Tamambo, the language of west Malo, Vanuatu
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Dorothy G. Jauncey
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Preface

This is a description of the Tamambo language of the island of Malo in northern Vanuatu. The language belongs to the Oceanic subgroup of the large Austronesian family, and can be regarded as conservative, reflecting many of the grammatical and lexical features of an earlier proto-Oceanic language.

My introduction to Malo island was many years ago in 1992. In that year, I made a brief trip to various places in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu to make contacts for possible linguistic fieldwork. After a visit to the Avunatari area of west Malo, I met with a Malo person in Port Vila who was enthusiastic about the prospect of my documenting his language. His suggestion to contact his sister, then an undergraduate in Brisbane, resulted in my being able to work with her in Australia over the next year, while I waited for fieldwork permission from the government of Vanuatu. When I subsequently received that permission in 1994, I was fortunate to then already have a basic knowledge of the language of west Malo from my Brisbane contact, plenty of advice, and an ‘instant’ family to stay with when I went to Malo.

The data from the fieldwork over the next three to four years resulted in my PhD thesis but, as with any language, there was still much to learn. I have been back to Malo several times over the ensuing years to gather more data and ask more questions. I am also able to be in contact with Tamambo speakers by letter, and now more often by email. As a result, this grammatical description has many changes from and additions to the original thesis (‘A grammar of Tamambo, the language of western Malo, Vanuatu’), and all has been updated.

The structure of the fourteen chapters remains basically the same, with the following main differences noted:

Chapters 1–8 in this work are all revised, with an addition to Chapter 1 on ‘Young people’s Tamambo’, a rearrangement of Chapter 3 on basic clause structure, with additions to Chapter 4 on discourse particles and greetings, and to Chapter 5 on valency. There are also additions to Chapter 7 on benefactive use, and revisions to Chapter 8 as to prepositional use. Chapters 9 and 10 have been rearranged: Chapter 9 on verbs and the verb phrase (previously Chapter 10) has additional data about interrogative verbs; the chapter on adjectival verbs (now Chapter 10) has been reanalysed and rewritten. Chapters 11 on tense, aspect and modality, Chapter 12 on serial verbs, and Chapter 13 on coordinate clauses have been updated with some additions and explanations. The last chapter (14) on subordinate clause types has additional data about another subordinator in complement and adverbial clauses.

In the thesis, there were two short texts; this description includes five.
Acknowledgements

My continued involvement with the island of Malo and the language of Tamambo over many, many years has been possible through the warm acceptance of my visits by the Avunatari community, and the kindness and hospitality of the Baniuri family in Moruhave village, and in Vila.

I thank all the people who shared their stories with me from the west of Malo: (in chronological order) Joy Baniuri, Sera Vui, Philip Baniuri, Sale Makali, Elder Sangavulu, the late Vula Vutilolo, Jif Vira Joseph, the late Jif Jonathan, Votamboi Moli, the late Elder Banbani, Lucian Bani, Vuvuro Leo, Vombani Rovo, Vombani Jeona, Vomoli Jeu, Letora Donald, Vomulehi Vuro, Pasta Mata, the late Titus Vatu, the late Votari Sangavulu, Vevira Solomon, the late Voulo Rongo, Vombani Jingo, Makali Baniuri, Sera Baniuri, Vetiri Muele, Volfio Vira, Jenny Joseph, Vuvahoro Taviti, and the children (as they were then) Morrison Makali, Konnie Misael, Patrick John Win, Wala Vuro, Vatu Dehi, Pakoa Makali, Ian Bani, Naomi Vuro, Sale Sohe, Sale Rongo, Stewart Bani. From Ataripoi in the southeast, thanks to Vorahesi Sikiala, Jeu Moli Taviti, John Tabae, and Vetari John Tabae.

I am grateful to my language assistants in Avunatari who helped me transcribe the original tapes: Selina Vutilolo, Lucian Bani, John Robert, Jonas Moli, Nellie Caleb, Alice Sai Caleb, also to Joy Baniuri in Vila and Canberra, and to Marie Wirrick (originally from Malo) in Sydney. Special thanks to Jif Vira Joseph, who spent innumerable hours with me explaining the names of things; to Elder Sangavulu, who was always ready to discuss with me the finer meanings of words, and to the late Vula Vutilolo, who assisted in the organisation of language assistants, and whose excellent English always helped me in finding better translations for particular expressions. Thanks also to my friends Selina Vutilolo and Nellie Caleb who both went out of their way to accompany me on various occasions—around the island, to traditional dancing with the women, and so on—I have fond memories of the laughs that we shared then, and more recently in Santo and Canberra.

I would also to thank Cynthia Allen as my main supervisor for the original thesis, and also Malcolm Ross for advice, and his prodigious knowledge of Oceanic. I would also like to acknowledge, with thanks, the input of Bob Dixon who encouraged me to do fieldwork in the first place. Thank you to Paul Schioberg at ANU for preparing the maps for this publication, and to Julie Manley at Pacific Linguistics for her patient assistance with formatting.

I am most grateful for the continuing encouragement from my husband to finally complete this revised and updated work. As for my extended ‘Vanuatu family’, thank you so much for the wonderful hospitality in Moruhave village, especially in the homes of Loreen and Vanua Bani, Makali Bani, and Mama Sera and the late Papa Baniuri. Especial thanks to Joy (Vomaranda) Baniuri (now Botleng), my first ‘teacher’, who has continued to answer my questions for almost two decades, and whose family, including children Joycinnette, Jacinta, and Jauncey, have been so welcoming to me and my husband in Vila.

To them and to all my other Malo friends, no manjine asena, moiso ku lete tinoimaliohi kamim noisonduhu.
### Abbreviations and organisation

<table>
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<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tr>
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<td>article</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>demonstrative</td>
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<td>male speaker</td>
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<td>vowel</td>
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<td>VP</td>
<td>verb phrase</td>
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Syllable boundaries, where shown, are indicated by the use of a full stop. Reduplication boundaries, where shown, are indicated by a tilde. Clitics, where shown, are indicated by a hyphen. Reference to other sections within the grammar is made by numbers, referring to number of chapter, then sections within that chapter, e.g. 6.4.2 refers to Chapter 6, section 4, subsection 2.

Tables and figures are referred to similarly; they are labelled with the number of chapter and the table or figure in that chapter, e.g. Table 2:4 refers to Chapter 2, fourth table. Numbered examples and footnotes within chapters are numbered for that chapter only since they are not cross-referenced elsewhere. Thus example (25) is the twenty-fifth example for that chapter.

The use of brackets in textual examples is as follows, unless otherwise noted:

- square brackets [ ] are used for phonetic transcriptions
- round brackets ( ) are used for optional components
- curly brackets { } are used to enclose a particular construction being discussed.
Map 1: Vianaau within the Pacific
Map 2: Malo island within Vanuatu
Photographs

Fresh sago palm leaves, *ratalaua*, are looped over struts, stitched, and then dried in the sun for roofing.

An errant pig is returned ‘home’ to Moruhave village from its escape into the bush.
Pigs, especially those with a growing circular tusk, *maranda*, are highly valued, and are kept tethered close to the house.

Bamboo cylinders, *buhuru*, are filled with grated yam and coconut milk, *wewe*, and cooked over an open fire, to make a kind of bush laplap or pudding.
Split bamboo is used to weave different patterns for walls of houses.

Women up in the bush, *aulu*, practise traditional dances; bamboo cylinders, *buhuru*, are used to beat a rhythm on the ground to accompany the singing.
Two senior Avunatari men give a demonstration of manja, traditional fighting sticks.

Elder Sangavulu, one of my valued language informants.
1 Introduction

1.1 Tamambo – an introduction

Tamambo is the predominant dialect of the traditional language of the island of Malo, Vanuatu. An Oceanic language, it is spoken as a first language by over three to four thousand people who live in the western area of Malo and other scattered villages throughout the island, and by Malo people who have settled in the neighbouring island of Santo, and in Port Vila.

The only other dialect of the language, pronounced [tamapo], used to be regarded as ‘the language’ of the Malo people who lived on the south-east and eastern coasts. Nowadays, there are not more than twenty people from age forty-five to seventy plus who would sometimes use the eastern dialect, and the half-dozen eastern speakers with whom I spoke, tend to mix the two dialects. I was told by a chief in a village in the south-east that there are no children growing up in the area who speak anything other than Bislama (Vanuatu Pidgin), although they may understand both Malo dialects. The eastern dialect is differentiated from the western by some phonological, morphological, and lexical differences, but the syntax in the few texts that I collected in the south-east appears the same. Certainly the two dialects are mutually intelligible although young western speakers, who are not familiar with its sound, are surprised by the short articulation of vowels, and the lack of prenasalised stops (see Appendix 1).

The language of Malo now refers principally to the western dialect, as the other dialect appears almost lost. Local speakers of the western dialect call it ‘Tamambo’; people from other islands refer to it as ‘Malo lanwis’ (Malo language).

1.2 The place

Malo is one of the seventy-four populated islands of the Republic of Vanuatu in the south-west Pacific (see Maps 1 and 2). It is one of the northern islands, just south of Vanuatu’s biggest island, Espiritu Santo, and it lies between 15.6 and 15.8 degrees south latitude, and between 167 and 168 degrees longitude east of Greenwich. It is an uplifted coral island, surrounded with fringing coral reefs, and is approximately seventeen kilometres east to west and thirteen kilometres north to south (see Map 3).

Around the coast it is quite flat, and the land goes up in a series of five stepped plateaux to the highest point, Malo Peak, at 326 metres. The coastal area and most of the inland that has not been cleared for plantations are heavily forested with an abundance of tropical tree, bush, and vine varieties. There are some roads across the island, and also a road around the coast. While some people own trucks, access to most places on the island is comparatively easy, though petrol and diesel are expensive. The south-west coast, generally inaccessible by truck during the time of my first visit, became much easier to get to with a new road.
completed in 1997. But lack of upkeep on roads, and continued poor access to vehicle repairs resulted in fewer working trucks by around 2007, as compared to ten years earlier. By contrast, there has been a considerable upsurge in boat buying over the first decade of the 2000s, and many outboards now ply the route between Naone Ban (the closest spot on south Santo) and various places on Malo.

1 When I first spent some months on Malo in May 1994, there were only four or five people with trucks, but by around 2001, there were about twenty, in spite of high petrol costs and little access to parts for repairs.

2 Perhaps because of the increased competition, the one-way ‘fare’ has not gone up in years, and in 2009 was still 200 vatu (about $AUD 2.15)

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**Map 3:** Malo island and boat routes
1.2.1 **Names and history**

The island was not always known as Malo. Dickie (1981) explains the naming as ‘a history of omission and coincidence’ and describes it as follows. On St Bartholomew’s day August 24, in 1606, the explorers Quiros and Torres sighted a large island that they named ‘Isla de Bartholome’ but which is now believed to be part of the present PNG. Later in 1768, the French explorer Bouganville sighted an island (now known as Malo) which he thought was the same as that described by Quiros and Torres. Then just a few years later in 1774, by coincidence again on August 24, Captain James Cook sighted the island seen by Bouganville and also chose the name St Bartholomew’s Island.

So for European explorers, it was first sighted by Bouganville, who thought it had already been discovered by Quiros and Torres, but then it was actually named by Cook. In European terms it stayed St Bartholomew’s Island for about a hundred years, until in 1875, Commander Goodenough of HMS Pearl noted in his journal (Goodenough 1876:334) that ‘a man who speaks English on this side called the place at which we anchor “Malo”.’ This was probably at Amalo in the south, which has a good bay and anchorage. Perhaps the present name of Malo dates from this time, although local people call the island and the people of the island ‘Natamambo’ ([natamambo] or [natamapo]), depending on whether they speak the western or eastern dialect.

1.3 **The people**

1.3.1 **People and population**

One version of the traditional ‘creation’ story of the Natamambo describes how originally there were no people on Malo, but that the Malo people evolved thus: A wild berry vine grew up on a large dragon plum tree at Malo Pass, a very beautiful place on the northern coast, and the berries fell and split the large buttressed roots of the tree into two. On one side a boy grew up and on the other side a girl, until they each were grown up and discovered the other. Wanting to make a home together, they were helped by a lizard that was able to warn them against particular trees or leaves for building materials, by making a sound *takataka*. And so they were able choose materials to build a strong house, and it is said that their descendants, the people of today, make their houses in the same way with the same strong wood for houseposts, the bamboo for the walls and the leaves of the sago palm tree (*ratalaua*) for the roofing.3

Evidence of Lapita culture (Spriggs 1995:116) on the island of Malo dates human settlement to about 1200 BC, with some of the earliest of the Lapita pottery, a sub-style known as ‘Western Lapita’, found there. How much of the ‘whole package of material culture items’ that are thought to go along with Lapita – such as particular shell ornaments and adzes, and the movement out into the Pacific of domesticated plants etc. (Spriggs 1995:116–18) – accompanied the move is not known. However, it is argued that the spread of Oceanic languages was coincident with the spread of Lapita and its successor cultures, and given that Malo is one of the very few sites in Vanuatu with Lapita, it may well have been one of the first sites settled in Vanuatu.

The first European contact with Malo people, after the early explorers, were the whalers who came to the southern part of the island in the first half of the 1800s, bringing gonorrhoea with them (Rannie 1912). Other traders sought sandalwood, bêche-de-mer and later, labour for the sugar plantations in Queensland. As Dickie observes (1984:30), ‘while

3 See Text 1 Takataka, Appendix 2.
the blackbirders were recruiting natives, European missionaries were trying to convert them. The first Presbyterian missionary arrived on Malo in 1887 and set up a mission in the west, while a Marist mission was founded within another two years in the east. At the time of arrival of the first missionaries, there were estimated to be about 3000 Malo dwellers. Miller (1990:40) suggests that this number is thought to be less than when the blackbirders had arrived some years earlier. This population dropped sharply over the following thirty years to a low point of 426 in 1926 as recorded by various missionaries.

This decimation of the population was not unique to Malo; the earliest official statistics as cited in Meresin (1980:247) show that the entire population of Vanuatu was ‘less than 100,000 in 1892, about 65,000 in 1911, 59,000 in 1920 and 45,000 in 1935’. Vanuatu, or the New Hebrides as it then was, was ‘well and truly in danger of dying’ (p.249), decimated by contagious diseases, primarily of ‘measles, influenza, tuberculosis, smallpox, whooping cough, scarlet fever, meningitis and diphtheria, in approximately that order of importance’ (p.245). Added to that was the depopulation on some islands through gonorrhoea, or by recruiting or blackbirding. The social and cultural devastation that resulted can only be guessed at, and one can only wonder at the effect on language change or loss where whole communities lost fifty to eighty percent of their speakers.

However, the population figures from the census in 1989 (Statistics Office, Vanuatu 1991) list 2879 persons for Malo, with forty-five percent of that number being from 0–14 years of age. By the time of the next national census in 1999, the population of Malo was 3548, and by 2009, the Malo population was probably between 4140 and 4280. Additionally there are those who live in town, that is, in Santo or Vila, but own land on Malo, and have strong family ties to it. Most of the people live on the west and south of the island, with numerous small villages in the inland area. A conservative estimate for the number of Tamambo speakers in 2009 would be around 3600. This is based on the population figures for the villages where it is known to be spoken, with a projection in numbers for the increase in population since the last census (as shown above), and also takes into account first-language Tamambo speakers in ‘town’.

1.3.2 People and land

The people live on family land that is passed down patrinely. Where there are land groups having no men, the land passes through a woman and goes to ‘the sister’s son of the last male survivor’ (Rubinstein 1981:310). It is complicated and difficult to acquire other land. Thus one’s traditional land is all-important, and disputes over land and boundaries are relatively frequent, time-consuming, and fraught with emotion. This is not unusual in Melanesia, and Keesing (1981:134) remarks that ‘land rights are a constant issue for horticultural people being particularly true for swidden horticulturalists’ as Malo people are. In the first three-quarters of the 20th century, there were extensive French-owned plantations in the north and east of the island. These were negotiated back to their traditional owners around the time of independence from the previous condominium (joint English and French) government, but the older Malo people whose traditional land was taken for those plantations still had not forgotten or forgiven, in the late 20th century, the often-threatening denial of access (sometimes at gunpoint) to their own land. There are now no French-owned plantations or French settlers remaining on Malo, with the

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4 There are no easily obtainable official records of population figures for that time, so the figures quoted are said to be an ‘informed guess’ (Miller 1990:40).

5 Based on linear and exponential projections.
exception of a few of their descendants, and so the population is essentially one hundred percent Melanesian.

From the 1940s, there was extensive movement from the neighbouring islands of Malakula and Ambrym to settle in the east and south. People from northern Malakula moved in the late 1940s to escape tribal warfare, and with the help of a Seventh Day Adventist Mission, were able to buy land and establish villages inland, such as Amambwaelo and Tanmial, and others in east Malo. In 1951, a sizeable volcanic eruption on Ambrym destroyed villages and the government resettled the people on other islands (Tonkinson 1968). Some of these people went to Malakula and then were later moved on to the south of Malo, where they established villages such as Asanasa.

Given that the population of the south-east and east of the island was already heavily decimated, and that there was this influx of speakers of other languages, the traditional dialect of that area has become restricted to a few very elderly speakers. Most of the people living in the south-east and east speak Bislama, most understand the western dialect and speak it to some degree, and some retain use of languages from their ‘home’ island. With a growing number of marriages between speakers of different language groups in that area, Bislama is strong and strengthening.

1.3.3 Life today

The present day Malo people live in family (patrilocal) villages of varying sizes, depending on the number of married sons in the family. Women marry ‘out’ of their village and traditionally go to live in their husband’s family village. Each nuclear family within the village usually has their own sleeping house, wash-house (for bathing), and separate kitchen. The traditional buildings of woven bamboo walls and thatched roofs are set on the ground, and the village area is shared with the family’s chickens and dogs. Pigs are tied a short distance away from the houses, but close enough for safekeeping. The kitchens are the hub of social activity – if a kitchen door is open, it is acceptable to visit and chat, but sleeping houses are private.

The life of families and the yearly cycle of events revolve very much around the gardens. Peoples’ main gardens are cultivated on traditional land, passed down from father to son, and often are distant from their family villages. For example, many of the people in the Avunatari area in the west have their gardens ‘on top’, that is, on the higher plateaux towards Malo Peak, and a fairly vigorous upward climb of forty minutes or so is required to reach them. Gardens are rotated and swidden horticulture is practised. Women and men work together in the gardens, and at planting time, other friends and family assist, so that all the new gardens for yams can be planted within the appropriate time. Collecting food from the garden throughout the year is mostly left to the women and to teenagers who have not continued to high school, and some men help with this work too.

Many families depend entirely on their gardens for food, supplemented by fish, shellfish and, when they are in season, flying fox, and eli, the marine palolo worms. Some families are able to sell additional coconuts, yams, sweet potato, manioc, taro, island cabbage, bananas, oranges, pawpaw etc., at the markets in Santo. Money earned from such cash-cropping is able to be used to pay for other food, such as Australian white rice, which is consumed in impressive quantities, tea, sugar, and so on. Money is also needed to buy day-to-day items such as clothes or material, torches, batteries, hurricane lamps, bush knives, 

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6 Kava is grown only to a limited extent on Malo because of the climate. The owners of the kava bars on Malo usually buy their kava on the neighbouring ‘big’ island of Santo.
and also to pay for the boat ride to Santo, and children’s school fees. Where they can afford it, families will raise chickens and beef cattle. Pigs are raised for money or gifts such as brideprice, and only used by a family for a feast for a very special occasion such as a family wedding.

Traditionally copra has been produced and sold, but when the world market for copra slumped, many Malo people turned to producing cacao beans. Unfortunately, so did people on many other islands of Vanuatu, and so the price for a labour-intensive cacao crop also dropped as the availability of high-quality fresh beans increased. Growing vanilla beans has been the most recent venture in many gardens, with buyers from Santo demanding a high quality product. From around 2007 onwards, some Malo men have also taken up the offer of seasonal fruit picking in New Zealand to make extra money. Additionally, many families on the island have a son or daughter or brother who has a paying job in town in Santo or in the capital of Vila, and since family ties are strong, it is expected that such family members will contribute towards the family finances.

1.3.4 Schooling, opportunities and language use

Children on the island are able to attend school at primary level from Kindergarten to Year 8. There are several primary schools on the island, all with instruction in English except one that teaches in French. Teachers are appointed to the government-funded schools by the government and are not necessarily locals or local speakers. Teachers at other schools, for example, church-based schools, are employed privately.

During the time of my main fieldwork, in the mid–1990s, children were not normally allowed to talk in Bislama or in their local language at school or in the playground and could be punished for doing so. But following a World Bank report in 1988 on vernacular education, the government of Vanuatu trialled vernacular education for children in Year 1 in twelve schools across Vanuatu in the late 1990s. One was at the local Avunatari primary school, and this program, enthusiastically supported by parents, was continued into 2000. Parents and grandparents were delighted that the thirty or so Year 1 children were being schooled in ‘language’, but there was little in the way of resources, and considerable confusion in the community as to who was responsible for paying for the teacher, where the class was to be housed, and when the transition to English would be made. In addition, some small private community ‘kindakaten’ schools opened over 1998–99 with much enthusiasm but extremely limited resources. These catered for half-day classes in Tamambo for four and five year olds. While some of those did not continue into the 2000s, another was established in the Avunatari area in 2002. These efforts at vernacular education captured the interest and imagination of the local people at the time, but whether such interest can be sustained in the future, with very little money and a dearth of basic resources, only time will tell. Fairly frequent changes of political parties in leadership in government, and the consequent changes in policy regarding support or otherwise for vernacular education within the government school system, are not conducive to a stable continuation of such programs.

Most primary-age children who live relatively close to primary schools attend regularly, but it is not always so easy for children who live ‘on top’, that is, at small villages inland, who have a long way to walk to the closest school. Some of these children may also have

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7 By mid-2007, there had been a considerable return to copra as the world price improved.
8 The extension from Year 6 to Year 8 was made in 2006, with the first Year 8 students sitting the examination required for this year at the end of 2007.
to assist mothers with fetching water every day, sometimes requiring a walk of an hour or so each way, so it is not surprising that attendance at school can be irregular. Additionally, school fees are required, and although these are not high for Kindergarten to Year 6, large families and lack of work can mean considerable difficulty in finding the vatu required, and so some students drop out before even finishing primary school.

In the 1990s, approximately ten per cent of Year 6 Malo students passed the then Year 6 government examination to allow them to proceed to high school, which usually meant no more than three or four children per year from the Avunatari area where I stayed. By the 2000s, this number had increased somewhat, but it remains to be seen what the results will be over the next few years for the new Year 8 government examination (see f.n.8). For Malo children, high school involves boarding school on another island, and visits home only at vacation time if their parents can afford the fare. Such entry into high school is keenly sought by most families for their children, even though it entails considerable extra expense for fees, uniforms and books.

Children who do not go to high school generally work in the family gardens, some may become housegirls for other Malo families, either on the island, or in Santo or Vila, and some may find work in Santo. These children who stay on Malo or with Malo families are the ones most likely to retain their language, as they are in an environment where it is spoken regularly, whereas the children who go on to receive more schooling are removed from regular contact with the language. But then these better-educated children are the ones who find higher paying jobs in town, do extra study abroad, and so on. Interestingly, but unsurprisingly, it is members of this group who are most concerned about language retention in Malo, concerned at the inroads of Bislama, but who are the ones least likely to use Tamambo in their everyday life.

1.3.5 The influence of Bislama

The influence of Bislama on Malo speakers is strong. Not only has much of the east of the island been settled by people from other islands as already described, but intermarriage with them has meant that there is a generation of children in the east who are first language Bislama speakers. In the west, relative ease of access to Santo has meant that many Malo men have married women they have met elsewhere than Malo. When these wives come to live in the patrilocal Malo villages, they are less likely to learn the local language than new wives of say, fifty or sixty years ago, when young girls were ‘bought’ at quite an early age and brought up with the family of the husband-to-be. These present-day, other-island wives have met their husbands talking Bislama, and feel no great need to learn another method of communication for at-home talk, particularly since their ‘in-laws’ are likely to speak at least some Bislama. This means that there are now a few children in the west who are first-language Bislama speakers, although this would still be unusual.

In addition, the centre of social activity, at higher than family village level, is the church, and churches now on Malo use the Bislama Gud Nius Bible and Bislama hymnbooks. The pastor of the Avunatari Presbyterian church has often been preferred as not being local, because the feeling has been that a local would be more concerned with his garden and traditional land than with church affairs. Thus an appointed other-island, other-language pastor would do all his preaching in Bislama, with hymns and most of the public announcements also in Bislama. So all reading, listening and speaking at such influential and social times has been in Bislama. Consequently, to be an active part of the life of the community entails pressure, however unintentional, to be a Bislama speaker and reader.
Virtually any print that adults see on west Malo then, whether notices of the frequent political meetings, church announcements, soccer matches, notices of store openings, etc., are generally only in Bislama, and I know of only one original Tamambo New Testament (1954) that survives in the area.

It is my understanding that people who live in villages ‘on top’, up in the bush, are less likely to go to church on a regular basis, are therefore much less likely to use Bislama. Women I met from such villages spoke only Tamambo, and retain a more traditional way of life than their coastal counterparts. Avunatari (west coast) dwellers have told me too that there is less Bislama spoken in the south-west coastal area, presumably because access in and out by boat or road has been difficult until recently (see fn.1).

However, a resurgence of interest in using the local language was apparent in the late 1990s and into the 2000s. A strong move was initiated in the mid-1990s by some of the older, well-educated men to write new hymns in Tamambo, and produce a revised and enlarged hymnbook, *Vuete Tamambo* (‘Tamambo songs’). This was published in 1999 and made available for sale in 2000, and is now used frequently in the local church. Another project was a Land Rights document in Tamambo, approved by all the chiefs (with translations in Bislama and English), which was ‘in process’ from 1994, and completed in early 2001, with sufficient copies produced for all the chiefs on the island. Together with the local interest in vernacular education, it would seem that some western Malo speakers are demonstrating a substantial commitment to keeping their language strong.

### 1.3.6 Young people’s Tamambo

At Avunatari in the west, where I did my fieldwork and have since regularly visited over the period from 1994 to 2009, the vast percentage of children and teenagers are first-language Tamambo speakers, and use it at home, in the gardens and with their friends playing volleyball and soccer. In spite of six to seven years of schooling at primary school in English⁹ they, just as their parents, rarely speak English and are not confident in understanding it in oral or written form. They do however, often incorporate Bislama terms into their speech, but use them within a Tamambo grammatical framework, even though the Bislama-Tamambo mix of some young people is of concern to some of the older members of the community.

This Tamambo, as spoken by young people, that is, teenagers, those in their early twenties and more particularly primary school age children, is characterised primarily by phonological and lexical differences from that of their older family members.

Phonologically, there is an increasing lack of distinction between the labialised and additionally labialised consonants (see 2.2.1), and the almost universal habit of deletion of word final high vowels by most speakers is being extended to deletion of all vowels word finally by children in fast connected speech (see 2.6.5.2).

