta vi’ai ne’ediai ka. I am stirring the porridge with a spoon.
ehe, n., crew. Mamio ehei ro o’u kaumo. The crew of women are coming (by canoe). [Note: In this usage it is more usual to refer to people in canoes than on land.]
ehebia, v., (iter. ihebuti), break. Mo urei nehebia ka. I am breaking a sugar cane. See: otoho. [Note: can be used with sticks or bread, but not glass.]
ehe’uti, v., (pl. ihe’uti), rip off, remove. Umiai ihe’uti pani niro ita. Remove the green leaves and put them into the pot.
ehume, n., vein
eidai, v., (mid. eredaidai, pl. imidai), get, buy, obtain. Dui nu himiha ro eredaidai ka. He got his own food for himself.
eika, part., might. Nu omoai eika. He might fall.
ekedua, v., (var. epedua, dur. ekedu, pl. ikedua), throw. Mo boro i nemekedu! Throw me my balls (one at at time!)
eke’eke, n., twigs. See: ete’ete
ema’ai, v., (iter. ima’atī, pl. ima’ai), give. Rohiai ro do’ou duodoui ubi ketai ima’ai vaka. The chief gave the people mats this morning (all at once). See: a’ai. [Note: iterative form means ‘give many things to many people’.

emabai, v., (iter. imabae’utī, pl. imabei), gut, clean. Mo ro uhoi nimabae’utī ka. I’m gutting the fish.

emaduo, v., (iter. emaduti, pl. imaduo), tell about. Nimo kikai nimaduo! Tell us a story!

emahibai, v., (pl. imahibai), try, taste. Mo itai dui emahibai. Try the sago I’m cooking.

emai, v., (pl. imai), pull in. Mo ro uhoi kimai ta nemaivuti ka. I’m pulling in a fish with a hook.

ema’o, v., (pl. ima’o), be angry and swear. Nu ema’o ka. He is angry and swearing. Nu ro ni ima’o. He got angry with them.


emari, v., (pl. imari), beat up. nu’atama emarutī beat a tree to remove the bark.

emate, v., (iter. imatūti, pl. imate), fill. Iridini oboi emate! Fill the engine with fuel! See: ate.

ematu’a, v., (pl. imati’a), spear. Mo ro debe nemati’a ka. I’m spearing an eel.

ematomudio, v., (pl. imatomudio), teach, show

emathuhia, v., (mid. eremathuhia), trick. Mo ro nu nemathuhia ka mo go’u odau ri inai mo animidio ka. I tricked him that I was going crabbing but I stayed behind. [Note: middle form means ‘lie.’]

embe, n., skirt. See: wapa

emebidio, v., (mid. eremebidio, pl. imebidio), warm up. Mo muko ita neremebidio ka. I warmed (myself) up by the fire.

emederiai, v., (mid. eremederiai, pl. imederiai), start. Iridini emederiai ra! Start the engine!

eme’ei, v., (iter. emiauti), sit. [Note: iterative form means ‘many people sitting down.’

emehai, v., leave

emehai, v., (pl. imeheai), let go

emehu, v., (pl. imehu), sharpen. Mo kai’ai nemehu! Sharpen my knife!

emeyerutu, v., straighten out. Kivakivai neme’ivuti ka. I am straightening out the kinks.

emidi, v., (pl. imidi), build for. Nu ro ni motoi imidi vaka. He built them a house (today). See: ididi

emidio, v., stay. Nimoiti bu’i goroi ta nemidio kaido. Both of us are hiding in the bush.

emo, n., 1. elbow. 2. heel. See: ebo

emumete, adj., deaf

enedu, n., firefly

enevaro, n., trading. Mo uho enevaro nodau ka. I’m going to trade fish. See: diva

epa, n., (pro. [e’pe]), broom. Mo ro epe ta horohoroi nimohu’uti ka. I swept up the rubbish with a broom.

epa’e, v., (pl. ipe’e), be full. Ni avipe’e ra? Are they satisfied? (lit. Are they full?) [Note: Only of people, not containers.]

epu, 1. n. head. adv., 2. first. Nu epu o’u ka. He’s coming first.

epu ma, post., before

epu’ito, n., brain(s)

era, n., firewood

erara, adj., hot

ere, interj., ouch!
ere'a, v., 1. feel. *Nu otoi ta temetemei ere'a ka.* She’s feeling pain in her foot. 2. see oneself. *Ro himihia ere’a ra otoroi ta.* You see yourself in the mirror.


erchaei, v., give way, yield. *Ro gaboi ta erechaei! Get off the road!* (lit. You yield the road!)

erche’e, v., (iter. erche’uti), comb. *Rio epui ituai ta erche’e umo!* Comb your hair with a comb!

erche’eai, v., turn. *Mo ido ereche’eai ra!* Turn to me!


erehe’ei, v., give way, yield. *Ro gaboi ta erehe’ei!* Get off the road! (lit. You yield the road!)


erehe’eai, v., (pl. iverhe’eai), 1. change. *Ro ro modobo ra ro dui nimo ubi tu eremabai? Please can you share your food with our guests? [Note: iterative form means ‘share generally, frequently’.]


erehe’eai, v., (pl. ierehe’eai), 1. change. *Pei evehe’eai ra!* Turn over the canoe!

ereha, v., 1. feel. *Nu otoi ta temetemei ereha ka.* She’s feeling pain in her foot. 2. see oneself. *Ro himihia ereha ra otoroi ta.* You see yourself in the mirror.


erchaei, v., give way, yield. *Ro gaboi ta erechaei! Get off the road!* (lit. You yield the road!)

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erehe’eai, v., turn. *Mo ido erehe’eai ra!* Turn to me!
gauga’u, n., prawn
ga’uga’u, adj., each one, every one
gu’uha, adv., together. Niti gu’uha podau ido. They both went together.
gebe, n., flotsam. [Note: A brown debris like tea leaves that washes up on beaches often after storms, made up of broken down vegetable matter, and which is used as good compost for kasava.]
gebe hipi, n., tea
gega, adj., big
gema, adj., big
gema, n., hip
geno’o, n., rat, mouse
geregere, n., festive flowers. [Note: From one plant species; traditionally used for singsings, dances.]
gidobu, n., barramundi [Lates calcarifer]
giepu, adj., 1. sad. 2. sorry
gi’epu, n., heart
gi’ipono, n., string. [Note: Used in cat’s cradle games]
gima, n., spot, pustule
gimini, n., back
giminihoro, n., backbone
gimo, adj., sick
gino, n., coconut plantation
giri, n., tooth
girigiri, n., teeth. [Note: Crocodile or swordfish teeth; teeth on a saw.]
girigirinai, n., saw
giritemeteme, n., toothache
gitora, n., bed, sleeping place
go’ario, n., wasp sp.
goé, n., betel nut
gogora, n., pelican
go’o, n., hole
gomo, n., chest
gomohobobo, n., bubble
gonogono, n., nostrils
go’ota, n., coconut
go’oto, n., (pl. go’otoioi), village
go’otohi’a, n., mainland
go’ototo, n., water snake
go’pe, n., carving, statue
gora, n., rattle. [Note: Used in traditional dances.]
goro, post., under. Karika bu’i goro ta emido ka. Karika is hiding in the bush. [Note: can also be used in the sense of ‘hidden’]
goroeme, n., underskirt
goroi, adj., next. goroi purai next week.
goropiripo, n., underwear
gu, n., ribcage
guagua, n., frog
guagua tama, adj., green (lit. ‘frog skin’)
guhi, n., glue. [Note: Made from residue of aphids’, etc., deposits on plants. Used to glue or patch kundu drums.]
guhoro, n., rib
gu’obo, adj., cold
gu’obogimo, n., malaria (lit. ‘cold sickness’)
gura, n., blowfly
guri, n., ditch, dry hole, empty well
guriguri, n., prayer, church service
gurigurihivio, n., Sunday (lit. ‘church time’)
guru, n., thunder
guruo, n., green slime. [Note: The slime that grows on the bottom of boats.]
gu’u, adj., empty

