Tape: a declining language of Malakula (Vanuatu)
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Tape: a declining language of Malakula (Vanuatu)

Terry Crowley

Edited by John Lynch

Pacific Linguistics
Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies
The Australian National University
Special thanks

We wish to record our great debt to Professor John Lynch, who—at a time when his own work had increased after Terry’s death—worked on all four of Terry Crowley’s Malakula volumes to bring them to publication in 2006. We thank him most sincerely.

Pacific Linguistics Board
Canberra, March 2006
# Table of contents

*List of tables, maps and photographs*  
*Preface*  
*Acknowledgements*  
*Abbreviations*  
*Conventions in citing examples*  
*Photographs*  

## 1 Introduction
  1.1 Geographical background  
  1.2 Traditional neighbours  
  1.3 Recent history  
  1.4 Previous and present work on Tape  
  1.5 Tape and its linguistic relationships  
  1.6 Lexical entries and spelling

## 2 Tape–English lexicon

## 3 English–Tape finderlist

## 4 Tape texts
  4.1 Women’s tooth avulsion  
  4.2 Offerings to Tar  
  4.3 A devil  
  4.4 Trading saltwater  
  4.5 Murder over a debt  
  4.6 Becoming refugees from the Tirakh people  
  4.7 Escaping to Tautu  
  4.8 The decline of the Tape language  
  4.9 The last battle with the Tirakh people  
  4.10 The rock of the devil

## 5 Phonology
  5.1 Segmental contrasts  
  5.1.1 Vowels
5.1.1 Peripheral short vowels 89
5.1.1.2 Vowel length 90
5.1.1.3 Schwa 92
5.1.2 Consonants 100
5.2 Stress 104
5.3 Phonotactics 107
5.4 Morphophonemic rules 110
5.4.1 Vowel deletion 110
5.4.2 The treatment of \(-p\) 111
5.4.3 Deletion of \(\text{n}\) 112

6 Grammar 113

6.1 Nouns and noun phrases 113
6.1.1 Pronouns 113
6.1.2 Nouns 114
6.1.2.1 Nominal derivation 114
6.1.2.1.1 Nominalisation 114
6.1.2.1.2 Compounding 116
6.1.2.1.3 Reanalysis of \(*na\) 119
6.1.2.2 Possession 120
6.1.2.2.1 Indirectly possessed nouns 121
6.1.2.2.2 Directly possessed nouns 124
6.1.2.2.3 Membership of possessive classes 127
6.1.2.2.4 Prepositional possession 128
6.1.3 Noun modifiers 129
6.1.3.1 Non-numeral modifiers 129
6.1.3.2 Numerals 131
6.1.4 Pro-NPs 136
6.1.5 Relative clauses 137
6.1.6 Coordinate noun phrases 138

6.2 Verbs and verb complexes 139
6.2.1 Inflectional prefixation 139
6.2.1.1 Subject-mood marking 140
6.2.1.1.1 Initial subjects 140
6.2.1.1.2 Echo subjects 145
6.2.1.2 Mood-aspect 149
6.2.1.2.1 Continuative 149
6.2.1.2.2 Completive 151
6.2.1.2.3 Necessitative 152
6.2.1.3 Negative 153
6.2.1.4 Number 154
6.2.1.5 Inceptive 155
6.2.2 Object marking 156
6.2.3 Verbal derivation 158
   6.2.3.1 Transitivity 158
   6.2.3.2 Reduplication 160
6.2.4 Complex verbs and verbal modifiers 160
   6.2.4.1 Nuclear serial verbs 161
   6.2.4.2 Other verbal modifiers 163
6.3 Clause structure 163
   6.3.1 Verbal and non-verbal clauses 164
      6.3.1.1 Verbal clauses 164
      6.3.1.2 Non-verbal clauses 166
   6.3.2 Prepositional phrases 170
      6.3.2.1 Free prepositions 170
         6.3.2.1.1 E ‘(placename) spatial’ 170
         6.3.2.1.2 Elel(venu) ‘illative’ 172
         6.3.2.1.3 Uren ‘similitive’ 173
      6.3.2.2 Nominal prepositions 173
         6.3.2.2.1 Erenge- ‘(non-personal) spatial’ 173
         6.3.2.2.2 Ejêkhê- ‘(personal) spatial’ 174
         6.3.2.2.3 Ejuje- / enhêkhêrê- ‘beside’ 176
         6.3.2.2.4 Sêne- / jêne- ‘cause, purpose’ 176
         6.3.2.2.5 Ne- ‘part-whole’ 177
         6.3.2.2.6 Ra- ‘oblique’ 177
      6.3.2.3 Verbal prepositions 178
         6.3.2.3.1 (E)duen- / (e)duon- ‘accompanitive, instrumental’ 178
         6.3.2.3.2 En- ‘oblique’ 179
         6.3.2.3.3 Preposition stranding and instrumental shift 181
6.3.3 Other clause-level constituents 181
   6.3.3.1 Benefactive 181
   6.3.3.2 Non-benefactive constituents 182
      6.3.3.2.1 Locational forms 182
      6.3.3.2.2 Temporal forms 184
      6.3.3.2.3 Miscellaneous adverbs 186
6.3.4 Interrogative clauses 187
6.3.5 Noun phrase fronting 188
6.4 Multi-predicate constructions 188
   6.4.1 Auxiliaries 188
   6.4.2 Core-layer serial verbs 189
      6.4.2.1 Directional serialisation 189
      6.4.2.2 Manner serialisation 190
6.4.2.3 Quotative serialisation
6.4.3 Coordination
6.4.4 Subordination
   6.4.4.1 Time clauses
   6.4.4.2 Place clauses
   6.4.4.3 ‘Until’ clauses
   6.4.4.4 Conditional clauses
   6.4.4.5 Reason clauses
   6.4.4.6 Purpose clauses
   6.4.4.7 The subordinators te and g
6.5 The discourse function of ivin ‘go’

References

Tables
Table 1: Vowel contrasts
Table 2: Consonant contrasts
Table 3: Independent pronouns
Table 4: Possessive pronouns (edible)
Table 5: Possessive pronouns (chewable)
Table 6: Possessive pronouns (drinkable)
Table 7: Possessive pronouns (general)
Table 8: Possessive suffixes
Table 9: Subject-mood prefixes
Table 10: Realis paradigm for titing ‘speak’
Table 11: Irrealis paradigm for titing ‘speak’
Table 12: Irrealis paradigm for ivin ‘go’
Table 13: Realis continuative paradigm for titing ‘speak’
Table 14: Realis completive paradigm for metër ‘sleep’
Table 15: Object suffixes

Maps
Map 1: Pre-contact Tape language area and subsequent population movements

Photographs
Photograph 1: Some of the remaining Tape speakers (Tautu village, December 2000)
Photograph 2: Harry Rambe (August 2004)
Photograph 3: Elder Lui Harry (August 2004)
Photograph 4: Ephraim Joshua (August 2004)
Preface

This is one of four monographs on Malakula languages that Terry Crowley had been working on at the time of his sudden death in January 2005. One of the four, *Naman: a vanishing language of Malakula (Vanuatu)*, had been submitted to Pacific Linguistics a couple of weeks earlier, and the remaining three, including the current volume, were in various stages of completion. I was asked by the Board of Pacific Linguistics to prepare all four for publication, both as a memorial to Terry and because of the valuable data they contain.

Various sections of the manuscript contained notes by Terry along the lines of ‘this needs to be checked in the field’. Clearly, he was hoping that one more trip to the field and more time spent on going through his collected texts would sort out some minor problems, fill the occasional gap, and make his grammar as complete and accurate as possible. That last field trip will, of course, not eventuate. Given that it is unlikely that any other linguist will work on Tape in the near future, and taking into consideration also Terry’s strongly held belief that the results of field research should be made available as soon as practicable, and in a form useful to the speakers, I was asked to go through this draft and do some general editing and tidying-up for publication. In some cases, I have inserted a comment on something he had written, and these comments usually appear as footnotes in italics (signed ‘JL’).

Terry’s death was a great loss to linguistics in the Pacific, and a personal loss to his many friends and colleagues. He was probably the most active and productive publisher in the field of Pacific linguistics and, given that he was only 51 when he died, it seemed that he had many fruitful years in front of him. A full obituary appeared in *Oceanic Linguistics* vol. 44, no. 1, 2005, but a brief summary is given below.

Terry had a BA (First Class Honours) and a PhD from The Australian National University. He taught at the University of Papua New Guinea from 1979 to 1983, and was then appointed the founding Director of the Vanuatu-based Pacific Languages Unit of the University of the South Pacific. He left Vanuatu at the end of 1990 to take up a teaching post at the University of Waikato in New Zealand, where he remained for the rest of his life, being promoted successively to Associate Professor and then Professor.

His initial research interests were in Australian Aboriginal linguistics. However, his PhD research was on the Paamese language of Vanuatu—he first went to Paama in 1976—and thus began almost three decades of close and continuous association with Vanuatu and its languages and people. As well as Paama, he also had lengthy periods of fieldwork on Erromango and Malakula. He published widely on Paamese and Erromangan languages,
as well as on broader comparative issues, and at the time of his death was just getting started on a series of publications on Malakula languages.

Despite this amazing productivity, he was possibly even better known for his groundbreaking work on Bislama. He published a dictionary (in a number of editions), a reference grammar, and a history of the language, as well as numerous articles on various aspects of its history, vocabulary and structure. He even produced a University-level course on Bislama—written entirely in Bislama. He was involved in committees attempting to standardise the spelling system of the language, and also in publications and activities in relation to national language and vernacular education issues.

Terry had a passion for languages and for linguistics which was evident not only in his teaching but also in many of his writings. In particular, he was concerned that the results of his research should, wherever possible, be made available not only to other professional linguists but also, in an accessible form, to speakers of the languages and to other ni-Vanuatu who might be interested. This book, his fourth lengthy description of a Vanuatu vernacular, is published at the same time as *Naman: a vanishing language of Malakula (Vanuatu)*, *The Avava language of central Malakula (Vanuatu)*, and *Nese, a diminishing speech variety of northwest Malakula (Vanuatu)*. He has left Oceanic linguists and the Vanuatu people an amazing legacy.

*John Lynch*
University of the South Pacific
Acknowledgements

My interest in the languages of northern Malakula began somewhat unintentionally. During 1995, while John Lynch, Malcolm Ross and I were toying with the idea of producing the survey volume *The Oceanic languages*—published as Lynch, Ross and Crowley (2002)—I approached a speaker of Neve’ei, Joemela Simeon, who was then studying at the University of Waikato in New Zealand, with the idea of gathering enough grammatical information on this previously undescribed language so that a sketch could be incorporated into that volume. Joemela was agreeable, and the sketch was eventually published as Crowley (2002a).

Another student from Malakula who also was studying at the University of Waikato, Lensi Samuel of Tautu village, volunteered the information that his mother was a speaker of a language which she used with her friends when she did not want to be generally understood. He was unsure of the name of the language and he knew nothing of the language himself, though he was very keen for this language to be documented. This language turned out to be Tape, which is the subject of the present study.

I was awarded a small grant from the Endangered Languages Fund (administered through Yale University) to support a two-month salvage fieldtrip to central Malakula over the period November 2000–January 2001 to begin a survey of the linguistic situation in the area, and during this period I was able to gather some preliminary data on Tape, as well as some other languages. I undertook a subsequent visit in 2002 during which I was able to further document the Tape language, this time funded by a small grant from UNESCO’s project *Indigenous language revitalisation and preservation in Melanesia (and the Pacific)*. Final work on Tape has been carried out with the help of three years of support from the Marsden Fund administered by the Royal Society of New Zealand over the period 2004–2007. I would like to formally acknowledge the invaluable contribution provided by each of these funds to the success of this project.

I would like to thank Harry Rambe, Selen Bue, Ephraim Joshua and Elder Lui Harry from Tautu village for so enthusiastically providing information in the Tape language. Successful linguistic fieldwork requires much more than just people who are willing to provide linguistic information, and in this respect I would also like to thank Ansen André and Kemuel Harry for their interest in the conduct of my research, and for being so enthusiastic about seeing the results of this work made publicly available. I would like to offer special thanks to the Tape community of Tautu village for their role as enthusiastic and generous hosts during my various visits to their village. Numa Fred and Marshall Hoke of the Malakula Cultural Centre in Lakatoro also helped greatly by allowing me to charge the batteries of my laptop, my recorder and my camera.
Thanks are due to Jimmy Simeon, the Vanuatu Cultural Centre fieldworker from Vinmavis village, for his dedication overall as an arranger of meetings, explainer of facts, and companion on forays into villages other than his own. Thanks must also go to Ralph Regenvanu of the Vanuatu Cultural Centre for once again so expeditiously arranging for the relevant permits and visas. Jimmy Numan’s contribution in the form of mate’s rates at an otherwise unaffordable but very pleasant hotel during my various sojourns in Port Vila was also very much appreciated.

Terry Crowley
Hamilton, New Zealand
December 2004
Abbreviations

ACC  accompanitive
BEN  benefactive
CHAR characteristic
CHEW chewable possession
COMPL completive
CONT continuative
COP  copula
ED   edible possession
DEM  demonstrative
DL   dual
DRINK drinkable possession
ES   echo subject
EXCL exclusive
ILL  illative
IMP  impersonal
INCEP inceptive
INCL inclusive
INDEF indefinite
INST instrumental
IRR  irrealis
LOC  locative
MULT multiplicative
NEC  necessitative
NEG  negative
NONSG non-singular
OBL  oblique
PART part-whole
PL  plural
POSS general possession
PREP preposition
PURP purposive
REAL realis
REDUP reduplication
REL  relative clause
SG  singular
SIM  similitive
SUB subordinator
TL  trial
TR  transitive
1  first person
2  second person
3  third person
Conventions in citing examples

Examples are glossed using the abbreviations just presented, with morphological categories presented in small capitals and lexical glosses in ordinary type. Where there is a clear boundary between morphemes expressing separate categories, these are separated in glosses by means of a hyphen. For example:

\[ pëti-m \]
\[ \text{head-2SG} \]
\[ \text{‘your head’} \]

Where morphological irregularity or the existence of portmanteau forms result in unsegmentable morphologically complex forms, the categories involved are separated in glosses instead by means of a colon. For example:

\[ i-mekar \]
\[ 3\text{SG:REAL}-\text{work} \]
\[ \text{‘(s)he works’} \]

Where a lexical or morphemic gloss contains a word boundary in the English gloss, there is a joining full-stop to indicate that this corresponds to a single morpheme in the Tape original:

\[ nëkhaarët \]
\[ \text{stinging.tree} \]
\[ \text{‘stinging tree’} \]
Photograph 1: Some of the remaining Tape speakers
(Tautu village, December 2000)
Photograph 2: Harry Rambe (August 2004)

Photograph 3: Elder Lui Harry (August 2004)

Photograph 4: Ephraim Joshua (August 2004)
1 Introduction

1.1 Geographical background

Tape is a relocated language that is now spoken by only a handful of older people some distance away from their traditional homeland, which has been abandoned as a place of residence. The traditional territory of Tape speakers was an area of northwestern Malakula extending inland between the Lowisinwei River valley and across to the eastern bank of the Brenwei River to the south of a mountain called Pwitarvere. I have not been able to locate a mountain with this name on topographical maps, though from local information, this appears to correspond to the high peak labelled as Ndanarang which is located in this area. (See map.)

Although Tape traditional territory included a stretch of coast from Anuatakh to Lowisinwei—which gave people living in this area access to salt which they could trade with the Tirakh people—Tape speakers oriented their lives primarily towards the bush. This is reflected in this study in the fact that speakers today were unable to offer more than an absolute minimum of terminology relating to sea life, even though they have lived in the coastal village of Tautu for about eighty years.

Tape was originally the name for the area shown on the map where the language which is the subject of this description was originally spoken. There was reportedly no distinct name for the language as such, which was referred to simply as vengesien Tape ‘the language of Tape’. However, speakers of the language today—and other people of Tape descent who do not speak the language—have come to use Tape as the name for the language as well.

This language has been referred to elsewhere in print (Deacon 1934; Capell & Layard 1980:4; Tryon 1976) as Marakus, Maragus and Maragaus, which is correctly represented according to the spelling conventions adopted in this volume (and in other studies of languages of the area that are currently in preparation) as Maraakhus [maraɣus]. This is not a word in the Tape language at all. Rather, it is the name that was used to refer to Tape speakers by speakers of the Naman language of the Litzlitz area to the south. This name is based on the elements mar ‘person of (place)’ and aakhus ‘bush’ in that language.

However, Tape people retain land ownership in their traditional territory and some continue to make food gardens there.
Map 1: Pre-contact Tape language area and subsequent population movements.
1.2 Traditional neighbours

The Tape language was traditionally bordered to the west by the V‘ënen Taut (or Big Nambas\(^2\)) language, which was spoken along the coast from just west of Anuatakh. This language occupies a large geographical area of northwestern Malakula, and in terms of the number of speakers, it is currently the second largest language of Malakula (Lynch & Crowley 2001:68). The neighbouring group to the northeast of Tape territory spoke the Tirakh language.\(^3\) During the colonial era, they moved down to the coast and their traditional homeland is now unoccupied.

Another language group which traditionally bordered on Tape territory were the people of Lombal, whose language was known as Rutan.\(^4\) This language was traditionally located in the interior between Pwitarvere mountain and the modern village of Mae. Some of these people relocated in the 1920s to the offshore island of Uri, located immediately to the south of Uripiv, while others relocated to the mainland just south of present-day Litzlitz village. Eventually, the mainland site was abandoned, and the language was replaced in their new home on Uri by the Uripiv variety of the Northeast Malakula language. The last speaker of Rutan reportedly died in the 1980s, and there is no known published record of the language.

Another neighbouring language was reportedly known as Gëlo \([golo]\), which was spoken in the area around the junction of the vehicular roads from Lakatoro, Lambumbu and Unmet. Speakers of this language also relocated to Tautu, where the language was ultimately completely replaced by the Northeast Malakula language. This language was also lost without record and today’s descendants of Gëlo speakers all speak the Northeast Malakula language. Finally, spoken along the coast between the Lowisinwei River and Lambumbu Point was the language that is generally referred to now as Larëvat after the name of the single village where it is now spoken.

Although not traditionally immediately neighbouring languages, mention will also be made of the Naman and Neve’e languages since there is frequent reference to these

\(^{2}\) The name Big Nambas refers to the style of men’s clothing which was unique to this particular group of people. Men from other parts of Malakula traditionally wore a penis wrapper—known in Bislama (the English-lexifier pidgin/creole which is the major lingua franca in Vanuatu) as a nambas—which was attached to a belt with the testicles visible. Among the Big Nambas, however, the penis wrapper was considerably more elaborate and men’s genitals were completely covered. The term Big Nambas continues to be widely used on Malakula today even though traditional clothing has now been abandoned. This name is not a colonial imposition; rather, it is a direct calque into Bislama of traditional expressions such as \(Nu’av’av Bur\) in neighbouring languages (in this case, Neve’e).

\(^{3}\) This language was referred to in Lynch and Crowley (2001:80) as Dirak, this being the form of the name that was recorded initially from speakers of the Northeast Malakula language.

\(^{4}\) This name reportedly derives from the local word for ‘let’s go’. Languages in central Malakula are often named after shibboleths in this way. Thus, the Neve’e language that is now spoken in Vinmavis is named after the word for ‘what?’, while the Naman language of Litzlitz is named after the local expression of surprise. The same language is referred to by Tape speakers as the Navar language, named after the Naman expression \(navar\) ‘I say’.

\(^{5}\) Because the last location where this language was spoken was the island of Uri, this is often referred to locally as the Uri language, though it clearly did not originate from Uri island at all. The small population now living on the island of Uri speaks the Uripiv variety of the Northeast Malakula language. Ross McKerras, formerly of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, reportedly recorded a small amount of data in the Uri language but this information has been lost. Apart from the word \([rutan]\) ‘let’s go’, I have only been able to record the words \([martu]\) ‘person’ and \([rakəm]\) ‘crab’ in this language.
languages in this account of Tape. Naman was originally spoken in the area between Bushmans Bay, Lakatoro and Ameli, though it is now moribund, with just a small number of speakers scattered in various locations around central Malakula. Neve‘ei is an actively spoken language with a traditional territory located on the southern border of the Larévat and Naman languages. Its speakers are now concentrated in the village of Vinmavis.

1.3 Recent history

Central Malakula experienced some rather dramatic events in its early colonial history, dating from the development of the first European-owned copra plantations around the time of the signing of the Anglo-French accord which established formal government in Vanuatu in 1906. Some of this historical background is provided in O’Reilly (1957:27–28, 47) and Van Trease (1987:172–173). Combined with the evidence of oral tradition from the area, a picture emerges of sometimes cordial and sometimes brutal relationships between settlers and some of the indigenous peoples. Also, the effects of traditional practices of warfare were exacerbated by the acquisition of rifles by some groups, resulting in sometimes aggressive campaigns by one local group against another.

The Big Nambas people were traditionally a war-like people and, in the early twentieth century, they launched a series of armed attacks on their Tape-speaking neighbours. They reportedly killed over thirty people, eating some. To escape the depredations of the Big Nambas, people from the Tape area moved to a series of new locations in the interior within (or adjacent to) the eastern part of their traditional territory, as far as possible away from the territory of the Big Nambas. (The text in §4.7 mentions the names of several locations within their own territory to which Tape speakers initially moved, though I have not been able to locate these places on any map.)

However, the attacks continued and the Big Nambas were also joined in their attacks against Tape speakers by speakers of the Tirakh language to their northeast. In desperation, the entire Tape-speaking population abandoned their homeland and relocated in the 1920s to the modern village of Tautu on the coast opposite the offshore island of Uripiv, near modern Norsup, where they came under the protection of colonial authorities and Christian missionaries.7

They were, however, soon followed to the Tautu area by their traditional Tirakh neighbours, and relations between the two groups remained poor for many years. There was a final bout of violence between the two groups in 1949 which resulted in speakers of Tirakh resettling in the present-day village of Mae,8 which is located several kilometres from the coast not far from Tautu. Some speakers of Tirakh subsequently established the village of Bethel, located on the coast about halfway between Norsup and Pinalum. Other speakers of Tirakh also resettled directly from the interior homeland as a minority in the predominantly Northeast Malakula-speaking village of Orap, located on the coastal mainland just to the north of Wala Island.

When the original Tape refugees settled in Tautu in the 1920s, the coast of the mainland was largely unpopulated, as the local people preferred to live on the various offshore

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6 See Naman: a vanishing language of Malakula (Crowley 2006c)

7 Only two of those people who were born in the traditional homeland of Tape are still alive in Tautu today, both now in their eighties or nineties. One of these old men, Harry Rambe, provided a number of recorded texts in Tape, which form the basis of this study.

8 Tryon (1972:56) uses the name of this present-day village as the name for the Tirakh language.
islands of Uripiv, Atchin, Wala and Rano. Tautu village began its history as a predominantly Tape-speaking refugee settlement. Over the years, increasing numbers of people from nearby Uripiv settled among the Tape speakers in Tautu and there was considerable intermarriage. The village became linguistically mixed, with Tape speakers generally being bilingual in their own language and the Uripiv variety of the Northeast Malakula language. Few people from Uripiv living in the village, however, acquired a knowledge of Tape.

In the late 1960s, as nationalist sentiment in Vanuatu was beginning to develop in the run-up to independence in 1980, there were numerous land disputes in different parts of Vanuatu. Disputes between the people of Tautu and the neighbouring French-owned copra plantation at Norsup were particularly bitter (Van Trease 1987:174–179), with a number of outbreaks of civil disobedience. The condominium governments, in an effort to block the disruptive activities of politically active young men from Tautu, sent policemen from the offshore islands to break up demonstrations and to gather information on their plans and activities.

In response to this strategy, the land activists of Tautu addressed each other in Tape rather than the language of Northeast Malakula, in order to leave the colonial police in the dark. The Tape language at the time rapidly became a potent tool for keeping information secret from colonial authorities, as the only people who could understand it were the politically active groups from Tautu. The chief of Tautu at the time, seeing the value of Tape as a ‘private’ language that could be used to keep information from all outsiders, dictated that henceforth, Tape speakers in Tautu should no longer teach the language to their children. This was, he said, to ensure that the next generation of people from Tautu could not teach this secret language to any outsider, thereby ensuring its value to them as a secret language.

This was clearly a remarkably short-sighted decision. The Tape-speaking community complied with this edict—one of the more successfully implemented language policies anywhere in the world, it might be pointed out—and the result is that the 25-year old land activists of 1967 have now reached their 60s, and they are the youngest speakers of this now moribund language. More than half of the current population of Tautu identify themselves as originating from Tape, though the vast majority now are first-language speakers of the Northeast Malakula language, albeit with some features that are unique to Tautu, and know no Tape language at all. The total number of fluent speakers of the Tape language today is no more than ten or fifteen. There are reportedly also individual speakers of Tape living on the western coast of Malakula in what is now the Vënen Taut-speaking village of Anuatak, as well as in Lärevat.

There has been an ongoing dispute over land ownership in Tape territory which is now reaching its final stages, with people from the Tape community in Tautu regaining traditional rights over their land from Big Nambas usurpers. The question of language played a significant role in the litigation, with Tape speakers making a point of using their

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9 During the colonial era, Vanuatu—then known as the New Hebrides—was jointly administered by Britain and France in an arrangement that was known as the ‘condominium’.

10 These events are detailed by Elder Lui Harry in the text that is presented in §4.8.

11 Northeast Malakula in its various regional varieties now has the largest number of speakers of any language on Malakula (Lynch & Crowley 2001:68). In addition to having already replaced both the Lombal and Rutan languages, it has also nearly supplanted Naman in Litzlitz village (Crowley 2006c), and it is widely known by speakers of Tirakh, many of whom also perceive their language to be under threat from Northeast Malakula.
language in front of the Big Nambas defendants to clearly demonstrate their group distinctiveness.

There has been considerable interest among the Tape community of Tautu in seeing the Tape language documented and taught to young children, and this interest appears to have been strengthened by the current research project. Kemuel Samuel of Tautu, himself a partial speaker of the language, had recorded a small amount of material on paper before the commencement of my own work, and Ansen André, a school-teacher in the local primary school, is keen to incorporate Tape language material in the local curriculum.

1.4 Previous and present work on Tape

Lynch and Crowley (2001:88–89) indicate that Tape is among thirty-five languages of Vanuatu which were at that time almost completely undocumented. In fact, the only published source of which I am aware which relates to this language is a basic wordlist of about 200 items in Tryon (1976), where the language was referred to as Maragus.

The present study is very much a salvage description of a disappearing language. A linguistic fieldworker investigating a moribund language typically faces particular kinds of difficulties, and the present study of Tape has been no exception in this respect. Given that the Tape language is no longer actively spoken, it was necessary to contrive elicitation and recording sessions in a way that is not always necessary when a language is being used in a living speech community on a daily basis.

Given that the most confident speakers of Tape are now quite elderly, it sometimes proved difficult to clearly hear certain kinds of sounds. In particular, the distinction between /p/ and /v/, and even /n/ and /l/, proved rather difficult to hear. Perhaps not surprisingly, other distinctions such as the contrast between plain labials and labiovelars (§5.1.2) and the contrast between schwa and other vowels (§5.1.1.2) also proved difficult to hear consistently. Formal elicitation of paradigms often tested the patience of the predominantly elderly speakers, who could not imagine why a linguist would want to keep asking for what was perceived to be the ‘same’ word. It sometimes proved difficult to establish the need for exact translations on the basis of my prompts, which resulted in my notes for particular verbal paradigms containing randomly scattered forms from different tenses, or incorrectly attributed pronominal inflectional categories.

It also became apparent that it was necessary to carefully consider certain structural features in my corpus. In general, if a particular feature is found only sporadically in contrast to a competing pattern that appears to have a more general distribution, I have tended to place less weight in this description on the pattern that is less widely distributed.

Also, if a particular pattern is found only in my elicited corpus, while a different pattern is found exclusively in my textual data, I have taken those patterns that appear in spontaneous speech to more reliably reflect the competence of speakers. While the analysis of textual data in conjunction with elicited data is essential in the documentation of any language, it becomes especially important in the case of a moribund language such as this one.

To date, I have transcribed and analysed a total of ten fairly short texts in Tape, amounting to a total of about twenty minutes of speech (§4). This is still a substantially smaller textual corpus than I have been able to assemble and analyse for the Naman language. However, while Naman is also moribund, it has a somewhat larger number of confident speakers than is the case with Tape. Members of the Tape community tend to
look to a very small number of octogenarians who were born in ‘the bush’ and moved to the coast with the original migration in the 1920 as representing the best sources of information on the language. However, analysis of texts recorded from these older speakers often proved difficult, and one relatively long text simply could not be transcribed and analysed at all because the elderly narrator’s voice was too unclear for other speakers of the language to make out what he was saying, and his performance was too rambling for people to be willing to make the extra effort that would be needed for the transcription process.

In addition, speakers of Tape who were born on the coast after the original migration were sometimes reluctant to put themselves forward as linguistic exemplars, even though their speech was typically much clearer. While these younger speakers were able to speak confidently in Tape, some structural evidence from their texts can be presented in support of their claim to speak a somewhat impoverished form of the language. The relatively unusual echo subject construction described in §6.2.1.1.2, for example, appears frequently only in narrative texts produced by the oldest speaker who was born in the bush, while it is either rare or non-existent in parallel structural contexts in the speech of people who were born on the coast.

Another potential source of material to which I have not been able to gain access involves one speaker of Tape who is himself not of Tape ancestry. It is not uncommon in highly multilingual Malakula, especially among the older generations, for people to fluently speak one or more local languages other than their own. There is one old non-Tape man who learned to speak Tape in his youth through his close association with members of this community, but during recording sessions he was never volunteered as a potential story-teller, nor did he ever attempt to volunteer himself, even though he could often be seen pottering around in the vicinity of the area where recordings were being made.

A final issue which has affected the accumulation of a more substantial corpus of textual data involves the unique preferences of members of the Tape-speaking community. While linguistic analysis can proceed on the basis of essentially any kind of well-recorded spoken data, the small group of Tape speakers have so far limited themselves to recording textual data on topics related directly to Tape traditions and history. Although the people from whom I recorded data were familiar with a wide range of traditional stories, they were unwilling to record a story in the Tape language if that story ‘belonged’ to somewhere else.

With regard to elicited data, the material on which this study is based was elicited and discussed primarily through the medium of Bislama. Some data, however, was obtained on the basis of prompts in the Uriipiv variety of the Northeast Malakula language, this being the language which speakers of Tape now use much more frequently than their ancestral language. While I speak Bislama, I have no familiarity with the Northeast Malakula language, but when it was clear that my own prompts in Bislama were either not heard or not properly understood by an older speaker of Tape, they were then often passed on in Northeast Malakula by Kemuel Harry, Elder Lui Harry or Ephraim Joshua.

This study is organised somewhat differently from what some linguists may expect of a published account in that it follows the organisation of my previously published description of Ura (Crowley 1999). There, the first major section is devoted to the lexicon. The lexicon is followed by a collection of texts, which are followed by a discussion of the phonology and then the grammar. The reason behind this organisation is that people in
Vanuatu typically view the task of linguistic documentation primarily as a lexicographical task and secondarily as involving a compilation of texts. Most local people have little (or no) awareness of the need for phonological and grammatical analysis, and, if they do appreciate the need for this, would for the most part have little understanding of the technical terminology and analytical principles of modern linguistics. In order to increase the value of this study to local people, I have chosen to put towards the end of the book the material that is least likely to be of local interest—the phonology and grammar—and to place the material that local people are most likely to value—the dictionary and texts—at the beginning.

1.5 Tape and its linguistic relationships

Clearly, until much more data has been assembled on the languages of northern and central Malakula, and indeed until existing information has been carefully checked, much of what might be said about the historical relationship between Tape and other languages must remain tentative. While we have substantial grammatical information on V’ënen Taut (Fox 1979), Naman (Crowley 2006c) and Neve‘ei (Musgrave 2001), as well as a grammatical sketch of Northeast Malakula (McKerras 2000), and while we have modest lexical collections for V’ënen Taut, Naman and Neve‘ei, there is still no published lexical material available for Northeast Malakula. In addition, we have almost no useful lexical or grammatical information on the neighbouring languages to the north, i.e. Tirakh and Malua Bay.12 For the neighbouring Larêvat language, my own fieldnotes contain some lexical and a little grammatical information, but we are little better off with this language than we are for the Malua Bay language.

Of the various languages of central and northern Malakula, Tape is very clearly more closely related to V’ënen Taut than it is to any other language. Although there are very good reasons for not paying too much attention to the raw lexicostatistical figures presented in Tryon’s (1976) survey (Lynch & Crowley 2001:3), it is worth noting that the highest figures for cognate sharing with Tape involve his V’ënen Taut wordlists from Leviamp and Unmet. This is consistent with my own observations that Tape has substantially more in common grammatically with V’ënen Taut than it does with any of the neighbouring languages. The major grammatical features which uniquely link the two languages involve the following features of verbal inflectional morphology:

- The categories of dual and plural are morphotactically distinct from subject-mood prefixes (§6.2.1.4).
- There is a range of mood-aspect categories—including the continuitive, completive and necessitate— which are marked by means of prefixes which appear in a distinct morphotactic position between the initial subject prefixes and the following numeral prefixes (§6.2.1.2).
- Negation is marked by means of a single prefix, rather than discontinuously by means of separate prefixed and suffixed elements as in Naman and Neve‘ei (§6.2.1.3).

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12 Amanda Brotchie of the University of Melbourne commenced work on Tirakh in August 2004, so it is anticipated that a substantial amount of information on this language will become available. Crowley’s sketch of Nese, referred to in Lynch and Crowley (2001:82) as Vovo, has also been published in conjunction with this book – JL
• Indirect possession marks a difference between the possession of items for eating, drinking and chewing, whereas in other languages of the area, these categories have been merged into a single general category of indirect possession.

• Both V’ënen Taut and Tape have an echo subject prefix which replaces the full set of subject prefixes in particular syntactic contexts (§6.2.1.1, §6.4.3).

Although Tape and V’ënen Taut are close linguistic relatives, there are numerous points of lexical and grammatical contrast between the two. The two languages also differ phonologically in a number of significant respects. Perhaps the most immediately obvious difference is the complete absence in Tape of the typologically rather unusual apico-labial consonants of V’ënen Taut. The apico-labial s of V’ënen Taut correspond to the plain labials in Tape, though there is usually an associated correspondence in adjacent vowels between the low vowel /a/ in V’ënen Taut and a higher vowel in Tape. We therefore find correspondences between the two languages such as the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tape</th>
<th>V’ënen Taut</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mekar</td>
<td>ṇakar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meläγ</td>
<td>ṇalāγ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meteveren</td>
<td>ṇatayaran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>venu</td>
<td>yanu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pare</td>
<td>parei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deb</td>
<td>dap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nib</td>
<td>nap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lipäγ</td>
<td>lipäγ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another significant point of phonological contrast between the phoneme inventory of the two languages is the complete lack of labiovelar consonants in V’ënen Taut. In common with many other Oceanic languages, Tape maintains a contrast between plain labials and labiovelars. The labiovelars of Tape correspond to plain labials in V’ënen Taut, as illustrated by the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tape</th>
<th>V’ënen Taut</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mōči</td>
<td>məsi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mōliun</td>
<td>mlin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pərpar</td>
<td>prapar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vər</td>
<td>vr</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final major point of segmental contrast between the two languages is the absence in V’ënen Taut of the velar nasal. There has clearly been a wholesale shift of /ŋ/ to /n/, as indicated by the following correspondences between the two languages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tape</th>
<th>V’ënen Taut</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>naŋnas</td>
<td>nana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dəŋna-</td>
<td>drənna-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ləŋləŋ</td>
<td>lenlen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ŋəp</td>
<td>neŋ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.6 Lexical entries and spelling

In all sections of this volume apart from this introductory chapter and the discussion of the phonology in §5, forms are represented in a practical spelling system rather than in phonemic script in order to render this material as accessible as possible to interested members of local communities, and in particular to descendants of the original Tape people. This orthography has been designed on the basis of my own observations of local traditions of writing whenever possible, and in particular with conventions for writing the Northeast Malakula language (McKerras 2000), which members of the Tautu community are familiar with. The following particular points should be noted:

- The velar nasal is written as ng.
- The velar fricative is written as kh. (Another possibility to consider is h, given the absence of an /h/ phoneme in Tape. This would be consistent with the established V’ënen Taut orthography, and it would have the advantage of eliminating a digraph. The use of the digraph at this stage reflects a purely personal preference to allow for the maximum comparability of forms between Tape and other languages from which I have gathered data in central Malakula, such as Avava and Neve'ei, where there is a phonemic contrast between /h/ and /ɣ/.)
- The prenasalised stops are written with the plain stop symbols b, d and g.
- The affricate /cʃ/ is represented as j.
- The labiovelar consonants are distinguished from plain labials by means of following w.
- Long vowels are written as double vowels.
- The schwa is represented as ě.

Note, therefore, the following correspondences between phonemic and orthographic representations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phonemic form</th>
<th>Spelling</th>
<th>Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/kɔnɔk/</td>
<td>kënëk</td>
<td>‘I’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/lipɔɣ/</td>
<td>lipakh</td>
<td>‘dog’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/tirɔbɔb/</td>
<td>tirkhëbëb</td>
<td>‘wild’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/cɪrʊ/</td>
<td>jiru</td>
<td>‘seven’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/dɔlɛn/</td>
<td>dëlneng</td>
<td>‘his/her ear’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/nɪ:vɔɣ/</td>
<td>niivëkh</td>
<td>‘Malay apple’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/pɔrpar/</td>
<td>pwërpar</td>
<td>‘pig’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What follows is a brief discussion of the internal organisation of entries in the lexicon. Immediately after the entry is the word class specification in italics, for which the

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13 Linguists working on some other Malakula languages which have contrastive velar fricatives have reportedly opted for orthographic x to represent this segment. If such a practice is considered locally acceptable, this option might also be considered for Tape. However, the Vanuatu Ministry of Education has reportedly issued guidelines for the design of local orthographies that the symbols used should stick as closely as possible to the kinds of sound-symbol correspondences that people will already be familiar with in English, French and Bislama.
following abbreviations are used (with the cross-references indicating the section of the grammar where the main discussion of that word class can be found):

- adj. adjective (§6.1.3)
- adv. adverbial (§6.3.3)
- aux. auxiliary (§6.4.1)
- conj. conjunction (§6.4.3)
- int. interjection
- inter. interrogative (§6.3.4)
- loc. locational noun (§6.3.3)
- n. indirectly possessed noun (§6.1.2.2.1)
- nom. nominal (§6.1.2.1.1)
- npart. noun possessed in partitive prepositional construction (§6.1.2.2.4)
- ns. directly possessed noun (§6.1.2.2.2)
- num. numeral (§6.1.3)
- postmod. postmodifier (§6.1.3)
- prep. preposition (§6.3.2)
- pron. pronoun (§6.1.1)
- sub. subordinator (§6.4.4)
- svi. serialised intransitive verb (§6.2.4)
- svt. serialised transitive verb (§6.2.4)
- vi. intransitive verb (§6.3.1)
- vt. transitive verb (§6.3.1)

Primary and secondary senses in dictionary entries are introduced by numerals within a single entry, while homophones are marked by means of separate entries followed by superscript numerals. Example sentences for some items are included in italics, followed by an English translation in plain type. A considerably greater number of examples of lexical items within sentences—taken overwhelmingly from narrative texts—are provided in this lexicon than might ordinarily be expected for a dictionary. This is because of the precarious status of this language given that it is probably the last generation of speakers whose speech is reflected here.

A fairly typical entry, then, will look something like this:

**dui** n. 1. man 2. husband 3. person

_Envwër betitting ogi jënen mimin ikhëjpongen dui._

I just want to speak because the spirit used to kill people.

Compounds or idioms are entered as separate lexical entries, such as the following:

**dui bëte** n. sorcerer

**dui mit** n. Melanesian

**dui tërep** n. old man

_Dui tërep gi nëkh sen Masing._ There was an old man whose name was Masing.

**dui tërtërep** n. old men

_Eren dui tërtërep tetwo invwër inpantakhe tëvëlëkh, intakhe tëvëlëkh esar._ When the old men a long time ago wanted to marry women, they would take their wives.
Members of some word classes in Tape undergo obligatory inflectional marking as set out in §6.1.2.2.2 and §6.2.1. Verbs in the lexicon are entered in their unprefixed root forms (which normally only appear in a highly restricted range of structural contexts), while directly possessed nouns and suffixed prepositions are entered with the third person singular pronominal suffix -n.

The underlining of headwords indicates forms for which I have obtained good quality digital recordings. It is hoped that these entries will ultimately be linked in a digitised form of the lexicon to sound files which will allow people to click on these items in order to hear these words pronounced by speakers of Tape. Headwords which are not underlined have been transcribed directly from speech with no digital recording available.\footnote{Given Terry’s premature death, it is not known at this stage whether this linking will be able to be done. However, I have retained the underlining in the lexicon in case this turns out to be possible – JL.}
The following lexicon of Tape is exhaustive for the corpus that has been assembled to date. The total number of entries is just over 1100. Note that alphabetical ordering does not distinguish e and ê or k and kh. So, for example, belevêr is immediately preceded by bêlékhêsên and immediately followed by bêng isimêk.

A

asen ns. maternal uncle (mother’s brother)
asen netite ns. brother-in-law
atua n. god Inlot en atua eser. They prayed to their god.

B

bawos adv. day after tomorrow
bêbêtên ns. 1. navel, belly button
    2. swelling on tree trunk. Also bêtên.
bêj1 vi. (of bird, chicken) alight, settle
bêj2 vt. pick (fruit)
bêjîj vi. blunt
bêkh vi. short
bêkhêj vt. squeeze
bêlakhêj n. parrotfish
bêle vt. squeeze liquid out of (e.g. coconut)
bêlékhêsên ns. 1. shell (of something) 
    blêkhêsêmêtiu ‘coconut shell’ 2. cup
belevêr n. thunder Belevêr ijvot.
    It thundered.
bêng isimêk adv. once

bêngale n. cicada (generic)
bêngên ns. days after death (of someone)
    Bêngên ilêm enisi. It is five days since his death today.
bêni svt. do to death Inslikh dênvvin
    eies jere dênkhej bêni netên ar. They carried him on their shoulders and walked around up in the bush and then they killed that boy.
bêr1 vi. fart audibly
bêr2 adv. still, yet
bêrbêr n. sea hearse tree (Hernandia nymphaeifolia)
bêrdîmdim n. brain
bêri svt. split ljef bri. He split it with an axe.
bêrkha vi. bend
bêruj vt. break Enbêruj ne gi envwêr
    bekhej en lipakh. I broke the stick that I wanted to hit the dog with.
bêrvîn ns. uncircumcised penis
bês lêmên ns. fingernail. Also lil bêsên.
bêsên ns. finger. Also narêkh lêmên.
bête adj. forbidden, taboo. Also têbête.
Chapter 2

bëtel svt. around iling bëtel nèmakh.
He walked around the house.

bëtën ns.
1. navel, belly button
2. swelling on tree trunk. Also bëbëtën.

bëtnie n. ashes. Also nies nib.

bu vi. stink, stinking, putrid, rotten

buok n. water taro (Cyrtosperma sp.)

buos n. uncastrated boar. Also bëbëtën.

bëtnie n. ashes. Also nies nib.

buok n. water taro (Cyrtosperma sp.)

buos n. uncastrated boar. Also bëbëtën.

D

dang luo vt. pull out Povën iskadang luo

lun, ikivin ejikhën elakh esen, netên
dui gi emu nen ikëmes. If they do not
pull out her teeth and she goes to her
husband, her first male child will die.

dar pron. their (pl.) (edible)
darëp n. Indian coral tree (Erythrina
indica)
dartël pron. their (tl.) (edible)
daru pron. their (dl.) (edible)
de¹ n. blood. Also deen.
de² prep. edible possessive (‘of’)

deb n. 1. ground Dënlep net pwërpar
dënhko erenge deb. And they took
the piglet and tied it to the ground.
2. soil 3. land
ded pron. our (pl. incl.) (edible)
dédëni vi. 1. tell lies 2. vt. tell lies to,
lie to Idédëniđë. He lied to us.
dédënen ns. sap. Also nuon.
dédëng vi. afraid, frightened
dédëngen vt. fear, afraid of Idédëngen
khaavot. He is afraid of the European.
Netite idédëngenëk. The child is afraid
of me.
dedëtël pron. our (tl. incl.) (edible)
dedru pron. our (dl. incl.) (edible)
deen ns. blood. Also de.
dëling dëning n. earwax
dëlil vt. swallow Idëlim nëkhanien.
He swallowed the food.
dëlin ns. 1. voice 2. sound
dëling n. 1. ear 2. gill (of fish)
dëlo vi. 1. go slowly 2. svi. slowly
Ilingling dëlo. He walked slowly.
3. quietly Ititing dëlo. He whispered.
dëm vi. fall
dëmen¹ ns. oil found in flesh of sprouting
coconut

dëmen² vt. let, agree
dëmon num. used in counting teens,
decades and hundreds isngel dëmon itël
‘thirteen’, ingeltël dëmon iru ‘thirty-
two’, ingasngel dëmon isngel dëmon
isig ‘one hundred and eleven’
dëmot n. peace
den pron. his, her, its (edible)
deng vi. cook food on fire
dërap n. lesser yam (Dioscorea esculenta)
dërap po n. wild yam with thorny vine
which grows in bush
dëring n. 1. fungus growing on rotten
wood 2. mushroom
dëriu vi. burp, belch
devo n. new yam celebration
didos n. palm tree
didiven vi. sleep on back
dikio n. 1. chiton without shell 2. slug
ding n. mangrove
dip vi. heavy Iskedip. It is not heavy.
Kërëng idip? Does it feel heavy?
diwip  n. canoe tree (Gyrocarpus americanus)
doakh  n. native lychee (Pometia pinnata)
dok  pron. my (edible)
dom  pron. your sg. (edible)

Pomo dëlep kake dom duen melëkh nen duen buos nen. Come and take your yam with its kava and its pig. Betabëkh viakh dom. I will cook the taro for you.

duen  prep. 1. with Dënsëkh duen melëkh nen. We stood it up with its kava.
2. to. Also duon, eduon, edun.
duon  prep. 1. with 2. to
dui  n. 1. man 2. husband 3. person

Envwër bevwiri en kem ipërvi dënriu e venu esed. We are all from Tape. I want to say to you all how we escaped from our place. 2. at (place) Dënlënglëng venu esed e Tape dënno e Vëti. We left our place at Tape and came to Vëti. Eren mënvwër banjej waia ese khaavot e Jinarur lene, mënvin mënvêtir engere waia. When we were about to cut the Europeans’ fence at Jinarur over there, we went and stood at the fence. 3. to (place) Dënlënglëng venu esed e Tape dënno e Vëti. We left our place at Tape and came to Vëti. Dui gi eso invin e venu esar. People who were from far away went to their villages. 4. of (place) Vengesien e Tape. It is the language of Tape.
edeb  loc. down, below

deduon  prep. 1. with 2. to. Also duen, duon, eduon.
eduon  prep. 1. with 2. to. Also duen, duon, eduon.
edui  e nib  n. Ambrymese person
dui elo  n. coastal person
dui cut  n. inland person
dui lil  n. important man
dui mit  n. Melanesian

dui némon  n. boy. Also netite dui.
dui nur  n. warrior, fighter
dui tërep  n. old man Dui tërep gi nêkhsen Masing. There was an old man whose name was Masing.
dui tërtërep  n. old men Eren dui tërtërep tetwo inivwër inpantakhe tëvêëlëkh, intakhe tëvêëlëkh esar. When the old men a long time ago wanted to marry a woman, they would take their wife. Also dui têtërep.
dui têtërep  n. old men. Also dui têtërep.
duui vi. sleepy Mëten iduil. He is sleepy.
duon  prep. 1. with 2. to. Also duen, edun, eduen.

E
e  prep. 1. from Naakëd rivwi e Tape. We are all from Tape. Envwër bevwiri en kem ipërvi dënriu e venu esed. I want to say to you all how we escaped from our place. 2. at (place) Dënlënglëng venu esed e Tape dënno e Vëti. We left our place at Tape and came to Vëti. Eren mënvwër banjej waia ese khaavot e Jinarur lene, mënvin mënvêtir engere waia. When we were about to cut the Europeans’ fence at Jinarur over there, we went and stood at the fence. 3. to (place) Dënlënglëng venu esed e Tape dënno e Vëti. We left our place at Tape and came to Vëti. Dui gi eso invin e venu esar. People who were from far away went to their villages. 4. of (place) Vengesien e Tape. It is the language of Tape.
edeb  loc. down, below

ededuon  prep. 1. with 2. to. Also duen, edun, eduen.
eduon  prep. 1. with 2. to. Also duen, duon, eduon.
edui  e nib  n. Ambrymese person
dui elo  n. coastal person
dui cut  n. inland person
dui lil  n. important man
dui mit  n. Melanesian

dui némon  n. boy. Also netite dui.
dui nur  n. warrior, fighter
dui tërep  n. old man Dui tërep gi nêkhsen Masing. There was an old man whose name was Masing.
dui tërtërep  n. old men Eren dui tërtërep tetwo inivwër inpantakhe tëvêëlëkh, intakhe tëvêëlëkh esar. When the old men a long time ago wanted to marry a woman, they would take their wife. Also dui têtërep.
dui têtërep  n. old men. Also dui têtërep.
duui vi. sleepy Mëten iduil. He is sleepy.
duon  prep. 1. with 2. to. Also duen, edun, eduen.

ejëkhën  prep. 1. to (person) Jerete inlep ivin ejëkhën elakh sen. Only then did they take her to her husband. Invin ejëkhën mwêliun. They went to the chief. 2. with (person) Er gi inliek ejëkhën mwêliun inliek. Those who lived with the chief stayed behind. Imo iliek ejëkhën netên mwili. She came and stayed with her child again. 3. at (place of) Nuo isig ejëkhkëmem. There is a spring at our place.
eji  loc. here Vengesien esek imos eji. My story concludes here.
ejujen  prep. beside Lipakh imêr ejujen nêmakh. The dog is sleeping beside the house. Dui intiting ejujen nêmakh. The man is talking beside the house.
elakh n. husband Jerete inlep ivin ejëkhën elakh esen. Only then did they take her to her husband.
elel prep. location (‘inside, within, into’) Dui ilunuum elel nuo. The man dived in the river.
elelvenu loc. inside Invlin dënliek elelvenu. They went and lived inside. Këneék enliek elelvenu. I stayed inside.
elikh loc. before, in front Ivtir elikh enëk. She stood in front of me.
elo loc. 1. down (to the coast) Dënim elo erenge skul. We came down to the church. 2. on the coast Dëniar erenge skul elo erenge 1928. We arrived at the church on the coast in 1928. 3. south Nitëp iling elo. The wind came from the south.

elwen ns. nephew
emakh loc. home Mënmelet imo emakh. We returned home.
emel loc. to/in the meeting house Elple nib emel. Light the fire in the meeting house.
emu loc. 1. at the front, in front Intëkh emu levër. They knocked out that one at the front. 2. adj. first Povër iskadang luo lun, ikivin ejëkhën elakh esen, netën dui gi emu nen ikëmes. If they do not pull out her teeth and she goes to her husband, her first male child will die.
en1 pron. he, she, it Ipovwiri en en. He will say it to him.
en2 prep. 1. to (person) Envwër bevwiri en kem ipërvi dënruu e venu esed. I want to say to you all how we escaped from our place. Këpanwiri en netëkem ipadrëngdo vengesien esed mo diar enisi. You will all tell it to your children so they know our language up till today. Inlot en atua eser. They prayed to their god. 2. in (language) Bevwiri en vengesien esek. I will say it in my language.
en3 adv. and then Isngnen elel lib en inudi. They put him into the bamboo and then they ate him.
enir n. that one Sëkho gi dënmo erenge skul enir. That was the year that we came to the church. Vengesien esek ogi enir. That is just my story.
enisi adv. 1. today Këpanwiri en netëkem ipanrëngdo vengesien esed mo diar enisi. You will all tell it to your children so they know our language up till today. 2. now Enisi envwër bevwiri mwili vengesien isig en kem. Now I want to tell one more story to you all.
enivin loc. underneath, beneath
enkhëkhërën prep. beside Ivtir enkhëkhërëk. She stood beside me.
eple vt. light (fire) Eple nib emel. Light the fire in the meeting house. Beple nib gi poliec ebibëkh ejëkhën. I will light a fire which you will sit close to.
er pron. them (pl.) Er gi inliek ejëkhën mwëliun inliek. Those who lived with the chief stayed behind. Povër têvet gi ipivin ivëtir ejëkhën dui gi banvësvësien en er iporëng. If a woman goes to marry a man, she will teach it to them and they will hear it.
eren n. 1. time Eren levër George Kalkoa ivwër polis esen ipanmo. At that time George Kalkoa told his police to come. 2. sub. when Eren dui têrtërep tetwo invwër ipantakhe têvëlëkh, intakhe têvëlëkh esar. When the old men a long time ago wanted to marry a woman, they would take their wife. Eren mwëliun gi ivwër ipove nëbëng, ivëkhëj buos. When a chief wants to hold a ceremony, he will kill a pig. Eren gi ivwër ipokhëj dui e ilingling ivin ikhëj dui. When she wanted to kill somebody she would go and kill somebody. Eren mënvwër banjej waia
ese khaavot e Jinarur lene, mënvin mënveòir erenge waia. When we were about to cut the Europeans’ fence at Jinarur over there, we went and stood at the fence.

erengen nom.prep. 1. goal (‘to’) Dënmo elo erenge skul. We came down to the church. Itutuen erenge venu gi ipomo erengen nêbëng esen. He distributed it to the village that came to his ceremony. Ivìn erenge nuo levër. He went to that spring. 2. at (time) Dënìar erenge skul elo erenge 1928. We arrived at the church on the coast in 1928. 3. location (‘on, in, at’) Inkho erenge lib. They bundled them up on the bamboo. Iliek ogi erenge nêmakh esen. She just stayed at her house. Iskerngdo ipul tegi mwëli erenge nëbëng esen. He couldn’t write anything more in his book. 3. in (language) Ivòr ivwers ipòrëng povër bantinge tegi erenge vengesien ese këmem. He stood in order to hear if we said anything in our language.

eritël pron. they, them (tl.)
eru pron. they, them (dl.)
es inter. who? Es ivwër këpanjej waia ese khaavot? Who said you should cut the Europeans’ fence? Bivìn duen es? Who will I go with?
esakh loc. uphill, upwards Mënvin mënveòir erenge waia divin divin divin divin iar esakh lene. We went and stood at the fence as far as all the way up over there.
esar pron. their (pl.) Eren dui tèrtêrep tetwo inyüèr invantakhe tôvëlëkh, intakhe tôvëlëkh esar. When the old men a long time ago wanted to marry a woman, they would take their wife. Jere dënbeòkrap esar. They they just cleared their garden sites.
esartël pron. their (tl.). Also gesartël.
esaru pron. their (dl.). Also gesaru.
eses pron. possessive (‘of’) Intakhe divìn e nêmakh ese mwëliun. They took them to the chief’s house. Banlulo nêkhanien ese naakëd evi? Where will we plant our food? Also gesè, se.
esed pron. our (pl. incl.) Envwër bevwwiri en kem ipërvi dënriu e venu esed. I want to say to you all how we escaped from our place. Dënëlënglëng venu esed e Tape dënmo e Vëti. We left our place at Tape and came to Vëti. Netite esed itar iskanrëngdo vengesien esed mwili. Many of our children don’t know our language any more. Also gesed.
esedétël pron. our (tl. incl.). Also gesedétël.
esedru pron. our (dl. incl.). Also gesedu.
esek pron. my Vengesien esek ogi enir. That is just my story. Also gesèk.
esen pron. his, her, its Jerete inlep ivìn ejëkhën elakh esen. Only then did they take her to her husband. Inrap esen. They cleared a garden site for him. Also gesen.
eso loc. far away Dui gi eso invin e venu esar. People who were from far away went to their villages. Iliek eso en nêmakh. He stayed a long way from the house.
esom pron. your (sg.) Bejej mëtiu esom. I will cut your coconut. Also gesom.
esoweies loc. above, on top Insëkh ivìn esoweies. They stood it up on top. Mënjuv ivin esoweies mënveòr. ‘Oi!’ We shouted up there, ‘Oi!’ Nëmen ivtir esoweies erenge nêmakh. The bird is standing on top of the house.
etakh adv. 1. next, afterwards Ikëmes jere te gi etakh nen ikëbëkhjilëp. He will die and then the next one will just live. 2. behind Ivtir etakh enèk. She stood behind me.
etakhdo adj. last Nêbëng isig, injem luo isig divin divin iar e etakhdo. For each
day they would remove one until it reached the last one.

etbën ns. grandparent, grandfather, grandmother
etër loc. 1. there Etëkh etër divin divin divin imumu. It stayed there until it rotted. Imos etër. It ends there. 2. n. that Etër ogi envwër bevwiri en kem. That’s all I want to tell you.
etkhan ns. brother-in-law
etmen ns. father
etmen lil n. father’s elder brother
etmen vës n. father’s younger brother
eut inter. where? Povër tëvet gi ipivin ivëtir ejkhën dui gi banvësvësien en er iporëng. If a woman goes to marry a man, she will teach it to them and they will hear it.
evibëkh loc. near, close Ivin evibëkh ejkhën. He went close to her. Pomo evibëkh ejkhëk. Come close to me.
evren loc. outside, outdoors Imos, inmo evren. When it was over, they came outside. Pivin evren! Go outside! Netiti er imo evren erenge skul. The children have come out of school.