Lexically, there are many Tamambo terms that have been overridden by Bislama words. Most common would be the almost complete replacement of familiar address terms for some kin, especially that of Tamambo *mama* ‘dad’ and *voi* ‘mum’ by Bislama *papa* and *mama* respectively (deriving from French influence) (see 6.6.1.2). English numbers have replaced Tamambo ordinal numerals above 11, and the majority of children, schooled in English, do not know the Tamambo numbers above 5 with any degree of assurance (6.2.5.1). Tamambo/Bislama mixes such as *mo flatem* and *mo kilim* creep into children’s

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⁹ The Tamambo vernacular education program described earlier in this chapter had only one intake in the government school.
stories, where the subject pronoun is in ‘language’ and the verb is in Bislama, in place of Tamambo mo losu-a ‘s/he punched/hit him’. See also the use of i gat, rather than noha ‘have’ in 9.2.2.2. Terms for traditional foods and places are not used because of changes in lifestyle and food preparation, so that many young people do not know the different names for different yams, for example, because of the heavy reliance on rice as a staple dish. (See also 5.5.3.2 for another example of lexical loss).

Cultural changes have also meant that the possessive classifiers used for some terms have changed, because clothes, boats, etc., are now bought rather than hand-crafted (7.4.1.3). As well, the previous heavy reliance on pigs as traditional ‘money’ has faded somewhat as many families have increased access to the cash economy, so that the possessive classifier for most animals, bula, is sometimes used by young people with ‘pig’, an animal that traditionally has taken a different classifier (7.4.3.4).

The usage of a particular term mwe to show obligation has been supplanted by the use of the Bislama mas ‘must’ by younger speakers, 4.7.2.2 (examples 60–62), and its disappearance as a complementiser in other than written, formal Tamambo is common nowadays to most speakers (14.3.7). Nevertheless, children and young people generally retain the grammatical patterns of Tamambo and, for example, ‘correctly’ use possessive markers, comitatives, and so on, in sentences with a substantial Bislama lexical content (see, for example, 6.6.1.2, example 169).

1.4 Tamambo within the Oceanic language group

Tamambo is one of the 450 or so languages that can be called Oceanic. The common ancestor for these languages is the Proto Oceanic subgroup. It, in turn, is one of the many subgroups of the Austronesian language family, one of the largest in the world, which stretches from Madagascar to Easter Island (Lynch et al. 2002:1).

**Figure 1:1** Diversification of Austronesian languages
(from Lynch et al. 2002:4)
From Proto Oceanic, the primary subgroups are generally regarded as being the Admiralties family, Western Oceanic, and Central/Eastern Oceanic. Then from Central/Eastern Oceanic, five groupings are recognised:

i) Southeast Solomonic family
ii) Utupua and Vanikoro
iii) Southern Oceanic linkage
iv) Central Pacific linkage
v) Micronesian family (Lynch et al. 2002:108)

The so-called ‘Southern Oceanic linkage’ is regarded as being made up of the Northern Vanuatu linkage and the Nuclear Southern Oceanic linkage. Concerning the former, Lynch and Crowley (2000:20) note that

‘...although the non-Polynesian languages of Vanuatu are all related, there appears to be a clear linguistic break in the north, with the languages of Torres and Banks Islands, Espiritu Santo, Ambae and Maewo, along with the Raga language of North Pentecost, forming a Northern Vanuatu subgroup distinct from the remainder.’

Nuclear Southern Oceanic is regarded as including all the remaining languages further south in Vanuatu, New Caledonia and the Loyalties (Lynch et al. 2002:112). Tamambo, then, is regarded as being within the Northern Vanuatu linkage.

1.5 Previous research

1.5.1 Linguistic research in the area

Previous research into the languages of the area have been of three main types:

i) historical research on the Oceanic subgroup of Austronesian languages
ii) grammars of some of the languages of the area
iii) word lists

The literature on i) is extensive and is only referred to in this description where it is relevant to the Malo data. The grammars and word lists that pertain specifically to Vanuatu are mentioned below in roughly chronological order.

The first major contributor to knowledge of the languages of Melanesia was R.H. Codrington’s *The Melanesian languages* in 1885, which contains grammatical information and short word lists for more than twenty languages of Vanuatu. This work is still a major reference for scholars today. Just a few years later in 1891, R.D. Macdonald published *South Sea languages* in two volumes. The first had, in fact, been published previously in 1889 but was amalgamated into the 1891 volumes. This work contains sketch grammars and word lists of ten languages of the New Hebrides, as Vanuatu was then called, and was prepared by the European missionaries in the various areas. The work of S.H. Ray complemented the work of Codrington, with the publication in 1926 of *A Comparative Study of the Melanesian Island Languages*, including grammatical sketches of seventeen Vanuatu languages. After those major publications, there were sketch grammars published by Ivens of several languages of north-central Vanuatu, such as Lotora (Maewo) in 1940.

One of the most-used and important studies for the Vanuatu area has been *New Hebrides languages: an internal classification* by Tryon (1976), who produced a word list of 292 words from 179 different languages and dialects of Vanuatu. This publication also
includes proposed Proto Oceanic sound correspondences, and lexico-statistical classifications and represented, as it claims, ‘a first systematic attempt to establish a comprehensive language map of the New Hebrides’ (p.5).

From the late 1960s for some years, there were a number of grammars published of Vanuatu\footnote{Called ‘New Hebrides’ at that time.} languages. David Walsh completed a *Phonology and phrase structure of Raxa* in 1966, and then in 1974, Jacques Guy’s *A grammar of the northern dialect of Sakao* was published. This was followed by John Lynch’s 1978 *A grammar of Lenakel*, G.J. Fox’s 1979 *Big Nambas grammar*, Terry Crowley’s 1982 *The Paamese language of Vanuatu*. More recent grammars have been Wolfgang Sperlich’s *Namakir: a description of a central Vanuatu language* in 1992–93, Robert Early’s 1994 *A grammar of Lewo, Vanuatu*, Terry Crowley’s 1998 *An Erromangan (Sye) grammar*, John Lynch’s 2000 *A grammar of Anejom*, Catriona Hyslop’s 2001 *The Lolovoli dialect of the North-East Ambae language, Vanuatu*, and the 2002 Alexandre François work, *Araki, a disappearing language of Vanuatu*. Some of these scholars, especially Lynch and Crowley, have published widely, and have been responsible for the comprehensive listing and assessment of Vanuatu materials in their 2001 publication *Languages of Vanuatu: A new survey and bibliography*. The subsequent 2002 appearance of *The Oceanic languages* (Lynch, Ross and Crowley) has added a number of valuable sketch grammars of many other Vanuatu languages.

But there was a gap of several years prior to 1994, where it was almost impossible for foreigners to obtain permission to do any kind of research in Vanuatu, unless one was affiliated with a Christian organisation such as the Summer Institute of Linguistics. This occurred because the Government of Vanuatu was developing guidelines for foreign research under a new Cultural Research Policy. This came into force in mid–1994, and researchers were allowed in once again from that time.

### 1.5.2 Linguistic documentation on Malo

Linguistic documentation specifically on the language of Malo is restricted to the following:

The first published wordlist of any Tamambo words is in Goodenough (1876:361–362) who endeavoured to collect local words from each of his ports of call. He lists forty-four words, collected from a place he calls ‘Sawann’\footnote{The only place name in the area now that appears a possible candidate for this is Asanavasa, see Map 3.} on the south-west coast on July 30th, 1875, including numbers one to ten, names for parts of the body, fruits, people. Most concur with present day use,\footnote{Three terms do not appear to have recognisable current forms: *lewu* ‘large’ (now *tawera*), *leiama* ‘small’ (now *vorivori*); *bavi* ‘adze’ (adzes no longer used).} allowing for understandable errors, such as *queno* ‘sleep’ being written for present-day *eno* ‘lie down’, *humico* is recorded as ‘mouth’, where *humiku* actually means ‘my beard’, and so on.

The first two small publications in Tamambo, both marked 1890, are by the first missionary to Malo Island, the Reverend John D. Landels, a Scots Presbyterian – *Buk talum*, a small sixteen page primer with an English alphabet (minus letters j, q, x, z), numbers, simple sentences, and four hymns, and *A Maloese book* with New Testament scripture passages and eleven hymns. Macdonald (1891) contains a fifteen-page sketch of ‘Maloese’ (pp.15–30) followed by a short list of ~185 words, obtained from Landels. At the conclusion of the Macdonald volume is a comparative list of approximately 750 words and phrases from seven languages including ‘Maloese’. This sketch grammar briefly lists.
the sounds of the language and then deals primarily with morphology. The phonology differs to some degree to what is proposed in this grammar and these differences are mentioned in 2.2. The morphology, albeit brief, is perceptive and thoughtful, and concurs with what is used today, with one exception that is discussed in 5.2.1.4 of this description. Most of the lexical items listed are also current today, taking into account the differences in orthography and some shifts in meaning, but there are some words with which speakers today are not familiar. This is hardly surprising, given that more than one hundred years have passed and that during that time, the number of speakers was substantially reduced. Syntactic information in the Macdonald volume is limited to the basics of verb phrase and noun phrase structure.

Landels was also responsible for translating a considerable amount of the New Testament; his Gospel according to St Mark was published in 1892 as *Sorae ducuducu non Iesu Kristo Marik mo cacari a*, followed by the combined Gospels of Mark and Luke in 1897, *Bebe sorai ducuducu non Iesu Kristo noda moli socen Marik mei Luk na cacari a*. A *Maloese primer and hymn book* was also published in 1897, with once again, an alphabet, and names for numbers as well as forty-five hymns. His translation of the Gospel according to John, *Bebe sorai ducuducu non Iesu Kristo noda moli socen Jon na cacari a*, was published in 1901, and that of Matthew, *Bebe sorai ducuducu non Iesu Kristo noda moli socen Matiu mo cacari a* in 1906. (See 2.9 re orthography used).

The next Presbyterian missionary to the area, the Rev. D.L. Patterson, was responsible for a second edition of the *Maloese primer and hymn book* in 1906 with some additional hymns, and a third edition in 1916. Patterson also prepared a reprint of selections of the New Testament, *Tuana buk non Niu Testament*, in 1922, from Landels’ work.

A later hymnbook was prepared by the next, and last missionary, the Rev. E.L. Sykes, the *Maloese hymn book of the Presbyterian Church of the New Hebrides* in 1947. While very few copies of this remain, it has been superceded by the revised hymnbook mentioned in 1.3.5. Sykes was also responsible for making a new translation of Genesis, Psalms, Minor Prophets and the New Testament in 1954, named *Sombuei soraetaucia tuai mana soraetaucia caramba moiso duhu*.13 This translation more closely follows the King James version of the Bible, whereas Landels claimed to have translated directly from the Greek. The orthography of the 1954 work is that used by most elderly members in the community, though this is changing (see 2.9.1–2.9.3). However the Sykes’ translation uses many more unusual compound lexical terms than in the Landels’ translations, and many of the terms are puzzling or unknown to today’s speakers.

Miller (1990:101) details that the Rev. Sykes was also responsible for producing several junior catechisms; for example a ‘Shorter catechism with introduction and proof-texts, and Isaiah 53 and 55 in the language of Malo, New Hebrides’, was published in 1953 with the vernacular title of *Vanjavanjiangia cina damiteria mana indarami busoci*. Later, a small primer prepared by Sykes, called *Bembei talomuna*, was published in 1955. This includes an alphabet, reading exercises, and some short prayers and stories for children. Copies of the latter are still in existence and were used to my knowledge in the local school at Avunatari with Kindergarten children around the early to mid-1970s. In fact, several well-educated Malo people who now have overseas tertiary qualifications have told me that they ascribe their later success in education to learning to read in their own language from these little books.

13 Copies of the works prepared/ translated by Landels, Patterson, and Sykes are held in the National Library of Australia, but I am unaware of any that survive on Malo, other than one original copy of the 1954 Sykes’ translation.
There is also a Tamambo–English, English–Tamambo Dictionary (1991) prepared from Sykes’ 1954 work. Since it was collated from the words used in a New Testament translation, there are often ten to twenty English one-word glosses given for Tamambo lexemes. Given that there are no examples of words in phrases or sentences, and the English translations used for Biblical terms are inclined to the archaic, the work is generally forgotten and quite unused on Malo.

Tryon’s New Hebrides languages (1976) includes words from Malo. For the language he lists as Malo North, which is called Tamambo in this study, there are 270 words listed, and for Malo South, which is the eastern dialect that is now almost lost, there are 77 words listed. His word list was a basic and invaluable resource early in my study, as it has been for other researchers working on other Vanuatu languages.

The 243 items in the words and phrases list in Rubinstein (1978) include around twenty to twenty-five terms that are directly concerned with the sumbwe, the pig-killing system associated with chiefs. But by 1996 on Malo, there were only two remaining ‘olfalas’ who had been traditional chiefs, the practice had completely died out and most of the terminology gone with it. People of around forty years of age or less whom I questioned did not know the sumbwe terms. Hence Rubinstein’s list is not only a practical listing of other terminology, but an important historical record of some lexical items that have disappeared with one aspect of the traditional culture.

More recently, a socio-linguistic study by Miriam Meyerhoff of the use of Bislama by Luganville (Santo) and west Malo dwellers was published in 2000. This provides an in-depth analysis of attitudes of first-language Tamambo speakers (and those of women from other islands who have ‘married in’), towards language and language use in the area where I have done most of my fieldwork.

1.5.3 Other research on Malo

The main published research, other than linguistic, that has been carried out on Malo (to my knowledge) encompasses the following.

During the 1960s, John Hedrick (Hedrick 1971; Hedrick & Hedrick 1975) carried out early archeological work on Malo on the Lapita sites. This was followed by extensive anthropological work on the island in the 1970s by Robert Rubinstein; the main body of his work was published in 1978 in his PhD thesis, Placing the self on Malo: An account of the culture of Malo Island, New Hebrides. This is an invaluable resource for understanding the traditional system of the ‘sumbwe’, the process of moving through grades as chief according to ritualised pig ownership and killing. It also details the kinship system, and the processes and problems of land claims. Rubinstein also includes a short word glossary to which I refer in 1.5.2. He has also published later articles including, in 1981, ‘Siblings in Malo Culture’ in Siblingship in Oceania: Studies in the meaning of kin relations.

Also in the 70s, Elizabeth Reed Dickie worked as a researcher in biomedical anthropology, documenting a description and analysis of the history of infant exposure to hepatitis B virus on Malo, published 1984. Her study provides carefully researched

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14 Of these, most concur with my data. Approximately 26 show differences: [p] is used in seven words in the Tryon list where all realisations in the west are [ph] e.g. baru ‘fat’ not paru; ten show a different vowel or lack a vowel where my data show a particular vowel, e.g. toxa ‘stab’ not tohi; the use of β and β with four words is reversed in my data e.g. β’indi = “tail” not flindi (which means ‘leap’); approximately five are incorrect due to misunderstanding or additional morphemes, e.g. dandan is ‘tell a lie’, not ‘lie down’, sale means ‘float’ not ‘flow’.
information about infant care and intra-familial behaviour as well as her bio-medical research.

The work on Lapita sites on the island by Hedrick was followed by that of Anson, who published his Malo research findings in 1986.

Sheila Gowers made a study of trees in many areas of Vanuatu in the 1970s, including Malo, and her work has more recently been incorporated into Wheatley (1992) A guide to the common trees of Vanuatu. Of the twenty-four tree names from Malo that Gowers lists, I have been able to confirm eleven with some minor orthographical changes, one name is incorrect, 15 and the others I have not been able to find. Heinrich Bregulla has also done ornithological research on Malo in his wide-ranging study Birds of Vanuatu published in 1991, and his photographs and detailed descriptions are most useful in putting Tamambo names to particular birds.

In 2001 Matthew Allen, of the Australian National University, completed a Masters Thesis titled ‘Change and continuity: land use and agriculture on Malo island, Vanuatu’. This is a detailed and insightful study of subsistence agriculture on the island, describing the trade patterns and income arising from cash cropping.

1.6 Typological characteristics of Tamambo

The typological characteristics of Tamambo indicate that it is a conservative Oceanic language, sharing many of the same structural characteristics which are widely distributed and frequently recurring among the Oceanic languages, and many of which are posited for Proto Oceanic (henceforth POc). It is a nominative-accusative language, and the unmarked word order of the clause is AVO/SV. The language can be classified as an unmarked declarative language and follows the pattern described by Sadock and Zwicky (1985:165) where ‘in an unmarked declarative language, sentence types other than the declarative will have forms based on the declarative construction’. That is, ‘the word order exhibited by declarative sentences is normally regarded as the basic word order’ (König & Siemund 2007:285).

It is an agglutinating language with considerable derivational morphology. It is primarily head marking, although there is some dependent marking with a small set of noun-like adjectival words, and dependency relations are not always clear-cut with some possessive constructions. Clauses can be formed from verbal predicates, noun phrase predicates, and some prepositional phrase predicates.

Phonologically, Tamambo shares many of the consonants of the reconstructed POc paradigm (Ross 1988:91) including prenasalised voiced stops (see Table 2:3, Chapter 2), and the five-vowel system. Like POc, sequences of unlike vowels are permitted (2.6.4.1) and the syllable structure is primarily (C)V. Basic noun phrase structure is similar to that outlined in Lynch et al. (2002) for POc with the noun as head, preceded by an article (retained only in some syntactic environments in Tamambo), and an optional premodifier such as a quantifier, and followed by an optional modifier and demonstrative.

Lexically, many words in the language are reflexes of words posited for POc. Other characteristics, common to many Oceanic languages, are reflected in Tamambo: they include a subject proclitic on the verb root, marking of inclusive and exclusive distinctions in pronouns, nouns differentiated between personal, common and ‘local’ nouns, and

15 Present-day speakers would prefer *vunjaria* to Gowers’ ‘vunsaria’, *vumatala* to ‘vumatal’, *vumbisu* to ‘vunbisu’ etc. Additionally, the clear mistake is *vuvale*, which is not *Barringtonia asiatica* (‘fish poison tree’) but *Barringtonia edulis*. 
possessive constructions with noun phrases reflecting alienable and inalienable possession. Some particular characteristics of Tamambo are:

i) the widespread and productive use of reduplication, affixation and compounding to derive words of the same and other classes

ii) the use of serial verb constructions for a variety of functions

iii) the use of ‘evidenced’ adjectival words in a prepositional phrase as a nominal attribute or a clausal predicate

iv) the variation in expressing causation

v) the use of relational and location nouns to indicate spatial concepts

vi) an animacy hierarchy, indicated to some extent as kin/proper name —> human —> non-human —> inanimate, which interrelates with possessive constructions, case marking with prepositions, verbal cross referencing with quantifiers, coordination of NPs, and plurality of some NPs.

1.7 Fieldwork and data collection

The fieldwork for this study was conducted in the west of Malo island in northern Vanuatu. I spent six months living in a family village, Moruhave, in the Avunatari area, over various times in 1994–1996 (see Map 3). I also spent some weeks working with Malo speakers in Port Vila, and intermittently with members of my Moruhave ‘family’ and other Malo people as available in Brisbane, Sydney and at my home in Canberra from 1994 to 1997. Over the following years, I have visited the island several times, maintained correspondence by letter and email (in Tamambo) with friends, and most recently, checked some data on Malo and in Port Vila in 2007 and 2009.  

I collected eighty-nine texts in the western dialect and five short texts in the eastern dialect. The eighty-nine Tamambo texts on which this study is primarily based were recorded from forty different speakers, about equal numbers of men and woman and including eleven children. All (with the exception of the three ‘eastern’ speakers) were mono-language or first language Tamambo speakers from various village communities in the west. The youngest speaker from whom I recorded a text was four years old at the time, and the oldest seventy plus. The texts range in size; the shortest is only ten sentences, and the longest many hundreds. The majority of them are single-speaker narrative, and of those, most would be traditional tandono, that is, legends of devils, of animals and birds, which are not actually regarded as true. There are also a number of narratives that are ‘kastom’, custom stories pertaining to Malo in long ago times. These include stories about ancestors, the creation story etc., and unlike tandono, are believed to be true. Stories about ‘kastom’ and the tandono are the easiest to collect, because speakers have heard them and told them many times before, often in ritualised story-telling sessions, and so are less likely to be nervous in the presence of sound recording.

Other texts are expository, describing a process, say, of fishing or cooking, and five are autobiographical, describing the lives of their speakers. The speakers always listened to the sound recordings and often clarified any words that were not clearly audible. There are also four interactional texts, with two+ speakers in conversations.  

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16 Some additional data has subsequently been added, and some corrections made, to the original thesis.

17 A couple of these conversations talked about personal, or some ‘secret’ cultural information. Consequently, although I have used words and some clauses from these conversations in this description, I am not at liberty to include them as texts.
I also collected around two thousand sentences that were entered in my data, both elicited sentences, and many others that I heard or learnt to say in conversation. Included in my data are also references to written text – letters written to me from Tamambo speakers, hymns from the 1947 hymnbook mentioned in 1.5.2, or the new 1999 hymnbook, or from a land tenure document compiled in 2001.

Because I believe that the nature of the data being analysed can often reflect the nature of the language use, I indicate what kind of data is used in the examples in this description. Abbreviations are shown below:

#e. indicates single phrase or sentence, elicited
#c. indicates single phrase or sentence, heard or learnt in conversation
T oral text number in data
N narrative
E expository
D description
C conversation
Wl written form: letter
Wh written form: hymn
Wld written form: land document
k kastom (custom) story
t tandono
ab autobiographical
ch a story made up for children

Thus, Nk-T74: 9, would represent a narrative ‘kastom’ story, entered in my data as Text 74, and the 9th sentence in that text; C-T85:36 represents the 36th sentence in a conversation, entered in my data as Text 85; Wld:3 represents the 3rd sentence in the land document held by all chiefs; #789 represents a single heard, or elicited, sentence. Occasionally, examples may show # with initials; this represents sentences which were learnt or elicited over later years from specific people, and which were not entered in the earlier numbered data.

All texts collected were transcribed with the assistance of speakers other than the narrator. I employed six young west Malo adults, first-language Tamambo speakers (aged approx. 23–35) week about to listen to the tapes with me and assist with the transcription and translation. Communication with them was initially in English, later in Bislama and Tamambo. Once transcribed, the texts (from adults) were checked with the original speakers, where possible, in case of any ambiguity. Later examples to 2009 have been checked with Tamambo speakers in Vila or on Malo, who were visiting Australia, or by letter or email.

1.8 Approach of the grammar

The approach in this grammar is descriptive from a primarily synchronic viewpoint. But like any language, Tamambo is evolving, as it has before and undoubtedly will continue to

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18 All had completed high school, some had some tertiary qualifications, and all spoke English. Some happened to be out of work at that time because of then-current government policy, which meant they were available to be language assistants.

19 Copies of tapes were lodged with the Cultural Centre in Vila, Vanuatu.
do so. Sounds, words, and the use of grammatical forms in a language are hardly immutable here or elsewhere. So with Tamambo, there is the interesting mix of a language conservative in Oceanic terms, surrounded by many similar ‘small’ languages, and brought face to face with rapidly changing political times and a comparatively new ‘official’ language, Bislama, recognised at national level.

In this description, I make reference to historical data where I believe that it is helpful in understanding a present form or the use of a present form. Such references to Proto Oceanic or to other languages are not restricted to one part of the grammar, but are used as relevant to what is being discussed. Similarly, where the influence of modern Bislama impinges on some aspect of how Malo people use Tamambo, I mention it at that point in the grammar.

This grammar makes no claim to be a complete account of the complexities of the language. It aims rather to describe the most important grammatical characteristics of the language over the time of this study, and as analysed through the data collected.
2 Phonology

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the sounds and sound patterning of the language. In 2.2, I describe the consonant phonemes of the predominant dialect Tamambo, from West Malo, and in 2.3, their phonetic realisations. Section 2.4 shows their correspondence to Proto Oceanic phonemes. Section 2.5 details the vowel phonemes and their realisation, and Section 2.6 describes the phonotactics of the language, the syllable structure, stress and phonemic distribution. Following on from this, a description of ‘phonological word’ as it pertains to this language is given in 2.7 and how phonological and grammatical words do or do not coincide. Next in 2.8, I outline the intonation patterns and lastly, the orthography used in this description is explained in 2.9.

2.2 Consonant phonemes

Table 2.1: Consonant phonemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bilabial</th>
<th>Dental-alveolar</th>
<th>Pre-palatal</th>
<th>Velar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stops</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>ɟ</td>
<td>k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b(^w)</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>k</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>m(^w)</td>
<td>s</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasals</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>β(^w)</td>
<td>l</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricatives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral approximant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The main characteristics of the 16 consonant phoneme system are the prenasalisation of the voiced stops, and the contrast between plain and additionally labialised bilabials.

The oppositions that could otherwise be regarded as non-distinctive or suspicious are shown in the following minimal or near-minimal pairs:

- \( b : b\(^w\) \): bara ‘walk on reef’  bwara 1. ‘grey haired’  2. ‘spider’
- \( b: β \): bila ‘break s.t.’  βila ‘lightning’
- \( β: β\(^w\) \): βidi ‘leap over’  β\(^w\)idi ‘tail’
- \( d: t \): dexi ‘carry s.t.’  texi ‘take in a breath’
- \( ã: s \): šavi ‘sharpen s.t.’  savi ‘mash, pound s.t.’
- \( k: x \): kari ‘comb hair’  xari ‘kind of shellfish’
- \( m: m\(^w\) \): mata ‘eye’  m\(^w\)ata ‘snake’
- \( n: ñ \): nadi ‘hit with a stone’  ñadi ‘black ant’
- \( r: l \): rito ‘mosquito wriggler’  lito ‘spit’
For comparison, the consonant phonemes that were listed by Landels in Macdonald (1891:15) that concur with this analysis are:

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{b} & \text{t} & \text{d} & \text{k} \\
\text{m} & \text{n} & \text{ŋ} \\
\text{s} \\
\text{r} \\
\text{l}
\end{array}
\]

Additionally, Landels lists ‘c (hard g), h (Greek X)’, which I suggest is the velar fricative /x/ and its various allophonic realisations (see 2.3.6). He also lists ‘j (ch, j) and z(ts)’, presumably the pre-palatal stop /j/ in this analysis (see also 2.9). Landels queries the status of ‘p’, which I find not in evidence in the western dialect. He does not distinguish between the bilabials and their additionally labialised counterparts, a distinction, in fact, that does not exist in the eastern dialect (see Appendix 1). Nevertheless, the ‘alphabet’ listed in Macdonald more than one hundred years ago is relatively close to what I posit here.

### 2.2.1 Bilabial contrasts

Ladefoged and Maddieson (1996:356) point out that ‘labialization is the most widely found secondary consonantal articulation’ in the world’s languages. They say that it is common in some Australian and Caucasian languages that permit labialisation of a wide range of consonants, ‘including those whose primary place of articulation is labial’. Additional labialisation of this kind also occurs in Tamambo, where a plain bilabial stop, bilabial nasal, and bilabial fricative are further labialised. Ladefoged and Maddieson also note (p.356) that ‘in the great majority of cases where lip rounding is employed as a secondary articulation, there is also an accompanying raising of the back of the tongue, that is, ‘a velarisation gesture’. Nevertheless, they do not use the term ‘velarised labial’ which is sometimes used for such sounds but instead propose ‘the term “simple labialization” to describe instances where lip rounding alone needs to be distinguished’.