H - h

ha, part., isn’t it? [Note: tag particle.]
hahu’a, n., yellow catfish
haiboi, inter., how
ha’ima, adj., tired, bored with. Mo ha’ima nerea ka. I’m feeling tired.
haira, n., emperor red snapper [Lutjanus sebae]
hairo, n., 1. heel. 2. ankle
haita, inter., where. Haita ro? Where is it? See: hatitoi
haka, part., not. [Note: used in non-
future tense.]
hama, n., stingray
ha’o, n., bag
hapuo, adj., half. hapuo tu umu five
dogs (lit. ‘half hands dog’).
hapuoi, post., about, concerning
hapuuito, adv., to one side
haro’o, n., roof post. [Note: There are
three per traditional house. The
other type of post (abo) supports the
floor only.]
haro’o, n., clan
hasi, n., hat
hato, adv., only. Motoi hato emidio titi
vadio ka. S/he always stays (only) at
home.
hau’i, n., 1. field, clear space.
2. outside. Merekeke odau mo hau’i
ta orioi! Children, go outside and
play!
hauto, n., barracuda [Sphyraena sp.]
havai, n., sago plantation
havia, n., heron
hede, n., ant
he’e, inter., where. Ro he’e? Where are
you?
hege, n., scabies
hegebitu, n., tinea
hehe, n., light. Hivioi hehe mea ka
do’u. The sunlight is good today.
hepato, n., ear
hepu, n., 1. earth, soil, ground. 2. world
hepukere, n., island (lit. ‘piece of
land’)
hepuvipa, n., worm (lit. ‘earth snake’)
hele, n., dance
hia, adv., very, a lot
hiabau, n., type, kind. I’a hiabau mere
ro ro iraramoi aike. You can’t trust
that kind of person.
hi’a’e, n., space. Nimoiti tuiai hi’a’e
huna ka. The space between us is
big.
hiamo, n., engagement gift. [Note: The
gift, for example Kina shells, is
given to the parents of the bride.]
hiamo, v., fight
hiavoara’iai, n., war (lit. ‘fighting and
killing’)
hiba, n., crocodile
hihua, adj., sharp. Kai’a hihua a’ai ka.
Sharpen a knife.
hi’i, n., underwear
himihia, adj., own, self. Nu himihia
motoi ididi ka. He has to build his
own house.
hini, dem., here; there. Na hini oito
o’u! Come over here!
hinibauha, adv., (var. himbauha), in
that manner. [Note: In rapid speech
the form becomes himbauha.]
hio, n., run, race
hi’o, n., meat, flesh
hioi to!, interj., hurry up!
hipai, n., flying fox
hipi, n., (pl. hipihipi), 1. root. See:
hivi. [Note: Roots of big plants like
trees.] 2. bark.
hipo, v., ashamed, shy. Mere kekei hipo
a’ai kaumo. The children are shy.
hipura, n., clothing, covering. Mo irio
hipurai do’ou duoduoi nivoru’o
vaka. I washed my dirty clothes this
morning. [Note: Can be used for
clothes, sheets, etc.]
hipura nira, n., (sewing) needle
hiri, n., sago trade. Epuito hivioi ta
nimo naniaioi hiri divai podau
vadio umo. In times gone by our
ancestors used to go on sago trade
journeys. [Note: The Urama people
used to go to the Moresby area to
trade sago for clay cooking pots.]
hiro, adj., lots, plenty, more
hito, n., shoulder bag. [Note: Made of
sago leaves.]
hiva, adj., (pro. [hi:va]), beautiful
Hivatuau, n., gecko. See: hiva, tua, baibu’u. [Note: Considered a smart, beautiful lizard.]

Hivi, n., (pl. hivihiivi), 1. vein. See: tamahivi. 2. root. See: hipi. [Note: Roots of small plants like grass and bamboo.]

Hivio, (pl. hiviohivioi), 1. n., sun. 2. day. [Note: Used with days of the week, e.g. Mondi hivioi ‘Monday’.]

Hivioioroi, n., sunrise
Hivioioruoi, n., sunset
Hiviotuiai, n., midday

Hu’a, n., tusk. See: bomohu’a huuia, n., rainbow
Huhu, n., fly
Huna, adj., big, wide
Hunu, n., chin
Hu’ono, n., crab hole
Hura, n., egg. Kokoro hura chicken’s egg. Mo hurai orotoho ka. My eggs smashed. w’ema hura turtle eggs. See: kimaihura

I - i

Ia, dem., that, there
Iaho’outi, v., (mid. iarahou’outi), count
Iamo, n., howl in agony. Nu temetemei ri iamo’a’ai ka. He’s howling in pain.

Iamohoho’o, v., shiver. Mo gu’obo niamohoho’o ka. I’m shivering with cold.

Ianai, adv., finally
Iapo, v., read
Iavi, n., oyster
Ibane, n., leech
Ibi1, n., molting crab. See: ibibi. [Note: Molting crabs are defenceless; this is the source of ibibi ‘weak’.]

Ibi2, v., (pro. [i:bi], iter. ibiti), pack. Ro do’ou odau a’ai ka ri ro ha’oi ibi ra. You are going to go today so pack your bag.

Iibibi, adj., weak, soft [Note: used for people]

Ibo, v., plant. Mo pa’iai ta taitui nibo ka. I’m planting yams in the garden.

Ibodio, v., (var. ibomai), smell. Mo o’apoi nibodio ka. I can smell a flower. Mo dui ibomai ra! Take a sniff of my cooking!

Idabuaia, v., 1. put together. 2. engage. Ni ro niti atidabuaia kaumo. They are
engaged (which was witnessed by others).

idabuaidu, n., wedding
idebi, v., 1. weep, cry. 2. mourn, grieve. Idebi emidio kaumo. They are at a funeral. [Note: Used to describe a funeral; i.e. ‘a mourning’].

idia, v., put, place
idiai, v., walk up. [Note: from a river bank or beach.]

ididi, v., (freq. iditi), build. Ni niro ka moto iditi ri. They want to build (a number of) houses. [Note: The frequentative form can be used for plural objects.]

idiidi, adj., (var. idi), black

idimai, v., (pl. idiom), take out. Mo ro umiai pani niroi ta nidimo ka. I’m taking the leaves out of the pot.

ido, v., drink

ido', vclitic., dl, dual
idomai, n., (dl. idomaioiti), eye
idomai garasi, n., eyeglasses
idomaiobo, n., tear (lit. ‘eye water’)

idomai, v., (punct. idomai), arrange, fix, tidy. Nanai idomai ra! Tidy up (a couple of things)!

ihiai, v., die. See: aihiai

ihiei, v., sell. Mo ro uhoi nihiei ka maketi ta. I’m selling fish at the market.

iho, v., eat. See: uho

i'i, aux., become. Mo ro umuo ni‘i ka I know for sure. Ro umuo vi‘i ra. You knew it for sure.

i'iro, v., live. Mo aini'i ro ka. I’m alive.

ika, n., shellfish
ikahoro, n., shell (lit. ‘shellfish bone’) 

ikoko, n., nail. [Note: for building.]


imaro, v., (var. ima'o, iter. imarutiti), shout. Mo iamoi nima'o ka mahu irai ta ainoru'uai ka. I screamed out because I chopped myself with an axe.

imaubo, v., walk. Mo ainimaubo ka motoi to. I’m walking home.

ime, n., crab

ime'edai, v., (var. eme'edei), win, get. Ro orioi avime'edei ra? Are you winning the game?

ime'ede, v., collect, choose. [Note: Also to gather fruit from the ground rather than to pick from the tree.]


imehebua, v., (iter. imihebuti, mid. aieremhebua), 1. kiss. Niti aitimehebuti kaido. 2. sniff. Nu o'apoi imehebuti ka. She’s sniffing a flower.

imini1, adj., slow. Dui itai pauo ka, nuri ro imini to itai ka. Cooking sago is hard work, so you have to cook it slowly.
imini2, n., mind, thought. Imini hato piraromo nu ro inamo wate ata a'oi ka. In her mind, she was thinking whether she, you know, would say something to me.
imini to, interj., slow down!
imo'a, v., spit. Nu gahe imo’a vadio ka. He often spits.
imodo'iai, v., pray. Nimo tanamotio ta nimehebuti kaumo imodo'iai ri. We’re kneeling in church to pray.
imumuo, v., (punct. imumuai), fly

inai, conj., but

inamo, interj., (var. inamoi), like, you know. See: dohobo

io'a, n., leave. [Note: To leave something somewhere.]
ioi, v., squeeze. Mo ro du iioi ka. I'm squeezing the sago.
ioro, v., climb. Iroroma imagauriai nu'a ata ioro ka. Iroroma jumped up and climbed into a tree.
ioropoio, adj., last. ioropoio purai last week. See: oropoio
itoi, n., boil
ipi, n., back. [Note: back of body]
ipo, n., grouper
ira, n., axe
irahio’uti, v., be full, overflow. [Note: For example, in reference to the container for juice when sago is being processed (i.e. iri).]
iraromai, v., remember
iraromo, v., think. Mo ainiraromo ka ro hobou a'o ka. I think you're talking nonsense.
iraromoi, n., belief, faith
ire1, conj., too, with, and. Go’otai irei uhoi ire disi ga'u ato iviovia ka iatu’uti ka. You put the coconut and the fish into one dish and you mash them.
ire2, det., that. ire na that thing.
iri, n., sago container. [Note: Used to collect sago juice.]
iridini, n., motor
irihati, v., (pl. iririhati), hit. Tarakai ro bomoi iririhati ka. The truck has hit the pigs.
irio, adj., dirty. irio mere kekei dirty children.
ita, adv., must, have to. Nu ro Gino du ita ema’ai ra. S/he must give Gino some food.
itai, v., (ben. emitai), cook. [Note: Includes various methods such as frying, grilling, etc.]
itiva, n., (var. ikiva), coconut husker
itu’a, n., comb
ivi, n., string. [Note: Can also be a clothesline.]
ivioro, v., (ben. emevio), take up. Nu go’otai ivioro ka. He’s taking up the coconuts. See: ioro
ivobudioi, v., leap up. Nu uro vati ta aiha ivobUDIO ka nu vade orovai ta. He got up at once when he heard her voice. See: obua
ivohi’idio, v., (ben. omohi’idio, imohi’idio), gather together. Nimo ro go’otai nivohi’idio kaumo. We’re gathering the coconuts together in one place.
voto, v., (ben. imovoto), hunt down. Pomo mere ro bomoi o bu’i nai ivotoi ka. The hunter hunts down pigs or wild animals.