G
gesar pron. their (pl.). Also esar.
gesartël pron. their (tl.). Also esartël.
gesaru pron. their (dl.). Also esaru.
gese prep. possessive (‘of’). Also ese, se.
gesed pron. our (pl. incl.). Also esed.
gesédëtël pron. our (tl. incl.). Also esedëtël.
gesedru pron. our (dl. incl.). Also esedru.
gesek pron. my. Also esek.
gesen pron. his, her, its. Also esen.
gesom pron. your (sg.). Also esom.

The yams that they had stood up wouldn’t be touched. Ivul luo vengesien gi mëntiting en levër. He wrote down the things that we said to that one. Dui gi eso invin e venu esar. People who were from far away went to their villages. 2. headless relative clause marker Gi elakh esen tyeck adasketëkh lun, ikmelet divin nëmakëh gi ikantëkh lun. One who has a husband and her teeth have not been knocked out will come back to the house where they will knock out her teeth. Gi idaskivin ejëkhën elakh esen intëkh lun. One who has not gone to her husband will have her teeth knocked out. 3. where 4. complementiser Dui gi iskhe ivwiri en këmem gi banjej waia. Nobody told us to cut the fence.
gir n. that one Gir ogi envwër betinge këpanrëngdo. That’s all I want to say for you all to hear.

I
iar vi. 1. arrive, reach Dëniar erenge skul elo erenge 1928. We arrived at the church on the coast in 1928. Nëbëng isig, injem luo isig divin divin iar e etakhdo. For each day they would remove one until it reached the last one. 2. touch Eniar. I touched it. 3. go until Intëkh luo rivwi, inkhës divin divin ikear nit ikeren. When they had knocked them out, they danced on
and on until daybreak. Këpanvwiri en netkem ipanrëngdo vengesien esed mo diar enisi. You will all tell it to your children so they know our language up till today. 4. go as far as Mënvin mënvvëtir renge waia divin divin divin divin iar esakh lene. We went and stood at the fence as far as all the way up over there. 5. vt. touch Kake gi insëkhër ikskaniar. The yams that they had stood up wouldn’t be touched.

ij vi. cry Iij. (S)he cried.

ikhos adv. too much, very Tirakh er intutakah dui ikhos. The people of Tirakh were very bad to people.

il vt. slice

ilêm num. five

i'lilêm vi. do five by five, do in fives

inglem num. fifty

inglemëjüs num. sixty

inglejevet num. ninety

inglejiru num. seventy

inglejitél num. eighty

inglelëm num. twenty

inglelëmjis num. sixty

inglelëmëjüs num. ninety

inglelëmjis num. sixty

ingelëm num. five

ingelves num. forty

ip vt. blow

ipij likhalmo int. good day

ipij meteveren int. good morning

ipij rivrip int. good afternoon, good evening

iru num. two Intëkh luo lun iru. They knocked out two of her teeth.

irusimëk vi. same Karusimëk. The two of you are the same.

is vt. bite Lipakh iis dui. The dog bit the man. Lipakh iisëk. The dog bit me.

is vëkhärët gnash teeth

isig num. one Enisi envwër bevwiri mwili vengesien isig en kem. Now I want to tell one more story to you all. Nuo isig ejëkh këmem. There is a spring at our place.

isimëk num. one Nil isimëk dënliek elelvenu. For one month they stayed inside. Lipakh isimëk iis tiu esek. A dog bit my chicken.

iskha int. no Dui iskha. There were no men. Also iskhe.

iskhe int. no Dui gi iskhe ivwiri en këmem gi banjej waia. Nobody told us to cut the fence. Also iskha.

isngel num. ten Vër ikës nëbëng isngel, venu esar injem nimwil. If it exceeded ten days, their village would remove the cycad leaves.

itar postmod. many Netite esed itar iskanrëngdo vengesien esed mwili. Many of our children don’t know our language any more. Ilis ikhëj dui itar. He saw him kill many people.

itël num. three

itwiren adv. nearly, almost, soon Itwiren ipomo. He will soon come.

iu vi. rain Nuis iu. It is raining.

ivaru vi. do twice

ivës inter. how much?, how many? Kudi niivëkh ivës? How many Malay apples did you eat?

ives num. four

ivësves vi. do four by four, do in fours

ivijevet vi. do nine times

ivijiru vi. do seven times

ivijitél vi. do eight times

ivilëm vi. do five times

ivilëmjis vi. do six times

ivin vi. 1. go Invin dënliek elelvenu. They went and lived inside. Gi idaskivin ejëkhën elakh esen intëkh lun. One who has not gone to her husband will have her teeth knocked out. Invtir divin divin ibëkhvin ejëkhën elakh esen. They will stay behind until she just
20 Chapter 2

goes to her husband. 2. on and on, eventually Intëkh luo rivwi, inkhës 
divin divin ikear nit ikeren. When they 
had knocked them out, they danced on 
and on until daybreak.

ivisngel vi. do ten times
ivitël vi. do three times
ivives vi. do four times

ivsig adv. 1. once 2. one day 3. all at 
one, suddenly, straight away Ivsig 
imetër. He slept straight away. Also 
ivsimëk.

ivsimëk adv. 1. once 2. one day Ivsimëk 
Tirakh inmo erenge venu esekêm e 
Tape. One day the Tirakh people came 
to our village at Tape. 3. all at once, 
suddenly, straight away. Also ivsig.

J

jar vt. wipe Ijar lëmen. He wiped his 
hands.

jëbêkh ns. smegma

jej1 n. croton

jej2 vi. 1. cut Eren mënvwër banjej waia 
es e khaavot e Jinarur lene, mënvin 
mënvetir erenge waia. When we were 
about to cut the Europeans’ fence at 
Jinarur over there, we went and stood 
at the fence. 2. chop En ijej ne. He 
chopped the wood.

jej bëri vt. split by chopping

jêjën sub. because 

jejevi vt. tight

jejër vi. slip Ijejër erenge lip. He slipped 
in the mud.

jël vi. smoke, be smoky Nib ijël. The fire 
is smoky.

jële vt. comb Ijële pëtin. He combed his 

hair.

jëlëj n. earthworm

jëlën ns. sucker (of banana, breadfruit)

jëljil vt. flick

jem vt. remove Vër ikës nëbëng isngel, 
venu esar injem nimwil. If it exceeded 
ten days, their village would remove 
the cycad leaves.

jem luo vt. remove Nëbëng isig, injem luo 
isig divin iar e etakhdo. For each 
day they would remove one until it 
reached the last one.

jêmjêm vi. leak Nëmakh ijëmjêm. The 
house leaks.

jênen sub. because Envwër betiting ogi 
jênen mwimwin ikhëj pongen dui. 
I just want to speak because the spirit 
used to kill people. Also sênen.

jënin ns. intestine

jëpakh n. earth oven. Also lel jëpakh.

jêperë vt. put short sticks in ground for 
(yam vines)

jëpon vt. count

jërbësen vi. clear one’s throat

jere adv. afterwards, and then Jere 
dënbëkhrap esar. Then they just 
cleared their garden sites. Jere inkhël 
mwili kake pove nëbëng te ipankhës 
jênen. Then they dug up the yams 
again to perform a ceremony to dance 
with. Also jerete.

jëren1 ns. semen

jëren2 vt. throw

jërëp n. coconut lory (Trichoglossus 
haematodus)

jerete adv. afterwards, and then Jerete 
inlep ivin ejëkhën elakh esen. Only 
then did they take her to her husband. 
Ikames jerete gi etëkh nen ikabëkhjilëp. 
He will die and then the next one will 
just live. Also jere.

jëvarën ns. shin

jevet num. nine

jëvjëpen vi. stamp feet

jëvjëvten vt. join
jëvot vi. bang, crash, make sudden loud noise, explode, (of gun) fire Belevër ijvot. It thundered.

ji n. excrement, faeces Ipoj ji. He stood in excrement. Also jin.

ji mëten ns. sleep in eye

jijen vi. 1. green  2. blue

jijër 1 n. skink

jijër 2 vi. (of road, branch) fork Sel ijijër. The road forked. Rengesne ijijër. The branch forked.

jijër 3 vi. 1. sweep  2. (of fowl) scratch ground in search of food

jijër 4 vi. kneel

jikhëp vi. sneeze

jile vt. 1. wash Bejile belet en nuo. I will wash the plate in the water.  2. wet, water Posip nuo vës bejile en kon. Scoop up a little water for me to water the corn with.

jilëp vi. live, be alive, stay alive Ikames jerete gi etakh nen ikabëkhjilëp. He will die and then the next one will just live. Tëvejëkh ikënjilëp. The woman will live.

jimod n. sow

jin' ns. excrement. Also ji.

jin 1 ns. vine (of something) ji kake ‘yam vine’

jiru num. seven

jitël num. eight

jomar pron. their (pl.) (chewable)

jomartël pron. their (tl.) (chewable)

jomaru pron. their (dl.) (chewable)

jomjom n. sweet coconut

jomo vt. 1. chew Jimo. (S)he chewed it.  2. prep. chewable possessive (‘of’)

jomod pron. our (pl. incl.) (chewable)

jomodêtël pron. our (tl. incl.) (chewable)

jomodru pron. our (dl. incl.) (chewable)

jomoj n. wild pandanus

jomok pron. my (chewable)

jomom pron. your (sg.) (chewable)

jomon1 ns. gratings of kava

jomon 2 pron. his, her, its (chewable)

jopakh vi. squat

jospin ns. fin (of fish)

jovo vt. 1. follow, go after, come after  2. go along Panlingling dënjovo sel. Let’s walk along the road.

jovo tes walk along reef (typically in search of shellfish)

ju bwëlin ns. backbone, spine

ju mërën ns. sternum, breastbone

ju nëpakh n. turtle shell

juele vi. shout. Also juule.

jul vi. shout, yell Mënjuv ivin esoweies mënvwër, ‘Oi!’ We shouted up there, ‘Oi!’ Netite ijul evi? Where is the child shouting? Also juele.

jun ns. 1. bone 2. shell, carapace  3. post (in fence) junémwël ‘fence post’

K

kake n. yam Inlulo kake esen, jerete inbhêklulo esar. They planted his yams and then they would just plant their own.

kake përe n. long yam variety

kel vi. constipated Jin ikel. He is constipated.

këllên ns. ribs

këlkelen vi. colourful

kem pron. you (pl.) Envwiri pij eduen kem. I will explain it to you all. Envwër bevwiri en kem ipërvë dënriu e venu esed. I want to say to you all how we escaped from our place.

këmem pron. we, us (pl. excl.) Nuo isig ejëkhkëmem. There is a spring at our place.
këmemru pron. we, us (dl. excl.)
këmemtël pron. we, us (tl. excl.)
kemru pron. you (dl.)
kemtël pron. you (tl.)

kënëk pron. I, me Kënëk Harry Rambe.
I am Harry Rambe.

kënkënel n. swollen glands
kërisel n. garden Eskerëng bivin ra krisel.
I don’t want to go to the garden.

kërkër vi. (of hen) cluck after laying eggs, or when calling chicks
kërliu n. door. Also liu.

kës vt. 1. pinch  2. break off (leaf) with fingers Ikës nimwil.
He broke off the cycad.

kësëlëm n. snot, nasal mucus
kësën ns. nose

kësiar vt. exceed, go past Vër ikësiar nëbëng isgel, venu esar injem nimwil.
If it exceeded ten days, their village would remove the cycad leaves.

khaavot n. European Eren mënvwër banjej waia ese khaavot e Jinarur lene, mënvin mënvëtir erenge waia.
When we were about to cut the Europeans’ fence, we went and stood at the fence.

khabu vi. (of food) burnt
khakhas vi. cold

khan vi. eat Tiu ikhan e milivin nëmak.
The chicken is eating under the house.

khap vi. crooked, bent
kharep vi. crawl

khau vi. 1. sour, bitter Ikhau. It is bitter.
2. (of food) spicy, piquant

khawen vi. happy

khëj vt. 1. kill Eren mwëliun gi ivwër ipove nëbëng, ivëkhëj buos.
When a chief wants to perform a ceremony, he will kill a pig. Envwër betiting ogi jënëm mimin ikhëj pongen dui. I just want to speak because the spirit used to kill people. 2. hit, strike, pound Ikhëj en tili têvelëkhkar gi ikhëjpong dui ar.
He struck it on the leg of that woman who used to kill people. 3. (of cyclone) strike Lang ikhëj. The cyclone struck. 4. beat (slitgong) Inkhëj nokhmo. They beat the slitgong.

khëjkhëj pête n. pounded breadfruit (which is eaten with coconut milk)

khëkhe vi. sing. Also khe.

khëkhël vi. 1. shake  2. shiver
khël vt. 1. dig  2. dig up Invin inkhël.
They went and dug them up. 3. build (house) Inkhël nëmak nën têvelëkh esar. They built a house for their wives.

khëmit vi. be dark, be night Nit ikhmit.
It is dark. Also mit.

khër vt. scratch, scrape
khërkhër1 vi. itch

khërkhër2 svt. block, prohibit Intiting khërkhër sel. They put a spoken prohibition over the path.

khës vi. dance Intëkh luo rivwi, inkhës divin divin ikear nit ikeren.
When they had knocked them out, they danced on and on until daybreak.
Jere inkhël mwili kake pove nëbëng te ipankhës jënëm. Then they dug up the yams again to perform a ceremony to dance with.

kho vt. bundle up, bind Rivrip inkho kake.
In the evening they bundled up the yams. Inkho erenge lib. They bundled them up on the bamboo.

khuos vi. strong Iskarkhuos mwili. The two of them were no longer strong.

kuku n. penis

laabët n. rat
laang n. fly
laang bibi n. blowfly
laang ikhëj n. hurricane, cyclone
labarang n. breadfruit variety
lakh vi. married, get married Irölkakh. The two of them got married. Iskölkakh. He is not married.
lakhien n. marriage, wedding Ivin erenge lakhien. He went to the wedding.
lakhmël vi. hurry, go quickly
lau vt. 1. cross, go over Ilau nuo. He crossed the river.  2. svt. go over Isëp lau. He jumped over it.
lel lëpakh n. earth oven. Also jëpak.  
lelën ilil envious Leln irar. She is envious.
lelën irar angry Leln irar. He is angry.
lëlès vt. roll
lelo n. tree species (Polyscias scutellaria)
lëmen ns. hand, arm
lëmjis num. six
lëng vt. put
lëng meleten vt. put back
lëng nëbëng settle date, announce day (of ceremony) Eren invëlëp ipamno ipanul tes, inlëng nëbëng. When they wanted to come and buy saltwater, they would settle on a date.
lënglang n. fat (of body) lënglang ne pekën ‘the fat of his body’
lënglëng vt. 1. leave Dënlënglëng venu esed e Tape dënmo e Vëti. We left our place at Tape and came to Vëti.  2. let go of, release
lep1 vt. 1. take Jerete inlep ivin ejëkhën elakh esen. Only then did they take her to her husband. Dënlep net pwërpar dënkho erenge deb. They took the piglet and tied it to the ground. Pomo dëlep kake dom duen melëkh nen duen buos nen. Come and take your yam with its kava and its pig.  2. get, receive  3. catch (disease) Enlep mësitien. I caught a disease.
lepk. give
lep luo vt. take out, remove Këtlep luo? Have you removed it?
lesën ns. male genitalia, penis, testicles
let vi. argue, dispute Inlet. They argued.
levër postmod. 1. that Ivin erenge nuo levër. He went to that spring. Eren levër George Kalkoa ivwër polis esen...
That time George Kalkoa told his police to come. When we had cut it, George Kalkoa came and said to that man from Rano to come and stand up.

They knocked out that one at the front.

They bundled them up on the bamboo.

They went and lived inside. The next day they stayed.

They stayed until night and they danced until daybreak.

They walked. They walked around. He walked across the river.

He has athlete’s foot. Also lip.

He saw him kill many people. I saw you. You saw me.

They planted his yams and then they would just plant their own.

They prayed to their god. We prayed to the person who was the origin of the world.

Where will we plant our food?
**luluakh** vi. shoot, fire shots *Irmo*

*irluluakh eji*. The two of them came and fired shots here. Also *lu*.

**lumlum** n. waterweed, seaweed

**lumlum nuo** n. waterweed

**lumlum tes** n. seaweed

**lun**¹ ns. 1. tooth *Intëkh lun*. They knocked out her teeth. 2. tusk (of pig)

**lun**² ns. belt, waistband

**lunum** vi. swim underwater, dive *Dui ilunum elel nuo*. The man dived in the river.

**luo**¹ vt. shoot *Irluo asekmemru*. They shot our uncle.

**luo**² svt. out *Intëkh luo lun iru*. They knocked out two of her teeth.

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**M**

**makhlo** loc. to/in the meeting house

*Partiting makhlo*. Let’s talk in the meeting house.

**mamau** vi. yawn

**mamwe** n. brother (of woman)

**mang** vi. make noise, be noisy

**maren** adv. tomorrow

**maren nen** adv. the next day *Maren nen inliek*. The next day they stayed.

**maru** n. vagina

**mavëkluir** n. Adam’s apple

**meang** n. green coconut with flesh that has become hard and the water has begun to go fizzy

**mëd** vi. ripe

**mëdakh** vi. 1. new 2. uncooked, raw

*Imëdakh*. It is raw. 3. (of plant) grow *Iëk divin divin iar e kake imdakh iar e leln iyek*. It stayed and stayed until the yam grew until it had tubers.

**mëdëdin** vi. smooth, level

**medek** n. puzzle tree (*Kleinhovia hospita*)

**mëdes** n. women's fibre skirt

**mëdin** vi. 1. sink, go underwater 2. (of sun) set *Niel imdin*. The sun has set.

**mëdkëhën** ns. scar

**mëj** vi. break, broken *Tilin nitveln imëj*. One of her legs was broken.

**mëji** n. star

**mekar** vi. 1. work *Imekar*. He worked. *Iskemekar*. He didn’t work. 2. make garden *Povër bëskhanjej waia levër, banmekar evi?* If we don’t cut that fence, where will we make our gardens?

**mekaren** vt. make, do *Imekaren ivaru*. (S)he did it twice.

**mekarien** n. work, job *Mekarien esom ste?* What is your job?

**mëkkwaia mëji** n. shooting star

**mëldon** ns. right hand

**mëlej** n. leftover food

**melëkh**¹ n. kava *Dënsëkh duen melëkh nen*. They stood it up with its kava.

**melëkh**² vi. pitch dark *Nit imelëkh*. It was pitch dark.

**melëkh miel** n. kava variety with reddish branches

**mëlep** n. twins

**melet** vi. return, go back, come back

*Gi elakh esen iyek adasketëkh lun, ikmelet divin nëmakh gi ikëntëkh lun*. One who has a husband and her teeth have not been knocked out will come back to the house where they will knock out her teeth. *Mënmelet imo emakh*. We returned home.

**meleten** svt. back, in return *Ilëng meleten*. He put it back.

**mëlip** vi. lean, be at an angle

**mëlis** n. 1. widow, widower 2. orphan *Irve mëlis*. The two of them are orphans.
mëlivin ns. shadow. Also mëlmilën.
mëlju vi. clean
mëlmëlêj vi. (of hair) tangled, matted
   Pëtin imëlmëlêj. His hair is matted.
mëlmilën ns. shadow. Also mëlivin.
mëlmol vi. clean
   (of hair) tangled, matted
Pëtin imëlmël. His hair is matted.
mëlmëlëj vi. (of hair) tangled, matted
mëlnge nelo n. spider web
mëng tilin ns. track, spoor, footprint
mëlnge n. 1. sleeping place  2. bed
   Bivin e mëlngenk. I am going to bed.
mëlulo vi. soft
mëmang vi. make noise, noisy
Netite imëmang. The children are making noise.
mëmëlkhai vtr. sharp
Imëmëlkhai en.
It is sharp.
mënen n. smell, odour
Mën ipij. Its smell is nice.
mën2 vt. drink
   Imën. (S)he drank it.
   Bëmën melëkh duenëm. I will drink kava with you.
mënar pron. their (pl.) (drinkable)
mënartël pron. their (tl.) (drinkable)
mënaru pron. their (dl.) (drinkable)
mëne prep. drinkable possessive ("of")
mëned pron. our (pl. incl.) (drinkable)
mënedëtel pron. our (tl. incl.) (drinkable)
mënedru pron. our (dl. incl.) (drinkable)
mënëmënëp vi. thin (rather than thick)
mënen pron. his, her its (drinkable)
menkre n. black flying fox, black fruit bat
mënëmëtikh vi. have vertigo
Leln imëmëtikh. He has vertigo.
mëmang vi. make noise, noisy
Netite inmëmang. The children are making noise.
mëmëlkhai vtr. sharp
Imëmëlkhai en.
It is sharp.
mëmëtikh vi. have vertigo
Leln imëmëtikh. He has vertigo.
mëme n. 1. cartoon, comic  2. funeral
   Invin sëne mesien isig. They went for a funeral.
mëtë kuku n. urethral opening (of male).
   Also mëte lesën.
mëtë lesën ns. urethral opening (of male).
   Also mëte kuku.
mëtë métiu n. eye of coconut (which can be pierced to get access to water inside)
mëte niel n. 1. cassia (Schleinitzia sp.)
   2. clock, watch
mëte nuo n. spring. Also nuo.
mëte sësën ns. nipple
mëte tèmes n. wart
mëtemiel n. conjunctivitis
mëten ns. eye
mëtepën n. blind person
metëri vi. wake up Imrit. He woke up.
mërit vi. wake up Imrit. He woke up.
mëru n. barrel tree (Acacia spirorbis)
mëruur vi. (of wood, leaves) dry
mes vi. die, dead
Inkhëj khaavot duon mesis esen irmes. They shot the European and his wife dead.
mësep n. empty space
mësid vi. hiccup Imsid. He hiccupped.
mesien n. funeral
Invin sëne mesien isig. They went for a funeral.
mësit vi. sick, ill
Imsit sne nêkhmakh. She is sick because of the mosquitoes.
mërëtikh vi. have vertigo
Leln imëmëtikh. He has vertigo.
metër lîlis vi. dream
meteveren n. 1. morning  2. adv. in the morning
mëtvililakh n. boil
mëtiu n. coconut  Bejej mëtiu esom.
I will cut your coconut.
mëtiu mërăng n. dry coconut
meviel n. rainbow
mib1 n. fontanelle
mib2 n. gecko
mibëkhu vi. slippery
mibën ns. grandchild, grandson, granddaughter
miel vi. red
mikhwel n. gully, non-permanent watercourse
miles n. cold  Irëng miles. He feels cold.
milli adv. 1. again  2. any longer. Also mwili.
milivin ns. under, beneath  Tiu ikhan e milivin nêmakh. The chicken is eating under the house.
mimid vi. sweat, perspire Naakêm kêmimid. You are sweating. Imimid. (S)he is sweating.
mimin1 ns. tongue
mimin2 ns. spirit (of place or dead person). Also mwimwin.
mingir vi. snore
mip n. small rock crab
mis vi. cooked Imis. It is cooked.
mis pij vi. cooked properly, well done Iskemis pij. It is not properly cooked.
misir n. apple banana
mit vi. 1. be dark, be night  Dënliek divin divin nit imit inkhës divin divin nit iren. They stayed until night and they danced until daybreak. Mwimwin ilingling nit imit. The spirit walked at night. Also khëmit.  2. black
miul vi. (of dry skin) peel
mo vi. come  Dënmo elo erenge skul. We came down to the church.
DënleÎNgëng venu esed e Tape dënmo e Vëti. We left our place at Tape and came to Vëti. Këpanwiri en netkem ipanche ñdo vengesien esed mo diar enisi. You will all tell it to your children so they know our language up till today.
moar vi. shiny, bright
mokhwo vi. urinate
momon vi. 1. ask  Inmomon en kêmëm rivwi, 'Es ivwër këpanjej waia ese khaavot?' They asked us all, 'Who said you should cut the Europeans’ fence?’  2. vt. ask Imomonëk. He asked me.
mopën ns. liver. Also movmit.
mopën khar n. lung. Also movkhar.
mor vi. split
mornen ns. left hand
mos vi. 1. conclude  Vengesien esek imos ejî. My story concludes here.  2. end, finish  Imos imo mwili iliek duen netên vësar. When she was finished, she would go and stay with that little child of hers.
mosi adv. today
movkhar n. lung. Also mopën khar.
movmit n. liver. Also mopën.
mumu vi. disintegrate Itëkh etër divin divin divin imumu. It stayed there until it disintegrated.
mwëlës n. citrus, orange
mwëliun n. chief  Eren mwëliun gi ivwër ipove nêbëng, ivëkhëj buos. When a chief wants to perform a ceremony, he will kill a pig. Intakhe divin e nemakh ese mwëliun. They took them to the chief’s house. Also nêmwal.
mwëliun lil n. paramount chief
mwëlmwel vi. round
mwëlnëvet n. stone wall
Chapter 2

mwili adv. 1. again Këpanrëngk mwili entiting. You will all hear me again talking. Intëkh lun mwili. They knocked out her teeth again. 2. any longer Netite esed itar iskanrëngdo vengesien esed mwili. Many of our children don’t know our language any more. Also mili.

mwimwin ns. spirit (of place or dead person) Nuo mwimwin iyek. The spring has a spirit. Ilis mwimwin nuo levër ive têvëlëkh. He saw the spirit of the water was like a woman. Also mimin.

N

naabues n. New Guinea rosewood (Pterocarpus indicus). Also naabuos.

naabuos n. New Guinea rosewood (Pterocarpus indicus). Also naabues.

naakëd pron. we, us (pl. incl.) Naakëd rivwi e Tape. We are all from Tape. Banlulo nëkhanien ese naakëd evi? Where will we plant our food? Imomonëk. He asked me.

naakëdëtël pron. we, us (tl. incl.)

naakëdru pron. we, us (dl. incl.)

naakel n. post (in house construction)

naakëm pron. you (sg.) Envwerp betiting mwili duen naakëm. I want to talk with you again.

naangës n. 1. great hog plum (Spondias dulcis) 2. pawpaw, papaya (Carica papaya)

naarës n. victory leaf (Cordyline terminalis)

naaret n. drinking coconut with flesh that is still soft

naarin ns. root naarine ‘root of tree (generic)’

naavëvrit n. Moreton Bay chestnut (Castanospermum australe)

naaviu n. pandanus variety (for making mats)

nabu n. club

nale n. lizard

nalomoj n. green tree lizard (Emoia sanfordii)

namëd n. bush sprite

napopo n. snake bean

narëkh lëmen ns. finger. Also bësën.

narëkh tilin ns. toe

nari tang n. handle of basket

nau n. 1. vine 2. rope, string

nau ne lesën ns. vas deferens. Also nuot ne lesën.

nau ne tes n. wave, swell

Navar n. 1. Naman language 2. person from Langalang

navêj n. comb

navul n. 1. bed 2. platform, bench

navwilo n. yam variety

navwimar n. emerald ground dove (Chalcophaps indica)

ne n. 1. tree 2. wood 3. stick

neb pëtin ns. back of neck (which, when struck, causes immediate death)

nëbakhasu n. freshwater crab (Bislama krab kaldoni)

nëbën ns. buttocks

nëbëng1 n. day Nëbëng ingëltël dënliek elelvenu. For thirty days they stayed inside. Vër ikës nëbëng isngel, venu esar injem nimwil. If it exceeded ten days, their village would remove the cycad leaves.

nëbëng2 n. ceremony Eren mwëliun gi ivvër ipove nëbëng, ivëkhëj buos. When a chief wants to perform a ceremony, he will kill a pig.

Nebënwo n. Norsup

nëbër n. elephantiasis

nëbëtbët n. mute person

nëbwëd n. wild yam

nej vt. pelt, throw missile at
nëjijër $n$. broom
nëkhārēt $n$. stinging tree, devil nettle $(Dendrocnide$ $sp.)$
nëkhanien $n$. food Banlulo nëkhanien ese naakēd evi? Where will we plant our food?
nëkēb $n$. soft yam variety with little taste
nëkhērēn $n$s. side
nëkhēs $n$. hill, mountain
nëkhēt $n$. louse
nëkhmakh $n$. mosquito
nëkhmo $n$. island teak $(Intsia$ $bijuga)$
nëkhksen $n$s. name
nëkhës $n$. hill, mountain
nëkhët $n$. louse
nëkhmakh $n$. mosquito
nëmakh $n$. house, building Inkhël nëmakh nen tēvēlēkh esar. They built a house for their wives.
nēmej $n$. fish
nēmen $n$. bird
nēmi $n$. dust
nēmop $n$. Tahitian chestnut $(Inocarpus$ $edulis)$
nēmot $n$. snake
nēnum $n$. earthquake
nēmwël $n$. chief. Also mwēliun.
nēmwēl $n$. fence around garden Inve nēmwēl esen. They made the fence around his garden.
nēmwēl ne pwērpar $n$. pig pen
nen $n$. part-whole (‘of’) lēnglang ne pētē ‘the fat of his body’, novo ne pētē ‘seed of the breadfruit’ Inkhēl nēmakh nen tēvēlēkh esar. They built a house for their wives.
nenēp adv. yesterday
nēpakh $n$. turtle
nēpek $n$. banyan tree
nēpel $n$. swamp harrier, hawk $(Circus$ $approximans)$
nēpet $n$. tuber with chewy (and slightly bitter) flesh
nēpik $n$. giant turban shell $(Turbo$ $marmoratus)$
nesēl $n$. coconut frond nesēl ra mētiu ‘frond of the coconut tree’
nesēl nunud $n$. firefly found at sea
nesip $n$. knife
neskērkērit $n$. sensitive grass $(Mimosa$ $pudica)$
net $n$. tree with edible round soft green fruit
net $n$. outrigger
net pwērpar $n$. piglet Dënlep net pwērpar dēnkho erenge deb. They took the piglet and tied it to the ground.
netēn $n$s. son, daughter, child Kēpanwwiri en netkem ipanrēngdo vengesien esed mo diar enisi. You will all tell it to your children so they know our language up till today. Povēr iskadang luo lun, ikvin ejēkhēn elakh esen, netēn dui gi emu nen ikames. If they do not pull out her teeth and she goes to her husband, her first male child will die.
netite $n$. child Netite esed itar iskadrēngdo vengesien esed mwili. Many of our children don’t know our language any more.
netite dui $n$. boy. Also dui nēmon.
netite tēvēlēkh $n$. girl
netitevēn $n$. young unmarried woman
nēvar $n$. heliconia
nēvēddēlin $n$s. top rail of long walls of house
nēvek $n$. ankle rattle tree $(Pangium$ $edule)$
nēvēs $n$. Fijian asparagus $(Saccharum$ $edule)$
Nēvet $n$. 1. stone, rock Ilep nēvetar. He took that stone. 2. money Invnak $n$. They stole the money that I wanted to buy the house with.
nëvet mit n. black stone Itakhe nëvet mit isig. He took a black stone. Also vetmit.

nëvet nen neyo n. cooking stone
nënevën ns. hip
nëvod n. barn owl (Tyto alba)
nëvon n. breadfruit variety
nëvwëk n. albino
nëvwër n. pus
nëvwib n. fish poison tree (Barringtonia asiatica)
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nëvwër n. pus
ningidin *ns.* gums

nini *vi.* burn down to embers *Nib inini.* The fire has burnt down to embers.

ninit *vi.* dirty

niniu *n.* tree sp. (*Macaranga* sp.)

ninwolën *ns.* top

nio *n.* armband

nipip *n.* bamboo rail to which thatch is attached in roof of house

nipipil *n.* 1. cave bat 2. swiftlet (*Aerodramus* sp.)

nipirang *n.* heat, sweatiness *Enrëng nipirang.* I feel hot and sweaty.

nipwij *n.* *stinkwood* (*Dysoxylum* spp.)

niri *n.* *imperata reed* (*Imperata cylindrica*)

nirirëp *n.* fan

niskhën *ns.* muscle

nisakh *n.* banana *Budi nisakh duen kake.* I will eat banana and yam.

nisakh mes *n.* banana variety

nisakh mit *n.* banana variety

nisêkh *n.* *kingfisher* (*Halcyon chloris*)

nisis *ns.* shellfish species (*Bislama nasisa*)

nisaches *n.* muscle

nisnes *n.* pudding cooked over fire inside bamboo

nit *n.* place *Mënjej waia divin divin iar nit imos en.* We cut the fence all the way as far as where the place finished.

nit bëte *n.* forbidden place. Also *nit tôbëte.*

nit imit *adv.* at night *Dënliek divin divin nit imit inkhês divin divin nit iren.* They stayed until night and then until daybreak. *Mwimwin ilingling nit imit.* The spirit wandered about at night.

nit irusimëk *adv.* at midnight

nit itëb *n.* *Enlis nit itëb.* I can see the sore.

nit mëdëdin *n.* level area

nit tôbëte *n.* forbidden place. Also *nit bëte.*

nitëp *n.* *wind* *Nitëp iling elo.* The wind is coming from the south.

nitëp ileng e lebëb *n.* onshore wind

nitëp iling e lo *n.* southeast wind

nitîu *n.* hermit crab

nitîu tivnu *n.* coconut crab (*Birgus latro*)

nîtilip *n.* *dragon plum* (*Dracontomelon vitiense*)

nîtvël *postmod.* one (of a pair) *Tîlîn nîtvelîn imëj.* One of her legs was broken.

niu *n.* dew

niur *n.* island

nivëkh *n.* *giant taro* (*Alocasia macrorrhiza*)

nivël *n.* *lightning*

nivip *n.* 1. penis wrapper. Also *nivivën.* 2. trousers

nivir *npart.* gratings, scrapings (of coconut) *nivir nen mëtiu* "coconut gratings"

nivisêkhêvin *ns.* armpit

nivivën *ns.* wing

nivivën² *ns.* penis wrapper. Also *nivip.*

nivos *n.* paddle, oar

nivwi *n.* *song* *Enrëng nivwi isig.* I heard a song.

nivwip *n.* *sprouting coconut*

nokh Luo *vt.* lift up

nokh Luo lelën have hernia

nokhmo *n.* *slitgong* *Inkhëj nokhmo.* They beat the slitgong.
nokhoskhos n. pumice

nokhwip n. Pacific pigeon (Ducula pacifica)

nol n. book Iskerngdo ipul tegi mwili energe nol esen. He couldn’t write anything more in his book.

novo npart. seed (of breadfruit) novo nen pète ‘breadfruit seed’

novo napopo n. ankle

novolelën ns. seed (of tree or plant other than breadfruit) novolel ne ‘seed of tree (generic)’

novolesën ns. testicles

novon ns. fruit novo ne ‘fruit of tree (generic)’

novonejëp n. dead coral pieces on shore

novop n. bladder

novotlip n. kidney

nud n. palolo, sea worm

nuik n. island cabbage (Abelmoschus manihot)

nuir n. 1. lobster 2. prawn

nuis n. rain Nuis iu. It is raining. Povër nuis ipiu pëskanvin energe lomël. If it rains, we will not go to the garden.

nukhru n. Christmas

nulul n. 1. firefly 2. luminescent fungus

nululen ns. tail. Also nilen.

nun n. fibrous cloth-like material which falls from top of coconut palm

nunu n. mother Iskerndgo te nunu esen ive pongen. She didn’t know that her mother used to do that.

nunwin n. 1. sand 2. beach Panliek renga nunwin. We will sit on the beach.

nuo n. 1. water 2. river Dui ilunum elel nuo. The man dived in the river. 3. spring Nuo isig ejëkhkëmem. There is a spring at our place. Ivin energe nuo levër. He went to that spring. Also mëte nuo.

nuo mëten ns. tears

nuo mëtiu n. coconut water

nuok n. canoe

nuon ns. 1. water, juice (of something) 2. sap nuone ‘sap of tree’. Also dëdënen.

nuos adv. day before yesterday

nuot npart. 1. tendon 2. vein, artery Nuot nen. His/her vein.

nuot ne lesën vs. vas deferens. Also nau ne lesën.

nur vi. fight battle, wage war

nurak n. long pole for yam vines to climb up

nuru¹ n. crab

nuru² n. car

nuru mes n. white crab found in mangrove

nuru mëtemiel n. red-eyed crab

nuru mit n. black crab

O

ogi adv. just, only Vengesien esek ogi enir. That is just my story.

P

par¹ n. tamanu tree (Calophyllum inophyllum)

par² vi. blind

pau n. circumcision ceremony

pavnuik vi. sleep on one’s belly

pëjpëjërakh vi. sit on ground with legs extended straight out in front

pek nëmakh n. wall (of house)

pekën ns. body

pëkhajin n. long yam variety

pëkpok n. hard yam variety, presented at time of celebrations

pekren n. 1. cloud 2. sky

pël¹ vi. choke

pël² vi. close eyes
pël mëten têvëlkhas vi. wink
pêlakh n. banded rail (*Gallirallus philippensis*)
pêlakhtilin ns. heel
pêle vt. light (fire) *Idaskhaple nib*. They haven’t lit the fire yet.
pêle lesën ns. base of penis
pêle ne n. tree
pelej n. tongs for holding hot stones (typically made of bamboo)
pêlelakh n. yellow white-eye (*Zosterops flavifrons*)
pêlëlëkhët n. outrigger pins which attach outrigger to the outrigger poles
pêlen ns. 1. tree (of particular species) *Mênliek erenge ple bwëlil erenge emakh levër*. We stayed at the sea almond tree at that building. 2. trunk (of tree) 3. origin (of something) *Dënlot e dui gi ple venu*. We prayed to the person who was the origin of the world.
pêlën ns. spur on leg (of rooster). Also pêlpêlën.
pêlilikh nh. wild kava
pêlkonëvet n. cave. Also lel nëvop.
pêlkon ns. hole
pêlpêl vi. blink
pêlpëlarës vi. 1. sit on ground with legs apart and knees raised 2. sit cross-legged
pêlpêlën ns. spur on leg (of rooster). Also pêlën.
pêlpolien n. battle, fight *Inlis pêlpolien nenêp*. They saw a fight yesterday.
pepe vt. give birth to *Ipepe netën*. She gave birth to the baby.
pêpêlakh vi. somersault
pepet npart. buttress root
pêptakh n. rubbish
pêre vi. long
pêring n. comb (of rooster or hen)
pêrir vi. deaf. Also pwërpêrir.
pêrv vi. how? *Envwër bevwi en kem ipêrv dëniune vënu esed*. I want to say to you all how we escaped from our place.
pête n. breadfruit (*Artocarpus altillis*)
pêti vwisin ns. shoulder *pêti vwisings* ‘my shoulder’
pêtin ns. head *Ivtir en pêtin*. He stood on his head.
pêtinuo n. heart. Also tang ne nuo, pêtinuomen.
pêtinuomen npart. heart. Also tang ne nuo, pêtinuo.
pêtisèkhe nh. yam variety
pij vt. 1. good *Ipij en bëskhanvësvësen en netite ese naakëd*. It is good that we do not teach it to our children. 2. properly, well *Envwiri pij eduen kem*. I will explain it to you all.
pilakhan ns. mother-in-law, father-in-law
pitejevet adj. ninth
pitejiru adj. seventh
pitejitël adj. eighth
pitelêm adj. fifth
pitelêmjës adj. sixth
pitemu adj. first
piteru adj. second
pitesngel adj. tenth
pitetakh adj. last
pitetël adj. third
piteves adj. fourth
poj vt. step on (something) *Ipoj ji*. He stood in excrement.
pokël n. palm species
pongen adv. 1. just, only *Tëvëlkëkh pongen*. There were only women. 2. always *Imekar pongen*. He always works.
pongeret n. tree fern
poolêmên ns. elbow
poootilin ns. knee
poplej vt. close, shut Enpoplej liu.
I closed the door.
potakhdèlîn ns. neck
potkhai n. skull
povër sub. if Povër iskadang luo lun, ikvin ejëkhën elakh esen, netën dui gi emu nen ikames. If they do not pull out her teeth and she goes to her husband, her first male child will die. Povër bëskanjej waia levër, banmekar evi? If we don’t cut that fence, where will we make our gardens? Ivitìr ivwër iporëng povër bantinge tegi erenge vengesien ese këmem. He stood in order to hear if we said anything in our language.
pupu n. grandparent
pupu dui n. grandfather
pupu têvëlëkh n. grandmother
pwarëkhlîlî n. thumb
pwarëkhpëre n. index finger
pwarëkhvës n. little finger, pinky
pwear vt. shake
pwear lëmën shake hands
pwërpar n. pig
pwërpar tirkhëbëb n. wild pig
pwërpërîr vi. deaf. Also përîr.
pwingi përe n. garfish
pwingin ns. mouth
pwitlar n. pandanus leaf mat
pwitlakh n. small greensnail shell

(‘at’, ‘in’) Imekar ra krisel. He worked in the garden.
rakh vi. come up, rise
rang vi. hot
rangën ns. branch ranga ne ‘branch of tree (generic)’. Also rengešën.
rap vi. clear garden site Inrap esen.
They cleared his garden site. Jere dënëbhëkhrap esar. They they just cleared their garden sites.
rar vi. sore, painful, hurt
rek vi. (of tide) low, ebb, go out Tes irek. It is ebb tide.
relkhrëj vi. have diarrhoea Irkhrej. He has diarrhoea.
ren vi. (of day) break Intëkh luo rivwi, inkhës divin ikare nit ikeren. When they had knocked them out, they danced on and on until daybreak. Dënlièk divin ikare nit imit inkhës divin divin nit iren. They stayed until night and they danced until daybreak.
rëng vt. 1. hear Këpanrëngk mwili entiting. You will all hear me again talking. Ivitìr ivwër iporëng povër bantinge tegi erenge vengesien ese këmem. He stood in order to hear if we said anything in our language. Enrëng intiting en vengesien gi eskerngdo. I hear them speaking in a language that I do not understand. Enrëng dui gi ilingling domo. I can hear somebody wandering about over here. 2. feel Irëng miles. He feels cold. Kërëng idip? Does it feel heavy? 3. smell Irëng mën. He smells it. 4. aux. want to Eskerëng bivin ra krisel. I don’t want to go to the garden.
rëng ipokhan vi. hungry Irëng ipokhan. (S)he is hungry.
rëng ipomën vt. thirsty for Irëng ipomën. (S)he is thirsty for it.
rëng ipomënmën vi. thirsty
rëng iset vi. sorry, sad
rëngdo vt. 1. know, understand Netite esed itar iskanrëngdo vengesien esed mwili. Many of our children don’t know our language any more. Këpanvwiri en netkem ipanrëngdo vengesien esed mo diar enisi. You will all tell it to your children so they know our language up till today. Iskerngdo te nunu esen ive pongen. She didn’t know that her mother used to do that. Enrëng intiting en vengesien gi eskerngdo. I hear them speaking in a language that I do not understand.

2. recognise by sound or smell Irëngdo dlim. He recognised your voice.

3. aux. be able to Iskerngdo ipul tegi mwili eren ge nol esen. He couldn’t write anything more in his book. Dëskanrëngdo badosusuen tegi mwili. We won’t be able to hide anything any more.

renge prep. location (‘on’) Panliek renge nunwin. We will sit on the beach.

rengesën ns. branch. Also rangan.

reteret vi. (of hen) cluck

revesakh n. long white yam variety

riu vi. escape, run away Envwër bevwiri en kem ipërví dënrui e venu esed. I want to say to you all how we escaped from our place.

rivrip n. 1. evening, late afternoon, dusk 2. adv. in the evening Rivrip inkho kake. In the evening they bundled up the yams.

rivwi postmod. 1. all Naakëd rivwi e Tape. We are all from Tape. Dui rivwi injej waia. Everybody cut the fence. 2. completive Intëkh luo rivwi, inkhès divin divin ikear nit ikeren. When they had knocked them out, they danced on and on until daybreak. Èren mënjej rivwi, George Kalkoa imo ivwiri en dui Rano levêr imo ivtir. When we had cut it, George Kalkoa came and said to that man from Rano to come and stand up.

ron ns. leaf rone ‘leaf (generic)’, ronëvar “heliconia leaf”

ruru vi. do two by two, do in twos

rusimëk vi. be midnight Nit irusimëk. It is midnight.

ruten vt. 1. turn 2. tip over 3. roll 4. vi. turn over 5. tip over

S

sakh1 vi. 1. go up Isakh enge ne. He went up the tree. 2. (of spring) bubble up Nuo isakh. The spring bubbled up.

sakh2 vt. (of devil) cause (someone) to call out while asleep Tëmes isakh en. A devil caused him to call out.

sakhen vt. climb Isakhen ne. He climbed the tree.

sar1 n. 1. spear 2. vi. spear 3. vt. spear 4. poke, pierce

sar2 vi. (of moon) shine Nil isar. The moon is shining.

se prep. possessive (‘of’). Also ese, gese.

sêkhnurakh put long poles into ground for yam vines to climb up

sêkhavi vt. give birth to Tëvëlëkh iskhavi netite. The woman gave birth to a child.

sêkho n. year Sëkho gi dënmo erenge skul enir. That was the year that we came to the church.

sêkhtren vt. tip out, pour away Isëkhtren nuo ivin. She poured the water away.

sêkol n. hibiscus

sël vi. go fishing by torchlight Insël erenge tes. They went fishing by torchlight in the sea.

sel1 n. road, path
sel² vi. float
selën ns. friend, companion
sēli vt. burn
sēlikh vt. carry on shoulder Inslikh netēn dui dēnjovo nuo dēnvin eies. They carried the boy on their shoulders along the river up there.
sēmsimēk vi. do one by one, do individually
sen pron. his, her, its
sēnen nom.prep. 1. purpose (‘for’) Besere netite ipivin snenuo. I will send the child for some water. 2. cause (‘because of’) Pētik irar sneniel. My head is sore because of the sun. Also jēnen.
sēngen vi. fill up, put inside Inkhēj bēni dēnsngen elel lib. They killed him and put him into the bamboo.
sēp lau vt. jump over
sēpīj vt. kill
sēpsēprir vi. flame Nib isēpsēprir. The fire is flaming.
sere vt. send on errand Besere netite ipivin snenuo. I will send the child for some water.
sēren vi. swell up, swollen Isren. It is swollen.
sērip vt. slurp (food, water) Isrip. He slurped it.
sēsēkha vi. 1. lost, missing Nesip esek isēskha. My knife is missing. 2. disappear Vengesien esed iposēskha. Our language will disappear.
sēsēl vi. burn garden site after it has been cleared
sēsēn ns. breast
sēsēreves vi. whisper
sēsērip vi. sniff
set vi. bad
sēte inter. what? Kēvwēr ste? What did you say?

sētek vt. do Invin dēnste. They would go and do it.
Sevenu n. Tautu
sēvērēn inter. when? Panvin sēvērēn? When will we go?
sēvsēvij vi. jump
sēvsip vi. joke
sien vi. pregnant
silen vt. insert (knife) into thatch for safe-keeping
siol vi. crouch, bow down
sip vt. scoop up (water) Sip nuo. Scoop the water. Posip nuo vēs bejile en kon. Scoop up a little water for me to water the corn with.
sir vt. tear, rip
sivi vt. catch (something thrown)
su vi. hide, hidden
susur vi. swear, be abusive
suvsip vi. 1. swim En iskerngdo iposuvsip. He doesn’t know how to swim. 2. bathe Idaskesuvsip. I haven’t bathed yet.

T

tabēkh vt. roast, cook (food) on fire Itabēkh viakh. He cooked the taro on the fire. Betabēkh viakh dom. I will cook the taro for you.
tabkhēn vi. roast food Itabkhēn. (S)he roasted food.
takhe vt. 1. take Invin intakhe. They went and took them. Wosip isig imo itakher dēnvin e Vila. A warship came and took them away to Vila. 2. marry Eren dui tērtērep tetwo invwēr ipantakhe tēvēlēkh, intakhe tēvēlēkh esar. When the old men a long time ago wanted to marry a woman, they would take their wife.
tang n. 1. basket 2. crop (of bird)
tang ne netite n. placenta
tang ne nuo n. heart. Also pëtinuo, pëtinuomen.

te adv. 1. just, only Jerete inlep ivin ejëkhën elakh ëeen. Only then did they take her to her husband. Ikames jerete gi etakh nen ikëbëkhjilëp. He will die and then the next one will just live. 2. sub. that Iskerngdo te nunu esen ive pongen. She didn’t know that her mother used to do that.

te bete n. sorcerer. Also dui bëte.

tëb vi. 1. sore, painful, hurt  2. have sore

teb vt. defecate

tebës vi. spit

tëbëte adj. forbidden, taboo. Also bëte.

tëbëtel tërep n. former garden site

tegi n. thing, something, anything Ivtir ivwër iporëng povër bantine terenge vengesien ese këmem. He stood in order to hear if we said anything in our language. Iskerngdo ipul terenge nol esen. He couldn’t write anything more in his book.

tëkh1 vt. 1. punch  2. knock out (tooth) Intëkh lun. They knocked out her teeth. Gi elakh esen iyek adasketëkh lun, ikmelet divin nêmak gi ikëntëkh lun. One who has a husband and her teeth have not been knocked out will come back to the house where they will knock out her teeth.

tëkh2 vi. stay Itëkh divin divin divin iar e kake imdakh iar e leln iye. It stayed and stayed until the yam grew until it had tubers.

tëkh3 vi. start

tëkh luo vt. knock out Intëkh luo lun iru. They knocked out two of her teeth.


tëkhës vt. chase away Eren Tirakh intkhes kmem mënmo mënliek erenge skul.

When the people of Tirakh chased us away, we came and stayed with the church. Itëkhes tiu. He chased away the chicken.

tele n. axe

tëlet n. small sugar ants

tëltël vi. do three by three, do in threes
tëmës vi. laugh Itmës. He laughed.

tëmes n. devil
tëmes nëmar n. short devil which, if you kill it, causes you to die yourself

tëmop n. castrated boar
tën vt. give Itën en. He gave it to him. Dëtënër. They gave it to them.
tenej vi. play
tëngting n. smoke
tëngting ne nuis n. fog
tep vt. push Intevër invin elelvenu. They pushed them inside.
tërrakh vt. 1. wait for Itërrakhëk. He waited for me.  2. vi. wait Itërrakh. He waited.
tëérékh vi. hunt, go hunting Ipantërëkh. They will go hunting.
tërep adj. old (sg.) Dui tërep gi nêkhsen Masing. There was an old man whose name was Masing.
tëriu n. white-throated pigeon (Columba vitiensis)
tërtërep adj. old (pl.) Eren dui tërtërep tetwo invwër ipantakhe tèveëlëkh, intakhe tèveëlëkh esar. When the old men a long time ago wanted to marry a woman, they would take their wife.
tês n. 1. sea  2. saltwater
tesëk vi. surprised Entesëk enëm. I was surprised by you. Pësketesëk enëk. Don’t be surprised by me.
tete n. father
tëtëb vi. thick
tëtëp vt. (of pig) push (ground) with snout
tëtip vi. fly
tetwo adv. long time ago Eren dui těrtërep tetwo invwër ipantakhe těvëlëkh, intakhe těvëlëkh esar. When the old men a long time ago wanted to marry a woman, they would take their wife.

těvakh vi. (of sun) Rise Niel itvakh. The sun has risen.

tevēl vt. beckon with (arm) Kětevēl lēmom. You will beckon.

těvëlëkh n. 1. woman. Also těvet.
2. wife Eren dui těrtërep tetwo invwër ipantakhe těvëlëkh, intakhe těvëlëkh esar. When the old men a long time ago wanted to marry a woman, they would take their wife.

těvëlëkh tērep n. old woman

těvëlkhas adj. 1. one (of pair) Ipēl mēten těvëlkhas. He winked (with one eye).
2. loc. across, on the other side Ivin eies bēr těvëlkhes ne nuo. It goes all the way up across the river.
3. n. side

těvet n. woman Povër těvet gi ipivin ivētir ejkhën dui gi banvēsvēsien en er iporēng. If a woman goes to marry a man, she will teach it to them and they will hear it. Also těvëlëkh.

těvtēvribēs n. morning star

tib n. saliva, spit tib sen ‘his/her saliva’

tib se tes n. sea foam

tibēr npart. bundle, bunch

tibēs vt. split

tikh¹ n. 1. hole 2. grave

tikh² vt. pull

tikh luo vt. pull out, extract Isketikh luo. He could not pull it out.

tikh ne kake n. yam mound

tilin ns. leg, foot Ikhēj en tili těvēlēkhar gi ikhēj pongen dui ar. He struck it on the leg of that woman who used to kill people. Tilin nitveln imēj. One of her legs was broken.

timolo n. scrub fowl, incubator bird (Megapodius freycinet)

tin n. rifle, gun

tin vēsvēs n. bow

tinge vt. tell, talk about Enir ogi envwër betinge. That is all I want to talk about. Ivtir ivwër iporēng povër bantinge tegi erenge vengesien ese kēmēm. He stood in order to hear if we said anything in our language.

tini vi. bury

Tirakh n. 1. Tirakh language 2. person from Tirakh

tirkhēbēb adj. wild, feral

tirtir vi. stop

titar vi. (of rooster) crow Tiu ititar. The rooster crowed.

titēp vi. light (in weight)

titing vi. talk, speak Kēpadrēngk mwili entiting. You will all hear me again talking. Envwër betiting mwili duen naakēm. I want to talk with you again. Eren lever mēskantiting duen en. At that time we did not speak with him.

titing dēlo vi. whisper

titing khērkhēr vt. prohibit, place verbal prohibition on Intiting khērkhēr sel. They put a prohibition on the road.

titing pij vi. bless

Tiu n. chicken, fowl

Tiū n. rooster

Tiū miel n. fowl with brown feathers

Tiū mit n. fowl with black feathers

Tiū pēlakh n. fowl with multicoloured feathers

Tiū tēvet n. hen

Tiū tirkhēbēb n. wild fowl

Tiū wip n. fowl with white feathers

tivwi n. conch shell

to vt. put

top vi. empty
tor n. grade-taking ceremony

tosusuen vt. hide, conceal T/osusuen.
  He hid it. Dëskanrëngdo bantosusuen
tegi mwili. We won’t be able to hide
anything any more.

tu n. shellfish (generic)
tuarëb n. uncircumcised man

turwir n. barren woman

Tut
  1. inland person, bushman
  2. Big Nambas person

tutuen vt. distribute Intutuen erenge
tegi mwili en levër.
He distributed it to the village that
came to his ceremony.