I thus describe the three contrastive bilabial consonants in Tamambo as being ‘additionally labialised’. One example of each of the contrasts is already given (2.2), but the following examples of minimal or near-minimal pairs also illustrate intervocalic contrasts where applicable.

Additional justification for additionally labialised consonants being regarded as separate phonemes rather than as CV sequences is shown by stress patterns (2.6.2).

But the distinction between the bilabials and their additionally labialised counterparts appears to be being lost. There are not lots of words that depend on the phonemic distinction word initially, and context often disambiguates less careful pronunciation. Medially, the distinction is phonemic with b /b\text{w}/ and with β /β\text{w}/ in only a few words (see above for some examples). While some older speakers prefer [танум\text{w}e] to [танумe] ‘devil’, and [тоβ\text{w}она] to [тоβона] ‘now’, the second alternative of each is more likely in the speech of people younger than forty. This loss of the additionally labialised phoneme—

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¹ Note that the orthography that Landels used in his 1890 and 1897 publications (see 1.5.2) does not always reflect what is stated in the sketch in Macdonald, especially with regard to fricatives and the pre-palatal stop.
collapsing both phonemes to the bilabial—is a characteristic that has continued, as documented by Riehl (Riehl & Jauncey 2005:256). See also 2.3.6.

Table 2.2: Bilabial contrasts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manner of articulation</th>
<th>Bilabials</th>
<th>Additionally labialised bilabials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stops</td>
<td>batu</td>
<td>b̃atu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sobe</td>
<td>sob̃e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>suba</td>
<td>sub̃e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>piece of s.t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>chief, become chief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasals</td>
<td>mala</td>
<td>m̃ala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>melo</td>
<td>m̃ele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>naked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>cycad palm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricatives</td>
<td>̃βae</td>
<td>̃β̃ae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>̃raβe</td>
<td>̃raβ̃e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>̃soβa</td>
<td>̃soβ̃a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>kind of red shellfish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>hermaphrodite pig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>pawpaw</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the dialect of east Malo, there is no additional labialisation, so that ‘snake’ and ‘eye’ are both [mata], ‘tail’ and ‘leap over’ both [βidi] and so on. But in the west of the island, I have heard even children correct what are obvious errors to them, as with /mata/ ‘eye’ and /m̃ata/ ‘snake’.

2.3 Phonetic realisation of consonants

2.3.1 Stops and prenasalisation

There are six stops, four of which are prenasalised in the western dialect.

I analyse these phonetic sequences of [mb], [mbw], [nd] and [ñd̃] as single phonemes rather than as consonant clusters. Borrowings and Bislama words with non-prenasalised voiced stops are given a prenasalised articulation in Tamambo, as in

Bislama bae ‘future marker’—> [mbae] (Tamambo speaker)
English ‘soap’—> soap-soap —> [sombusombu] ‘wash clothes’
(borrowing into Tamambo)

In connected speech, all the voiced stops are strongly prenasalised both word initially and medially. In citation form, word-initial /b/ and /bw/ are always nasalised as [mb] and [mbw] either slightly or strongly, but word initial /d/ or /ɟ/ are only slightly prenasalised as [nd] and [ñd̃] or not prenasalised at all. For example, /domdomi/ ‘think about’ is [domdomi] in citation form. But in connected speech, the nasalisation is always clearly articulated, as follows:

(1) /dodo, ku domdomi-ra/  [ndo d̃o d̃o nd̃o m̃o d̃o m̃i r̃a]
   night 1SG think-O:3PL
   ‘At night time, I think about them.’

2.3.2 Bilabial stops

The two voiced bilabial stops, /b/ and /bw/ have already been discussed above as far as their labialisation is concerned. Although voicing is not distinctive at this place of
articulation, the voicing is quite pronounced and the voiceless stop is not used as an alternate.

2.3.3 Dental-alveolar stops

/d/ and /t/ are phonemically contrastive, both word initially, as shown above in 2.2, and also word medially:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Phonemic Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>maduru ‘broken’</td>
<td>maturu ‘sleep’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>madi 1. ‘just’ 2. ‘calf of leg’</td>
<td>mati ‘low tide’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>redi ‘ankle’</td>
<td>reti ‘complain’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both phonemes are pronounced with an apico-alveolar place of articulation although there is a range to apico-dental. Occasionally, older speakers articulate the prenasalised voiced stop with a slight [r] off-glide, so that a word like /doβo/ ‘rotten’ is pronounced as [ndrβo] where /d/ → [ndr] /# optionally.

The phoneme /t/ is a voiceless aspirated stop [tʰ], but the aspiration is neither strong nor phonemically distinctive.

2.3.4 Prepalatal and velar stops

There are two further stops, /ɟ/ and /k/. /ɟ/ is a prenasalised laminal pre-palatal (laminal post-alveolar) stop. Voicing in this place of articulation is not distinctive, and this stop is often realised as voiceless. The release of this stop is very frequently affricated, so that its articulation word initially in citation form can be [ʤ] or [ʧ]. Intervocally in fast connected speech it is always prenasalised, usually as [nʤ] but sometimes as [nʧ].

Ladefoged and Maddieson (1996:31) remark that ‘the actual area of contact in sounds of this type may vary over a wide range, so that it is often hard to decide whether a given sound should be classified a palato-alveolar or a palatal’. In fact, this stop is articulated in Tamambo further forward than a palatal, and could more accurately be described by Ladefoged’s and Maddieson’s (pp. 40–41) terminology and representation as a laminal post-alveolar /d/.

The remaining stop is velar /k/; this is realised as voiceless aspirated [kʰ] in all environments.

2.3.5 Nasals

There are four nasals in three places of articulation. Bilabial /m/ contrasts with /mʷ/, as described in 2.2.1, although /mʷ/ is not common. Alveolar /n/ and a velar /ŋ/ are invariant in their allophonic realisations.

Interestingly, many ŋ-initial words describe sounds, such as /ŋara/ ‘cry’, /ŋaruguruta/ ‘crunch’, /ŋora/ ‘snore’, /ŋiri/ ‘buzz’, /ŋuruŋuru/ ‘grunt like a pig’, /ŋutuŋutu/ ‘hum’.

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2 Ladefoged and Maddieson (1996:90) comment that ‘the palato-alveolar affricate ŋ occurs in approximately 45 percent of the world’s languages’. This realisation is now noted as common in the speech of a group of young Malo adults living in town (see Riehl and Jauncey 2005).
2.3.6 Fricatives

There are four fricative consonants. Bilabials /β/ and /βw/, as shown earlier in Table 2:2, are contrastive word initially and, in a very few words, word medially. Otherwise, the two bilabial fricatives often appear in free variation in medial position. With younger speakers (< 40–45), fricative /β/ is often realised as [v] as in:

/βebe/ —> [vɛmbɛ] ‘butterfly’

Occasionally children and teenagers use [φ] or even [f] as an allophone of /β/ as in:

/βaβine/ —> [φaβine] or [favine] ‘woman’, where initial devoicing in both contrasts with /β/ and place of articulation further contrasts with the use of [f].

But /βw/ is realised by most speakers as glide [w] intervocically, and by a growing number of speakers as [w] in all environments.

Alveolar fricative /s/ is widely distributed, both word initially before all vowels and intervocically. There is no apparent allophonic variation in the different environments.

Velar fricative /x/ is realised as follows:

/x/ —> [ɣ] /V_ + stress

—> [x] elsewhere.

e.g. /aβuxo/ —> [aβúyo] ‘tomorrow’
/reuxi/ —> [reúyi] ‘moisten’
/xaraxa/ —> [xarâya] ‘crawl’
/xaoraxi/ —> [xaorâyi] ‘feel cold’

but
/xabe/ —> [xámbe] ‘cut into pieces’
/βonoxaxa/ —> [βonoxâya] ‘thick’

While these allophonic realisations are fairly standard, especially with older less ‘urban’ speakers, there is a range of other realisations that appear, impressionistically, based on gender, age and education.

i) Elderly male speakers articulate /x/ intervocically in the range of the velar [ɣ] through to uvular [ʁ], for example:

/saxasaxa/ —> [sáyasâya] or [sásasâka] ‘work’
/ríxi/ —> [ríyi] or [ríxi] ‘be insufficient’

ii) But many speakers, especially women, young adults and/or some of the more mobile3 speakers articulate /x/ as [x] ~ [h] word initially or following an unstressed vowel:

3 I use ‘mobile’ in the sense of being able to travel and spend regular time out of Malo for education or work, rather than just being able to go to Santo (~45 minutes by boat) to trade at the markets. This use of [x] or [h] with such speakers may be as result of more frequent use of Bislama or English, but this is speculation only.
/xariβi/ —> [xariβi] or [harivi] ‘rat’
/xaba/ —> [xάmba] or [hάmba] ‘wing’
/βonoxaxa/ —> [βonoxáya] or [βonoháya] ‘thick’

And this realisation of /x/ as [x] ~[h] is also extended to use between back vowels where the first of those vowels is stressed (i.e. ú-u, ó-o or ú-o)⁴, an environment where more traditional speakers would use [ɣ]. For example:

/duxu/ —> [“dúxu] or [“dúhu] ‘good’
/toxo/ —> [tóxo] or [tóho] ‘fast’
/αβuxo/ —> [aβúxο] or [aβúhο] ‘tomorrow’
/asetoxo/ —> [asətόxo] or [asətόho] ‘day after tomorrow’

Otherwise, and as previously described for older or more traditional speakers:

/x/ —> [ɣ] /V– +stress as in:

/saxasaxa/ —> [sáɣasáya] ‘work’
/soxe/ —> [sόɣe] ‘push up’
/reuxi/ —> [reúɣi] ‘moisten s.t.’
/nixo/ —> [níɣo] IP:2SG (‘you’)’
/rixi/ —> [rίɣi] ‘be insufficient’

iii) Children and many of the younger ‘less-mobile’ speakers similarly use [x] or [h] in the same environments as the speakers described in ii). However, by contrast, these younger ‘stay at home’ speakers often use the voiced stop [g] where the speakers described in ii) use [ɣ]. This use of [g] seems to be a growing pattern, as evidenced in my visits over many years. For example:

/duxu/ —> [“dúxu] or [“dúhu] ‘good’
/xaraba/ —> [xarάmba] or [harάmba] ‘new’

but

/saxasaxa/ —> [sáɣasága] ‘work’
/soxe/ —> [sόɣe] ‘push up’
/reuxi/ —> [reúɣi] ‘moisten s.t.’
/nixo/ —> [níɣo] ‘you’ (2SG)

iv) Some young, well-educated speakers, especially women, articulate /x/ as follows:

/x/ —> [h] in all environments, as in

/βonoxaxa/ —> [βonohάha] or [vnonohάha] ‘thick’

v) Just occasionally, I have heard a child, or a wife who has married ‘in’,⁵ use

---

⁴ An environment of ó-u is not attested for /x/.
⁵ Women, including those from other islands, traditionally move to their husband’s patrilocal village on marriage (see 1.3.3).
This pronunciation of phoneme /x/ as [kh] following a stressed syllable seems less acceptable to ‘traditional’ speakers, and is usually corrected. So although several allophonic realisations are tolerated in this environment, one that combines both voiceless and stop features is unacceptable.

### 2.3.7 Trills and approximants

Phoneme /r/ is mostly realised as a voiced alveolar trill. However, word initially, it can be either a trill or an alveolar tap with no change in phonemic status.

/r/ $\rightarrow$ [ɾ] V–

Approximant /l/ is realised as a voiced apico-alveolar lateral [l] in all environments.

### 2.4 Consonant phonemes in Proto Oceanic and correspondences

There appears to be a strong correspondence between the consonant phonemes of present-day Tamambo, and those posited for Proto Oceanic (POc), as tabled in Lynch et al. (2002:63), based on Ross (1988) with the addition of p$^w$ (Ross 1998a). This is shown in the following table of correspondences.

The voiced stops in POc are posited as being prenasalised although the prenasalisation is not shown in their phonemic representation as listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POc</th>
<th>Tamambo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>p</strong></td>
<td>*papine ‘woman’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p$^w$</td>
<td>*pwilak ‘lightning’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>b</strong></td>
<td>*boni ‘night’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b$^w$</td>
<td>*b$^w$era ‘banana type’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>t</strong></td>
<td>*topu ‘sugarcane’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>d</strong></td>
<td>*-da P:1EP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>c</strong></td>
<td>*taci ‘younger sibling’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>j</strong></td>
<td>*laje ‘branching coral’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>k</strong></td>
<td>*kamami D:1EP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>g</strong></td>
<td>*waga ‘canoe’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>q</strong></td>
<td>*qase ‘chin, jaw’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m$^w$</td>
<td>*mwata ‘snake’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>m</strong></td>
<td>*maquri ‘be alive’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
<td>*nopu ‘stonefish’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>β</td>
<td>βαβine ‘woman’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>β</td>
<td>βίλα ‘lightning’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>boνi ‘day’, ‘time’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b$^w$</td>
<td>b$^w$exa ‘banana type’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>toβu ‘sugarcane’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>-da P:1PL.E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>tasi ‘younger brother’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ɂ</td>
<td>la̱jɛlaje ‘coral’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>kamam ɁP:1PL.E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>xani ‘eat’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>aka ‘canoe’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>buaxa ‘deep’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>ase ‘chin’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x</td>
<td>raxa ‘branch of breadfruit tree’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m$^w$</td>
<td>m$^w$ata ‘snake’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>mauru ‘be alive’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>noβu ‘stonefish’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lynch et al (2002:64) posit *q as ‘probably a glottal stop … with uvular stop reflexes in some languages’, and POc *r most likely ‘a uvular trill’. The following mergers and changes appear to have occurred:

**Mergers:**

* n, *ñ —> n  
* c, *s —> s  
* dr, *r, *r —> r (see also 2.3.3 for *dr)

**Changes:**

i) No POc final consonants have been preserved in Tamambo, so that, for example,

POc *tasik ‘sea’ —> Tamambo /tasi/ ‘sea’ (old word)  
POc *sa(-ñ)-puluq ‘ten’ —> Tamambo /saβulu/ ‘ten’  
POc *niur ‘coconut’ —> Tamambo /niu/ ‘coconut’  
POc *pulan ‘moon’ —> Tamambo /βula/ ‘moon’

ii) *p —>  β

This change is almost uniform in all environments, but there are just two exceptions in my data where instead, *p —> b (*patu —> batu ‘stone’; *pitu —> abitu ‘seven’). Given that the phonological conditioning is the same for many other words where *p —> β, I do not know why these should be exceptions.

iii) *g —> k

Examples for comparison are limited, and there is no apparent difference in phonological conditioning to show why both the voiceless velar stop /k/ and the voiceless velar fricative /x/ should have derived from the same environment (a–a). But note that [g] is now reappearing as an allophone of /x/ in younger people’s speech (see 2.3.6).

---

6 The change from POc *p to voiced fricatives [v], [β] is extremely common in many languages of Oceania. See Ross 1988 (esp. pp. 48–61) for description, examples and explanation.
iv) \*q \rightarrow x /V–V
   \( +\text{low}+\text{low} \)
   \( \rightarrow \emptyset /\text{elsewhere} \)

By far the most common change is to zero as shown in many lexical forms.

v) \*w \rightarrow \beta^w /V–V
   \( \rightarrow \emptyset /\# – \)

Other environments have not been sighted.

vi) \*k \rightarrow k /\# –
   \(-\text{stress} \)
   \( \rightarrow x /\text{elsewhere} \)

Many Tamambo examples illustrate this last change of \*k \rightarrow x.

**Some problems**

There are three other correspondences which each have exceptions known to me. Firstly, \*b \rightarrow Tamambo /b/, as shown in Table 2.3, and this is also reflected medially as in \*siba ‘cut’ Tamambo /siba/ ‘cut’. However, there is one POc example \*(s,j)obu ‘descend, dive’ that has a reflex in Tamambo as /joβi/ ‘descend, fall down’. This suggests that perhaps \*b \rightarrow /β/ intervocalically after a back vowel, but I have no further correspondences of this type to compare.

Secondly, \*r has merged with \*r and \*dr to /r/ in Tamambo, as illustrated in many correspondences. But although \*suri ‘follow’ \( \rightarrow \) suri ‘follow’, yet \* suiri ‘bone’ \( \rightarrow \) sui ‘bone’. Since \*R \rightarrow r in all other examples in my data, I suggest that the further weakening may have been motivated by the addition of possessive pronominals usually suffixed to ‘body part’ nouns (e.g. sui-ku ‘my bones’) and the resultant change to the primary stress pattern.7

Lastly, whilst \*s \rightarrow s and \*j \rightarrow j in Tamambo, as can be found in many examples, there are only two Tamambo words attested where \*s \rightarrow j.

\*sibo ‘down below, go down’ \( \rightarrow \) jįβo ‘go down’
\*(s,j)obu ‘descend, dive’ \( \rightarrow \) joβi ‘descend, fall down’

This is suggested as a secondary change, possibly resulting from an earlier merger of a nasal with pre-POc \*s.8 As noted in Lynch et al (2002:65), where homorganic nasal and obstruent sequences occurred word-initially, ‘they were the outcome of a pre-POc

---

7 The irregular developments of Proto (Eastern) Oceanic \*R in Vanuatu and elsewhere are discussed by Geraghty in Davidson (1990).

8 Proto Austronesian (PAN) is thought to have a palatal (ŋ)j and alveolar (n)s, (n)c, (n)z, (n)Z. These then are thought to have developed as PAN (ŋ)j \( \rightarrow \) POc c/[j]. But additionally PAN (n)s, (n)c, (n)z, (n)Z \( \rightarrow \) PEMP (Proto-Eastern Malayo-Polynesian) (n)s, (n)z \( \rightarrow \) (Pre-POc (n)s \( \rightarrow \) POc s/j (Ross 1989:438). The history of these Proto-Malayo-Polynesian and Proto-Oceanic ‘palatals’ as they have come to be known, and their correspondences in present-day languages has enjoyed considerable attention from many scholars, e.g. Dempwoolf (1936), Dyen (1947,1951), Milke (1968) all cited in Ross (1989), also Grace (1969), Blust (1978), Ross (1988). For a full overview, see Ross (1989).
innovation which is unpredictable and whose cause(s) is unknown’. Alternately, the variation could be as the result of some sort of earlier morphological conditioning.

The generalisation can be made that all POc phonemes have a present day realisation in Tamambo of either:

- an unchanged direct phonemic correspondence as shown in Table 2.3
- a merger with other phonemes to realise one only of the original phonemes, or
- a changed phoneme which has derived in most circumstances from weakening, in some cases to zero.

2.5 Vowel phonemes

There are five vowel phonemes as shown:

Table 2.4: Vowel Phonemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are no long vowels. The same five vowels are posited for POc as listed in Ross (1988:29), and again in Lynch et al. (2002:65). A distinction is made here in some environments between vowels that are:

- or - high, + or - front, + or - back, so that

+ high: /i/ /u/ - high: /e/ /o/ /a/
+ front: /i/ /e/ - front: /u/ /o/ /a/
+ back: /u/ /o/ - back: /i/ /e/ /a/

2.5.1 Phonetic realisation of vowels

The phonetic realisation of vowels is dependent on their occurrence singly, or within sequences of non-identical vowels. Where they occur within vowel sequences, the placement of stress can affect their realisation. The rules governing stress occurrence are given in more detail in 2.6.2, but stress as it affects allophonic realisation of particular vowels is shown here. Since stress rules operate with regard to the syllable (2.6.1), syllable boundaries are shown here, where relevant, by a full stop.

With high vowels, some realisations are made as glides [j] and [y]. However, since these realisations occur in very restricted environments, separate phonemes are not established for those particular phones. This is different from some other Oceanic languages such as Paamese (Crowley 1982:16) and Boumaa Fijian (Dixon 1988:12) where such glides are established as separate phonemes.

All attested two, three, and four vowel sequences are listed in 2.6.4.1. The allophonic realisations shown below apply equally to those sequences.
2.5.1.1 High front vowel /i/

This high front unrounded vowel is usually realised as the cardinal vowel [i], except before some nasals or prenasalised stops where it can be realised as the more open [ɪ]. For example:

/rɪxi/ —> [ɾi̯βi] ‘insufficient’
/jingo/ —> [ʃɪŋo] ‘mouth’
/siba/ —> [simba] ‘knife’

But where there are two-vowel sequences, the following applies:

/i/ —> front glide [j] /–V
-stress -front

/ia/ —> [já] /niala/ —> [njá.la] ‘that’
/iau/ —> [já.u] ‘I’
/iu/ —> [jú] /mo tiu-ra/ —> [mo.tjú.ra] ‘s/he leaves them’

However, in the same sequence of vowels, /i/ is realised as [i] when stressed:

/ia/ —> [iá] /nia/ —> [ní.a] ‘s/he, it’
/io/ —> [iò] /mo tio/ —> [mo.tí.o] ‘s/he jumps’
/iu/ —> [íu] /mo tiu/ —> [mo.tí.u] ‘s/he leaves’

(The sequence of ie occurs only in aie as below.) Where there is a sequence of three or more vowels, the following additionally applies:

/i/ —> front glide [j] /–V
-high

/oí/ —> [oí] /mo boi-a/ —> [mo.mbój.a] ‘s/he likes it’

See also 2.6.4.1 for other multi-vowel combinations with examples of /ei/, /oi/ and /ai/.

2.5.1.2 High back vowel /u/

Vowel /u/ is high, back and always rounded. It is realised as cardinal [u] except before nasals, and prenasalised stops, where it is realised as follows:

/u/ —> [u] /– N as in:

/lumlum/ [lumlum] ‘moss’
/bubu/ [ˈbʊmbu] familiar term for maternal grandparent

In vowel sequences, the following applies:
/u/ —> [w] / _V
-stress  -back

/uá/ —> [wá] /buaxa/ —> ["bwá.xa] ‘deep’

But the same vowel sequences generate a different allophonic realisation where /u/ is stressed, as shown:

/uí/ —> [uí] /eβuí/ [eβú.i] ‘complete s.t.’
/uá/ —> [úa] /bua/ ["bú.a] ‘deep water’

There is a further environment of a three-vowel sequence in which /u/ can be realised as [w]:

/u/ —> [w] / V-
+stress, -front

/ou/ —> [ow] /mo kou-a/ [mo.kó w.a] ‘he looked after it’

A three-vowel sequence such as /aúí/ or /aúa/ can be realised as follows, depending on whether it is in citation form (CF) or fast connected speech (CS):

/daui/ —> [da.ú.i] (CF) ~ ["dáw-i] (CS) ‘coconut crab’
/ratalaua/ —> [ra.ta.la.ú.a] (CF) ~ [ra.ta.láw.a] (CS) ‘sago palm leaves’

See also 2.6.4.1 for other examples of /au/ and /ou/ sequences.

2.5.1.3 Mid-front vowel /e/
Vowel /e/ is a mid-front closed vowel. It is close to cardinal vowel [e] but with a slightly more open quality. It is realised in that form except before nasals or prenasalised stops where it is realised as [ɛ].

/sareŋreŋ/ —> [sareŋreŋ] ‘shiny’
/xəŋa/ —> [xəŋa] ‘blue/green’
/βebe/ —> [βembe] ‘butterfly’
but /atea/ —> [atea] ‘one’

2.5.1.4 Mid-back vowel /o/
Vowel /o/ is a closed mid-back vowel, and usually is realised as cardinal [o]. It can be realised with a more open articulation as [ɒ] before stops and nasals.

/dodole/ —> ["dondole] ‘throat’
/lokolokoa/ —> [lokolokoa] ‘laziness’
/bonji/ —> ["bonji] ‘day’
2.5.1.5 Low vowel /a/

This vowel is open and low and has the same realisation as cardinal [a]. It is invariant in its realisation and does not extend to a higher phonetic realisation such as [æ].

2.6 Phonotactics

2.6.1 Syllable structure

Syllable structure and the stress rules that arise from that structure are shown here through the division of the syllable into its onset and the rest of the syllable which is called the rhyme, following Lass (1984) and Durand (1990). Durand (p.200) states that ‘the rhyme should itself be split into a nucleus and coda’.

In this language, the nucleus of the rhyme is the only obligatory slot in the syllable structure and the nucleus is always a vowel. The onset, where filled, is always a consonant, and any consonant can function in that slot. The coda, where filled, is always a nasal consonant (N). A ‘rhyme’ that branches and has a coda is regarded as a closed syllable; a rhyme that does not branch and has no coda is regarded as an open syllable. This is regardless of whether the onset is filled or not. In this language, the only possibility for a closed syllable is by the existence of a N-filled coda. But the pattern of such closed syllables in Tamambo is changing with the growing deletion of high vowels in reduplication, and the deletion of word-final high vowels, and even non-high vowels, by young speakers in many environments (see 2.6.5.2).

Vowel sequences are not analysed here as diphthongs because of the constraints in reduplication rules. In reduplication, a vowel sequence such as au or ai can be ‘split’, as in:

- xinau —> xina~xinau ‘thing’—> ‘things’
- βosai —> βosa~βosai ‘pleasant, nice’—> ‘extremely nice’

If these vowel sequences were diphthongs, they could not be ‘split’. Thus each vowel is analysed here as constituting a separate nucleus. See also 2.6.1.1 re reduplication. The structure yields canonical syllables of:

CV V VN CVN

as in /a.en/ ‘really’, /lum.lum/ ‘moss’, /ma.i/ ‘come’, /ra.su/ ‘scoop out’, /u.a/ ‘high tide’, where a syllable boundary is indicated by a full stop. The vast majority of syllables in the language are open syllables of CV structure.

---

9 This is the same terminology and pattern as used by Lass 1984, except that Lass (p.252) uses the term ‘peak’ where Durand uses ‘nucleus’.
2.6.1.1 Reduplication of syllables

With reduplication, a maximum of two syllables can be reduplicated.10 (A tilde here represents a reduplication boundary.) Two syllable words are unproblematic, because the full word reduplicates:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ma.i} & \quad \text{‘come’} \rightarrow \text{ma.i~ma.i} \quad \text{‘come in quantity’} \\
\text{du.xu} & \quad \text{‘good’} \rightarrow \text{du.xu~du.xu} \quad \text{‘wonderful’}
\end{align*}
\]

But with words of more than two syllables, a maximum of two syllables can reduplicate, prefixing (leftwards) with only the first two syllables:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ta.xa.si} & \quad \text{‘stone’} \quad \rightarrow \text{ta.xa~ta.xa.si} \quad \text{‘stones’} \\
\text{xi.na.u} & \quad \text{‘something’} \quad \rightarrow \text{xi.na~xi.na.u} \quad \text{‘things’} \\
\text{e.βu.i} & \quad \text{‘finish s.t.’} \quad \rightarrow \text{e.βu~e.βu.i} \quad \text{‘finish everything’} \\
\text{βo.sa.i} & \quad \text{‘perfect’} \quad \rightarrow \text{βo.sa~βo.sa.i} \quad \text{‘perfectly’}
\end{align*}
\]

A two-syllable reduplication boundary is the boundary of a phonological word (2.7) and this is reflected in stress patterns as shown below.