K - k

ka1, part., prs
ka2, conj., and
kai’a, n., knife
kaka, n., bailer
kaka’api, n., spider
kaka’api moto, n., spider web (lit. ‘spider house’)
karahudi, n., spear
kateni, n., box, carton
kaupu, quant., few, some
kaupubai, quant., very few. [Note: Fewer than kaupu.]
kava obo, n., kava
kavaia, n., wind
keihi, adj., (var. keihibo), little, small. See: merekeihi
keihibo, adj., narrow, small
keihiboito, adv., quietly
keito, interj., thank you
keitoka, adv., thanks a lot
kekai, adj., close
kema, n., necklace
ke’o, n., spear. [Note: A small spear with three points that can be shot from a bow.]
ke’ohura, n., spearhead (lit. ‘spear egg’)
kerakera, adj., (var. kera), left (hand)
kere, n., (pl. kerekere), piece
kerere, n., trouble. *Nupa mo abeai kerere ata ro apo’a ka.* Maybe my father is in some kind of trouble.

keresini, n., kerosene

keta, n., sleeping mat

keveke, n., mask. [Note: Traditional mask worn in ceremonies, woven from cane and very tall.]

kiauka, interj., (var. kauka), enough!, stop it!

kika, n., story. *Mo kika nemaduo!* Tell me a story!

kikio, n., bird

kimai, n., fishing tackle

kimaihura, n., hook (lit. ‘fishing egg’). *See: hura*

kiva’iva, adj., (var. kivakiva, kiva), curvy, bent

koiko, n., lie

koimo, n., cup

koimohotu, n., coconut shell (lit. ‘cup shell’)

kokoleti, n., chocolate

kokoro, n., chicken

kokoro bamu, n., chick (newborn chicken)

komo, n., camp

komu, adj., (pl. komukomu), short, old. *Gema hia igohuti aike, nupa komu aibo.* Don’t boil for long, maybe a little while.

komubo, adj., short, very short

konau, n., rope

kopara, n., copra

kopi, n., coffee

koro, n., grasshopper

kotini, n., cotton thread

kuku, n., stick

kurukuru, n., grass

kutu, n., smoke, cigarette. *Nu kutu emadia!* Light a cigarette for him!

ma= vclitic. purp, in order to. [Note: Used to express intention in purpose clauses.]

ma’ata, n., mouth

mabe, n., medicinal creeper. [Note: The leaves are used in a poultice to draw out pus.]

mabia, n., (mabiamio), big sister

mabo, n., armband. [Note: Traditionally a form of money of less value than the kina. Armbands were part of the bride price.]

mabu1, n., root, origin. [Note: Also in the sense of family origins.]

mabu2, conj., because. [Note: *mabu*, like *nuri* (‘so, therefore’) is clause initial, but may not be sentence initial.]

magani, n., wallaby

mai’a, n., mullet sp. [Note: A small species caught for bait.]

maketi, n., market

mama, pron., both. *Ubi ro niti aipidabuai mama umo.* The people both arranged their marriage.


mamio, n., women. *See: obo*

mamu, n., (pl. mamio), mother.

mamui, n., sheep. [Note: Probably a loanword from Motu, with biblical reference.]

maniota, n., cassava [*Manihot esculenta*]. *See: rapia*

mareta, n., pandanus

masisi, n., match(es). [Note: for starting fires]

mate, n., seedlings, shoots

maua, n., suitcase

mauai, n., (pl. mauamio), brother. [Note: This is the “special” brother who leads traditional events; can be older or younger.]
mea, adj., (var. mia), 1. good. 2. well, healthy. *Mo mea ka.* I am well.
memiho, adj., 1. bad. 2. hurt. *Mo memiho nere’a ka.* I feel hurt, upset, offended.
mere, n., (pl. ubi), person
mere behe, n., (pl. buhebai), girl
merehio, n., (pl. ohiobai), boy
merekehi, n., (pl. merekeke), child
merekeke, n., (var. merekeikei), children
mereki, n., plate
mereotei, n., childbirth
minimini, n., bees, honey bee
miri1, n., kina. [Note: traditional shell money, worth more than mabo.]
miri2, n., mopping cloth. [Note: cloth for mopping up water in a canoe.]
mo, pron., 1s, I, me
mo’a, adv., not. *Obo ate baketai ta huna hia mo’a kehibo aibo.* Do not overfill the bucket; just put a little water in.
modobo, mod., can
modobo, adj., enough. *Ro iho dau modobo ka?* Have you had enough to eat?
moho, n., coconut husk
moni, n., money
moto, n., house
motoi ubu, n., roof (lit. ‘house roof’)   motoiohui, n., roof (lit. ‘house top’)
mudebe, n., nail. [Note: Fingernail or toenail]
muduabia, n., mother’s brother. [Anth: Maternal uncles have a special status in Urama society. They give the firstborn child their first hair cut in a ceremony and are then feasted with.]
mudumamumu, n., mother’s sister-in-law
mudumere, n., sister’s child
muho, n., hair
muko, n., fire
mukoh’opii, n., ember
mukuru, n., pufferfish
mumu, n., fan. See: umumu
mumuo, n., shaking, earthquake. *Hepui mumuo ka.* The earth is shaking.
mupuru, n., red berries
mura, n., seam. [Note: edge of clothing, threads at end.]
muramura, n., medicine

N - n

n-, vpref., 1, first person agreement
na1, n., (pl. nana), thing
na2, dem., this, here. [Note: Never occurs after the noun.]
na’ata, n., (var. nata), something. *Mo na’ata ma a’oi ri.* I want to say something. See: ata. [Note: Compare with ata na ‘another thing’.]
nahia1, adj., elderly
nahia2, adj., ready. *Nupa turei nahia ka.* Maybe the taro is ready.
nahini, adv., here
nahi’o, n., bait. *Nimo gaugaui piniohi raumo nahi’oi ri.* We caught prawns for bait.
nahua, n., song
na’i, n., tiger prawn [*Penaeus monodon*]
naia, n., earring. [Note: Traditional earrings made of a dog’s teeth.]
nakomu, n., (pl. nanakomukomu), container (lit. ‘little/old thing’). [Note: e.g. bucket.]
nanepa, n., lantern
nakomu, n., (pl. nanakomukomu), container (lit. ‘little/old thing’). [Note: e.g. bucket.]
nama, adv., 1. when. 2. at this point. *Mo nama na!* I’m here!
namu, n., (pl. namio), big brother
namona, n., lantern
namia, n., (pl. naniaioi), 1. great-grandparent. 2. ancestor
natato, n., (var. na ata tato) nothing. *I’a mere na ata tato umuoi haka.* That person knows nothing at all. *Mo na ata tato ka.* I have nothing.
nato, n., (pl. natonato), footprint, trace, track. Mo imei natoi ponobodo ra ita aiha peneve’a ra. I followed the crab’s tracks until I found it.

na’u, inter., what. Ro na’u va’o ra? What did you say?

na’uri, inter., why. Ro na’uri vo’u ra? Why did you come?

ne, n., excrement
ne ahu, n., constipation (lit. ‘hard excrement’)
ne oboobo, n., diarrhoea (lit. ‘soft excrement’)

neduahe, n., (dl. neduaheti), twins
ne’e, n., end. [Note: The leftover end of a sago tree trunk that isn’t processed, or the end of the coconut shoot that is still in the shell.]
ne’eida, post., (var. ne’eita), from nemoto, n., toilet (lit. ‘excrement house’).

nemotoi haita ro? Where is the toilet?

netoa, num., (var. netua), two
ni, pron., 3p, they, them

niavapo, n., (pl. niavamio), little sibling. [Note: can be for younger brothers or sisters.]

nibi, pron., 3tr, them three

nibo^1^, adj., (pro. [ni:bo]), heavy
nibo^2^, 1. n., smell. nibo mea a good smell. adj., 2. smelly. uho nibo a smelly, rotten fish. See: ibomai.

nika, n., papaya, pawpaw

nimio^1^, pron., 1p, we (all)
nimo^2^, n., louse

nimo vati hunai, n., village chief. [Note: Can be used for Prime Minister.]

nimohoro, n., nit (lit. ‘louse bone’) nimoibi, pron., 1tr, we three nimoiti, pron., 1dl, we both nipa, n., nipa palm [Nypa fruticans] nira, n., (hypodermic) needle

niro^1^, n., stomach
niro^2^, n., love

niromama’e, adj., angry
niti, pron., 3dl, they both

nituo, adj., dead

no’a, n. 1. rock. 2. mountain. [Note: As there are no hills or mountains on Urama or nearby, there are no proper names for them.]

nu, pron., 3s, he, she, it
nu’a^1^, n., 1. tree. 2. stick. 3. wood
nu’a^2^, n., (pro. [nu:ʔa]), room

nu’aete, n., (pl. nu’aectete), branch
nu’ahura, n., seed (lit. ‘tree egg’)

nu’atama, n., tree bark (lit. ‘tree skin’)

nuato, adv., on condition, while. Mo o’ui ta nuato odaui na’ai kaido orohoi. I’ll come on condition that we both go for a spin.

nuha, adv., at that time
nupa, adv., maybe

nupu, n., corner, edge

nupui ta, post., bottom. Mo dui pani nupui ta nemede’a! I’ll leave my dinner at the bottom of the pan (for later)!

nuri, adv., so, therefore. Nu gimo ka nuri odau vaka gimo motoi to. He is sick so he went to the clinic.