U

udi vt. eat Intakhe divin e nimel ese
  mwëliun udi. They took them to the
  chief’s meeting house and he ate them.
  Kudi niïvëkh ivës? How many Malay
  apples did you eat? Budi nisakh duen
kake. I will eat banana and yam.

uje vt. slap

ul1 vt. write Iskerngdo ipul tegi mwili eren
gi ipomo erenge nëbëng esen.
He couldn’t write anything
more in his book.

ul2 vt. pay for, buy Dui e Tirakh invwër
ipanul stik tabak ejkhë Mr Presis.
The people of Tirakh wanted to buy
a tobacco stick from Mr Bridges.

ul luo vt. write out, write down

ulel n. pillow

ulul vi. write

ululen vt. sell

unun vi. swim underwater, go diving
  Ivwër ipunun. He wanted to go diving.

ured prep. like. Also uren.

uren prep. like Eren imo ivtir uren levër.
  When he came, he stood up like that.
  Also ured.

uri vt. open Puri liu. Open the door.
  En uri liu. He opened the door.

urtakh n. phlegm

use vt. hold Inuse rivwi lëmar. They held
  all of their arms. Enususe. I held it.

use jëjën vt. hold tight Enususe jëjën.
I held it tight.

ututakh vt. spoil, damage, ruin, be bad
to Tërakh er inututakh duen iksos. The
people of Tirakh were very bad to
people.

V

vang vi. be alight, burn Nib ivang. The
  fire is alight.

vave n. paternal aunt (father’s sister)

ve vt. 1. do, make, cause Inve nëmwël
  esen. They made his garden. Këve ste?
  What are you doing? Tëvëlhëk îve mëri.
  The woman made a mat. Iskerngdo te
  nunu esen îve pone. She didn’t
  know that her mother used to do that.
  2. happen to Tegi kevek kemru.
  Something must happen to the two
  of you. 3. be (copula) Inwis nëkhxen
  îve Tar. They called him Tar. Ilis
  mwimwin nuo levër îve tëvëlhëk. He
  saw the spirit of the water was a
  woman.

ve nëbëng perform ceremony Eren
  mwëliun gi ivwër ipove nëbëng, ivëkhëj
  buos. When a chief wants to perform a
  ceremony, he will kill a pig.

ve pau go for circumcision

vedkho npart. gall bladder

vëkhvakh vi. crazy, mad

vël vi. (of lightning) flash Nivël ivël.
  The lightning flashed.

velenges n. bush nut (Barringtonia edulis)
vëli vt. heap up, pile up
vélkhëmit vi. black
vélonib n. charcoal
vënakh vi. steal Ivnah. He stole.
vënakhnen vt. steal Invënakhnen nèvevet gi envwër bul en nêmakh. They stole the money that I wanted to buy the house with.
vëngen vt. feed, give food to Ivngen pwërpar. He fed the pig.
vengesen vt. speak (language)
vengesien n. 1. story Vengesien esek ogi enir. That is just my story. Vengesien ivwërdo. The story is true. 2. language Netite esed itar iskanrëngdo vengesien esed mwili. Many of our children don’t know our language any more.
vënkwili n. bird species
vënpo n. white flying fox, white fruit bat
venu n. 1. place Envwër bewwiri en kem ipërvi dënriu e venu esed. I want to say to you all how we escaped from our place. Dënëlënglëng venu esed e Tape dënmo e Vëti. We left our place at Tape and came to Vëti. 2. village Itutuen erenge venu gi ipomo erenge nêbég esen. He distributed it to the village that came to his ceremony. 3. world Dënlot e dui gi plevenu. We prayed to the person who was the origin of the world.
vënvosowos n. whitewood (Endospermum medullosum)
vër sub. if Vër ikês nêbég isngel, venu esar ijem nemwil. If it exceeded ten days, their village would remove the cycad leaves.
vëre vt. 1. poke, prick 2. inject
vërëng vi. 1. listen 2. think
vërëngien n. idea, thought, opinion Vërëngien esom ipërvi? What is your opinion?
vëris vt. call to Ivris en. He called him.
vërngës vi. blow nose
vërër vi. 1. run 2. be fast, be quick
Vëngëlëng ivëvërver. He walked quickly.
vës1 vi. small, little Ilës mwimwin nuo levër iivevêlëkh netën gi idavës ogi. The spirit of that spring looked to him like a woman with a child which was still only small. Imos imo mwili iliek duen netën vës ar. When she was finished, she would go and stay with that little child of hers. Netite vës esen têvëlëkh mili. Her little child was another girl. Posip nuo vës bejile en kon. Scoop up a little water for me to water the corn with.
vës2 vt. dig
vësakh vt. remember, think of
vësës vi. fart silently
veskai vt. lose Enveskai en. I lost it.
vësnening vi. forget
vësnu n. sheath around coconut flower
vësvës vi. teach
vësvësen vt. teach Ivwër bëskhanvësvësen en netite ese kêmem vengesien ese kêmem. He said that we should not teach our children our language.
vëtëns ns. belly
vëtir vi. 1. stand Eren mënjej rivwi, George Kalkoa imo ivwiri en dui Rano levër imo ivtir. When we had cut it, George Kalkoa came and said to that man from Rano to come and stand up. Eren mënvwër banjej waia ese khaavot e Jinarur lene, mënvin mënvëtir erenge waia. When we were about to cut the Europeans’ fence at Jinarur over there, we went and stood at the fence. 2. stay behind Ivëtir divin divin ibëkhvin ejëkhën elakh esen. They will stay behind until she just goes to her husband. Ivëtir en pëtin. He stood on his head.
vëtir ejëkhën vt. marry Povër tëvet gi ipivin ivëtir ejëkhën dui gi banvësvësen
er iporëng. If a woman goes to marry a man, we will teach it to them and they will hear it.

vetmes n. limestone rock from uplifted reef

vetmit n. black stone. Also nève mit.

vettilin ns. calf (of leg)

vetvet vi. make mat

vêvîdel vi. dizzy

vevnên ns. 1. sister (of man) 2. paternal aunt (father’s sister)

viakhd n. taro

vieb n. wild cane variety with thick stems


vive n. cottonwood (Hibiscus tiliaceus)

vunupup n. 1. butterfly 2. moth

vwêkvêk vi. be albino

vwêr aux. 1. want Envwêr bevwi en kem ipërvi dënriu e venu esed. I want to say to you all how we escaped from our place. Eren mwêliun gi ivwêr ipove nêbhëng, ivëkhëj buos. When a chief wants to perform a ceremony, he will kill a pig. 2. be about to Eren mënvwêr banjej waia ese khaavot e Jinarur lene, mënvin mënvêtir erenge waia. When we were about to cut the Europeans’ fence at Jinarur over there, we went and stood at the fence. 3. vii. say Ivvêr bëskanvêvsêsien en nettie ese kêmëm vengesien ese kêmëm. He said that we should not teach our children our language. Mênjul ivin esoweies mënnvêr, ‘Oi!’ We shouted up there, ‘Oi!’ 4. in order to Ivtir ivwêr iporëng povër bantinge tegi erenge vengesien ese kêmëm. He stood in order to hear if we said anything in our language.

vwêrdo vi. 1. tell truth Kêvvêrdo? Are you telling the truth? 2. be true Vengesian ivwêrdo. The story is true.

vwilil vi. whistle

vwîtvwîmîel n. small black bird with red head

vwirî1 n. red-bellied fruit dove (Ptilinopus greyii)

vwirî2 vt. say Envwêr bevwi en kem ipërvi dënriu e venu esed. I want to say to you all how we escaped from our place. Kêpanvwër en netkem ipanrëngdo vengesien esed mo diar enisi. You will all tell it to your children so they know our language up till today.

vwirî pij vt. explain Envwirî pij eduen kem. I will explain it to you all.

vwirû n. coconut which has water but no flesh

vwirvwrirî vt. tell on, reveal (secret)

vwito n. Tanna fruit dove (Ptilinopus tannensis)

W

wilës n. maggot

wili vt. lever out

wip vi. white

wis vt. 1. address Inwis nêkhsen ive Tar. They called him Tar. 2. call to, shout to Inwis dui rivwi inmo. They called everybody over. Powis en ipomo. Call him over. Bewis dui gi këmo jënen. I will call the man who you came for.

woj vi. yellow

wolesen vt. look for Inwolesen nêmej. They looked for fish.

wor vi. wet

wun vi. 1. full 2. (of tide) high, rise, come in Tes iwun. The tide is coming in.

1 Quite possibly Myzomela cardinalis, the cardinal honeyeater – JL
Chapter 2

Y

**yek** vt. have

*Gi elakh esen iyek adasketēkh lun, ikmelet divin nēmakh gi ikantēkh lun.* One who has a husband and her teeth have not been knocked out will come back to the house where they will knock out her teeth. *Itēkh divin divin divin iar e kake imdakh iar e leln iyek.*

It stayed and stayed until the yam grew until it had tubers. *Nuo mwimwin iyek.* The spring has a spirit.
The following is a finderlist that has been constructed on the basis of the Tape–English lexicon presented in the previous section. The information that is contained in this finderlist has been kept to a minimum; thus information about word class membership of Tape forms should be obtained from the main lexical listing, as should detailed semantic descriptions. Grammatical information, where supplied, relates to English and not to Tape (thus what is glossed as an adjective in English is usually an intransitive verb in Tape.) All forms should be checked against the main lexical entries for greater grammatical and semantic detail.

A

Abelmoschus manihot nuik
able to, be rêngdo
above esoweies
abusive susur
Acacia spiroorbis mëru
across têvëlkhas
Adam’s apple mavëkluir
address wis
Aerodramus sp. nipipil
afraid dëdëng, dëdëngen
afternoon, late rivrip
afterwards etakh, jere, jerete
again mili, mwili
agree dëmen²
albino nëvwëk
be albino vvëkwvëk
alight
v. (of bird) büj¹
adj. vang
alive jilëp

all rivwi
all at once ivsig, ivsimëk
almond
native nienge
sea bwëlil
almost itvwiren
Alocasia macrorrhiza nivëkh
always pongen
Ambrym nib
Ambrymese person dui e nib
and then en³, jere, jerete
angle, be at mëlip
angry lelën irar
ankle novo napopo
ankle rattle tree nèvek
announce (day of ceremony) lëng
nëbëng
ant
fire ant nij
sugar ant, small têlet
any gi¹
any longer mili
Chapter 3

anything tegi
Ardea sacra nibonwo
argue let
arm lëmen
armband nio
armpit nivisëkhëvin
around bëtel
arrive iar
arrow lu¹
poison arrow lu bète
artery nuot
Artocarpus altilis pëte
ashes bëtnie, nies nib
ask momon
asthma ngevien
at e, erengen, ra
at night likhat
athlete’s foot lip
axe tele

B
back adv. meleten
back n. bwëlin
of neck neb pëtin
backbone ju bwëlin
bad set
be bad to ututakh
bald head nëvwid
bamboo lib
hard lib vet
soft lib velës
banana nisakh
varieties misir, nisakh mes, nisakh mit
banded rail pëlakh
bang jëvot
banyan nêpek
bark n. lil ne, lilën, nilën
barn owl nëvod
barrel tree mëru
Barringtonia asiatica nëvwib

dulis velenges
basket tang
bat
black fruit bat menkre
white fruit bat vënpo
cave bat nipipil
bathe suvsip
battle pëlpolien
be ve
be about to vwër
beach nunwin
bean napopo
beard nil nisin
because jënen
because of sënen
beckon tevël
bed mëlngen, mëri, navul
behind bwëlin, etakh
belch v. dëriu
belly vetën
belly button bebêtën
below edeb
belt lun²
bench navul
bend vt. bërkhavi
beneath enivin, milivin
bent khap
beside ejujen, nkhëkhërën
big lil
Big Nambas person Tut
bind kho
bird nëmen
unidentified birds vënwmili, vwilvwimiel
Birgus latro nitiu tivnu
bite is
bitter khau
black mit, vëlkhëmit
bladder novop
bland lilakh
bless titing pij
blind par³
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Tape finderlist</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>blind person</td>
<td>mëtepar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blink</td>
<td>pëlpël</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>block v.</td>
<td>khërkhër²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blood</td>
<td>de¹, deen</td>
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<tr>
<td>blow vt.</td>
<td>ip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blow nose</td>
<td>vërgës</td>
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<tr>
<td>blowfly</td>
<td>laang bibi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blue</td>
<td>jijen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blunt</td>
<td>bëjij</td>
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<tr>
<td>boar</td>
<td>castrated tëmop</td>
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<td></td>
<td>uncastrated buos</td>
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<td>body</td>
<td>pekën</td>
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<tr>
<td>boil n.</td>
<td>mëtëvililakh</td>
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<tr>
<td>bone</td>
<td>jun</td>
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<tr>
<td>book</td>
<td>nol</td>
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<td>bow n.</td>
<td>tìn vësvës</td>
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<tr>
<td>bow down</td>
<td>siol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boy</td>
<td>dui nëmon, netite dui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brain</td>
<td>bërdimdim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>branch</td>
<td>rangan, rengesën</td>
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<tr>
<td>bread</td>
<td>nies nib</td>
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<tr>
<td>breadfruit</td>
<td>pëte</td>
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<tr>
<td>breadfruit variety</td>
<td>labarang, nëvon</td>
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<tr>
<td>pounded breadfruit</td>
<td>khëjkhëj pëte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>break</td>
<td>vt. bëruj</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vi. mëj</td>
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<tr>
<td>break off</td>
<td>kës</td>
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<tr>
<td>of day</td>
<td>ren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>breast</td>
<td>sësën</td>
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<tr>
<td>breastbone</td>
<td>ju mërën</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>breastfeed</td>
<td>mënmmën</td>
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<tr>
<td>breathe</td>
<td>ngep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bright</td>
<td>moar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>broken</td>
<td>mëj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>broom</td>
<td>nëjijër</td>
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<tr>
<td>brother of woman</td>
<td>mamwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brother-in-law</td>
<td>asen netite, etkhan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bubble up</td>
<td>sakh¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bud n.</td>
<td>limën</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>build (house)</td>
<td>khël</td>
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<tr>
<td>building</td>
<td>nëmakh</td>
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<tr>
<td>bullet</td>
<td>lu¹</td>
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<tr>
<td>bunch</td>
<td>tibër</td>
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<tr>
<td>bundle n.</td>
<td>tibër</td>
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<tr>
<td>bundle up</td>
<td>kho</td>
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<tr>
<td>burn</td>
<td>vi. vang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vt. sëli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>burn cleared garden site</td>
<td>sësël</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>burn down to embers</td>
<td>nini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>burnt</td>
<td>khabu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>burp v.</td>
<td>dëriu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bury</td>
<td>tini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bush</td>
<td>lebëb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bush nut</td>
<td>velenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bush sprite</td>
<td>namëd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bushman</td>
<td>Tut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>butterfly</td>
<td>vunupup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buttocks</td>
<td>nebën</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buttress root</td>
<td>pepet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buy</td>
<td>ul²</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**C**

calf (of leg) | vettilin |
call to | vëris, wis |
*Calophyllum inophyllum* | par¹ |
*Canarium indicum* | nienge |
canoe | nuok |
canoe tree | diwip |
car | nuru² |
carapace | jun |
*Carica papaya* | naangës |
carry on shoulder | sëlikh |
cartridge | lu¹ |
cassia | mëte niel |
*Castanospermum austral* | naavëvrit |
*Casuarina equisetifolia* | niar |
catch |
disease | lep¹ |
something thrown | sivi |
cause v. ve
to call out sakha²

cave lel nêvop, pëlko nêvet

celebration for new yams devo
ceremony nêbêng²

for circumcision pau
grade-taking tor

perform ceremony ve nêbêng

chair nijëngjëng

Chalcophaps indica navwimar
charcoal vêlonib

chase away têkhes

chest (anat.) mërën

chew jomo

chewy tuber nêpet

crack jomjom
weaker nêpet

cobblestone

chicken tiu

chief mwêliun, nêmwal

paramount chief mwêliun lil

chin netên, netîte, nisîn

chiton lilës

without shell dikio

choke vi. pël¹

chop jej²

Christmas nukhru

cicada bëngale

circumcision ceremony pau

Circus approximans nêpel

citrus mwêlës

clean adj. mëljiu

clear v.

garden site rap

the throat jërbësen

climb vt. sakhen

clock mëte nîel

close adv. evibëkh

close v. poplej

close eyes pël²

cloth-like material at top of coconut

palm nun

clothes nillëk

cloud pekren

club nabu

cluck kërkër, reteret
cost loc. lo²

coastal person dui elo

coconut mëtiu
dry coconut mëtiu mërang

drinking naaret

frond nesèl

green meang

husk lil mëtiu, nil mëtiu

immature vwiru

sheath of flower vësnu

shell See bëlëkhësën

sprouting nivwip

sweet jomjom

water nuo mëtiu

coconut crab nitiu tivnu

coconut lory jërëp

cold khakhas, miles

colourful këlkelên

Columba vitiensis têriu

comb	n. navëj

of fowl përing

v. jële

come mo

after jovo

back melet

in, of tide wun

up rakh

companion selên

completive rivwi

conceal tosusuen

conch shell tivwi

conclude mos

conjunctivitis mëtemiel

constipated kel

cook

vi. dengë

vt. tabëkh

cooked mis

properly mis pij

coral pieces on shore novonejëp
coral tree darëp
*Cordyline terminalis* naarës
cottonwood vive
cough tékhe
count jépon
crab nuru¹
   black crab nuru mit
   coconut crab nitiu tvnu
   freshwater crab nèbakhasu
   hermit crab nitiu
   red-eyed crab nuru mëtemiel
   small rock crab mip
   white mangrove crab nuru mes
crash jëvot
crawl kharep
crazy vëkhvakh
crooked khap
crop (of bird) tang
cross vt. lau
croton jej¹
crouch siol
crow v. titar
crunch in mouth mërij
cry ij
cup bèlèkhêsën
cut jej²
cycad, *Cycas circinalis* nimwil
cyclone laang ikhëj
*Cyrtosperma* sp. buok

*D*
damage v. ututakh
dance v. khês
dark khêmît, mit
   pitch dark melêkh²
daughter netën
day nèbëng¹
   day after tomorrow bawos
   day before yesterday nuos
   the next day maren nen
   days after a death bèngën
daybreak, until nit iren
dead mes
defeat përir, pwërpërir
defecate teb
*Dendrocnide* sp. nèkhaarët
devil tèmes
   kind of devil tèmes nèmar
devil nettle nèkhaarët
dew niu
diarrhoea, have rèkhrej
die mes
dig khël, vës²
   dig up khël
*Dioscorea esculenta* dëræp
dirty ninit
disappear sèsèkha
disease mësitien
disintegrate mumu
dispute v. let
distribute tutuen
dive lunum
dizzy vëvëdel
do mekaren, sëtek, ve
   one by one, individually sëmsimëk
   twice ivaru
   two by two, in twos ruru
   three times ivitël
   three by three/in threes tëltël
   four times ivives
   four by four/in fours ivësves
   five times ivilëm
   five by five/in fives ililëm
   six times ivilëmjis
   seven times ivijiru
   eight times ivijitël
   nine times ivijevet
   ten times ivisngel
   to death bëni
dog lipakh
door kërliu, liu
down edeb
Chapter 3

Dracontomelon vitiense nitlip
dragon plum nitlip
dream v. metër lilis
drink v. mën², mënën
dry adj. memes, mërang
Ducula pacifica nokhwip
dusk rivrip
dust nëmi
Dysoxylum spp. nipwij

E

ear dëlneng
earth oven jëpakh, lel jëpakh
earthquake nënum
earthworm jëlël
earwax delëng dëlneng
eat khan, udi
ebb rek
eel mëre
egg nidëlën
 of ants nidël tëlet
eight jitàl
 of eight times ivijítël
eighth pitejitël
eighty ingeljitël
elbow poolëmen
elephantiasis nebër
emaciated mërej
emerald ground dove navwimar
Emoia sanfordii nalomoj
empty top
 of empty space mësep
end v. mos
Endospermum medullosum vënwisosos
envious lelën ilil, lil
Erythrina indica darëp
escape riu
European khaavot
evening rivrip
- in the evening rivrip
evening star lavenu
eventually ivin

F

exceed kësìar
excrement ji, jin¹
explain vwiri pij
explode jëvot
extract tikh luo
eye mëten
of coconut) mëte mëtiu
eyeball nidël mëten
eyebrow, eyelash, eyelid nil mëten

E

face n. likhanan
fall dëm
fan n. nirirëp
far away eso
deft
 audibly bër¹
 silently vësës
fast adj. vërvër
fat
 adj. lil
 n. lënglang
father etmen, tete
father’s elder brother etmen lil
father’s sister vave, vevnën
father’s younger brother etmen vës
father-in-law pilakhan
fear v. dëdëngen
feather nilën, nil tiu
feed vëngen
feel rëng
fence around garden nëmwël
feral tirkhëbëb
fifth pitelëm
fifty ingelëm
fight
 n. pëlpolien
 v. pëlpol, nur
fighter dui nur
Fijian asparagus nëvës
fill up sëngen
fin josin
English–Tape finderlist

finger bësën, narëkh lëmen

thumb pvarëkh-nil

index pvarëkhpërë

little pvarëkhvës

fingernail bës lëmen, lil bësën

finish v. mos

fire

n. nib

 taboo fire nib bëte

v. jëvot, lu², luluakh

fire ant nij

firefly nesël nunud, nulul

firewood nib

 burning piece of nib vang

first emu, pitemu

fish

n. nëmej

v. by torchlight sël

fish poison tree nëvwib

five ilëm

 do five by five/in fives ililëm

 do five times ililëm

flame v. sëpsëprir

flash (of lightning) vël

flesh lelën

flick jëljil

float v. sel²

flower ningen

 of breadfruit lunen

fly

n. laang

v. tëtip

flying fox

 black menkre

 white vënpo

foam (in sea) tib se tes

fog tënting ne nuis

follow jovo

fontanelle mib¹

food nëkhanien

 leftover mëlej

foot tilin

footprint mëinge tilin

for (purpose) sënen

forbidden bëte, tëbëte

forehead likhanan

foreskin nil pek lesën

forest, primary lebëb tërep

forget vësningen

fork v. jijër²

forty ingelves

four ives

 do four by four/in fours ivësves

 do four times ivësves

fourth piteves

fowl tiu

 kinds tiu miel, tiu mit, tiu pëlakh, tiu wip

 wild tiu tirkhëbëb

friend selën

frightened dëdëng

from e

frond nesël

front likhan

 in/at the front emu

fruit novon

full wun

funeral mesien

fungus dëring

 luminescent nulul

G

gall bladder vëdkho

Gallirallus philippensis pëlakh

garden n. kërisel, lomël

 former garden site, former tëbëtel tërep

 make garden mekar

garfish pwingi përe

Garuga floribunda mësmes

gecko mib²

genitalia, male lesën
get lep
get married lakh

Chapter 3

giant taro nivēkh
giant turban shell nēpik
gill dēngen
ginger, wild lēkhlēkh

girl nettī tévēlēkh
give lep, tēn
give birth to pepe, sēkhavi
give food to vēngen
glands, swollen kēnkēnel
glans penis lel vējējēn
gnash teeth is vēkharēt

go ivin

H

after jovo
along jovo
as far as iar
back melet
diving unun
for circumcision ve pau
hunting tērēkh
out, of tide rek
over lau
past kēsiar
quickly lakhmēl
slowly dēlo
underwater mēdin
until iar
up sakh

god atua
good pij
good afternoon/evening ipij rivrip
good day ipij likhalmo
good morning ipij meteveren

headband vio
head mēran
headband vio
healed mēran
head vēli
hear rēng
heart pētinuo, pētinuomen, tang ne nuo
heat n. nipirang
heavy dip
heel pēlakhtilin

of kava jomon

grave n. tikh

greasy (of food) mērurur

great hog plum naangēs

green jijen

greensnail (small) pwitlakh
ground deb
growth hanging from rooster’s throat

nisin

grub See lēkh

gully mikhwel
gums ningidin
gun tin

Gyrocarpus americanus diwip
heliconia nēvar
hen tiu tēvet
her esen, gesen, sen
  chewable jomon\(^2\)
  drinkable mēnen
  edible den
here eji
hermit crab nitiu
Hernandia nymphaefolia bērbēr
hernia, have nokh luo lelēn
heron nibonwo
hibiscus sēkol
Hibiscus tiliaceus vive
hiccup mēsid
hidden su
hide
  vi. su
tosusuen
  vt.
high tide wun
hill nēkhēs
hip nēvnevēn
his esen, gesen, sen
  chewable jomon\(^2\)
  drinkable mēnen
  edible den
hit khēj
hold use
tight use jējēn
hole pēlkon, tikh\(^1\)
home emakh
hop lēljējēkh
hot rang
house nēmakh
how? pērvi
how much? how many? ivēs
hungry rēng ipokhan
hunt tērēkh
hurricane laang ikhēj
hurry lakhmēl
hurt vi. rar, tēb
husband dui, elakh

husk n. lil mētiu, nil mētiu

I
I kēnēk
idea vērēngien
if povēr, vēr
ill mēsit
illness mēsitien
Imperata cylindrica niri
important man dui lil
in ra
  in (language) en\(^2\), erengen
  in front emu
  in order to vvēr
incubator bird timolo
Indian coral tree darēp
inject vēre
inland eut
  inland person dui eut
Inocarpus edulis nēmop
inside elelvenu
inside part lelēn
interior lelēn
intestine jēnin
Intsia bijuga nēkhmo
island niur
island cabbage nuik
island teak nēkhmo
it en\(^1\)
itch v. khērkēr\(^1\)
its esen, gesen, sen
  chewable jomon\(^2\)
  drinkable mēnen
  edible den

J
jaw nisin
jealous lil
job mekarien
join jēvjēvten
joke vi. sëvsip
juice of nuon
jump sëvsëvij
    over sëp lau
just adv. ogi, pongen, te

K
kava melëkh¹
    variety melëkh miel
wild pëlilikh
kidney novotlip
kill khëj, sëpij
kingfisher nisëkh
Kleinhovia hospita medek
knee pootin
kneel jijikhëvo
knife nesip
knock out tëkh¹, tëkh luo
know rëngdo

L
land n. deb
language vengesien
large lil
last pitetakh
laugh témës
leaf ron
    leaf bud limën
    leafy part likhan
leak v. jëmjëm
lean vi. mëlip
leave vt. lënglëng
left hand mornen
leftover food mëlej
leg tilin
lesser yam dërap
let dëmen²
    let go of lënglëng
level mëdëdin
    level area nit mëdëdin
lever out wili
lick limi
lie (= tell lies) dëdën
lift up nokh luo
light adj. (in weight) titep
    v. eple, pële
lightning nivël
like prep. ured, uren
limestone rock vetmes
limp lijëkh
lip nil pwingin See also ngërngirin
listen vërëng
little vës¹
live jilëp, liek
liver mopën, movmit
lizard nale
green nalomoj
lobster nuir
long përe
    long time ago tetwo
look for wolesen
look through small hole lobres
lose veskai
lost sësëkha
louse nêkhët
low tide rek
lung mopën khar, movkhar
lychee, native doakh

M
Macaranga sp. niniu
mad vëkhvakh
maggot wilës
make mekaren, ve
    make garden mekar
    make mat vetvet
    make noise jëvot, mang, mëmang
Malay apple niivëkh
man dui
    important man dui lil
old man dui tërep
old men dui tërtërep, dui têtërep
uncircumcised man tuarēb
mangrove ding
many itar
marriage lakhien
married lakh
marry takhe, vëtir ejēkhēn
mat of coconut leaf mēri, mēri pwitar
of pandanus pwitar
make mat vetvet
matted (of hair) mēlmēlēj
me kēnēk
meeting house nimel
to/in the emel, makhlo
Megapodius freycinet timolo
Melanesian person dui mit
Metroxylon warburgii niet
midday likhalmo
middle likhan
midnight at nit irusimēk
be rusimēk
Mimosa pudica neskērkērit
missing sēsēkha
money nēvet
mouth nil
moon nil
Moreton Bay chestnut naavēvrit
morning meteveren
morning star tēvtērivbēs
mosquito nēkhmakh
moth vunupup
mother nunu
mother-in-law pilakhān
mountain nēkhēs
moustache nil pwingin
mouth pwingin
mucus, nasal kēsēlēm
mud lēvlip, lip
muscle niskhēn
mushroom dēring
mute person nēbētbēt
my esek, gesek
chewable jomok
drinkable mēnok
edible dok

N
naked mēlmol
Naman language Navar
name nēkhsen
native almond nienge
native lychee doakh
navel bēbētēn, bētēn
near evibēk
nearly itvveren
neck potakhdēlin
back of neb pētīn
nephew elwen
nest, of bird ninēkh nēmen
nettle nēkhaarēt
New Guinea rosewood naabues,
naabuos
new mēdakh
next etakh
next day maren nen
night likhat
at nit imit
be khēmit, mit
nine jēvet
do nine times ivijevet
ninety ingeljevet
ninth pitejivet
nipple mēte sēsēn
nits lējar
no iskha, iskhē
noise, make jēvot, mang, mēmang
noisy mang, mēmang
noon likhalmo
Norsup Lebēnwo, Nebēnwo
nose kēsēn
now enisi, lakhmēlsi
O

oar nivos
odour mën
of ese, gese, se
   chewable jomo
   drinkable mëne
edible de
   part-whole nen, ra
place e
oil (in sprouting coconut) dëmen
oily (of food) mërurur
old tërep, tërtërep
   old man dui tërep
   old men dui tërtërep, dui tëtërep
   old woman tëvélëkh tërep
on renge
   on and on ivin
   on top esoweies
once bëng isimëk, ivsig, ivsimëk
one gi, isig, isimëk
   of a pair nitvelën, tëvélkhas
   one day ivsig, ivsimëk
only ogi, pongen, te
open vt. uri
   eyes lilis
opinion vërëngien
orange n. mwëlës
origin pëlen
orphan mëlis
other side, on the tëvélkhas
our incl. dl. esedru, gesedru
   chewable jomodru
   drinkable mënëdru
edible dedru
our incl. tl. esed, esedëtël, gesedëtël
   chewable jomodëtël
   drinkable mënëdëtël
edible dedëtël
our incl. pl. esed, gesed
   chewable jomod
   drinkable mënëd
edible ded
out luo
outdoors evren
outrigger net nuok
outside evren
oven jëpakh, lel jëpakh
over there lene

P

Pacific pigeon nokhwip
paddle n. nivos
painful rar, tēb
palm (of hand) lel lëmen
palm sp. didis, pokël
palolo nud
pandanus variety jomoj, naaviu
Pangium edule nëvek
papaya naangës
paramount chief mwëliun lil
parrotfish bëlakhëj
paternal aunt vave, vevnën
path sel
pawpaw naangës
pay for ut
peace dëmot
peel v. (of dry skin) miul
   n. (of fruit) lilën, nilën
pelt v. nej
penis kuku, lesën
   base of pële lesën
uncircumcised bërvin
penis wrapper nivip, nivivën
perform ceremony ve nëbëng
person dui
   Ambrymese dui e nib
   Big Nambas Tut
   blind métepar
   coastal dui elo
   from Langalang Navar
   from Tirakh Tirakh
   inland dui eut
   Melanesian dui mit
   mute nëbëtbët
perspire mimid
phlegm  urtakh
pick (fruit) bëj²
pierce sar¹
pig pwërpar
wild pig pwërpar tirkhëbëb
pig pen nèmwël ne pwërpar
piglet net pwërpar
pile up vëli
pillow uel
pinch kës
pins attaching outrigger to poles pëlëlëkhët
piquant khau
pith (of breadfruit) nilen¹
place n. nit, venu
forbidden place nit bëte, nit tèbëte
place verbal prohibition on titing khërkhër
placenta tang ne netite
plant vt. lo¹, lulo
platform navul
play tenej
poison arrow lu bëte
poke sar¹, vëre
pole (for yam vines) nurakh
Polyscias scutellaria lelo
Pometia pinnata doakh
post jun, naakel
pound khëj
pour away sëkhtren
prawn nuir
pray lot
pregnant sien
prick v. vëre
prohibit khërkhër², titing khërkhër
Pterocarpus indicus naabues, naabuos
Ptilinopus
greyii vwiri¹
tannensis vwito
pubic hair (male) nil pèle lesën

pudding (of island cabbage) lëbëlëb,
   neyo, nisnes
puff, be puffed ngëvngep
pull tikh²
   pull out dang luo, tikh luo
pumice nokhoskhos
punch v. tëkh¹
pus nëvwër
push tebe, tep
ground with snout (of pig) têtëp
put lëng, to
   put back lëng meleten
   put inside sëngen
   put knife into thatch silen
   put on hat vio
   put poles in ground for yam vines sëkh nurakh
   put sticks in ground jëpere
putrid bu

Q
puzzle tree medek
quick vërvër
quiet liek khëmëj
quietly dëlo

R
rail
top rail of house wall nëvëdëlin
rail to which thatch is attached nipip
rain
   n. nuis
   v. iu
rainbow meviel
rat laabët
raw mëdakh
reach iar
receive lep¹
recognise lisdo, rëngdo
red miel
red-bellied fruit dove vwiri¹
reed variety niri
reef heron nibonwo
release lënglëng
remember vësakh
remove jem, jem luo, lep luo
rest v. liek
return
  vi. melet
  in return meleten
reveal (secret) vwirvwiri
ribs këlëlën
rice nidël tëlet
rifle tin
right hand mëldon
ringworm nin
rip sir
ripe mëd
rise rakh
  of sun tëvakakh
  of tide wun
river nuo
road sel¹
roast
  vi. tabkhën
  vt. tabëkh
rock nëvet
roll vt. lëlës, ruten
rooster tiu dui
root naarin
  buttress root pepet
rope nau
rotten bu
round mwëlmwël
rubbish pëptakh
ruin v. ututakh
run vërvër
  run away riu

S
Saccharum edule nëvës
sad rëng iset
sago palm niet
saliva tib
saltwater tes
same irusimëk
sand nunwin
sap dëdënen, nuon
say vwër, vwiri²
scale
  n. ngërngirën
  v. ngërngir
scar n. mëdkëhën
Schleinitzia sp. mëte niel
scoop up (water) sip
scrape vt. khër
scrapings (of coconut) nivir
scratch vt. khër
  scratch ground jijër³
scrub fowl timolo
sea tes
sea almond bwëlil
sea hearse tree bërbër
sea worm nud
seaweed lumlum, lumlum tes
second piteru
see lis
seed novolelën
  of breadfruit novo
sell ululen
semen jëren¹
send on errand sere
sensitive grass neskërkërit
set (of sun) mëdin
settle
  (date) lëng nëbëng
  (of bird) bëj¹
seven jiru
  do seven times ivijiru
seventh pitejiru
seventy ingeljiru
sew lëlëkh
shadow mëlivin, mëlmilën
shake
  vi. khëkhël
vt. pwear  
  shake hands pwear lëmën

sharp mëmëlkhai

she en¹

sheath of coconut flower vësnu

shell jun
  of something bëlëkhësën
  of turtle ju nëpakha

shellfish tu
  sp. nìsis

shin jëvarën

shine (of moon) sar²

shiny moar

shirt nililëk

shiver khëkhël

shoes lel tilin

shoot v. lu², luluakh, luo¹

shooting star mëkхаwаi mëjì

short bëkh

shoulder pëti vwisin

shout juele, jul
  shout to wis

shut v. popej

sick mësit

sickness mësitien

side nëkhëkhërën

sing khe, hekhe

sink vi. mëdin

sister of man vevnën

sit liek See also pëlprélarës
  with legs extended pëjpëjërakh

six lëmjìs
  do six times ivilëmjìs

sixth pîtëltëmjìs

sixty ingelëmjìs

skin n. lil pekën, lilën, nil pekën, nilën

skink jijër¹

skinny mërej

skirt mëdes

skull potkhai

sky pekhai

slap uje

sleep metër
  on back didiven
  on one’s belly pavnuik
  on side metër en nëkhëkhërën
  ‘sleep’ in the eye ji mëten

sleeping place mëlngeŋ

sleepy duil

slice v. il

slip v. jejer

slippery mibëkhlu

slitgong nokhmo

slowly dëlo

slug dikio

slurp sërip

small vës¹

smegma jëbëkh

smell
  n. mën¹
  vt. rëng

smoke
  n. tëngting
  vi. jël

smoky vi. jël

smooth mëdëdin

snake nëmot

snake bean napopo

sneeze jikhëp

sniff sësërip

snore mingir

snot kësëlëm

soil deb, mëluło

sole (of foot) lel tilin

Solenopsis geminata nij

somersault pëpëlakh

something tegi

son netën

song nivwi

soon itvwiiren

sorcerer dui bëte, te bëte

sore
adj. rar, têb
  n. nit itêb
    have a sore têb
sorry rëng iset
sound dêlin
sour khau
sow n. jimod
speak titing
  a language vengesen
spear n. & v. sar
spider nelo
spider web mëngne nelo
spine ju bwëlin
spirit (of place/dead person) mimin, mwimwin
spit
  n. tib
  v. tebës
split bëri, mor, tibës
  by chopping jej bëri
spoil ututakh
*Spondias dulcis* naangës
spoor mëngne tilin
spring n. mëte nuo, nuo
spur (on rooster’s leg) pëlën, pëlpëlën
squat v. jopakh
squeeze bëkhëj
  squeeze liquid out of bële
stall (of fruit) nijëngjëng
stamp feet jëvjëpen
stand
  vi. vëtir
  vt. (stand something up) sëkh
star mëji
  evening star lavenu
  morning star tëvtëvřibës
  shooting star mëkhwaia mëji
start tékh
stay liek, tékh
  alive jilëp
  behind vëtir
steal
vi. vënakh
vt. vënakhhen
step on poj
sternum ju mërën
stick ne
    feathered, for dancing nil tiu
still adv. bër
stink, stinking bu
stinkwood nipwij
stone nëvet
  black nëvet mit, vetmit
  cooking nëvet nen neyo
  stone wall mwëlnëvet
stool nijëngjëng
stop tëtir
story vengesen
straight lingën
  straight away ivsig, ivsimëk
strike khëj
string nau
strong khuos
sucker (of banana etc.) jëlën
suddenly ivsig, ivsimëk
sugar niji
sugar ant, small tëlet
sugarcane niji
sun niel
surprised tesëk
suspend lëkhëj
  be suspended lelakh
swallow dëlim
swamp lëvlip
swamp harrier nëpel
swear susur
sweat v. mimid
sweatiness nipirang
sweep jijër
sweet lelëm
swell
  n. nau ne tes
  v. sëren
swelling on tree trunk bëbëtën, bëtën
swiftlet *nipipil*
swim *suvsip*
underwater *lunum, unun*
swollen *sëren*
swollen glands *kënkenël*
*Syzygium malaccense* *niivëkh*

*T*
taboo *bëte, tëbëte*
taboo fire *nib bëte*
Tahitian chestnut *nëmop*
tail *nilen², nululen*
take *lep¹, takhe*
take out *lep luo*
talk *tinging*
talk about *tinge*
tamanu *par¹*
tangled (of hair) *mëlmëlij*
Tanna fruit dove *vwitō*
taro *viakh*

giant *nivëkh*
water *buok*
tasteless *lilakh*
Tautu *Sevenu*
teach *vësvēs, vësvēsen*
tear v. *sir*
tears *nuo mëten*
tell *tinge*
tell lies *dëdëni*
tell on *wvirvwiri*
tell truth *vwërdo*
ten *isngel*
do ten times *ivisngel*
tendon *nuot*
tenth *pitesngel*
*Terminalia catappa* *bwëlil*
testicles *lesën, nolleśen*
that *dem. etër, gi¹, levër*
that one *enir, gir, levër*
sub. *te*
thatch *nït*

their *dl. esaru, gesaru*
chewable *jomaru*
drinkable *mënaru*
edible *daru*
their *tl. esartël, gesartël*
chewable *jomsartël*
drinkable *mënsartël*
edible *dar*

them
*dl. eru*
*tl. eritël*
*pl. er*
then *en³, jere, jere*
there *etër, lene*
they
*dl. eru*
*tl. eritël*
*pl. er*

thick *tëtëb*
thin *mënimënëp, mërej*
thing *tegi*
think *vêrëng*
think of *vësakh*
third *pitetël*
thirsty *rëng ipomënëmën*
thirsty for *rëng ipomën*
thirty *ingeltël*
this *gi¹*
thought *vêrëngien*
three *itël*
do three times *ivitël*
do three by three / in threes *tëltël*
throw *jëren²*
throw missile at *nej*
thump *pwarëkhlih*
thunder *belevër*
tie up *lékh²*
tight jëjën

time eren
tip out sëkh tren
tip over vt. & vi. ruten
Tirakh language/person Tirakh
to duen, duon, ra
  (goal) eren gen
  (person) en^2
  (place) e
today enisi, mosi
toe narëkh tilin
tomorrow maren
tongs pelej
tongue mimin^1
too much ikhos
tooth lun^1
top ninwolën
  on top esoweies
touch iar
track (of something) melinge tilin
tree ne, pêle ne
  of particular species pêlen
  unidentified tree sp. net
tree fern pongeret
  Trichoglossus haematodus jërëp
trousers nivip
true wërdo
trunk pêlen
tuber lelën
  chewy nêpet
  Turbo marmoratus nêpik
turn vt. ruten
  turn over vi. ruten
turtle nêpakh
  turtle shell ju nêpakh
twenty ingelru
twice, do ivaru
twins mëlep
two iru
  do two by two, in twos ruru
Tyto alba nëvod

U

uncle
  father’s elder brother etmen lil
  father’s younger brother etmen vës
  mother’s brother asen
uncooked mëdakh
under mëlivin
underneath enivin
understand rëngdo
uphill esakh
upwards esakh
urethral opening mëte kuku, mëte lesën
urinate mokhwo
us excl.
  dl. këmemru
  tl. këmemtël
  pl. këmem
us incl.
  dl. naakëdru
  tl. nakedëtël
  pl. naakëd

V

vagina maru
vas deferens nau ne lesën, nuot ne lesën
vein nuot
vertigo, have mëmëtikh
very ikhos
victory leaf naarës
village venu
vine jin^2, nau
voice dëlin
volcano nib
vomit
  n., vomitus luakhen
  v. luakh

W

wage war nur
waistband lun^2
wait tërakh
wait for **tërakh**

wake up **lîlis, mërit**

walk **ling**

walk across **lingling lau**

walk along reef **jovo tes**

walk around **ling betel**

walking stick **nijëvjëp, pëlijëvjëp**

wall of house **pek nëmakh**

stone wall **mwêlnëvet**

wander about **lingling**

want **vwër**

want to **rëng**

warrior **dui nur**

wart **mête tèmes**

wash **jîle**

watch n. **mête niel**

water

  n. **nuo, nuon**

  v. **jîle**

water taro **buok**

watercourse (non-permanent) **mikhwel**

waterweed **lumlum, lumlum nuo**

wave n. **nau ne tes**

we excl.

  dl. **këmemru**

  tl. **këmementël**

  pl. **këmem**

we incl.

  dl. **nakedru**

  tl. **nakedêtël**

  pl. **naakëd**

wear hat **vio**

web, of spider **mëlng ne lo**

wedding **lakhien**

wet

  adj. **wor**

  v. **jîle**

what? **sëte**

when sub. **eren**

when? **sëvërën**

where? **evi**

whisper **sësëreves, titing dëlo**

whistle **vwîlîl**

white **wip**

white-throated pigeon **tërîu**

whitewood **vënînosowos**

who? **es**

widow **mëlis**

widower **mëlis**

wife **tëvëlëkh**

wild **tîrkhëbëb**

wild cane varieties **mer, vieb**

wild kava **pëllîkh**

wild yam **nëbwëd**

  variety **dërîp po**

wind n. **nitëp**

  onshore **nitëp ileng e lebëb**

  southeast **nitëp iling e lo**

wing **nîvîvên**

wink **pêl mëten tëvëlkhas**

wipe **jar**

with **duen, duon, eduen, eduon**

woman **tëvëlëkh, têvet**

  barren woman **turwîr**

  old woman **tëvëlëkh têrep**

  young woman **netitevên**

wood n. **ne**

wood grub **lëkh**

work

  n. **mekarien**

  v. **mekar**

world **venu**

worm **jëlëj**

sea **nud**

write **ul**, **ulul**

  write out/down **ul luo**

Y–Z

yam **kake**

  lesser **dërîp**

  wild **dërîp po**
varieties  kake përe, lejelej, navwilo, nêkhëb, pêkhajin, pêkpok, pêtisêkhe, revesakh
yam mound  tikh ne kake
yawn  mamau
year  sêkho
yell  jul
yellow  woj
yellow white-eye  pêlelakh
yesterday  nenêp
yet  bêr²

you
  sg.  naakêm
  dl.  kemru
  tl.  kemtêl
  pl.  kem
young woman  netitevën
your sg.  esom, gesom
  chewable  jomom
  drinkable  mënom
edible  dom
Zosterops flavifrons  pêlelak
A total of ten texts in the Tape language have been recorded, transcribed and analysed, amounting to about twenty minutes of continuous speech from three different male speakers, aged in their fifties and above. Each of these is presented below with interlinear glosses.

These texts have been lightly edited from the recorded spoken version in line with the wishes of speakers of Tape. Changes which have been made to the texts as they were actually spoken take into account the following considerations:

- Some stories include occasional factual errors. In some cases, the speaker would immediately correct this in the recording, in which case the original error has simply been deleted. In other cases, the error was not noticed until the story was being transcribed, in which case the correct material is substituted for what was said incorrectly.

- Small parts of some of the recordings turned out to be inaudible (or very nearly so), either because of poor quality recording or because a speaker was mumbling. Such material has also been ignored.

- Occasionally, a speaker makes unexpected shifts of audience, sometimes addressing a story to me (as the recorder) and sometimes to the community of Tape speakers. Where a story is consistently addressed to a single audience, this is not changed in these stories. However, where a narrator alternates unpredictably within a single story, the audience is made consistent throughout in these published versions.

- Unsurprisingly—especially since this language is no longer spoken on a daily basis—the stories also occasionally contain what were recognised by speakers as ‘performance errors’, i.e. slips of the tongue, inappropriate choice of words, incomplete words or sentences while a speaker struggles to find an acceptable way to express something, and so on. Again, such features were sometimes corrected on tape and sometimes not, though these features have been eliminated from these published texts.

- Sometimes a story-teller began to jump ahead of himself and then reverted back to the original story line, or he thought of something later that he meant to say earlier. In such cases, material that was spoken out of place has been edited out, or placed in a more appropriate location.
• Speakers of Tape were insistent that where somebody had occasionally lapsed into Bislama, this should not be reflected in the written record of the language. Such material has also been edited out in the versions of the texts that are presented here.

However, it is recognised that some scholars may have a legitimate interest in the original versions of these texts, so the recordings, along with detailed transcriptions of these, will ultimately be deposited in appropriate archival sources.

4.1 Women’s tooth avulsion

This story was told by Harry Rambe in Tautu village on 4 September 2002. It tells of traditional practices associated with the removal of the front teeth of women when they reached a marriageable age.

Be-vwiri en vengesien esek e Tape.
1SG:IRR-tell LOC language POSS:1SG LOC Tape
‘I will tell it in my Tape language.’

Eren dui tërtërep tetwo i-n-vwër ipa-n-takhe tèveëlêkh
time man old: PL before 3REAL-PL-want 3NONSG:IRR-PL-marry woman
i-n-vin i-n-khêl nêmakh nen tèveëlêkh esar.
3REAL-PL-go 3REAL-PL-build house PURP wife POSS:3PL
‘When the old men before wanted to marry a woman, they would go and make a house for their wives.’

I-n-vin dë-n-liek elelvenu.
3REAL-PL-go ES-PL-live inside
‘They would go and live inside.’

Tèveëlêkh pongen.
woman only
‘There were only women.’

Dui iskha.
man no
‘There were no men.’

I-n-vin dë-n-liek elelvenu.
3REAL-PL-go ES-PL-live inside
‘They would go and live inside.’

En i-n-têkh lu-n iru gi emu levêr.
and 3REAL-PL-knock.out tooth-3SG two REL front that.one
‘And they would knock out those two teeth which were at the front.’

I-n-têkh luo, i-n-têkh luo rivwi.
3REAL-PL-knock.out out 3REAL-PL-knock.out out all
‘They would knock them out until they had knocked them both out.’
I-n-khës d-ivin d-ivin i-k-iar nit
3REAL-PL-dance ES-go ES-go 3SG:REAL-NEC-reach place
i-kë-ren.¹
3SG:REAL-NEC-be.daylight
‘They would dance on and on until daybreak.’

Maren ne-n i-n-liek.
tomorrow PART-3SG 3:REAL-PL-stay
‘The next day they would stay (there).’

 Nil isimëk i-n-liek elelvenu en i-mos.
month one 3REAL-PL-stay inside and 3SG:REAL-finish
‘They would stay inside for one month and then it was finished.’

I-n-mo evren i-n-khës mili.
3REAL-PL-come outside 3REAL-PL-dance again
‘They would come outside and they would dance again.’

Jerete i-n-lep ivin ejëkhë-n elakh esen.
then 3REAL-PL-take 3SG:REAL:go GOAL-3SG husband POSS:3SG
‘Then they would take her away to her husband.’

Gi elakh esen i-yek a-da-ske-tëkh lu-n
REL husband POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL-have IMP:REAL-CONT-NEG-knock.out tooth-3SG

i-kë-melet d-ivin energe nêmakh gi i-kë-n-tëkh
3SG:REAL-NEC-return ES-go GOAL house SUB 3REAL-NEC-PL-knock.out
lu-n mili.
tooth-3SG again
‘She who has a husband and her teeth have not been knocked out had to go back to
the house where they would knock out her teeth again.’

Gi i-da-sk-ivin ejëkhë-n elakh esen i-n-tëkh
REL 3SG:REAL-CONT-NEG-go GOAL-3SG husband POSS:3SG 3REAL-PL-knock.out
lu-n.
tooth-3SG
‘They would knock out the teeth of her who has not yet gone to her husband.’

I-vëtir d-ivin d-ivin i-bëkh-vin ejëkhë-n elakh
3SG:REAL-stay.behind ES-go ES-go 3SG:REAL-INCT-go GOAL-3SG husband
esen.
POSS:3SG
‘She would stay behind and would eventually just go to her husband.’

Povër i-ska-dang luo lu-n i-kë-vin ejëkhë-n
if 3REAL-NEG:PL-pull out tooth-3SG 3SG:REAL-NEC-go GOAL

¹ The reason for the appearance of the necessitative prefixes in this sentence is still a mystery.
Chapter 4

4.2 Offerings to Tar

This story was also told by Harry Rambe. It was recorded in Tautu village on 4 September 2002. In it, he discusses the traditional practice of making offerings to Tar, who he regarded as the traditional equivalent of the Christian God.

elakh esen netê-n dui gi emu ne-n i-kë-mes.
husband POSS:3SG offspring-3SG male REL first PART-3SG 3SG:REAL-NEC-die
‘If they hadn’t pulled out her teeth and she went to her husband, her firstborn son would die.’

Jerete gi etakh ne-n i-kë-bêkh-jilêp.
then REL next PART-3SG 3SG:REAL-NEC-INCP-live
‘Then the next one would surely live.’

Tëvëlêkh i-ka-n-jilêp.
female 3REAL-NEC-PL-live
‘The females will surely live.’

Gir ogi en-vwër be-vwiri en kem këpa-n-rëngdo.
that only 1SG:REAL-want 1SG:IRR-tell GOAL 2PL 2NONSG:IRR-PL-know
‘That is all what I want to tell you all for you to know.’

Vengesien e kastom esed e Tape.
story ABOUT tradition POSS:1PL.INCL SOURCE Tape
‘It is a story about our traditions from Tape.’

Enisi en-vwër be-vwiri mili vengesien isig en kem
now 1SG:REAL-want 1SG:IRR-tell again story one GOAL 2PL
këpa-n-rëngdo.
2NONSG:IRR-PL-know
‘Now I want to tell another story to you for you all to know.’

Naakêd e Tape.
1PL.INCL SOURCE Tape
‘We are from Tape.’

Eren mwëliun gi i-vwër ipo-ve nêbêng i-vëkhëj buos.
time chief REL 3SG:REAL-want 3SG:IRR-make ceremony 3SG:REAL-kill pig
‘When there was a chief who wanted to hold a ceremony, he would kill a pig.’

I-n-vin i-n-ve nêmwêl esen.
3REAL-PL-go 3REAL-PL-make garden BEN:3SG
‘They would go and make a garden for him.’

I-n-rap esen jere dë-n-bêkh-rap esar.
3REAL-PL-clear.garden BEN:3SG then ES-PL-INCP-clear.garden BEN:3PL
‘They would clear a garden site for him and then they would just clear garden sites for themselves.’
I-n-lulo kake esen jerete i-n-bēkh-lulo esar.
3REAL-PL-plant yam BEN:3SG then 3REAL-PL-INCIP-plant BEN:3PL
‘They would plant yams for him and then they would plant them for themselves.’

I-tēkh d-ivin d-ivin d-ivin iar e kake i-mēdakh
iar e lelē-n i-yek.
3SG:REAL:reach LOC tuber-3SG 3SG:REAL-have
‘It would stay until the yams had grown and had tubers.’