2.6.2 Stress

There is one primary stress per phonological word (see 2.7) and stress rules operate with reference to the syllable. A final syllable receives primary stress if it is a closed syllable; if the final syllable is an open syllable, the primary stress falls on the penultimate syllable, that is, stress falls on the last vowel that is followed by a consonant.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ma.la.lúm} & \quad \text{(closed last syllable)} \quad \text{‘soft’} \\
\text{má.la} & \quad \text{(open last syllable)} \quad \text{‘hawk’}
\end{align*}
\]

This stress pattern provides additional evidence for additionally labialised consonants being regarded as phonemes rather than CV sequences. For example:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{só.be} & \quad \text{‘follow’} \quad \rightarrow \text{só.b^w} \quad \text{‘piece of s.t.’} \\
\text{rá.βe} & \quad \text{‘push out with force’} \quad \rightarrow \text{rá.β^w} \quad \text{‘intersex pig’}
\end{align*}
\]

If /b^w/, for example, was analysed as /bu/, then the stress would fall on /u/ as in:

\[
\text{*so.bú.e}, \quad \text{which is not acceptable.}
\]

The stress pattern in the language is similar to many Oceanic languages where primary stress most commonly falls on the penultimate syllable. Where additional syllables are added to a word through affixation or cliticisation, the stress moves to accommodate this and the rules above still apply:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{βi.ti} & \quad \text{‘tell’} \quad \rightarrow \text{βi.ti.a} \quad \text{‘tell him/her/it’} \\
\text{lú.a} & \quad \text{‘vomit’} \quad \rightarrow \text{lu.á.si} \quad \text{‘vomit on s.t.’}
\end{align*}
\]

---

10 Reduplication of only one syllable is very unusual (see 5.4.4.2 and 5.4.4.3).
Light secondary stress falls on the second syllable preceding the penultimate syllable where a phonological word is more than three syllables. Additional syllables are often generated through affixation, such as two affixes on the following:

/βo-tabaluxi-ra/  βo.ta.bá.lu.xi.ra ‘their wives’
FEM-wife-P:3PL

or three affixes on the following:

/na-βo-natu-na/  na.βò.na.tú.na  ‘his/her daughters’
PL-FEM-child-P:3SG

Where additional syllables are generated through reduplication, the stress applies to each phonological word, that is, each phonological word receives primary stress on the penultimate syllable unless there is a closed syllable, which will then receive stress.

βá.no ‘go’  βá.no~βá.no ‘walk’
xá.ni  ‘eat’  xán~xa.ní.a  ‘feast’

Inherently reduplicated form:  lúm~lúm  ‘moss’

If the word is three syllables in its simple form, the stress will follow the same penultimate pattern, but because only two syllables can reduplicate, the stress falls on a different nucleus in the reduplication.

xi.ná.u  ‘something’  xí.na~xi.ná.u  ‘things’
e.βú.i  ‘finish s.t.’  é.βú~é.βú.i  ‘finish everything’
a.tó.lu  ‘three’  a.tó.lu~to.lú.xi  ‘three by three’

The stress pattern also applies to borrowings into the language from English or Bislama, and their reduplications. For example, from Bislama wokbaot ‘walk’ a Tamambo verb is derived where both the simple form and the reduplicated form follow the stress rules of the language with penultimate stress in each phonological word:

ba.ó.ti  ‘walk about’  bá.o~ba.ó.ti  ‘continue to walk around’

Compounded lexical forms have the same stress patterns as reduplications, that is, as separate phonological words. Where there is a four-syllable structure, the stress pattern can often be initially indistinguishable from a single multi-syllable phonological word, in that stress appears on the penultimate, and then again on the second syllable from the penultimate:

bá.tu-di.ra  ‘naughty’ (lit. head-strong)
ré.ti-dú.xu  ‘truthful’ (lit. talk-good)

But in fact this is primary stress on the penultimate syllable of each of two phonological words. Where the structure is five syllables, then the pattern is more distinct. In fact, the
stress pattern is often an indication that a word is a compounded form, even though the meaning is no longer compositional.

má.ta-ta.ú.xi ‘choose’ (lit. eye-grab)
ló.lo-ji.βó.a ‘patience’
βí.ri-sa.ru.xi ‘baked root crops’

If these were single phonological words, perhaps with one or more affixes, such as na.βò.na.tú.na ‘his daughters’, the primary stress would fall on the penultimate, but then there would be secondary stress on the second syllable preceding the penultimate, as described earlier. But if this stress pattern is followed with forms with more than one phonological word, the primary stress remains the same, but secondary stress on the second syllable preceding the penultimate would result in a pattern, for example, as:

*ma.tà-ta.ú.xi, which is unacceptable.

2.6.3 Distribution of consonants

All but the additionally labialised consonants can occur word initially before any of the vowels. The additionally labialised consonants are not attested as occurring before /u/, and only /βw/ can occur before /o/. Given that the distinction appears to be being lost between the simple and additionally labialised consonants for many words (2.2.1) it is possible that /bw/ and /mw/ previously could occur in more environments than present data show.

Approximately 88.4% of all words in my data begin with consonants, and the remaining 11.6% (approximately) begin with vowels. Percentages for occurrence as initial consonants are given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consonant</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/t/</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/β/</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/m/</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/b/</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/βw/</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/s/</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/l/</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/r/</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/d/</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/k/</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/j/</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/n/</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/bw/</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/η/</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/m/</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The additionally labialised consonants and two of the nasals are the least likely to begin a word. Consonant clusters are not allowed within a phonological word, with only two exceptions noted in the data, aiente ‘some’ and an interjection aente ‘no idea’/‘I don’t know’.

Co-occurrence of initial consonants with other consonants within the same word is shown in the following table:

---

11 I have excluded from the count the many dozens of tree names that all begin with the ‘tree’ prefix /βu/.

12 It is possible that aiente is a compound of aien ‘here’ + indefinite article te ‘some’. Interjection aente is possibly a compound of interjection aen ‘really!’ and discourse marker te ‘eh’.
### Table 2.5: Consonant co-occurrence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word initial</th>
<th>Word medially</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>b^w</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>j</th>
<th>k</th>
<th>m</th>
<th>m^w</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>η</th>
<th>η</th>
<th>β^w</th>
<th>s</th>
<th>x</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>l</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>b</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>b^w</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
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<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Generalisations re consonant distribution

i) Each consonant can co-occur within the same word.
ii) Voiced stops from different places of articulation rarely occur in the same word.
iii) Different stops from the same place of articulation, /d/ and /t/, rarely co-occur in the same word and I have two examples only of ‘t-initial’ words only where /d/ is allowed e.g. /tada/ ‘glance up’; /tadono/ ‘legend’, ‘devil’.
iv) All fricatives can co-occur in the same word with any one of two or more different fricatives.
v) Nasals have a high number of restrictions on co-occurrence with other nasals. Nasals are the only consonants that can be word final.

#### 2.6.4 Distribution of vowels

All vowels can occur word initially, medially and word finally. Vowels make up only 11.6% of the initial phonemes of words in my data, with percentages of occurrence given as follows:

---

13 Occurrence is rare and is only in words which are compounds or appear to have been compounded, although simple forms are not now always separable.
14 Not possible in adjacent syllable e.g. /kailaxo/ ‘kind of fighting stick’.
15 Only in words which appear to be compounded forms.
16 This co-occurrence is unusual, with one example only attested: /βuβwiaxoxa/ ‘nakoka tree’
17 One example only attested in a compound word /xaikaraβvalau/ ‘roof supports’.
18 Only examples are borrowed from East or compounds.
Sequences of identical vowels are not allowed in a phonological word (2.6.5.1). Non-identical vowels can occur in sequences across syllable boundaries within a phonological word. This reflects POc ‘where only sequences of unlike vowels were permitted’ (Lynch et al. 2002:67).

### 2.6.4.1 Sequences of vowels

#### Two-vowel sequences

Eighteen of the 20 possible two-vowel sequences can occur intramorphemically. Additionally, the sequence of ‘ie’ can occur within a three-vowel sequence within a morpheme, but does not occur across morphemes in the data. The intramorphic sequences are listed in Table 2:6 with their realisations. All sequences with one realisation as a glide have already been discussed with examples in 2.5.1. Syllable boundaries are shown with a full stop. It can be seen that some sequences have a realisation of either one or two syllables, and many sequences have a two-syllable realisation with stress possible on either of the vowels.

There are more restrictions on vowel sequences across morpheme boundaries—sequences attested are shown in Table 2:7. As mentioned earlier, sequences of like vowels are reduced within a phonological word.

#### Table 2.6: Intramorphic two-vowel sequences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ui</th>
<th>[i.u]</th>
<th>io</th>
<th>[i.o]</th>
<th>ia</th>
<th>[i.a]</th>
<th>ja</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>[i.u]</td>
<td>/u/</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>/o/</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>/a/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*ie only occurs in three vowel sequence as shown below
*uo does not occur in corpus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ei</th>
<th>[e.i]</th>
<th>Le [le.i]</th>
<th>personal name</th>
<th>ei</th>
<th>[e.i]</th>
<th>Le [le.i]</th>
<th>personal name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ei</td>
<td>[e.i]</td>
<td>Lei [le.i]</td>
<td>‘water’</td>
<td>ei</td>
<td>[e.i]</td>
<td>Lei [le.i]</td>
<td>‘water’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eu</td>
<td>[e.u]</td>
<td>reu [re.u]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
<td>eu</td>
<td>[e.u]</td>
<td>reu [re.u]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eo</td>
<td>[e.o]</td>
<td>lele [le.lé.o]</td>
<td>‘wake up’</td>
<td>eo</td>
<td>[e.o]</td>
<td>lele [le.lé.o]</td>
<td>‘wake up’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ea</td>
<td>[e.a]</td>
<td>atea [a.té.a]</td>
<td>‘one’</td>
<td>ea</td>
<td>[e.a]</td>
<td>atea [a.té.a]</td>
<td>‘one’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ea</td>
<td>[e.a]</td>
<td>atea-teaxi [a.té.a.te.á.yi]</td>
<td>‘one at a time’</td>
<td>ea</td>
<td>[e.a]</td>
<td>atea-teaxi [a.té.a.te.á.yi]</td>
<td>‘one at a time’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>[o.i]</td>
<td>voi [vo.i]</td>
<td>‘mum’</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>[o.i]</td>
<td>voi [vo.i]</td>
<td>‘mum’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>[o.i]</td>
<td>xo [xo.i]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>[o.i]</td>
<td>xo [xo.i]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>wi [wi]</td>
<td>‘water’</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>wi [wi]</td>
<td>‘water’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
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<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
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<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
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<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
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<tr>
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<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
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<tr>
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<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
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<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
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<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
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<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
<td>u</td>
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<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
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<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
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<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
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<td>‘damp’</td>
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<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
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<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
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<td>we [we]</td>
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<td>we [we]</td>
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<tr>
<td>u</td>
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<td>we [we]</td>
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<td>we [we]</td>
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<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>[u.i]</td>
<td>we [we]</td>
<td>‘damp’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sequences of two vowels can occur across morpheme boundaries with the following provisos:

i) all vowels can occur with /i/ or /a/ as vowel 2,
ii) only /a/ is attested as being able to occur with /u/ or /e/ as vowel 2,
iii) vowel /o/ does not occur as vowel 2.

**Table 2.7:** Two-vowel sequences across morphemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>i.a</th>
<th>mași-a</th>
<th>fish-NOM ‘fishing’</th>
<th>e.i</th>
<th>até-i</th>
<th>sit-NOM ‘chair’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e.a</td>
<td>dulé-a</td>
<td>clear-NOM ‘clearing bush’</td>
<td>a.i</td>
<td>salá-i</td>
<td>road-LINK ‘way of’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o.a</td>
<td>lokolokó-a</td>
<td>lazy-NOM ‘laziness’</td>
<td>o.i</td>
<td>xoró-i</td>
<td>trunk-LINK ‘trunk of’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u.a</td>
<td>maurú-a</td>
<td>live-NOM ‘life’</td>
<td>u.i</td>
<td>taβalú-i</td>
<td>side-LINK ‘side of’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.u βa-uráji</td>
<td>PL-child ‘children’</td>
<td>a.e</td>
<td>sorá-e</td>
<td>talk-NOM ‘words’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Three and four vowel sequences**

**Restrictions:**

i) In a three or four vowel sequence, one of the vowels must be /a/;
ii) where /a/ begins or ends the sequence, the vowel adjacent to /a/ must be maximally distinct from it, that is, /u/ or /i/.

Additionally, if a combination of morphemes forms a phonological word, then:

iii) at least one vowel must be realised phonetically as a glide.

Following are the multi-vowel sequences that are attested in the data within morphemes. All have realisations incorporating a glide as detailed in 2.5.1.1 and 2.5.1.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>iau</th>
<th>ia→</th>
<th>[ja]</th>
<th>iau [já.u]</th>
<th>‘I’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>iae</td>
<td>ia→</td>
<td>[ja]</td>
<td>niae [njá.e]</td>
<td>‘there’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aie</td>
<td>ai→</td>
<td>[aj]</td>
<td>aien [aj.én]</td>
<td>‘here’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aio</td>
<td>ai→</td>
<td>[aj]</td>
<td>aiono [aj.ó.no]</td>
<td>‘six’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aui</td>
<td>au→</td>
<td>[aw]</td>
<td>daui [dáw.i] ~ [da.ú.i]</td>
<td>‘coconut crab’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aua</td>
<td>au</td>
<td>[aw]</td>
<td>ratalaua [ra.ta.láw.a] ~ [ra.ta.láw.a]</td>
<td>‘sago palm leaves’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, the following multi-vowel sequences are attested as occurring across morphemes where a phonological word is formed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>iu-a</th>
<th>iu→</th>
<th>[ju]</th>
<th>mo-tiu-a [mo.tjú.a]</th>
<th>‘s/he trapped him/her/it’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ei-a</td>
<td>ei→</td>
<td>[ej]</td>
<td>na-reβei-a [na.reβέj.a]</td>
<td>‘s/he pulled it’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ei-(i)au</td>
<td>ia→</td>
<td>[ja]</td>
<td>teleiau [te.le.já.u]</td>
<td>‘to me’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.6.5 Vowel deletion

There are two main types of vowel deletion in this language:

i) deletion because of the prohibition of a sequence of identical vowels

ii) deletion because of phonetically motivated weakening.

2.6.5.1 Deletion of an identical vowel

As mentioned in 2.6.4, a sequence of identical vowels cannot occur within a phonological word. Where two identical vowels do occur in a sequence because of morphological processes of reduplication, affixa- tion or cliticisation, the sequence must be reduced as follows:

\[ V_1 V_1 \rightarrow V_1 \]

This rule applies before stress. See also 2.7.3.

| Reduplication: /olo/ ‘respect’ \(\rightarrow\) olo~olo \(\rightarrow\) ololo ‘be respectful’ |
| Affixation: /ara/ ‘two’ \(\rightarrow\) βaxa-ara \(\rightarrow\) βaxarua ‘twice’ |
| /Aba/ ‘Ambae’ \(\rightarrow\) ta-Aba \(\rightarrow\) Tabae ‘Ambae person’ |
| Cliticisation: /telei/ ‘to/with/from’ \(\rightarrow\) telei=iau \(\rightarrow\) teleiau ‘to/with/from me’ |
| /eno/ ‘lie’, ‘be there’ \(\rightarrow\) le=eno \(\rightarrow\) leno ‘it’s there’ |

2.6.5.2 Deletion of a vowel through weakening

Synchronically, there are some words in Tamambo with one or more closed syllables as CVN. In such cases, it is highly probable that an unstressed vowel has weakened to a schwa and then been deleted after a nasal. Now such words are lexicalised in the language in the N-final form. Words of this type include the following:

/ðum/ ‘explode’ /ðumdum/ ‘backfire’
/kamãm/ IP:1PL.E ‘we’ excl. /kamãm/ IP:2PL ‘you both/all’
/xãnxã/ ‘eat’ (INTR) /kûnûn/ ‘hold in laughter’
/lûlûm/ ‘moss’ /malalûm/ ‘soft’
/sarîrèn/ ‘shiny’ /βwabûbûn ‘kind of edible shellfish’

Questioning of speakers younger than 35–40 reveals that they are not aware of a possible vowel in word final position, and are somewhat bemused by the question. Older speakers questioned are ‘not sure’, but think that they may have heard the vowel for some of the above words, or others similar, as either /i/ or /u/ word final.
However there is a process of deletion of some vowels in reduplication where the simple form still retains the CV syllable word final. The process is as follows:

With prefixing reduplication of a base word of syllable structure CV_1CV_2 (CV_3) where \( V_2 \) is a high front vowel, then \( V_2 \rightarrow \emptyset \).

\[
\begin{align*}
/\text{βiti}/ & \rightarrow /\text{βít–βiti}/ \text{ ‘speak to many people’} \\
/\text{manjisi}/ & \rightarrow /\text{mān–manjisi}/ \text{ ‘jumping around with joy’} \\
/\text{joβi}/ & \rightarrow /\text{joβ–joβi}/ \text{ ‘fall down in quantity’} \\
/\text{suli}/ & \rightarrow /\text{súl–suli-a}/ \text{ ‘burning-off time for gardens’} \\
/\text{soxi}/ & \rightarrow /\text{sóx–sóxi}/ \text{ ‘play hide and seek’}
\end{align*}
\]

This process is attested as occurring when /\text{i}/ follows any consonant as \( C_2 \) except for the voiced stops and /k/. In addition to the deletion of the high front vowel, a deletion is also occurring with some, but not all, words of the same structure where \( V_2 \) is a high back vowel.

\[
\begin{align*}
/\text{βwenu}/ & \rightarrow /\text{βwen–βwenu}/ \text{ (INTR)} \\
/\text{xutu}/ & \rightarrow /\text{xút–xútu}/ \text{ ‘rub’} \\
/\text{mesu}/ & \rightarrow /\text{rá–mes.mésu}/ \text{ ‘grass’}
\end{align*}
\]

Other words have obvious reduplicated forms but no attested simple forms, such as:

/\text{xáβ–xáβu}/ ‘distribution of money, yams etc. after a relative’s death’

Such phonetically motivated deletion is not surprising in that, as Lass says (1984:187), ‘unstressed vowels are more deletable than stressed ones and to a slight extent, high vowels tend to be weaker than low, perhaps because of their inherent relative shortness’. But not all words of this structure delete /\text{u}/ as \( V_2 \), since the following are attested in unabbreviated form, both as reduplications:

\[
\begin{align*}
/\text{duxu}/ & \text{ ‘good’} \\
/\text{luxu}/ & \text{ ‘take refuge, hide away’} \\
/\text{b welubwelu}/ & \text{ ‘close eyes’} \\
/\text{nuruuru}/ & \text{ ‘grunt’}
\end{align*}
\]

or as reduplications which have no simple form, such as:

\[
\begin{align*}
/\text{daŋe}/ & \text{ ‘shell’} \\
/\text{xilo}/ & \text{ ‘have a look at s.t.’} \\
/\text{sora}/ & \text{ ‘talk’}
\end{align*}
\]

The generalisation can be made that the most common deletion in reduplication of high vowels is where the first syllable becomes CVN. This outcome suggests that many of the
ŋ-final words listed earlier in this section went through this process. That is, they first deleted the high vowel medially in reduplication, and then later the word-final high vowel was also lost.

A similar process is occurring of deletion of word-final high vowels and some lower vowels, especially following nasals, in fast connected speech, particularly that of children. For example, the following phonemic representation shows the vowels bolded and underlined that are deleted in the phonetic realisation.

(2) /tama-ra  manŋ  tina-ra/
father-P:3PL  COM  mother-P:3PL
[ tamära  män  tinära ]
‘their mother and father’  (Nt-T48:3)

(3) /iau  ku  ronŋ  natu-i  maŋi/
IP:1SG  1SG  hear  child-LINK  fish
[jáu  kur ɒ  natúi  mänŋi]
‘I hear the fishes’ child.’  (Nt-T47:7)

Even more pronounced deletion is apparent in the following example from a ten year-old boy, where he deletes a final syllable (shown underlined) from each phonological word but one. Additionally, in the last phonological word, he deletes a medial [e], usually articulated as [ə] in fast connected speech. The deletion includes vowels following consonants other than nasals. In spite of his deletions, the primary stress pattern according to the syllable structure is still the same as if the sentence was articulated more carefully.

(4) /kämim  no  jivŋ  no  suv-suvu  iau  ku-le-atę/
IP:2PL  2PL  go.down  2PL  RED-dive  IP:1SG
[käm  nontʃiv  nosuʃu  jáu  kulat]
‘You go down and go diving, I’m staying (here).’  (Nt-T49:11)

I suggest that the language may well be moving towards a syllable structure where the coda of the rhyme is not just N, but a range of other consonants that occur before a deleted vowel.19

2.6.5.3 Deletion of /u/ in a restricted environment

There is another kind of specific vowel deletion where words with the structure CVCV(CV) delete /u/ as V1 before /l/ as C2. This deletion is not in citation form (CF), but in connected speech (CS). Of course in all languages, many words can be articulated very differently in fast connected speech, and unstressed vowels frequently weaken to schwa in such an environment. But this particular deletion of /u/ is so noticeable in Tamambo speech that I mention it here. For example:

---

19 I have not included such consonants as ‘coda components’ of the formal syllable structure in this description, since I have personal letters where the writer includes the high vowel in the written form but nevertheless always omits it in speech. This would suggest that the inclusion of the high vowel, word finally, is still seen as ‘correct’ with many words, at least by some speakers.
Chapter 2

2.6.6 Other changes with vowels

2.6.6.1 Vowel assimilation

There is only one very specific pattern of vowel assimilation known to me in this language. This is where the vowel /e/ of the negative marker /te/ assimilates to the back vowel of the same height, /o/, where the negative marker precedes a CV syllable where V is /o/. That is: /te/—> /to/ / _ C o

/ku-te boi-a/—> [kutombója] ‘I didn’t /don’t like it’
/mo-te olo-a/—> [motolóa] ‘(S)he didn’t /doesn’t respect it.’

2.6.6.2 Addition of [h] before low vowel

Some words that phonemically begin with the low vowel /a/ can sometimes be articulated with an initial [h] or [x]. (See also 5.2.1.5 on the counting prefix.)

/a/—> [ha-]~ [xa-] /#– optional

This is particularly noticeable in the different pronunciation of numbers by children and speakers to around age 40, compared with most speakers 40+. Impressionistically, it also appears more common in women’s speech than that of men.

<40 [xatea, xarua, xatolu, xaβati] ~ [hatea, harua, hatolu, haβati]
40+ [atea, arua, atolu, aβati] ‘one, two, three, four’

2.7 Phonological word and grammatical word

A distinction is made between ‘phonological word’ and ‘grammatical word’ in this language. In most cases, the two will coincide in ‘a happy congruence of criteria’ as Anderson (1985b:153) puts it in describing approaches to the ‘word’, but there are some cases where the two types of ‘word’ result in different word divisions for the same utterance.

2.7.1 Phonological word

A phonological word must accord with the stress rules of the language as given in 2.6.2. That is, the location of predictable stress on the penultimate syllable is fixed by reference to the boundaries between ‘words’. These boundaries are made up of what Anderson (p.151) calls ‘potential pause locations’, divisions between phonological units that
correspond to the pauses that can be made in articulation without affecting the meaning of the utterance. A phonological word must be made up, minimally, of two open syllables or one closed syllable (i.e. with a branching rhyme) as outlined in 2.6.1. When a word has two or three affixes, there are often four or five syllables with light secondary stress on the second syllable preceding the penultimate.

In addition to the rules of stress assignment, a phonological word must accord with the phonotactics of the language. For instance, a sequence of identical vowels is not possible internally in a phonological word (see 2.6.5.1), but can occur across word boundaries. Such orderings are dependent on the concept of a bounded phonological unit.

### 2.7.2 Grammatical word

A grammatical word is seen here as one that is replaceable by another word of the same class in the syntactic slot that it fills. A grammatical word is not divisible and can only be moved as a unit maintaining its cohesiveness. A lexical root can be itself a full grammatical word. If it is affixed, the derivational affix becomes part of the same grammatical word.

A grammatical ‘word’ is taken here to also include grammatical ‘forms’, and the various classes and subclasses of such grammatical words and forms are discussed in Chapter 4. Derivational affixation is discussed at some length in Chapter 5.

### 2.7.3 Coincidence of phonological word and grammatical word

A phonological word and a grammatical word may or may not coincide. Often the two are one and the same, as in /βano/ ‘go’, /siba/ ‘knife’, /βaβine/ ‘woman’, /lai/ ‘take’, /duxu/ ‘good’, /manisi/ ‘happy’. Such words are made up simply of their lexical core or root, in the sense that they are uninflected and have not been subject to reduplication or affixation. They ‘fit’ both the phonological and grammatical criteria for ‘word’.

But sometimes, one grammatical word can be two phonological words, or sometimes one phonological word may encompass two or three grammatical words and so on, as shown in examples later in this section. Words with reduplications of two syllables, even those where the meaning of the simple form is no longer part of speakers’ knowledge, are regarded as two phonological words because of the stress placement. For example /nadipadira/ ‘rough-textured’ has no presently known simple form that has any semantic connection. But it is stressed as [ŋandíndíndí]. If this was just one phonological word, the stress would be [ŋandíndíndí], which is unacceptable to native speakers. However, it functions as one grammatical word.

The same situation applies to compounds, of the speakers. Compounds are thus analysed as separate phonological words because of the stress patterns that they display (see 2.6.2). Where processes of reduplication or affixation occur to a lexical word, the following must apply:

i) Reduplicate first two syllables, and reduce any sequence of identical vowels, if applicable. (A different syllable structure can result.)

ii) Affix with derivational affixes or grammatical particles if applicable. (A different syllable structure can result.)

20 There is a word ngandi which refers to a particular kind of ‘black ant’, but any semantic connection seems far-fetched.
iii) Apply stress rule.