O - o

o, interj., yes

o’a, v., (pl. i’a), be located. Nai meaha o’a vati ta eidai ka! You’ve knocked over something that was put in a really good place!

o’apo, n., flower

o’apuai, v., (mid. oro’apuai, pl. i’apuai), touch, hold. Nimoiti ro o’apo ni’apuai kaido. We’re both holding flowers. Ro eme oro’apuai ra! Straighten your skirt!

obai, v., carry. mere obai carry a child. [Note: ‘carry a child’ can sometimes mean to give birth]

obo^1^, n., 1. water. 2. fuel. iridini obo engine fuel.
obo, n., (pro. [o:bo]), 1. woman.  2. wife.  I'a nu obo ka. That’s his wife.

obo oru’oi, v., wash, swim (lit. ‘water wash’.  [Note: One can also wash in the rain: vihai ta oru’oi.]

obobo, v., (ben. omobobo, iter. iobobotuti, pl. iobobo), dig. Oboguri iobobotuti! Dig lots of wells! See: bobo

obodiio, v., (pl. ibodiio), chase.  Hiba ro nimoiti nibodiio ka.  The crocodile chased us both.

obodidio, v., (pl. ibodidio), chase.  Oboguri iobobotuti! Dig lots of wells! See: bobo

obodidio, v., (pl. ibodiio), chase.  Hiba ro nimoiti nibodiio ka.  The crocodile chased us both.

obodo, v., (mid. orobodo, pl. ibodo), follow.  Mo ro ubi nibodo ka. I’m following the people.  Mo ro ni didimoi ta norobodo ka. I was following right behind them.

obodiro, n., water bottle

obodo, v., (mid. orobodo, pl. ibodo), follow.  Mo ro ubi nibodo ka. I’m following the people.  Mo ro ni didimoi ta norobodo ka. I was following right behind them.

obodo, v., (mid. orobodo, pl. ibodo), follow.  Mo ro ubi nibodo ka. I’m following the people.  Mo ro ni didimoi ta norobodo ka. I was following right behind them.

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omotidio, v., wait. Mo ro Karika nomotidio ka. I’m (standing around) waiting for Karika. [Note: Has a sense of standing and waiting.]

omuduhi, v., (pl. imuduhi), bark at. Umui mo nomuduhi ka. The dog’s barking at me. Umui aimuduhi kaumo. The dogs are barking.


omurai, v., take off, remove. hibatamai omurai skin a crocodile. hipurai omurai take off your clothes.

omurai2, v., (pl. imurai), cover. hipura imurai fold up the bed sheets.


one, n., sago grub [Rhynchophorus ferrugineus]. [Note: Sago trunks are left out so that these grubs will grow in them. They are then harvested and eaten.]

onioni, n., onion

ono, n., urine

o’o, v., (iter. io’uti, pl. io’o), carve, make, shave. Nu gopei io’uti vadio ka. He often carves statues. [Note: Has a sense of standing and waiting.]

o’o2, interj., no

opihiai, v., burn. Raisi aiopihiai’ai ka. The rice is burnt.

opio, v., (pl. ipio), hide. Nimoiti bu’i goroi ta nipio kaido. We’re both hiding in the bush. [Note: Can also be used transitively.]

opiova, v., (pl. ipiova), hide. Mo moni pirai goroi ta nipiova ka. I’m hiding my money under the pillow.

opoio, v., (mid. oropoio), finish. Mo bukai iapoi do’ou duodoui oropoio vaka. I finished reading the book this morning. See: ioropoio

opui’a, v., (mid. oropui’a), beat up. Ni himiha ro oropui’a kaumo. They’re all beating each other.

ora, n., blood

oraora, adj., (var. ora’ara), red. See: verevere
ori, n., cloud
orio\(^1\), adj., 1. young, new. 2. raw. uho
orio raw fish.
orio\(^2\), v., (pro. [orio:]), play. Mere
kekei oroi aiorio kaumo. The
children are playing a game.
oroi, n., game
oriona, n., (pro. [orio:na]), plaything,
toy (lit. ‘new thing’)
oroi, n., game
orio, adj., right, true. Oroha gaboi
oda ka. You’re going the right
way. Mo ro oroha kika araduo
na’ai ka. I’m going to tell a true
story.
orohi, n., go around, visit. Mo tauni
orohoi nodau ka. I’m going for a
spin around town.
oroi ‘i, v., drag, slide. Pei himiha
oroi ‘i ka. The canoe is sliding along (i.e.
on mud). [Note: Also to describe
how a snake moves.]
oroiioi, n., life
oromouti, v., overflow, vomit. [Note:
Used of containers for sago juice.]
orooro, adj., 1. thorny. n.
orou, v., (pl. irou), sleep, lie down.
Motoi ubui orou pusi aveve’a ra?
Did you see the cat lying on the
roof?
orovai, v., hear, believe
orovidio, v., listen. Mo ro radio
norovidio ka. I’m listening to the
radio.
oruo, v., (var. o’uo), go down. Obo
oruo. The tide went down.
oru’o, v., wash. [Note: Only used for
imperatives]
oruro, v., burn oneself. Mo mukoi ta
himiha noruro ka. I burnt myself on
the fire. See: ururo
orurudio, v., (iter. iruruti), be closed.
Duarai aiorurudio ka. The door is
closed. See: urai
ota’auti, v., damage, ruin
oti, v., (var. otidio), stand. Ro ro i’a
merei hinita oti ta aveve’a ra? Do
you see the man that is standing
there?
отиодай, v., (ben. omотиодай, pl.
itiodai), send. Mo ro diata titi
ponотиодай ra Mosbi ito. I sent a
letter to Port Moresby some days
ago.
ото, n., (pro. [o:to]), sago pounder
ото ра ту ра ти, num., twenty (lit. ‘feet
and hands both’)
ото’а, v., (pl. itо’а), stand up. Rio itо’а
uno! You guys stand up!
отохийа, v., (dur. otohio, iter. itоhiiti,
pl. itоhийа), tie, weave. Mo ketati
nitоhийа (mama) ka. I’ve woven both
baskets.
отоhийити, v., bandage. Mo ro nu umai
hipura kere ta notоhийити ka. I’m
bandaging his wound with a piece o
of cloth.
отоhийивои, n., birthday
отоho, v., (mid. orотоho), break. See:
cheбия
отоi, v., (iter. iотuti, pl. iотоi), 1. give
birth. Mamui ro nedоaheti iото ka.
The mother gave birth to twins
2. lay. Wa’emамамаui ro hurai iотuti
vaka. The turtle laid lots of eggs.
отоmai, v., (mid. orотоmai, pl.
ioтоmai), pull out of the water. Oboi
arui ri dububai ro pei iотоmai
kaumo. Because the tide is high the
men are pulling up the canoes.
отоmu, v., (pl. itоmu), teach, guide.
Mamui ro merekekei itоmu ka. The
mother is teaching her children See:
ционм
отоmuдеbe, n., toenail
отоо, n., (dl. otoоти), leg(s). 2. foot
отoро, n., mirror
отото, v., pound. Mo ro otoи ta dui
nototo ka. I’m pounding the sago
with a sago pounder.
o’u, v., 1. come. aux., 2. dfut
оубua, v., (punct. оубуа, pl. iоubua),
get up. Mo mereikekei uro vati та
ioubuai kaumo. My children have got up out of bed.

o’uai, adj., coming. o’uai purai, bunoi the coming week, year. See: o’u

ova’ati, v., work. Nimoiti ahuha nova’ati kaido. We’re both working hard.

ovabai, v., (ben. omovabai, pl. ivabai), help. Mo nomovabai! Help me!

ovadaudio, v., 1. drift. Pei omoi ta povadaudio. A canoe was drifting on the river. 2. take, go away.

ovadidio1, v., sew. [Note: e.g. make clothes; mend a net]

ovadidio2, v., float. Hibai omoi ta ovadidio ka. The crocodile is floating on the river.

ovadomoai, v., (var. ovadomai, mid. orovadomai, pl. ivadomo), to stab, stick, poke. Nu geno’oi ovadomo ka. He’s poking at the rat (with something sharp).

ovaduoi, v., (pl. ivaduoi), talk, gossip about. Nu ro mo novaduo vaka duoduo hiai. He was talking about me early this morning. See: araduoi

ovad’uti, v., (pl. ivad’uti, iva’aduti), talk about. Ubi ro ni turanaioi iva’aduti vakaumono didimoi ta. People were talking about their friends after church. I’iro mere aibo ovad’uti kaumo. They are talking about him as if he were alive.