I-n-vin dē-n-khēl.
3REAL-PL-go ES-PL-dig
‘They would go and dig them up.’

I-n-vin dē-n-takhe en nimel ese mwēliun.
3REAL-PL-go ES-PL-take GOAL meeting.house POSS chief
‘They would go and take them to the chief’s meeting house.’

Udi.
3SG:REAL:eat
‘He would eat them.’

Jere i-n-khēl mili kake po-ve nēbēng te
then 3REAL-PL-dig again yam 3SG:IRR-make ceremony SUB
ipa-n-khēs jēne-n.
3NONSG:IRR-PL-dance CAUSE-3SG
‘Then they would dig yams again for him to hold the ceremony that they would
dance for.’

En i-n-kēs nimwil.
and 3NONSG:REAL-PL-pinch.off cycad
‘And they would pinch off the cycad (leaves).’

I-tutuen erenge venu gi ipo-mo erenge nēbēng
POSS:3SG
‘He would distribute them to the villages that would come to his ceremony.’

Vēr i-kēsiar nēbēng isngel venu esar i-n-jem
if 3SG:REAL-go.past day ten village POSS:3PL 3REAL-PL-remove
nimwil.
cycad
‘If it went past ten days, their village would remove the cycad (leaves).’

Nēbēng isig i-n-jem isig.
day one 3REAL-PL-remove one
‘For each day, they would remove one (leaf).’

Nēbēng isig i-n-jem luo isig d-ivin d-ivin iar e
day one 3REAL-PL-remove out one ES-go ES-go 3SG:REAL:reach LOC
nëbëng isngel.

day ten

‘For each day they would remove one (leaf) for ten days.’

*I-n-vin ejëkhë-n mwëliun ipa-n-ve nëbëng esen.*
3REAL-PL-go GOAL chief 3NONSG:IRR-PL-make ceremony POSS:3SG

‘They would go to the chief to perform his ceremony.’

*I-n-lëkh buos esar dë-n-tën e mwëliun.*
3REAL-PL-tie.up pig POSS:3PL ES-PL-give GOAL chief

‘They would tie up their pigs and give them to the chief.’

*D-ivin d-ivin i-mos iar rivrip i-n-kho*  
es-go es-go 3SG:REAL-finish 3SG:REAL:reach evening 3REAL-PL-bundle.up

kake erenge lib.
yam LOC bamboo

‘Eventually it was done by the evening and they would bundle up yams on the bamboo (platform).’

*I-n-kho erenge lib dë-n-sëkh duen melëkh ne-n.*
3REAL-PL-bundle.up LOC bamboo ES-PL-stand.up ACC kava PURP-3SG

‘They would bundle them up on the bamboo (platform) and stand them up with the kava to go with it.’

*I-n-sëkh ivin esoweies dë-n-lep net pwërpar*  
3REAL-PL-stand.up 3SG:REAL:go on.top ES-PL-take child pig

dë-n-kho edeb.
es-PL-tie.up on.ground

‘They would stand it up on top and take a piglet and tie it up on the ground.’

*Gi levër i-n-lot en atua ese këmem.*  
? ? ? 3REAL-PL-pray GOAL god POSS 1 PL.EXCL

‘... (?) They would pray to our god.’

*I-n-wis nëkhse-n i-n-vwër Tar.*
3REAL-PL-call name-3SG 3REAL-PL-say Tar

‘They used to call him “Tar”.’

*I-n-wis en i-n-vwër, “Tar o!”*  
3REAL-PL-call 3SG 3REAL-PL-say Tar oh

‘They would call to him, “Oh, Tar!”’

*Po-mo dë-lep kake dom duon melëkh ne-n duon buos*  
2SG:IRR-come ES-take yam ED:2SG ACC kava PURP-3SG ACC pig

ne-n.
PURP-3SG

‘Come and take your yams and the kava to go with it and the pig to go with it.’
Nëbëng jiru mosi.  
‘It is seven days today.’

I-vwiri mwili.  
‘He would say it again.’

I-wis nēkhse-n i-vwër, “Tar o!”  
‘He would call his name, “Oh, Tar!”.’

Po-mo dē-lep kake dom duon melēkh ne-n duon buos  
‘Come and take your yams and the kava to go with it and the pig to go with it.’

Nëbëng jiru mosi.  
‘It is seven days today.’

Dë-n-liek d-ivin d-ivin nit i-mit.  
‘And they would stay until it was dark.’

I-n-khēs d-ivin d-ivin nit i-ren.  
‘They would dance until it was daylight.’

Dui gi eso i-n-vin e venu esar.  
‘People who were from far away would go to their villages.’

Er gi i-n-liek ejēkhē-n mwēliun i-n-liek.  
‘Those who lived with the chief would stay.’

Kake gi i-n-sēkh-ēr i-kē-ska-n iar.  
‘They must not touch the yams that they had stood up.’

I-tēkh etēr d-ivin d-ivin d-ivin i-mumu duon melēkh ne-n.  
‘It would stay there until it disintegrated with the kava that went with it.’

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2 This appears to be a formulaic utterance associated with the offering of goods to Tar, the significance of which is not explained by the narrator.
Chapter 4

4.3 A devil

This story, told by Ephraim Joshua on 5 September 2002 in Tautu village, tells of an old man who stopped a devil from killing people.

Etër ogi en-vwër be-vwiri en kem këpa-n-rëngdo.
there all 1SG:REAL-want 1SG:IRR-tell GOAL 2PL 2NONSG:IRR-PL-know
‘That is all I wanted to tell you for you all to know.’

Tetwo dë-n-lot en dui gi pële venu.
before 1NONSG.INCL:REAL-PL-pray GOAL person REL origin village
‘Before we used to pray to the person who was the origin of the village.’

Nëkhse-n i-ve Tar.
name-3SG 3SG:REAL-COP Tar
‘His name was Tar.’

En-vwër be-titing mili duon naakëm.
1SG:REAL-want 1SG:IRR-tell.story again ACC 2SG
‘I want to tell another (story) with you.’

Nuo isig ejëkh këmem.
spring one LOC 1PL.EXCL
‘There is a spring on our land.’

Nuo mimi-n i-yek.
spring spirit-3SG 3SG:REAL-have
‘The spring has a spirit.’

En-vwër be-titing ogi jënen mimi-n i-khéj
1SG:REAL-want 1SG:IRR-tell.story only because spirit-3SG 3SG:REAL-kill
pongen dui.
always person
‘I just want to tell the story because the spirit was always killing people.’

I-khéj dui d-ivin dui tërep gi nëkhse-n Masing.
3SG:REAL-kill person ES-go man old REL name-3SG Masing
‘It killed people until there was an old man whose name was Masing.’

Dui tërev-ër nëkhse-n enir.
man old-DEM name-3SG that.one
‘That was the old man’s name.’

I-liék d-ivin i-lis i-khéj dui itar.
3SG:REAL-stay ES-go 3SG:REAL-see 3SG:REAL-kill person many
‘He stayed until he saw that it had killed many people.’

Ivin ivsig i-metër.
3SG:REAL:go one.day 3SG:REAL-sleep
‘He went one day and he went to sleep.’
I-metêr  i-lis  ivin  erenge nôo levêr.
3SG:REAL-sleep 3SG:REAL-see 3SG:REAL:go GOAL spring that
‘He dreamt that he went to that spring.’

I-lis  mimi nôo levêr i-ve têvêlêkh.
3SG:REAL-see spirit spring that 3SG:REAL-COP woman
‘He saw that the spirit of that spring was a woman.’

I-ve têvêlêkh netê-n gi i-da-vês ogi.
3SG:REAL-COP woman child-3SG DEM 3SG:REAL-CONT-small only
‘She was a woman whose child was still only small.’

I-r-lik d-ivin en ivin i-khêj pongen dui.
3NONSG:REAL-DL-stay ES-go and 3SG:REAL:go 3SG:REAL-kill always person
‘The two of them lived on and on and she would always go and kill people.’

D-ivin i-mo i-lik ejêkhê-n netê-n mili.
ES-go 3SG:REAL-come 3SG:REAL-stay ACC-3SG child-3SG again
‘And she would come and stay with her child again.’

Eren gi i-vwêr ipo-khêj dui e i-lingling
time SUB 3SG:REAL-want 3SG:IRR-kill person LOC 3SG:REAL-walk
3SG:REAL:go 3SG:REAL-kill person
‘At a time that she wanted to kill somebody, she would walk away and kill somebody.’

I-mos i-mo mili i-lik dui nôo vêš-ar.
3SG:REAL-finish 3SG:REAL-come back 3SG:REAL-live ACC child-3SG small-DEM
‘When she was finished, she would come back and live with her small child.’

Dui tërev-ar i-lis uren-êr i-metêr.
man old-DEM 3SG:REAL-see like-DEM 3SG:REAL-sleep
‘That old man dreamt like that.’

Mimi-n i-lingling nit i-mit.
spirit-3SG 3SG:REAL-walk place 3SG:REAL-dark
‘The spirit would wander around when it was dark.’

Ivin i-lis têvêlêkh levar i-ve mëri.
3SG:REAL:go 3SG:REAL-see woman that 3SG:REAL-make mat
‘He went and saw that woman making a mat.’

I-ve mëri i-mos, i-vwêr mili ip-ivin
3SG:REAL-make mat 3SG:REAL-finish 3SG:REAL-want again 3SG:IRR-go
again 3SG:IRR-kill person
‘When she had finished making the mat, she wanted to go again and kill somebody.’

Dui tërev-ar ivin i-lis uren-êr i-takhe nêve
man old-DEM 3SG:REAL:go 3SG:REAL-see like-DEM 3SG:REAL-take black
mit isig.
stone one
‘When the old man saw that, he took a black stone.’

Ivin evibēkh ejēkhē-n.
3SG:REAL:go close GOAL-3SG
‘He went close to her.’

I-lep nēvet-ar i-khēj en tili tēvēlēkh-ar gi
3SG:REAL:pick.up stone-DEM 3SG:REAL:hit INST leg woman-DEM REL

i-khēj pongen dui er.
3SG:REAL:kill always person PL
‘He picked up that stone and hit the leg of that woman who was always killing people with it.’

I-khēj tili-n.
3SG:REAL:hit leg-3SG
‘He hit her leg.’

Tili-n nitvelēn i-mēj.
leg-3SG one.of.pair 3 SG:REAL:break
‘One of her legs was broken.’

Enisi i-ske-lingling mili.
now 3SG:REAL:NEG:walk again
‘Then she didn’t walk any more.’

I-ske-khēj mili dui.
3SG:REAL:NEG:kill again person
‘She didn’t kill people any more.’

I-liek ogi erenge nēmakh esen.
3SG:REAL:stay only LOC house POSS:3SG
‘She just stayed at her house.’

I-liek i-liek.
3SG:REAL:stay 3 SG:REAL:stay
‘She stayed and stayed.’

Netite vēs esen tēvēlēkh mili.
child small POSS:3SG female again
‘Her small child was another female.’

I-ske-rēngdo te nunu esen i-ve pongen mili.
3SG:REAL:NEG:know SUB mother POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL:do always again
‘She did not know that her mother always behaved like that.’

I-ska-r-kuos mili gi ipa-r-lingling ipa-r-khēj dui.
‘They were not strong (enough) to wander around killing people.’
4.4 Trading saltwater

This story was told by Ephraim Joshua on 13 August 13 2004 in Tautu village. It tells how the Tape people used to arrange to meet the neighbouring Tirakh people, whose land provided no access to the sea, at a particular place where they could exchange saltwater (used for cooking) for other goods.

Kënëk en-vwër be-tinge gi Tirakh i-n-mo
1SG 1SG:REAL-want 1SG:IRR-talk.about SUB Tirakh 3REAL-PL-come
i-n-ul tes ejëkh naakëd.
3REAL-PL-buy saltwater SOURCE 1PL.INCL

‘I want to talk about how the Tirakh people would come and buy saltwater from us.’

Eren i-n-vwër ipa-n-mo ipa-n-ul tes
time 3REAL-PL-want 3NONSG:IRR-PL-come 3NONSG:IRR-PL-buy saltwater
i-n-lëng nëbëng.
3NONSG:IRR-PL-put day

‘When they wanted to come and buy saltwater, they would settle on a day.’

I-n-lëng nëbëng i-n-lëng nëbëng gir.
3REAL-PL-put day 3REAL-PL-put day that.one

‘When they settled on a day, that’s the day that they settled on.’

Nëbëng enir këmem ba-n-mo ba-n-ul
day that.one 1PL.EXCL 1NONSG.EXCL:IRR-PL-come 1NONSG.EXCL:IRR-PL-buy
tes ejëkh-kem.
saltwater SOURCE-2PL

‘(They would say) “On that day we will come and buy saltwater from you”.’

Këmem më-n-vin më-n-sip tes
1PL.EXCL 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-go 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-scoop.up saltwater
elo.
on.coast

‘We would go and scoop up saltwater on the coast.’

Më-n-takhe i-mo emakh.
1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-carry 3SG:REAL-come to.home

‘We would bring it home.’
Eren nèbèng ne-n i-n-mo.
‘When it was time for it, they would come.’

I-n-mo i-n-luluakh en tin.
‘When they came, they would fire shots with rifles.’

I-n-rëng tin i-jëvot këmem mè-n-ÿwër,
“When they heard the rifles fire, we would say, “Ah! There they have come”.

Më-n-vin më-n-tërakh-ër nit i-n-ul tes e.
“We would go and wait for them where they used to buy the saltwater.’

Nit i-n-ul tes e nèkhse-n i-ve e Jarabu.
‘The place where they bought the saltwater was Jarabu.’

Eren i-n-ul tes i-n-lep kake i-n-tën en naakëd.
‘When they bought the saltwater, they brought yams and gave them to us.’

Naakëd dë-n-to tes en-ër.
‘We would present the saltwater to them.’

Er i-n-ling i-n-vin emakh esar.
‘They walked away to their homes.’

Naakëd tu dë-n-vin enenge nèmakh se naakëd.
‘We also went to our houses.’

Te en-ÿwër be-tinge i-mos enir.
‘What I wanted to talk about finishes there.’

4.5 Murder over a debt

This story was recorded on 13 August 2004 in Tautu village by Harry Rambe. It tells of a renowned incident in the early colonial era of Malakula in which some Tirakh people
Tape tapes

murdered a number of Europeans at Norsup. They were eventually captured and sent away to Vila, never to return to Malakula.

These events are documented historically and reported in O’Reilly (1957:27–28) as having taken place in 1916. A man called Bridges, his Ni-Vanuatu wife and their four children were all reported as having been hacked to death in a dispute with people from Tirakh over a debt. Although this account indicates that Bridges’ son was captured alive and later taken to the bush to be killed and eaten, the historical record indicates that it was in fact the son of Corlette, an associate of Bridges, and not Bridges’ own son, who was killed and eaten.

Kënëk Harry Rambe.

1SG Harry Rambe

‘I am Harry Rambe.’

En-vwër be-vwiri mwili ipërvi dui e Tirakh

1SG:REAL-want 1SG:IRR-tell again 3SG:REAL-how man LOC Tirakh

i-n-mo dë-n-khëj Misti Presis i-lièk e Lalep.

3REAL-PL-come ES-PL-kill Mr Bridges 3SG:REAL-live LOC Lalep

‘I want to tell again how the Tirakh people came and killed Mr Bridges who was living at Lalep.’

I-n-kho mëtiu dë-n-mo.

3REAL-PL-tie.up copra ES-PL-come

‘They tied up copra (threaded onto lengths of rope) and came.’

I-n-vwër ipa-n-ul stik tabak ejëkh Misti Presis.

3REAL-PL-want 3NONSG:IRR-PL-buy stick tobacco SOURCE Mr Bridges

‘They wanted to buy tobacco stick from Mr Bridges.’

Misti Presis ul mëtiu esar i-set.

Mr Bridges 3SG:REAL-pay.for copra POSS:3PL 3SG:REAL-bad

‘Mr Bridges did not pay good money for their copra.’

I-n-vwër ipa-n-khëj en.

3REAL-PL-want 3NONSG:IRR-PL-kill 3SG

‘They wanted to kill him.’

I-n-khëj Misti Presis duon mesis esen i-r-mes.

3REAL-PL-kill Mr Bridges ACC wife POSS:3SG 3REAL-DL-die

‘They killed Mr Bridges and his wife dead.’

I-n-sëlikh netë-n dui dë-n-jovo nuo dë-n-vin eies.

3REAL-PL-carry.on.shoulders child-3SG male ES-PL-go.along river ES-PL-go up

‘They carried his son on their shoulders away up along the river.’

Dë-n-vin-vin eies jere dë-n-khëj bëni netë-n-ar.

ES-PL-REDUP-go up then ES-PL-kill dead child-3SG-DEM

‘And they went up and up and then killed that child of his.’

Dë-n-sëngen elel nib en i-n-udi.

ES-PL-put.into inside bamboo and 3REAL-PL-eat

‘And they put him inside the bamboo (and baked him) and ate him.’
I-n-udi jere i-n-vwër ipa-n-mo mwili
3REAL-PL-eat then 3REAL-PL-want 3NONSG:IRR-PL-come back
ipa-n-ul stik tabak e Nebënwo mwili.
3NONSG:IRR-PL-buy stick tobacco LOC Norsup again
‘When they had eaten him they wanted to come back to buy tobacco stick at Norsup again.’

I-n-mo en Kaya i-lis-ër.
3REAL-PL-come and Caillard 3SG:REAL-see-3PL
‘They came and Caillard saw them.’

I-lis-ër i-vwër, “Dui i-n-khëj Misti Presis-ar enir.”
3SG:REAL-see-3PL 3SG:REAL-say man 3REAL-PL-kill Mr Bridges-DEM that.one
‘When he saw them, he said, “Those are the men who killed Mr Bridges”.’

Pa-n-tikh-ër.
1NONSG.INCL:IRR-PL-pull-3PL
‘Let’s pull them (and hold onto them).’

I-n-use jëjën-ër.
3REAL-PL-hold tight-3PL
‘They grabbed hold of them.’

I-n-use rivwi lëma-r.
3REAL-PL-hold all arm-3PL
‘They held all of their arms.’

I-n-tev-ër i-n-vin elelvenu stoa gi enivin edeb.
3REAL-PL-push-3PL 3REAL-PL-go inside store DEM underneath on.ground
‘They pushed them inside that store underneath on the ground.’

I-n-metër d-ivin d-ivin d-ivin nit i-ren wosip
3REAL-PL-sleep ES-go ES-go ES-go place 3SG:REAL-be-daylight warship
isig i-mo.
one 3SG:REAL-come
‘They slept until it was daylight and a warship came.’

I-takhe-r dë-n-vin e Vila.
3SG:REAL-take-3PL ES-PL-go GOAL Vila
‘It took them away to Vila.’

I-n-mes e Vila.
3REAL-PL-die LOC Vila
‘They died in Vila.’

Vengesien esek ogi enir.
story POSS:1SG only that.one
‘That is just my story.’

The building in which these men were incarcerated is still standing at Norsup, and still functions as a store. The main store is built over a ground-level warehouse and is reached by climbing one of two sets of concrete steps. The door to the warehouse is found beneath these steps.
4.6 Becoming refugees from the Tirakh people

Harry Rambe’s story, recorded in Tautu village on 13 August 2004, tells of the initial incident which led to a battle with the Tirakh people, which resulted in the Tape people escaping from their neighbours to the present-day village of Tautu.

*Kënnëk Harry Rambe.*

1SG Harry Rambe

‘I am Harry Rambe.’

En-vwër be-vwiri mwili ipërvi më-n-riu
dë-n-mo erenge skul.

1SG:REAL-want 1SG:IRR-tell again 3SG:REAL:how 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-escape

ES-PL-come GOAL church

‘I want to tell again how we escaped and came to the church.’

IvSIMëk Tirakh i-n-mo erenge venu ese kêmem e Tape.

One.day Tirakh 3REAL-PL-come GOAL village POSS 1PL.EXCL LOC Tape

‘One day, the Tirakh people came to our village of Tape.’

I-n-lik d-ivin d-ivin d-ivin dui têrep ejëkhê-d isig

3REAL-PL-stay ES-go ES-go ES-go man old LOC-1PL.INCL one

i-ve mwëlium.

3SG:REAL-COP chief

‘They stayed on and on and one old man at our place was a chief.’

I-vwiri en-ër isig i-vwër, “Lipakh iis-ëk-ar enir”.

3SG:REAL-say GOAL-3PL one 3SG:REAL-say dog 3SG:REAL:bite-1SG-DEM that.one

‘He said to one of them, “That dog bit me”.’
Kënëk povër lipakh esek ipo-yek i-d-is en.
1SG if dog POSS:1SG 3SG:IRR-have 3SG:REAL-CONT-bite 3SG
“If I had a dog, it would still bite him (back).”

I-vwiri ured en, etet esek Harry Rambe i-rëng.
3SG:REAL-say like 3SG father POSS:1SG Harry Rambe 3SG:REAL-hear
“When he said that, my father Harry Rambe heard it.’

Ivin dë-luo dui nen.
3SG:REAL-go ES-shoot man DEM
‘He went and shot that man.’

I-luo Tirakh nen i-mes i-metër.
3SG:REAL-shoot Tirakh DEM 3SG:REAL-die 3SG:REAL-sleep
‘He shot that Tirakh man stone dead.’

3REAL-PL-say ES-PL-say oh 2SG:REAL-shoot man-DEM
‘They (the other Tape people) said, “Oh, you have shot that man”.’

Tirakh i-kë-n-tëkhes-ëd.
Tirakh 3REAL-NEC-PL-chase.away-1PL.INCL
‘The Tirakh people will surely chase us away.’

I-ske-përe Tirakh i-n-mo.
3SG:REAL-NEG-long Tirakh 3REAL-PL-come
‘Before long, the Tirakh people came.’

I-n-vëtir erenge nëkhës e Pwitarvere dë-n-luluakh i-mo
GOAL village POSS 1PL.EXCL LOC Pwitarvere ES-PL-fire.shot 3SG:REAL-come
e venu ese këmem e Tape.
‘They stood on Pwitarvere hill and fired shots into our village of Tape.’

I-n-vwër, “Këpa-n-mën tes!”
3:REAL-PL-say 2NONSG:IRR-PL-drink saltwater
‘They said, “You will all drink saltwater”.’

Jerete i-n-melet dë-n-vin.
then 3REAL-PL-return ES-PL-go
‘Then they went back.’

Maren ne-n te i-n-mo i-n-luluakh.
tomorrow PURP-3SG ? 3REAL-PL-come 3REAL-PL-fire.shot
‘The next day they came (back) and fired shots.’

“Këpa-n-mën tes!”
2NONSG:IRR-PL-drink saltwater
‘(They said), “You will all drink saltwater!”.’

I-n-vwiri i-n-vwër iar meteveren ne-n.
3REAL-PL-say 3REAL-PL-say 3SG:REAL:reach morning PURP-3SG
‘They said it until the morning.’
4.7 Escaping to Tautu

This story was told by Harry Rambe of Tautu village on 4 December 2000. It tells briefly about the original migrations of people from Tape in the 1920s to escape from the depredations of the Big Nambas and the Tirakh people and of their escape to Tautu. It also expresses his hope that the ancestral Tape language will not be lost forever.

Këmem Harry Rambe.
1SG Harry Rambe
‘I am Harry Rambe.’

En-vwiri pij eduen kem.
1SG:REAL-speak good ACC 2PL
‘I am explaining with you all.’

Naakëd rivwi dui e Tape.
1PL.INCL all person LOC Tape
‘We are all Tape people.’

Këpa-n-rëng-k mwili en-titing.
2NONSG:IRR-PL-hear-1SG again 1SG:REAL-speak
‘You will all hear me speaking again.’

En-vwër be-vwiri en kem ipërvi
1SG:REAL-want 1SG:IRR-tell GOAL 2PL 3SG:REAL:how
dë-n-riu e venu esed
1NONSG.INCL:REAL-PL-escape SOURCE village POSS:1PL.INCL
dë-n-mo elo erenge skul.
1NONSG:REAL-PL-come to.coast GOAL church
‘I want to tell you all how we escaped from our village and came to the church on the coast.’

Dë-n-lënglëng venu esed e Tape dë-n-mo
GOAL Vëti
‘We left our village of Tape and came to Vëti.’
Dë-n-riu e Vëti dë-n-mo e Tilip.
1NONSG.INCL:REAL-PL-escape SOURCE Vëti ES-PL-come GOAL Tilip
‘We escaped from Vëti and came to Tilip.’

Dë-n-mo e Tilip dë-n-riu dë-n-mo e Olsup.
1NONSG.INCL-PL-come SOURCE Tilip ES-PL-escape ES-PL-come GOAL Olsup
‘We came to Tilip and escaped to Olsup.’

Dë-n-mo Olsup dë-n-riu mwili erenge skul.
1NONSG.INCL:REAL-PL-come Olsup ES-PL-escape again GOAL church
‘We came to Olsup and escaped again to the church.’

Dë-n-iar erenge skul elo erenge 1921.
1NONSG.INCL:REAL-PL-arrive LOC church on.coast LOC 1921
‘We arrived at the church on the coast in 1921.’

Sëkho gi dë-n-mo erenge skul enir.
year REL 1NONSG.INCL:REAL-PL-come GOAL church that.one
‘That was the year that we came to the church.’

Vengesien esek ogi enir.
story POSS:1SG only that.one
‘That is just my story.’

En-vvër be-vviri en kem këpa-n-rëngdo ipërvì
1SG:REAL-want 1SG:IRR-tell GOAL 2PL 2NONSG:IRR-PL-know 3SG:REAL:how
dë-n-riu e venu esed
1NONSG.INCL:REAL-PL-escape SOURCE village POSS:1PL.INCL
‘I wanted to tell you all so you would know how we escaped from our village
and came to the coast.’

Netite esed itar i-ska-n-rëngdo vengesien
child POSS:1PL.INCL many 3NONSG:REAL-NEG-PL-know language
esed mili.
POSS:1PL.INCL again
‘Many of our children no longer know our own language.’

Vengesien esed ipo-sëskha.
language POSS:1PL.INCL 3SG:IRR-disappear
‘Our language is going to disappear.’

En-vviri en naakëd rivwi e Tape e Vëti e
1SG:REAL-tell GOAL 1PL.INCL all SOURCE Tape SOURCE Vëti SOURCE
Meledeb këpa-n-rëng vengesien esek.
Meledeb 2NONSG:IRR-PL-know story POSS:1SG
‘I am telling all of us from Tape, from Vëti and from Meledeb so you will all know
my story.’
4.8 The decline of the Tape language

This story, told by Elder Lui Harry on 17 October 2002 in Tautu village, tells of the events in the 1960s which brought about the final loss of the Tape language and the wholesale shift to the Uripiv variety of the Northeast Malakula language in Tautu village.

‘I want to tell how chief Avia said that we should not teach our children our language.’

‘When we were going to cut the European’s fence at Jinarur over there, we went and stood along the fence as far as up there.’

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4 This was a fence which a European-owned plantation had moved and which led to a major land dispute that went before the courts in Port Vila and also led to this instance of protest (Van Trease 1987:174–179).
Chapter 4

Më-n-jul ivin esowei eso më-n-vwër,

"Oi!!".

oi
‘We shouted up there, “Oi!!”.’

Uren levër dui rivwi i-n-jej waia.
like that person all 3REAL-PL-cut fence
‘At that (signal), everybody cut the fence.’

Më-n-jej d-ivin d-ivin iar nit i-mos
en më-n-melet i-mo emakh.
and 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-return 3SG:REAL-come home
‘We cut the fence as far as the place where it ended and we came back home.’

Eren më-n-melet i-mo emakh George Kalkoa
time 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-return 3SG:REAL-come home George Kalkoa
i-vwër polis esen ipa-n-mo.
3SG:REAL-say policeman POSS:3SG 3NONSG:REAL-PL-come
‘When we came back home, George Kalkoa\(^5\) said his policemen should come.’

I-vwiri en dui Rano gi, “En-vwër Samuel en
3SG:REAL-tell GOAL man Rano DEM 1SG:REAL-want Samuel 3SG
i-mo”.
3SG:REAL-come
‘He said to that man from Rano, “I want Samuel\(^6\) to come”.’

I-vwër ipo-lep vengesi ese këmem.
3SG:REAL-say 3SG:IRR-take word POSS 1PL.EXCL
‘He said he should take (down) our words (to find out who the ringleaders were).’

Eren levër më-ska-n-titing duen en.
time that 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-NEG-PL-speak ACC 3SG
‘At that time, we did not speak with him.’

I-mo më-n-liek erenge pële bwëlil erenge
3SG:REAL-come 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-stay LOC tree sea.almond LOC
taningrum levër.
dining.hall that
‘When he came, we were at the sea almond tree at that dining hall.’

\(^5\) George Kalkoa, later to be known as Ati George Sokomanu, became the first president of the Republic of Vanuatu in 1980. At the time of the events described in this story, he was working with the British police force.

\(^6\) The intention here was to call over a policeman from one of the islands close to Tautu village because it was assumed that everybody in the area could understand each other. George Kalkoa did not realise at the time that Tape was a very different language.
I-n-wis du irvwi i-n-mo.
3REAL-PL-call person all 3REAL-PL-come
‘They called everybody over.’

I-n-mo i-n-lik.
3REAL-PL-come 3REAL-PL-sit
‘They came and sat down.’

I-n-momon en këmem rivwi, “Es i-vwër këpa-n-jej
3REAL-PL-ask GOAL 1PL.EXCL all who 3SG:REAL-say 2NONSG:REAL-PL-cut
waia ese khaavor?”
fence POSS European
‘They asked all of us, “Who said you should cut the European’s fence?”.’

Më-n-vwër, “Këmem rivwi më-n-jej waia.”
1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-say 1PL.EXCL all 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-cut fence
‘We said, “We all cut the fence”.’

Dui gi iskhe i-vviri en këmem gi ba-n-jej.
person DEM no 3SG:REAL-tell GOAL 1PL.EXCL SUB 1NONSG.EXCL:IRR-PL-cut
‘Nobody told us to cut it.’

Më-n-vwër, “Povër bë-ska-n-jej waia levër,
1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-say if 1NONSG.EXCL:IRR-NEG-PL-cut fence that
ba-n-mekar evi?”
1NONSG.EXCL:IRR-PL-make.gardens where
‘We said, “If we didn’t cut the fence, where would we make (our) gardens?”.’

Ba-n-lo nëkhanien ese këmem evi?
1NONSG.EXCL:IRR-PL-plant food POSS 1PL.EXCL where
‘Where would we plant our food?’

Eren levër i-ve te më-n-vin
time that 3SG:REAL-make SUB 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-go
më-n-jej waia.
1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-cut fence
‘At that time, it’s what made us go and cut the fence.’

Eren më-n-jej irvwi George Kalkoa i-mo
time 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-cut all George Kalkoa 3SG:REAL-come
i-vviri en Samuel, du Rano levër, i-mo i-vëtir.
3SG:REAL-tell GOAL Samuel man Rano that 3SG:REAL-come 3SG:REAL-stand
‘When we had cut the fence, George Kalkoa came and told Samuel, that man from
Rano, to come and stand up.’

I-vëtir i-vwër ipo-rëng povër ba-n-tinge
3SG:REAL-stand 3SG:REAL-intend 3SG:IRR-hear if 1NONSG.EXCL:IRR-PL-talk.about
tegi erenge vengesien gi dë-n-vengesen lesi. something LOC language REL 1NONSG.INCL:REAL-PL-speak here ‘He stood up to hear if we would talk about something in the language that we speak here.’

Ip-ul luo vengesien gi më-n-titing-en levër. 3SG:IRR-write out words REL 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-talk-TR that ‘(He intended to) write down those words that we said.’

Eren më-n-titing-en vengesien ese këmem e Tape time 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-talk-TR language POSS 1PL.EXCL LOC Tape i-ske-rëngdo ip-ul tegi mili erenge nol esen. 3SG:REAL-NEG-able 3SG:IRR-write something again LOC book POSS:3SG ‘When we spoke our Tape language, he couldn’t write anything else in his book.’


Eren levër më-n-vwër ba-n-vësvës-en time that 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-intend 1NONSG.EXCL:IRR-PL-teach-TR vengesien ese këmem levër en netite se këmem er. language POSS 1PL.EXCL that GOAL child POSS 1PL.EXCL PL ‘At that time, we intended to teach that language of ours to our children.’

Mwëliun Avia i-vwër bë-ska-n-vësvës-en en chief Avia 3SG:REAL-say 1NONSG.EXCL:IRR-NEG-PL-teach-TR GOAL netite esed. child POSS:1PL.INCL ‘Chief Avia said we should not teach it to our children.’

Povër tëvet gi ip-ivin ipo-vëtir ejëkhë-n dui i-kë-vwiri if woman REL 3SG:IRR-go 3SG:IRR-stand ACC-3SG man 3SG:REAL-NEG-tell en elakh esen. GOAL husband POSS:3SG ‘(He said) if a woman who goes and stands with a man (i.e. marries a man), she will tell it to her husband.’

Bë-ska-n-rëngdo ba-n-tosusuen tegi mwili. 1NONSG.EXCL:IRR-NEG-PL-able 1NONSG.EXCL:IRR-PL-keep.secret something again ‘We would not be able to keep anything secret any more.’

I-pij en bë-ska-n-vësvës-en en netite ese 3SG:REAL-good SUB 1NONSG.EXCL:IRR-NEG-PL-teach-TR GOAL child POSS
4.9 The last battle with the Tirakh people

Ephraim Joshua told this story in Tautu village on 13 August 2004. Relations between the Tape and the Tirakh people had been troubled for some decades, as detailed in some of the texts presented above. Even though the two groups of people eventually both relocated to the same area along the coast, relations continued to be bad. This story tells of the last battle between the Tape and the Tirakh people in Tautu village in 1947, after which the Tirakh people moved to their present-day location of Mae.

Kënëk en-vwër be-tinge vengesien mili isimëk.
1SG 1SG:REAL-want 1SG:IRR-tell story again one
‘I want to tell another story.’

Eren Tirakh i-n-tëkhes këmem më-n-mo
time Tirakh 3REAL-PL-chase.away 1PL.EXCL 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-come
më-n-liek e Tautu erenge skul.
1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-stay LOC Tautu LOC church
‘When the Tirakh people chased us away, we came and stayed at Tautu with the church.’

Më-n-liek d-ivin d-ivin iar sëkho ingelves
d-ES-go ES-go 3SG:REAL:reach year 40
dëmon jevet.
+ 10
‘We lived (here) until the year ’49.’

Tut gi i-mo nëkhse-n i-ve Maku Barabar
Big.Nambas REL 3SG:REAL-come name-3 SG 3SG:REAL-COP Maku Barabar
duon selë-n mili.
ACC companion-3SG again
‘A Big Nambas man, whose name was Maku Barabar, came with another companion.’

I-r-mo i-r-luluakh eji.
3REAL-DL-come 3REAL-DL-fire.shots here
‘The two of them came firing shots here.’

I-r-luo ase këmemru Jeffrey.
3REAL-DL-shoot maternal.uncle 1DL.EXCL Jeffrey
‘They shot the maternal uncle of Jeffrey and me.’
Chapter 4

4.10 The rock of the devil

This is a short story told by Ephraim Joshua on 13 August 2004 in Tautu village about a time when he and some of his friends were young and they were walking in the bush. They came across a cave in which there were many bats, but it was only when they got back home that they discovered this was a place of devils.

Kënëk en-vwër be-tinge mili vengesien isimëk mili.
1SG 1SG:REAL-want 1SG:IRR-tell again story one more
‘I want to tell one more story again.’

Nëvet ese këmem isig nèkhse-n i-ve Nëvet Ese Tëmes.
rock POSS 1PL.EXCL one name-3SG 3SG:REAL-COP rock POSS devil
‘There is a rock of ours whose name is the Rock7 of the Devil.’

I-tëkh erenge nuo se këmem gi nèkhse-n Luosinwo.
3SG:REAL-be.located LOC river POSS 1PL.EXCL REL name-3SG Lowisinwei8
‘It is located on our river whose name is Lowisinwei.’

I-tëkh ivin eies bër têvëlkhas ne-n nuo
3SG:REAL-be.located 3SG:REAL:go up yet across PART-3SG river
ivin e Tut ie.
3SG:REAL:go GOAL Big.Nambas ?
‘It is located further up across the river towards the Big Nambas.’

Kënëk duon Kipion më-r-vin dë-r-vëtir erenge-n.
1SG ACC Kipion 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-DL-go ES-DL-stand LOC-3SG
‘Kipion and I went and stood in it (i.e. the cave).’

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7 Although this place is named as a rock, the primary feature of the site is, in fact, a cave.
8 The Luosinwo River of the Tape people is marked on present-day maps as Lowisinwei, which is how it is more widely known.
Më-r-lis nipipil itar we itar we itar. 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-DL-see bat many REL many REL many
‘We saw lots and lots and lots of bats.’

Më-r-melet më-r-mo emakh 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-DL-return 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-DL-come home
‘When we came back home, we talked about it to Harry Rambe.’

‘He said, “Oh, the two of you went to the Rock of the Devil”.’

I-pi, mo nèvet ese naakëd. 3SG:REAL-good SUB rock POSS 1PL.INCL
‘It is good that it is our own rock.’

Povër ipo-sëkha tegi i-kë-ve kemru. if 3SG:IRR-not.exist something 3SG:REAL-NEC-happen.to 2PL
‘If it wasn’t, something would have happened to the two of you.’

Vengesien en-vwër be-tinge i-mos enir. story 1SG:REAL-want 1SG:IRR-tell 3SG:REAL-finish that.one
‘The story that I wanted to tell finishes there.’
5 Phonology

Because substantial reference to phonetic detail is called for in this chapter, forms are presented here in widely used symbols of the International Phonetic Alphabet. Elsewhere in this volume, however, forms are presented in a practical orthography which follows principles which are by and large consistent with practices adopted for neighbouring languages (§1.6).

5.1 Segmental contrasts

Those aspects of the segmental phonology of Tape which can be stated with confidence are presented below. There are, however, a number of issues which remain somewhat uncertain at this stage, with the nature of these uncertainties presented in the following discussion.

5.1.1 Vowels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Vowel contrasts</th>
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<tr>
<td>High</td>
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<td>Mid</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low</td>
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There are five uncontestably contrasting peripheral short vowels in Tape, /i, e, a, o, u/, as well as a highly salient schwa /ə/, as set out in Table 1. However, there is some room for debate as to the precise underlying status of schwa in many words. There is also a possible contrast involving vowel length, though if this feature does prove to be phonemically contrastive, it appears to be of somewhat limited distribution, with only certain vowels exhibiting distinct long and short forms, and then with long vowels carrying fairly low functional load.
5.1.1.1 Peripheral short vowels

The vowel inventory for Tape includes five peripheral short vowels, as set out in Table 1. The following pairs are presented to demonstrate evidence of contrast between peripheral vowels which are adjacent to each other in the vowel area:

/i/ and /e/  /i/iččər/  ‘(s)he swept’
/e/ and /i/  /i/iččər/  ‘(s)he slipped’
/i/ and /e/  /i/iččən/  ‘his/her intestines’
/e/ and /i/  /i/iččen/  ‘because of it’
/i/ and /e/  /i/məri/  ‘coconut leaf mat’
/e/ and /i/  /i/more/  ‘eel’

/e/ and /a/  /e/neło/  ‘spider’
/a/ and /e/  /a/nalomoč/  ‘green tree lizard’
/e/ and /a/  /a/niet/  ‘sago’
/a/ and /e/  /a/niar/  ‘casuarina’
/e/ and /a/  /e/ipel/  ‘(s)he choked’
/a/ and /e/  /a/ipar/  ‘(s)he is blind’

/a/ and /o/  /o/maren/  ‘tomorrow’
/o/ and /a/  /a/mornen/  ‘his/her left hand’
/a/ and /o/  /o/iγas/  ‘it is cold’
/o/ and /a/  /a/iγos/  ‘too much’

/o/ and /u/  /u/ilo/  ‘(s)he planted’
/u/ and /o/  /o/ilu/  ‘(s)he fired shots’
/o/ and /u/  /u/nio/  ‘armband’
/u/ and /o/  /u/niu/  ‘dew’

Pairs can also be presented in support of the contrastive status of schwa vis-à-vis each of these peripheral vowels, though the status of schwa is reserved for separate discussion in §5.1.1.3.

The peripheral vowels for the most part have phonetic realisations as suggested by their traditional IPA values with no major allophonic variation. The only exception is the high front vowel /i/, which has a distinctly centralised realisation before the velar fricative /ɣ/. Thus:

/i/iγanan/  [i/iγanan]  ‘his/her face’
/paIiIiIy/  [paIiIiI]  ‘wild kava’
/iIy/  [IiI]  ‘grave’

When /i/ appears word-initially before the velar fricative /ɣ/, this phonetically centralised vowel is often also preceded by a palatal glide. Thus:

/iIγəC/  [iIγəts ~ jIγəts]  ‘(s)he killed it’
/iIγan/  [iIγan ~ jIγan]  ‘(s)he ate’
With sequences of /u/ followed by another vowel, there is an optional transitional rounded glide between the two vowels:

\[
\begin{align*}
/dui/ & \quad [\text{n}d\text{ui} ~ \text{n}duwi] \quad \text{‘man’} \\
/nuo/ & \quad [nuo ~ nuwo] \quad \text{‘water’} \\
/duen/ & \quad [\text{nduen} ~ \text{nduwen}] \quad \text{‘with’}
\end{align*}
\]

It should also be noted that there is evidence that sequences of word-medial /ue/ vary freely with /uo/, as illustrated by variants such as the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
/duen/ & \quad [\text{n}d\text{uen} ~ \text{n}duen] \quad \text{‘with’} \\
/\text{na:}bues/ & \quad [\text{na:m}bues ~ \text{na:m}buos] \quad \text{‘New Guinea rosewood’}
\end{align*}
\]

However, sequences that are represented underlyingly as /uo/ remain invariant. Thus:

\[
\begin{align*}
/\text{buok}/ & \quad [\text{m}\text{buok}] \quad \text{‘water taro’} \\
/\text{nuot}/ & \quad [\text{nuot}] \quad \text{‘tendon’}
\end{align*}
\]

### 5.1.1.2 Vowel length

In other languages of central and northern Malakula, contrastive vowel length is either completely absent, or at best only marginal. For example, there is no contrastive vowel length at all in V’ënën Taut (Fox 1979:1–5). Long vowels, while they do contrast in Northeast Malakula (McKerras 2006) and Naman (Crowley 2006c), are of low functional load in both languages. Moreover, in Naman, only the non-mid vowels /i/, /u/ and /a/ have contrastive long equivalents, with the mid vowels /e/, /o/ and /o/ being invariably short.

In my Tape corpus, there is some evidence of phonetically long vowels alongside the corresponding short equivalents. The most commonly attested long vowel is the low vowel [a:], though there is also evidence in some words for long [i:], as well as marginal evidence for [o:] and [e:]. There are no attested instances of words containing the long vowels [u:] or [ø:].

However, it does appear that the difference between [a] and [a:] may well be phonemically contrastive. If so, this contrast seems to be of restricted distribution, being limited to stressed syllables (§5.2) when the preceding consonant is /n/, /l/ or /ŋ/. That is, there is no evidence for contrast in unstressed syllables; nor is there any evidence of contrast in stressed syllables with preceding consonants other than /n/, /l/ and /ŋ/. My corpus contains the following possible minimal pair:

\[
\begin{align*}
/\text{nari-}/ & \quad [\text{nari}-] \quad \text{‘handle of’} \\
/\text{na:ri-}/ & \quad [\text{na:ri}-] \quad \text{‘root of’}
\end{align*}
\]

---

1 Where words have been attested with phonetically lengthened vowels, I am not certain if these reflect normal Tape speech or if the process of recording with a microphone, as well as elicitation of words in isolation for transcription purposes, has perhaps interfered in some unnatural way with the pronunciations of some words. Final judgement on the phonemic status of vowel length will therefore need to wait until a sufficiently representative sample of more natural connected speech can be recorded and analysed.

2 In a number of places in the draft version of this section, Crowley had footnotes reminding himself to check these possible length contrasts, and/or querying whether the contrast had been correctly recorded. It is clear that the question of a length contrast in Tape may not be resolved without further field research – JL.
Examples of other forms attested with putative /a:/ in my corpus include the following:

- /na:ŋas/ ['na:ŋas] ‘great hog plum’
- /na:ret/ ['na:ret] ‘green coconut’
- /na:ros/ ['na:ros] ‘victory leaf’
- /na:kom/ ['na:kom] ‘you (sg.)’
- /na:kad/ ['na:kaŋd] ‘we (pl. incl.)’
- /na:viu/ ['na:viu] ‘pandanus’
- /na:kel/ ['na:kel] ‘post’
- /na:ŋyloʊmen/ ['na:ŋyloʊmen]3 ‘his/her finger’
- /la:n/ ['la:n] ‘fly (n.)’
- /na:bu/ ['na:mbu] ‘club’
- /la:ŋoʊt/ ['la:ŋoʊt] ‘rat’
- /ya:vot/ ['xa:vot] ‘European’
- /naˈyaːrʊt/ ['naˈyaːrʊt] ‘stinging tree’

These examples can be contrasted with the following in which the vowel has been recorded in parallel environments invariably as phonetically short:

- /taŋ/ ['taŋ] ‘basket’
- /sar/ ['sar] ‘spear (n.)’
- /par/ ['par] ‘*Calophyllum inophyllum*
- /paɾəŋil/ ['paɾəŋil]4 ‘thumb’
- /kake/ ['kake] ‘yam’
- /boŋale/ ['boŋale] ‘cicada’

In unstressed syllables, the low vowel is invariably phonetically short regardless of the preceding consonant, as in the following:

- /iyan/ ['iyan] ‘(s)he ate’
- /niar/ ['niar] ‘casuarina’
- /lipax/ ['lipax] ‘dog’
- /nisax/ ['nisax] ‘banana’
- /peɪptax/ ['peɪptax] ‘rubbish’
- /naˈvɪmar/ ['naˈvɪmar] ‘*Chalcophaps indica*’

In addition to the possible contrast between /a/ and /a:/, there is also a possible contrast between /i/ and /i:/, illustrated by the contrast between the following pair of words:

- /niˈvʊx/ ['niˈvʊx] ‘giant taro’
- /niˈvʊx/ ['niˈvʊx] ‘Malay apple’

Verb roots beginning with /i/ also lengthen the vowel with the addition of the third person singular realis prefix /i-/ . Thus, /i-iː/ ‘(s)he cried’ is realised phonetically as [iːts].

The existence of a contrastive long /e:/ is suggested by the following minimal pair:

---

3 This form appears to be stressed as a compound of /na:ŋy-/ (which is not independently attested) and /loʊmen/ ‘his/her hand’.

4 This form is a compound of /paɾəŋil/ ‘finger’ and /liːl/ ‘large’.
Chapter 5

/sen/ ['sən] ‘his/her (edible thing)’
/sen/ ['sən] ‘his/her blood’

Some instances of /e:/ are derived when nouns ending in /e/ are followed by a cliticised item beginning with /e/. For instance, the pluraliser /er/ can be attached as a clitic to a preceding noun resulting in derivations such as the following:

/netite=er/ [netite:r] ‘children’
child-PL

Also, the instrumental preposition /en/ can be cliticised, when it is stranded (§6.3.2.3.3), to a preceding verb, as in the following:

/be-čile=en/ ['betʃile:n] ‘I will wash (it) with (it)’
1SG:IRR-wash-INST

Finally, while my corpus contains no minimal or subminimal pairs involving the vowels [o] and [o:], I have recorded phonetically long vowels in the forms [po:lmen] ‘his/her elbow’ and [po:tilin] ‘his/her knee’. There are thus pairs such as the following, which also suggest the possibility of contrast:

/po:lmen/ [po:lmen] ‘his/her elbow’
/po:tilin/ [po:tilin] ‘his/her knee’
/potaγdɔlin/ [potaγdɔlin] ‘his/her neck’

However, the forms containing long vowels here are both bimorphemic involving the independently attested elements /lmen/ ‘his/her arm’ and /tilin/ ‘his/her leg’, whereas /pɔɾeret/ ‘tree fern’ and /potαdɔlin/ ‘his/her neck’ are monomorphemic. This difference in morphological analysis may be responsible for the lengthening of the morpheme-final vowel here.

5.1.1.3 Schwa

Schwa is widely distributed as a phonemically contrastive vowel among languages which were spoken in the general neighbourhood of the traditional Tape area, e.g. Northeast Malakula (McKerras 2000), Larëvat (Crowley, field notes) and Naman (Crowley 2006c). However, this vowel is not universally present in the languages of the general area. Neve’ei (Musgrave 2001:14–15), Avava (Crowley, fieldnotes) and Neverver (Julie Barbour, University of Waikato PhD student, pers. comm.), for example, show evidence for only the five peripheral vowels.

In Tape, however, a contrast involving a sixth central vowel, /a/, is very well established, as indicated by the following pairs:

5 Note, however, that while neighbouring Vënën Taut is described as having a contrastive schwa (Fox 1979:1), there is no mid back rounded vowel /o/, so this language still has only a five-vowel system.
There are numerous instances in my corpus in which all vowels in a word are schwa, e.g. /mən/ ‘its smell’, /kəsən/ ‘his/her nose’, /təvələy/ ‘woman’, /mədəyən/ ‘scar’. Moreover, schwa is a vowel of rather high frequency. Approximately 16.5% of all vowels in my lexical corpus are schwas, with schwa being the third most commonly encountered vowel of all, after /i/ and /e/, in that order. The vowels /u/, /a/ and /o/ are all substantially less common than schwa.

However, schwa also behaves in ways which set it apart somewhat from the five peripheral vowels. For one thing, it is the only vowel which never appears word-initially. It also appears to be the only vowel which never appears word-finally. Moreover, schwa is the only vowel which can not occur adjacent to another vowel within the same word; i.e. it is the only vowel in the language which must always be simultaneously preceded and followed by a consonant.

Another characteristic feature of schwa in Tape is that there is evidence in my corpus for the rampant alternation between schwa and zero in a wide variety of phonological environments. This kind of alternation is particularly common in unstressed initial syllables of roots, resulting in a wide range of root-initial consonant clusters alternating with sequences of /CəC-/ . The most commonly encountered instances of variation result in clusters of an initial stop followed by a liquid, and occasionally some other continuant, as illustrated by the following:

/ɪ/ and /ə/  
/ɪ̂cɪle/  ‘(s)he washed it’  
/ɪ̂cəle/  ‘(s)he combed it’  
/ɪ̂linɪ̂lɪ̂/  ‘(s)he walked’  
/ɪ̂ləŋ̂əŋ̂/  ‘(s)he left it’

/e/ and /ə/  
/ɪ̂vəs/  ‘four’  
/ɪ̂vəs/  ‘how many?’  
/ɪ̂sɛl/  ‘it floated’  
/ɪ̂səl/  ‘(s)he went fishing by torchlight’

/a/ and /ə/  
/ɪ̂ləɣ̂/  ‘(s)he is married’  
/ɪ̂ær̂/  ‘(s)he tied it up’  
/ɪ̂nɪ̂ɣ̂/  ‘banana’  
/ɪ̂nəɣ̂/  ‘kingfisher’  
/ɪ̂tər̂ɛ̂γ̂/  ‘(s)he waited’  
/ɪ̂tər̂əγ̂/  ‘(s)he hunted’

/o/ and /ə/  
/ɪ̂ʃəpəŷ/  ‘(s)he squatted’  
/ɪ̂pəŷ/  ‘earth oven’  
/ɪ̂nəŷmo/  ‘slitgong’  
/ɪ̂nəŷmo/  ‘island teak’

/u/ and /ə/  
/ɪ̂nuŷru/  ‘Christmas’  
/ɪ̂nəŷsən/  ‘his/her name’  
/ɪ̂səsʊr̂/  ‘(s)he swore’  
/ɪ̂səsən/  ‘her breast’
However, alternations between schwa and zero after the first consonant of a word are not limited to such pairs of consonants, as clusters involving two different continuants are quite frequently attested in my corpus as well. For example:

/mare/  [mare ~ mre]  ‘eel’
/mori/  [mari ~ mri]  ‘coconut leaf mat’
/maran/  [maran ~ maran]  ‘dry (leaf, wood)’
/masit/  [masit ~ msit]  ‘sick’
/navet/  [nave ~ nvet]  ‘stone’
/volonib/  [foloni" ~ floni"b]  ‘charcoal’

In fact, I have even encountered words in which the word-initial cluster of [pt-] arises by the same process. For example:

/patin/  [patin ~ ptin]  ‘his/her head’

It should be noted that when a word contains an initial sequence of /Crc/-, the optional deletion of the schwa is accompanied by syllabification of the trill. For example:

/korliu/  [korliu ~ krliu]  ‘door’

While this kind of alternation between schwa and zero is quite common when words are pronounced in isolation, it is much more frequent when a form of the shape /Crc/- is morphologically attached to some kind of preceding material. The third person singular realis verbal prefix /i-/ is one form which is particularly frequently associated with this kind of alternation. Thus, from the root /masit/ ‘sick’ we can derive the nominalised form /masit-ien/ ‘sickness, disease’ and the inflected verb /i-masit/ ‘(s)he is sick’. While /masitien/ may appear as both [masitien] and [msitien], the inflected verb is overwhelmingly likely to appear as [imsit], with [immasit] only being produced in extremely careful speech. Other examples of the same kind of alternation with this verbal prefix include the following:

/i-rando/  [rando ~ imdo]  ‘(s)he knew’
/i-copon/  [copon ~ itspon]  ‘(s)he counted’
/i-dalim/  [idalim ~ indlim]  ‘(s)he swallowed’
/i-vonay/  [vonay ~ ivnay]  ‘(s)he stole’
/i-modin/  [modin ~ im"din]  ‘it sank’
/i-maday/  [maday ~ im"dax]  ‘it is raw’
/i-saya/  [saya ~ isxa]  ‘there is none’
This process is also encountered when the spatial preposition /e/ (§6.3.2) is attached as a proclitic to the name of a place. For example:

/e=vti/  [e VTI ~ epti]  ‘to Vël’

In fact, forms do not even need to be attached within the same phonological word for the schwa deletion rule to be activated. When a vowel-final possessum precedes a possessor, even though the two represent different phonological words, schwa deletion is quite strongly favoured. For example:

/cu npay/  [tʃu npax ~ tʃu npax]  ‘turtle carapace’

carapace  turtle

/ese kəmem/  [ese kəmem ~ ese kmem]  ‘our (pl. excl.)’