The obligatory reduction of an identical vowel sequence can result in a reduction of phonological words because of the loss of a syllable nucleus. The following examples are given to illustrate some possible outcomes:

**Reduplication only**

Transitive verb: /sau/ ‘hook s.t.’ [sá.u]
Reduplication of first two syllables (in this case, whole word) to derive intransitive verb: sau~sau
Stress rules apply: sáu~sá.u ‘go fishing’
Outcome: 1 grammatical word, 2 phonological words

Transitive verb: /soari/ ‘see s.t’ [so.á.ri]
Reduplication of first two syllables to derive transitive verb, indicating plurality of patients: soa~soari
Stress rules apply: só.a~so.á.ri ‘look around at many/all things’
Outcome: 1 grammatical word, 2 phonological words

**Reduplication+ derivational affixation**

Adjectival verb (inherently reduplicated): /lokoloko/ ‘lazy’ [ló.ko~ló.ko]
Affixation to derive noun: loko~loko-a
Stress rules apply: ló.ko~lo.kó.a ‘laziness’
Outcome: 1 grammatical word, 2 phonological words

**Reduplication where V is deleted**

Transitive verb: /olo/ ‘respect s.o.’ [ó.lo]
Reduplication to derive intransitive verb: olo~olo
Deletion of identical vowel resulting in deletion of syllable: ololo
Stress rule applies: o.ló.lo ‘be respectful’, ‘show respect’
Outcome: 1 grammatical word, 1 phonological word

Derivational affixation to reduplicated verb
Affixation of nominaliser to verb to derive noun: /ololo-a/ (‘respect’ as noun)
Stress rule applies: o.lo.ló-a
Outcome: 1 grammatical word, 1 phonological word

**Cliticisation**

Intransitive verb: /xiniti/ ‘pinch off’, ‘nip off’ [xi.ní.ti]
Addition of grammatical particles: ku xiniti ra
1SG nip.off O:3PL
Subject pronoun cliticises rightwards to verb, object pronoun cliticises leftwards to verb.
Stress rule applies: ku=xi.ní.tí=ra ‘I nipped them off.’
Outcome: 3 grammatical words, 1 phonological word

Transitive verb: /losovi/ ‘wash s.o.’ [lo.só.vi]
Addition of grammatical particles: ku tele losovi a
1SG not.yet wash O:3SG
Subject pronoun cliticises rightwards to aspectual, object pronoun cliticises leftwards to verb.
Stress rule applies: ku=té.le lo.so.vi=a ‘I’ve not yet bathed him’.
Outcome: 4 grammatical words, 2 phonological words

Although cliticisation is relevant to the concept of phonological word, clitics are discussed in more detail in 4.11, because they cut across various word classes.

2.8 Intonation

There are clearly marked intonation patterns that are briefly described here for clauses in declarative sentences, imperatives and questions.

2.8.1 Intonation in declarative clauses

A prototypical clause is articulated as one intonation whole without a pause. Each declarative clause within a series of clauses ends with an upward pitch contour, and the last clause in the sentence has a downward contour. Of course speakers are able to exploit pauses and contour variations for particular pragmatic reasons, but such a pattern is the basis for an otherwise unmarked declarative sentence. With such a sentence of four or more clauses, the pattern is as follows:

____________________

All declarative clauses are some variation on the above but the number of clauses is reflected in the number of pauses and downward contours. A long non-final clause has a slight downward contour before the rise and pause as shown:

____________________

In all text examples given in this description, commas are used to signify a pause in the intonation pattern of the speaker. For example, from a text:

(5) mo βano boŋ tinabu, ku βano, turu aie, ku xaro-a,
3SG go day different 1SG go stand there 1SG clear-O:3SG

ku xaro-a mo-iso, ku suli-a,
1SG clear-O:3SG 3SG-finish 1SG burn-O:3SG

mo-iso ku mule.
3SG-finish 1SG head.home
‘Time goes on and then a different day, off I go, and then, I clear the twigs off, and when I finish clearing, I burn it off (the garden), and then I go home.’(E-T53:3)

The clause as an intonational unit is important in distinguishing between some particular clause types. For instance, the intonation pattern of left-dislocated core arguments and relative clauses is one criterion for distinguishing between them (see
14.2.1). Also serial verb constructions as described in Chapter 12 are regarded as a ‘unit’ and reflect this in their unbroken intonation pattern (see 12.5).

2.8.2 Intonation in imperative clauses

Imperative clauses have a similar pattern to a sentence-final declarative clause in that they have a falling contour, but they tend to start at a higher pitch and fall more sharply:

Each syllable is articulated at a lower pitch than the preceding one, as in the next example where syllables are shown separately. The breaks here in the intonation pattern do not denote pauses but represent a correspondence with each syllable.

2.8.3 Intonation in questions

Questions have a different intonation pattern from either declarative or imperative sentences. With both polar and information-seeking questions, the pitch rises sharply to a peak on the ante-penultimate syllable, and then falls sharply on the penultimate (usually stressed) syllable.

Examples are given for both polar and information questions, once again with syllables shown separately:

21 This is an abbreviation of βano ‘go’ in colloquial speech.
2.9 Orthography

The orthography of the Landels’ material of the 1890s and early 1900s (1.5.2) employed no prenasalisation of stops, and variously used ‘u’, ‘v’ and ‘w’ for /β/ and /βw/, ‘g’ for /ŋ/, ‘z’ or ‘ts’ for /ʃ/, and ‘c’ (but occasionally ‘k’) for /x/. This usage was continued with Patterson (1922). Sykes, the last Presbyterian missionary on Malo, made some changes in the spelling system, dating from 1947. He retained ‘c’ for /x/, but used ‘j’ for /ʃ/, ‘ng’ for /ŋ/. He wrote the prenasalised stops without the prenasalisation word initially but included it word medially.

The orthography that I use in this description is primarily based on what Sykes used, and what has been used in written materials available in the community such as hymnbooks and readers from around 1950s onwards. Some changes have been made in this description as explained below.

The letters used for orthographic representation are henceforth in italics; if they differ from the phonemic representation, the phoneme is given in slashes. All vowels are written in the same way as the vowel phonemes. Alternate representations for some consonants (e.g. b, mb) are explained following Table 8.

Table 2.8: Orthographic representation of consonant phonemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stops</th>
<th>b, mb</th>
<th>/b/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bw, mbw</td>
<td>/βw/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>t</td>
<td>/t/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d, nd</td>
<td>/d/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>j, nj</td>
<td>/ʃ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>k</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trill</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>/r/</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>l</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fricatives</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>/β/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>w</td>
<td>/βw/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>s</td>
<td>/s/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>h</td>
<td>/x/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nasals</th>
<th>m</th>
<th>/m/</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mw</td>
<td>/mw/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>/n/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ng</td>
<td>/ŋ/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.9.1 Stops

It is the preference of older literate native speakers to write according to the spelling system used by Sykes (1947, 1954) with no prenasalisation shown on prenasalised stops word initially, but included word medially. Although this could seem inconsistent, and it might seem preferable to write such consonants either all with, or all without the nasal, the system as it exists is workable and does not appear to pose any spelling or pronunciation problems. I have consequently decided to follow local tradition with this. So word initially, /b/ is written as b but as mb word medially, and similarly, d and nd, j and nj.
Chapter 2

e.g. /barabara/ barambara ‘reef’
/dodo/ dondo ‘night’
/jinajina/ jinanjina ‘entice’

2.9.2 Additionally labialised consonants

The additional labialisation feature is written as /u/ in the 1947 and 1954 Sykes’ translations and by older speakers trained in that orthography. So /bw/ has been written as bu word initially and mbu medially, /mw/ as mu, and /βw/ as vu. For example, vui has traditionally been written for two-syllable [βu.i] ‘stem’ and also for one-syllable [βw:i] ‘wash the dishes’.

But this causes problems of ambiguity in the data where /u/ does represent [u] as the nucleus of a syllable, rather than as a labialisation feature, and so the additional labialisation is shown as follows in this description:

- /bβw/ —> bw/mbw /bβwito/ bwito ‘navel’
  /subβw/e/ sumbwe ‘chief’
- /mβw/ —> mw /mβwata/ mwata ‘snake’
- /βw/ —> w /βwete/ wete ‘song’

In materials such as word lists that are primarily for the local community and not part of this description, I have tried to accommodate the wishes of the local people by giving alternate spellings where appropriate. For /βw/, for example, the younger people prefer w and the older people are more comfortable with vu, so I show words such as ‘dance’ with alternate spellings of welu (vuelu).

2.9.3 Fricatives

Bilabial fricatives have already been mentioned above as v for /β/ and w for /βw/. Velar fricative /x/ has traditionally been written as c, dating from all missionaries to the area since the 1890s, and consequently, old hymnbooks and signs in the church are written with c. But this causes real confusion with young people who are now taught in English from kindergarten level, and learn that written c represents [k]. To further complicate their learning, written k is used for [k] in Bislama.

In this description, I use h for /x/ and its usual other allophonic realisation of [ɣ]. Henceforth, all examples in this description are written in the orthography as shown in Table 2:8 unless otherwise stated.

I had informal talks with a number of young adults in the area, and held one workshop locally in Avunatari and conducted two workshops with Malo speakers of varying ages in Vila, in which this question of the representation of /x/ (and also of /βw/) was discussed. This resulted in all of those speakers surveyed as preferring h for the written form of /x/. Nevertheless I am well aware that there are older local speakers who prefer c, and thus in word lists and stories for community use, I have written the alternative spellings (as with w and vu as already mentioned) to accommodate their preference, e.g. horo (coro) ‘block s.t’. 
3 Basic clause structure and grammatical functions

3.1 Introduction
In this chapter, I first describe the basic structure of an independent clause. The clause is regarded in terms of an obligatory inner core that includes the nucleus, an optional extended outer core, and an optional periphery. The classification of independent clauses into verbal, non-verbal, and semi-verbal clauses is based primarily on the form of the predicate, as the nucleus of the clause.

The structure of verbal clauses is described in 3.3, and the definiteness and specificity that can be shown in such clauses is outlined in 3.3.1. The structure of non-verbal clauses, both equative and ascriptive, is discussed in 3.4, and that of semi-verbal clauses in 3.5. Examples of left dislocation of core arguments are given in 3.6. The next section, 3.7, describes the components of the clausal periphery.

Next, in 3.8, I outline the syntactic units that are intrinsic to the structure of clauses, and justify my use of the terms subject, object, and prepositional object for this language. Sections 3.8.1–3.8.3 give more detail on the grammatical functions of those units, and the various semantic roles that they can fulfil.

3.2 Structure of basic independent clauses
The sentence is made up of one or more clauses, based on the structure of the predicate within the clause. There is wide scope for a variety of predicates. Clauses can be independent or dependent, and dependent clauses can be non-embedded or embedded within a basic clause.

This section describes the structure of basic independent clauses. Independent clauses that are joined together are described in Chapter 13, and clauses that are dependent (subordinate clauses) are discussed in Chapter 14. The framework used in this description is loosely that of the layered clause, as proposed first by Foley and Van Valin (1984), and revised later by Van Valin (1993 and 2005), and Van Valin and La Polla (1997).

Van Valin (2005:4) describes the ‘layered structure of the clause as being based on two fundamental contrasts: between the predicate and non-predicating elements on the one hand, and among the non-predicating elements, between arguments and non-arguments’. This description fits with his previous analysis of the primary constituents of the clause: that the predicate is contained in the nucleus, this nucleus then is part of the core of the clause together with the arguments of the predicate, and the periphery is ‘an adjunct to the core and subsumes non-arguments of the predicate’(1993:5).
This framework has been modified slightly for the analysis of clause structure in Tamambo, to indicate the ‘core’ as having both an inner and outer layer. Independent clauses (with different kinds of predicates as nucleus) are analysed here as having an obligatory nucleus and core, making up an inner core. There is then an optional outer core, the arguments of which occur only in some clauses, and an optional periphery. Core arguments are differentiated syntactically from peripheral elements in that they

i) must be adjacent to the predicate
ii) can be relativised
iii) can be fronted.

The optional components at the periphery of the clause are not arguments of the predicate. They take the form of prepositional phrases (henceforth PPs) or unmarked noun phrase (NPs) functioning as modal or instrumental indicators or, more usually, temporal or locational modifiers. These have scope over the whole clause.

The nucleus of any basic clause is the predicate and the structure of the obligatory inner core is dependent on the type of predicate nucleus. Basic independent clause types are thus classified here on the form of the predicate. They are classified into the following:

- verbal clauses (3.3)
- non-verbal clauses (3.4) which can be further divided into equative clauses (3.4.1) and ascriptive clauses (3.4.2)
- semi-verbal clauses (3.5).

Each is discussed in turn.

### 3.3 Structure of verbal clauses

By far the most frequent type of clause in the data is the verbal clause. Verbal clauses are those where prototypically a single verb, but also a serial verb construction, or adjectival verb (functioning as an intransitive verb) is the predicate of the clause.\(^1\) The inner core of a verbal clause is made up of two components:

i) a subject pronominal (+ optional TAM particles or the negative particle)

ii) a predicate.

This inner core equates to a basic verb phrase, and is a minimal basic verbal clause. The third singular subject pronominal can be omitted in specific syntactic environments, if aspectual *le* is used (11.4.4).

The outer core preceding the inner core contains the NP argument that is in subject relation to the verb. For discussion of arguments in subject relation see 3.8.1. This core argument can be any NP including independent pronouns. In many clauses, it is omitted, and its person and number reference is carried on the pronominal within the inner core.

The outer core following the inner core can contain the pronominal or NP object of a transitive verb. For discussion of arguments in object relation see 3.8.2. In verbal clauses, object pronouns can be cliticised to the verbal predicate\(^2\) and are part of the phonological word. Pronominal objects and NP objects cannot cooccur as core arguments in a basic clause, except in cases of left dislocation as described in 3.6.

---

1 Examples of a handful of nouns functioning as predicates are listed in 9.3.2.3.
2 With the exception of 1PL E and 2PL which keep the forms of independent pronouns.
Prepositional objects can also occur in the outer core following the inner core. A prepositional object (henceforth P-object) is regarded as a prepositional phrase (PP) that functions as an oblique argument within the extended core of a verbal clause. For justification of this term, P-objects, and discussion, see 3.8.3. If there is a NP or pronominal direct object, the P-object must follow the object in linear order and be marked with a preposition. As shown in 3.6, P-objects can be left-dislocated just as can objects, with an obligatory pronominal trace remaining with the preposition in the extended core slot. But they cannot otherwise be marked, nor cross-referenced, for person or number (3.8.3).

At the periphery, NPs or PPs functioning to set the overall location or time of the clause are common, but can be omitted without affecting the predicative proposition. Modal lexemes are also possible in the first peripheral slot, and intensifiers are possible in the final peripheral slot, but both are relatively uncommon.

The usage here of the term ‘verb phrase’ (VP) does not claim to completely fulfil syntactic criteria for constituency, but I use it as a convenient label according to Oceanic terminology (see Crowley 1982:184), also Mosel and Hovdhaugen (1992:330). Subject pronouns cannot be deleted in coordinate structures of two transitive verbs, but instead ‘nuclear layer serialisation’ (contiguous verb sequences as described in 12.6) appears to take the place of real coordination. On the other hand, the incidence of ‘verb phrases’ grammaticalising as discrete units, both as aspectuals (12.7) and as conjunctions (13.2.2.4), is suggested evidence for constituency.

Additionally, the terms ‘inner core’ and ‘outer core’ are used here as descriptive devices. I do not use them to indicate a hierarchical syntactic structure.

The obligatory and optional components of an independent verbal clause, as described above, are summarised in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Components of a verbal clause

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Optional Components</th>
<th>Obligatory components</th>
<th>Optional Components</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Periphery</td>
<td>Outer Core</td>
<td>INNER CORE (VP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>Nucleus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Predicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporal, modal, spatial, NPs/PPs</td>
<td>Subject NP/Independent pronoun</td>
<td>Subject pronoun + TAM or negative particles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Verbal clauses can be further subdivided according to the number of core arguments and their relationship to the predicate. The structure is as follows:

\[(NP) \ VP \ (NP) \ (PP)\]

The only obligatory component of a verbal clause is the VP, making up the inner core, but in total, there can be eight different structural variations in basic verbal clauses. Examples follow.
VP alone

An independent verbal clause made up of a VP alone can be a declarative clause, an imperative or a question. These are the most basic of all clauses. In all such clauses, the subject argument must have already been introduced or understood from the context. All can show TAM marking, and all can be negated except VPs marked for future (see 11.3.3.1 with future).

(1) Na sahasaha.  (2) O-te mai!
3PL work 2SG-NEG come
‘They work/ed.’ ‘Don’t come!’

(3) No-mbo vano?
2PL-FUT go
‘Will you (all) go?’

This ability to function as affirmative or negative in declarative clauses, imperatives or questions also applies to all types of verbal clauses.

NP+VP

The NP core argument in subject relation to the verb is stated in the outer core. The preverbal subject pronoun then cross-references the NP for person and number within the VP, as in:

(4) Tina-ku mo-le tetevi.
mother-O:3SG 3SG-TA sweep
‘My mother is/was sweeping.’ (#e.104)

VP+NP

In this type of verbal clause, a pronominal object or NP functions as direct object of a transitive verb as an argument in the outer core, following the obligatory VP (inner core). There is no object pronoun if there is a NP in the object slot.

3SG strike-O:3PL 3SG strike ART child
‘S/he hit them.’ ‘S/he hit the child.’

NP+VP+NP

This type is simply a combination of the two previous types, where the subject and object slots are both filled by NP arguments in the outer core. The preverbal subject pronoun, within the inner core, cross-references the person and number of the subject NP.

(7) Hambuhani mo kamwe na batuivanua.
volcano 3SG destroy ART village
‘The volcano destroyed the village.’ (#e.654 SV)
**VP+PP**

Oblique core arguments are shown by P-objects in a PP in the outer core, although PPs can also occur in the periphery. An example is given here only of a P-object as an outer core argument. For PPs at the periphery, see 3.7.

(8) *Mo-le eno telei-ho.*
   3SG-TA lie PREP-O:2SG
   ‘It’s up to you.’ (lit. it lies with you.) (#c.988)

**NP+VP+PP**

This type is very similar to the above, except that the NP core argument as subject is shown in the outer core, and the preverbal subject pronoun cross-references this subject within the VP.

(9) *Tanume mo donosere hini-a …*
   devil 3SG choke PREP-O:3SG
   ‘The devil choked on it …’ (Nt-T20:113)

**VP+NP+PP**

(10) *Mo sile na vetai telei-au.*
    3SG give ART banana PREP-O:1SG
    ‘S/he gave the bananas to me.’

**NP+VP+NP+PP**

This type shows three core arguments, subject, object and a P-object.

(11) *Va-uranji na viti-a telei tama-ra.*
    PL-child 3PL tell-O:3SG PREP father-P:3PL
    ‘The children told their father about it.’ (lit. told it to their father.) (#e.657)

### 3.3.1 Definiteness and specificity in verbal clauses

#### 3.3.1.1 With subjects

Subject NPs are not morphologically marked for specificity or definiteness, although modifiers can disambiguate definiteness, as shown in the following examples. These examples are all with verbal clauses, since subjects of non-verbal clauses must always be definite (see 3.4).

**Indefinite or definite (depending on context)**

(12) *Tamalohi na mai.*
    person 3PL come
    ‘People came’ / ‘The people came.’
**Indefinite (can be specific or non-specific)**

(13) Tamalohi atea mo mai.  
    person one 3SG come  
    ‘A man came’ (a particular man/any man)/ ‘One man came.’

**Definite**

(14) Tamalohi rindi mo mai.  
    person REF 3SG come  
    ‘The man came’ (to whom I have already referred).

### 3.3.1.2 With objects

Critical to the coding of object relation with NPs is a portmanteau marker *na* that functions as a case marker and to indicate a definite referent or, in conjunction with *atea* ‘one’, an indefinite referent, as shown in the examples below. Marker *na* is never used with object pronouns, as they already indicate a definite known referent, and it is never used with subjects. Nor can *na* be used with prepositional objects, although it is suggested in 4.8.2 that it has become absorbed into several prepositions over time. Marker *na* is glossed as ART for ‘article’, in the Oceanic tradition and because of its posited history (for further detail, see 4.9.1.1). Examples follow:

(15) *na* sai hatou  
    3PL search hermit.crab  
    ‘they look for hermit crabs’/‘they go hermit crab searching.’ (#e.185)

(16) *na* sai *na* hatou  
    3PL search ART hermit.crab  
    ‘they look for the hermit crab/s’ (known referent).

(17) *na* sai *na* hatou atea  
    3PL search ART hermit.crab one  
    ‘they look for a hermit crab’ (any one /particular one).

Additionally, there is a modifier *rindi* indicating anaphoric reference. This refers back to a referent already introduced into the discourse (see example (14) in this chapter. When *rindi* occurs with O, *na* must also be used.

(18) *na* sai *na* hatou *rindi*  
    3PL search ART hermit.crab REF  
    ‘They look for the hermit crab/s’ (known referent, the one/s which the speaker and listener already know about).

A common noun as O thus has four marking possibilities, encoding neither, both or one of the two functions described above:

i) lack of *na* as in (15) = O not marked, indefinite
Here, the absence of *na* with O equates to undefined number, indefinite reference, or generic reference;

ii) with *na*, as in (16) = O marked, definiteness marked
   In such an example, *na* + O indicates a singular or plural O, definite reference, where the ‘hearer can uniquely identify the referent of the NP’ (Foley & Van Valin 1984:284);

iii) with *na* + *atea* (one), as in (17) = O marked, indefinite
   Here, *na* + O + *atea* = singular number, indefinite reference.
   This combination is potentially ambiguous, as it can indicate a non-referential indefinite O, as in ‘any’, or a referential indefinite O, as in ‘a particular one’, with particular features.

iv) with *na* + *rindi* as in (18) = O marked, definiteness marked, prior reference (old information).

The use of iii) *na* + Noun *atea* as referential indefinite is frequently employed in narrative in Tamambo to present what Foley & Van Valin (1984:286) describe as ‘a participant being introduced into the discourse (new information)’. Thereafter, once established as an entity in the discourse, the participant can afterwards be referred to by the use of *(na)* + Noun + *rindi* (‘the’/ ‘that’), the demonstrative modifier of prior reference, the use of *na* or otherwise being dependent on whether the noun is in O or S function. For further detail on *rindi*, see 4.9.2.2.

### 3.4 Structure of non-verbal clauses

Non-verbal clauses are those where the predicate is other than a VP. They have no preverbal pronominal in a cross-referencing function as do verbal clauses. They are also distinguished from verbal clauses in that they are not marked for TAM, nor do they show negative polarity. If they are to be negated, a ‘semi-verbal clause’ with negative particle *te* is used, as is shown in 3.5.

Non-verbal clauses are not as common as verbal clauses in either narrative or discourse, but pragmatically they can be used to present new information about a referent. They have a general time reference, and are not time specific as verbal clauses often can be.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Optional components</th>
<th>Obligatory components</th>
<th>Optional components</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Periphery</td>
<td>INNER</td>
<td>PERIPHERY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporal, NPs/PPs</td>
<td>SUBJECT</td>
<td>Temporal, NPs/PPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP and/or Independent Pron.</td>
<td>PREDICATE NP or PP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subjects of such non-verbal clauses are always definite, so subject NPs can be common nouns to which reference has already been made in the discourse, or proper nouns, demonstrative pronouns or, with one type of non-verbal clause, independent pronouns. The cross-referencing subject pronominals of the verbal clauses are not used. The predicate of a non-verbal clause can be:
a noun phrase (NP), or, a prepositional phrase (hina PP, matai PP, sohen PP).

Where the predicate is a NP, the head of that NP can be a common noun, a demonstrative pronoun, or a proper name. Where the predicate is a PP, there are particular syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic restrictions involved that are explained in 3.8.3.1.

If there are peripheral components, they are usually limited to temporal modifiers, such as ‘always’, ‘nowadays’.

Non-verbal clauses fall into two main semantic groups. Lyons (1977:472) describes them as ‘equative’, and ‘ascriptive’. More recently Dryer (2007:233) refers to them as ‘equational’ and ‘true nominal predicates’. The first type is where the subject and the predicate can be reversed; the second type is where the predicate ascribes a certain property to the subject. Tamambo differentiates syntactically between the two types:

i) the equative or equational, ‘reversible’ subject-to-predicate clause has a subject NP—head can be a common noun, a proper name or a demonstrative. It must also have an independent pronoun agreeing in person and number with the head. An independent pronoun alone cannot function as the subject. The predicate is a NP.

ii) the ascriptive (Dryer’s ‘true nominal’) has a subject NP—head can be a common noun, proper name, demonstrative, or an independent pronoun.

The predicate of an ascriptive clause can be a NP or a PP.

Table 3.3: Types of non-verbal clauses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equational (reversible)</th>
<th>Ascriptive (‘true nominals’) (non-reversible)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Predicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP + Indep. pronoun</td>
<td>NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

These are described in turn.

3.4.1 Non-verbal equative clauses

These clauses are referential and identify ‘the individual denoted by the predicate with individual denoted by the subject’ (Dryer 2007:233). It is also possible to use either subject or predicate as the initial identity, that is, they are reversible.

(19) *Sora-e rindi nia niani.*

‘The story goes this way.’ (lit. the story is this.) (Nk-T67:2).

can be reversed to:
Basic clause structure and grammatical functions

(20) *Niani nia sora-e rindi.*
    this IP:3SG talk-NOM REF
    ‘This is the story.’

(21) *No-ku evui-na-i Sande aien nia barindi.*
    CLFR-P:1SG end-NOM-LINK Sunday here IP:3SG today
    ‘My last Sunday here is today.’ (#c.875)

can be reversed to

(22) *Barindi nia no-ku evui-na-i Sande aien.*
    today IP:3SG CLFR-P:1SG end-NOM-LINK Sunday here
    ‘Today is my last Sunday here.’

(23) *Loren nia tija niala.*
    L. IP:3SG teacher there
    ‘Loren is the teacher over there.’ (#c.190 b)

can be reversed to

(24) *Tija niala nia Loren.*
    teacher there IP:3SG L.
    ‘The teacher over there is Loren.’

(25) *Na-natu-ku nira havo rindi.*
    PL-child-P:1SG IP:3PL twin REF
    ‘My boys are the twins.’

can be reversed to

(26) *Havo rindi nira na-natu-ku.*
    twin REF IP:3PL PL-child-P:1SG
    ‘The twins are my boys.’

3.4.2 Non-verbal ascriptive clauses

In these clauses, with ‘non-referential nominal predicates’ (Dryer 2007:233), the predicate gives additional information about the subject. The predicate does not give the subject another label of identity, as in the equative clauses in 3.4.1, and so the sentences are not reversible. There is no additional independent pronoun within the same clause agreeing with the subject NP.

3.4.2.1 Juxtaposed NPs

Two NPs can be juxtaposed without any linking morphological material as in the following, with the subject always preceding the predicate.
Chapter 3

(27) No-ku stori atea tamalohi atea le ovi ana wamba.
CLFR-P:3SG story one person one TA live PREP cave
‘My story (is about) a person who lived in a cave.’ (Nt-T31:1)

Where an ascriptive clause (bolded) is giving additional information to a previous verbal clause, the subject can be expressed by an independent pronoun.

(28) Nia, undu-na mo baravu, nia maranda.
IP:3SG tooth-P:3SG 3SG long IP:3SG full.circle.tusk
‘As for it, its tusk is long, it's a full circle tusker pig.’ (E-T44:10)

(29) Iau ku sahe ku tawera mo-iso, iau vavine
IP:1SG go.up 1SG big 3SG-finish IP:1SG woman,

mo iso …
3SG finish
‘I had already grown up, I was a woman, and then …’ (N.ab-T78:21)

Existential clauses are generally expressed by use of intransitive verbs such as ovi ‘live’, and posture verbs such as ate ‘sit/stay’ and turu ‘stand’, but very occasionally a non-verbal clause of this type is used to convey an existential meaning, as in the next example.