ovaharoi, n., start, origin. Aro’o nu’a gemai ahiai ri ovaharoi ka. He started chopping down that big tree.

ovaha’uti, v., (pl. ivaha’uti), chop. Mo erai nivaha’uti ka muko ma adiai ri. I chopped wood to make a fire.

ovahe’a, v., (iter. ivahe’uti, pl. ivahe), split. go’ota ivahe’uti kopara idedeai ri splitting coconuts to make copra.

ovaivai, v., (pl. ivai), try, make. Dui erara ovai ri na’ai ka. I’m trying to heat up the food.

ovaioi, v., make, cause. Ni ro nu niromama’e ovaidio vadio kaumo. They often make him angry.

ovoroho, v., (pl. ivoroho), lead. Aro’o umu gemai ro pivoroho vadio umu kekei. That big dog used to lead the smaller ones around.

ovoruo, v., (pl. ivoruo), pull down. Mo nanai nomovoruo! Take down my things for me! [Note: The plural form is used for e.g. bringing something down for more than one person.]

ovoru’o, v., (pl. ivoru’o), wash. Mo mere bamui detu obo novoru’o ra. I washed the baby yesterday. See: oru’o


ovore, v., (iter. ivotuti, pl. ivotui), weave

ovo’u, v., (ben. omovo’u, iter. ivovo’u, pl. ivovo’u), bring

ovoubuai, v., (pl. ivoubuai), lift. [Note: Used to express getting or helping someone to their feet. Not as high as a’atai.]

ovumo, v., (mid. orovumo, pl. ivumo), take into. Mo ro umui bu’i to nivumo ka. I’m taking the dogs into the bush. See: umo

P - p

p-, vpref., dpst, distant past.

pa’eai, n., garden

pahe1, adj., male

pahe2, n., (pl. pahepahe), leaf

pai, adj., famous

paimere, n., 1. famous person. 2. lord, god

paina, n., name

painaii, n., namesake. Nu mo painaii ka. She’s my namesake.

painapu, n., (pl. panepai), pineapple

paipai, adj., big. I’a nu’a paipai ro oti kaumo. There are big trees standing over there.

pakara, adj., light (in weight)

pakosi, n., scissors

pamo1, adj., rotten. du pamo rotten sago. nu’a pamo rotten tree.

pamo2, adj., ripe

pamopamo, adj., wet

pani, n., pot

papa, adj., slack, flat. Tarakai taimai papa ka. The truck tyre is flat.

pasoro, n., gift

pata, n., swamp

paou, n., labour, hard work. Ro ro nu paou ova’ati ema’ai ka. You’re giving him a hard job to do.

pa’uri, adj., thin, old. dubu pa’uri an old man. [Note: Elderly people are typically thin.]

pe, n., canoe

pepa, n., paper

pereini, n., plane. Pereini ro aiomo’a ka. The plane has just landed.

pidu, n., dugong (sea cow) [Dugong dugon]

pinati, n., peanut

pira, n., pillow

piripo, n., pants

pimu, n., cheat, theft

pimu a’ai, v., steal

piroha, interj., silence!

pi’u, n., (pl. pi’ui), star

poho, n., fish trap. [Note: Like a net, made of fibre from sago leaf stems; stretched across a stream.]

pomo, n., hunt. Mo ro bito pomo nodau ka. I’m hunting for possums.

popu, n., knee. Nu ro popu imihebia ka. He’s kneeling.

potoi, n., upstream. Mo ro potoi to nodau ka. I’m going inland/upstream.

pu’o, n., mouth. See: ma’ata

pupuo, adj., tough, strong

pupuotato, adj., 1. weak. Mo ro pupuotato mere peneve’a. I saw a weak person. 2. helpless, about to die

pura, n., week

pusi, n., cat
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**R - r**

ra, *part.*, pst. [Note: Used in verb phrase to form interrogatives, imperatives and various tenses.]

ragani, *n.*, (var. lagani), year. [Note: Loan word from Motu.]

raisi, *n.*, rice. [Note: Also called hura ‘ants’ eggs’.]

rapia, *n.*, cassava. See: maniota

rato, *conj.*, (var. ato, ra ato), if

rautu, *post.*, with

reke, *n.*, net

resa, *n.*, razor

ri, *post.*, about, concerning, for

rio, *pron.*, 2p, you all

rioibi, *pron.*, 2tr, you three

rioiti, *pron.*, 2dl, you both

ro, *pron.*, 2s, you

ro', *part.*, nom, nominative case marker

robu, *n.*, mullet

rohia, *n.*, (var. lohia), chief. [Note: Motu loan word.]

rubirubi, *adj.*, noisy

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**S - s**

saku, *n.*, bald

satauro, *n.*, cross. [Note: The Christian cross; from Motu]

se’a, *n.*, chair


siporo, *n.*, lemon, lime

situa, *n.*, store

sopu, *n.*, soap

suga, *n.*, sugar. See: topona

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**T - t**

ta, *post.*, at, by, with

taboro, *n.*, spade

taho’o, *part.*, fut.neg

ta’i, *n.*, price. *Nu oboi ta’i pima’ai.* He paid his wife’s bride price. [Note: Originally meant ‘bride price’.]

tainamu, *n.*, mosquito net. [Note: May be a Motu word.]

taitai, *adj.*, 1. near. 2. soon. *Nu taitai to ohi ‘ai aike!* Don’t bother him!

taitu, *n.*, yam

tama, *n.*, skin. [Note: Used to express a personal relationship with someone or something.]

tama bomo, *n.*, domestic pig

tama erara gimo, *n.*, fever (lit. ‘skin hot sickness’)

tamahivi, *n.*, vein (lit. ‘skin root’). See: hivihivi

tamaka, *n.*, shoe

tamamere, *n.*, relation (lit. ‘skin person’). [Anth: tama is used to indicate that something belongs or is related to you, e.g. tama bomo a tame pig.]

tamatuia, *n.*, waist, middle

tamu¹, *n.*, feather

tamu², *n.*, 1. fin. 2. wing

tana, *adj.*, sacred

tanamoto, *n.*, church (lit. ‘sacred house’)

taneka, *n.*, tank

ta’ota’o, *n.*, cutty grass

taraka, *n.*, vehicle

taravatu, *n.*, law, rules

taro, *n.*, (pro. [ta:ro]), drying rack. [Note: Used to dry or smoke something over a fire.

-tato, *vsuf.*, neg, not.

-tato, *suf.*, without, “-less”

tau, *adv.*, already, ever. *Nimoiti ro Gino tau peneva’a raido.* We have seen Gino (already).

tauni, *n.*, town

tauo, *adj.*, old

tauoha, *adj.*, early

tava, *n.*, mud skipper

tavahoro, *n.*, jaw

tawa, *n.*, (var. tava), cheek

Teiboro, *n.*, table

temeteme, *adj.*, 1. painful, sore. *Mo gi’epu temeteme.* I have a sore throat. [Note: gi’epu means heart,
but it is used in this context as well.] 
n., 2. pain. Temeteme memihohia ka. 
The pain is really bad.
tepai, n., basket. [Note: A temporary 
basket woven from Nipa palm leaves.]
tere, n., 1. black palm. 2. flooring. 
[Note: Black palm wood is used for 
flooring.]
-ti, suf., (var. otī), both
tiai ta, post., (var. tiai da, tuiai da), 
between. See: tuiai
ți’iño, adj., mucous
ți’inogimo, n., cold (illness)
ți’inoobo, n., snot. Mo tı’inoobo ka. 
I have a runny nose (lit. I am snotty).
tinitini, adj., naked
tiratira, adj., rough. Tuiai oboi tiratira 
hiaha o’a ka. The sea is very rough 
(with breaking waves).
tiro, n., mat. [Note: Floor mat made of 
pandanus leaves.]
titi, adv., always, often. Mo maketi to 
nodau titi vadio ka. I always go to 
the market.
titi2, n., design. Pei titi edidiai. I 
painted designs on the canoe.
titima, n., ship. See: vaape
 arbitrary, to. See: oito
toe, adj., afraid, frightened, fearing. Nu 
toehi’a ka tuniha nanaito. He’s 
afraid of everything.
toia, n., dry season
tomo, n., button
to’o, adj., 1. lots. 2. full. Nu ma’atai du 
to’oi rau tu’u vadei a’o ka. He’s 
talking with his mouth full.
topi, n., lump. [Note: sago lumps (du 
topi) are used in cooking.]
topo, adj., sweet
topona, n., sugar (lit. ‘sweet thing’)
toti, adj., (var. totitoti), sticky. Du toti 
es’ediai ra! Mix up some sticky 
sago! [Note: Variant totitoti means 
‘very sticky’]
toto, n., balcony, platform
totomu, n., advice. Abiai ro merei 
totomu ovaidio ka. The father gave 
the child advice. See: otomu
toto’obe, n., tongue
tu, n., 1. arm. 2. hand
tua, n., lizard
tuhaha, adj., (var. tuaha), empty, bare. 
I’a merei kimai vati ta tuhaha o’u 
ka. That person is coming back from 
fishing empty-handed.
tuhi’a, n., right hand. [Note: hi’a has 
the sense of ‘real’, so this means the 
‘real hand’.]
tu’i niroi, n., palm, inside of hand.
tui, n., sea, ocean
tuiai, n., (var. tiai), middle. Mo motoi 
mututu atai da otdio ka. My 
house is (standing) in between two 
others. [Note: tiai da is used as a 
postposition.]
tumi, n., mushroom. [Note: Grown on 
sago compost.]
tumudebe, n., fingernail
tumuna, adj., untamed. tumuna bomo 
wild pig. [Note: Prenominal only. 
Of people it can mean unruly and 
disobedient.]
tuniha, quant., all
tu’o, n., ashes, dust
tu’otu’o, n., mist, haze
turana, n., (pl. turanaioi), friend
ture, n., taro
turomo, n., storm, hurricane
tuto’o, adj., handful
tutu, adj., long, tall