POSS  IPL.EXCL

In addition to the widespread alternation in my corpus between word-initial phonetic consonant clusters and /C–C/ sequences, there is a substantial collection of forms which have, at least at this stage of research, only been attested with initial clusters. Even though these forms have not been attested with a schwa following the initial consonant, they are nevertheless analysed phonemically as containing a schwa for the simplification that this achieves in the statement of the phonotactics of the language, where underlying word-initial consonant clusters are otherwise not permitted. Free forms of this type include the following:

/səkol/  [skol]  ‘hibiscus’

/pasι/  [priŋ]  ‘comb (of rooster)’

/dərap/  [drap]  ‘lesser yam’

/bəri/  [briŋ]  ‘split’

/tərep/  [trep]  ‘old’

/səte/  [ste]  ‘what’

We can also include in this set forms which are analysed as beginning with /λC–/ where the deleted schwa is accompanied by syllabification of the initial lateral. Thus:

/łəčar/  [ltʃar]  ‘nits’

It is perhaps also worth pointing out that these proposed underlying schwas also appear to reflect historically prior vowels given that cognates of these forms in nearby languages contain vowels which are invariably present. Thus, Tape /səkol/ ‘hibiscus’ corresponds to Neve’ei /ninsogoul/, while Tape /łəčar/ ‘nits’ corresponds to Neve’ei /nilis/.

In addition to the loss of schwa in root-initial syllables, there is also evidence for the loss of schwa in root-final syllables. This happens only occasionally when words are pronounced in isolation, but it is somewhat more frequent when words appear in continuous speech, especially when a following word begins with a vowel. Thus, while /i-rəŋ/ ‘(s)he felt’ would normally be pronounced with the schwa in isolation, it is common for it to be lost in environments such as the following:

/i-rəŋ (> irŋ)  i-po-yan/  3SG:REAL-feel  3SG-IRR-eat

‘s(h)e felt like eating’
This loss of schwa in final syllables always appears to involve sequences of the liquids /r/ and /l/, as well as the velar fricative /ɣ/, followed by another consonant. In addition to the example just presented, we also find examples of occasional loss of schwa in forms such as the following:

- /nəyaːːtət/ [nəyaːːtət ~ nəyaːː] ‘Dendrocnide sp.’
- /nə:rsa:/ [nə:rsa: ~ nə:rsa:] ‘victory leaf’
- /nəŋəs/ [nəŋəs ~ nəŋəs] ‘hill’

One form has been attested only with a final cluster, though an intervening schwa is posited in the phonemic representation for the simplification that this achieves with respect to the phonotactics of the language since no other underlying word-final clusters are posited in the language. Thus:

- /wilːs/ [wils] ‘maggot’

Schwa deletion in final syllables appears to be obligatory in some environments. In particular, there is a small number of disyllabic forms ending in sequences /-t/ in which the schwa is obligatorily deleted and the final liquid is syllabified. Thus:

- /itːl/ [itl] ‘three’

Obligatory deletion of schwa in final syllables is also encountered with directly suffixed noun roots (§6.1.2.2.2) ending in schwa where the preceding consonant is /t/, /l/ or /t/ and the form carries the third person singular possessive suffix /-n/, again with syllabification of the final consonant. We therefore find examples such as the following:

- /nəŋəɣəːnː-ːn/ [nəŋəɣəːnː] ‘his/her rib’
- /netːnː/ [netnː] ‘his/her child’
- /ləlː-ːnː/ [ləlnː] ‘its interior’
- /nilː-ːnː/ [nilnː] ‘its feather, bark’

With directly possessed noun roots ending in /sə-/, there is alternation between deletion of the schwa with accompanying syllabification of the final nasal and retention of the schwa. Thus:

- /reŋəsəːnː/ [reŋəsən ~ reŋəsən] ‘its branch’

Although schwa deletion is overwhelmingly encountered in initial syllables, and occasionally in final syllables, there is also a relatively small number of trisyllabic roots in which a medial syllable which contains schwa shows evidence of optional schwa deletion. For example:

- /mədəɣənː/ [mədəɣən ~ mədəɣən] ‘scar’
- /tirəɣəbhː/ [tirəɣəbhː ~ tirəɣəbhː] ‘wild’
- /ɛtəɣənː/ [ɛtəɣən ~ ɛtəɣən] ‘to him/her’

In some cases, the deletion of word-medial schwa in forms of three or four syllables can result in word-medial surface clusters of three, and sometimes even four or five, consonants. For example:

- /tɔːtɔːrep/ [tɔːtɔːrep ~ tɔːtɔːrep] ‘old (pl.)’
- /pəɾəɣəɾpre/ [pəɾəɣəɾpre ~ pəɾəɣəɾpre] ‘middle finger’
- /nəskəɾkrit/ [nəskəɾkrit ~ nəskəɾkrit] ‘Mimosa pudica’
In the discussion above, I indicated that I treated the relatively small number of recorded initial and final clusters as containing an underlying schwa between the two consonants, but there are rather more problems associated with a similar treatment for medial clusters. While some medial clusters clearly do derive from deleted schwas, as just demonstrated, there are very many medial clusters in Tape which are only ever attested as clusters, with no suggestion that schwas may optionally intervene. For instance, a form that has been invariably recorded as [dələnən] ‘his/her ear’ could hardly be treated phonemically as /delənən/ without forcing the parallel insertion of schwas into large numbers of other kinds of intervocalic clusters as well (§5.3).

The precise conditions under which schwa is available for deletion and when it is invariably pronounced as such in Tape are somewhat difficult to establish. It is possible that if I had had the opportunity to be exposed to a much broader sample of natural conversational speech in Tape, I may have obtained a wider range of examples in which schwa is deletable, as well as examples in which it is not deletable. However, even though the language is no longer used conversationally, my corpus does indicate that there is a number of environments in which schwa deletion appears to be categorically impossible. In particular, this process is completely unattested in the first syllable of a root when:

(i) a schwa appears within a monosyllabic root. There are very few monosyllabic free roots in Tape of the shape /CaC/, though the following examples can be noted:

\[
\begin{align*}
/\text{b}r/ & \quad [\text{m}br \sim \ast \text{mb}r] \quad \text{‘still, yet’} \\
/\text{v}r/ & \quad [\text{far} \sim \text{fr}] \quad \text{‘if’}
\end{align*}
\]

This restriction against schwa deletion in monosyllabic roots holds even if the root happens to be inflected in some way within a longer word. Thus:

\[
/i-\text{ys}/ \quad [\text{iy}s \sim \ast \text{ys}] \quad \text{‘(s)he danced’}
\]

(ii) a schwa is stressed according to the regular penultimate stress rule set out in §5.2. Thus:

\[
\begin{align*}
/\text{kəsən}/ & \quad [\text{kəsən} \sim \ast \text{kən}] \quad \text{‘his/her nose’} \\
/\text{tənələŋ}/ & \quad [\text{tənələx} \sim \ast \text{tənəlx}] \quad \text{‘woman’}
\end{align*}
\]

(iii) a schwa is followed by a medial consonant cluster. For example:

\[
\begin{align*}
/\text{nuvənən}/ & \quad [\text{nu}vənən \sim \ast \text{nuvənən}] \quad \text{‘his/her hip’} \\
/\text{vədʒo}/ & \quad [\text{və}^\text{d}ʒo \sim \ast \text{v}^\text{d}ʒo] \quad \text{‘gall bladder’}
\end{align*}
\]

(iv) a schwa is preceded and followed by the same consonant. For example:

\[
\begin{align*}
/\text{səsən}/ & \quad [\text{səsən} \sim \ast \text{səsən}] \quad \text{‘her breast’} \\
/\text{idədən}/ & \quad [\text{idədən} \sim \ast \text{idədən}] \quad \text{‘(s)he told a lie’} \\
/\text{iməməŋ}/ & \quad [\text{iməməŋ} \sim \ast \text{iməməŋ}] \quad \text{‘it chirped’}
\end{align*}
\]

---

6 McKerras (2000) indicates that in Northeast Malakula words of the shape VCVCV, the medial vowel is also often deleted, resulting in alternations such as /e̥ki/ [etsiki ~ etski] ‘there is none’. This process of vowel loss in Northeast Malakula involves a number of different vowels, but apparently not the mid central vowel.
(v) a schwa is preceded or followed by a labiovelar consonant. For example:

/ðəlin/ [mðəlin ~ mðəlin] ‘his/her back’
/məliun/ [məliun ~ mliun] ‘chief’
/iərəi/ [iəri ~ iəri] ‘(s)he told’
/nəvib/ [nəvɪmb ~ nəvɪmb] ‘Barringtonia asiatica’
/nənəl/ [nənəl ~ nənəl] ‘chief’

(vi) a schwa is preceded and followed by stops which differ in their voicing. Note, therefore, the possibility of schwa deletion in the first example below but not in the second:

/pətin/ [pətin ~ ptin] ‘his/her head’
/bəte/ [məte ~ məte] ‘forbidden’

(vii) a schwa is preceded by /c/ and followed by a liquid. Thus:

/iəren/ [itəren ~ itʃren] ‘(s)he threw it’
/iələ/ [itʃəle ~ itʃle] ‘(s)he combed it’

It was mentioned above that schwa deletion in root-final syllables is much less frequently encountered than in root-initial syllables, occurring only in a limited set of syllable types. Although final syllables of the shape /-təl/ are eligible for reduction in this way, there is an overriding restriction that such syllables cannot undergo schwa deletion if the result would be a three-member consonant cluster at the end of the word. Thus, with a form such as /kəmentəl/ ‘we (trial exclusive)’, the schwa of the final syllable is invariably retained and we do not find *[kəmentəl], even though /itəl/ ‘three’ is invariably pronounced [itʃ].

With other roots of the shape /CəCV-, however, schwa appears to be fairly widely open for deletion. It is particularly common in the following environments, almost to the point of being categorical:

• when the first consonant is a nasal, a fricative or a voiceless stop and the second consonant is a liquid, e.g. /məre/ ‘eel’, /vəris/ ‘call’, /pəlen/ ‘its base’, /pəlility/ ‘wild kava’;

• when both consonants are continuants, e.g. /məsit/ ‘sick’; and

• when the first consonant is /s/ and the second consonant is a fricative, a voiceless stop or a nasal, e.g. /səγa/ ‘not exist’, /səte/ ‘what’, /sənen/ ‘because of it’, /səkol/ ‘hibiscus’.

Although deletion of schwa is much less common in other environments, the examples presented in this section demonstrate clearly that deletion can take place between almost any two consonants, even when the first is a stop and the second is a nasal, as shown by the alternation in the pronunciation of /təmes/ ‘devil’ between [təmes] and [tmes]. It is even possible to encounter surface word-initial consonant clusters consisting of two stops of different places of articulation arising as a result of schwa deletion with the pronunciation of forms such as /pəti-/ ‘head’ as [pəti-] and [pti-].
Some quite elaborate intervocalic clusters can also arise as a result of schwa deletion, especially over morpheme boundaries. For instance, /nidɔlɔ-/'egg' and /tɔlɛt/‘sugar ant’ regularly combine to produce /niːdlɛt/‘sugar ant eggs’, in which we find an intervocalic cluster of four consonants. It is possible to find elaborate intervocalic clusters also in the verbal prefixing system where schwa has been optionally deleted. For instance, the sequence:

/i-kɔ-ska-n-iʌt/
3SG:REAL-NEG-PL-touch
‘they (pl.) must not touch it’

can be pronounced /iːkskaniʌt/ with the three-member intervocalic cluster /ksk/.

This pattern of widespread alternation between schwa and zero that I have described above is consistent with the idea that what we are observing is phonological change in progress in Tape, with an original contrastive schwa undergoing a process of widespread loss. In the normal course of events, we might have predicted that ultimately, many instances of what are currently analysed phonemically in Tape as schwa may have been completely lost, resulting in a wide range of word-initial two-member consonant clusters. Exactly this kind of process is already well attested as having taken place in languages further south in Vanuatu, such as Sye (Crowley 1998b:18–21) and South Efate (Thieberger 2004:51).

However, even though I have described these alternations as involving optional zero realisations of schwa phonemes in Tape, we should probably not close our minds completely to the idea that phonemic schwa loss may already have taken place, at least with forms that invariably appear in my corpus with initial or final consonant clusters, resulting in phonemic forms such as /skɔl/‘hibiscus’ or /wils/‘maggot’. Even with forms where we find alternation between schwa and zero, it may be possible to view the schwa as a phonetically inserted vocalic transition between underlying clustered consonants. Thus, a form that appears in my corpus variably as [msiːt] and [mɔsɪt] ‘sick’ may also be treated phonemically as /msiːt/, but with an optional rule of schwa insertion in certain environments.

There are, however, some genuine difficulties with this kind of analysis on the basis of the current data. For one thing, phonemic schwa is independently motivated within the vowel inventory of Tape, given that in many words the only vowel is schwa. If all instances of schwa were to be treated as instances of phonetic insertion, then a form such as [tɔvɔlɔx]‘woman’ would presumably need to be treated phonemically as /tvɭɪ/ (with no vowels at all), rather than as /tvɔlɔx/ as at present. Such a solution would clearly result in huge complications to the statement of the phonotactics of the language, in that we would need to allow for wide ranges of initial and final consonant clusters, in contrast to the existing pattern whereby words can begin and end with only single consonants.

It might be possible to overcome this problem by distinguishing between those phonetic schwas which reflect underlying schwas and those which are to be seen purely as phonetically inserted transitions between clustered consonants. However, it is by no means obvious that there is any clearly definable set of mechanisms for distinguishing which schwas should be treated in which way, so there is bound to be an unacceptable amount of arbitrariness in any such solution to this question of the status of schwa.
5.1.2 Consonants

The consonant inventory of Tape is set out in Table 2. This inventory involves a number of significant points of similarity with the consonant inventories of languages which traditionally bordered on the Tape area, as well as several points of contrast. In particular:

- Unlike V’ënen Taut, there are no apico-labial consonants in Tape. V’ënen Taut therefore represents the southernmost in a series of languages spoken along the northern and northwestern coasts of Malakula in which this typological fairly unusual feature is present. Tape (and Larëvat) represent the northernmost languages to lack such segments, and they share this lack with Naman, Neve’ei and Northeast Malakula.

- Tape, along with Larëvat, Northeast Malakula and Naman, has a contrastive palatal affricate, represented in Table 2 as /c̠/, which is completely lacking in V’ënë Taut.

- Tape, along with Northeast Malakula, has a contrastive series of labiovelar consonants, which are completely lacking in neighbouring V’ënen Taut,⁷ Larëvat and Naman.

- Tape lacks the contrastive bilabial trill which is found, albeit marginally, in Northeast Malakula, as well as in Niverer and Avava spoken to the south of Naman and Neve’ei. However, it is absent in the intervening Naman and Neve’ei languages.

The plain obstruents in Table 2 are pronounced with labiovelar, bilabial, alveolar, post-alveolar and velar articulations respectively. The labiovelar obstruent is pronounced as a voiceless bilabial stop with simultaneous lip-rounding. The segment /c̠/ is realised as the voiceless post-alveolar affricates [ts] and [tʃ] in free variation. The remaining voiceless obstruents are pronounced as we would expect on the basis of their IPA values.

When obstruents in the prenasalised series are preceded by a vowel or a non-nasal consonant, we find automatic non-syllabic homorganic prenasalisation of a phonetically voiced stop. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plain obstruents</th>
<th>̃p</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>č</th>
<th>k</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prenasalised stops</td>
<td>̃b</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricatives</td>
<td>̃v</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasals</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>ƞ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral</td>
<td>l</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhotic</td>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glides</td>
<td>w</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- /medek/ [meʔdek] ‘puzzle tree’
- /mədes/ [məʔdes] ‘fibre skirt’
- /məldon/ [məlʔdon] ‘his/her right hand’

⁷ However, Fox (1979:2) indicates that /p/ and /m/ have labiovelar allophones before the front vowels /i/ and /e/.
Word-initially, while they are generally pronounced as voiced prenasalised stops, one occasionally encounters a plain (i.e. non-prenasalised) voiced stop in free alternation with a corresponding prenasalised stop. Thus:

/\buos/ \[mbuos ~ buos\] ‘uncastrated boar’
/\dui/ \[ndui ~ dui\] ‘man’

When there is a preceding non-homorganic nasal consonant, these stops are invariably pronounced as plain voiced stops. Thus:

/bɔrdimdim/ \[mbɔr\dimdim\] ‘brain’
/la:ŋbibib/ \[la:ŋbibimbi\] ‘blowfly’

Word-finally, the stop element of the prenasalised obstruents have both voiced and voiceless realisations, though prenasalised realisations are far more frequent than the corresponding voiceless forms. Thus:

/mib/ \[mi:mb ~ mimp\] ‘gecko’
/tirya:bab/ \[tirya:bmb ~ tirya:mbp\] ‘wild’
/imimid/ \[imimi:d ~ imimi:t\] ‘(s)he is sweating’

The alveolar stop /d/ additionally exhibits variants with lightly trilled release in some environments. Such variants can be noted word-finally after the vowels /a/ and /o/. Thus:

/na:kod/ \[na:kad ~ na:ka\d ~ na:ka\t\] ‘we (pl. incl.)’
/čimod/ \[tʃimo\d ~ tʃimo\t ~ tʃimo\t ~ tʃimo\t\] ‘sow’

There is also a possibility of a lightly trilled release initially and intervocally when the following vowel is /u/. Thus:

/duen/ \[duon ~ duon\] ‘with’

When the following vowel is /a/, this segment is again often pronounced with a trilled release, though the schwa is itself often deleted and the trill is syllabified. This pronunciation is attested as being in free variation with a simple prenasalised voiced stop followed by the schwa, as in the following:

/dəlø/ \[dəlø ~ d\lø\] ‘slowly’
/ida\dø/ \[i\dø\dø ~ i\dø\dø\] ‘(s)he is afraid’

The consonant chart for Tape indicates that there is a distinct series of labiovelar segments contrasting with each of the plain bilabials. As in many of the neighbouring languages, this contrast in Tape is only made in certain environments. In particular, there is no evidence for a contrast between the two series of consonants either syllable-finally, or when the following vowel is one of the rounded vowels /u/ or /o/. This means that these segments are only encountered in syllables of the following types: /mø/, /mø/, /mø/, /mø/.

In many languages of central Vanuatu in which a phonemic contrast can be established between plain labial and labiovelar consonants, the contrast frequently shows signs of being lost, with wholesale shift of labiovelars to the corresponding labial consonants. The corpora for many of these languages therefore show substantial variation in the pronunciations of many words.
In my Tape corpus, however, the distribution of labiovelars seems to be unusually stable, with just a couple of pairs of words showing clear evidence of variation: /mimî/- mimî- ‘spirit’ and /mîli ~ mîli/ ‘again’. There are two logically possible explanations for the apparent stability of labiovelars in Tape:

- These segments just happen to be unusually stable in this language, in somewhat stark contrast to what we find in many of the neighbouring languages.
- The apparent stability of these segments in Tape is the result of the nature of the corpus which I have been able to assemble for this moribund language. All of the speakers in my corpus are aged between their fifties and their eighties. It may simply be that in this age group for any language, the contrast may turn out to be relatively stable and that it is only among younger speakers that we start finding substantial evidence of variability.

The labial and velar fricatives have both voiced and voiceless allophones. Voiceless realisations predominate over voiced allophones word-initially and word-finally, as well as word-medially when the segment is preceded or followed by a voiceless segment. Elsewhere, however, these fricatives are normally articulated as voiced fricatives. Thus:

\[
\begin{align*}
/tavləʃ/ & \quad [tavləʃ] \quad \text{‘woman’} \\
/xə:vot/ & \quad [xa:vot] \quad \text{‘European’} \\
/iʃət/ & \quad [iʃət] \quad \text{‘(s)he killed it’} \\
/ŋəmo/ & \quad [ŋəmo] \quad \text{‘slitgong’} \\
/ŋəxən/ & \quad [ŋəxən] \quad \text{‘his/her name’}
\end{align*}
\]

However, these generalisations represent strong tendencies rather than absolute statements, as some degree of free variation between voiced and voiceless allophones of these fricatives is encountered in all environments.

The contrast between /v/ and /p/ is maintained only in non-final position, with the opposition being neutralised at the ends of words. The phonetic forms [p], [f] and [v] all appear in free variation word-finally, with fricative allophones being more commonly encountered utterance-medially and the stop allophone being preferred utterance-finally (including also in citation). We therefore find variation such as the following:

\[
/niviv/ \quad [nivəv ~ niwəv ~ niwiv] \quad \text{‘sprouting coconut’}
\]

The consonant /l/ is realised as an alveolar lateral, while /ɾ/ is realised as an apico-alveolar flap or trill. Finally, we have the glide /w/ which is realised according to its IPA value of [w], and the corresponding palatal glide, which is represented as /y/.

The palatal glide in Tape is attested in only a handful of words, including /neyo/ ‘pudding’ and /yek/ ‘have’. However, a contrast between /i/ and /y/ is suggested by a pair such as the following:

\[
/iər/ \quad \text{‘reach, arrive at’} \\
/yek/ \quad \text{‘have’}
\]

---

Fox (1979:1) points to the complete absence of both glides in V’en Taut, though he does include a number of words beginning with /uV-/ and containing the medial sequence /VuV/ which many would perhaps have treated as /wV-/ and /VwV/ respectively.
The following pairs illustrate the contrasts for phonetically similar sounds from the set of consonants discussed in this section:

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
/\text{p}/ \text{and} /\text{b}/ & /\text{p}ɔɾpəɾ/ \quad \text{‘pig’} \\
& /bɔlɪn/ \quad \text{‘his/her back’} \\
/p/ \text{and} /b/ & /pətə/ \quad \text{‘breadfruit’} \\
& /bətə/ \quad \text{‘forbidden’} \\
/t/ \text{and} /d/ & /i mùsɪt/ \quad \text{‘(s)he is sick’} \\
& /i mùsɪd/ \quad \text{‘(s)he hiccupped’} \\
/k/ \text{and} /g/ & /dɪkɪo/ \quad \text{‘slug’} \\
& /oɡi/ \quad \text{‘only’} \\
& /iɾeɪk/ \quad \text{‘(the tide) ebbed’} \\
& /iʃɪɡ/ \quad \text{‘one’} \\
/p/ \text{and} /p̃/ & /pəɾɪɾ/ \quad \text{‘deaf’} \\
& /pɔɾpəɾ/ \quad \text{‘pig’} \\
& /iɲɪɛɾ/ \quad \text{‘it is good’} \\
& /niɲɪɛɾ/ \quad \text{‘\textit{Dysoxylum} sp.’} \\
/b/ \text{and} /b̃/ & /bʊlɑʏɑc̃/ \quad \text{‘parrotfish’} \\
& /bɔlɪl/ \quad \text{‘sea almond tree’} \\
/t/ \text{and} /c̃/ & /nɑmɛc̃/ \quad \text{‘fish’} \\
& /iɛmɛt/ \quad \text{‘(s)he returned’} \\
& /iʃɪtɪɾ/ \quad \text{‘(the rooster) crowed’} \\
& /iʃɪɛɾ/ \quad \text{‘(s)he swept’} \\
/c̃/ \text{and} /s/ & /iʃɪɭɑp/ \quad \text{‘(s)he is alive’} \\
& /iʃɪmɑk/ \quad \text{‘one’} \\
/p̃/ \text{and} /ṽ/ & /niɲɪɛɾ/ \quad \text{‘\textit{Dysoxylum} sp.’} \\
& /niʃɪp/ \quad \text{‘sprouting coconut’} \\
/p/ \text{and} /v/ & /nɑpɛk/ \quad \text{‘banyan’} \\
& /nɔvɛt/ \quad \text{‘stone’} \\
& /niɲɪpɪl/ \quad \text{‘bat’} \\
& /niɲɪvɪn/ \quad \text{‘his penis wrapper’} \\
/k/ \text{and} /ɣ/ & /kɑnɑk/ \quad \text{‘I’} \\
& /ni:wɔɣ/ \quad \text{‘Malay apple’} \\
& /nuiɡ/ \quad \text{‘island cabbage’} \\
& /pɔlɪlɪɣ/ \quad \text{‘wild kava’} \\
/v/ \text{and} /ṽ/ & /iɣɒɾvəɾ/ \quad \text{‘(s)he ran’} \\
& /iɣɔɾ/ \quad \text{‘(s)he said’} \\
/w/ \text{and} /ṽ/ & /wiɫas/ \quad \text{‘maggot’} \\
& /vɪrɪ/ \quad \text{‘red-bellied fruit dove’}
\end{array}
\]
5.2 Stress

In disyllabic words of the shape (C)V(C)V(C) containing only short peripheral vowels, the basic stress pattern in Tape is for stress to be attached to the penultimate syllable. We therefore encounter examples such as the following involving disyllables:

/nisaŋ/ [ˈnisax] ‘banana’
/nitlip/ [ˈnitlip] ‘dragon plum’
/čimod/ [ˈtʃimɒd] ‘sow’
/ulel/ [ˈulel] ‘pillow’
/ogi/ [ˈoɡi] ‘only’

With trisyllables of the same basic pattern, it is the middle syllable which receives stress according to this generalisation. For example:

/novotlip/ [noˈvotlip] ‘kidney’
/li̞yanaŋ/ [li̞ˈyanaŋ] ‘his/her face’
/veleŋes/ [feˈleŋes] ‘Barringtonia edulis’
/ninidin/ [niŋiˈdɪn] ‘his/her gums’
/nalomoč/ [naˈlomots] ‘green tree lizard’
/nibonwo/ [niˈbɔnwo] ‘reef heron’

Vowel length, if this is ultimately confirmed as being phonemically contrastive, does not affect the position of stress, as long vowels are described in §5.1.1.2 as being attested only in syllables that would be otherwise be eligible for stress. Thus:

/ya: vot/ [ˈxa: vot] ‘European’
/nyaː tɔt/ [ˈnaːyaː tɔt] ‘Dendrocnide sp.’

With disyllabic forms of the shape CVV(C), i.e. where there are two adjacent vowels with or without a following closing consonant, the first of the two vowels receives stress. Thus:

/vio/ [ˈfio] ‘hat’
/dui/ [ˈdui] ‘man’
/viaŋ/ [ˈfiaŋ] ‘taro’
/niel/ [ˈniel] ‘sun’
/nuis/ [ˈnuis] ‘rain’
However, in words of this basic shape but with one or more additional syllables of the shape CV preceding this final material, these vowel sequences are treated for stress assignment purposes as if they were a single syllable. Stress is assigned, therefore, to the immediately preceding syllable. Thus:

\[
\begin{align*}
/niniu/ & \quad [\{'niniu\}] \quad \text{‘Macaranga sp.’} \\
/na:viu/ & \quad [\{'na:viu\}] \quad \text{‘pandanus’} \\
/eduen/ & \quad [\{'e\duen\}] \quad \text{‘with’} \\
/na:bues/ & \quad [\{'na:\mutes\}] \quad \text{‘New Guinea rosewood’} \\
/n\yanien/ & \quad [\{'n\yanien\}] \quad \text{‘food’}
\end{align*}
\]

When the final syllable of a word contains schwa and the other vowels in the word are peripheral vowels, the schwa is treated in the same way as other vowels for syllable counting purposes. Stress appears, therefore, on the penultimate syllable, as in:

\[
\begin{align*}
/niv\m/ & \quad [\{'niv\m\}] \quad \text{‘lightning’} \\
/belev\m/ & \quad [\{'be'lev\m\}] \quad \text{‘thunder’}
\end{align*}
\]

With words ending in /CaC/ which result in word-final clusters ending in a syllabic /l/ or /n/ in association with the loss of schwa (§5.1.1.3), the final syllabic consonant is counted as a separate syllable for stress-assignment purposes. For example:

\[
\begin{align*}
/n\l/ & \quad [\{'n\l\}] \quad \text{‘its feather’} \\
/c\var\n/ & \quad [\{'c\var\n\}] \quad \text{‘his/her shin’} \\
/n\n\var\n/ & \quad [\{'n\n\var\n\}] \quad \text{‘his/her rib’}
\end{align*}
\]

With words which contain only schwas, stress is again assigned to the penultimate syllable according to the same generalisation that operates for all other categories of words described above. Thus:

\[
\begin{align*}
/\k\s\n/ & \quad [\{'\k\s\n\}] \quad \text{‘his/her nose’} \\
/n\g\s/ & \quad [\{'n\g\s\}] \quad \text{‘louse’} \\
/n\v\s/ & \quad [\{'n\v\s\}] \quad \text{‘Fijian asparagus’} \\
/k\s\l/ & \quad [\{'k\s\l\}] \quad \text{‘snot’} \\
/\v\l/ & \quad [\{'\v\l\}] \quad \text{‘woman’} \\
/m\d\n/ & \quad [\{'m\d\n\}] \quad \text{‘his/her scar’}
\end{align*}
\]

With words which contain a mix of schwas and peripheral vowels, the position of stress varies somewhat from the penultimate placement of stress described so far. With disyllables of the shape CVCV(C) in which the vowel of the initial syllable is schwa and the vowel of the second syllable is not schwa, stress is generally attracted instead to the final syllable.

\[
\begin{align*}
/\n\mi/ & \quad [\{'\n\mi\}] \quad \text{‘dust’} \\
/p\te/ & \quad [\{'p\te\}] \quad \text{‘breadfruit’} \\
/m\ru/ & \quad [\{'m\ru\}] \quad \text{‘Acacia spirorbis’} \\
/\n\pek/ & \quad [\{'\n\pek\}] \quad \text{‘banyan’} \\
/\n\max/ & \quad [\{'\n\max\}] \quad \text{‘house’} \\
/p\tin/ & \quad [\{'p\tin\}] \quad \text{‘his/her head’} \\
/\d\l/ & \quad [\{'\d\l\}] \quad \text{‘his/her voice’} \\
/b\l/ & \quad [\{'b\l\}] \quad \text{‘his/her back’}
\end{align*}
\]
It should be noted, however, that the phonetic difference between the stressed and unstressed syllables with forms such as these is, in fact, not particularly marked, and occasional variation has been noted between stress on the first and second syllables. Thus:

/ʨɔnin/ [ʦəˈn̩in ~ ʦən̩in] ‘his/her intestines’

Of course, many instances of unstressed schwa in these kinds of environment are available for optional deletion (§5.1.1.3), resulting in alternations such as the following:

/pɔtìn/ [pɔˈtin ~ ˈptìn] ‘his/her head’
/təmes/ [təˈmes ~ ˈtmes] ‘devil’

When a vowel is available for deletion according to the generalisations presented in §5.1.1.3, it never receives stress, even if it is retained and it appears in the penultimate syllable. Thus, if a prefix is added to such a form—which happens most commonly with verbs—the stress will shift to the vowel of the prefix rather than to the vowel of the final syllable of the root. Thus, with a root such as /məsit/ ‘sick’, the stress appears on the prefixed syllable in the inflected form /i-məsit/ ‘(s)he is sick’: i.e. ['iːməsit] or, with schwa deletion, ['imsit]. The schwa is simply ‘bypassed’ for stress assignment purposes, meaning that [*iːməsit] is not a possible pronunciation.

As noted above, with words ending in two adjacent vowels, or in a consonant preceded by two adjacent vowels, stress is normally attracted to the vowel of the preceding syllable. However, when the preceding syllable contains schwa, stress is applied instead to the first of the two vowels. Thus:

/μɔliun/ [mɔˈliun] ‘chief’
/mɔtii/ [mɔˈtii] ‘coconut’

With disyllabic forms in which the vowel of the first syllable is schwa and there is a medial consonant cluster, stress attaches invariably to the penultimate syllable. Thus:

/μɔlɛn/ [mɔlɛn] ‘his/her bed’
/ɲɔŋmax/ [ɲɔŋmax] ‘mosquito’
/ɲɔŋpon/ [ɲɔŋpon] ‘white flying fox’
/pɔrtax/ [pɔrtax] ‘rubbish’
/mɔldon/ [mɔlˈdon] ‘his/her right hand’
/dɔlɛn/ [ˈdɔlɛn] ‘his/her hand’
/kɔtii/ [kɔtii] ‘door’

Again, with words ending in /-CCVVC/, we find stress on the preceding syllable even if that syllable contains schwa. Thus:

/bɔtnie/ [ˈbɔtnie] ‘ashes’

Roots of three or more syllables are much less infrequent in Tape than disyllables, but when the penultimate syllable contains a schwa and the remaining syllables contain other vowels, stress shifts one syllable to the left to the antepenultimate syllable if that syllable contains a peripheral vowel. Thus:

/nidɔlɛn/ [niˈdɔlɛn] ‘its egg’
/tirɔɓɔb/ [ˈtirɔˈɓɔbj] ‘wild’
/pɔtaydɔlin/ [pɔˈtaydɔlin] ‘his/her neck’
Stress in Tape is not fixed to a particular syllable of a root in all morphological contexts. Given that the addition of prefixes and suffixes can affect the number of syllables in a word, stress can be shifted leftwards or rightwards from a particular syllable in the root in line with the general requirement that stress should ordinarily appear on the penultimate syllable of the phonological word. Note, therefore, the varying position of stress in the following examples containing the root /lis/ ‘look at’:

/Ø-lis-Ø/  
2SG:IMP-look.at-3SG  
['lis]  ‘look at it’

/Ø-lis-œr/  
2SG:IMP-look.at-3PL  
['lisœr]  ‘look at them’

/ɪ-lis/  
3SG:REAL-look.at-3SG  
['ilis]  ‘(s)he looked at it’

/ɪ-lis-œr/  
3SG:REAL-look.at-3PL  
['ilisœr]  ‘(s)he looked at them’

/ka pó-n-lis-Ø/  
2NONSG:IRR-PL-look.at-3SG  
[ko'panlis]  ‘you will all look at it’

/ka pó-n-lis-œr/  
2NONSG:IRR-PL-look.at-3SG  
[kopan'lisœr]  ‘you will all look at them’

5.3 Phonotactics

From what has been described in the preceding sections, particularly §5.1.1.3, the description of the phonotactic patterns of Tape potentially varies quite dramatically depending on what particular phonological analysis is adopted vis-à-vis schwa. The discussion which follows is predicated on the same kinds of assumptions about the vowel inventory for this language which are described in this chapter.

Roots in Tape begin overwhelmingly with consonants. Any single consonant can appear at the beginning of a word, though initial /g/ is attested in only a couple of items. One of these, however, is the high-frequency multifunctional item /gi/ with functions as a demonstrative (‘this, that’), as an indefinite noun phrase marker, and as a relative clause marker.

Although roots may begin with vowels, a number of phonotactic restrictions on the distribution of initial vowels can be noted. The initial high vowels /i/ and /u/ are reasonably commonly attested, though almost exclusively with verbs. Root-initial /e/ is also quite widely encountered, though such forms overwhelmingly belong to closed sets such as pronouns, prepositions, locational nouns or adverbs, with just a handful of nouns and no verbs at all. There is only a single word in my corpus beginning with /o/, though it is the high-frequency form /ogi/ ‘just, only’. Only a single indigenous word has been attested with initial /a/, i.e. /ase/ ‘mother’s brother’. No word at all begins with schwa.

In word-final position we encounter all vowels apart from /a/. The vowel /a/ only appears at the end of the preposition /ra/, though it is suggested in §6.3.2 that this form

---

9 My corpus includes the word /atua/ ‘God’, though that represents a post-contact borrowing ultimately from Samoan.
may represent sporadic influence from some other language. A variety of vowel sequences are permitted within roots in Tape, as governed by the following generalisations:

- The low vowel /a/ can be followed by a high vowel, i.e. /ai/, /au/.
- High vowels can be followed by any non-like vowel other than schwa, i.e. /ie/, /ia/, /io/, /iu/, /ue/, /ua/, /uo/.
- Mid vowels can be followed by the low vowel, i.e. /ea/, /oa/.

Specifically excluded by these generalisations are the following vowel sequences:

- Any vowel sequence in which schwa appears as the first or second vowel.
- Any sequence of two like vowels.
- Any sequence of the mid vowels with anything other than following /a/.
- Sequences of the low vowel followed by a mid vowel.

There are some restrictions on word-final consonants in that labiovelar consonants are not attested. There is also only a single form attested with word-final /g/ and that is /isig/ ‘one’. It will also be remembered from the discussion in §5.1.2 that there is no word-final contrast between /v/ and /p/. The glides /w/ and /y/ are also excluded word-finally, though we do find words ending in the diphthongs /au/ and /ai/. Word-finally, we never encounter more than a single phonemic consonant. However, it will be remembered from the discussion in some of the preceding sections that while there is a range of permissible final phonetic clusters, these are all derived as a result of the deletion of underlying schwa.

The labiovelar consonants are somewhat restricted in their distribution in that they never appear word-finally or as the initial element of a consonant cluster. There is also no evidence for schwa deletion taking place after a word-initial labiovelar that would result in a surface word-initial consonant cluster (§5.1.1.3). Labiovelars also never appear before the rounded vowels /u/ and /o/, being attested only before the vowels /i/, /e/, /a/ and /o/.

Intervocically we find any single consonant. A substantial number of words are found with two-member intervocalic consonant clusters, though it is difficult at this stage to formulate any generalisations as to what kinds of clusters are permitted and what kinds are disallowed. Excluding historically reduplicated roots and likely compounds, the vast majority of intervocalic clusters are attested in only a single root or in a small handful of roots. In fact, of the forty-three different two-member consonant combinations that are currently attested in my corpus, thirty-one cluster types are attested in only a single form. The following nine clusters each appear in only two forms: /νν/, /χχ/, /γγ/, /λκ/, /θθ/, /ττ/, /ρρ/, /υυ/. Only three clusters, /γυυ/, /νν/ and /ττ/, are each attested in three separate roots.

With the relatively restricted lexical corpus that has been assembled at this stage it is difficult to offer any generalisations about the intervocalic clustering possibilities in Tape. About the only restrictions that can be stated regarding two-member consonant clusters are the following:

10 Note that some directly suffixed nominal roots do end in schwa and /a/, though these forms obligatorily receive some suffix, or are morphologically bound to a following possessor noun, so we do not find these vowels at the ends of words.

11 These clusters are: /pt, pl, tb, tν, tγ, tm, tn, kl, br, dy, dl, vl, vs, sk, sy, sŋ, mɛ, mk, my, np, nŋ, lɛ, lk, ld, lm, rt, rk, rb, rd, rv, mr/. 
(i) Not attested as the initial element of a cluster are the following: all labiovelar consonants; the velar consonants /g/ and /ŋ/; and the palatal affricate /ç/.

(ii) Not attested as the final element of a cluster are the following: the voiced velar stop /g/ and the labiovelar stops /p/ and /b/.

(iii) There can be no root-medial clusters of two identical consonants.

However, these statements about the intervocalic clustering possibilities of Tape still leave well over a third of the logically possible two-member clusters completely unrepresented in the lexicon of Tape. It is not known which of the following explanations for this rather unsatisfactory set of generalisations is most appropriate:

- My lexical corpus may simply be too restricted at this stage to allow for proper generalisations about this aspect of the phonotactic possibilities in the language.
- My current knowledge of the morphology of the language may have failed to properly distinguish between intra-morphemic clusters and inter-morphemic clusters.
- This aspect of the phonology of Tape may be genuinely messy, with the description just presented above more or less accurately reflecting what is going on in the language. That is, in addition to the general phonotactic restrictions just presented, there may well be a substantial set of more or less *ad hoc* restrictions against particular consonant clusters.  

In addition to the various two-member consonant clusters discussed above, my corpus also includes only two forms containing three-member intervocalic consonant clusters: /menkre/ ‘black flying fox’ and /søytre/ ‘tip out’. The first of these forms appears to represent a historic compound, possibly being based on the historical root of /nɔmən/ ‘bird’ (with loss of the accreted article /nɔ-/) (§6.1). It may also be that the sequence /kr/ should be treated as involving an underlying schwa that has been deleted according to the widespread process described in §5.1.1.3. Thus, it is possible that the phonemic form here should be /menkɾe/. Certainly, such a three-syllable analysis would be consistent with comparative data, as cognate forms in nearby languages all have an additional syllable, e.g. Naman/mengore/, Neve’ei /nimingori/.

The phonotactic statements presented so far relate exclusively to intra-morphemic possibilities. Perhaps unsurprisingly, a substantially greater range of consonant clusters is permitted over morpheme boundaries in Tape. One point that is worthy of specific comment, however, is the fact that the intra-morphemic contrast between the non-prenasalised voiceless stop /t/ and the prenasalised voiced stop /d/ is supplemented by an additional contrast involving the consonant cluster /nt/, which only arises over morpheme boundaries. Compare, therefore, the following:

12 Unappealing though this kind of conclusion may be to many linguists, this is possibly the most likely solution given that substantially broader lexical corpora assembled for closely related Naman and Neve’ei reveal more or less the same kinds of problems in relation to the clustering possibilities for these languages.

13 However, I have no explanation to offer for the apparent exceptional phonotactic behaviour of the verb /søytre/, unless this is also an example of an unrecognised underlying trisyllable of the shape /søyören/. 
Chapter 5

5.4 Morphophonemic rules

The morphology of Tape brings together a number of sequences of segments which are subject to systematic morphophonemic processes. These general processes are outlined in this section, and the reader will be reminded of the application of these processes at the appropriate points in the discussion of noun morphology in §6.1 and verb morphology in §6.2.

5.4.1 Vowel deletion

When two vowels are brought together over a morpheme boundary, one of the following two changes apply:

(i) If one of the two vowels involved is a schwa, the schwa is lost. The effects of this change can be seen in the derivation of the following verbal object suffixes (§6.2.2):

\[ /i^-rəndo^a^k \rightarrow i^rəndok/ \]
3SG:REAL-know-1SG
‘(s)he knows me’

\[ /en^-tini^ɔr \rightarrow entinir/ \]
1SG:REAL-bury-3PL
‘I buried them’

\[ /kə^-udi \rightarrow kudi/ \]
2SG:REAL-eat
‘you ate (it)’

(ii) If neither of the two vowels is a schwa, the first of the two vowels is systematically lost. This rule can be seen in the developments affecting vowel-final verbal prefixes (§6.2.1). For example:

\[ /be^-udi \rightarrow budi/ \]
1SG:IRR-eat
‘I will eat (it)’

\[ /ipo^-ivin \rightarrow ipivin/ \]
3SG:IRR-go
‘(s)he will go’
Phonology

/i-ske-ivin → iskivin/
3SG:REAL-NEG-go
‘(s)he did not go’

Where the prefix /i-/ 3SG:REAL is added to a non-monosyllabic root beginning with /i/, the resulting sequence of like vowels is realised as a single vowel. For example:

/i-ipərvί → ipərvί/
3SG:REAL-do.how
‘how did (s)he do it?’

However, when the verb root is monosyllabic, there is an exceptional realisation of this sequence of vowels in that the result is a phonemically long vowel. Thus:

/i-ič → i:č/
3SG:REAL-cry
‘(s)he cried’

5.4.2 The treatment of -p

When root-final /p/ is followed by a vowel as a result of some morphological process, the /p/ systematically shifts to /v/. We encounter this kind of change when object suffixes are added to verbs (§6.2.2). For example:

/i-tep-ər → itevoɾ/
3SG:REAL-push-3PL
‘(s)he pushed them’

When a noun ending in /p/ is suffixed with a cliticised demonstrative of the shape /-ər/ or /-ar/, we find the same kind of shift. For example:

/dui tərep-ər → dui tərevəɾ/
man old-DEM
‘that old man’

We also see evidence of the effect of this process in root alternations such as that between the unsuffixed noun /nivip/ ‘penis wrapper’ and the corresponding directly possessed form (which obligatorily ends in a vowel), /nivivə-/ ‘penis wrapper’.

As just formulated, this rule has the appearance of an ordinary morphophonemic rule. However, as noted in §5.1.2, there is no phonemic contrast word-finally in Tape between /p/ and /v/. This form is represented phonemically here as /p/ (and orthographically as p). However, since this segment is indeterminate with respect to /p/ and /v/, it would have been perfectly possible to have chosen /v/ to represent this segment word-finally in phonemic representations (and to have represented this orthographically as v), and the derivations as presented above would no longer be needed. We would therefore find instead alternative patterns such as the following:

/i-tev/               [itep]
3SG:REAL-push
‘(s)he pushed (it)’
Chapter 5

\[ /i\text{-tev-ɔr/} \quad \text{[itevɔr]} \]
3SG:REAL-push-3PL
‘s(he pushed them’

5.4.3 Deletion of \(n\)

When sequences of \(/n/\) and \(/d/\) are brought together over morpheme boundaries, the nasal is regularly lost.\(^{14}\) We encounter this change when the first person singular realis prefix \(/en-/\) is followed by a root or another prefix beginning with \(/d/\). For example:

\[ /en-de\text{-vɔs} \rightarrow \text{edevɔs/} \]
1SG:REAL-CONT-small
‘I am still small’

The plural prefix \(/n-/\) on verbs (§6.2.1.4) also has zero realisation before a verb beginning with \(/d/\). For example:

\[ /i\text{-ska-n-dɔdɔŋ} \rightarrow \text{iskadɔdɔŋ/} \]
3REAL-NEG-PL-afraid
‘they are not afraid’

\(^{14}\) It will be remembered that \(/d/\) is a prenasalised stop, so there will always phonetically be an alveolar nasal, even if phonemic deletion of a nasal has taken place.
6 Grammar

6.1 Nouns and noun phrases

A noun phrase in Tape can consist minimally of either a pronoun or a noun. The behaviour of pronouns, along with the range of modifiers that are associated with them, is described in §6.1.1. The morphology of nouns is described in §6.1.2, while the much wider range of modifiers that can be found with nouns is covered in §6.1.3.

6.1.1 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>kënëk</td>
<td>naakëdru</td>
<td>naakëdêtël</td>
<td>naakëd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Excl.</td>
<td>këmemru</td>
<td>këmemtël</td>
<td>këmem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>naakëm</td>
<td>kemru</td>
<td>kemtël</td>
<td>kem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>en</td>
<td>eru</td>
<td>eritël</td>
<td>er</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The closed set of independent pronouns in Tape is set out in Table 3. It can be seen that these forms mark a formal distinction between first, second and third person, as well as a four-way number distinction with separate categories of dual (‘two’) and trial (‘three’) alongside the singular (‘one’) and plural (‘more than three’). Note that the dual and trial series of pronouns are formed by adding to the plural pronoun the historical roots of the numerals *iru* ‘two’ and *itël* ‘three’ respectively (§6.1.3.2), with some unpredictable forms arising out of these combinations.

The category of dual is obligatorily distinguished in Tape from the singular and plural wherever dual reference is implied, as illustrated by the following textual examples:

*Kemru ka-r-vin erenge nève tese têmes.*

2PL 2NONSG:REAL-DL-go GOAL rock POSS devil

‘The two of you went to the rock of the devil.’

*En-vwër be-vwiri en kem.*

1SG:REAL-want 1SG:IRR-tell GOAL 2PL

‘I want to tell it to you (pl.).’
Pronouns with trial reference are less likely to be used than any of the other series of 
pronouns, for purely pragmatic reasons. My textual corpus does not provide a single
instance where a trial pronoun would be called for, and the forms presented in Table 3 
are derived exclusively from elicited data. However, while there is a four-way number 
distinction in the pronouns, this is not matched in the subject prefixes found on verbs in 
Tape, where only a three-way number distinction is marked (§6.2.1.1). Verbal subjects 
with trial reference are cross-referenced on verbs in the same way as plural subjects. Thus:

\[ \text{Naakëdëtël dë-n-titing.} \]
1TL.INCL 1NONSG.INCL:REAL-PL-speak
‘We (tl. incl.) are speaking.’

\[ \text{Naakëd itar dë-n-titing} \]
1PL.INCL many 1NONSG.INCL:REAL-PL-speak
‘Many of us are speaking.’

Quantifiers can appear after the plural forms of the pronouns. For example:

\[ \text{Këmem rivwi më-n-jej waia.} \]
1PL.EXCL all 1NONSG:REAL-PL-cut wire
‘We all cut the wire.’

\[ \text{Naakëd rivwi dui e Tape.} \]
1PL.INCL all person SOURCE Tape
‘We are all people from Tape.’

### 6.1.2 Nouns

While the bulk of nouns in my Tape corpus are inflectionally and derivationally simple,
there are nonetheless a number of derivational processes which relate to the formation of 
new nouns, described in §6.1.2.1. Because possession with one large subset of nouns is 
expressed inflectionally in Tape, possessive constructions in general are set out in §6.1.2.2.

#### 6.1.2.1 Nominal derivation

While there are a substantial number of derived nouns in Tape, the processes of nominal 
derivation described in this section are either less than fully productive or, if productive, 
not very frequently found in ordinary speech.

#### 6.1.2.1.1 Nominalisation

There is a productive pattern for deriving nouns from verb roots in Tape which involves 
the addition of the suffix -ien. For example:

- mekar  ‘work’
- khës  ‘dance’
- mësit  ‘sick’

- mekar-ien  ‘work, job’
- khës-ien  ‘(a) dance’
- mësit-ien  ‘illness, disease’
vërëng ‘think’          vërëng-ien ‘thought, idea’
mes ‘die’               mes-ien ‘funeral’
pëlpol ‘fight’           pëlpol-ien ‘(a) fight’
lakh ‘married’           lakh-ien ‘marriage, wedding’

Verbs ending in *p* involve regular shift of the consonant to *v* in association with the nominalising suffix (§5.4.2). For example:

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{ngep} \quad \text{‘breathe’} \\
\text{ngev-ien} \quad \text{‘asthma’}
\end{array}
\]

These nominalised verbs in Tape participate in the full range of sentence structures in the same way as ordinary nouns. For example:

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{Vërëng-ien esom ipërvi?} \\
\quad \text{think-NOM POSS:2SG 3 SG:REAL:how} \\
\quad \text{‘What is your opinion (lit. how is your thinking)?’}
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{Mekar-ien esom sëte?} \\
\quad \text{work-NOM POSS:2SG what} \\
\quad \text{‘What is your job?’}
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{Er i-n-vin erenge khës-ien isig.} \\
\quad \text{3PL 3 REAL-PL-go GOAL dance-NOM one} \\
\quad \text{‘They went to a dance.’}
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{l}
\text{I-n-vin jëne mes-ien isig.} \\
\quad \text{3 REAL-PL-go CAUSE die-NOM one} \\
\quad \text{‘They went for a funeral.’}
\end{array}
\]

It should be pointed out, however, that while this pattern of derivation is certainly productive in that any verb is presumably open to nominalisation in this way, Tape—in common with most of its Oceanic relatives—is not a language in which speakers frequently call upon this structural possibility.

This pattern of suffixed nominalisation in Tape corresponds to what we find in V‘ënen Taut (Fox 1979:32), Naman (Crowley 2006c) and Avava (Crowley 2006a), and it contrasts with other languages of central Malakula, such as Neve’ei and Neverver, in which nominalisation is marked discontinuously by means of a prefixed element *nV-* and the suffixed element -ian.

However, in addition to this productive pattern of suffixed nominalisation in Tape, there is also evidence for two rather more sporadically attested patterns. The first of these involves a couple of intransitive verbs for which nominalisation is expressed discontinuously by means of the prefixed element *nē-* and the suffixed element -ien.¹

Those verbs which have been attested as behaving in this way are:

\[
\begin{array}{l}
khan \quad \text{‘eat’} \\
jë\text{ñ} \quad \text{‘cry’}
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{l}
kē-khan-ien \quad \text{‘food’} \\
n-jē-ien² \quad \text{‘crying’}
\end{array}
\]

---

¹ The existence of a handful of nominalised verbs involving a simulfix parallels a minor pattern that we also find in Naman.

² The loss of the final vowel of the prefix before the vowel-initial verb root here is consistent with what we systematically find with verbal prefixing morphology (§6.2.1), and is covered by the general morphophonemic rule set out in §5.4.1.
The word for ‘food’ occasionally shows evidence of irregular nominalisation in Malakula languages, so this may well be an idiosyncratic pattern in Tape. The appearance of a simulfix rather than simple suffixation in this case may reflect sporadic influence from the Northeast Malakula language, where many—though apparently not all—nominalisations are expressed discontinuously by means of $nV$-/-(i)en (McKerras 2000).

The second sporadic pattern of nominalisation involves simple prefixation of $në$- with no accompanying suffix. This is again a pattern which is attested sporadically in some of the neighbouring languages. One verb-noun pair which is attested as behaving in this way is the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
jijër & \quad \text{‘sweep’} & në-jijër & \quad \text{‘broom’}
\end{align*}
\]

The following noun also appears to be derived in the same way, though at this stage the putative unreduplicated verbal root has not been attested:

\[
\begin{align*}
vwëkvwëk & \quad \text{‘be albino’} & në-vwëk & \quad \text{‘(an) albino’}
\end{align*}
\]

### 6.1.2.1.2 Compounding

There is considerable evidence for compounding as a derivational process involving nouns in my Tape corpus. One commonly attested pattern is that by which two nominal roots are linked to form a new noun. For example:

\[
\begin{align*}
pupu & \quad \text{tëvéélëkh} & \quad \text{grandparent woman} & \quad \text{‘grandmother’} \\
netite & \quad \text{dui} & \quad \text{child man} & \quad \text{‘boy’} \\
lumlum & \quad \text{tes} & \quad \text{waterweed sea} & \quad \text{‘seaweed’}
\end{align*}
\]

A noun referring to a person with a following place name indicates a person who originates from that place. For example:

\[
\begin{align*}
dui & \quad \text{Tape} & \quad \text{man Tape} & \quad \text{‘Tape man’}
\end{align*}
\]

Locational nouns other than institutionalised place names can also enter into this construction. For example:

\[
\begin{align*}
dui & \quad \text{elo} & \quad \text{man coast} & \quad \text{‘coastal person’}
\end{align*}
\]

---

3 Others that possibly fall into this set are as follows, though at this stage of research the corresponding verb stems have not been recorded: $nijëngjëng$ ‘stool’, chair’, $nijëvjëp$ ‘walking stick’, $nirirëp$ ‘fan’, $nëbhëtët$ ‘mute person’, $nëvwëd$ ‘bald head’.
Locational nouns, including institutionalised place names, can also be made into compound nouns with the preceding locative preposition e, as in the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{dui} & \quad \text{e} \quad \text{Tape} \\
\text{man} & \quad \text{LOC} \quad \text{Tape} \\
\text{‘Tape man’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{dui} & \quad \text{e} \quad \text{nib} \\
\text{man} & \quad \text{LOC} \quad \text{fire} \\
\text{‘Ambrymese’ man’}
\end{align*}
\]

Another pattern of compounding involves an initial noun being followed by an uninflected verbal root (§6.1.3). The most common pattern of this type involves a stative verb, as in the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{dui} & \quad \text{mit} \\
\text{man} & \quad \text{black} \\
\text{‘Melanesian’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{dui} & \quad \text{lil} \\
\text{man} & \quad \text{big} \\
\text{‘important person’}
\end{align*}
\]

It is particularly common for stative verbs of colour to be used in the formation of nouns referring to particular varieties of plants or other biological taxa. For example:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{melêkh} & \quad \text{miel} \\
\text{kava} & \quad \text{red} \\
\text{‘kava variety with reddish-coloured branches’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{nisakh} & \quad \text{mit} \\
\text{banana} & \quad \text{black} \\
\text{‘variety of banana’}
\end{align*}
\]

However, it is also possible for an active verb also to enter into a nominal compound as the second element. For example:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{dui} & \quad \text{nur} \\
\text{man} & \quad \text{wage.war} \\
\text{‘warrior’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{nib} & \quad \text{vang} \\
\text{fire} & \quad \text{burn} \\
\text{‘burning piece of firewood’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[\text{4}\quad\text{The island of Ambrym—clearly visible from the east coast of Malakula—is well known for its two volcanoes which are more or less permanently active. It is named in Tape for the word nib ‘fire’ because of the burning volcanic glow which can be seen at night.}\]
Compounds can also be formed with an initial noun followed by an adjective (§6.1.3). For example:

\[
\begin{align*}
lu \quad bëte & \quad \text{arrow forbidden} \\
 & \quad \text{‘poison arrow’} \\
dui \quad bëte & \quad \text{man forbidden} \\
 & \quad \text{‘sorcerer’} \\
nit \quad bëte & \quad \text{place forbidden} \\
 & \quad \text{‘forbidden place’}
\end{align*}
\]

When nouns ending in -iu enter into nominal compounds as the initial element, the final \( u \) is frequently (though by no means invariably) lost. Thus:

\[
\begin{align*}
mëtiu + mërang & \rightarrow mëti mërang \\
 & \quad \text{‘coconut’} \quad \text{‘dry’} \quad \text{‘dry coconut’} \\
tiu + tëvet & \rightarrow ti tëvet \\
 & \quad \text{‘chicken’} \quad \text{‘woman’} \quad \text{‘hen’} \\
tiu + dui & \rightarrow ti dui \\
 & \quad \text{‘chicken’} \quad \text{‘man’} \quad \text{‘rooster’} \\
nitiu + tivnu & \rightarrow niti tivnu \\
 & \quad \text{‘hermit crab’} \quad \text{‘?’} \quad \text{‘coconut crab’}
\end{align*}
\]

Compounds which are derived from directly suffixed nouns (§6.1.2.2.2) fall into two groups in terms of their morphological behaviour. With one subset of such nouns, a noun carrying its possessive suffix is followed by a compounded element. Examples of this type include the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
etme-n \quad lil & \quad \text{father-3SG big} \\
 & \quad \text{‘his/her father’s elder brother’} \\
etme-n \quad vës & \quad \text{father-3SG little} \\
 & \quad \text{‘his/her father’s younger brother’}
\end{align*}
\]

With members of the second subset of directly suffixed nouns, however, there is no suffix present and the noun and the verb are linked in a single phonological word. Thus:

\[
\begin{align*}
mëte-miel & \quad \text{eye-red} \\
 & \quad \text{‘conjunctivitis’}
\end{align*}
\]

With a handful of attested compounds, however, both of these patterns appear to be in free variation, as in the following:
mopë-n  mit  mov-mit
liver/lung-3SG  black  liver/lung-black
‘lung’  ‘lung’

While my Tape corpus includes a substantial number of examples of nominal compounds, many of these specific patterns would have to be described as less than fully productive. Such a comment perhaps applies to compounding in most languages, since meanings that one might logically expect to be expressed by means of a compound are either unpredictably expressed by means of separate morphologically underived forms, or expressed by means of periphrasis of some kind. For example, while there is the compound *dui mit ‘Melanesian’ (= ‘person’ + ‘black’), there is no compound *dui wip (‘person’ + ‘white’) for ‘European’, as there is a separate lexical form, i.e. khaavot.