(30) Mo-iso ana bongi atea, nia lafet tawera, tutunu-a
3SG-finish PREP day one IP:3SG party big cook-NOM

‘Then one day there was a big party, a big feast, in a different place.’ (Nt-T77:2)

3.4.2.2 NP possessor + NP possessed

These differ from the juxtaposed NPs above only in that the NPs are in a possessive construction. But similarly, the predicate gives additional information about the subject.

(31) Avurmakal na-votambaluhi-na sangavulu.
A. PL-wife-P:3SG ten
‘Avurmakal had ten wives.’ (lit. Avurmakal his wives ten.) (Nk-T1:2)

(32) Tamalohi mwende maravitu telei-au hisa-na Vui.
person particular.one near PREP-O:1SG name-P:3SG V.
‘The man next to me is called Vui.’ (#c.593)

Although such structures may originally have been Topic-Comment, they are now fixed into this Subject-Predicate structure. This is shown by the admissibility of a modifier or modifying clause to the (possessor) subject (example 32) before the (possessed) predicate.
Basic clause structure and grammatical functions

3.4.2.3 NP + prepositional phrase

There are three kinds of prepositional phrases that can be used as predicates, beginning with matai, sohen or hina. Other uses of these prepositions are described in Chapter 8.

matai PP

When matai PP indicates the locutional topic of a subject, it can occur as clausal predicate, giving ascriptive information about the subject. As a predicate, it is restricted to this semantic role of ‘locutional topic’, and can function as a formulaic introduction to a narrative, being frequently used in this way by speakers of all ages.

(34) Sora-e atea niani matai tanume arua.
    talk-NOM one this PREP devil two
    ‘This story concerns two devils.’ (Nt-T40:1)

(35) No-ku stori matai tamalohi vuro.
    CLFR-P:1SG story PREP person war
    ‘My story is about a warrior.’ (Nk-T30:1)

sohen PP

A sohen PP functioning as a clausal predicate gives characterising information about the subject by providing an example. The semantic role is always that of ‘similative’, a term borrowed from Lichtenberk (1983:372). See also 8.2.4.

(36) ... no-na wete sohen mwende niani.
    CLFR-P:3SG song PREP particular.one this
    ‘… his song went like this.’ (lit. his song like this one.) (Nt-T33:59)

(37) … matan jara sohen mwende niaro, na mas⁴ loli-a
    SUB place PREP particular.one EMPH 3PL must do-O:3SG
    alolo.
    inside
    ‘… because the place was like that very one, they had to do it inside.’ (E-T43:24)

(38) Han’han sohen balosuro, dam ne mo tete rais.
    food PREP nowadays yam but 3SG negative rice
    ‘The food was like nowadays, yams but no rice.’ (C-T89:33)

⁴ This is a Bislama word—see 1.3.6.
Chapter 3

**hina PP**

The use of a *hina* PP as part of a clausal predicate is an unusual construction, in that unlike prepositions *matai* and *sohen* that precede nouns in a PP, *hina* precedes an adjectival word to provide additional information about the subject. Such predicates are not common—speakers prefer to use verbal clauses, and the *hina* + adjectival verb construction is more often used as an attribute of an argument in a verbal clause. (For further details of *hina* and its semantic and pragmatic restrictions with adjectival verbs, see Chapter 10).

(39) *Ne presen atea niani hina vorivori manihi.*
    but present one this PREP little LIM
    ‘But this present is just little.’ (W1:SV)

In the following example, the independent pronoun subject of the non-verbal clause (bolded) is referring to a NP (*jara* ‘place’), already mentioned in the text, with an ascriptive *hina* predicate.

(40) *… manji na rongovosai na re* \(^5\) *nia hina vono,*
    … animal 3PL know 3PL say IP:3SG PREP empty
    *mo-te tamalohi.*
    3SG-NEG person
    ‘… the fish knew that it (the place) was empty, there were no people.’ (E-T43:22)

Two non-verbal clauses can also be combined in one sentence about the same known referent. The following sentence shows first a possessive ascriptive clause with preposition *hina* where information is given about just one of the people in the story – this is then followed by a second clause, where more information is given.

(41) *Atea-si manihi karu-na hina tawera, nia bura.*
    one-RES LIM leg-P:3SG PREP big IP:3SG with.elephantiasis
    ‘Just one (of them) had really big legs, he was an elephantiasis sufferer.’
    (Nt-T77:27)

3.4.2.4 **Generalisations re non-verbal clauses**

The following generalisations can be made about non-verbal clauses:

i) where an independent pronoun follows a subject NP to cross-reference it, within the same clause, the predicate indicates an additional label of identity; subject and predicate are ‘equational’ and can be reversed;

ii) where the subject and predicate NPs are simply juxtaposed, or a PP is used as predicate, the predicate gives additional characterising information about the subject. Subject and predicate cannot be reversed.

---

\(^5\) Note that *na re* here is functioning as a complementiser (see also 14.3.4).
3.5 Structure of ‘semi-verbal’ clauses

Semi-verbal clauses are so named because they share characteristics of both verbal and nominal clauses. Similarly to a verbal clause, semi-verbal clauses have an obligatory preverbal subject pronoun in the inner core and an optional subject NP in the outer core. But they do not have a verbal predicate. Instead, the predicate of a semi-verbal clause is similar to a non-verbal clause, that is, it uses a NP or, very occasionally, a sohen PP. But the most distinctive feature of the use of semi-verbal clauses is that they are only used where there is negative polarity to the predicate. It gives a label of identity by stating what something is not.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.4: Components of a semi-verbal clause</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Periphery</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporal, NPs/PPs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Because of this distinctive feature of negative marking, such clauses are often used where the speaker wants to emphasise the negative polarity of the information, as follows:

(42) **Balosuro mo-te sohena.**
    nowadays 3SG-NEG the.same
    ‘Nowadays it is not like that.’ (C-T89:17)

There are very few examples in the data of peripheral components, but occasionally temporal modifiers are possible, as in the previous example.

Semi-verbal clauses are most often used to contrast negative information in one clause with positive information in the next (usually non-verbal) clause, as in:

S/he/it/ is not an X, s/he/it/ is a Y.

(43) … **natu-na, uranjì niaro mo-te tamalohi vuro, nia**
    child-P:3SG child EMPH 3SG-NEG person war IP:3SG
    tamalohi tamata.
    person peace
    ‘… his son, that particular child was not a warrior, he was a man of peace.’
    (Nk-T30:8)

(44) **Mo-te boe, nia rave.**
    3SG-NEG male.pig IP:3SG hermaphrodite.pig.
    ‘It isn’t a boar, it’s a hermaphrodite pig.’ (C-T86:23)

---

6 Hermaphodite or so-called ‘intersex’ **rawe** pigs have both male and female characteristics but cannot reproduce. They are not common, to my knowledge, on islands close by, and are still much prized on
In these kind of clauses, the overt subject can be shown by either a full NP (as in (example 43) or as an independent pronoun (as follows), just as occurs in verbal clauses.

(45) \textit{Nia mo-te solja, nia dokta.}
\[ \text{IP:3SG 3SG-NEG soldier, 3SG doctor.} \]
‘He’s not a soldier, he’s a doctor.’ (#e.192d)

What is obligatory is the preverbal subject pronoun with the negative \textit{te}. This negative particle cannot attach to an independent pronoun. So it is not allowable to put the negative into a nominal clause, such as

(46) *\textit{Nia te boe} ‘It’s not a boar.’

nor is it grammatically acceptable to have positive presentational information in a verbal or semi-verbal clause, such as

(47) *\textit{Mo rawe} ‘It’s a hermaphrodite pig.’

The common nouns that can function as predicates in semi-verbal clauses are, in all respects, nouns. They are not the same as the small set of multi-function words (as described in 6.2.6) such as \textit{sumbwe} (‘chief’/ ‘to become chief’) or \textit{skul} (‘school, church’/ ‘to go to school, church’), etc., though there is no limitation on such multi-function words also being able to function in non-verbal and semi-verbal clauses. Semi-verbal clauses can also be used for an existential meaning such as:

(48) … \textit{nia hina vono, mo-te tamalohi.}
\[ \text{IP:3SG PREP empty 3SG-NEG person} \]
‘… it (the place) was empty, there were no people.’ (E-T43:22)

See also 9.2.4.5 for use of the verb \textit{tete} as negative existential.

As well as NP predicates, there are occasional uses of a PP introduced by the simulative \textit{sohen}, as follows:

(49) \textit{Tovon ku-mbo ta mai, Evian a-te sohen tovona.}
\[ \text{when 1SG-FUT REP come E. 3SG-NEG like now} \]
‘When I come back again, Evian won’t be like now.’ (#c.1025)

3.6 Left dislocation in verbal and non-verbal clauses

Left dislocation, where the NP is fronted to achieve extra prominence, is available to both verbal and non-verbal clauses in Tamambo. In all cases, some trace of the fronted NP must also be retained in the clause in the same linear order as the original NP. This trace varies according to the type of argument. Note that in all examples, a comma represents an intonational break.

Malo. They used to be particularly valuable as part of the ritualised pig-killing ceremonies of earlier times, associated with the various grades of the \textit{sumbwe} (the hierarchical system of chiefs).
3.6.1 In verbal clauses

Subject dislocation

In verbal clauses, the strict word order rules of the language ensure that the subject is already the leftmost component of a clause. As shown in Table 3:1, verbal clauses have either a NP or independent pronoun in the outer core subject slot, if it is filled at all, but not both. But additional topicalisation can be achieved by placing the NP subject in left dislocation position, and then following it with an independent pronoun as the subject argument—both preceding the inner core with its obligatory cross-referencing pronominal.

(50) Bisu~mbisu-na sangavulu, nira na maututu.
    RED~finger-P:3SG ten IP:3PL 3PL broken
    ‘As for her ten fingers, they were broken.’ (Nt-T74:22)

Examples such as the above, where there are two subject references as well as the subject pronoun of the inner core, are used especially for dramatic effect in narrative or discourse.

Alternately, particular topicalising of the subject (bolded) can be achieved by a right dislocation as in (51), or an appositional phrase following the subject NP, as in (52), which is not a left or right dislocation, but additional information about the subject. (For appositional phrases, see 6.5.)

(51) Na avu na mai na-le han~hani, nira arua.
    3PL fly 3PL come 3PL-TA RED~eat IP:3PL two
    ‘They flew back and they were eating, the two of them.’ (Nt-T42:10)

(52) Tamalohi rindi, baliha-na, mo lai na akes rindi
    person REF son.in.law-P:3SG 3SG take ART axe REF
    The man, his son-in-law, took that axe (and ... ) (Nt-T74:40)

Object left dislocation

Left dislocation of objects is a very common topicalising strategy in discourse to emphasise the importance of that particular argument. The NP expanded object is fronted, and an object pronoun remains in the clause in the usual linear core slot, cross-referencing the NP object for person and number. Only in left dislocations like this can there be two representations of the object, indicating that the fronted object is outside the clause. Both the fronted object NP and object pronoun trace are bolded in the examples:

(53) …‘net’ rindi, nira na lasi-a nia litu.
    net REF IP:3PL 3PL tie-O:3SG IP:3SG litu
    ‘… as for that net, they tie it (and) it’s a litu net.’ (E-T43:4)

(54) Ian mai Stewart, aka mo bulahi-ra na jivo ana tarusa.
    I. COM S. boat 3SG toss-O:3PL 3PL go.down PREP sea
    ‘As for Ian and Stewart, the boat tossed them out and down they went into the sea.’ (N.ch-T4:7)
**Prepositional object left dislocation**

When functioning as an oblique core argument in a clause, P-objects can be left dislocated by fronting the NP only, and adding a cross-referencing pronominal object in the prepositional phrase in the clause. As with object left dislocation, there are thus two representations of the P-object, showing that the fronted P-object is outside the clause. This pronominal ‘trace’ agrees in person and number with the P-object (both bolded):

(55) \[ \ldots \text{stori } \text{rindi, mama maranjea nia mo dumisi-au} \]

\[ \text{hini-a.} \]

\[ \text{PREP-O:3SG} \]

‘... as for that story, my old dad explained it to me.’ (lit. explained me of it.)

(Nk-T73:1)

### 3.6.2 In non-verbal clauses

In non-verbal clauses, the subject can be emphasised by fronting, and then restating it in the usual clausal order of subject and predicate.

**Subject left dislocation**

(56) \[ \text{Niani atea, niani hina tinambu ...} \]

‘This one, this is different ...’ (E-T26:1)

**Predicate left dislocation**

It is also possible for the NP predicates of non-verbal clauses to be fronted for emphasis outside the clause, although this seems rather less usual than the fronting of subjects. The predicate is then repeated in the same form in the clause in the usual predicate slot.

(57) \[ \text{Sora-e sohi, sora-e rindi nia sora-e sohi.} \]

‘A secret story, the story is a secret story.’ (Nk-T73:2)

(58) \[ \text{Tamalohi tiri, tavonavu niala nia tamalohi tiri} \]

‘A con man, the Malakula man over there is just a con man.’ (#c.JM/VJ)

### 3.7 The periphery of the clause

At the periphery of the clause are the components that are not part of the predicate but which set the time, place or manner of the proposition. The most common are those that
describe non-spatial settings—these can take the form of PPs, sentence-level adverbs or unmarked NPs.

3.7.1 Non-spatial settings

Location in time

Peripheral components describing location in time are PPs such as:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ana bongi tuai} & \quad \text{ana raviravi} \\
\text{PREP day long.ago} & \quad \text{PREP afternoon} \\
\text{‘in the olden days’} & \quad \text{‘in the afternoon’}
\end{align*}
\]

or unmarked NPs such as

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ulurani dondo} & \quad \text{nananovi balosuro} \\
\text{‘dawn’ (lit. ‘morning night’)} & \quad \text{‘yesterday’} & \quad \text{‘present time/nowadays'}
\end{align*}
\]

While these are mostly used in the periphery of verbal clauses, they can also function in the core of non-verbal clauses, as shown with NP \text{barindi} ‘today’ in 3.4.1, examples (21) and (22).

‘Location in time’ PPs can occur at either periphery, that is, at the beginning or end of the clause, but unmarked NPs are preferred at the beginning. See also 4.5.1.2.

Frequency of time

Expressions at the periphery indicating frequency of time are commonly used in verbal clauses, either at the beginning or the end of the clause.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{turuvui aiente bongi vahatari} \\
\text{‘always’} & \quad \text{‘sometimes’} & \quad \text{‘often/many times’}
\end{align*}
\]

Only \text{turuvui} ‘always’ is attested in the data in a non-verbal clause.

Anaphoric time reference

In the data, these are restricted to the beginning of verbal clauses, rather than non-verbal clauses. They include the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{moiso (mo-iso); aiso (a-iso) ana bongi rindi lai mwe} \\
\text{‘then’} & \quad \text{‘at that time’} & \quad \text{‘just at that moment’}
\end{align*}
\]

3.7.2 Spatial settings

These peripheral elements are commonly used with verbal clauses as in example (59) but only occasionally with non-verbal clauses.

Location at place

These can be in the form of a NP where the head is a proper name or a location noun.
Chapter 3

(59) **Na-le ovi telei tumbu-ra Vila/aulu**

3PL-TA live PREP grandmother-P:3PL Vila/up.direction

‘They were living with their grandmother in Vila/ up in the bush.’

Common nouns or relational nouns are used in peripheral PPs, such as the following, at either the beginning or end of the clause:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ana} & \quad \text{jara} & \quad \text{tinambu} & \quad \text{ana} & \quad \text{oneone} \\
\text{PREP} & \quad \text{place} & \quad \text{different} & \quad \text{PREP} & \quad \text{sand} \\
\text{‘at a different place’} & \quad \text{‘on the beach’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ana livuha-ni} & \quad \text{Vila} & \quad \text{ana tavalu-i sala} \\
\text{PREP middle-LINK V.} & \quad \text{PREP side-LINK path} \\
\text{‘in the middle of Vila’} & \quad \text{‘by the side of the road’}
\end{align*}
\]

**Anaphoric spatial setting**

These are restricted to deictics such as aie ‘there’, aien ‘here’ (see 4.5.1.3), and are used at the end of the clause, as in the following:

(60) **Nia dokta aie.**

IP:3SG doctor there

‘She’s a doctor there.’ (#c.993b.)

3.7.3 **Modals, instrumental, and source prepositional phrases**

There are only two modals (attested) used at the periphery of a verbal clause, *sondo* ‘maybe’, and *aisoro* (from *a-iso-ro*: 3SG-finish-thus) ‘perhaps’. They are used at the beginning of the clause that they modify (see 4.5.1.1).

Instrumental PPs at the periphery are common with verbal clauses, particularly where the PP describes how something is done, as in the next two examples.

(61) **Tamalohi mo losu na heletu hina simba.**

man 3SG strike ART pig PREP knife

‘The man killed the pig with a knife.’ (#e.50)

(62) **Tovon o kakau Vila hini Air Vanuatu ...**

when 2SG reach V. PREP Air Vanuatu

‘When you get to Vila with Air Vanuatu …’ (Wl-T8:2)

PPs indicating source can also occur at the periphery as in:

(63) **Mo voli na buk atea telei na tamalohi atea niala.**

3SG buy ART book one PREP ART man one there

‘S/he bought a book from that man over there.’ (#e.749)
3.8 Syntactic units and grammatical functions

The usage of the terms ‘subject’ and ‘object’ (as used in this description) is established here on the basis of the grammatical functions of particular noun phrases as A, S and O. These abbreviations have been in currency for well over thirty years, and were first used by Dixon (1972) in describing basic syntactic functions as A-transitive subject, S-intransitive subject and O-transitive object. A is based on ‘Agent’ but is not equivalent to it.

Following Andrews (2007a:137), an Agent is ‘a participant which the meaning of a verb describes as doing something, or causing something to happen, possibly intentionally’ while the Patient is defined as ‘a participant which the verb describes as having something happen to it, and as being affected by what happens to it’.\(^7\) Two-argument verbs taking an Agent and a Patient are regarded as ‘primary transitive verbs’ by Andrews (2007a:138). Further following Andrews, a NP which is an argument of a two-argument verb and takes on the morphological and syntactic accoutrements appropriate to an Agent of a primary transitive verb, has grammatical function A. The NP which is an argument of a two-argument verb which ‘receives the treatment normally accorded to the Patient of a PTV (primary transitive verb) has the grammatical function O. Such sentences with both A and O in their syntactic structure are called “transitive”, and “intransitive” if one or both of these is missing’ (Andrews 1985:68 and 2007a:139).\(^8\) In such a sentence, the argument of the one-argument verb has neither grammatical function A nor O, but is defined as having grammatical function S.

In this language, A and S grammatical functions share the following syntactic and morphological behaviour:

i) both obligatorily indicate the person and number of the NP argument on the preverbal pronoun in the VP
ii) both always precede the verb in linear order
iii) neither is morphologically marked for plurality, unless the head of the NP belongs to the small set of nouns which do indicate plurality.

The NP with grammatical function O:

i) always follows the verb in linear order, except in cases of left dislocation where a pronominal object trace must remain in the usual linear O slot
ii) can be unmarked, or marked as definite or indefinite.

Thus the term ‘subject’ is used henceforth for the grammatical relation comprising the grammatical functions of A and S in this language, and the term ‘object’ is used for the grammatical relation associated with the grammatical function O.

While there is always only one obligatory core argument in an intransitive clause (subject: S) and two obligatory core arguments in a transitive clause (subject and object: A and O), there are oblique arguments possible in which both have a participatory role.\(^9\) Such arguments, as prepositional objects, are almost always encoded in prepositional phrases,

---

\(^7\) This wording is essentially the same as in Andrews 1985:68.

\(^8\) Note however, that while the definitions are the same in 2007 as 1985, Andrews (2007) refers to P as the grammatical function that he previously referred to as O. I prefer to retain the label of O in this description.

since there are no ditransitive verbs in Tamambo that can have a ‘double object’
construction. For examples of these oblique arguments as part of the core of a clause, see
3.3.

Some transitive verbs that take both a direct object and a prepositional object as core
arguments can show variation as to which semantic role can fill which slot. That is, the
speaker has some choice in whether an argument is to be slotted into object or
prepositional object function, depending on the semantic role associated with each.

The particular grammatical features of arguments functioning as subject, object or
prepositional objects (as obliques), and the various semantic roles available to them, are
discussed below.

3.8.1 Subject

Arguments in subject relation are marked by the feature of rigid word order, preceding
the predicate in a declarative clause. Any NP with a head as common noun (modified or
otherwise), proper noun, independent pronoun, a numeral or demonstrative can function as
subject in any clause type.

As seen in 3.3, the subject in verbal clauses is then cross-referenced by a preverbal
subject pronoun for the features of person and number. This preverbal subject pronoun can
be left to carry the subject information within the verb phrase if the subject NP is later
omitted.

NP subjects that are common nouns do not show any morphological indication of
person or number, with the exception of a small set of nouns that do mark plurality
morphologically (see 5.2.1.1).

3.8.1.1 Semantic roles of subjects

As well as subjects being in the role of Agent, there can be other various semantic roles
encoded in the subject (bolded) as shown below (see also Table 9:3, Chapter 9). Subjects
are cross-referencing pronominals or full NPs.

Agent (intentional action)

(64) Mo bila-e.
3SG shatter-O:3SG
‘S/he shattered it.’

Causer (non-intentional action)

Note that the object here, batuivanua, has been fronted in a left dislocation.

(65) Batuivanua mwende le ovi aie, langlosu mo komo-a.
village particular.one TA live there hurricane 3SG destroy-O:3SG
‘As for the village where she lived, the hurricane destroyed it.’ (#e.695)
Basic clause structure and grammatical functions

**Performer**

(66) *Voi mo sahe aulu mo iso.*

mum 3SG go.up up.direction 3SG finish

‘Mum’s gone up to the gardens already.’ (#41 JB)

**Experiencer**

(67) *Ku-te boi-a, ku-te boi na raes.*

1SG-NEG like-O:3SG 1SG-NEG like ART rice

‘I didn’t like it, I didn’t like the rice.’ (N.ab-T52:10)

**Patient**

(68) *Aka sua-sua mo dono.*

boat RED~paddle 3SG sink

‘The canoe sinks.’ (N.ch.-T4:title)

3.8.2 **Object**

Arguments in object relation in verbal clauses are fixed in order immediately following the verb. Objects behave differently to subjects, in that the direct object of a transitive verb must be shown by a full NP or a pronoun but not both. Object pronouns and object NPs are mutually exclusive in independent clauses except in the environment of a left-dislocated construction (3.6.1) or in relative clauses (Chapter 14). There can be only one direct object of a transitive verb.

The object pronoun indicates person and number of the argument, whereas object NPs with a common noun as head of the NP are not marked for number (with the exception of some nouns as described in 5.2.1.1).

3.8.2.1 **Semantic roles of objects**

The semantic roles expressed by arguments in object relation to the verb tend to be more varied than those of subject. Pawley and Reid (1980:105) suggest that in ‘exemplary Oceanic languages … direct object selection is freer’ (than that of subject) and this is so in Tamambo. The semantic roles that are possible are shown in examples below (object bolded). The distinction that is made here between Patient, Experiencer, and Theme is: Experiencer: animate, affected; Patient: non-animate, affected 10; Theme: animate or non-animate, not necessarily affected.

**Experiencer**

(69) *Tamalohi na-le lai na manji tarusa.*

person 3PL-TA take ART creature sea

‘Men were catching the fish.’ (E-T43:1)

---

10 I distinguish between Patient and Experiencer following Comrie (1981:55). Further remarks on these semantic roles and the verbs which function with them is made in 9.2.2.1 and 9.2.3.
3.8.3 P-objects

The term ‘P-object’ is used in the sense of Andrews (1985:91 and 2007a:160) where ‘the verb determines the choice of preposition and the NP within it functions as an argument of the verb’. Such P-objects have a participatory role in the action of the predicate, and are referred to here as ‘oblique core arguments’ (Van Valin 1993:41). In verbal clauses with transitive verbs, the P-object, if there is one, follows the object, so the syntactic functions of the three core arguments are then A, O and P-object. But there are also some verbal clauses with intransitive verbs that can take a P-object as an oblique, and the syntactic functions of the two core arguments are then S and P-object (as in example 8 in this chapter).

There is some overlap with the semantic roles indicated by some objects functioning as direct core arguments of the clause and some P-objects as oblique core arguments. As
mentioned in 3.8, the speaker has some freedom as to whether an argument, depending on its semantic role, is employed as a direct or oblique argument. This freedom does not apply to subject, in that semantic roles are ‘neutralised’ in their grammatical behaviour, and an argument in core initial position behaves grammatically in the same way whether it is an experiencer or prototypical agent (see Van Valin 1993:50 for some discussion of neutralisation). But with reference to the groups of semantic role types as suggested by Sasse (1993:681), and also to the Actor-Undergoer Hierarchy as presented in Van Valin (1993:44) and Foley and Van Valin (1984:59), there appears to be a limited hierarchy of roles operating with the central participants of object and P-object in this language. This is shown in table 3.5.

So it can be seen that there are central participant roles within the core of the clause that are only ever ascribed to objects and some only ever to P-objects. But there are some that straddle both roles, so that when a ‘recipient’, ‘theme’ or ‘locutional topic’ is in object function, it is unmarked, but when it is a P-object, it is marked with a preposition.

The speaker option of choosing the ‘x’ argument for the O, and the ‘y’ argument for the P-object slot, or vice versa, is a fairly classic ‘dative shift’ alternation with such verbal predicates as dami ‘ask’ and sile ‘give’, where there is a rearrangement of core arguments for pragmatic reasons.

### Table 3.5: Hierarchy of semantic roles with Objects and P-objects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semantic role</th>
<th>Object (as direct core argument)</th>
<th>P-object (as oblique core argument)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patient</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencer</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipient</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locutional topic</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object of attitude</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cause of emotion/ reaction</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partitive theme</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locational goal</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes (rare)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comitative</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 3.8.3.1 P-objects as ‘central participants’ and semantic roles

The analysis of P-objects as ‘central participants’, functioning as arguments within the core is usually unambiguous, but there are times when it is difficult to decide if the P-object is part of the core and intrinsic to the predicate, or is more peripheral in the clause. This difficulty of deciding whether referents are ‘participants’ or ‘circumstantial’ is discussed at some length by Matthews (1981), and he suggests various tests of participation, collocation, obligatoriness, latency and exclusion (pp.124–27). But in his discussion of ‘indirect objects’ in particular, he concludes that often, regardless of such
tests, ‘we are left with a mass of boundary cases, subtle ambiguities and gradience generally’ (p.136).

For example, in the Tamambo data, a recipient P-object with *telei* is a central participant, but in a role as ‘source’ it appears sometimes within the core, and sometimes is relegated to peripheral level status, depending on its relationship with the verbal predicate. Similarly, a partitive P-object with *hina* is part of the core, a central participant, while an instrumental with *hina* is usually peripheral. And while *ana* is almost exclusively used for peripheral arguments, it can occur in a particular context as a P-object marking locational goal where it is intrinsic to the predicate. So particular prepositions often indicate a variety of semantic roles, and those prepositions do not always function in the same way within the clause. The best judgement that can be made here for this data, as to whether a referent is a participant or circumstantial, is a conservative assessment of whether:

i) the participant is intrinsic to the action of the predicate
ii) it fulfils an obligatory function and cannot be omitted
iii) it occurs within the collocational restrictions of the semantics of the predicate.