U - u

uame, n., spoon, ladle
uamu, n., (pl. uamio), husband
ubau, n., noni tree [Morinda citrifolia]. 
[Note: The fruit is used in traditional 
remedies.]
ubi, n., people
ubu, n., swelling, bump
uburo, n., basket, bag
ubuubu, adj., bumpy
udumo, adj., blunt
uho₁, n., fish
uho₂, v., (iter. ihotuti, pl. iho), eat
uiia, n., (pl. uiiaio), cassowary
[Casuarius casuarius]
uma, n., wound, sore
umabu’omo, n., scar
umo₁, v., go into. bu’i to umo go into the bush.
=umo₂, veltic., tr, pl
umu, n., dog
umumu, v., fan. Mo ro mumui ta mukoi numumu ka. I’m fanning the fire with a fan.
umunimo, n., flea (lit. ‘dog louse’)
umuo, v., know. Mo ro nu umuo ka. I know him. Mo umuo Ginaui tutu mere ka. The Ginau I know is a tall man. [Note: defective verb which does not take first person agreement or tense markers.]
uodi, v., (pl. iruodi), pour. Obo ererai koimoi ta uodi! Pour hot water into the cup!
upi, n., shoot
urai, v., close, cover. Situai aiurai ka. The store is closing. Situai aiorurudio ka. The store is closed.
See: orurudio
ure¹, n., sugar cane
ure², n., cough. Nu ure a’aituti vadio ka. He’s always coughing.
urehipi, n., phlegm (lit. ‘cough spit’)
urioabea, n., god (lit. ‘spirit father’)
uriotato, adj., shocked. Mo uriotato novai ka hibai eve’ai ta. I was shocked when I saw the crocodile.
urita, n., octopus
uro, adj., asleep. Nu uro ka. He’s asleep.
ururo, v., be cooked. Raisi tau ururo vaka. The rice is ready / already cooked.
ut’a, v., lie down. Nu oro uta’a ka. She is asleep.
utumo, n., neck
u’umai, v., (pl. iriumoi), bury. Nimo turanai gabidi vati ta u’umai na’ai kaumo. We will bury our friend in the cemetery.

V - v

v-, vpref., n1, non-first person agreement
vade, n., (var. wade), 1. word. 2. language. See: bogobogovade. [Note: Also used for conversation and news.]
vaudevade, n., (var. wadewade), discussion, meeting
vadio, 1. part., hab. adj., 2. usual. vadio ubi the usual people. vadio vati the normal place.
vaivai, n., mango
vari, n., (var. wari), 1. laugh. 2. joke. Mo vari na’ai ka! I’m joking!
varupi, n., potato, sweet potato
vati, n., place
vativati, n., anywhere
vato, adj., (var. wato), dry. Patai vato ka. The mangroves are dry.
veiraveira, adj., orange. [Note: The colour of immature coconuts.]
vene, n., meeting house. [Note: Originally the men’s longhouse; now open to all.]
vera, n., method, steps
vere, n., red paint. [Note: Made from a nut (not betel).]
vi’a, n., porridge. [Note: made of sago.]
vibu, n., charcoal. Vibui itai. The charcoal is burning (cooking).
viha, n., rain. Viha keihi ro orurudio ka. A light rain is falling.

vihai, conj., while. Niti ro bomoi ovaredio vihai… while they were both carrying the pig…

vihaihivioi, n., rainy season

vio, n., sand, sandbank

vio, n., shout. Vio a’ai ka. He’s shouting.

vipa, n., snake

viamo’o, n., whistling. Nu nahuai viamo’o ta abodo ka. He’s whistling a song.

vovo, n., stand. [Note: A stand for processing sago when harvested.]

3. English-Urama finderlist

A - a

about, almost aibo
about, concerning hapuoi
about, concerning, for ri
accident arai’iai
admirable, be admired aiaro
adopt ahurai
advice totomu
adze dape, dapera
afraid, frightened, fearing toe
after didimoi ta
afternoon, evening dohoi
all tuniha
already, ever tau
always, often titi
ancestor nania
anchor anegai
anchor, park odudio
and ka
angry niromama’e
be angry and swear ema’o
ankle hairo

ant hede
anywhere vativati
approach ohii’iai
arm tu
armband mabo
arrange, fix, tidy idomo
arrive eredea
arrow wahumo
ashamed, shy hipo
ashes, dust tu’o
ask aho’o
ask, inquire arato
asleep uro
at, by, with ta
at that time nuha
at this point nama
axe ira

B - b

back (body part) didimoi; gimini; ipi
backbone giminihoro
bad memiho
Lexicon

bag  ha’o
bail out  ahi’oi
bailer  kaka
bait  nahi’o
balcony, platform  toto
bald  saku
bamboo  wadu
banana(s)  dubai
to bandage  otohiti
bandicoot  wana
bank  (savings)  banekai
bare  tuhaha
bark (of a tree)  hipi
bark (of a tree)  nu’atama
bark at  omuduhi
barracuda  hauto
barramundi  gidobu
basket  tepai
basket, bag  uburo
beach  davarai
beat  ododoi
beat up  emaruti; opui’a
beautiful  hiva
because  mabu
become  i’i
bed, sleeping place  gitora
bees, honey bee  minimini
before  epui ta
begin  ovaharo
behind  didimoia ta
belief, faith  iraromoi
belt  bidibidi
beside  erehei ta
betel nut  goe
between  tiai ta
bicycle  basikoroi
big  gega; gema; paipai
big, wide  huna
bird  kikio
birthday  otohivioi
to bite  adedeai
black  ididi
black magic, sorcery  ebiha
black palm  tere
blind  idomaitato
blood  ora
blow  ohudidio; ohuduti; omoduhuti
blowfly  gura
blunt  udumo
boar’s tusk  bomohu’a
boil  ioto
boiling, hot  ogohuti
bone  horo
book  buka
both  mama
bottom  bare; nupui ta
bow  ga’e
box, carton  kateni
boy  merchio
boys  ohiobai
brain(s)  epuiiti’inoi
branch  nu’aete
bread  beredi
break  ehebia; otoho
break into  abe’emai
break open  abe’ea
breast  amo
breast milk, milk  amoihi
breath  hora
bridge  wapai
bring  ovo’u
bring out  ovohu’o
broom  epe
brother  mauai
brother (older)  namu
bubble  gomohobobo
bucket  baketa
build  adoro; ididi
build for  emi
bumpy  ubuubu
burn  aradi; opihi’iai
burn oneself  oruro
bury  u’umai
bush  bu’i
but  inai
butcher  ohuti
butterfly  babame’e; babao
button  tomo
buy, obtain  imidai

C - c

call  arahue; atohotai
camp  komo
can (modal) **modobo**
canoe **pe**
capsize **omuhoubiai**
carry **obai; ovaredio**
carve, make, shave **o’o**
carving, statue **gope**
cassava **maniota; rapia**
cassowary **uia**
cat **pusi**
catch **ohiai**
catfish **atu**
cemetery **gabidivati**
centipede **amotoba**
chair **se’a**
change **evehe’eai**
charcoal **vibu**
chase **obodidio**
cheat, steal, theft **piro**
cheek **tawa**
chest **gomo**
chick **kokoro bamu**
chicken **kokoro**
chief **rohia**
child **merekehi**
childbirth **mereotoi**
children **merekeke**
chin **hunu**
chocolate **kokoleti**
choke **a’oia**
chop **ovaha’uti**
church **tanamoto**
clan **haro’o**
clean, fix, tidy up **odomo**
climb **ioro**
close **kekai; omodoi’a**
close, cover **urai**
closed **orurudio**
clothing, covering **hipura**
cloud **ori**
cockatoo **aiau**
coconut **go’ota**
coconut husk **moho**
coconut plantation **gino**
coconut shell **koimohotu**
coconut husker **itiva**
coffee **kopi**
cold **gu’obo**
cold (illness) **ti’inogimo**
collect, choose **ime’ede**
comb **itu’a**
to comb **erehe’e**
come **o’u**
come out **ahau; ohu’o**
coming **o’uiai**
constipation **ne abu**
container **diro; nakomu**
continue, really **aiha**
to cook **itai**
be cooked **ururo**
cooking place, stove **ana’apu**
cooking plate **waia**
copra **kopara**
corner, edge **nupu**
cotton thread **kotini**
cough **ure**
count **iaho’outi**
to cover **atimai; omurai; omuruti**
cow **boromokau**
crab **ime**
crabbingstick **biko**
crabhole **hu’ono**
crawl **aredio**
crew **che**
crocodile **hiba**
cross **satauro**
to cross **abu**
cup **koimo**
curvy, bent **kiva’iva**
cut **ahiai; u’uai**
cutty grass **ta’ota’o**