6.1.2.1.3 Reanalysis of *na

A common feature of Vanuatu languages is the wholesale reanalysis of an original preposed noun phrase marker of the form *na as an integral part of the noun root (Crowley 1985). While we certainly find evidence that this reanalysis has also taken place in Tape, it is interesting to note that this process has not been nearly as thoroughgoing as in some of the neighbouring languages. In Tape, only about 38% of nouns now begin with n- as a result of this kind of change, in comparison to 54% of nouns in Naman and as many as 91% in Neve’ei. This means that we find examples such as the following in which Tape shows no evidence of having retained reflexes of accretive *na whereas the other languages have clearly reanalysed the original article as part of the root:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neve’ei</th>
<th>Naman</th>
<th>Tape</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>noto</td>
<td>neto</td>
<td>tiu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nesal</td>
<td>nesel</td>
<td>sel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nesakhau</td>
<td>neskho</td>
<td>sëkho</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are also forms such as the following which show evidence of accretion of *na only in Neve’ei, but not in Tape or Naman:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neve’ei</th>
<th>Naman</th>
<th>Tape</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nibiang</td>
<td>buag</td>
<td>viakh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nebat-</td>
<td>batë-</td>
<td>pëti-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nelabut</td>
<td>labët</td>
<td>laabët</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, there are some forms in which all three languages show evidence of accretion of the original article. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neve’ei</th>
<th>Naman</th>
<th>Tape</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>na‘abuah</td>
<td>nakhabues</td>
<td>naabues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>na‘ari</td>
<td>nakhari</td>
<td>naarës</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nebang</td>
<td>negab</td>
<td>nëpek</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally, there is a handful of forms which show no evidence of article accretion in any of these languages. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>libakh</th>
<th>libakh</th>
<th>lipakh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>‘dog’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In those languages which extensively retain reflexes of *na, it is common for nouns to lose the historically accreted element in at least some nominal compounds, with the resulting compounds reflecting only the historically prior roots. Such patterns typically alternate with apparently more recent patterns in which compounds are derived on the basis of the new root. In a language such as Neve’ei, therefore, we encounter alternations between the following older (and much less productive) pattern:

\[
\text{nukhubou} + \text{nemwen} \rightarrow \text{nukhubou-mwen}
\]

‘post’ ‘male’ ‘main house post’

and the following newer (and much more productive) pattern:

\[
\text{noang} + \text{netan} \rightarrow \text{noang netan}
\]

‘canoe’ ‘land’ ‘car’

In Tape, however, the first of these patterns appears to have diminished to the point where it can hardly be recognised as a pattern in the language at all. This is perhaps not too surprising given the relatively low proportion of nouns which show any evidence for the retention of reflexes of *na. Even so, my Tape corpus does contain a handful of compounds which suggest the possible wider existence of such a pattern at an earlier stage in the language. For example:

\[
\text{nëvet} + \text{mes} \rightarrow \text{vetmes}
\]

‘stone’ ‘dry’ ‘uplifted coral reef found in bush’

\[
\text{lib} + \text{nëvet} \rightarrow \text{libvet}
\]

‘bamboo’ ‘stone’ ‘very hard variety of bamboo’

However, the more general pattern of compounding with the noun nëvet ‘stone’ is illustrated by the following, where the historical article is not lost:

\[
\text{nëvet} + \text{mit} \rightarrow \text{nëvet mit}
\]

‘stone’ ‘black’ ‘black stone’

There is, in addition, a vestigial process involved in the derivation of a handful of locational nouns (§6.3.3.2) by which the reflex of *na- is replaced with e-, producing pairs such as the following:

\[
\text{nëmak} \quad \text{‘house’} \quad \text{emak} \quad \text{‘to/at home’}
\]

\[
\text{nimel} \quad \text{‘meeting house’} \quad \text{emel} \quad \text{‘to/in the meeting house’}
\]

6.1.2.2 Possession

As is extremely common in the Oceanic subgroup, Tape presents a basic distinction between indirectly (and typically alienably) possessed and directly (and typically inalienably) possessed nouns (Lynch, Ross & Crowley 2002:40–43). With indirectly possessed nouns, both the possessor and possessum are expressed as free forms, while with directly possessed nouns, the possessum may be expressed by means of a bound nominal root to which some kind of possessive suffix is attached. These two patterns can therefore be contrasted as follows, in which the possessum is the indirectly possessed noun nisip ‘knife’ in the first example and the directly possessed noun pëti- ‘head’ in the second:
nisip ese mwëliun
knife POSS chief
‘the chief’s knife’

pëti-k
head-1SG
‘my head’

6.1.2.2.1 Indirectly possessed nouns

The possession of free nouns in Tape is expressed by means of the indirect possessive construction, in which the possessed noun is followed by a possessive pronoun when there is a singular pronominal possessor. Postposed possessive pronouns are also used with third person non-singular pronominal possessors, as well as with first person inclusive pronominal possessors.

The paradigms for pronominal possessors are therefore defective in that there are no separate possessive pronouns for first person non-singular exclusive possessors, nor for second person non-singular possessors, just as we find with the paradigms for directly possessed nouns (§6.1.2.2.2). The same pronominal suffixes that are used in the expression of possession with directly possessed nouns are attached to the various possessive constituents in these indirect possessive constructions.

In contrast to some languages of central Malakula such as Naman, Neve’ei and Avava, there is a formal distinction in Tape between constructions expressing different kinds of alienable possessive relationships, involving special markers for the possession of items that are to be eaten, chewed and drunk, as well as a separate category for ‘general’ possession which does not come under any of these three specific possessive relationships. While this kind of elaboration in the expression of alienable possession represents a contrast with some of the immediately adjacent languages, it is a feature which is shared with its immediate neighbour V’ënen Taut (Fox 1979:40–41), as well as many other languages of central Vanuatu and, indeed, other Oceanic languages further afield.

The basic forms of the roots of the various possessive forms in Tape are de- for the expression of edible possession, jomo- for the possession of chewable items, mëne- for drinkable items and (g)ese- for general possession. The first three of these possessive forms bear partial, though unpredictable, similarities to transitive verb roots which express clearly related meanings. Thus, de- can be compared to the verb udi ‘eat’, jomo- to the verb jomo ‘chew’ and mëne- to the verb mën ‘drink’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Possessive pronouns (edible)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The markers that are used in association with items that are for eating, including nouns such as *nëkhaniem* ‘food’, *mëtiu* ‘coconut’ (of which one can eat the flesh), *nëmej* ‘fish’, *pwërpar* ‘pork’, are set out in Table 4. Thus:

\[ \text{mëtiu do-m} \]  
\[ \text{coconut ED:2SG} \]
\[ \text{‘your coconut (for eating)’} \]

It will be seen that the variation in the form of the vowels of the root of the possessive marker between \( e \), \( o \) and \( a \) here mirrors the variation that we find in root-final vowels with directly suffixed nouns that end in \( e \) (§6.1.2.2.2).

**Table 5: Possessive pronouns (chewable)**

<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>jomok</td>
<td></td>
<td>jomodru</td>
<td>jomod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Excl.</td>
<td></td>
<td>jomodetël</td>
<td>jomod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>jomom</td>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>jomon</td>
<td>jomaru</td>
<td>jomartël</td>
<td>jomar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chewable possessive markers are used with nouns such as *niji* ‘sugarcane’, *jomjom* ‘sweet coconut’ (which is chewed rather than drunk or eaten) and *nëpet* ‘kind of tuber with very fibrous flesh’. The markers that are used to express this relationship are set out in Table 5. Thus:

\[ niji jomo-m \]
\[ \text{sugarcane CHEW-2SG} \]
\[ ‘your sugarcane (for chewing)’ \]

**Table 6: Possessive pronouns (drinkable)**

<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>mënok</td>
<td>mënedru</td>
<td>mënodedetël</td>
<td>mënéd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Excl.</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>mënom</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>mënen</td>
<td>mënaru</td>
<td>mënartël</td>
<td>mënar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The drinkable possessive relationship is expressed by means of the markers set out in Table 6. Items for which possession is marked in this way include *nuo* ‘water’, *ti* ‘tea’ and *wiski* ‘whisky’. Thus:

\[ nuo mëno-m \]
\[ \text{water DRINK-2SG} \]
\[ ‘your water (for drinking)’ \]

\[ nuo mëne-n \]
\[ \text{water DRINK-3SG} \]
\[ ‘his/her water (for drinking)’ \]
Finally, there is a set of possessive markers which is used with all other indirectly possessed nouns, as set out in Table 7. These forms appear overwhelmingly in my corpus in their vowel-initial forms based on a root of the basic shape ese-. However, speakers of Tape did volunteer a series of occasional g-initial variants based on the root gese-. These two sets of forms were seen as being semantically and functionally equivalent. Thus:

\[
\begin{align*}
nisip & \quad eso-m \\
\text{knife} & \quad \text{POSS-2SG} \\
\text{‘your knife’} & \\
nisip & \quad geso-m \\
\text{knife} & \quad \text{POSS-2SG} \\
\text{‘your knife’} & \\
\end{align*}
\]

With those pronominal categories for which there are no possessive suffixes in this possessive construction, the pattern of possession is exactly the same as that which is followed with nominal possessors. That is, the unsuffixed possessive morphemes are simply followed by the independent pronoun (§6.1.1) to express the pronominal category of the possessor. The unsuffixed forms of the possessive markers are respectively jomo for chewable items, mëne for drinkable items and de for edible items. Thus:

\[
\begin{align*}
nuo & \quad mëne \quad tëvëlëkh \\
\text{water} & \quad \text{DRINK woman} \\
\text{‘the woman’s water (for drinking)’} & \\
nuo & \quad mëne \quad këmem \\
\text{water} & \quad \text{DRINK IPL.EXCL} \\
\text{‘our (pl.excl.) water (for drinking)’} & \\
niji & \quad jomo \quad tëvëlëkh \\
\text{sugarcane} & \quad \text{CHEW woman} \\
\text{‘the woman’s sugarcane (for chewing)’} & \\
mëtiu & \quad de \quad pwërpar \\
\text{coconut} & \quad \text{ED pig} \\
\text{‘the pig’s coconut (for eating)’} & \\
\end{align*}
\]

With general possession, the unsuffixed form of the possessive marker varies between ese and gese, though there is an additional variant here in that there is a shortened form se. Thus:

\[
\begin{align*}
nisip & \quad ese \quad tëvet \\
\text{knife} & \quad \text{POSS woman} \\
\text{‘the woman’s knife’} & \\
\end{align*}
\]
As is commonly found in Oceanic languages where similar kinds of semantic distinctions are expressed with regard to alienable possession, nouns are not assigned to fixed categories with regard to these four different possessive markers. Rather, different kinds of possessive relationships can potentially be expressed by different markers with the same noun. Thus, since taro, for example, can seen as something to be eaten, as well as something to be seen in some other way (e.g. for planting), possession of taros can be expressed in more than one way. For example:

\[ \text{viakh do-m} \]
\[ \text{taro ED-2SG} \]
\[ \text{‘your taro (for eating)’} \]

\[ \text{viak eso-m} \]
\[ \text{taro POSS-2SG} \]
\[ \text{‘your taro (for some purpose other than eating, e.g. planting)’} \]

This means that while it would be possible to say something like the following:

\[ Pwërpar eso-m i-lingling lene. \]
\[ \text{pig POSS-2SG 3SG:REAL-wander over.there} \]
\[ \text{‘Your pig is wandering about over there.’} \]

it would not be possible to express this same meaning as:

\[ *Pwërpar do-m i-lingling lene. \]
\[ \text{pig ED-2SG 3SG:REAL-wander over.there} \]

since this would imply that a dead, and possibly even butchered or cooked, pig is somehow managing to wander around as though it were alive.

### 6.1.2.2.2 Directly possessed nouns

<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>-k</td>
<td>-dru</td>
<td>-dëtël</td>
<td>-d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incl.</td>
<td>Excl.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>-m</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>-n</td>
<td>-ru</td>
<td>-rtël</td>
<td>-r</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 8: Possessive suffixes*
With nouns which participate in the direct possessive construction—expressing predominantly inalienable possessive relationships—the possessive suffixes are as set out in Table 8.\(^5\) We therefore find examples such as the following:

\[
\text{pëti-}m
\]
\text{head-2SG}
\‘your (sg.) head’

With directly suffixed noun roots ending in the mid vowels \(e\) and \(o\), there is some change in the form of the final vowel of the root, as follows:\(^6\)

(i) Before suffixes beginning with \(r\) (i.e. all third person non-singular suffixes), a root-final mid vowel is lowered to \(a\). Thus, from \(lëme\)- ‘hand, arm’, we find the following:

\[
lëma-r
\]
\text{hand/arm-3PL}
\‘their hands/arms’

(ii) Before the first person singular suffix \(-k\) and second person singular suffix \(-m\), root-final \(e\) is backed to \(o\). For example:

\[
lëmo-m
\]
\text{hand/arm-2SG}
\‘your hands/arms’

With other suffixes, however, the final vowel of the root remains unchanged. For example:

\[
lëme-n
\]
\text{hand/arm-3SG}
\‘his/her hands/arms’

With roots that end in schwa that is preceded by \(t\), \(l\) or \(r\), the addition of the third person possessive suffix \(-n\) is accompanied by the loss of the schwa, and the nasal of the suffix is syllabified (§5.1.1.3). Note, therefore, the following possessive forms:

\[
\text{nilë-} \quad \‘hair, feather’ \quad \text{nil-}n \quad \‘its hair/feather’
\]
\[
\text{nëkhëkhërë-} \quad \‘side’ \quad \text{nëkhëkhër-}n \quad \‘his/her/its side’
\]
\[
\text{netë-} \quad \‘son, daughter’ \quad \text{net-}n \quad \‘his/her son/daughter’
\]

When a directly suffixed noun ends in \(s\) followed by schwa, the deletion of schwa and associated syllabification of the nasal of the suffix is optional. Thus:

\[
\text{rengesë-} \quad \‘branch’ \quad \text{renges(ë)-}n \quad \‘its branch’
\]

Nominal possessors with indirectly possessed nouns are expressed by simply juxtaposing the unsuffixed possessum with the immediately following possessor. These sequences are stressed as two separate phonological words. Thus, contrast the following:

\(^5\) These are the same pronominal suffixes that are attached to the various possessive constituents associated with alienable possession as described in §6.1.2.2.1.

\(^6\) Crowley had a note to himself in the draft manuscript to carry out further checks on these vowel alternations, so it is possible that what is described here might require modification once further research has been carried out – JL.
Note once again that there are no pronominal suffixes for non-singular first person exclusive and non-singular second person pronominal possessors of directly suffixed nouns. This category of possessor is expressed by directly postposing the full pronoun to the unsuffixed form of the noun in the same way just described for nominal possessors. Note, therefore, the following:

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
péle-n & \text{pèle} ne \\
\text{trunk-3SG} & \text{trunk tree} \\
\text{‘its trunk’} & \text{‘trunk of the tree’} \\
pwingi-n & \text{pwingi} ase \\
\text{mouth-3SG} & \text{mouth uncle} \\
\text{‘his/her mouth’} & \text{‘uncle’s mouth’} \\
nuo-n & \text{nuo} mëte-n \\
\text{juice-3SG} & \text{juice eye-3SG} \\
\text{‘its juice’} & \text{‘his/her tears’} \\
\end{array}
\]

It is worth pointing out that there is a major structural difference between Tape and central Malakula languages to the south such as Naman, Neve‘ei, Avava and Neverver with regard to the expression of pronominal possession. These languages also have a partial paradigm of pronominal possessive suffixes paralleling those for Tape set out in Table 8. However, with these categories of pronominal possession, the possessive suffixes typically alternate with a construction that directly parallels the pattern used for nominal possession, but making use of the independent pronouns. Compare, therefore, the following forms in Naman:

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
batë-n & \text{libakh} \\
\text{head-3SG} & \text{dog} \\
\text{‘the dog’s head’} & \\
bato-g & \sim \text{batë-n kine} \\
\text{head-1SG head-3SG 1SG} & \text{‘my head’} \\
\end{array}
\]

In these languages, the option represented by the example \(bato-g\) ‘my head’ clearly represents an older pattern, though the pattern represented by examples such as \(batë-n \text{kine}\) is very common in the present-day language, especially among younger speakers.

In Tape, however, there is no evidence whatsoever for the same kind of development having taken place. Thus, the meaning of ‘my head’ is invariably expressed by means of the direct pronominal possession, as in the following:

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
pẹtī-k & \\
\text{head-1SG} & \text{‘my head’} \\
\end{array}
\]

The following pattern, therefore, is completely unattested:
When schwa-final directly possessed forms are associated with a free form possessor—either a noun or one of those pronominal categories which is not expressed by means of pronominal suffixes—then the possessor again directly follows the possessum, though the final schwa of the root is lost. Compare, therefore, the following:

*peti kënek
head 1SG

netê-k
child-1SG
‘my child’

netê-m
child-2SG
‘your child’

net-n
child-3SG
‘his/her child’

netê-k
net këmem
child 1PL.EXCL
‘our child’

netê-m
net pwèrpar
child pig
‘piglet’

net-n
net nuok
child canoe
‘outrigger (= child of canoe)’

6.1.2.2.3 Membership of possessive classes

As with Oceanic languages in general where the same kind of structural difference is found, nouns which enter into the direct possessive construction are generally semantically inalienably possessed. On the other hand, nouns which enter into the indirect possessive construction can generally be considered to be alienably possessed. Membership of these two sets of nouns is overwhelmingly fixed in Tape in the sense that any given noun can ordinarily participate in only one of these two constructions. About three-quarters of the total number of nouns in my Tape lexicon are free form (or indirectly possessed) nouns while the remaining quarter are bound (or directly possessed) nouns.

The semantic notion of inalienability, as expressed by membership of the set of directly possessed nouns, involves the following specific sets of notions in Tape:

- Many human and animal body parts, e.g. *peti* ‘head’, *mête* ‘eye’, *tili* ‘leg’, *jêni* ‘intestine’, *mêdêkhê* ‘scar’, *nivivê* ‘wing’. However, some internal organs are expressed as free nouns, e.g. *bêrdimdim* ‘brain’, *novotlip* ‘kidney’. Also, temporary manifestations of the body are likely to be expressed as free nouns, e.g. *mib* ‘fontanelle’, *nin* ‘ringworm’.
- Some intimate personal items, e.g. *mêlnge* ‘bed’, *nivivê* ‘penis wrapper’, *mwimwi* ‘spirit’.
- Some body products relating to both humans and animals, e.g. *dêli* ‘voice’, *ji* ‘excrement’, *dee* ‘blood’, *jêre* ‘semen’, *luakhe* ‘vomit’, *nidêlê* ‘egg’. However, many body products are expressed as indirectly possessed nouns, e.g. *kêsêlêm* ‘snot’.
- Many parts of plants, e.g. *jêlê* ‘sucker’, *lilê* ‘peel’, *lune* ‘flower (of breadfruit)’.
- Many (though by no means all) kin terms, e.g. *elwe* ‘nephew’, *etme* ‘father’.
• Some positions, e.g. *bwēlin* ‘behind’.
• Some commonly encountered products of things, e.g. *jomo-* ‘gratings (of kava)’.

There is, however, a handful of nouns referring to body products which have formally related free and directly suffixed roots, as set out below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unsuffixed noun</th>
<th>Suffixed noun</th>
<th>‘excrement’</th>
<th>‘blood’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>ji</em></td>
<td><em>ji-</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>de</em></td>
<td><em>dee-</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The unsuffixed forms are used when a speaker wishes to refer to the body product in question without referring to its origin. For example:

\[
I-poj \, ji.
\]

3SG:REAL-step.on excrement

‘He stepped in excrement (of, presumably, unknown origin).’

Note also the following pair for which I have no information on how the different forms are used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unsuffixed noun</th>
<th>Suffixed noun</th>
<th>‘penis wrapper’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>nivip</em></td>
<td><em>nivivē-</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are, in addition, some semantically equivalent nouns which have formally unrelated roots, yet they belong to quite different morphological classes, i.e.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unsuffixed noun</th>
<th>Suffixed noun</th>
<th>‘father’</th>
<th>‘grandparent’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>tete</em></td>
<td><em>etme-</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>pupu</em></td>
<td><em>etbē-</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While both sets of forms can apparently equally be used referentially, only the indirectly possessed forms appear to be used as address forms.

### 6.1.2.2.4 Prepositional possession

In addition to nouns that are linked in possessive constructions, two nouns can also be linked in Tape by means of the nominal preposition *ne-* (§6.3.2.2). This preposition expresses either a part-whole or a purposive relationship between the referents of the two nouns. For example:

\[
lēnglang \, ne \, pekē-n
\]

fat PART body-3SG

‘fat of his/her body’

\[
novo \, ne \, pēte
\]

breadfruit.seed PART breadfruit

‘breadfruit seed’

\[
nau \, ne \, tes
\]

swell PART sea

‘swell (of sea)’
This form can also appear without a following noun phrase, in which case we find the third
person singular possessive suffix -n, as in the following:

\[ \text{melēkh} \text{ ne-n} \]
\[ \text{kava} \text{ PURP-3SG} \]
\[ \text{‘the kava of/for it’} \]

With a handful of nouns, this preposition is used to introduce a following animate
possessor, as in the following:

\[ \text{tang} \text{ ne-n} \]
\[ \text{placenta} \text{ PURP-3SG} \]
\[ \text{‘its placenta’} \]

The only nouns which have so far been attested as expressing possession in this way are
the following:

\[ \text{tang} \quad \text{‘placenta’} \]
\[ \text{nuot} \quad \text{‘vein, tendon’} \]
\[ \text{jēbēkh} \quad \text{‘smegma’} \]
\[ \text{pētinuomen} \quad \text{‘heart’} \]
\[ \text{vēdkho} \quad \text{‘gall bladder’} \]

Directly parallel constructions using a clearly cognate preposition are also found in a
number of other central Malakula languages which have been investigated so far, e.g.
Naman, Neve‘ei, Avava. In each case, it is only a restricted set of body parts which is
involved, so it may well be that there are not many more members of this subset awaiting
discovery in Tape than those which I have just listed.

### 6.1.3 Noun modifiers

There are no preposed nominal modifiers in Tape, with all modifiers within the noun
phrase placed after the nominal head. These modifiers will be described below under two
major headings: non-numeral and numeral modifiers.

#### 6.1.3.1 Non-numeral modifiers

My Tape corpus includes the following kinds of non-numeral nominal modifiers:

(i) the demonstratives *gi* ‘this’, *levēr* ‘that’, and *nen* ‘that’. For example:

\[ \text{Dui tērep gi nēkhse-n Masing.} \]
\[ \text{man old DEM name-3SG Masing} \]
\[ \text{‘That old man’s name was Masing.’} \]
Chapter 6

Ivin dë-luo dui nen.
3SG:REAL:go ES-shoot man DEM
‘He went and shot that man.’

It should be noted that the form levër ‘that’—alternating freely with the form levar—is sometimes expressed by means of the clitic -ër (alternating with -ar), which is attached to the final element of the noun phrase. Thus:

mimi nuo levër
spirit water that
‘that spirit of the water’

dui têrev-ër
man old-that
‘that old man’

The form levër/levar can also be used as a noun phrase in its own right, with either human or non-human reference. For example:

Ip-ul luo vengesien gi më-n-titing en levër.
3SG:IRR-write out talk REL 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-say GOAL that.one
‘He will write down the things that we say to that one.’

(ii) one of the third person non-singular pronominal forms (§6.1.1) which functions as a definite number marker. For example:

Tirakh er
Tirakh.person PL
‘the people of Tirakh’

The plural postmodifier er is also optionally cliticised, as -r, to a noun ending in a vowel; when this occurs, there is accompanying lengthening of the final vowel of the preceding noun. Thus:

dui er → duiir
man PL
‘the men’

(iii) a small set of adjectives, including bête ‘forbidden, sacred’, tirkhëbëb ‘wild, feral’, têrep ‘old (sg.)’, tê(r)têrep ‘old (pl.)’, emu ‘first’, etakhdo ‘last’. For example:

nib bête
fire taboo
‘forbidden fire’
tiu tirkhëbëb
fowl wild
‘wild fowl’
dui têrtêrep
man old:PL
‘old men’
To this set we can also add the class of stative intransitive verbs which can be used without inflection as adjectival modifiers to a noun. For example:

\[
\begin{align*}
netite & \quad vës \\
\text{child} & \quad \text{little} \\
\text{‘little child’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
dui & \quad \text{set} \\
\text{man} & \quad \text{bad} \\
\text{‘bad man’}
\end{align*}
\]

(iv) quantifiers such as \textit{rivwi} ‘all’, \textit{itar} ‘many’, \textit{nitvelën} ‘one of a pair’. For example:

\[
\begin{align*}
netite & \quad esed \quad \text{itar} \\
\text{child} & \quad \text{POSS:1PL.INCL} \quad \text{many} \\
\text{‘many of our children’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
dui & \quad \text{rivwi} \\
\text{person} & \quad \text{all} \\
\text{‘everybody’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
tili-n & \quad \text{nitvelën} \\
\text{leg-3SG} & \quad \text{one.of.pair} \\
\text{‘one of his/her legs’}
\end{align*}
\]

6.1.3.2 Numerals

There is an open-ended set of numerals in Tape, all of which can appear as postmodifiers within a noun phrase, as illustrated by the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
lipakh & \quad isimëk \\
\text{dog} & \quad \text{one} \\
\text{‘one dog’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
dui & \quad \text{iru} \\
\text{man} & \quad \text{two} \\
\text{‘two men’}
\end{align*}
\]

The full set of numerals to ten is set out below:

\[
\begin{align*}
1 & \quad \text{isimëk, isig} \\
2 & \quad \text{iru} \\
3 & \quad \text{itël} \\
4 & \quad \text{ives} \\
5 & \quad \text{ilëm} \\
6 & \quad \text{lëmjis} \\
7 & \quad \text{jiru} \\
8 & \quad \text{jitël} \\
9 & \quad \text{jevet} \\
10 & \quad \text{isngel}
\end{align*}
\]
Note that the forms for 7 and 8 are derived from the forms for 2 and 3 by the addition of the prefixed element \(j\)-, which has no known independent function in the language. The form for 9 bears a similarity in form to the word for 4, as well as showing evidence of the same initial \(j\)-. The form for 6 appears to involve the root of the word for 5,\(^7\) though the following element \(-jis\) has no known independent function in Tape.

There is also a series of ordinal numerals in Tape which function as nominal postmodifiers. The form \(pitemu\) ‘first’ is suppletive with respect to the cardinal numerals \(isimëk/isig\). Other ordinal numerals, however, are expressed using the basic pattern of \(pite\)-followed by the root of the basic numerals, with loss of the initial vowel of those numerals which begin with \(i\).\(^8\) Thus:

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
1^{st} & pitemu \\
2^{nd} & piteru \\
3^{rd} & pitetël \\
4^{th} & piteves \\
5^{th} & pitelëm \\
6^{th} & pitelëmjis \\
7^{th} & pitejiru \\
8^{th} & pitejitël \\
9^{th} & pitejevet \\
10^{th} & pitesngel
\end{array}
\]

In common with many other languages of central and northern Vanuatu including neighbouring V’ënen Taut (Fox 1979:88–91), the cardinal numerals 1–10 have separate irrealis forms when they are used as postmodifiers to the object of an irrealis verb, or as independent object noun phrases in their own right. Contrast, therefore, the following in Tape:

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
En-lep & iru. \\
1SG:IRR-take & two \\
‘I took two.’
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
Be-lep & iporu. \\
1SG:IRR-take IRR:two \\
‘I will take two.’
\end{array}
\]

The respective irrealis forms of the numerals just presented are as follows:

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
1 & iposig, isimëk \\
2 & iporu \\
3 & ipotël \\
4 & ipoves \\
5 & ipolëm \\
6 & ipolëmjis \\
7 & ipojiru
\end{array}
\]

\(^7\) Note the partial similarity in shape between the root \(lëm\) ‘five’ and \(lëme\)- ‘hand’. It is common in the languages of Vanuatu for there to be a connection between the word for five and the numerals 6–9.

\(^8\) The form \(pite\)- has no known independent function in Tape.
The irrealis numerals can be related to the corresponding realis forms in the following ways:

- Vowel-initial numerals lose their initial *i*- and add the prefix *ipo-*.  
- Consonant-initial numerals simply add the prefix *ipo-*.

This behaviour is consistent with the idea that numerals were once rather more verbal in their behaviour, with the separable *i-* of the numerals 1–5, as well as 10, deriving from the same prefix that now regularly marks third person singular realis verbs. Similarly, the element *ipo-* that we find on the irrealis numerals corresponds exactly to the shape of the third person singular irrealis prefix of verbs.

Tape has a counting system that allows for the expression of quite high numbers. However, speakers of Tape are not always completely proficient in expressing these higher numbers. The Bislama counting system appears to have largely supplanted the indigenous counting system at an early stage, not only within the Tape community but more widely around Malakula. We find evidence of this lack of proficiency in one text where a speaker was attempting to express the year 1949 (as ’49). This should have been expressed as *ingelves dëmon jevet*, but the speaker said *ingasngel ivives dëmon jevet*, which actually means 409.

To express the numbers 11–19, the cardinal numeral for 10, *isngel*, is followed by *dëmon*, with the numerals 1–9 immediately following. Thus:

11  *isngel dëmon isimëk*  
12  *isngel dëmon iru*  
13  *isngel dëmon itël*  
14  *isngel dëmon ives*  
15  *isngel dëmon ilëm*  
16  *isngel dëmon lëmjis*  
17  *isngel dëmon jiru*  
18  *isngel dëmon jitël*  
19  *isngel dëmon jevet*

The form *dëmon* has no known independent function in Tape. However, there is a cognate form in Neve‘ei of the shape *nedremwen* which functions in the same way in the derivation of numerals, while at the same time also functioning as a noun meaning ‘body’.9

Decades from 20 and above are formed by attaching the form *ingel-* to the following basic numerals 1–9 within a single phonological word.10 With those numerals beginning with *i-*, the initial vowel is removed. Sequences of *ll* arising over the morpheme boundary are resolved as a single consonant. Thus:

---

9 The root for ‘body’ in Tape is of a completely different shape, i.e. *pekë-*.  
10 The alternation between *isngel* used in counting and the unpredictably different form *ingel-* used in the derivation of higher numerals is paralleled by a similar irregularity in V‘ënen Taut between *sënal* used in counting and *inel* used in deriving higher numerals (Fox 1979:88–90).
Units between the various decades are again expressed using \textit{dëmon} in the same way as already described for the -teens:

\begin{align*}
21 & \quad \text{ingelru dëmon isig} \\
32 & \quad \text{ingeltël dëmon iru} \\
43 & \quad \text{ingelves dëmon itël}
\end{align*}

etc.

There is a separate form for 100, which appears to represent a derivation of the same pattern (i.e. 10 x 10) involving the decade formative \textit{ingel-} and the basic numeral \textit{isngel}. However, rather than expected \*\text{ingelisngel}, we find instead the irregular form \textit{ingasngel}. Units above 100 are again linked to \textit{ingasngel} by means of postposed \textit{dëmon}. Thus:

\begin{align*}
101 & \quad \text{isngasngel dëmon isig} \\
110 & \quad \text{ingasngel dëmon isngel} \\
111 & \quad \text{ingasngel dëmon isngel dëmon isig}
\end{align*}

etc.

For 200 and above, the form \textit{ingasngel} is directly followed by the multiplicative forms of the basic numerals. The multiplicative numerals are described separately below, but the resulting numerals for the various centuries from 200 are as follows:

\begin{align*}
200 & \quad \text{ingasngel ivaru} \\
300 & \quad \text{ingasngel ivitël} \\
400 & \quad \text{ingasngel ivives} \\
500 & \quad \text{ingasnel ivilêm} \\
600 & \quad \text{ingasngel ivilêmjis} \\
700 & \quad \text{ingasngel ivijiru} \\
800 & \quad \text{ingasngel ivijitël} \\
900 & \quad \text{ingasngel ivijevet}
\end{align*}

There is no separate numeral known in Tape for 1000,\footnote{In some of the languages of central Malakula, there is a separate numeral for 1000, e.g. Neve’ei \textit{netar}.} and the form \textit{ingasngel ivisngel} (‘ten hundreds’) was volunteered instead.

In addition to the postmodifying functions of numerals, the same basic numerals also exhibit derived adverbial forms. The first of these derived adverbials are the multiplicative numerals, which express the number of times that an action is performed. These forms occupy adverbial slots within the clause, illustrated by the following:
I-mekar-en ivi-tël.
3SG:REAL-work-TR MULT-three
‘(S)he did it three times.’

The multiplicative forms are based on the pattern $iv(V)$- followed by the root of the basic numeral. Thus:

- ‘once’ $ivsimëk$, $ivsig$
- ‘twice’ $ivaru$\(^{12}\)
- ‘three times’ $ivitël$
- ‘four times’ $ivives$
- ‘five times’ $ivilëm$
- ‘six times’ $ivilëmjis$
- ‘seven times’ $ivijiru$
- ‘eight times’ $ivijitël$
- ‘nine times’ $ivejevet$
- ‘ten times’ $ivasngel$

It is difficult to generalise about the precise shape of these multiplicatives, as the initial $i$- of the basic numerals is sometimes lost and sometimes retained. In some cases, the multiplicative prefix appears as $iv-$, while in other cases it has the shape $iva-$, $ivi-$ and $ive-$.

It should also be noted that the multiplicative forms $ivsimëk$ and $ivsig$, in addition to meaning ‘once’, can also be used adverbially to mean both ‘one day’ and ‘at once, all of a sudden’, as in the following:

$Ivsimëk$ Tirakh $i$-n-mo erenge venu ese-këmem $e$ Tape.
one.day Tirakh 3:REAL-PL-come GOAL village POSS-1PL.EXCL LOC Tape
‘One day the people of Tirakh came to our village at Tape.’

$I-vin$ ivsig $i$-metër.
3SG:REAL-go at.once 3SG:REAL-sleep
‘(S)he went at once and slept.’

Finally, corresponding to the numerals 5 and below, there is a set of distributive forms which express the idea that an action is performed by subjects acting together in groups of a particular number, i.e. ‘one by one, individually’, ‘two by two, in twos’, ‘three by three, in threes’. Thus:

$I-n$-khës sëm-simëk
3REAL-PL-dance REDUP-one
‘They danced individually.’

$I-n$-khës ru-ru.
3REAL-PL-dance REDUP-two
‘They danced two by two.’

\(^{12}\) I have also recorded this as $ivevaru$, and am not sure whether this reflects genuine variation or an error of some kind.
While reduplication is a recurring feature of these distributive numerals, it is not possible to generalise about the precise morphological process by which this category is expressed. The following are the forms of the distributive numerals as they have been recorded:

- ‘one by one’ \(\text{sëmsimëk}\)
- ‘two by two’ \(\text{ruru}\)
- ‘three by three’ \(\text{tëltël}\)
- ‘four by four’ \(\text{ivësves}\)
- ‘five by five’ \(\text{ililëm}\)

It should be noted that these forms can also appear in irrealis environments, in which case they accept the third person singular irrealis prefix \(\text{ipo-}\), as in the following:

\[
I\text{-pa-n-khës} \quad \text{ipo-sëm-simëk.} \\
3\text{REAL-IRR-PL-dance} \quad \text{IRR-REDUP-one} \\
\text{‘They will dance individually.’}
\]

\[
I\text{-pa-n-khës} \quad \text{ipo-ru-ru.} \\
3\text{REAL-IRR-PL-dance} \quad \text{IRR-REDUP-two} \\
\text{‘They will dance two by two.’}
\]

Distributives involving numerals 6 or higher are expressed by means of the basic numerals without any reduplication:

\[
I\text{-n-khës} \quad \text{lëmjis} \\
3\text{REAL-PL-dance} \quad \text{six} \\
\text{‘They danced six by six.’}
\]

### 6.1.4 Pro-NPs

One noun phrase construction for which there is evidence in my Tape corpus is what can be referred to as a pro-noun phrase construction. These are noun phrases which contain a stative modifier but where the referent of the noun to which this form refers is not present, and it can only be deduced by referring to a previous mention of a noun phrase within the linguistic context, or to some aspect of the non-linguistic context. Such constructions correspond, therefore, to constructions that are expressed in English by means of the form ‘one’ in association with an adjective, i.e. ‘sweet one’ in a sentence such as ‘Can I have a sweet one?’

In Tape, such constructions are expressed by means of the partitive preposition \(\text{ne-}\) in its third person singular suffixed form \(\text{nen}\), appearing after a stative postmodifier. This structure then occupies a normal noun phrase position within the clause. We therefore find examples such as \(\text{emu nen}\ ‘first one’ and \(\text{etakh nen}\ ‘next one’ in sentences such as the following:

\[
\text{Gi emu ne-n i-kë-mes.} \\
\text{REL first PART-3SG 3SG:REAL-NEC-die} \\
\text{‘The one who is the first would surely die.’}
\]
6.1.5 Relative clauses

Relative clauses in Tape are introduced by the form *gi*, which also functions as a postnominal demonstrative (§6.1.3.1) as well as a general subordinator (§6.4.4.7). Thus:

\[
\text{Dui gi i-vënakh nêvet esek i-iê-riu.}
\]

man REL 3SG:REAL-steal money POSS:1SG 3SG:REAL-COMPL-run.away
‘The man who stole my money has run away.’

The relativised noun phrase can be the topic of a verbless clause, as in the following:

\[
\text{Dui tërep gi nëkhse-n Masing.}
\]

man old REL name-3 SG Masing
‘There was an old man whose name was Masing.’

Examples have been recorded of relativised noun phrases from verbal object position, as in the following, with non-singular noun phrases being copied pronominally as object suffixes to the verb. Thus:

\[
\text{Kake gi i-n-sëkh-ër i-k-ska-n-iar.}
\]

yam REL 3:REAL-PL-stand.up-3PL 3REAL-NEG-PL-touch
‘The yams that they had stood up mustn’t be touched.’

\[
\text{Ip-ul luo vengesien gi më-n-titing en levër.}
\]

3SG:IRR-write out talk REL 1 NONSG.EXCL:REAL-go GOAL that.one
‘He will write down the things that we say to that one.’

The following illustrate a range of relativised prepositional objects:

\[
\text{En-lis dui gi kë-titing duen en.}
\]

1SG:REAL-see man REL 2SG:REAL-talk ACC 3SG
‘I saw the man who you talked with.’

\[
\text{Dui gi en-titing duen-ër i-itë-n-melet.}
\]

man REL 1SG:REAL-talk ACC-3PL 3:REAL-COMPL-PL-return
‘The men who I was talking with have returned.’

\[
\text{Be-pêle nib gi po-lik e vëbhëk ejëkhë-n.}
\]

1SG:IRR-light fire REL 2SG:IRR-sit close LOC-3SG
‘I will light a fire that you will sit close to.’

\[
\text{B-ivin nit ar-ve lomël erenge-n.}
\]

1SG:IRR-go place IMP:REAL-make garden LOC-3SG
‘I will go to where they are making the garden.’
The form *gi* can also be used to introduce a headless relative clause, as shown by the following examples:

\[ Gi \text{ elakh esen i-yek i-kë-mëlet. } \]
REL husband POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL:have 3SG:REAL-NEC-return
'She who has a husband would have to return.'

\[ Gi \text{ etakh ne-n i-kë-bëkh-jilëp. } \]
REL next one 3SG:REAL-NEC-INCEP-live
'He who was the next one would just live.'

While relative clauses are overwhelmingly marked by means of preposed *gi*, there is textual evidence that the general subordinator *te* (§6.4.4.7) is also occasionally used in this kind of construction. We therefore encounter examples such as the following:

\[ Jere \text{ i-n-khël mili kake po-ve nëbëng te } \]
then 3REAL-PL-dig again yam 3SG:IRR-make ceremony SUB
\[ ipa-n-khës jëne-n. \]
3NONSG:IRR-PL-dance CAUSE-3SG
'Then they would dig yams again for him to hold the ceremony that they would dance for.'

### 6.1.6 Coordinate noun phrases

The corpus does not at this stage include a wide range of examples of coordinated noun phrases, but the accompanitive preposition *duen* or *duon* (§6.3.2.3.1) is the only form that is attested as being used to link noun phrases in such constructions. Note that this construction is used to conjoin both animate and inanimate noun phrases. Thus:

\[ Kënëk \text{ bë-lis pwërpar duen lipakh. } \]
1SG 1SG:IRR-see pig ACC dog
'I will see the pig and the dog.'

\[ B-uëd \text{ nisakh duen kake. } \]
1SG:IRR-eat banana ACC yam
'I will eat bananas and yams.'

The corpus also includes examples of multiply coordinated noun phrases which are linked in the same way. For example:

\[ kake \text{ duon melëkh duon buos } \]
yam ACC kava ACC pig
'yams and kava and pigs'
6.2 Verbs and verb complexes

Tape exhibits a fair degree of morphotactic complexity in its verbal prefixation, a feature which it shares with V'ënen Taut, in contrast to nearby languages such as Northeast Malakula, Naman and Neve’ei, which are morphotactically rather simpler. There is in addition a limited set of object suffixes on transitive verbs. The overall pattern for Tape verbal affixation can be summarised as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT-</th>
<th>MOOD-</th>
<th>NEGATIVE</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>INCEPTIVE</th>
<th>ROOT</th>
<th>OBJECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MOOD-</td>
<td>ASPECT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following examples illustrate some of the morphotactic complexity of Tape verbal prefixes:

- **pë-ska-r-vin**
  
  1NONSG.INCL:IRR-NEG-DL-go
  
  ‘we (dl. incl.) will not go’

- **i-kë-n-bëkh-jilëp**
  
  3REAL-NEC-PL-INCEP-live
  
  ‘they will surely just live’

This section describes the morphological behaviour of verbs, as well as the behaviour of other constituents that are closely linked grammatically to verbs within what we might refer to as the verbal complex in Tape.

6.2.1 Inflectional prefixation

Verbs in Tape obligatorily mark the pronominal category of the subject by means of inflectional prefixation, which is also associated with the marking of a distinction between realis and irrealis mood.

It is common in the languages of central Vanuatu for the difference between realis and irrealis inflectional categories to be associated with patterns of root-initial mutation which reflect some kind of historical distinction between oral and nasal grade. Tape verb roots, however—as well as those of all documented neighbouring languages—exhibit no such alternation in all inflectional environments.  

However, verb roots in Tape do exhibit some alternations in shape of a rather different kind. It was mentioned in §5.1.1.3 that the addition of inflectional prefixes to certain categories of verbal roots of the general shape CeCV- promotes the application of a schwa-deletion rule which results in verb roots beginning optionally with surface consonant clusters. We therefore find frequent examples of root alternations such as the following:

- **mësit-ien**
  
  sick-NOM
  
  ‘sickness, disease’

---

13 Aulua (Paviour-Smith, pers. comm.) and Nāti (Crowley 1998a:124–125) are Malakula languages which do show evidence of some kind of verb-initial mutation, demonstrating that this pattern is not completely absent on Malakula.
6.2.1.1 Subject-mood marking

Tape verbs are inflected differently according to whether the subject is a new one or if it is the same as the immediately preceding one in the discourse. It is the new subjects which exhibit the greater amount of morphological complexity and these are the prefixes which are described first below (§6.2.1.1.1), with ‘echo-subject’ prefixes described separately afterwards (§6.2.1.1.2).

6.2.1.1.1 Initial subjects

Verbs in Tape are obligatorily marked by subject prefixes which make a basic distinction between realis and irrealis mood. The realis prefixes are used to refer to events in the past or present, while the irrealis forms are used for events in the future, as well as to express other irrealis categories such as the following:

(i) the imperative (‘do X!’), for example:

\[ P-\text{vin!} \]
\[ 2SG:\text{IRR-go} \]
\[ ‘\text{Go!}’ \]

\[ Këpa-r-vin! \]
\[ 2\text{NONSG:IRR-DL-go} \]
\[ ‘\text{Both of you go!}’ \]

\[ Këpa-n-vin! \]
\[ 2\text{NONSG:IRR-PL-go} \]
\[ ‘\text{You all go!}’ \]

In addition to the use of the irrealis mood to express the imperative, it should be noted that singular imperatives can also be expressed by means of zero prefixation. For example:

\[ \text{Ø-Poplej kërliu!} \]
\[ \text{IMP:SG-shut door} \]
\[ ‘\text{Shut the door!}’ \]

(ii) prohibitive (‘don’t do X!’)

\[ Po-\text{ske-titing!} \]
\[ 2SG:\text{IRR-NEG-talk} \]
\[ ‘\text{Don’t talk!}’ \]

\[ Pë-\text{ska-n-mêmang!} \]
\[ 2:\text{IRR-NEG-PL-be.noisy} \]
\[ ‘\text{Don’t (pl.) be noisy!}’ \]
(iii) hortative (‘let’s do X!’), for example:

\[ Pa-n-vin! \]
1NONSG.INCL:IRR-PL-go
‘Let’s go!’

(iv) necessitative (‘must X’), for example:

\[ Naakëm \ p-ivin \ bër. \]
2SG 2SG:IRR-go NEC
‘You must go.’

(v) conditional (‘if X does …’), for example:

\[ Povër \ nuis \ ip-iu \ pê-ska-n-vin \ erenge \ lomël. \]
if rain 3SG:IRR-rain 1NONSG.INCL:IRR-NEG-PL-go GOAL garden
‘If it rains, we will not go to the garden.’

These subject-mood prefixes mark a distinction between singular and non-singular, but since the non-singular forms are obligatorily associated with either the following dual number marker \( r^- \) or the plural marker \( n^- \) (§6.2.1.4), a three-way number distinction is marked inflectionally on Tape verbs. Because other prefixes may intervene between the subject-mood prefixes and the number markers, these number prefixes should be treated in Tape as being morphotactically separate from the preceding subject-mood prefixes. The following, for example, indicate that the negative prefix can intervene between the two:

\[ më-n-titing \ më-ska-n-titing \]
1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-speak 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-NEG-PL-speak
‘we (pl. excl.) spoke’ ‘we (pl. excl.) did not speak’

This kind of analysis for Tape is consistent with comparative evidence from neighbouring V’ënen Taut (Fox 1979:65–68), where we find examples such as the following:

\[ a-ha-v-hap’il^{14} \]
3NONSG:REAL-NEG-PL-tell.lie
‘they (pl.) did not tell lies’

In other Malakula languages such as Naman and Neve’ei, however, we need to recognise distinct sets of singular, dual and plural prefixes which cannot be further segmented morphotactically. Contrast the examples presented above for Tape with the following examples from Naman:

\[ mët-ibës \ mët-sa-bës-i \]
1PL.EXCL:REAL-speak 1PL.EXCL:REAL-NEG-speak-NEG
‘we (pl. excl.) spoke’ ‘we (pl. excl.) did not speak’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9: Subject-mood prefixes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Realis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[^{14}\] In the orthography used for V’ënen Taut, \( h \) represents a velar fricative (symbolised as \( kh \) in this study of Tape), while \( p’ \) represents a voiceless apico-labial stop.
The basic forms of the two sets of initial subject-mood prefixes are set out in Table 9. The non-singular subject prefixes obligatorily combine with one of the number markers, i.e. $r$- in the dual or $n$- in the plural (§6.2.1.4). This means that we encounter complete paradigms such as that set out in Table 10 for the realis forms of the verb *titing* ‘speak’. The corresponding irrealis paradigm is set out in Table 11.

A number of these prefixes exhibit allomorphic variation in particular morphological environments. When two non-like vowels come together over a prefix boundary, a prefix-final vowel is systematically lost (§5.4.1).\(^{15}\) (It will be remembered from §5.3 that the only vowels which appear verb-initially are $i$- and $u$-.) Note, therefore, the following derivations:

\(^{15}\) At this stage of research, it is not certain if there is any accompanying lengthening of the vowel which remains after the loss of the vowel of the prefix.

### Table 10: Realis paradigm for *titing* ‘speak’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>entiting</td>
<td>dërtiting</td>
<td>dëntiting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incl.</td>
<td>Excl.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>këtiting</td>
<td>kartiting</td>
<td>kantiting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ititing</td>
<td>irtiting</td>
<td>intiting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 11: Irrealis paradigm for *titing* ‘speak’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>betiting</td>
<td>partiting</td>
<td>pantiting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incl.</td>
<td>Excl.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>potiting</td>
<td>képartiting</td>
<td>képaniting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ipotiting</td>
<td>ipartiting</td>
<td>ipantiting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grammar

*kë-udi* (**→** *kudi*)
2SG:REAL-eat
‘you ate (it)’

*i-udi* (**→** *udi*)
3SG:REAL-eat
‘(s)he ate (it)’

*be-udi* (**→** *budi*)
3SG:IRR-eat
‘I will eat (it)’

*po-uri* (**→** *puri*)
2SG:IRR-shut
‘you (sg.) will shut (it)’

*ipo-iu* (**→** *piiu*)
3SG:IRR-rain
‘it will rain’

Although the non-singular prefixes are all presented as vowel-final in Table 9, these forms are never subject to this process of vowel deletion because they are obligatorily followed by some form of consonant-initial prefix, whether a number marker, a negative marker, or some other verbal prefix which appears between these subject markers and the verb root. However, there is a general process affecting all *a*-final verbal prefixes in Tape by which the *a* shifts to *ë* if the immediately following morpheme is other than a number prefix. Thus, if some other prefix intervenes between one of these non-singular prefixes and the number prefix, we find alternations such as the following:

*pa-n-titing*
1NONSG.INCL:IRR-PL-speak
‘we (pl. incl.) will speak’

*pë-ska-n-titing*
1NONSG.INCL:IRR-NEG-PL-speak
‘we (pl. incl.) will not speak’

When the third person singular realis prefix *i-* is attached to a monosyllabic verb beginning with the same vowel, the vowel of the prefix is no longer deleted. Rather, the resulting sequence of identical vowels is realised as a lengthened vowel. Thus:

*i-is* (**→** *iis*)
3SG:REAL-bite
‘(s)he bit (it)’

However, with a longer *i*-initial verb, the sequence of two identical vowels is resolved as a single short vowel. For example:

*i-ivin* (**→** *ivin*)
3SG:REAL-go
‘(s)he went’
When the first person singular realis prefix *en-* appears before a following root that begins with *r*, the final *n* optionally shifts to *d*. For example:

\[en-rëngdo \sim ed-rëngdo\]

1SG:REAL-know

‘I know’

Alternatively, this could be treated as a case of optional insertion of phonetic [d] between *n* and *r* with no change needed in the phonemic representation of the form. Thus, phonemic /en-rʊŋ/ could be seen as alternating phonetically between [enrʊŋ] and [endrʊŋ].

Table 12: Irrealis paradigm for *ivin* ‘go’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>bivin</em></td>
<td><em>parvin</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>barvin</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><em>pivin</em></td>
<td><em>këparvin</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>iparvin</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the regular patterns of subject marking described above, there is one known irregular verb in Tape. The very common verb *ivin* ‘go’ has two different root forms: *ivin* in the singular and *vin* in the non-singular. Table 12 sets out the resulting irrealis paradigm for this verb.

In at least some of the languages that are spoken in the neighbourhood of Tape, there is an additional pattern of subject marking which can be referred to as an ‘impersonal’ construction. This is a construction in which there is no overtly expressed noun phrase subject, while the subject marking on the verb itself is different in form from any of the ordinary subject prefixes. Verbs with this kind of subject marking are overwhelmingly transitive, and the object is often—though by no means always—fronted for contrast. The following illustrates this construction in Naman:

\[Nibu \ nakh \ rë-khores \ khën-gën.\]

bamboo DEM IMP:REAL-cut SOURCE-1SG

‘That bamboo was cut from me.’

\[V’ënen \ Taut \ also \ has \ an \ impersonal \ construction \ (Fox \ 1979:66–67), \ which \ is \ expressed \ by \ means \ of a \ subject \ prefix \ which \ is \ identical \ in \ shape \ with \ the \ third \ person \ non-singular \ subject \ marker \ (a-), \ but \ without \ the \ otherwise \ obligatory \ associated \ dual \ or \ plural \ prefixes. \ Contrast, \ therefore, \ the \ following: \]

\[a-tr-i\]

\[3\text{NONSG:REAL-cut-3SG}\]

‘one cut it, it was cut’

16 Remember, of course, that /d/ is phonetically prenasalised (§5.2).

17 This irregularity has a parallel in Neve’ei, where we find the root *vu* in the singular and dual and *tovu* in the plural.