The prepositions listed in Table 3:6 are those that can operate within the core of a verbal clause as P-objects. These particular prepositions can also function at peripheral level with a wide range of semantic roles.

**Table 3.6: P-objects within the core of the clause and their semantic roles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prepositions which can precede P-objects (oblique core arguments)</th>
<th>Semantic role possible at core level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>telei</em></td>
<td>source, object of attitude, comitative, recipient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ana</em></td>
<td>locational goal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>hina/hini</em></td>
<td>partitive theme, theme, locutional topic, source of emotion or reaction, object of attitude</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Just one example is given here of each of these prepositions where they function with a NP as a P-object.

**Source**

(76) *Mo dami-au telei tama-ku.*
3SG ask-O:1SG PREP father-P:1SG
‘He asked my father for me.’ i.e. my hand in marriage (lit. he asks/asked me from my father.) (N.ab.-T78:26)

**Locational goal**

(77) *Votambaluhi-na mo turu mo kakau ana tano rindi*
wife-P:3SG 3SG stand 3SG reach PREP garden REF
‘His wife then reached the garden.’ (Nt-T:74:32)
Theme

(78) O tinerani hina lulungi watatina.
   2SG watch.out PREP wave PL.big
   ‘Look out for the big waves.’ (Wl.-T8:8)

For a full discussion of prepositions in other semantic roles as oblique objects and also in the periphery of the clause, see Chapter 8.
4 Word classes

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the grounds for establishing different word classes in this language. Section 4.2 refers to the concept of ‘grammatical word’ in this language, and in 4.3, I list the classification of words into different classes. The rest of the chapter is concerned with a description of those classes, how they differ from each other and how they function. The large classes of nouns and verbs are differentiated in 4.4, but a full description of them, including adjectival verbs, is given in other chapters. So from 4.5 to 4.10, I concentrate on the closed word classes of Tamambo. These include adverbs, proforms, conjunctions, prepositions, and the other various grammatical functional forms. In 4.11, I discuss clitics, forms that do not constitute a separate word class, but cut across several classes of grammatical forms. The last section, 4.12, briefly describes interjections and discourse particles—these do not constitute a syntactic category, but are important pragmatically in communication.

4.2 Grammatical word

A distinction has been made between ‘phonological word’ and ‘grammatical word’ in Tamambo as outlined in 2.7. In addition, a grammatical word has been described in 2.7.2 as one that is replaceable by another word of the same class in the syntactic slot that it fills. A further distinction is made here, within the label of ‘grammatical word’, between full lexical forms and grammatical forms (or particles as they are often known) as shown in Table 4.1.

Full lexical forms can be affixed with derivational affixes and in such cases the original word + affixation will result in another, different, grammatical word. Derivational affixes are regarded here as forms that can

i) change the previous syntactic function of the grammatical word to which they are attached (for instance, a word classed as a verb can be affixed to become a noun, a noun can be affixed to become a stative verb, and so on), OR

i) increase or decrease the valency of the word to which they affix or reduplicate.

Such affixes, however, can attach only to full lexical forms rather than to grammatical particles, and are not regarded as grammatical words (that is, as lexical or grammatical forms). They are described in the next chapter (Chapter 5) on morphological processes.

For the sake of simplification, this description shows examples of reduplication with a tilde, and the linking of affixes and particles to the lexical root by a hyphen. Interlinear glosses should dispel any ambiguity as to the function of a grammatical particle or an affix linked to a full lexical form.
4.3 Classification of word classes

Classification of words into classes, and the allocation of membership of particular words to those word classes, are based on morphological and syntactic criteria. The different grammatical criteria pertinent to each word class are discussed in each section. Although word classes are not established on semantic criteria, in many cases they correspond to particular semantic content.

A distinction is made between full lexical words and grammatical function words or particles. But as Sasse notes (1993:652), ‘full words and particles are discrete only on the edges of a continuum of grammaticalization’. He observes that the same function word class in a language may contain different strata of grammaticalisation, and that words with clear semantic content may occur in closed classes. So, as a starting point, I take the particles or function words in Tamambo as being within closed classes, but where the distinction is blurry for particular words within particular classes, I note it in the description to follow. Full lexical forms can belong to either open or closed classes in this language but, again, there are words from an open class which appear to be becoming grammaticalised into either a more closed grouping or have already been grammaticalised into a functional class (see 4.8.1 and 12.8 for examples).

An open word class is a class that is potentially unbounded, in that its number of members can vary according to the needs of its speakers. A closed word class consists of a class that is bounded and has a fixed number of forms. Following Schachter (1985:25), also Schachter and Shopen (2007:24), the term proform is ‘a cover term for several closed classes of words which, under certain circumstances, are used as substitutes for words belonging to open classes’.

Word classes and their sub-classes are listed as follows. Within some sub-classes, there may be finer grammatical distinctions that justify setting up subsets of a particular sub-class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full lexical forms</th>
<th>Grammatical forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Open</strong></td>
<td><strong>Closed</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOUNS Open</td>
<td>NOUNS Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common nouns</td>
<td>Relational nouns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proper names and vocatives</td>
<td>Location nouns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Numerals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VERBS Open</td>
<td>PROFORMS Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitive verbs</td>
<td>Personal pronouns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intransitive verbs:</td>
<td>Demonstrative pronouns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>Interrogatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stative, including adjectival verbs of human propensity, physical property</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VERBS Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transitive / Intransitive active verbs:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>meteorological</td>
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<td></td>
<td>interrogative</td>
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<td>Intransitive active verbs:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>motion and posture</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Stative verbs:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>quantitative</td>
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<td>negative</td>
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<td>adjectival verbs of</td>
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<td>dimension, difference,</td>
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<td>colour, value, difficulty, age</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Prepositions</td>
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<td>Conjunctions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coordinating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subordinating</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interjections and discourse particles

I follow Sasse (1993:683) in recognising interjections as neither full words nor function words, but as ‘uninflectable particles that function as equivalents as entire sentences’. As Schacter and Shopen say (2007:57), they can ‘constitute utterances in themselves’. Since interjections have no syntactic status, I do not include them above, but note that they are important forms in a language and describe them in 4.12.

Included also in that section is a short discussion of discourse particles, including ‘fillers’, and formulaic greetings.

4.4 The classes of noun and verb

Words described as either ‘nouns’, or ‘verbs’ have forms categorised in both open and closed lexical classes as listed in Table 4.1. Those listed in the closed class are limited in number and scope, as is shown in Chapters 6 (nouns), 9 (verbs), and 10 (adjectival verbs). But how do such words differ from each other? At first glance, it seems that this is a ‘verby’ language, and that the preference of speakers is to use many words predicatively. While a prototypical noun and a prototypical verb are entirely different in their morphosyntactic behaviour, there are certain members of what is called the ‘noun’ class or the ‘verb’ class that can sometimes behave similarly.

Words that express adjectival concepts function in the same way as intransitive verbs when in predicative function, and are classified as adjectival verbs, a subset of intransitive stative verbs. But there are some ‘adjectival words’ that also function similarly to nouns. So there is considerable variation and overlap in the different word groups.

A similar situation applies to categories that can be specified; some are common to two groups, some only to one. Membership in just one class is not always firmly fixed and the functions of some members of those classes can sometimes overlap.

The large word classes of nouns, verbs and their subsets are not described further here and the remainder of this chapter concentrates on those word classes that have members primarily in closed sets. Adverbs are the only full lexical word class that can be regarded as closed, although it could well be argued that particular phrasal adverbs are a potentially open set (see 4.5.2). Nouns and their open and closed subclasses are described in Chapter 6. Verbs and their open and closed subclasses, as listed in Table 4.1, are described in
Chapter 9. The subsets of stative verbs (open and closed) that express adjectival concepts are detailed in Chapter 10.

Table 4.2: Functions and category specifications of noun, verb, and adjectival verb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functions</th>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Adjectival verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>core argument of a verbal clause</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subject of a non-verbal clause</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>predicate of a non-verbal clause</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>object of a preposition</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>modifier to noun</td>
<td>some</td>
<td>some</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>modifier to verb</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>predicate of an intransitive verbal clause</td>
<td>some</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>predicate of a transitive verbal clause</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>able to be specified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>definiteness</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quantifiability</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ability to enter into possessive constructions</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plurality 2</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>polarity</td>
<td>restricted 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intensifiability</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>degree periphrastically marked</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tense, aspect, mood</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I first discuss the Adverb class, then move to a description of Grammatical Forms, which are discussed in the order in which they are listed in Table 4.1. The only exception to this is that ‘General modifiers’ are discussed after adverbs, since some of the general modifiers can also function adverbially.

4.5 Adverbs

Adverbs are defined as per Schachter and Shopen (2007:20) as words which ‘function as modifiers of constituents other than nouns’. They further note that the range of adverbs can vary with the ‘type of constituent modified’. 4

In Tamambo, their scope is either sentential where they set the frame for an entire proposition, or they modify a verb or adjectival verb in predicative function. That is, the ‘scope of adverbs always includes some overt or covert predicative element as its central member’ (Sasse 1993:666).

Where these words function as sentential modifiers, they must occur either at the beginning or the end of the proposition, and cannot occur within it. Where they modify single words as predicates, they are adjacent to the verb, either directly following or

---

1 This excludes words classed as phrasal adverbs that modify verbs, or verbs functioning in a serial verb construction.
2 This refers to plurality as shown morphologically on the word, rather than to number cross-referencing, as is shown by an obligatory subject pronoun in a VP.
3 In semi-verbal clauses only, see 3.5.
4 Note that ‘General Modifiers’ as shown in Table 4.1, can sometimes, but not always, function in the same way as words classed here as ‘adverbs’; see 4.6.
preceding it. This depends to some extent on the subclass of adverbs to which they belong, as explained below. Unlike other full lexical words in this language, sentential and prehead phrasal adverbs cannot be affixed with inflectional or derivational affixes.

I differentiate adverbs into two subclasses on distributional grounds, which correspond to particular semantic sets. These are

i) sentential adverbs
ii) phrasal adverbs.

Both modify predicative elements, and neither subclass can function in any other capacity. But sentential adverbs function primarily to modify entire propositions, and in that capacity are always at the periphery of the proposition, either clause-initial or final. Such adverbs can function at phrase level, although this is unusual.

As well, there can be optional modifiers within a verb phrase that function adverbially. In many ways, they are similar to verbs in their morphological marking and syntactic behaviour, but they cannot function as independent verbs. Such modifiers are described in detail in 9.4.2. The two subclasses of adverbs and their semantic sets are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentential adverbs</th>
<th>Phrasal adverbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>modal</td>
<td>participatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>temporal</td>
<td>manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spatial</td>
<td>directional movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>non-resultative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.1 Sentential adverbs

These adverbs belong to small, closed subsets. Modal, temporal and spatial adverbs are ‘frame-setting’. They orient the addressee to the proposition by speaker attitude, or by setting the scene in time or place.

4.5.1.1 Modal modifiers

The only modal adverbs known to me in this language are *sondo* ‘maybe’ and *aisoro* ‘perhaps’ (lit. ‘should it finish thus’). They are both used to modify propositions and occur clause initially with a verbal clause.

(1) *Sondo ku-mbo jivo Vila.*
    maybe 1SG-FUT go.down V.
    ‘Maybe I’ll go to Vila.’ (#c.821)

In the next example, *sondo* functions as a clause-initial modifier, where the *sondo* clause in turn modifies the previous verbal clause.

(2) *Na matavosai na loli-a sondo a duhu.*
    3PL be.able 3PL do-O:3SG maybe 3SG good
    ‘They probably can do it okay’ (lit. they are able to do it maybe it might be good.)
    (C-T86:144)

The adverb *sondo* is not often used by younger speakers and appears to be losing ground to *aisoro*, which is also clause-initial modifying a proposition. The latter is
lexicalised from *a-iso-ro* (3SG.irrealis-finish-thus). (See also 12.7.3 for the literal and aspectual uses of *a-iso*.)

(3)  
\[
\text{*A-iso-ro* } \text{i} \text{al} \text{e} \text{ i} \text{au} \text{ ku} \text{ mate...}
\]
3SG-finish-thus if IP:1SG 1SG die  
‘Perhaps if I die...’ (lit. it might finish thus if I die...) (C-T86:143)

### 4.5.1.2 Temporal modifiers

Temporal adverbs refer to those full words that set the scene in time. In this language, there is also a rich source of lexicalised phrases which function with prepositions to locate the temporal setting (see 8.2.2 for some examples).

#### Location in time

These adverbs must come at the beginning (preferably) or end of the clause that they modify. They cannot occur clause internally.

- **tovona** ‘now’
- **barindi** ‘today’
- **balosuro** ‘present time, nowadays’
- **natalanovi** ‘a day or two ago’
- **nananovi** ‘yesterday’
- **asetohi** ‘day after tomorrow’
- **avuho** ‘tomorrow’

As well, there are other words that are classed here as adverbs, but which also have other functions:

- **tuai** ‘long ago, in the olden days, a long time’
- **talom** ‘before, first of all’

As adverbs indicating location in time:

(4)  
\[
\text{**Tuai, karai nia le ovi lete sevu ...**}
\]
long.ago flying fox IP:3SG TA live never hang.upside.down  
‘Long ago, Flying Fox never lived hanging upside down ...’ (Nt-T29:2)

(5)  
\[
\text{**Ne talom-ro, tamaute mo tete.**}
\]
but before-thus white.person 3SG negative  
‘But so before, there were no white people.’ (C-T86:59)

As well, *tuai* can function as an intransitive verb, both as an adjectival verb to modify nouns, and as a verbal predicate (10.3.6), and *talom* often functions as an ordinal number (6.2.5.2).

Some words referring back to a specific time can be indicated by suffixing with the 3SG possessive -*na*, as in *bongi-na* ‘that day’ (7.4.1.4). From that suffixed construction where days in the past begin with *na*, the number of days can be further added. Lexemes denoting actual days in the past also begin with *na*, such as ‘yesterday’ *nananovi*, ‘day or two ago’ *natalanovi*.

- **bongi-na-arua** is abbreviated to *bongnarua* ‘two days ago’
- **day-P:3SG-two**
And similarly

- **bongi-na-atolu** ➔ **bongnatolu** ‘three days ago’
- **bongi-na-avati** ➔ **bongnavati** ‘four days ago’, etc.

For words referring to days in the future, the structure is as follows:

- **bongi arua** ➔ **bongarua** ‘two days hence’
  - day-two

And similarly

- **bongi-atolu** ➔ **bongatolu** ‘three days hence’
- **bongi-avati** ➔ **bongavati** ‘four days hence’

Note that terms for specific days in the future begin with **a**, such as ‘tomorrow’ **avuho**, ‘day after tomorrow’ **asetoho**. For example:

(6) **Avuho (bongavati/asetoho)**  
    **ku jivo Vila.**
    tomorrow (four days hence/day after tomorrow) 1SG go.down V.
    ‘Tomorrow (four days hence/day after tomorrow) I’m going to Vila.’

**Frequency of time or number**

These are preferred at the end of the proposition that they modify, but occasionally **turuvui** can occur clause-initially.

- **Time** **turuvui** ‘always’.
- **Time or number** **vahatari** ‘often’. (This has been described to me as ‘not a children’s word’ suggesting that it may not be used a great deal.)
- **Number** **vahatea, vaharua** etc. ‘once, twice’ etc., **arua-ruahi, atolu-toluhi** etc. ‘in twos, in threes’ etc.

(For detail on such number terms, see 6.2.5.)

(7) **Mo-le loli-a sohena turuvui.**  
    3SG-TA do-O:3SG the.same always.
    ‘He always did the same way.’ (N.ch-T6:6)

(8) **Tamalohi rindi mo vano Alotu vahatari.**  
    person REF 3SG go Santo often
    ‘That man often goes to Santo.’ (#e.323)

In addition, a much-used lexicalised phrase **aiente bong** ‘sometimes’ can occur clause initially. The concept of ‘never’ is expressed by a grammatical particle **lete**, used within a VP (11.4.6.1).

---

5 Mosel and Hovdhaugen (1992:133-4) refer to ‘deictic temporal nouns’ in Samoan where those ‘formed by **ana**’ refer to the past and those formed by **a** to the future …’. This would suggest a similar history for the Samoan forms and for these Malo forms **na** and **a**.
**Duration of time**

There is only one adverb in my data that indicates only duration of time: *losu* ‘forever, for a very long time’ that follows the VP. In my data it is rarely used, and there are no examples attested with a transitive verb.

(9) *Mo matavosai na sora-e, mo ovi losu.*

3SG know ART talk-NOM 3SG live forever

‘She knows the language, she’s lived (here) for ages.’ (C-T68:53)

Other durative concepts are expressed by different grammatical means, such as:

- ‘a short time’/ ‘not long’ lexicalised VP (*a-te tuai* lit. ‘to not be long’)
- ‘continuing’ serial verb construction (12.7.1)
- ‘for three days’/ ‘for Christmas’ prepositional phrases (8.2.5.1)

Additionally, there is some use of *tuai* ‘long ago’, which usually indicates location in time, but occasionally is used for duration of time (10.3.6).

**4.5.1.3 Spatial /directional modifiers**

Spatial or locative adverbs occur at the periphery of the clause they are modifying. They are limited to three sets, two with a two-way distinction, one with a three-way distinction.

- **aien(i)** ‘here’
- **aie** ‘there’
- **roni** ‘here’
- **rola** ‘there’ (‘old’ word, rarely used, discussed below)
- **niani** ‘here’
- **niae** ‘there’ (close to addressee)
- **niala** ‘over there’

**aien(i) and aie**

These two adverbs are similar to location nouns (6.2.4) in that they can occur in the same syntactic slot as peripheral arguments. They are classed separately because they differ from location nouns in several ways:

i) they cannot function as ‘possessed’ in a possessive construction as location nouns can do

ii) they cannot function as oblique core arguments as location nouns can do

iii) they cannot modify nouns as location nouns can do.

Both begin with *ai-,* suggesting that they could derive from a POc locative proform *ai-*(Ross 1988:348, 459), though Lynch et al. (2002:72) posit the POc locative proforms for ‘here’ as *i* and ‘there’ as *a*. Adverb *aien* refers to ‘in this place’, and can be used with animates or non-animates.

(10) *Ro store nia a turu tau aien.*

thus story IP:3SG 3SG stand put here

‘So the story is to stop here.’ (Nk-T83:47)
Adverb aie refers to ‘another place that is not visible’. As one informant says, ‘you use aie when you can’t see it’. It also has an anaphoric reference, so that the ‘place’ would have already been referred to.

Mo ovi aie tovon nia ‘student’.
3SG live there when IP:3SG student
‘She lived there when she was a student.’ (#c.JB 96)

**roni and rola**

The adverb rola is mentioned by informants as an ‘old word’ for ‘there’, and that it is ‘from the east’. It is not ungrammatical to use it, and it appears quite often in old Bible translations, but I have not heard it in narratives or conversation, and have only one or two elicited examples.

Ku vano rola.
1SG go there
‘I went there.’ (#e.409a)

On the other hand, the other half of the pair, roni ‘here’, is used quite often in the west of the island, and for some reason it has enjoyed longer usage in the western dialect than has rola. It is primarily used when the speaker is referring to a visible place close to them, rather than a general location.

O mai roni!
2SG come here
‘Come here!’ (#c.485)

To respond to a query about someone’s location at a particular moment, one could say:

Nia roni.
IP:3SG here
‘He’s right here.’ (#c.575)

but not

Nia aien.
IP:3SG here
‘There was not a person living here.’ (Nk-T80:3)

niani, niae and niala

The set of niani (often nian), niae and niala refer to places that are visible, and to which the speaker often points. They translate as ‘here’, ‘there near you’ and ‘there/over there’ respectively. The three forms are used in the same form as demonstrative pronouns (4.7.2) and demonstrative modifiers (4.9.2), but in different slots and in different functions.

O mai ka eno niani ka tivovo ...
2SG come 1PL lie here 1PL cover.over
‘Come and we’ll lie here (and) cover ourselves …’ (Nt-T37:12)

---

6 See references to Landels in 1.5.2.
(17) Viraimbatu mo re, ‘lau niani, ku-te suiha.’
Ringfinger 3SG say IP:1SG here 1SG-NEG strong
‘Ringfinger said, “As for me here, I’m not strong”.’ (Nt-T32:26)

(18) O sivahi o mai niae?
2SG do.what 2SG come there
‘What did you do to get there?’ (Nt-T33:16)

(19) Mwer atea le ovi aulu niala le loli-a sohena.
male one TA live up.direction there TA do-O:3SG the.same
‘A man living up over there (speaker pointing) does it the same way.’ (C-T86:126)

So there are three sets with contrasting options but, in reality, they serve different functions and not all are commonly used. They are listed here in three groups for comparison according to spatial distance, direction, and semantic differences.

**Distant from speaker (two options)**

aie  ‘there’:
in that place (general term), non-visible, more remote, anaphoric reference.

niala  ‘there/over there’:
in that place (specific) visible or non-visible, but non-remote and in the direction where I am pointing (not used for anaphoric reference).

**Close to addressee (one option)**

niae  ‘there’:
a specific place close to you that we both can see (animate or non-animate referents, non-anaphoric). It is not used as much as the more contrastive niani and niala.

**Close by to speaker (three options)**

aien  ‘here’:
in this location or place as with a village or island, or ‘at this stage of events’ with, say, a narrative. The location in place or time are known but are fairly general entities; anaphoric reference.

niani  ‘here’:
this place near me where I am showing you (animate or non-animate referents; not used for anaphoric reference).

roni  ‘here’:
right here close to me (used with human referents; not used for anaphoric reference).

Certainly niani and roni are often interchangeable, although there seem to be slight semantic differences in some contexts.

4.5.2 Phrasal adverbs

There are a certain number of words which function as optional components in the verb phrase to modify the verb. Semantically, they indicate manner, type of movement, participation, non-result or a mitigating function. Grammatically, they cannot function independently as the head of a verb phrase, but function only to modify verbs, occurring
immediately adjacent to the verb either prehead or posthead. Although they show many verb-like characteristics, synchronically they function adverbially and are regarded in this analysis as phrase level adverbs. They are discussed individually in Chapter 9 and are listed here only.

4.5.2.1 Prehead modifiers

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{hase} ‘alone’, ‘independently’
  \item \textit{mandi} ‘simply’, ‘just’
  \item \textit{andi} ‘skilful’, ‘good at’
  \item \textit{limbo} ‘pretend’
\end{itemize}

4.5.2.2 Posthead modifiers

The modifiers that occur immediately posthead show strong similarities to serialising verbs and it is suggested (12.8.2) that their present function may well have grammaticalised from verbs in serial constructions. If this is so, then potentially these modifiers, as listed below, could constitute an open adverbial class to which other semantically sympathetic verbs could gravitate. However, the subclass is limited (in my data) to the list, as shown, of less than 20.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{lalihi} ‘in turn’, ‘one after the other’
  \item \textit{lulusi} ‘from one place to another’
  \item \textit{maravitu} ‘close to’, ‘near’
  \item \textit{(dali)dalihahi} ‘all around’
  \item \textit{bwaki} ‘encircling’
  \item \textit{wotowotongi} ‘facing’
\end{itemize}

\subsection*{Location or movement}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{tamahi} ‘with difficulty’
  \item \textit{wanju(hi)} ‘quietly’
  \item \textit{toho/tohi} ‘quickly’
  \item \textit{vonotahi} ‘carelessly’
  \item \textit{(vosa)vosai} ‘very well’, ‘perfectly’
\end{itemize}

\subsection*{Manner}

Non-result

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{lesi} ‘try’
  \item \textit{wati} ‘unable’
  \item \textit{vatarahi} ‘wait’
  \item \textit{vonohi} ‘for nothing’
\end{itemize}

4.6 General modifiers

There is a small closed group of words which function more widely as modifiers in that they can function as

sentential adverbs
phrasal adverbs
modifiers to words other than verbs.

Some can do two of the above, some all three. Because of their wider functional capacity, I class them separately from the ‘adverbs’ described in 4.5.

4.6.1 Intensifiers

This set of only two modifiers straddles the subclasses of sentential and phrasal adverb, since one of the intensifying modifiers asena behaves grammatically as a sentential adverb in that it can modify verbs or whole propositions, while the other, tina, functions at phrase level.

asena ‘a lot’, ‘very’
tina ‘really’, ‘too’

asena

The most common use of asena is to intensify an intransitive verb (stative or active) directly following the predicate, as in the following examples:

(20) Mo duhu asena.
3SG good INTEN
‘It’s very good.’ (#c.248a)

(21) Mo-te kiri asena, ne lolo-na vanua-ku mo aira.
3SG-NEG rain INTEN but inside-P:3SG house-P:1SG 3SG wet
‘It didn’t rain a lot, but the inside of my house was wet.’ (#c.1101)

It can also intensify another modifier as in the next example:

(22) Ku-bo viti na store vorivori etea,7 kastom store,
1SG-FUT tell ART story little one custom story
matan Naone Baravu tuai tuai tuai asena.
PREP Naone Baravu long.ago long.ago long ago INTEN
‘I’m going to tell a little story, a custom story, about Naone Baravu a very long long, long time ago. ‘(Nk-T93:2)

And it can modify entire propositions, where it is clause final following the object of the transitive verb, as in:

(23) Hambu mo han lima-na asena.
fire 3SG burn hand-P:3SG INTEN
‘The fire burnt her hand badly.’ (#e.849)

7 This speaker was from the ‘east’; numerals begin with e rather than a and there is no prenasalisation of stops.
(24) Tovon le uluvou mo-le boi unu-i heletu asena.
when TA young 3SG-TA like hunt-LINK pig INTEN
‘When he was young he used to like pig-hunting a lot.’ (#e.130)

\textit{tina}

This modifier also functions as an intensifier, and often is interchangeable with \textit{asena},
directly following an intransitive verb. Where a grammatical environment allows either
\textit{tina} or \textit{asena}, then \textit{tina} appears preferred by younger people <25, and is more informal.

(25) mo duhu tina
3SG good INTEN
‘it’s really good’

(26) ku ronjo tina
1SG sick INTEN
‘I was really sick’(#e.107)

(27) ne mo lokoloko tina.
but 3SG lazy INTEN
‘but he’s really lazy.’ (#e.1151)

Sometimes the use of \textit{tina} is not complimentary, and the intensification can be a
complaint, much the same as in English. Thus the following would depend on context and
intonation as to which interpretation is appropriate.

(28) Bot mo walau tina.
boat 3SG run INTEN
‘The boat really goes’/ ‘The boat goes TOO fast.’ (#c.420a)

The two intensifiers are compared in the following examples, where the use of \textit{tina} can
alter the literal meaning of the preceding verb:

(29a) Mo mangisi asena.
3SG happy INTEN
‘She’s very happy.’ (#e.420b)  ‘She’s proud.’ (#e.420c)
(thinks too much of herself.)