**D - d**
damage, ruin **ota’auti**
dance **hete**
to dance **aramauti; oma**
dark **du’i**
daughter-in-law **etera**
day **hivio**
day before yesterday **diata**
dead **nituo**
defef **emume**
death **aihiai**
design **titi**
dew oveioboi
diarrhoea ne oboobo
die ihiai
difficulty bihaito
dig obobo; ogohuti
dirty irio
discussion, meeting vadevade
dish, bowl disi
ditch (dry) bobo
ditch, dry hole, empty well guri
do a’ai
dog umu
domestic pig tama bomo
don’t aihe
door duara
door (of house) biri
down odoi
drag, slide oro’i’i
dream hivo
drift ovadaudio
to drink idio
drown a’umo
dry vato; amai
dry season toia
drying rack taro
dry leaves gaga’o
dugong (sea cow) pidu

E - e

each one, every one ga’uga’u
ear hepato
early tauoha; dohaito
earring naia
earth, soil, ground hepu
eat iho; uho
eel debe
egg hura
ep elbow ebo; emo
elderly nahia
ember duhomo; mukohu’opi
empty gu’u
end ne’e
engage idabuai
engagement present hiamo
English bogobogowade
enough modobo

enough! stop it! kiauka
evening adimoi
excrement ne
eye idomai

F - f

face hoho
fall erepeduai
fall over omo’a
false, weak hobou
familiar, like dohobo
famous pai
famous person paimere
fan mumu
to fan umumumu
far awo
fast dohaito
fat gagi
father abea
father-in-law damuabea
feather tamu
feed, nurture ovoto
feel ere’a
fell e’ebo
female behe
fence wara
festive flowers geregere
fever tama erara gimo
few, some kaupu
field, clearing hau’i
to fight arai’iai; hiavo
fill ate; emate; ovia
fin tamu
finally ianai
find evea
fingernail tumudebe
finish opoio
fire muko
firefly enedu
firewood era
first epu
fish uho
fishing tackle kimai
fish trap gaho; poho
to flash eremabe
flea umunimo
flee odaudio
float ovadidio
flooring tere
flotsam gebe
flounder abeda
flower o’apo
fly huhune
to fly imumuio
flying fox hipai
foam auboigahe
follow obodo
food du
foot otoo
footprint, trace nato
forgetting dodo
friend turana
frog guagua
from ne’eida
fuel obo
full to’o, epe’e

G - g

game orioi
garden pa’eai
gather aidabuai
gather together ivohi’idio
gecko baibu’u; hivatua
get eidai
get angry and swear aha’o
get up oubua
gift pasoro
girl mere behe
girls buhebai
give ema’ai
give birth otoi
give way erchai
glasses idomai garasi
glue guhi
go odau
go around, visit oroho
go in odoro
go into umo
god urioabea
go down oruo
good mea
grandparent aramu

goodness, ahu
grass kurukuru
grasshopper koro
great-grandparent nania
green guagua tama
grouper ipo
gun ga’e
gut, clean emabeai

H - h

hair muho
half hapuo
halfway gaboipi
hand tu
handful tuto’o
handsome gahi
hang ohi
happy ge’i
hat hasi
he, she, it nu
head epu
heal ai’i
healing bedea
hear, believe orovai
heart gi’epu
heavy nibo
heel ebo; emo; hairo
help ovabai
helpless, about to die pupuotato
here na; nahini
here; there hini
heron havia
to hide opio; opiova
high aru; ohu
hip gema
hit irihati
hold (in hand) ohidio
hole goho
hook kimaihura
hot erara
house moto
how haiboi
howl iamo
to hug momomai
hungry duniro
hunt pomo
hunt down ivoto
hurry up! hioi to!
hurt memiho
husband uamu

I - i

I mo
if ato; rato
in the past aia
inflate omohuduti
in that manner hinibauha
island hepukere
isn’t it? ha

J - j

jail dibura
jaw dua; tavahoro
jellyfish dado
to joke vari
juicy ihi
jump imagauri

K - k
kava kava obo
kerosene keresini
kill, hurt ai’iai
kina miri
to kiss imehebuai
kitchen dumotoi
knee popu
kneel imehebu
knife kai’a
know umuuo

L - l

labour, hard work pauo
language vade
lantern nanepa
last ioropoio; wapo
later wapoi ta
to laugh vari
law, rules taravatu
lay otoi
to lead ovoroho
lead in ovodoi

leaf pahe
leap up ivobudoi
learn a’o
leave io’a; emehai; inato
leave open aoidio
leech ibane
left (hand) kerakera
lefthand hoboutui
leg(s) otoo
lemon, lime siporo
let go emehai
lick ohome
lid hoho
lie hobou; koikoi
lie down uta’a
life oroiioi
lift ovoubuai
light (in weight) pakara
light hehe
light (a fire) adiai
lightning berebere
like aibo
like, you know inamo
lime, white paint amia
limp imehebu
listen orovidio
little, small keihi
live i’iro
liver beru
lizard tua
located o’a
log aroiipi
long, tall tutu
look after, watch, look at arodio
look for oho
look back eremeteai
look like everai
lord, god paimere
lose atu’ai
lots to’o
lots, plenty, more hiro
louse nimo
love niro
low tide oboihi
lump topi
lungs beru papa
### M - m
- mainland: go’otohi’a
- make, cause: ova’dioi
- make, fix: ededeai
- malaria: gu’obogimo
- male: pahe
- man, male: dubu
- mango: vaivai
- mangrove: bana
- market: maketi
- mash up: atu’uti
- mask: keveke
- mat: tiro
- match(es): masisi
- maybe: nupa
- meat, flesh: hi’o
- medicinal creeper: mabe
- medicine: muramura
- meeting house: vene
- message: hivo’a
- messenger: hivo’amere
- method, steps: vera
- midday: hivioutiai
- middle: tuiai
- middle finger left hand: hoboututu
- might: eika
- mind, thought: imini
- mirror: otoro
- miss: aphemai
- mist, haze: tu’otu’o
- mix, stir, twist: e’ediai
- money: moni
- moon: ove
- mopping cloth: miri
- morning: duoduo
- mosquito: na’ati
- mosquito net: tainamu
- most: amia
- mother: mamu
- mother-in-law: damumamu
- mother’s brother: muduabia
- mother’s sister-in-law: mudumamu
- motor: iridini
- moulting crab: ibi
- mountain: no’a
- mourn, grieve: idebi
- mouth: ma’ata; pu’o
- mucous: ti’ino
- mudskipper: tava
- mullet: mai’a; robu
- muscular, strong: ebugama
- mushroom: tumi
- must: aiha
- must, have to: ita

### N - n
- nail: ikoko; mudebe
- naked: tinitini
- name: paina
- namesake: painaii
- narrow, small: keihibo
- nauseous: mamau
- near: taitai
- neck: utumo
- necklace: kema
- needle: hipura nira; nira
- net: reke
- new: oio
- newborn, soft: bamu
- next: goroi
- night: duo
- nipa palm: nipa
- nit: nimohoro
- no: o’o
- noisy: rubirubi
- noni tree: ubau
- nose: wodi
- nostril: wodigoho
- nostrils: gonogono
- not: mo’a; haka; -tato
- nothing: atanatato; natato
- now: do’ou

### O - o
- octopus: urita
- often: vadio
- oh! are
- old: tauo
- on condition, while: nuato
- one: ga’u; ga’ubo
- onion: onioni
only beha; hato
on top of ohui ta
open abe’emai; a’erai
orange veiraveira
orphan ogogami
other, again ata
other, some amia
ouch! ere
outside hau’i
overflow, be full irahio’uti
overflow, vomit oromouti
own, self himiha
oyster iavi

P - p

to pack ibi
paddle aibi
to paddle abidio
pain, painful, sore temeteme
painful, sore temeteme
to paint ohiauti
palm (of hand) tu’i niroi
pandanus mareta
pants piripo
papaya, pawpaw nika
paper pepa
parents-in-law damio
pass to each other eremehe’e
past p-
path, road gabo
peanut pinati
pelican gogora
people ubi
person mere
phlegm urehipi
pick, collect odo’o
pick, lift up a’atai
picture, painting urio
piece kere
pig, pork bomo
pig snout ganopa
pillow pira
pineapple painapu
pineapples panepai
place vati
plane pereini
plant aro; ibo
plate mereki
play orio
plaything, toy oriona
pool damo
porridge vi’a
possum, cuscus bito
post abo
pot pani
potato varupi
to pound ototo
pour ahu’odioi; uodi
to praise emarahue
prawn gauga’u
pray imodo’iai; omodo’ia
prayer, church service guriguri
pregnant dopi
pregnant woman dopiobo
prepare ododeai
price ta’i
protein naepu
puddle, pool dafo
pufferfish mukuru
pull down ovoruo
pull in emaivuti
pull, launch ovi’i
pull out of the water otomai
pull out, remove a’ubai
pus duho
push ohi’odidio
put, place idia
put together idabuai
put down, place ede’a
python, long snake hoia