18 While this is translated here by means of the passive in English, this is still an active construction in Naman. A structurally more faithful—if stylistically somewhat awkward—translation would be something like ‘One cut that bamboo from me.’
Such constructions are almost impossible to elicit via both Bislama and English, so we are dependent on textual data to assemble reliable examples. To date, there is nothing in my Tape textual corpus that unambiguously points to the existence of any kind of parallel construction. However, there is a handful of examples which are certainly suggestive of further investigation. The first of these is found in a text, and the glossing appears to be as follows:

\[
A-da-ske-tëkh\quad lu-n.  \\
\text{IMP:REAL-CONT-NEG-knock.out}\quad \text{tooth-3SG}  \\
\text{‘Her teeth had not been knocked out.’}
\]

The second is found in the following elicited sentence:

\[
B-ivin\quad n\text{it}\quad ar-ve\quad lomël\quad erenge-n.  \\
\text{1SG:IRR-go}\quad \text{place}\quad \text{IMP:REAL-make}\quad \text{garden}\quad \text{LOC-3SG}  \\
\text{‘I will go to where the garden was made.’}
\]

The verbs in these two examples share the following features:

- The subject position is occupied by a prefix of the shape \(a(r)-\), which does not appear elsewhere in the subject-mood paradigm for Tape verbs. Such a form is plausibly cognate with the impersonal prefix of the general shape \(rV-\) that is found in both Naman and Neve’ei. (The form of the prefix in the first example as \(a-\) rather than \(ar-\) may be due to the presence of the immediately following \(d-\)initial continuative marker.)
- There is no associated marking of the otherwise obligatory category of number, similar to what we find in V’ënen Taut.

6.2.1.1.2 Echo subjects

There is evidence for an additional subject marker in Tape and that is the prefix \(dë-\). This form loses its prefix-final vowel in exactly the same way that was reported in the preceding section for vowel-final initial subject prefixes, in line with the general morphophonemic process described in §5.4.1. Thus:

\[
dë-titing  \\
\text{ES-speak}  \\
\text{‘and (subject) spoke’}
\]

\[
d-iar  \\
\text{ES-reach}  \\
\text{‘and (subject) reached (it)’}
\]

The irregular verb \(ivin\ ‘go’ alternates with the non-singular root \(vin\) when it carries this prefix. Thus:
The echo subject prefix in Tape functions in a very similar way to the echo subject prefixes described for the languages of southern Vanuatu (Lynch 2002:177–178). Fox (1979:82–85) also describes a prefix ka- in V’ënen Taut, which he refers to as a marker of a ‘dependent verb’, and this appears to directly parallel the behaviour of dë- in Tape. The echo subject prefix appears in place of the subject prefixes set out in Table 9, and a verb carrying this prefix never appears as the initial verb in a discourse. This prefix does not distinguish between realis and irrealis mood, and a verb carrying this prefix takes its value for mood from the mood marking of the initial verb. If there is a change in mood between an initial verb and a following verb, then both must take initial subject prefixes, as in the following:

\[
I-n-vin \quad e jëkhe-n \quad m wëliun \quad i p a-n-ve \quad nëbëng \quad esen.
\]

3REAL-PL-go GOAL chief 3NONSG:IRR-PL-make ceremony POSS:3SG

‘They would go to the chief to perform his ceremony.’

The subject prefix dë- expresses a coordinating function in examples such as the following, by simply echoing the subject and mood categories of the preceding verb:

\[
B-i vin \quad dë-\text{liek}.
\]

1SG:IRR-go ES-stay

‘I will go and stay.’

\[
P o-mo \quad dë-\text{lep} \quad k ake.
\]

2SG:IRR-come ES-take yam

‘Come and take the yams.’

\[
I p-i vin \quad dë-\text{mekar} \quad \text{Lakatoro}.
\]

3SG:IRR-go ES-work Lakatoro

‘(S)he will go and work at Lakatoro.’

When the initial verb carries non-singular marking, the echo subject marker is also obligatorily followed by one of the number prefixes, as shown by the following:

\[
Më-r-vin \quad dë-r-vëtir.
\]

1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-DL-go ES-DL-stand

‘We (dl. excl.) went and stood up.’

\[
I-n-vin \quad dë-n-\text{liek} \quad \text{elelvenu}.
\]

3:REAL-PL-go ES-PL-stay inside

‘They went and stayed inside.’

The echo subject prefix does not simply express a coordinating function, however, as it is very frequently attested on the verbs ivin ‘go’ and mo ‘come’ to express the direction of an action. A verb such as riu ‘escape’ is indeterminate with respect to direction hither or thither, and this distinction can be expressed by means of an echo verb, as in the following:
Më-n-riu dë-n-mo erenge skul.
1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-escape ES-PL-came GOAL church
‘We escaped (hither) to the church.’

A similar example, this time involving the expression of the opposite direction, is:

I-n-melet dë-n-vin.
3:REAL-PL-return ES-PL-go
‘They went back.’

The verb iar ‘reach, arrive at’ is also often found with this prefix to express the idea that an event takes place in the ‘direction’ of the present from the past. For example:

I-mo d-iar enisi.
3SG:REAL-come ES-arrive.at today
‘It has come until today.’

I-n-rap esen jere dë-n-bëkh-rap esar.
3REAL-PL-clear.garden BEN:3SG then ES-PL-INCEP-clear.garden BEN:3PL
‘They would clear a garden site for him and then they would just clear garden sites for themselves.’

The echo subject construction is also sometimes used with the verb vwër ‘say’ after some other more specific verb of saying to introduce the content of the locution. Thus:

I-n-vwiri dë-n-vwër “O, kë-luo dui-ër.”
‘They said, “Oh, you shot that man”.’

One particularly common pattern in narrative texts is for the verb ivin ‘go’ to be repeated several times with the echo subject prefix. It is most commonly repeated three times, but occasionally just twice and sometimes even four times or more, to indicate iteration of an event. It should be noted, however, that the verb carrying echo subject marking in this way does not repeat any number marking which may be present on the initial verb. We therefore find repeated examples in my corpus such as the following:

I-n-khës d-ivin d-ivin d-ivin Ø-iar nit
3SG:REAL-daylight
‘They danced on and on until it was daybreak.’

Although the examples presented above all involve a single instance of a verb carrying echo subject marking following a verb with initial subject marking, there is no limitation on the number of verbs which may follow an initial verb in this way. In the following extract from a narrative text, for example, the first verb (insëlikh) carries initial subject and number marking as we would expect, but the following five verbs all carry echo subject marking (dënjovo, dënvin, dënvîvin, dënkhëj, dënsëngen). It is only when the speaker reached the sixth verb (inudi) that the inflection reverts to initial subject marking. Thus:

I-n-sëlikh dë-n-jovo nuo dë-n-vin eies
3:REAL-PL-carry.on.shoulder ES-PL-go.along river ES-PL-go uphill
‘They carried him on their shoulders and went along the river uphill and walked about up there and then they killed that child of his and put him into bamboo and ate him.’

Although the discussion above describes a range of contexts in which the echo subjects are used in Tape, there are many contexts in which verbs would be eligible for echo subject marking, yet they appear with initial subject marking. Alongside textual examples such as the following in which the first verb carries initial subject marking and the second verb carries echo subject marking:

\[\text{Kënëk duon Kipion më-r-vin dë-r-vëtir erenge-n.} \]

\[1\text{SG ACC Kipion 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-DL-go ES-DL-stand LOC-3SG} \]

‘Kipion and I went and stood in it (i.e. the cave).’

we find many examples such as the following, in which both inflected verbs carry initial subject marking:

\[\text{I-r-mo i-r-luluakh eji.} \]

\[3\text{REAL-DL-come 3REAL-DL-fire.shots here} \]

‘The two of them came firing shots here.’

There is, in fact, something of an age correlation in my—albeit rather narrow—range of speakers. Of the three speakers who have contributed to my textual corpus of Tape, Speaker A is in his eighties, Speaker B is in his sixties, and Speaker C is in his fifties. The incidence of echo subject prefixes in environments where, from the preceding discussion, they may be expected,\(^{19}\) is as follows for each of these three speakers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Incidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaker A</td>
<td>63.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker B</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker C</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, the older the speaker, the more likely it is that the echo subject prefixes will be used, with the youngest speaker not using them at all. The distribution of this feature in my Tape corpus is consistent with the idea that younger speakers are showing evidence of structural interference from their dominant language, Northeast Malakula, where parallel structures appear to be absent.\(^{20}\)

6.2.1.2 Mood-aspect

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\(^{19}\) I have excluded from these counts the use of repeated \(d\-ivin d\-ivin d\-ivin\) to express ongoing actions, as this is structurally somewhat different from the remaining functions of verbs carrying echo subjects. All speakers made frequent use of this construction, regardless of how frequently or infrequently they used this construction in other environments.

\(^{20}\) This conclusion needs to be checked, though McKerras (2000) makes no reference to any verbal prefixes which could be seen as being similar in function to this prefix in Tape.
Immediately following the realis subject-mood markers described in §6.2.1.1 is a second order of verbal prefixes. These express a number of additional specific mood or aspect categories, each of which is described in turn below.

6.2.1.2.1 Continuative

The first of these is a prefix which expresses the continuative meaning of ‘still’. The basic form of this prefix is de-, but when the immediately following prefix is one of the non-singular markers r- or n-, it has the form da-. The following illustrates the de- variant of the continuative prefix:

Netë-n i-de-vës ogi.
child-3SG 3SG:REAL-CONT-small only
‘Her child was still only small.’

The da- variant is illustrated by the following:

Më-da-n-vës.
1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-CONT-PL-small
‘We (excl.) are still small.’

When this prefix appears before a vowel-initial root, it regularly loses its final vowel to become d- (§5.4.1). For example:

i-d-ivin
3:REAL-CONT-go
‘(s)he is still going’

e-d-udi
1SG:REAL-CONT-eat
‘I am still eating (it)’

The continuative prefix is more frequently attested when the following morphotactic slot is occupied by the negative marker (§6.2.1.3). This combination of prefixes expresses the meaning of ‘not yet’. Because the number prefixes invariably follow the negative marker, the continuative prefix appears in its basic form of de- rather than as da- for all numbers, as in examples such as the following:

I-de-ske-pële nib.
3SG:REAL-CONT-NEG-light fire
‘(S)he has not yet lit the fire.’

---

21 Fox (1979:63–64) describes a prefix of the shape d(a)- with the same function in V’ënen Taut, which occupies a parallel morphotactic slot, as shown by examples such as the following:

i-da-ma
3SG:REAL-STILL-come
‘(s)he is still coming’

22 This again parallels what we find in V’ënen Taut, with examples such as the following:

a-d-a-v-takhtakh
3NONSG:REAL-STILL-NEG-PL-burn.off
‘they have not yet burnt off’
I-de-sk-ivin ejêkhê-n elakh esen.
3SG:REAL-CONT-NEG-go GOAL-3SG husband POSS:3SG
‘She has not yet gone to her husband.’

I-de-ska-n-tëkh lu-n.
3REAL-CONT-NEG-PL-knock.out tooth-3SG
‘They have not yet knocked out her teeth.’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>edetiting</td>
<td>dëdartiting</td>
<td>dëdantiting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incl.</td>
<td>mëdartiting</td>
<td>mëdantiting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Excl.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>këdetiting</td>
<td>këdartiting</td>
<td>këdantiting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>idetiting</td>
<td>idartiting</td>
<td>idantiting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13: Realis continuative paradigm for titing ‘speak’

The continuative prefix has so far only been attested in association with preceding realis subject prefixes, and I am not sure whether they may or may not be used with irrealis markers. The first person singular realis prefix en- regularly loses its final consonant before the continuative marker (§5.4.3), as illustrated by the following:

Kënêk e-de-vës.
1SG 1SG:REAL-CONT-small
‘I am still small.’

In the non-singular, the continuative prefixes are also obligatorily accompanied by number markers and, as noted above, the continuative is marked by da-. The combinations of subject prefixes, continuative prefixes and number prefixes result in the paradigm for the verb titing ‘speak’ set out in Table 13.

6.2.1.2.2 Completive

Also appearing immediately after the subject-mood markers is the second-order prefix tê-, which expresses a completive function. This form is attested only in conjunction with preceding realis subject prefixes, and once again it is not clear whether they may be used with irrealis markers. In contrast to the continuative prefix which varies in shape between singular and non-singular, the completive marker has the same shape for all numbers. Thus:

Kë-tê-vës.
2SG:REAL-COMPL-small
‘You have become small.’

23 Fox’s (1979:62–63) account of V’ënê Taut refers to a prefix of the shape ta- which occupies a parallel morphotactic slot, describing it also as a completive marker. For example:

kë-ta-ma
2SG:REAL-COMPL-come
‘you have come’
I-të-n-mo
3REAL-COMPL-PL-come
‘They have come.’

The vowel of this prefix is regularly lost before a verb root beginning with a vowel §5.4.1), as illustrated by the following:

Kë-t-ivin.
1SG:REAL-COMPL-go
‘You have gone.’

It should be noted that in the first person singular, the normal realis prefix en- is replaced with the unpredictable form na-. We therefore find examples such as the following:

Na-t-ivin.
1SG:REAL-COMPL-go
‘I have gone.’

Table 14: Realis completive paradigm for metër ‘sleep’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>nat(ë)metër</td>
<td>dëtërmetër</td>
<td>dët(ë)nmetêr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incl.</td>
<td>mëtërmetër</td>
<td>mët(ë)nmetêr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Excl.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>kët(ë)metër</td>
<td>këtërmetër</td>
<td>kët(ë)nmetêr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>it(ë)metër</td>
<td>itërmetër</td>
<td>it(ë)nmetêr</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It will be remembered from §5.1.1.3 that schwa a often alternates with zero. Before the plural prefix n-, the final schwa of the completive marker is often deleted, with accompanying syllabification of the nasal of the number marker. Taking into account the various comments just presented about the completive prefix, we therefore encounter paradigms such as that in Table 14 for the verb metër ‘sleep’.

6.2.1.2.3 Necessitative

A third category in this morphotactic slot is the necessitative marker kë-, which is again attested only after the realis subject prefixes. This category expresses the idea of ‘must’ or ‘have to’, as in the following:

I-kë-n-iëkh   lu-n.
3:REAL-NEC-PL-knock.out tooth-3SG
‘They have to knock out her tooth.’

In addition to this necessititative meaning, there is an additional rather different function of kë-, which is sometimes found in complex sentences in the clause expressing a consequence after an initial clause that is marked by the conditional subordinator povër ‘if’ (§6.4.4). The following textual examples illustrate this aspect of the behaviour of this prefix:

Povër i-ska-dang luo lu-n netë-n dui gi emu nen
if 3:REAL-NEG:PL-pull out tooth-3SG child-3SG boy REL first one
i-kē-mes.
3SG:REAL-NEC-die
‘If they did not pull out her tooth, her first son would die.’

_Povër tēvet ip-ivin ipo-vētir ejēkhē-dui i-kē-vwirvwiri_
if  woman 3SG:IRR-go 3SG:IRR-stand ACC-man 3SG:REAL-NEC-reveal

_5en  elakh  esen._
GOAL husband POSS:3SG
‘If a woman goes and stands with (i.e. marries) a man, she will reveal it to him.’

_Povër ipo-sēkha tegī i-kē-ve kemru._
if  3SG:IRR-not.exist something 3SG:REAL-NEC-happen.to 2PL
‘If it hadn’t been (thus), something would have happened to the two of you.’

The final vowel of this prefix is affected by the same general processes described in the preceding sections for the other verbal prefixes. We therefore find examples such as the following in which the final vowel of the prefix is systematically lost before a vowel-initial root (§5.4.1):

_I-k-ivin._
3:REAL-NEC-go
‘(S)he had to go.’

The following demonstrate that the schwa of the prefix is optionally deleted before consonants (§5.1.1.3), resulting in word-medial two- and three-member consonant clusters:

_I-k-melet._
3SG:REAL-NEC-return
‘(S)he had to return.’

_Kake gi i-k-ska-n iar._
yam DEM 3:REAL-NEC-NEG-PL-touch
‘They must not touch the yams.’

It should be pointed out that when the first person singular realis prefix _en-_ is followed by the necessitative prefix _kē-, this sequence is unpredictably realised by means of the portmanteau form _gē-, as illustrated by the following:

_g-ivin._
1SG:NEC-go
‘I had to go’

6.2.1.3 Negative

The languages which neighbour Tape’s traditional territory mark verbal negation in a variety of ways. In Northeast Malakula, a negative particle is placed before the inflected verb (McKerras 2000). For example:

_sete e-vini_
NEG 3SG:REAL-come
‘(s)he did not come’
Naman follows a widespread pattern in central and northern Vanuatu languages in marking negation with a discontinuous affix, the prefixed element of which appears between a number-marked subject-mood prefix and the verb, while there is a suffixed element which appears after the verb, or after the final element of a complex verb involving an initial inflected verb and a following unprefixed nuclear serial verb (Crowley 2006c). For example:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{në-së-vale-si} & \quad 1\text{SG:REAL-NEG-come-NEG} \\
& \quad \text{‘I did not come’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{kë-së-têkh lue-si} & \quad 2\text{SG:IRR-NEG-take out-NEG} \\
& \quad \text{‘you will not take (it) out’}
\end{align*}
\]

Finally, in V’ënen Taut, negation is marked by means of a prefix only (Fox 1979:65–66). For example:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{i-a-sakhëv} & \quad 3\text{SG:REAL-NEG-sneeze} \\
& \quad \text{‘(s)he did not sneeze’}
\end{align*}
\]

The pattern in Tape is essentially the same as that of V’ënen Taut in that there is a single prefixed morphotactic slot within the verb that is reserved for the expression of negation. The basic form of the negative prefix in Tape is \textit{ske}- in the singular and \textit{ska}- in the non-singular. The following present a number of instances of corresponding affirmative and negative forms of verbs:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{i-mekar} & \quad \text{i-ske-mekar} \\
& \quad 3: \text{REAL-work} \quad 3: \text{REAL-NEG-work} \\
& \quad \text{‘(s)he works’} \quad \text{‘(s)he is not working’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{be-titing} & \quad \text{be-ske-titing} \\
& \quad 1\text{SG:IRR-talk} \quad 1\text{SG:IRR-NEG-talk} \\
& \quad \text{‘I will talk’} \quad \text{‘I will not talk’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{i-r-khuos} & \quad \text{i-ska-r-khuos} \\
& \quad 3: \text{REAL-DL-strong} \quad 3: \text{REAL-NEG-DL-strong} \\
& \quad \text{‘they (dl.) are strong’} \quad \text{‘they (dl.) are not strong’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{dë-n-rëngdo} & \quad \text{dë-ska-n-rëngdo} \\
& \quad 1\text{NONSG.INCL:REAL-PL-know} \quad 1\text{NONSG.INCL:REAL-NEG-PL-know} \\
& \quad \text{‘we (pl. incl.) know’} \quad \text{‘we (pl. incl.) do not know’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{i-de-pële} & \quad \text{i-de-ske-pële} \\
& \quad 3: \text{REAL-STILL-light} \quad 3: \text{REAL-STILL-NEG-light} \\
& \quad \text{‘(s)he is still lighting (the fire)’} \quad \text{‘(s)he has not yet lit (the fire)’}
\end{align*}
\]

While subject prefixes generally combine with negative prefixes by simply being placed one after the other in sequence with no change in the shape of either prefix, it should be noted that the first person singular realis subject marker \textit{en}- undergoes unpredictable loss of the final consonant to become \textit{e}- before the negative prefix. Thus:
Chapter 6

en-rëngdo  e-ske-rëngdo
1SG:REAL-know  1SG:REAL-NEG-know
‘I know’  ‘I don’t know’

The second person non-singular subject marker këpa- also loses its initial syllable and becomes pë- when the negative prefix is present. For example:

këpa-n-mëmang  pë-ska-n-mëmang
2NONSG:IRR-PL-be.noisy  2NONSG:IRR-NEG-PL-be.noisy
‘you (pl.) will be noisy’  ‘you (pl.) will not be noisy’

6.2.1.4 Number

As mentioned in §6.2.1, non-singular number is obligatorily marked by means of the prefixes r- ‘dual’ and n- ‘plural’. (The singular is therefore the formally unmarked category, as we might have expected on typological grounds.) It should be noted that when the plural prefix is attached to a t-initial verb root, the resulting sequence of nt is maintained over the morpheme-boundary, even though sequences of NASAL + VOICELESS STOP are prohibited intra-morphemically by the phonotactic rules of the language (§5.3). Given that the phoneme inventory includes voiced prenasalised stops (§5.1.2), this means that over morpheme boundaries there is a contrast between [nd] and [nt]. Compare, therefore, the morphologically simple form mëdes [mûdes] ‘fibre skirt’ with the following inflected form, which is realised phonetically as [mûnte]:

më-n-tebe
1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-push
‘we (pl. excl.) pushed (it)’

When the plural prefix n- appears before a following root that begins with r, the n optionally shifts to d, in the same way that the first person singular realis prefix en- alternates with ed- (§6.2.1.1). Thus:

këpa-n-rëng  ~  këpadrëng
2NONSG:IRR-PL-hear
‘you (pl.) will hear’

këpa-n-riu  ~  këpadriu
2NONSG:IRR-PL-run.away
‘you (pl.) will run away’

When the dual prefix r- appears before a verb root which itself begins with r-, the sequence of two identical consonants is reduced to a single consonant. This means that the only overt marking of number is in the vowel of the prefix.24 Thus:

këpa-r-riu (→ këpariu)
2NONSG:IRR-run.away
‘you will both run away.’

---

24 I have no data at this stage as to what happens when plural n- immediately precedes an n-initial verb.
6.2.1.5 Inceptive

There is a final pre-verbal prefix in Tape, which appears after the number markers. This is the form bëkh-, which can be glossed as ‘inceptive’. This basically expresses the idea that something just happens of its own accord, as in the following:

\[
i-bëkh-vin \\
3:REAL-INCEP-go \\
‘(s)he just went’
\]

\[
i-kë-bëkh-jilëp \\
3:REAL-NEC-INCEP-live \\
‘(s)he must just live’
\]

The fact that this prefix must be ordered after the number markers in Tape (and therefore after all other prefixes) is indicated by examples such as the following:

\[
dë-n-bëkh-rap \\
1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-INCEP-clear.garden \\
‘we (pl. excl.) just cleared the garden’
\]

\[
i-n-bëkh-lulo \\
3:REAL-PL-INCEP-plant \\
‘they (pl.) just planted (it)’
\]

6.2.2 Object marking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 15: Object suffixes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Singular</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transitive verbs accept a limited range of pronominal object suffixes according to the defective paradigm set out in Table 15. The limited range of object suffixes is parallelled in nearby languages such as V’ënen Taut (Fox 1979:81) and Naman (Crowley 2006c). These object suffixes are illustrated by the following:

\[
En-lis-ëm. \\
1SG:REAL-see-2SG \\
‘I see you.’
\]

\footnote{Fox (1979:54–69) provides no evidence for a prefix category in this morphotactic position in V’ënen Taut. However, he does refer to the clearly cognate ‘proximity’ marker p’ëkh-. In V’ënen Taut, this appears before the number markers rather than after them as in Tape (Fox 1979:64–65). For example:

\[
a-p’ëkh-v-p’ëlt \\
3NONSG:REAL-PROX-PL-join \\
‘they have all just joined’
\]
I-n-sëkh-ër.
3:REAL-PL-stand.up-3PL
‘They stood them up.’

Third person singular inanimate objects are invariably marked in my corpus by means of zero suffixation, as in the following:

\[ Dui \text{ tërev-ar } i-lis-\emptyset. \]
\[ \text{man old-that 3:REAL-see-3SG} \]
‘That old man saw it.’

However, when a third person singular pronominal object has animate reference, it is overwhelmingly marked in my Tape corpus instead by means of the independent pronoun \textit{en}. For example:

\[ I-n-vwër \text{ ipa-n-khëj } \textit{en}. \]
\[ 3\text{REAL-PL-want 3IRR-PL-kill 3SG} \]
‘They wanted to kill him.’

The difference in behaviour of third person singular inanimate vs. animate pronominal objects is well illustrated by a sentence from a text which comes shortly after the previous example in which the person referred to had by then been killed and was being prepared for baking in lengths of bamboo. The now-dead—hence inanimate—individual is referred to in this second instance by means of a zero-object marker in the following:

\[ Dë-n-sëngen \text{ elel lib en i-n-udi.} \]
\[ \text{ES-PL-put.into.bamboo inside bamboo and 3REAL-PL-eat} \]
‘(And) they put (him) into the bamboo and they ate (him).’

The object suffixes presented above regularly lose their initial vowel when they are attached to a verb that ends in a vowel (§5.4.1). Thus:

\[
\begin{align*}
 i-rëngdo-k & \quad i-tini-k \\
 3\text{SG:REAL-know-1SG} & \quad 3\text{SG:REAL-bury-1SG} \\
 ‘(s)he knows me’ & \quad ‘(s)he buried me’ \\
 i-jile-m & \quad \textit{en-jovo-m} \\
 3\text{SG:REAL-wash-2SG} & \quad 1\text{SG:REAL-follow-2SG} \\
 ‘I washed you’ & \quad ‘I followed you’ \\
 i-jile-d & \quad i-n-rëngdo-d \\
 3\text{SG:REAL-wash-1PL.INCL} & \quad 3\text{SG:REAL-PL-know-1PL.INCL} \\
 ‘(s)he washed us (incl.)’ & \quad ‘they know us’ \\
 i-n-tini-r & \quad \textit{en-rëngdo-r} \\
 3\text{REAL-PL-bury-3PL} & \quad 1\text{SG:REAL-know-3PL} \\
 ‘they buried them’ & \quad ‘I know them’
\end{align*}
\]

In addition, with verb roots which end in \textit{-e}, the final vowel shifts to \textit{a} before the first person singular object suffix \textit{-k} and the third person plural suffix \textit{-r}. For example:

\[ i-jila-k \]
\[ 3\text{SG:REAL-wash-1SG} \]
‘(s)he washed me’
i-jila-r
3SG:REAL-wash-3PL
'(s)he washed them’

The first person singular object suffix also loses the initial vowel to become -k after a root ending in ng. Contrast the following:

kë-lis-ëk
2SG:REAL-see-1SG
‘you see me’

këpa-n-rëng-k
2NONSG:IRR-PL-hear-1SG
‘you (pl.) will hear me’

With those categories of pronominal objects for which there are no separate object suffixes, as well as for third person singular pronominal objects with animate reference, the object is expressed by means of one of the independent pronouns set out in §6.1.1 appearing immediately after an uninflected verb. Thus:

En-lis kam.
1SG:REAL-see 2PL
‘I saw you all.’

I-rëngdo naakëd.
3SG:REAL-know 1PL.INCL
‘(S)he knows us (pl. incl.).’

Reflexive and reciprocal verbs are not marked derivationally in Tape, with these meanings simply being expressed by means of the appropriate marking of pronominal objects on the verb. My corpus also includes the single verb tëkhe ‘cough’ which is obligatorily expressed as a reflexive verb, even though the action is a simple one. For example:

en-tëkha-k
1SG:REAL-cough-1SG
‘I coughed’

kë-tëkhe-m
2SG:REAL-cough-2SG
‘you coughed’

i-n-tëkha-r
3:REAL-PL-cough-3PL
‘they coughed’

dë-n-tëkhe-d
1NONSG.INCL:REAL-PL-cough-1PL.INCL
‘we (pl. incl.) coughed’

When such verbs have subjects that correspond to objects for which there are no suffixed forms, the reflexive object must be expressed by means of a free form object. Thus:
kë-n-tëkhe kem
2REAL-PL-cough 2PL
‘you (pl.) coughed’

i-tëkhe en
3SG:REAL-cough 3SG
‘(s)he coughed’

At this stage, my corpus contains only a single confirmed example of this type of verb. On the basis of comparative evidence from other languages spoken in the area, however, it is possible that there may be a small but semantically heterogenous set of other verbs which behave in the same way.

6.2.3 Verbal derivation

The discussion in this section has so far dealt exclusively with the inflectional morphology of Tape verbs. I will now turn my attention to verbal derivational morphology.

6.2.3.1 Transitivity

Verbs in Tape are overwhelmingly lexically characterised as being either intransitive (which can never be associated with an object) or transitive (which can take a following object). There is, however, a handful of verbs for which corresponding transitive-intransitive pairs are expressed by means of distinct lexical roots, or at least by means of differences in the forms of roots which do not follow any general patterns. Thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transitive</th>
<th>Intransitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>udi</td>
<td>khān</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>luo</td>
<td>lu(luakh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tabēkh</td>
<td>tabkhēn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lēkhēkh</td>
<td>lēlēkh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vwiri</td>
<td>vwēr</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transitive</th>
<th>Intransitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>khēr</td>
<td>khēr-khēr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mēn</td>
<td>mēn-mēn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ul</td>
<td>ul-ul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lis</td>
<td>li-lis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tinge</td>
<td>ti-ting²⁶</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

²⁶ In addition to partial reduplication, this verb also shows evidence for an unpredictable change in the form of the root.
Finally, there is a small number of verbs which function both transitively and in transitively with no change in the shape of the root. Thus:

\[dëdën\] ‘tell lies (to)’

There is also evidence in my corpus for the derivation of transitive verbs from intransitive roots by the addition of the transitivising suffix \(-en\). Attested examples that are derived on the basis of this pattern include the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intransitive</th>
<th>Transitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dëdëng</td>
<td>dëdëng-en</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vënakh</td>
<td>vënakh-en</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vësvës</td>
<td>vësvës-en</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mekar</td>
<td>mekar-en</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>titing</td>
<td>titing-en</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘afraid’</td>
<td>‘afraid of’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘steal’</td>
<td>‘steal’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘teach’</td>
<td>‘teach’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘work’</td>
<td>‘do, make’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘speak’</td>
<td>‘say’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My corpus also includes one example of an intransitive verb from which a corresponding serialised transitive form has been derived by the addition of the suffix \(-en\). Thus, corresponding to melet ‘return’ we find the serialised verb melet-en ‘do back’, as in the following:

\[I-lëng melet-en-Ø.\]

3SG:REAL-put return-TR-3SG
‘(S)he put it back.’

While Neve’ei makes productive use of the suffix \(-en\) as a transitiviser (Musgrave 2001:71–73), the corresponding form \(-an\) in Naman appears to be purely vestigial (Crowley 2006c), and there is no evidence for a similar form in V’ënen Taut (Fox 1979). It is therefore quite possible that this suffix is also vestigial in Tape, though this needs to be checked further.

In many of the languages of central Vanuatu, one of the prepositions is coopted for use as what we might refer to as a ‘pseudo-transitiviser’, allowing for the expression of a patient noun phrase immediately following a formally intransitive verb. Fox (1979:92), for example, indicates that the oblique preposition \(an\) in V’ënen Taut functions in this way:

\[K-en \quad sali \quad an-i.\]

2SG:REAL-do wrongly TR-3SG
‘You did it wrongly.’

In Naman, the oblique preposition \(khën\) also performs a parallel function. For example:

\[Na-rëb \quad khën \quad nemakh.\]

1SG:REAL-work TR house
‘I built the house.’

There is some evidence from my corpus that the causal preposition \(jëne-\) in Tape (§6.3.2) can also be used in the same sort of way. For example:

\[I-n-titing \quad pij \quad jëne-n.\]

3:REAL-PL-speak good TR-3SG
‘They blessed it.’
6.2.3.2 Reduplication

As with most—if not all—languages of central Vanuatu, reduplication is attested as part of the verbal morphology of Tape. In the preceding section, it was indicated that reduplication is involved in the derivation of some intransitive verbs from transitive verbs, though this is very much an unproductive process.

Reduplication is much more commonly attested in Tape with purely semantic, rather than syntactic, effect. Because the textual corpus is still fairly restricted at this stage, I am not yet in a position to state the full range of reduplication patterns in this language, along with the range of functions that it expresses. However, the functions that have been attested for reduplication in Tape—repetition and randomness of an action—by and large mirror the kinds of functions that we find in other languages of central Vanuatu.

With regard to the form of reduplication, it does appear that there is a tendency for syllables containing the high front vowel \(i\) to be reduplicated with schwa. We therefore encounter examples such as the following:

\[
\text{isimēk} \quad \text{‘one’} \quad \text{sēm-simēk} \quad \text{‘one by one’}
\]

6.2.4 Complex verbs and verbal modifiers

While the noun phrase is a fairly tightly constrained syntactic unit in Tape (§6.1), it is rather more difficult to argue for a similarly tightly defined verbal complex in this language. The bounds of the putative verbal complex are arguably more difficult to define in Tape than is the case in languages such as Naman and Neve’ei. In these languages, the position of the suffixed element of the discontinuous negative affix can sometimes be used to determine the boundary of a verbal complex, but in Tape there is no equivalent suffixed negative. Nevertheless, there is a range of constituents in Tape which appear to be more closely related syntactically to a verbal head than to any other constituent in the clause which I propose to describe in this section under the heading of the verb complex.

6.2.4.1 Nuclear serial verbs

It is common in the languages of central and northern Vanuatu for two (or more) verbs to appear in sequence with a single set of inflectional prefixes appearing on the initial verb and a single set of inflectional suffixes appearing on the second verb in a pattern which has come to be referred to as nuclear-layer verb serialisation (Crowley 2002b:82–92). Such constructions are well attested in Neve’ei (Musgrave 2001:102–117) and Naman (Crowley 2006c) for which substantially larger amounts of textual data have been analysed than is the case with Tape. In Tape’s closest relative, V’ënen Taut, Fox (1979:72–81) describes a large set of what he calls ‘stem modifiers’, which he treats as derivational suffixes, and elsewhere he refers to ‘modifying adverbs of manner’ (Fox 1979:92). However, Crowley (2002:51–52) argues that these forms behave seemingly identically to what in other languages have since been analysed as nuclear serial verbs.

Despite the fact that my textual corpus of Tape is relatively limited in comparison to what has been recorded for some of these other languages, convincing evidence has emerged for the existence of nuclear-layer serial verb constructions such as we find fairly
widely distributed elsewhere, often even involving clearly cognate forms. Well-attested serial verbs in my corpus include the following:

- *bëni* ‘kill’
- *bëri* ‘split’
- *bëtel* ‘go around’
- *dëlo* ‘go slowly’
- *khërkhër* ‘block, prohibit’
- *lau* ‘go over’
- *luo* ‘remove, take out’
- *meleten* ‘return, take back’
- *pij* ‘well, properly’
- *jëjën* ‘tight’
- *pongen* ‘do habitually’

The fact that unprefixed forms such as these are particularly tightly bound to preceding inflected verbs is illustrated by examples such as the following, in which the object suffix appears on the second element of the verbal complex, i.e. *jëjën* ‘tight’, rather than on the initial transitive verb *use* ‘hold’:

\[ I-n-use \quad jëjën-ër. \]
\[ 3\text{REAL-PL-hold} \quad \text{tight-3PL}. \]

‘They grabbed hold of them.’

Some of the forms just listed are used as independent verbs in their own right, while also appearing productively as the second element of a serial verb construction. One example of this type is *dëlo* ‘go slowly’. For example:

\[ I-dëlo. \]
\[ 3\text{SG:REAL-go.slowly} \]

‘(S)he went slowly.’

\[ I-ling-ling \quad dëlo. \]
\[ 3\text{SG:REAL-REDUP-walk} \quad \text{slowly} \]

‘(S)he walked slowly.’

The form *pij* ‘good’ is used as an ordinary intransitive verb meaning ‘good’. For example:

\[ I-pij. \]
\[ 3\text{SG:REAL-good} \]

‘It is good.’

However, it is also used as the second element of a number of verbal complexes to express an action that is performed well or properly. For example:

\[ \text{En-lëng} \quad pij \quad nol \quad esek. \]
\[ 1\text{SG:REAL-put} \quad \text{properly} \quad \text{book} \quad \text{POSS:1SG} \]

‘I put my book (somewhere) properly.’

Some independent verbs, however, while they are attested as the second element of a serial verb construction of this type, appear only in single fixed expressions. Thus, while
metēr ‘sleep’ and lilis ‘look’ are both used independently, lilis only appears as the second element of a serial verb construction in the single complex verb metēr lilis ‘dream’.

Another form which functions as both an initial inflected verb and as an uninflected serialised verb is melet. Its use as an ordinary intransitive verb meaning ‘return’ is illustrated in the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{En-melet} & \quad \text{emakh} \\
1\text{SG:REAL-return} & \quad \text{home} \\
\text{‘I returned home.’}
\end{align*}
\]

In its transitivised form meleten (§6.2.3.1), it can be used as a serial verb in association with a preceding transitive verb to mean ‘back’, as in the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{I-lēng} & \quad \text{melet-en.} \\
3\text{SG:REAL-put} & \quad \text{return-TR} \\
\text{‘(S)he put (it) back.’}
\end{align*}
\]

The remaining forms that were presented in the list above have been attested only as the second verb in the serial verb construction and have no attested independent function as main verbs. Thus, while the form luo indicates that an action is performed outwards, it has never been attested as a stand-alone verb in its own right. Thus:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{I-lep} & \quad \text{luo.} \\
3\text{SG:REAL-take} & \quad \text{go.out} \\
\text{‘(S)he took (it) out.’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{*I-luo.} \\
3\text{SG:REAL-go.out}
\end{align*}
\]

The form pongen is used in such constructions to indicate that an action is performed habitually, as in the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{I-khēj} & \quad \text{pongen dui-ar.} \\
3\text{SG:REAL-kill} & \quad \text{HABIT person-that} \\
\text{‘(S)he had been killing those people.’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Nunu esen} & \quad \text{i-ve pongen-Ø.} \\
\text{mother POSS:3SG} & \quad 3\text{SG:REAL-do HABIT-3SG} \\
\text{‘His/her mother used to do it.’}
\end{align*}
\]

There are also examples such as liek khēmēj ‘be quiet’ in which liek ‘stay’ is followed by khēmēj. The latter form has not been attested independently, so it may turn out to be a functionally restricted form, or it may simply be that the corpus is at this stage not sufficiently broad to have revealed other examples of this form in association with other verbs.

6.2.4.2 Other verbal modifiers

There is also evidence in my Tape corpus for a number of other forms which appear to be grammatically closely linked to verbs and which follow the verb that they modify, though these forms appear to be less tightly linked to the verb than the serialised verbs discussed above, in that the object of the verb intervenes between the verb and the
following adjunct. One form of this type that has been attested is *mili* ‘again’, and this is illustrated by the following:

\[
\text{Këpa-n-rëng-k mili en-titing.}
\]

\[
2:\text{IRR-PL-hear-1SG} \text{ again} \quad 1\text{SG:REAL-speak}
\]

‘You will all hear me again speaking.’

Another verbal modifier of this type appears to be *ikhos* ‘very much’. For example:

\[
I-n-ututakh dui ikhos.
\]

\[
3\text{REAL-PL-be.bad.to person} \quad \text{very.much}
\]

‘They were very bad to people.’

The form *bër* has also been attested in a single example, apparently with a necessitative meaning in association with a verb carrying irrealis subject marking:

\[
Naakëm p-ivin bër.
\]

\[
2\text{SG} \quad 2\text{SG:IRR-go} \quad \text{must}
\]

‘You must go.’

However, the full range of occupants of this structural position has not yet been established. Indeed, it is somewhat difficult to recognise a clear difference between a purely verbal modifier and a clause-level adverbial, and the distinction may well turn out to be an artificial one.

### 6.3 Clause structure

The syntax of Tape will be described in two major sections: one which describes the make-up of simple sentences (§6.3), and one which describes the structure of multi-predicate sentences (§6.4).

#### 6.3.1 Verbal and non-verbal clauses

Simple clauses in Tape can be categorised into two basic types: verbal clauses, which contain a single inflected verb (§6.3.1.1); and non-verbal clauses, which contain no inflected verb (§6.3.1.2).

##### 6.3.1.1 Verbal clauses

The basic constituent order in Tape with underived clauses containing only core constituents with a single inflected predicate is SVO. Intransitive exemplars of this pattern include the following:

\[
Mimi-n i-ling-ling.
\]

\[
\text{spirit-3SG} \quad 3\text{SG:REAL-REDUP-walk}
\]

‘His/her spirit wandered about.’
Chapter 6

**Tili-n nitvelën i-mēj.**

leg-3SG one.of.pair 3SG:REAL-break

‘One of his/her legs was broken.’

Transitive clauses containing nominal objects are illustrated by the following:

**Dui tērtērep i-n-takhe tēvēlēkh esar**

man old:PL 3:REAL-PL-marry wife POSS:3PL

‘The old men married their wives.’

**Kēnēk be-lis pwērpar duen lipakh.**

1SG 1SG:IRR-see pig ACC dog

‘I will see the pig and the dog.’

When an object is expressed by means of an independent pronoun, this occupies the same post-verbal position. For example:

**Tirakh i-n-tēkhes kēmem.**

Tirakh 3REAL-PL-chase.away 1PL.EXCL

‘The people of Tirakh chased us away.’

In addition to transitive verbs with a single direct object, my corpus indicates that there is also a small number of ditransitive verbs in Tape, such as vēsvēsen ‘teach’, which are associated with two unmarked noun phrases after the verb, the first object representing the recipient and the second representing the object of transfer. Thus:

**Bē-ska-n-vēsvēs-en netite ese kēmem vengesien ese kēmem.**

1NONSG.EXCL:IRR-NEG-PL-teach-TR child POSS 1PL.EXCL language POSS 1PL.EXCL

‘We will not teach our children our language.’

In association with the fact that there is obligatory marking of the pronominal category of the subject on the verb (§6.2.1.1), it is possible for there to be no overt occupant of the subject noun phrase position. For example:

**I-liek ogi erenge nēmakh esen.**

3SG:REAL-stay only LOC house POSS:3SG

‘(S)he just stayed in his/her house.’

**I-ske-khēj dui.**

3SG:REAL-NEG-kill person

‘(S)he didn’t kill anybody.’

In fact, an examination of verbs carrying initial subject marking in textual data reveals that in about 90% of clauses there is no occupant of the pre-verbal subject position, whether by a noun (or a nominal phrase) or by a pronoun. When a pronoun is present, this invariably expresses contrast. For instance, when a speaker begins a story that follows on from another story that he has just told, the opening is likely to include no overtly expressed pronoun, as in the following:
Enisi en-vwër be-vwiri mili vengesien isig.

now 1SG:REAL-want 1SG:IRR-tell again story one

‘Now I want to tell another story.’

However, when a new story-teller in a recording session which involves several narrators opens his story, the opening is likely to be as follows, with the pronoun present:

Kënëk en-vwër be-tinge vengesien mili isimëk.

1SG 1SG:REAL-want 1SG:IRR-tell story again one

‘I (in contrast to the previous story-teller) want to tell another story.’

While it is possible for any verb carrying initial subject marking to be preceded by a subject noun phrase, verbs which carry echo subject marking may never appear with an immediately preceding overtly expressed subject. Thus, while it would be possible to say either of the following:

Dui i-n-vin.

person 3REAL-PL-go

‘The people went.’

I-n-vin.

3REAL-PL-go

‘They went.’

it would be possible only to say:

Dui i-n-vin dë-n-khël kake.

person 3REAL-PL-go ES-PL-dig.up yam

‘The people went and dug up the yams.’

and never the following:

*Dui i-n-vin dui dë-n-khël kake

person 3REAL-PL-go person ES-PL-dig.up yam

Another clause type in which subjects appear to be strictly prohibited are the impersonal constructions referred to in §6.2.1.1, where the subject position is marked on the verb by means of the prefix a(r)-. Thus: 27

A-da-ske-tëkh lu-n.

IMP:REAL-CONT-NEG-knock.out tooth-3SG

‘Her teeth had not been knocked out.’

B-ivin nit ar-ve lomël erenge-n.

1SG:IRR-go place IMP:REAL-make garden LOC-3SG

‘I will go to where the garden was made.’

It should be remembered that some object categories are also expressed by means of pronominal suffixes (§6.2.2). This means that a full transitive clause can consist minimally of nothing more than an inflected verb. For example:

27 Data on the impersonal construction in general are somewhat limited, and probably need further checking in the field.
Chapter 6

En-lis-ëm.
1SG:REAL-see-2SG
‘I saw you.’

I-n-sëkh-ër.
3:REAL-PL-stand.up-3PL
‘They stood them up.’

There is, however, one minor type of verbal clause which varies from the SVO pattern described above, showing instead systematic SOV order. Exceptional clauses of this type involve only the single transitive verb yek ‘have’. With this verb, the object must always be a possessed noun phrase of some kind (§6.1.2.2). Examples of this pattern include the following:

Kënëk lipakh esek ipo-yek.
1SG dog POSS:1SG 3 SG:IRR-have
‘I will have a dog.’

Nuo mimi-n i-yek.
river spirit-3SG 3 SG:REAL-have
‘The river has a spirit.’

Kake lelë-n i-yek.
yam tuber-3SG 3 SG:REAL-have
‘The yam has a tuber.’

6.3.1.2 Non-verbal clauses

TOPIC + COMMENT clauses can be expressed non-verbally by juxtaposing the two constituents in that order with no intervening copula. For example:

Tautu venu esek.
Tautu place POSS:1SG
‘Tautu is my place.’

Kënëk dui Tape.
1SG man Tape
‘I am a Tape man.’

Netite vës esen tëvëlëkh.
child little POSS:3SG female
‘Her little child was a female.’

In addition to a noun phrase, the comment can involve some other constituent type such as a prepositional phrase, as in the following:

Naakëd e Tape.
1PL.INCL SOURCE Tape
‘We are from Tape.’
Nuo isig ejëkh këmem.
river INDEF LOC 1PL.EXCL
‘There is a river at our place.’

Although clauses of this type are commonly expressed in my corpus by means of non-
verbal clauses, there is another possibility in which the inflected verb ve appears between
the topic and the comment. This verb can function as an ordinary transitive verb meaning
‘do’ or ‘make’, as in the following:

I-n-ve nêmwell esen.
3:REAL-PL-make garden POSS:3SG
‘They made his garden.’

Ve as a transitive verb can also express the meaning of ‘happen to’, as in the following:

Tegi i-kë-ve kemru.
something 3SG:REAL-NEC-happen.to 2PL
‘Something would certainly happen to the two of you.’

This form can also be used to link a topic and a comment, in which case it functions as a
copula. Thus:

Nëkhse-n i-ve Tar.
name-3SG 3SG:REAL-COP Tar
‘His name was Tar.’

The verbal and non-verbal constructions here seem to be in genuinely free variation, as a
directly parallel meaning to that expressed in the preceding example has also been attested
in my textual corpus being expressed as a non-copular sentence, as follows:

Nëkhse-n Masing.
name-3SG Masing
‘His name was Masing.’

Although it was mentioned above that ve can function as a transitive verb, the
construction just described in which it functions a copula is not considered to be a
transitive one. For one thing, the noun phrase which occupies the putative ‘object’
position after the copula cannot be fronted to the head of the clause in the same way that is
possible for an ordinary verbal object (§6.3.5). Thus:

*Tar nëkhse-n i-ve.
Tar name-3SG 3SG:REAL-COP

Another consideration is that ve in its copula function never appears with any of the
pronominal object suffixes that we find with ordinary transitive verbs (§6.2.2).

TOPIC + COMMENT clauses that are expressed non-verbally have only been attested
in their negative forms by inserting the copula ve between the topic and the comment and
treating this as an ordinary verb. Thus:

Naakëd dë-ska-n-ve Tirakh.
1PL.INCL 1NONSG.INCL:REAL-NEG-PL-COP Tirakh
‘We are not Tirakh people.’
Another possibility for a non-verbal clause is a presentative construction in which the referent of a single noun phrase is asserted with no accompanying constituents in the clause. Thus:

\[ \text{Tëvëlëkh pongen.} \]

\[ \text{woman only} \]

‘There were only women.’

The negative of such clauses is expressed using the corresponding free form negative marker \text{iskha} ‘not exist’ after the noun. For example:

\[ \text{Dui iskha.} \]

\[ \text{man no} \]

‘There were no men.’

When the referent of the noun phrase that is being presented in this way is being pointed to or referred to contextually, this can be indicated by use of the deictic forms \text{enir} or \text{gir} ‘that one’ appearing after the noun phrase. For example:

\[ \text{Nëkhse-n enir.} \]

\[ \text{name-3SG that.one} \]

‘That was his name.’

\[ \text{Vengesien esek ogi enir.} \]

\[ \text{story POSS:1SG only that.one} \]

‘That is just my story.’

\[ \text{Sëkho gi dë-n-mo erenge skul enir.} \]

\[ \text{year REL INONSG.INCL-PL-come GOAL church that.one} \]

‘That was the year that we came to the church.’

\[ \text{Nëbëng gir.} \]

\[ \text{day that.one} \]

‘That was the day.’

It should be noted that these forms can also function alone in the expression of presentative clauses if it is clear from the linguistic or non-linguistic context what it refers to. Thus:

\[ \text{Enir ogi.} \]

\[ \text{that.one only} \]

‘That’s all.’

\[ \text{Gir ogi.} \]

\[ \text{that.one only} \]

‘That’s all.’

Presentative clauses can also be expressed verbally, by means of the intransitive verb \text{liek} ‘exist’, as in the following:
Another presentative construction that is expressed verbally involves the intransitive verb *tēkh* ‘exist, be located’, as in the following:

\[
\text{I-tēkh enenge nuo se kēmem gi nēkhse-n Luosinwo.}
\]

3SG:REAL-be.located LOC river POSS 1PL.EXCL REL name-3SG Lowisinwei

‘It is located on our river whose name is Lowisinwei.’

It will be remembered that in §6.3.1.1, I referred to the apparently exceptional behaviour of *yek*, which was described at that point as a transitive verb. It is possible, however, to offer an alternative analysis of this construction by which *yek* would be treated instead as a presentative intransitive verb similar to *liek* and *tēkh*. In the case of *yek*, the subject would have to be specified obligatorily as a possessive noun phrase. Thus, the putatively transitive construction presented earlier may be analysed instead as follows:

\[
\text{Kēnēk lipakh esek ipo-yek.}
\]

1SG dog POSS:1SG 3 SG:IRR-exist

‘I will have a dog (lit. my dog will exist).’

However, even if this alternative analysis were to be accepted, we will still be forced to recognise a structural anomaly with this particular clause type in that the possessor within the subject noun phrase appears to be obligatorily—rather than merely optionally—fronted. Thus, we find no attestations in my corpus of clauses of the following type in which the possessor appears in the unmarked second position within the noun phrase:

* Lipakh esek ipo-yek.
  dog POSS:1SG 3 SG:IRR-exist

* Mimi nuo i-yek.
  spirit river 3SG:REAL-exist

### 6.3.2 Prepositional phrases

The basic verbal and non-verbal clauses described in §6.3.1 can be structurally augmented by the addition of any of the types of non-core prepositional clauses described in this section. Such constituents invariably appear after the central clause constituents of subject, verb and object in the case of verbal clauses. For example:

\[
\text{Be-jile belet en nuo.}
\]

1SG:IRR-wash plate LOC water

‘I will wash the plate in the water.’

Prepositional constructions also appear after non-verbal clauses, as in the following:

\[
\text{Nuo isig ejēkh kēmem.}
\]

spring one LOC 1PL.EXCL

‘There is a spring on our land.’
There are three different types of preposition in Tape: free prepositions, nominal prepositions and verbal prepositions. Free prepositions are those which are directly followed by a noun or an independent pronoun with no suffixing morphology of any kind attaching to the preposition itself. Nominal prepositions are those which can accept the same pronominal suffixes that we find on directly possessed nouns (§6.1.2.2.2). Finally, verbal prepositions are those which accept the same pronominal suffixes that we find on transitive verbs (§6.2.2). In the discussion which follows, the membership and functions of each of these types of prepositions is described and exemplified.

6.3.2.1 Free prepositions

There appear to be just two free prepositions in Tape. The range of functions expressed by each of these is set out below.

6.3.2.1.1 E ‘(placename) spatial’

The free preposition e is used as a marker of any of the spatial roles of location (‘at’), source (‘(come) from’), goal (‘to’) and place of origin (‘(be) from’) with a following place name. Thus:

\[\text{Ba-n-jej waia ese khaavot } e \text{ Jinarur.}\]

\[1\text{NONSG.EXCL:IRR-PL-cut fence POSS European LOC Jinarur}\]

‘We will cut the Europeans’ fence at Jinarur.’

\[\text{Dë-n-mo } e \text{ Olsup.}\]

\[1\text{NONSG:INCL:REAL-PL-come GOAL Olsup}\]

‘We came to Olsup.’

\[\text{Naakëd } e \text{ Tape.}\]

\[1\text{PL.INCL ORIGIN Tape}\]

‘We are from Tape.’

Note that with disyllabic nouns in which the initial syllable contains schwa, the preposition e is optionally cliticised to the place name, with the schwa being deleted according to the conditions set out in §5.1.1.3. Thus:

\[\text{Dë-n-mo } e=\text{Vti.}\]

\[1\text{NONSG:INCL:REAL-PL-come GOAL=Vëti}\]

‘We came to Vëti.’

It should be noted, however, that place names do sometimes appear with no preposition at all when expressing these spatial roles (§6.3.3). For example:

\[\text{En } i-metër \text{ Norsup.}\]

\[3\text{SG 3\text{SG:REAL-live Norsup}\}

‘(S)he lives at Norsup.’

---

28 This three-way subcategorisation of prepositions directly mirrors the pattern that we find in Vënen Taut (Fox 1979:41–44) and Naman (Crowley 2006c).
Ivin Norsup.
3SG:REAL:go Norsup
'(S)he is going to Norsup.'

Ip-ivin dë-mekar Lakatoro.
3SG:IRR:go ES-work Lakatoro
'(S)he will go and work at Lakatoro.'

One context in which the spatial preposition e appears to be obligatory is when a generic noun with some kind of spatial reference is marked with the nominal preposition erenge- (§6.3.2.2.1) and this is then followed by a more specific place name. In such a case, the spatial meaning is expressed again before the second noun phrase by means of the preposition e. We therefore find examples such as the following:

I-n-vëtir erenge nëkhës e Pwitarvere dë-n-luluakh
3:REAL-PL-stand LOC hill LOC Pwitarvere ES-PL-fire.shots
i-mo e venu ese këmem e Tape.
3SG:REAL-come GOAL village POSS 1PL.EXCL GOAL Tape
'They stood on the hill at Pwitarvere and fired shots here into our village of Tape.'