Q - q

quietly everaito; keihiboito

R - r

rain viha
rainbow huhuia
raincoat hobo
rainy season vihaihivioi
rat, mouse geno’o
rattle gora
raw orio
razor resa
read iapo
ready nahia
red oraora; ora’ora
red berries mupuru
red paint vere
red emperor snapper haira
reed dudu
reef obono’a
to refuse ahu’uti
relation tamamere
remember iraromai
rest hora
return amaivai; ovaivai
rib guhoro
ribleaf gu
rice raisi
right, true oroha
righthand tuhi’a
rip off, remove ehe’uti
ripe pamo
river, pool omo
riverbank bara
river passage ebebeai
rock no’a
to rock eremehe’uti
roof motoi ubu; motoiohui
roof post haro’o
room nu’a
root hipi; hivi
root, origin mabu
rope konau
rotten pamo
rough tiratira
rub, wipe aditi
rubbish, waste horohoro
rule, custom, law bubu
run aruruti
run, race hio
rushing hovihovi

S - s

sacred tana
sad giepu
sago du
sago grub one
sago bag abia
sago container iri
sago plantation havai
sago pounder oto
sago pulp etune
sago stick duamo
sago trade hiri
sales trip diva
salt damera
sand, sandbank vio
sandfly buburo; buni’i
saw girigirinai
saw up ohuti
scabies hege
scale (of fish) bata
scar bu’omo; umabu’omo
school, education sikuru
scissors pakosi
scoop, ladle ga’ima
to scratch eve’iti
sea davarai
sea, ocean tuia
seagull aipau; damura
seam mura
see ai’a; evea; e’a
see oneself ere’a
seed nu’ahura
seedlings, shoots mate
select, point to apui
sell ihiei
send otiodai
sew ovadidio
shade du’i
shadow urio
shake amoho’o; omauti; ovomauti
shaking, earthquake mumuo
share erema’ai
shark, whale ome
sharp hihua
sharpen emehu
sheep mamui
shell ikahoro
shellfish ika
shinbone horoipi
shine aradi
ship titima; wapea
shiver *iamohö’o*
shocked *uriotato*
shoe *tamaka*
shoot *upi; aro*
shoots, young leaves *baribari*
short *komubo*
short, old *komu*
shortcut *ebebai*
shoulder *bena*
shoulder bag *hito*
shout *vio; imaro*
show, drum *gama*
sibling (younger) *niavapo*
sick *gimo*
side *bara*
silence! *piroha*
simultaneously *atumivio*
sing *abodo*
sister (older) *mabia*
sister’s child *mudumere*
sit *eme’ei*
skin *tama*
skinny, wasted *horokuku*
skirt *eme; wapa*
sky *aromo*
slack, flat *papa*
sleep, lie down *orou*
sleeping mat *keta*
slime (green) *guroo*
slow *imini*
slow down! *imini to*
slowly *everaito*
smell *nibo; ibodio; ibomai*
smelly *nibo*
smoke, cigarette *kutu*
smoke, steam *ahuta*
snail *gaima’u*
snake *vipa*
sneeze *asio*
sniff *imehebuai*
snot *ti’inoobo*
snout *ganogano*
so, therefore *nuri*
soap *sopu*
sweet *hobobo*
someone else’s *dubi*
something *na’ata*
something, another thing *ata na*
song *nahua*
son-in-law *emapua; emapua-abea*
soon *tainai*
sorry *giepu*
sound, noise *di amo*
space *hia’e*
spade *taboro*
speak *a’o*
spear *karahudi; ke’o*
to spear *emati’a*
spear, poke *amuai*
spearhead *ke’ohura*
spear shaft *dudu*
spend, throw away, waste *eheua*
spider *kaka’api*
spiderweb *kaka’api moto*
spirit *urio*
spit *gahe*
to spit *imo’a*
split *ovahe’a*
spoon, ladle *uame*
spot, pustule *gima*
sputum *gahehi pi*
squeeze *ioi; omomohi’iti*
stab *ovadomoai*
stairs *gabe*
stand *vovo; oti; otidio*
standup *oto’a*
star *pi’u*
start *emederai*
start, origin *ovaharoi*
stay *emidio*
steal *piro a’ai*
stick *kuku; nu’a*
to stick *ahoaiai; arateai*
stick on *ovateai*
sticky *toti*
stingray *hama*
stomach *niro*
store *situa*
storm, hurricane *turomo*
story *kika*
straight *gamo’o*
straighten out *eme’ivuti*
string *gigiho; ivi*
strongly *ahuha*
stupid, naughty avavo
sugar suga; topona
sugar cane ure
suitcase maua
sun hivio
Sunday gurigurihivio
sunrise hivioiioroi
sunset hivioioruoi
surprised hoa
swamp pata
sweat bua’ea
sweet topo
swell aupai
swelling aupai
swelling, bump ubu
swim imapeduo
swordfish gabora

T - t

table teiboro
tail wapo
take away ovame’ede
take, go away ovadaudio
take into ovumo
take, make go ovodauoi
take off, remove omurai
take up ivioro; ovidiai
take in ovodoroi
take off, remove ahu’eta
take out idimai
talk about ovaduo’uti
talk, gossip about ovaduo'i
tank taneka
taro ture
tea gebe hipi
teach, guide otomu
teach, show ematomudio
tear idomaiobo
teeth girigiri
tell araduo
tell about emaduo
tell, order, ask oduai
thank you keito
thanks a lot keitoka
that aro’o; ire; i’a
the =i

there i’a
they all ni
they both niti
thin, old pa’uri
thing na
think iraromo
thirsty oboniro
this na
this morning do’ou duoduo'i
thorn oro
thorniry, thorns orooro
those three nibi
throw ekedua
thunder guru
tie, weave otohiai
tiger prawn na’i
tinea hegebitu
tired, bored with ha’ima
tired, out of breath hora
to to
to one side hapuuito
to, towards oito
today do’ou
toenail otomudebe
together atuha; ga’uha
toilet nemoto
tomorrow doutu
tongs dubitu
tongue toto’obe
tonight do’ou duoi
too, with, and ire
tooth giri
toothache giritemeteme
top ohu
torch gaga’o
touch a’apuai
touch, hold o’apuai
tough, strong ahu; pupuo
town tauni
trading enevaro
tree nu’a
tree fungus babao
to trick ematuhia
trouble kerere
try, make ovai
try, taste emahibai
turn erehe’eai
turn off *odoia*
turn over *evehe’eai*
turtle *wa’ema*
tusk *hu’a*
twenty *oto ra tu ra ti*
twigs *eke’eke; ete’ete*
twins *neduahe*
two *netoa*
type, kind *hiabau*

**U - u**

under *goro*
underskirt *goroeme*
underwear *goropiripo; hi’i*
unripe, young, immature *gahuru*
untamed *tumuna*
upstream *potoi*
urine *ono*
usual *vadio*
uvula *bikobiko*

**V - v**

vehicle *taraka*
vein *ehume; hivi; tamahivi*
very, a lot *hia*
very few *kaupubai*
village *go’oto*
village chief *nimo vati hunai*
vomit *mamau*

**W - w**

waist, middle *tamatuia*
wait *omoti; omotidio*
wake up *oitorai*
walk *imaubo*
walk up *idiai*
walking stick *gana’u*
wall *baratei; biri*
wallaby *magani*
want *niro*
war *hiavoara’iai*
warm up *emebidio*
wash, swim *obo oru’oi*
wash, swim *obo oru’oi*
wasp *go’ario*
water *obo; ado’a*
water bottle *obodiro*
water well *oboguri*
watersnake *go’ototo*
watery *oboobo*
wave *aubo*
we (all) *nimo*
we both *nimoiti*
we three *nimoibi*
weak *pupuotato*
weak, soft (used for people) *ibiibi*
wear *orovio*
weave *ovotu*
wedding *idabuaidu*
week *pura*
weep, cry *idebi*
well, healthy *mea*
welt, bruise *bodomo*
wet *pamopamo*
what *na’u*
when *nama; hatihivio*
where *haita; he’e*
where to *hatitoi*
which *hati*
while *vihai*
whistling *voiomo’o*
white *bogobogo*
who *hotu; wotu*
why *na’uri*
wife *obo*
wild pig *bu’ibomo*
win, gain *aimidai*
win, get *ime’edai*
wind *kavaia*
window *winidai*
wing *tamu*
witchdoctor, healer *bedeamere*
with *rautu*
woman *obo*
women *mamio*
wood *nu’a*
word *vade*
work *ova’ati*
world *hepu*
worm *hepuvipa*
wound, sore *uma*
Y - y

yam taitu
year bunio; ragani
yellow catfish hahu’a
yes o

yesterday detu
you ro
you all rio
you both rioiti
you three rioibi
young, neworio
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