The preposition e can also appear before nouns other than institutionalised place names, though such nouns will normally be associated by speakers with some unstated place name. In the example below, it appears before the noun venu ‘village’:

Dë-n-riu e venu esed
1NONSG:INCL:REAL-PL-escape SOURCE village POSS:1PL.INCL
'We escaped from our village.'

The final example below indicates that e can also be used to express the meaning of ‘about’ in relation to a story or an utterance:

Vengesien e kastom esed e Tape.
story ABOUT tradition POSS:1PL.INCL LOC Tape
'It is a story about our traditions from Tape.'

The preposition e has become so strongly associated with institutionalised place names that it sometimes appears before a place name which is used purely referentially and with no spatial interpretation at all, as in the following example:

Nit i-n-ul tes e nëkhse-n i-ve e Jarabu.
place 3:REAL-PL-pay.for saltwater LOC name-3 SG 3SG:REAL-COP LOC Jarabu.
'The name of the place that they paid for the saltwater at is Jarabu.'

Some locational nouns (§6.3.3) also appear obligatorily with an initial e-, which presumably derives from the same kind of association, e.g. elo ‘to/by the coast’, emakh ‘at home’, emel ‘to/in the meeting house’, esakh ‘uphill’. In fact, the illative preposition described in the following section is also probably derived historically from a combination of the spatial preposition e and the directly possessed noun lelë- ‘interior’.

Finally, the spatial preposition e can precede a directly suffixed noun expressing location such as milivi- ‘under, beneath’. For example:

29 It is not known if this also appears with other directly suffixed nouns expressing place.
Tiu i-khan e milivi nēmakh.
chicken 3SG:REAL-eat LOC under house
‘The chicken is eating under the house.’

A free preposition such as e can be stranded. Because this preposition exclusively governs noun phrases with inanimate reference, it is normal for a third person singular prepositional object to be expressed by means of zero in exactly the same way that we find with verbal objects (§6.2.2). We therefore find examples such as the following in textual data (where the stranded e is the first occurrence of e in the sentence):

Nit i-n-ul tes e nēkhse-n i-ve e Jarabu.
place 3:REAL-PL-buy saltwater LOC name-3SG 3SG:REAL-COP LOC Jarabu
‘The name of the place that they bought the saltwater at was Jarabu.’

6.3.2.1.2 Elel(venu) ‘illative’

The preposition elel also expresses a spatial meaning, but refers explicitly either to location ‘inside’ something else, or motion ‘into’ something. The following examples illustrate both of these illative functions of this form:

Dui i-lunum elel nuo.
man 3SG:REAL-dive ILL water
‘The man is diving in the water.’

Dē-n-sèng̃en elel nib.
ES-PL-put.into ILL bamboo
‘(And) they put him into the bamboo.’

It should be noted that the preposition elel combines with the noun venu ‘place’ to produce the locational adverb elelvenu ‘inside’ (§6.3.3). For example:

I-n-vin dē-n-liek elelvenu.
3REAL-PL-go ES-PL-live inside
‘They would go and live inside.’

While this longer form is normally attested only as a locational noun, it is found in a single textual example with an immediately following noun, in which case it appears to be functioning as an alternant form of the illative preposition. Thus:

I-n-tev-ēr i-n-vin elelvenu stoa.
3REAL-PL-push-3PL 3REAL-PL-go ILL store
‘They pushed them inside that store underneath on the ground.’

6.3.2.1.3 Uren ‘similitive’

The form uren, occasionally alternating in shape with ured, appears in my corpus before noun phrases with the meaning of ‘like’.

I-vwiri ured en, etet esek Harry Rambe i-rēŋ.
3SG:REAL-say like 3SG father POSS:1SG Harry Rambe 3SG:REAL-hear
‘When he said it like that, my father Harry Rambe heard it.’
Uren levër dui rivwi i-n-jej waia.
like that person all 3REAL-PL-cut fence
‘Like that (i.e. at that signal), everybody cut the fence.’

Dui tërev-ar i-lis uren-ër i-metër.
man old-DEM 3SG:REAL-see like-DEM 3SG:REAL-sleep
‘That old man dreamt like that.’

6.3.2.2 Nominal prepositions

Nominal prepositions are those which accept the third person singular possessive suffix
-n described in §6.1.2.2.2 for directly suffixed nouns when they are stranded or associated
with a third person singular pronominal object. Thus:

Kënëk duon Kipion më-r-vin dë-r-vëtir erenge-n.
1SG ACC Kipion 1NONSEXCL:REAL-DL-go ES-DL-stand LOC-3SG
‘Kipion and I went and stood at it.’

Ivin evibëkh ejëkhë-n.
3SG:REAL:go close LOC-3SG
‘He went close to her.’

The form and functions of each of these nominal prepositions is described in the following
sections.

6.3.2.2.1 Erenge- ‘(non-personal) spatial’

The nominal preposition erenge- expresses the same range of spatial roles that are
expressed by the free preposition e. The difference between the two lies in the fact that e
is typically associated with following placenames while erenge- is typically associated
with non-placenames other than personal nouns. (Note that the shorter variant renge- is
also very occasionally attested in my corpus.) When these forms govern a following noun,
the preposition appears in its unsuffixed form, i.e. erenge (or renge).

This preposition expresses the following range of specific spatial meanings:

(i) allative (‘to’), for example:

Dé-n-mo elo erenge skul.
1NONSEXCL:REAL-PL-come to.coast GOAL church
‘We came to the coast to the church.’

(ii) location (‘in’, ‘along’), for example:

I-jejër renge lip.
3SG:REAL-slip LOC mud
‘(S)he slipped in the mud.’

I-tëkh erenge nuo se këmem.
3SG:REAL-be.located LOC river POSS 1PL.EXCL
‘It is located along our river.’
The meaning of ‘on’ can be expressed with this preposition, though it will be shown in §6.3.2.3.2 that the oblique verbal preposition *en-* can also be used to express this meaning. The following illustrates the use of *renge* in this way:

\[ P_a-n-liek \quad renge \quad n_u_n\text{-}w_i_n. \]

1NONSG.INCL:IRR-PL-sit LOC beach
‘Let’s sit on the beach.’

(iii) time (‘in’, ‘during’), for example:

\[ D_e-n-i_a_r \quad e_r_e_nge \quad s_k_u_l \quad e_l_o \quad e_r_e_nge \quad 1921. \]

1NONSG.INCL:REAL-PL-arrive LOC church on.coast LOC 1921
‘We arrived at the church on the coast in 1921.’

(iv) speaking ‘in’ a language, for example:

\[ B_a-n-t_i_n_g e_t e_g_i \quad e_r_e_nge \quad v_e_n_g_e_s_i_e_n \quad e_s_e \quad k\acute{e}_m_e_m. \]

1NONSG.EXCL:IRR-PL-say something LOC language POSS 1PL.EXCL
‘We will say something in our language.’

Once again, the oblique verbal preposition *en-* can also be used to express this meaning (§6.3.2.3.2).

### 6.3.2.2.2 *Ejëkhë*—‘(personal) spatial’

The nominal preposition *ejëkhë*- accepts the full range of pronominal suffixes that are involved in the expression of direct possession (§6.1.2.2.2). Thus:

\[ P_o-m_o \quad e_v_i_b\acute{e}k\acute{h} \quad e_jk\acute{e}h-k. \]

2SG:IRR-come close LOC-1SG
‘Come close to me.’

\[ I-n-l_i_e_k \quad d-i_v_i_n \quad d-i_v_i_n \quad d-i_v_i_n \quad d_u_i \quad t\acute{e}r_e_p \quad e_jk\acute{e}h-d \quad i_s_i_g \]

3REAL-PL-stay ES-go ES-go ES-go man old LOC-1PL.INCL one

\[ i-v_e \quad m_w\acute{e}l\acute{e}u_n. \]

3SG:REAL-COP chief
‘They stayed on and on and one old man at our place was a chief.’

This preposition frequently loses its medial schwa, resulting in widespread alternation between *ejëkhë*- and *ejkhë*-, as illustrated in some of the examples which follow.

*Ejëkhë*- differs from the preposition *erenge*- described in the preceding section in that it invariably appears with the third person singular possessive suffix -*n* when the preposition governs a following noun. Thus:

\[ I-n-v_i_n \quad e_jk\acute{e}h-n \quad m_w\acute{e}l\acute{e}u_n. \]

3:REAL-PL-go GOAL-3SG chief
‘They went to the chief.’
However, when it governs an independent pronoun, it appears in its unsuffixed form. In such cases, it either loses its final schwa to become ejëkh, or it loses its medial schwa, retaining the final vowel. Thus:

\[ \text{Nuo isig ejëkh këmem.} \]
\[ \text{river INDEF LOC 1PL.EXCL} \]
\[ \text{‘There is a river at our place.’} \]

It also seems that this preposition appears in its unsuffixed form when it governs a personal name. Thus:

\[ \text{I-n-vvër ipa-n-ul stik tabak ejkhë Misti Presis.} \]
\[ \text{3:REAL-PL-want 3NONSG:IRR-PL-buy stick tobacco SOURCE Mr Bridges} \]
\[ \text{‘They wanted to buy tobacco stick from Mr Bridges.’} \]

Ejëkhë- expresses a similar range of spatial functions to those that are expressed by the nominal preposition erenge- and the free preposition e described in the preceding sections, with the only difference being that ejëkhë- always governs personal nouns. We therefore find this preposition expressing the following range of functions:

(i) allative (‘to’), for example:

\[ \text{I-n-lep ivin ejëkhë-n elakh esen.} \]
\[ \text{3:REAL-PL-take 3SG:REAL:go GOAL-3SG husband POSS:3SG} \]
\[ \text{‘They took her over to her husband.’} \]

(ii) source (‘from’), for example:

\[ \text{I-n-ul tes ejkhë naakëd.} \]
\[ \text{3:REAL-PL-buy saltwater SOURCE 1PL.INCL} \]
\[ \text{‘They bought saltwater from us.’} \]

(iii) While the locative function (‘in’, ‘on’, ‘at’) is pragmatically unlikely with personal nouns, this preposition does express the semantically related meaning of accompanitive (‘with’). Thus:

\[ \text{Ip-ivin ipo-vëtir ejkhën dui.} \]
\[ \text{3SG:REAL-go 3SG:IRR-stand ACC man} \]
\[ \text{‘She will go and stand with the man.’} \]

\[ \text{Er gi i-n-liek ejëkhë-n mwëliun i-n-liek.} \]
\[ \text{3PL REL 3:REAL-PL-live ACC chief 3:REAL-PL-stay} \]
\[ \text{‘Those who lived with the chief stayed.’} \]

(iv) Finally, this preposition also expresses the idea of location at a place which belongs to a person (or a group of people), for example:

\[ \text{Nuo isig ejëkh këmem.} \]
\[ \text{river INDEF LOC 1PL.EXCL} \]
\[ \text{‘There is a river at our place.’} \]

\[ \text{The reduced preposition ejkhë is the only form in the language where word-final schwa is encountered.} \]
Chapter 6

Dui terep ejkhè-d isig i-ve mwëliun.
man old LOC-1PL.INCL one 3SG:REAL-COP chief
‘An old man from our place was a chief.’

6.3.2.2.3 Ejuje- / enkhëkhërë- ‘beside’

The nominal prepositions ejuje- and enkhëkhërë- share the same very specific locational function, expressing the meaning of ‘beside’, as in the following:

Lipakh i-metër ejuje-n nëmakh.
dog 3SG:REAL-sleep beside-3SG house
‘The dog is sleeping beside the house.’

I-vëtir enkhëkhërë-k.31
3SG:REAL-stand beside-1SG
‘(S)he stood beside me.’

6.3.2.2.4 Sëne- / jëne- ‘cause’

The nominal preposition sëne- alternates freely with jëne-. The schwa of the root is commonly deleted to produce the form sne-, though the vowel is more likely to be retained with the j-initial variant. When this preposition governs a following free form noun or pronoun, it invariably appears in its unsuffixed form.

This preposition is used to indicate the following range of functions:

(i) cause (‘because of, on account of, from’), for example:

Pëti-k i-rar sëne niel.
head-1SG 3SG:REAL-sore CAUSE sun
‘My head is sore because of the sun.’

I-mësit sëne nëkhmakh.
3SG:REAL-sick CAUSE mosquito
‘(S)he has malaria (lit., (S)he is sick from the mosquitoes).’

(ii) purpose (‘for’), for example:

Be-sere netite ip-ivin sëne nuo.
1SG:IRR-send.on.errand child 3SG:IRR-go PURP water
‘I will send the child on an errand for water.’

I-n-khël kake te ipa-n-khès jëne-n.
3:REAL-PL-dig.up yam PURP 3NONSG:REAL-PL-dance CAUSE-3SG
‘They dug up the yams to dance because of them.’

6.3.2.2.5 Ne- ‘part-whole’

31 There is a noun nëkhëkhërë- ‘side’. What I have suggested is a preposition enkhëkhërë- may in fact be a misrepresentation of e nëkhëkhërë- ‘LOC side’.
The preposition *ne-*-, rather than expressing clause-level functions, normally expresses interrelationships between two noun phrases such as part-whole, as well as purpose, characteristic, and even a particular subtype of body-part possession (§6.1.2.2.4). However, it does occasionally function as a clause-level marker of beneficiary, as in the following:

$I$-$n$-$k$h$él $n$é$makh $n$e$-$n $t$é$v$é$ël$é$k$h $e$sar.

‘They built houses for their wives.’

6.3.2.2.6 *Ra*- ‘oblique’

My corpus also includes a small number of examples of a preposition of the shape *ra-*.

Although it has not been attested in its presumed third person singular suffixed form *ra-n*, it is considered unlikely that *ra* will turn out to be a free preposition given that *a* is otherwise unattested as a word-final segment (§5.3).

However, *ra-* is very rarely attested in my corpus, and appears to date only in elicited rather than textual data. Moreover, there is no function that is unique to this form, as it overlaps in function with a number of the other prepositions described here. Those functions that can be attributed to *ra-* are as follows:

(i) part-whole, for example:

$nes$él $ra$ $m$é$tiu$

‘coconut frond’

In this function, *ra-* overlaps with the part-whole function of the preposition *ne-* described in §6.3.2.2.5.

(ii) allative, for example:

$E$-$ske$-r$éng $b$-$i$vin $ra$ $k$é$ri$sel.$

‘I don’t feel like going to the garden.’

It is difficult to know whether *ra* represents a very rare variant for expressing these (and possibly other) functions, or if this preposition represents random influence from some other language. However, there is no viable source for *ra-* in Tape speakers’ dominant Northeast Malakula language, nor is there a similar form in V’ënén Taut (Fox 1979:41–41) or Naman (Crowley 2006c). There is a spatial preposition *ran* in Neve’ei (Crowley 2002a:647), and this frequently appears as *ra* when there is an immediately following noun. However, speakers of Neve’ei and Tape have not been in extensive contact either before or since colonial contact, so it is difficult to imagine how such a transfer might have taken place.

6.3.2.3 Verbal prepositions
Chapter 6

The final category of prepositions is those which accept the same suffixes that are used to express pronominal objects to transitive verbs (§6.2.2).

6.3.2.3.1 (E)duen- / (e)duon- ‘accompanitive, instrumental’

The form duen- / duon-, with its occasional longer alternants eduen- / eduon- is one such preposition. It is clear, however, that this is not a verb of any kind, as it does not accept any of the inflectional prefixing morphology described in §6.2.1.1.

This preposition expresses the following range of meanings:

(i) accompanitive (‘with’), in relation to animate nouns. Thus:

\[\text{Be-lik} \quad \text{duen} \quad \text{nêmwal}.\]
1SG:IRR-stay ACC chief
‘I will stay with the chief.’

\[\text{Be-mën} \quad \text{melëkh} \quad \text{duen-êm}.\]
1SG:IRR-drink kava ACC-2SG
‘I will drink kava with you.’

It should be pointed out that while a category such as the second person singular can be expressed by means of a verbal pronominal affix, as shown in the immediately preceding example, it is also possible for this category to be expressed by means of a free form, as in the following:

\[\text{En-vwër} \quad \text{be-titing} \quad \text{mili} \quad \text{duon} \quad \text{naakém}.\]
1SG:REAL-want 1SG:IRR-tell.story again ACC 2SG
‘I want to tell another story with you.’

(ii) accompanitive (‘with’), also in relation to inanimate nouns, for example:

\[\text{Dê-n-sëkh} \quad \text{duen} \quad \text{melëkh}.\]
1NONSG.INCL-PL-stand.up ACC kava
‘We stood it up with the kava.’

\[\text{Kake} \quad \text{i-mumu} \quad \text{duen} \quad \text{melëkh}.\]
yam 3SG:REAL-rot ACC kava
‘The yams rotted with the kava.’

(iii) instrument (‘with’, ‘by means of’), for example:

\[\text{I-ling-ling} \quad \text{duen} \quad \text{nijëvjép}.\]
3SG:REAL-REDUP-walk INST walking.stick
‘(S)he walked with a walking stick.’

6.3.2.3.2 En- ‘oblique’

The last preposition to be described is en-. The fact that this form falls into the subset of verbal prepositions is illustrated by the existence of inflected forms such as en-êr in the
following, as -ër is otherwise attested as a third person plural marker only on transitive verbs:

Naakëd dë-n-to tes en-ër.
1PL.INCL 1NONSG.INCL:REAL-PL-present saltwater GOAL-3PL
‘We would present the saltwater to them.’

Because en- expresses a wide range of functions, it can be considered as the default or ‘oblique’ preposition. It will be remembered from the discussion of verbal derivational morphology in §6.2.3.1 that the transitivising suffix that is found with verbs bears the same shape as this oblique preposition. The full range of individual functions of en- that have been attested to date includes the following:

(i) addressee of utterance, for example:

I-n-lot en atua eser.
1:REAL-PL-pray DAT god POSS:3PL
‘They prayed to their god.’

En-vwër be-vwiri en kem.
1SG:REAL-want 1SG:IRR-say DAT 2PL
‘I want to say it to you all.’

I-n-momon en këmem rivwi, “Es i-vwër
3REAL-PL-ask GOAL 1PL.EXCL all who 3SG:REAL-say
këpa-n-jej waia ese khaavot?”
2NONSG:REAL-PL-cut fence POSS European
‘They asked all of us, “Who said you should cut the European’s fence?”’

(ii) goal of verb of transfer, for example:

Naakëd dë-n-to tes en-ër.
1PL.INCL 1NONSG.INCL:REAL-PL-present saltwater GOAL-3PL
‘We would present the saltwater to them.’

Eren levër më-n-vwër ba-n-vësvës-en
1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-intend 1NONSG.EXCL:IRR-PL-teach-TR
vengesien ese këmem levër en netite se këmem er.
language POSS 1PL.EXCL that GOAL child POSS 1PL.EXCL PL
‘At that time, we intended to teach that language of ours to our children.’

(iii) instrument (‘with’, ‘by means of’), for example:

Be-jile belet en nuo.
1SG:IRR-wash plate INST water
‘I will wash the plate with water.’

I-n-mo i-n-luluakh en tin.
3REAL-PL-come 3REAL-PL-fire.shot INST rifle
‘When they came, they would fire shots with rifles.’
It was shown in §6.3.2.3.1 that this function can also be expressed by means of the preposition (e)duen- / (e)duon-.

(iv) location ‘on’, for example:

\[
\text{I-vëtir } \text{en } \text{pëti-n}. \quad \text{3SG:REAL-stand LOC head-3SG}
\]

‘(S)he stood on his/her head.’

However, it has already been shown in §6.3.2.2.1 that the nominal preposition erenge can also be used to express this meaning.

(v) allative ‘to’, for example:

\[
\text{I-n-vën } \text{dë-n-takhe } \text{en } \text{nimel } \text{ese } \text{mwëliun}. \quad \text{3REAL-PL-go ES-PL-take GOAL meeting.house POSS chief}
\]

‘They would go and take them to the chief’s meeting house.’

(vi) speaking ‘in’ a language, for example:

\[
\text{Be-vwiri-Ø } \text{en } \text{vengesien } \text{esek}. \quad \text{1SG:IRR-say-3SG LOC language POSS:1SG}
\]

‘I will say it in my language.’

Again, it is indicated in §6.3.2.2.1 that the preposition erenge can also express this meaning.

6.3.2.3.3 Preposition stranding and instrumental shift

In keeping with what appears to be a fairly widely distributed feature among central Malakula languages—and possibly languages further afield on Malakula—there is a process of instrumental shift in Tape whereby the stranded preposition en-, when it expresses an instrumental function (but none of its other varied functions), is systematically shifted from the post-object position in the clause to a position between the verb and its associated object. We therefore find examples such as the following:

\[
\text{I-lep } \text{nëvet } \text{i-khëj } \text{en } \text{tili } \text{tëvëlëkh}. \quad \text{3SG:REAL-take rock 3SG:REAL-hit INST leg woman}
\]

‘He took the rock and hit the woman’s leg with it.’

\[
\text{I-n-vënakh } \text{nëvet } \text{gi } \text{en-vvër } \text{b-ul } \text{en } \text{nëmak}. \quad \text{3REAL-PL-steal money REL 1SG:REAL-want 1SG:IRR-buy INST:3SG house}
\]

‘They stole the money that I wanted to buy the house with.’

\[
\text{En-bëruj } \text{ne } \text{gi } \text{en-vvër } \text{bë-khëj } \text{en } \text{lipakh}. \quad \text{1SG:REAL-break stick REL 1SG:REAL-want 1SG:IRR-hit INST:3SG dog}
\]

‘I broke the stick that I wanted to hit the dog with.’

When en is shifted to a position immediately following a verb ending in e, the resulting sequence of vowels is resolved as a long vowel, with the instrumental marker being cliticised to the verb itself. Thus:
Po-sip \textit{nuo vës be-jile=en kon.} \hspace{1cm} 2SG:IRR-scoop.up water little 1SG:IRR-water=INST:3SG corn  
‘Scoop up a little water to water the corn with.’

6.3.3 \textit{Other clause-level constituents}

In addition to the core clause constituents of subject, verb and object, along with prepositional phrases, clause structures can include a number of additional constituents which are typically less tightly bound to the constituents already described. These additional constituents are also more diffuse in terms of their functions, though many of these forms provide additional information about the temporal or locational orientation of the event that is encoded in the clause.

6.3.3.1 \textit{Benefactive}

One particular construction that is worthy of special note is the use of the possessive markers described in §6.1.2.2.1 as markers of the benefactive when they appear as clause-level constituents. When the beneficiary is expected to benefit from an action by the consumption of something, the benefactive relationship can be expressed by means of one of the possessive constituents that is used to express edible or drinkable possession. Thus:

\begin{verbatim}
Be-tabëkh viakh do-m.
1SG:IRR-roast taro BEN:ED-2SG 
‘I will roast taro for you (to eat).’
\end{verbatim}

In association with a transitive verb such as \textit{tabëkh} ‘roast’, there is potential ambiguity here between this benefactive reading and a reading in which \textit{viakh dom} ‘your taro (for eating)’ is interpreted as a patient noun phrase, i.e.

\begin{verbatim}
Be-tabëkh viakh do-m.
1SG:IRR-roast taro POSS:ED-2SG 
‘I will roast your taro (for eating).’
\end{verbatim}

The fact that these are genuine benefactive constructions, however, is indicated by the fact that forms such as \textit{dom} can appear after clearly intransitive verbs.

Benefactive relationships which do not involve something from which someone is expected to benefit by consumption are marked by the possessive form that is used in the expression of general possession. For example:

\begin{verbatim}
I-mekar ese khaavot.
3SG:REAL-work BEN European 
‘(S)he worked for the European.
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
I-n-rap ese mwëliun jere dë-n-rap esar.
3REAL-PL-clear.garden BEN chief then ES:REAL-PL-clear.garden BEN:3PL 
‘They cleared gardens for the chief and then they cleared gardens for themselves.’
\end{verbatim}

6.3.3.2 \textit{Non-benefactive constituents}
In this section I will list a variety of uninflected clause-level markers. These are quite diffuse in terms of their specific behavioural characteristics, as is often the case with what might be loosely termed ‘adverbial’ constituents.

6.3.3.2.1 Locational forms

It will be remembered from the discussion in §6.3.2.1 that place names exhibit grammatical behaviour that distinguishes them from other categories of nouns, in that the spatial roles of location, goal and source can be marked by means of the preposition e, in contrast to general nouns which mark such roles by means of the prepositions en or (e)renge. Compare, therefore, the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Dë-n-mo} & \quad e & \quad \text{Olsup.} \\
\text{1NONS:REAL-PL-come} & \quad \text{GOAL} & \quad \text{Olsup} \\
\text{‘We came to Olsup.’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Dë-n-mo} & \quad \text{erenge} & \quad \text{skul.} \\
\text{1NONS:REAL-PL-come} & \quad \text{GOAL} & \quad \text{church} \\
\text{‘We came to the church.’}
\end{align*}
\]

Place names—but not general nouns—have the additional option of being able to express these kinds of spatial roles by means of zero marking, as in the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{En} & \quad i-metër & \quad \text{Norsup.} \\
\text{3SG} & \quad \text{3SG:REAL-sleep} & \quad \text{Norsup} \\
\text{‘(S)he slept at Norsup.’}
\end{align*}
\]

In behaving in this way, place names are optionally behaving in the same way as a definable set of locational adverbs. These are forms which encode information about the spatial orientation of an event but which appear in a clause with no prepositional marking. My corpus includes the following forms:

- eji: ‘here’
- etër: ‘there’
- lene: ‘way over there’
- evibëkh: ‘nearby’
- eso: ‘far away’
- esoweies: ‘above’
- esakh: ‘uphill’
- elo: ‘below, downhill, coastwards’
- emu ~ elikh: ‘at front, first’
- elelvenu: ‘inside’
- evren: ‘outside’
- emakh: ‘to/at home’
- emel ~ maklo: ‘to/at the meeting house’

We therefore find examples such as the following:
Dën-mo elo erenge skul.
1PL.INCL:REAL-come to.coast GOAL church
‘We came to the coast to the church.’

Pa-r-titing makhlo.
1NONSG.INCL:IRR-DL-talk in.meeting.house
‘Let’s talk in the meeting house.’

Vengesien esek i-mos eji.
story POSS:1SG 3 SG:REAL-finish here
‘My story finishes here.’

I-mo emakh.
3SG:REAL-come home
‘(S)he came home.’

These forms almost all begin with e-, which suggests the possibility that they may involve the historical reanalysis of the spatial prefix e as part of the root. The fact that the putative roots may once have had independent existence as nouns is further suggested by the fact that the forms emakh ‘to/at home’ and emel ‘to/at the meeting house’ show partial similarity to the general nouns nêmawkh ‘house’ and nimel ‘meeting house’ respectively, as already noted in §6.1.2.1.3. Note also that the form elelvenu ‘inside’ is clearly derivable historically from a combination of the spatial preposition e ‘inside’, the directly suffixed noun root lelë- ‘interior’ and the free noun venu ‘place’. For example:

Kënëk en-liek elelvenu.
1SG 1 SG:REAL-stay inside
‘I stayed inside.’

Some of these locational markers can appear on their own in a clause with zero-marking, while also entering into complex prepositional constructions in which these initial locational elements are linked to a following noun phrase by means of one of the prepositions set out in §6.3.2. Such forms include the following:

eso (en- + NP) ‘far (from)’
evibëkh (en ~ ejëkhë- + NP) ‘close (to)’
esoweies (erenge- ~ renge- + NP) ‘on top (of)’

We therefore find examples such as the following in which there is no noun phrase associated with these forms:

Më-n-jul ivin esoweies.
1NONSG.EXCL-PL-shout 3SG:REAL:go above
‘We shouted up there.’

However, we also find examples such as the following in which the locational markers are linked to an associated noun phrase by means of a preposition:

I-liek eso en nêmakh.
3SG:REAL-stay long.way LOC house
‘(S)he is a long way from the house.’
Po-mo evibēkh ejēkhē-k.
2SG:IRR-come close LOC-1SG
‘Come close to me.’

Nēmen i-vētir esoweies renge nēmakh.
bird 3SG:REAL-stand above LOC house
‘The bird is standing on top of the house.’

6.3.3.2.2 Temporal forms

In addition to these zero-marked locational markers, my corpus includes a set of zero-marked temporal markers. This lexical set includes the following:

mosi ‘today’
enisi ‘now’
maren ‘tomorrow’
nenēp ‘yesterday’
bawos ‘day after tomorrow’
nuos ‘day before yesterday’
tetwo ‘long time ago’
jere(te) ‘afterwards’
etakh ‘next’
meteveren ‘in the morning’
likhalmo ‘at noon’
rivrip ‘in the evening’
likhat ‘at night’

Thus:

Jerete i-n-lep i-vin ejēkhē-n elakh esen.
then 3REAL-PL-take 3SG:REAL-go GOAL-3SG husband POSS:3SG
‘Only then did they take her to her husband.’

We also find the noun nit ‘place’ followed by a handful of inflected verbs which can be used both as clauses in their own right or as adverbials within a clause. For example:

nit i-ren
place 3SG:REAL-daybreak
‘It dawned.’
‘at/until daybreak’

nit i-mit
place 3SG:REAL-dark
‘It was night.’
‘during/until the night’

Thus:

Mimi-n i-ling-ling nit i-mit.
spirit-3SG 3SG:REAL-REDUP-walk place 3SG:REAL-dark
‘The spirit walked about at night.’
While the locational markers typically appear after the core arguments of the clause, the
temporal markers are more loosely constrained in their position in the clause. They are
commonly found at the beginning of the clause, as in the case of *rivrip* ‘in the evening’ and
*enisi* ‘now’ in the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Rivrip} & \quad i-n-kho \quad kake. \\
\text{evening} & \quad 3:\text{REAL-PL-bundle.up} \quad \text{yam} \\
\text{‘In the evening they bundled up the yams.’} \\
\text{Enisi} & \quad en-vwër \quad be-vwiri \quad vengesien \quad isig. \\
\text{now} & \quad 1\text{SG:REAL-want} \quad 1\text{SG:IRR-tell story} \quad \text{INDEF} \\
\text{‘Now I want to tell a story.’}
\end{align*}
\]

However, they can appear in other positions in the clause, even between a subject and a
verb, as in the placement of *tetwo* ‘before’ in the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Eren} & \quad dui \quad tèrentrep \quad tetwo \quad i-n-vwër \quad ipa-n-takhe \quad tèveřēk \\
\text{time} & \quad \text{man old: PL before} \quad 3\text{REAL-PL-want} \quad 3\text{NONSG:IRR-PL-marry woman} \\
\text{i-n-vin} & \quad i-n-khēl \quad nēmakh \quad nen \quad tèveřēk \quad esar. \\
\text{3REAL-PL-go} & \quad 3\text{REAL-PL-build house} \quad \text{PURP wife} \quad \text{POSS:3PL} \\
\text{‘When the old men before wanted to marry a woman, they would go and make} \\
\text{a house for their wives.’}
\end{align*}
\]

Unmarked noun phrases including modifiers with time reference, in addition to the simple
nouns listed above, can also be used adverbially, as illustrated by the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Nil} & \quad isimēk \quad dē-n-liek \quad elelvenu. \\
\text{month} & \quad \text{one} \quad 1\text{NONSG.INCL:REAL-PL-stay inside} \\
\text{‘We stayed inside for one month.’}
\end{align*}
\]

Another phrasal construction which is used to express a temporal meaning involves the
adverbial *maren* ‘tomorrow’ followed by the part-whole preposition *ne-* carrying the third
person singular pronominal suffix -n (§6.3.2.2.5). The resulting sequence *maren nen*
expresses the meaning of ‘the next day’, as in the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Maren} & \quad ne-n \quad i-n-liek. \\
\text{tomorrow} & \quad \text{PART-3SG} \quad 3\text{REAL-PL-stay} \\
\text{‘The next day they would stay.’}
\end{align*}
\]

6.3.3.2.3 Miscellaneous adverbs

Finally, there is a number of additional clause-level modifiers which do not fall into any
particular semantically or structurally definable class, including the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ogi} & \quad \text{‘only’} \\
\text{pongen} & \quad \text{‘only’} \\
\text{te} & \quad \text{‘only’} \\
\text{mili} & \quad \text{‘again, back’}
\end{align*}
\]

Thus:
Chapter 6

Këpa-n-rëng-k mili en-titing.
2NONSG:IRR-PL-hear-1SG again 1SG:REAL-speak
‘You will all hear me speaking again.’

The forms ogi, te and pongen have all been attested with the meaning of ‘just’ or ‘only’, though it has not yet been established what sorts of differences there may be between these forms. We find examples such as the following in the corpus:

Vengesien esek ogi enir.
story POSS:1SG only that.one
‘That is just my story.’

Tëvëlëkh pongen.
woman only
‘There were only women.’

Eren levër i-ve te më-n-vin më-n-jej
waia.
time that 3SG:REAL-make only 1NONSG.EXCL-PL-go 1NONSG.EXCL-PL-cut
‘At that time, it just made us go to cut the fence.’

6.3.4 Interrogative clauses

A full range of interrogative constructions has yet to be documented. Because the language is no longer used conversationally, and because the amount of textual data that has been recorded so far is quite limited, I have no recorded examples of yes/no questions, and the content questions that I have recorded do not cover the full range.

The interrogatives sëte ‘what?’ and es ‘who?’ function as noun phrases (§6.1) within a clause. Thus:

Kë-vwër sëte?
2SG:REAL-say what
‘What did you say?’

B-ivin duen es?
1SG:IRR-go ACC who
‘Who will I go with?’

Es i-vwër këpa-n-jej waia?
who 3SG:REAL-say 2NONSG:IRR-PL-cut fence
‘Who told you all to cut the fence?’

The form ivës ‘how much/many?’ functions as a numeral postmodifier within a noun phrase (§6.1.3.2). For example:

K-udi niivëkh ivës?
2SG:REAL-eat Malay.apple how.many
‘How many Malay apples did you eat?’
The interrogatives evi ‘where?’ and sëvërën ‘when?’ function in the same way as zero-marked locational and temporal adverbials within the clause (§6.3.3). For example:

Netite i-jul evi?
child 3SG:REAL-shout where
‘Where is the child shouting?’

Kë-metër evi?
2SG:REAL-sleep where
‘Where do you sleep?’

Pa-n-vin sëvërën?
2NONSG:IRR-PL-go when
‘When will you all go?’

Finally, the form ipërvi ‘how’ behaves like a verb and takes subject-mood inflection as in the following:

Dë-n-riu ipërvi e venu esed?
1NONSG:REAL-PL-escape 3SG:REAL:how SOURCE village POSS:1PL.INCL
‘How did we escape from our village?’

6.3.5 Noun phrase fronting

In common with many Oceanic languages, we find that focussed noun phrases can be shifted from verbal object position to the beginning of the clause. In the absence of a passive construction, such a process allows a patient noun phrase to be shifted into a position of pragmatic salience in the clause, as illustrated by the following:

Vengesien esek ogi enir en-vwër be-vwiri en kem.
story POSS:1SG only that.one 1SG:REAL-want 1SG:IRR-tell GOAL 2PL
‘That is just my story that I want to tell you all.’

Kake gi i-n-sëkh-ër i-k-ska-n-iar.
yam REL 3:REAL-PL-stand.up-3PL 3:REAL-NEC-NEG-PL-touch
‘They must not touch the yams that they have stood up.’

On the basis of comparative evidence, we would expect to find that prepositional objects might also be amenable to shifting in this way, though this needs to be checked against further textual data from the field. However, examples such as the following indicate that the possessor noun phrase in a possessive construction can also be fronted:

Dui tërev-ër nëkhse-n enir.
man old-that name-3SG that.one
‘That was the old man’s name.’

Gi i-da-sk-ivin ejëkhê-n elakh esen
REL 3SG:REAL-CONT-NEG-go GOAL-3SG husband POSS:3SG

32 It is not clear whether the verb root is përvi, which is preceded by the 3sg prefix i-, or whether there is a monomorphemic root ipërvi.
i-n-tëkh
lu-n.
3:REAL-PL-knock.out tooth-3SG
‘They knocked out the teeth of one who had not yet gone to her husband.’

6.4 Multi-predicate constructions

The final section of this grammar deals with sentences which are made up of two (or more) predicates. Under this general heading, we can include auxiliary constructions, core-layer serial verb constructions, coordinate constructions and subordinate constructions.

6.4.1 Auxiliaries

A verbal auxiliary is one of a small set of fully inflected verbs which is followed by a main verb carrying verbal inflection which is tightly constrained by the inflectional marking on the preceding auxiliary. These auxiliaries express a range of modal meanings, and they cannot be separated from the following main verb by any kind of intervening constituents. The following auxiliaries have been attested in Tape:

vwër ‘intend to, be about to, want to’
rëng ‘want to, feel like’
rëngdo ‘know how to, be able to’

The subject marking on the auxiliary and the following main verb is identical. An auxiliary that carries realis marking is followed by a main verb carrying irrealis marking. Thus:

En-vwër be-vwiri-Ø en kem.
1SG:REAL-intend 1SG:IRR-say-3SG GOAL 2PL
‘I intend to say it to you all.’

En i-rëng ipo-metër.
3SG 3SG:REAL-want 3SG:IRR-sleep
‘(S)he feels like sleeping.’

When a verb that is associated with a preceding auxiliary is negated, the negative marking is found on the auxiliary and not on the following main verb. Thus:

E-skë-rëng b-ivin.
1SG:REAL-NEG-want 1SG:IRR-go
‘I don’t want to go.’

En i-skë-rëngdo ipo-suvsiv.
3SG 3SG:REAL-NEG-be.able 3SG:IRR-swim
‘(S)he can’t swim.’

6.4.2 Core-layer serial verbs
Core-layer serial verb constructions are those in which two verbs are closely bound conceptually and grammatically, but where both verbs carry overt marking for subject-mood categories.

6.4.2.1 Directional serialisation

This kind of construction commonly involves expression of the directional orientation of an action by means of the basic motion verbs *ivin* ‘go’ and *mo* ‘come’. When these verbs are serialised, they are marked by third person singular prefixation on the directional verb, as illustrated by the following:

*I-n-lep* tëvēlēkh *ivin* ejēkhē-n elakh esen.
3:REAL-PL-take woman 3SG:REAL:go GOAL-3SG husband POSS:3SG
‘They took the woman to her husband.’

*I-sēkhtren* nuo *ivin*.
3SG:REAL-pour water 3SG:REAL:go
‘(S)he poured the water away.’

While core-layer serialisation is generally expressed with both verbs carrying initial subject marking (§6.2.1.1.1) as in the examples just presented, we find occasional use of echo subject marking on the directional verb (§6.2.1.1.2). Thus:

*Mē-n-riu* dē-n-mo erenge skul.
1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-escape ES-PL-came GOAL church
‘We escaped (hither) to the church.’

*I-n-melet* dē-n-vin.
3:REAL-PL-return ES-PL-go
‘They went back.’

It will be noted, however, that when echo subject markers are used in this kind of construction, the number category of the initial verb is copied onto the subsequent verb. This represents a point of contrast with core-layer serial verb constructions in which both verbs carry initial subject marking, as the second verb invariably appears with singular inflection. Contrast, therefore, the last two examples with the following:

*Mē-n-jul* *ivin* esoweies.
1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-shout 3SG:REAL:go up
‘We shouted up there.’

*Mē-n-melet* i-mo emakh.
1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-return 3SG:REAL-come home
‘We came back home.’

6.4.2.2 Manner serialisation

As we might expect from evidence provided by comparable constructions in related languages, the same construction is also encountered with stative verbs expressing the manner in which an action is carried out. In the following example, *set* ‘bad’ carries the
same third person singular inflection to indicate that the act of paying for the copra was done ‘badly’:

*Misti Presis ul mëtiu esar i-set.*

Mr Bridges 3SG:REAL:pay.for copra POSS:3PL 3SG:REAL-bad
‘Mr Bridges did not pay good money for their copra.’

### 6.4.2.3 Quotative serialisation

The verb *vwër* ‘say’ can be used on its own as the sole verb within a clause to indicate what somebody has said. For example:

*Mwëliun Avia i-vwër bë-ska-n-vësvës-en en*  
chief  Avia 3SG:REAL-say 1NONSG.EXCL:IRR-NEG-PL-teach-TR GOAL  
*netite esed.*  
child  POSS:1PL.INCL  
‘Chief Avia said we should not teach it to our children.’

However, this verb is very frequently serialised after another verb of locution to introduce the content of the utterance. Thus:

*I-n-wis nëkhse-n i-n-vwër Tar.*  
3REAL-PL-call name-3SG 3REAL-PL-say Tar  
‘They used to call him “Tar”.’

*I-n-vwiri i-n-vwër iar meteveren ne-n.*  
3REAL-PL-say 3REAL-PL-say 3SG:REAL:reach morning PURP-3SG  
‘They kept saying it until the morning.’

It is common in Vanuatu languages for a clausal complement to a verb of perception or mental activity to be expressed in the same way as a complement to a verb of saying, often making use of a serialised form of the verb meaning ‘say’. The evidence to date for Tape, however, is that with such verbs, the separate subordinator *te* is used instead (§6.4.4.7), as in the following:

*I-ske-rëngdo te nunu esen i-ve pongen mili.*  
3SG:REAL-NEG-know SUB mother POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL-do always again  
‘She did not know that her mother always behaved like that.’

### 6.4.3 Coordination

There is a range of constructions which can be used when speakers wish to signal a coordinate relationship between two clauses. One possibility is to use the clausal coordinator *en*, as in the following:

*I-n-mo en Kaya i-lis-ër.*  
3REAL-PL-come and  Caillard 3SG:REAL-see-3PL  
‘They came and Caillard saw them.’
However, this is a possibility that speakers do not make frequent use of, and my spoken corpus provides a total of only four instances of this kind of coordination. Another possibility that has a similarly low frequency in my spoken texts is for the temporal adverb jere(te) ‘then’ to link two clauses, as in the following:

\[I-n-lulo \quad kake \quad esen \quad jerete \quad i-n-bëkh-lulo \quad esar.\]
3REAL-PL-plant yam BEN:3SG then 3REAL-PL-INCEP-plant BEN:3PL
‘They would plant yams for him and then they would plant them for themselves.’

My textual corpus includes many examples in which two clauses are simply coordinated with no overt marking of any kind. This is particularly common when the first of the coordinated clauses contains either of the basic motion verbs mo ‘come’ or ivin ‘go’, as in the following:

\[I-n-mo \quad i-n-liek.\]
3:REAL-PL-come 3:REAL-PL-stay
‘They came and stayed.’

\[I-n-vin \quad i-n-takhe.\]
3:REAL-PL-go 3:REAL-PL-take
‘They went and took it.’

However, there is an alternative construction involving the echo subject prefix dë-(§6.2.1.1.2). This prefix expresses a coordinate relationship between two clauses in which the subjects of the two verbs are identical and the two verbs express the same mood category. Thus:

\[I-n-vin \quad dë-n-liek \quad elelvenu.\]
3:REAL-PL-go ES-PL-stay inside
‘They went and stayed inside.’

It should be noted that when two clauses are linked by means of the temporal adverbial jere(te), it is still possible for the second verb to appear with echo subject marking. Thus:

\[I-n-rap \quad esen \quad mwëlin \quad jere \quad dë-n-bëkh-rap \quad eser.\]
3:REAL-PL-clear.garden POSS:3SG chief then ES-PL-INCEP-clear.garden POSS:3PL
‘They cleared the chief’s garden and then they just cleared their own.’

However, when the coordinator en is used to link clauses, the second verb appears to obligatorily carry initial subject marking.

\[6.4.4 \text{ Subordination}\]

Only a partial range of subordinate clause types have so far been attested in my textual data. Those subordinators that have been attested are set out and illustrated below.

\[6.4.4.1 \text{ Time clauses}\]
There is a noun *eren* which can be used to mean ‘time’, as in the following:

\[
\text{Eren levër mé-ska-n-titing duen en.} \\
\text{time that 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-NEG-PL-speak ACC 3SG}
\]

‘At that time, we did not speak with him.’

However, this form can also be used as a subordinator to introduce time clauses. For example:

\[
\text{Eren dui tërtërep i-n-vwër ipa-n-takhe tëvëlëkh} \\
\text{time man old.PL 3:REAL-PL-want 3NONSG:IRR-PL-marry woman}
\]
\[
i-n-vin i-n-takhe tëvëlëkh \\
\text{3NONSG:REAL-PL-go 3NONSG:REAL-PL-take woman}
\]

‘When the old men wanted to marry a woman, they went and took the woman.’

While *eren* is generally simply preposed at the beginning of the time clause as a genuine subordinator in its own right, its original nominal function is still apparent in occasional examples such as the following in which the relative clause marker *gi* also occurs (§6.1.5):

\[
\text{Eren gi i-vwër ipo-khëj dui e i-ling-ling} \\
\text{time SUB 3SG:REAL-want 3SG:IRR-kill person LOC 3SG:REAL-REDUP-walk}
\]
\[
i-ivin i-khëj dui. \\
\text{3SG:REAL-go 3SG:REAL-kill person}
\]

‘When (= ‘(at) the time that’) she wanted to kill somebody, she would walk away and kill somebody.’

It is also possible for the form *rivwi* ‘all’ (§6.1.3.1) to be used as a completive marker after a verb when a sequential interpretation between two events is intended. For example:

\[
\text{I-n-tëkh lu-n rivwi i-n-khës d-ivin d-ivin} \\
\text{3:REAL-PL-knock.out tooth-3SG COMPL 3:REAL-PL-dance ES-go ES-go}
\]
\[
d-ivin i-k-iar nit i-ke-ren. \\
\text{ES-go 3:SG:REAL-NEC-reach place 3SG:REAL-NEC-daylight}
\]

‘When they had knocked out her teeth, they would have to dance on and on until it was daylight.’

In fact, we sometimes find *eren* used as a clause-initial subordinator along with the verbal postmodifier *rivwi* to express the same meaning. Thus:

\[
\text{Eren ba-n-jej rivwi George Kalkoa i-mo.} \\
\text{time 1INCL.NONSG:REAL-PL-cut COMPL George Kalkoa 3SG:REAL-come}
\]

‘When we had cut it, George Kalkoa came.’

### 6.4.4.2 Place clauses

The form *nit* is commonly used as a noun meaning ‘place’ as a verbal subject in a number of idiomatic constructions expressing ambient states, as in the following:
Mimi-n i-lingling nit i-mit.
spirit-3SG 3SG:REAL-walk place 3SG:REAL-dark
‘The spirit would wander around when it was dark.’

The same form is also used to introduce a subordinate clause of place. We therefore find examples such as the following:

Më-n-vin më-n-tërakh-ër nit
1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-go 1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-wait.for-3PL place
i-n-ul tes e.
3REAL-PL-buy saltwater LOC
‘We would go and wait for them where they used to buy the saltwater.’

Nit i-n-ul tes e nëkhse-n i-ve e Jarabu.
place 3REAL-PL-buy saltwater LOC name-3SG 3SG:REAL-COP LOC Jarabu
‘Where they bought the saltwater was Jarabu.’

6.4.4.3 ‘Until’ clauses

‘Until’ clauses are expressed by means of a combination of the verb ivin ‘go’ carrying echo subject marking, often repeated several times, and often also in conjunction with the verb iar ‘reach, arrive at’, as illustrated by the following example:

I-n-tëkh lu-n rivwi i-n-khës d-ivin d-ivin
d-ivin i-k iar nit i-ke-ren.
ES-go 3:SG:REAL-NEC-reach place 3SG:REAL-NEC-daylight
‘When they had knocked out her teeth, they would have to dance on and on until it was daylight.’

6.4.4.4 Conditional clauses

Conditional clauses are introduced by povër. For example:

Povër nuis ip-iu pë-ska-n-vin erenge lomël.
if rain 3SG:IRR-rain 2NONSG:IRR-NEG-PL-go GOAL garden
‘If it rains, you (pl.) will not go to the garden.’

Occasionally, the conditional marker appears as the shorter form vër. For example:

Vër i-kësiar nëbëng isngel venu esar i-n-jem nimwil.
if 3SG:REAL-go.past day ten village POSS:3PL 3REAL-PL-remove cycad
‘If it went past ten days, their village would remove the cycad (leaves).’

It is not uncommon for the verb of the second clause in such constructions to be marked by the necessitative mood markers described in §6.2.1.2.3. Thus:

Povër i-ska-dang luo lu-n netë-n dui gi emu
if 3:REAL-NEG-remove out tooth-3SG child-3SG male REL first
ne-n  i-kë-mes.
PART-3SG  3:REAL-NEC-die
‘If they did not remove her teeth, her first son would certainly die.’

6.4.4.5 Reason clauses

Reason clauses are introduced by means of the third person singular form of the causal preposition (§6.3.2.2.4), i.e. sënen or jënen. For example:

En-vwër  be-titing  ogi  jëne-n  mimi-n  i-khëj
1SG:REAL-want  1SG:IRR-tell.story  only  CAUSE-3SG  spirit-3SG  3SG:REAL-kill
pongén  dui.
always  person
‘I just want to tell the story because the spirit used to kill people.’

6.4.4.6 Purpose clauses

Purposive clauses can be marked by means of the same subordinator gi which is used in the formation of relative clauses (§6.1.5), as in the following:

I-vwiri  en  kêmem  gi  ba-n-jej  waia.
3SG:REAL-tell  GOAL  1PL.EXCL  PURP  1EXCL.NONSG:REAL-PL-cut  fence
‘He told us to cut the fence.’

However, a purposive relationship between two events can also be signalled by simple clausal juxtaposition if the verb of the initial clause carries realis marking and the second verb carries irrealis marking. Thus:

I-n-vin  ejëkhë-n  mwëliun  ipa-n-ve  nëbëng  esen.
3REAL-PL-go  GOAL-3SG  chief  3NONSG:IRR-PL-make  ceremony  POSS:3SG
‘They would go to the chief to perform his ceremony.’

6.4.4.7 The subordinators te and gi

In addition to the various subordinators described in the preceding sections, the forms te and gi are also attested in a small number of textual examples with subordinating functions. Gi, and very occasionally also te, is used to introduce relative clauses in Tape (§6.1.5). The form gi is also used as a general subordinator to introduce a complement clause. For example:

I-ska-r-khuos  mili  gi  ipa-r-lingling  ipa-r-khëj
dui.
person
‘They were not strong (enough) to wander around killing people.’
Examples such as the following suggest that *gi* can also be used to introduce a quotative complement, alongside the more commonly attested pattern described in §6.4.2.3 which involved the serialised form of the verb *vwër* ‘say’. Thus:

\[ Dui \quad gi \quad iskhe \quad i-\text{vwiri} \quad en \quad këmem \quad gi \]
\[ \text{person DEM no} \quad 3\text{SG:REAL-tell} \quad \text{GOAL} \quad 1\text{PL.EXCL} \quad \text{SUB} \]
\[ ba-n-jej. \]
\[ 1\text{NONSG.EXCL:IRR-PL-cut} \]

‘Nobody told us to cut it.’

It has already been mentioned in §6.4.2.3 that the subordinator *te* is used to introduce a clausal complement to a verb of mental activity, as in the following:

\[ I-ske-rëngdo \quad te \quad nunu \quad esen \quad i-\text{ve} \quad pongen \quad mili. \]
\[ 3\text{SG:REAL-NEG-know} \quad \text{SUB mother POS3:SG} \quad 3\text{SG:REAL-do always} \quad \text{again} \]

‘She did not know that her mother always behaved like that.’

However, it appears that *te* can also be used as a more general marker of a complement clause, as in the following:

\[ Eren \quad levër \quad i-\text{ve} \quad te \quad më-n-vin \]
\[ \text{time that} \quad 3\text{SG:REAL-make} \quad \text{SUB} \quad 1\text{NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-go} \]
\[ më-n-jej \quad \text{waia.} \]
\[ 1\text{NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-cut} \quad \text{fence} \]

‘At that time, it’s what made us go and cut the fence.’

### 6.5 The discourse function of *ivin* ‘go’

Given that I have been able to assemble only a fairly small corpus of spoken Tape, along with the fact that it will probably never be possible to observe people spontaneously conversing in the language, it would probably be unwise to attempt to offer anything more than passing comments about Tape discourse patterns. Limited though my corpus of narrative text is, however, there are nonetheless some recurring patterns which clearly function to link sentences together in continuous speech. It is these recurring patterns which are described in this final section of the grammar.

One very widely attested pattern involves the verb *ivin* ‘go’. This frequently appears in narrative texts carrying the echo subject prefix *dë*- (§6.2.1.1.2), with the inflected verb regularly appearing as *d-ivin*. This can be used to link two clauses with the implication that the event described in the first clause takes place over an extended period before a second event (or state), expressed in the form of a verbal clause, is realised. Thus:

\[ I-\text{liek} \quad d-\text{ivin} \quad i-\text{lis} \quad i-\text{këj} \quad dui \quad itar. \]
\[ 3\text{SG:REAL-stay ES-go} \quad 3\text{SG:REAL-see} \quad 3\text{SG:REAL-kill} \quad \text{person many} \]

‘He stayed until he saw that it had killed many people.’

The verb *d-ivin*, when used with this discourse function, is very commonly repeated. About half of all instances of *d-ivin* used in this way in my Tape corpus appear twice, as in the following:
Chapter 6

I-vëtir d-ivin d-ivin i-bëkh-vin ejëkhë-n elakh
3SG:REAL-stay.behind ES-go ES-go 3SG:REAL-INCEP-go GOAL-3SG husband
esen.
POSS:3SG
‘She would stay behind and would eventually just go to her husband.’

However, it is common for about a quarter of such patterns to involve three repetitions, as in the following, with the remaining quarter of exponents just involving a single instantiation of d-ivin, as illustrated above. Thus:

I-tëkh etër d-ivin d-ivin d-ivin i-mumu duon
3SG:REAL-stay there ES-go ES-go ES-go 3SG:REAL-disintegrate ACC
melëkh ne-n.
kava PURP-3SG
‘It would stay there until it disintegrated with the kava that went with it.’

Although d-ivin has the form of the verb ivin ‘go’ with echo subject prefixation, this pattern differs from the regular echo subject constructions described in §6.2.1.1.2 in that the category of number is not obligatorily copied from the initial verb onto the verb carrying echo subject marking. In the following, for example, the initial plural verb i-n-khës ‘they danced’ is followed by the singular echo verb d-ivin rather than the corresponding plural form *dë-n-vin:

I-n-khës d-ivin d-ivin nit i-ren.
3REAL-PL-dance ES-go ES-go place 3SG:REAL-be-daylight
‘They danced until it was daylight.’

Where an event takes place either over an extended period of time or over a large distance leading up to a particular point in time or a particular place, d-ivin may be followed by the verb iar ‘reach’ in its third person singular realis form. Thus:

Më-n-vëtir erenge waia d-ivin d-ivin iar
1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-stand LOC fence ES-go ES-go 3SG:REAL:reach
esakh lene.
up over.there
‘We stood (in a line) along the fence as far as up there.’

Më-n-liek d-ivin d-ivin iar sëkho ingelves
1NONSG.EXCL:REAL-PL-live ES-go ES-go 3SG:REAL:reach year 40
dëmon jевet.
+ 9
‘We stayed until the year ’49.’
References


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198