Syntactically, \textit{tina} differs from \textit{asena} when modifying transitive verbs. It does not
follow the object to modify the entire proposition, as shown with \textit{asena} in (23) and (24),
but directly follows the verb, similarly to a serialising verb. In this environment, it is
suffixed with transitiviser -hi, and in turn is suffixed with an object pronoun (see 9.4.2.2
and 9.2.4.3 for comparison to and similarities with other verbal modifiers).

(30) Betty mo toro na tamalohi mwende le losu
B. 3SG drop ART person particular.one TA strike
\textit{tina-hi-a}
INTEN-TR-O:3SG
‘Betty left the man who used to really beat her/who beat her a lot.’ (#e.693a)
4.6.2 Limiters

There are just two modifiers with a limiting function, *manihi* and *sivo*.

**manihi as phrasal adverb**

This modifier functions to limit the reference of the modified component. It directly follows the verbal predicate that it modifies. I gloss it as LIM for limiter, and it translates as ‘nothing but’, ‘only’ or ‘just’.

(31) *Aiente bongi tarusa mo tamata manihi.*  
some day sea 3SG calm LIM  
‘Sometimes, the sea is nothing but calm.’ (WI-T8:6)

(32) *No-le loli sava? Ka-le sora manihi.*  
2PL-TA do what 1PL-TA talk LIM  
‘What are you doing? We’re only/just talking.’ (#c.240)

See also 4.12.4 for use of *manihi* in a standard formalised response.

**manihi as modifier to a noun**

As well as functioning as an adverb, limiter *manihi* can also function to modify nouns, following the noun that it modifies, limiting the reference to that referent only.

(33) *Ku vai-a matai mana-e manihi.*  
1SG do-O:3SG PREP laugh-NOM LIM  
‘I did it just for fun.’ (#e.1159d)

(34) *Nira avisa manihi na mai.*  
IP:3PL few LIM 3PL come  
‘There were only a few that came.’ (#e.1162c)

(35) *Tahisa-na mo mate mo-iso sui-na manihi le eno.*  
friend-P:3SG 3SG dead 3SG-finish bone-P:3SG LIM TA lie  
‘Her boyfriend was already dead and nothing but his bones were lying there.’ (Nk-T12:16)

**sivo as modifier to numerals**

This is a limiter used with cardinal numerals. It is frequently abbreviated to *s~si* in fast connected speech, especially by younger people, and in its abbreviated form is cliticised to the numeral. I gloss it as RES for ‘restriction of number’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numeral + limiter</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>atea sivo</em></td>
<td><em>ateasi</em> / <em>ateas</em></td>
<td>just one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>avati sivo</em></td>
<td><em>avatisi</em> / <em>avatis</em></td>
<td>just four</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 4

(36) Ne atea sivo mo-ta mai barindi.  
But one RES 3SG-REP come today  
‘But just one came again today …’  (C-T86:117)

(37) Avisa-s na mai.  
few-RES 3PL come  
‘Only a few came.’ (#c.1162b)

See also -si as a ‘downplaying’ discourse particle, 4.12.2.

4.6.3 sohena

This is a word that does not fit easily into any particular class because of its variation in distribution and in function. Rather than slot it into a particular category, I list it separately here as ‘isolated word’, a term used by Mosel and Hovdhaughen (1992:160) for similar words in Samoan. It is translated as ‘the same’, ‘in the same way’, ‘be the same’, ‘like that’. I gloss it as ‘the same’. It is similar in form to preposition sohen(i) ‘like’ (introduced in 3.4.2.3, see also 8.2.4). It is possible that their present forms derive from:

*sohe + ni*, reflecting POc preposition *ni*  
*sohe+ na*, reflecting POc article *na*

However that may be, sohena can occur in the following functions:

- phrasal adverb  
- sentential adverb  
- modifier to noun  
- NP predicate of a semi-verbal clause (3.5)  
- verb in restricted environment (9.3.2.3).

While attested in all these functions, it is most often used in a modifying role.

sohena as phrasal adverb

As a phrasal adverb, it directly follows the intransitive verb or the object of the transitive verb:

(38) ka-te tohotoho sohena.  
1PL-NEG play the.same  
‘we didn’t play like that.’  (C-T89:42)

(39) Na loli-a sohena matai suli-suli-a  
3PL do-O:3SG the.same PREP RED~burn.off-NOM  
mana lavo-lavo-a.  
PREP RED~plant-NOM  
‘They did it the same way for the burning off and the planting.’ (Nk-T3:5)

sohena as sentential adverb

As a sentential adverb, it comes at the beginning or end of the clause that it modifies:
(40) *Mo hilo mo vano ana bua sohena, mo soari...*
3SG look 3SG go PREP deep.water the.same 3SG see
‘He kept on looking into the deep water like that, and saw…’(Nk-T85:12)

(41) *Mo iso sohena puskat a vano ana tano*
3SG finish the.same cat 3SG go PREP garden
‘Then in the same way pussycat would go to the garden.’ (N.ch-T2:3)

sohena as modifier to a noun

(42) *Are o sai daui ana bongi sohena, nia*
if 2SG search coconut.crab PREP day the.same IP:3SG

le duhu manihi ne...
TA good LIM but
‘If you look for coconut crab on days like that, it’s okay but …’ (Wi-T8:13)

4.7 Proforms

For this language, the term ‘proform’ encompasses personal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns that substitute for nouns or a NP, and interrogative forms that substitute for words from several word classes.

4.7.1 Personal pronouns

The term ‘personal pronoun’ here indicates a form which

1) substitutes for a noun or a noun phrase as third person, singular or plural number, and occurs in the same syntactic slot, or

2) cross-references a noun or NP in the verb phrase by indicating person and number.

All personal pronouns distinguish between first, second and third person and there is also an inclusive and exclusive distinction for first person plural. Gender is not specified for any person on pronominal marking. Unlike some Oceanic languages, there is no particular pronominal marking for dual, although *arua* ‘two’ is often used after independent pronouns, such as *hinda arua* ‘we two’, *nira arua* ‘the two of them’.

There are four classes of pronouns, as is common in Oceanic languages (Lynch et al 2002:35):

- independent pronouns
- subject pronouns
- object pronouns
- possessive pronouns
Table 4.3 Pronominal paradigm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Independent pronouns</th>
<th>Subject pronouns</th>
<th>Object pronouns</th>
<th>Possessive Pronouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1SG</td>
<td>iau</td>
<td>ku</td>
<td>-(l)au</td>
<td>-ku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG</td>
<td>niho</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>-ho</td>
<td>-m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG</td>
<td>nia</td>
<td>mo (realis)</td>
<td>-a/-e</td>
<td>-na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL.I</td>
<td>hinda</td>
<td>ka</td>
<td>-nda</td>
<td>-nda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL.E</td>
<td>kamam</td>
<td>ka</td>
<td>kamam</td>
<td>-mam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL</td>
<td>kamim</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>kamim</td>
<td>-mim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3PL</td>
<td>nira</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>-ra</td>
<td>-ra</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.7.1.1 Independent pronouns

An independent pronoun can function as the head of a noun phrase. In that capacity, it can function as a core argument of a verbal clause or a non-verbal clause in subject role. An independent pronoun does not function as the object argument of a verbal clause. But as Table 4.3 shows, the object pronouns are identical to the independent pronouns for first person plural exclusive and second person plural, and often for first singular (according to phonological conditioning), and the other object pronouns closely resemble the free forms. So it can be suggested that historically, the free independent pronouns were able to function in both subject and object roles in verbal clauses just as other NPs do, and that over time, the other independent pronouns (2SG, 3SG, 1PL.I and 3PL) weakened phonologically to the present day forms in object role.

The close affinity of independent pronouns to other NPs in grammatical behaviour is supported by the fact that they can occur in the same slot as any NP as a subject, and similarly to other NPs, they can be modified by numerals (6.4.8). But unlike common noun NPs, independent pronouns cannot be modified by adjectival verbs or quantifiers. Nor do they enter into possessive constructions or be affixed to derive a different word.

As mentioned above and discussed in Chapter 3, independent pronouns can substitute for nouns in the subject slot of a verbal clause or in some non-verbal clauses. But they can also be used together with a noun subject for emphasis. In ordinary discourse, they are not used a great deal, because the obligatory cross-referencing subject pronouns fulfil the function of indicating person and number in the verb phrase, and speakers do not generally introduce lots of new referents into one slab of speech. It is not ungrammatical to use independent pronouns together with the preverbal subject pronouns when the subject of discourse is already established, but it sounds stilted and unnecessary to native-born speakers except in the following situations:

- to indicate the person and number of a conjoint NP
- to introduce a new referent or to topicalise with left dislocation
- to reintroduce a referent into the discourse
- to emphasise the participation of a known referent
- to indicate the person and number of the subject (without a preverbal subject pronoun) in a non-verbal identifying clause.

Each of these points is briefly discussed below.
**Indication of the number in a conjoined NP**

Where two NPs are conjoined as a subject and one is an independent pronoun, the independent pronoun reflects the number of the conjoint NP. For example, if we take the two short verbal clauses following:

(43a) **Ku vano**  (43b) **Nancy mo vano.**

1SG go N 3SG go

‘I went.’ ‘Nancy went.’

and then combine them to reflect the same information in one verbal clause, the independent pronoun must change to include the total number of subjects.

(44) **Kamam mai Nancy ka vano.**

IP:1PL.E PREP N. 1PL go

‘Nancy and I went.’

This is discussed in more detail in 6.6.1.3.

**Introduction of a new focus of discourse in verbal clauses, or topicalisation of known subject**

Where a new referent is introduced into discourse, or a new focus is introduced, the independent pronoun is often used.

(45) **Ne kamam mwende talom, kamam ka-le loli**

But IP:1PL.E particular.one first IP:1PL.E 1PL-TA do

na hinau niaro.

ART thing EMPH

‘But we who came first, [well] as for us, we do this very thing.’ (E-T25:12)

Where a ‘known’ subject NP is topicalised by left dislocation, it is followed by the independent pronoun:

(46) **Natu-na atea, nia mo hao ana vu-mambwe atea.**

child-P:3SG one IP:3SG 3SG climb PREP TREE-chestnut one

‘As for that one son of his, he climbed into a chestnut tree.’ (Nk-T73:6)

This was to strongly differentiate ‘the son’ in the story line from his father, the chief, who was under the tree teaching secret dances to other men, not knowing that his son was watching – the dances were forbidden to be seen by children.

In the same way, in the next example, the subject NP is followed by the independent pronoun prior to the VP. This is to emphasise the subject of the sentence, the five older brothers and their actions, as a contrast to their little brother, the main character of the story, who wanted to do things alone and independently.
(47) Mo mati, vorae alima, nira na-le bara~mbara…
   3SG low.tide siblings five IP:3PL 3PL-TA RED~walk.on.reef.
   ‘The tide went out and the five brothers, they were walking around on the reef…’
   (Nt-T50:9)

Reintroduction of a referent into the discourse

Where there is more than one referent in a narrative, the independent pronoun is used when a referent is reintroduced, or when the speaker is switching backwards and forwards from one referent to another.

In the next example, the speaker is explaining the cooking procedures of a group of women of which she is a part, but since she is also referring to the fire they are using, she uses the first plural inclusive pronoun to switch back to her own group’s activity.

(48) Ka tau tahasi mo sahe, le hani.
   1PL put.in.place stone 3SG go.up TA burn

   Hani\(^8\) hinda ka-le biri~mbiri.
   burn IP:1PL.I 1PL-TA RED~grate
   ‘We put the stones up (on the fire) and it’s burning. While it’s burning we do the grating [of the yams].’ (E-T59:6)

Similarly in the next example, the story line is switching between the actions of one old man and a group of warriors, who are urging him to leave his house for his own safety in the imminent fighting. The old man is insistent on staying, and then the group is reintroduced as the subject into the story line:

(49) Mo re, “No vano, iau ku-le ate, le-ate.”
   3SG say 2PL go IP:1SG 1SG-TA stay TA-stay

   Nira na wala-tiu na vanua na vano...
   IP:3PL 3PL run-leave ART house 3PL go
   ‘He said, “You go, (but) me, I’m staying, staying”. They ran off away from the house…’(Nt-T41:34)

Emphasis on the participation of a known subject in verbal clauses

This is one of the most common uses of the independent pronoun, where the referent is already known, but the speaker wishes to emphasise the participatory role of that referent. Compare the following, where one question puts more emphasis on the subject:

(50) O vano?
   2SG go
   ‘Are you going?’ (#c.571)

---

\(^8\) The speaker, talking quickly and informally, has omitted the TA marker le prior to the verb; in more careful speech a speaker would repeat the le hani form from the previous clause.
Word classes

(51) Niho o vano?
IP:2SG 2SG go
‘Are YOU going?’

(See also iau in example (49) as an example of emphasis on a referent’s role.)

While an imperative usually does not require an independent pronoun, its use makes the utterance more forceful and directed. So in the following, the two story characters (in this case, two karai—flying foxes) were provoking one another to fight.

(52) Mo-iso-ro Manuaru mo re “Niho, niho o tiu talom!”
3SG-finish-thus M. 3SG say IP:2SG IP:2SG 2SG hit first
‘Then Manuaru said, “YOU, you hit first!”’ (Nt-T42:14)

The emphasis on subject participation, as indicated by the independent pronoun when the referent is already known, can also be an accusation, as in where a devil is found to be responsible for the demise of a child:

(53) Niho o hani natu-ku!
IP:2SG 2SG eat child-P:1SG
‘YOU ate my child!’ (Nt-T33:47)

Alternately it can be an expression of exasperation. In the following, a lazy reef heron and a hard-working dove had been finding shellfish on the reef to share; however the heron had been leaving all the collecting to the dove, who became cross and decided it was time for the heron to help.

(54) Lavwe-m niala! Niho o-mbo lai-a!
affect-P:2SG there IP:2SG 2SG-FUT take-O:3SG
‘That’s your job over there! YOU are going to get it!’ (Nt-T61:56)

Sometimes, the independent pronoun can follow after the verbal clause in a right dislocation, once again to focus on the subject (see 3.6.1).

Indication of the person and number of the subject of a non-verbal ascriptive clause

Independent pronouns are used in non-verbal ascriptive clauses (see 3.4.2) where the preverbal subject pronouns are never used.

(55) …matan nia Kastom dira asena, nia sora-e sohi.
because IP:3SG custom hard INTEN IP:3SG talk-NOM secret
‘…because it was a very hard custom, it was a secret story.’ (Nk-T73:26)

4.7.1.2 Subject pronouns

A subject pronominal is an obligatory constituent of the verb phrase, the inner core of a verbal clause (Table 3:1, Chapter 3) and indicates the person and number of the NP as subject. It can cooccur with the NP or independent pronoun (IP) in the subject slot, or it can function without either, where the subject is omitted (by a process of ellipsis) or already understood from context. In a verbal clause, there must be this subject pronominal clitic with or without an overt NP subject. The only exception is where the TA marker le is
used for 3SG, and this is described in Chapter 11. These subject pronouns cliticise to their immediate rightward component, in most cases a verb, but also can be a TA marker, as shown in 4.11.

The variation in 3SG subject pronouns, as seen in Table 4.3, arises in that mo is an archaic realis marker. It is still used by some older speakers in some contexts, following subject pronouns other than 3SG (see 11.3.1). But its use as realis with other person and number is uncommon, and mo is almost always in the function of jointly indicating 3SG person and number, + realis, for the subject pronoun. The use of a indicates 3SG person and number, + irrealis (discussed in the section on modality in Chapter 11). In all examples in this description, both a and mo are glossed just as 3SG, except where mo is clearly functioning as a realis marker. This variation in realis/irrealis with personal pronouns occurs only with the third singular subject pronouns.

### 4.7.1.3 Object pronouns

Object pronouns in form are the same as, or appear to be, abbreviations of the independent pronouns as previously mentioned. Object pronouns and NPs have an affinity in grammatical behaviour in that object pronouns or full NPs occur as object arguments, but not both. That is, object pronouns occur in the same syntactic slot as an NP object, but do not co-occur, other than when the O is topicalised by left dislocation, or in relative clauses. In such cases, a resumptive object pronoun is retained and cross-references the NP object for person and number. This prohibition against co-occurrence is fairly unusual for an Oceanic language, since many of the languages of the region have obligatory object pronominal cross-referencing on the verb to agree with the NP object.

There is some variation of 1SG and 3SG object pronouns, as shown in Table 4.3, according to phonological conditioning. Vowel i is deleted from 1SG iau in some environments (see 2.6.5.1). The variation in 3SG occurs because the handful of transitive verbs which end in -a, such as kula ‘dodge’, lumba ‘wrap up s.t.’, tua ‘slap’ cannot take object pronoun -a, but instead take -e as 3SG object, such as in ku lumbae ‘I wrapped it’; ku surae ‘I carried it (on my head)’, etc.

Object pronouns of 1SG, 2SG, 3SG, 1PL.I and 3PL cliticise to the immediate leftward component as explained in 4.11, whilst 1PL.E and 2PL remain independent grammatical forms.

### 4.7.1.4 Possessive pronouns

Possessive pronouns substitute for a NP possessor. They suffix to the possessed noun in direct possessive constructions or, in indirect possessive constructions, suffix to one of four classifiers as listed in 4.9.3.1. A detailed description of possessive constructions is given in Chapter 7.

### 4.7.1.5 Respect distinctions with personal pronouns

The second plural (kamim no, etc.) is used as an honorific distinction to express respect for the addressee, usually to much older people than the speaker, or to a person of some social esteem such as a pastor or chief. The use of the second singular pronoun (niho o) by a younger speaker may be seen as disrespectful of the age and wisdom of the other.

The first person plural inclusive (hinda) is often used when describing how things are done, as for example, different socio-cultural procedures such as planting yams, cooking island food, participating in various customs and so on. Since such a description does not
include the participation of the addressee, at least not at the time of speech, it appears to be a politeness gesture towards the speaker as being welcome and included in the group. It contrasts with the use of thanking someone, on behalf of a family or group, where the first person plural exclusive (*kamam*) is used.

### 4.7.2 Demonstrative pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns can be categorised into those indicating

- spatial deixis
- anaphoric reference
- emphatic reference.

They are generally invariant in form for person and number with one exception of a spatial deictic which can disambiguate plural (4.7.2.1).

#### 4.7.2.1 Spatial deictics

There is a two-way system based on distance relative to the speaker and addressee. They are differentiated from demonstrative modifiers (4.9.2.1) and spatial adverbs (4.5.1.3) on distributional grounds, in that they occur in core argument slots. They refer to animate or non-animate entities which are visible both to speaker and listener.

- **niani** ‘this one’ near to speaker
- **niala** ‘that one over there’ further away from both

(56) *Niani mo boni.*

this 3SG stink

‘This one stinks.’ (#e.576)

(57) *Niala mo tawera tina.*

that 3SG big INTEN

‘That one is really big.’ (#c.580)

But **niae** ‘that’ (near to addressee), which makes up a three-way set of demonstrative modifiers (4.9.2.1), is not used as a pronoun to my knowledge. In colloquial speech, **nirala** ‘those ones over there’ is used as a plural form of **niala**.

#### 4.7.2.2 Anaphoric reference

There are two terms that are used only for anaphoric reference:

- **mwende** ‘the particular one/s’
- **mwe** ‘the particular one’/‘the one obliged to’ (rarely used).

**mwende**

This pronoun is invariant for person and number, and can refer to animate or non-animate entities that are being made specific in their reference. It can function as an argument in all argument slots.
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(58) *Mo sahe, mwende na-le turu aulu na revei-a.*
3SG go.up particular.one 3PL-TA stand up.direction 3PL drag-O:3SG
‘He went up, and the ones standing up on top dragged her up.’ (Nt-T31:21)

In this function, it can be also modified by a demonstrative or emphatic modifier:

(59) *Simba niala mo duhu mo liu mwende niani.*
knife that 3SG good 3SG exceed particular.one this
‘That knife is better than this one.’ (#e.672)

As well as functioning as a proform and a NP in its own right as above, it can be used in the same form but in different slots as a demonstrative modifying a NP (4.9.2.2) or as a relative proform (14.2.2).

*mwe*

Most examples with *mwe* in this description are from the 1999 *Vuete Tamambo* ‘Tamambo Songs’, a new hymnbook that has incorporated some old hymns, together with others recently written by older members of the Avunatari community. The term *mwe* is also found in the bible translations dating from 1890s–1950s. Younger speakers (<35–40) tell me they understand the term, but that they themselves would not use *mwe*. It has three functions:

as a complementiser (14.3.7)
as a subordinating conjunction to adverbial purpose clauses (14.4.4.1)
as the singular form of *mwende*.

It is this last usage that an older speaker explained to me as:

‘*mwe* hemi wan man nomo, be *mwende* hemi fulap man’ (Bislama)
‘*mwe* is just one person, but *mwende* is lots of people’.

But the only occasional examples of this usage that I have seen appear in some hymns:

(60) *Hisa-ni Iesu mo duhu telei mwe mo domtau.*
named-LINK Jesus 3SG good PREP the.one 3SG believe
‘The name of Jesus is good to one who believes.’ (Wh-p.64)

The large word classes of nouns, verbs and their subsets are not described further here and the remainder of this chapter concentrates on those word classes that have members primarily in closed sets. Adverbs are the only full lexical word class that can be regarded as closed, although it could well be argued that particular phrasal adverbs are a potentially open set (see 4.5.2). Nouns and their open and closed subclasses are described in Chapter 6. Verbs and their open and closed subclasses, as listed in Table 4.1, are described in Chapter 9. The subsets of stative verbs (open and closed) that express adjectival concepts are detailed in Chapter 10.

When questioned, the younger informants knew the word *mwe* in this context, but described its use as ‘heavy’, or formal, and I have no examples of it occurring in this use as

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9 Most of the data on *mwe* is additional in this work to the original thesis.
anywhere but in written sources. So nowadays mwende is used to indicate both singular and plural roles as shown in (58) and (59) above.

The function that is sometimes now attested for mwe is as a proform where it indicates ‘the one who has an obligation’ to do something. It is used with independent pronouns in an appositional construction to indicate that the subject ‘should’ do something. For example:

(61) lau mwe ku vano ne ku-te boi.
    IP:1SG one.obliged 1SG go but 1SG-NEG like
    ‘I should go but I don’t want to. ‘(lit. I the one I go but I do not like) (#e.1153)

(62) Nia mwe a loli na no-na sahasaha-e
    IP:3SG one.obliged 3SG do ART CLFR-P:3SG work-NOM

    ne mo ronjo tina.
    but 3SG sick INTEN
    ‘He’s supposed to do his work but he’s really sick.’ (#e.591)

The usage of mwe (in this sense) in my data was elicited in examples where obligation was being expressed (‘I should go’, ‘he has to work’, etc.). But the use of Bislama mas ‘must’ has generally supplanted this use of mwe to indicate ‘should’, ‘must’, ‘supposed to’, as follows:

(63) Na mas vano.
    3PL must go
    ‘They must go’/ ‘they should go’.

4.7.2.3 Emphatic reference
niaro

This is a demonstrative pronoun with an emphatic or presentative element. It is glossed here as EMPH for emphatic.

(64) Niaro, evui-na-i no-ku stori.
    EMPH end-NOM-LINK CLFR-P:1SG story
    ‘That’s it, the end of my story.’ (Nt-T32:37)

(65) ...ne mara tuai no-na sala-i manji-a nia niaro.
    but man long.ago CLFR-P:3SG path-LINK fish-NOM IP:3SG EMPH
    ‘…but for men of olden days, their way of fishing was this very thing.’(E-T24:12)

Similarly to the other demonstrative pronouns, it is also used as a demonstrative modifier (4.9.2.3).

4.7.3 Interrogative proforms

Interrogatives are listed together here, but on distributional grounds belong to several different word classes.
4.8 Prepositions and conjunctions

4.8.1 Prepositions

Prepositions are grammatical forms that occur primarily with nouns. Distributionally, they directly precede nouns, pronouns, or some adjectival verbs, to form a prepositional phrase. Prepositions cannot occur in any other syntactic slot, nor can they be affixed or reduplicated to derive other forms.

Prepositions function to indicate the semantic role of the NP (or adjectival word) that they precede. The prepositional phrase then functions as an oblique core argument or at the periphery of a verbal clause, as a predicate of a non-verbal clause, or as an attribute of a NP.

This section outlines the range of prepositions in the language. Full detail of their roles and functions is given in Chapter 8. The eleven prepositions, in five loose semantic groupings, are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>i) locative and spatial</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>telei</em></td>
<td>‘to, from, together with’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ana</em></td>
<td>‘to, from, at, in’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii) comitative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>mai</em></td>
<td>‘together with, and’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>mana</em></td>
<td>‘together with, and’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii) similitative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>sohen</em></td>
<td>‘like’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv) reason and cause</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>matai</em></td>
<td>‘for, because, about’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>matana</em></td>
<td>‘for, because’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>mata-</em>, <em>matani</em></td>
<td>‘for, because’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interrogative sentences retain declarative word order but differ in their intonation patterns (2.8.3). Note that Tamambo also uses interrogative verbs (Chapter 9).

10 This numeral noun *avisa* also translates as ‘a few’ (see 6.2.5.4).
4.8.2 Derivations of some prepositions

Some words classed as prepositions show morphological and semantic characteristics of their earlier history. Many show characteristics of the possessive constructions where a NP possessor is linked with NP possessed (see 7.5.1). This derivational source of possessive constructions is sometimes very clear, in that the grammaticalisation still seems to be underway (see especially matai, matan etc.). But other times, it is tantalisingly suggestive of such possessive constructions, but is no longer as clearly derivative.

Others are transparently derived from combinations of POc article *na, POc personal article *i, or POc ‘instrumental, confective, refective’ 11 *ni (Ross 1988:461) with other forms. Both Tamambo mai and hini, for example, appear to be clear reflexes of POc *ma[i] ‘comitative’, and *[ki]ni ‘instrumental, refective’, two of the verbal prepositions described in Lynch et al. (2002:87).

4.8.3 Conjunctions

Conjunctions are grammatical forms that function to link phrases or clauses. There are two types of conjunctions, with smaller subsets within those types

i) conjunctive or disjunctive coordinators that link NPs or clauses, and
ii) subordinating conjunctions that link subordinate clauses to a main clause.

They are listed here only and their grammatical behaviour is described as follows:

- Conjunction/disjunction coordinating NPs: 6.6
- Conjunctions coordinating clauses: Chapter 13
- Conjunctions linking subordinate clauses: Chapter 14

**Coordination**

- Conjunctive coordination: mai/ mana ‘and, with’
- Disjunctive (alternative) coordination: tene ‘or’
- Adversative coordination: ne ‘but’

**Subordination**

- matan(i) ‘because’
- matan, matana ‘in order to, that’
- mwe ‘in order to, that’
- Verb re ‘say’ ‘that’
- are or ale ‘if’
- sohen ‘like’

---

11 Ross (1988:417) notes that he uses confective as ‘typically a concomitant, occasionally an instrument, with a verb of motion’ and refective as typically a stimulus, such as a source or cause, and often with a verb expressing some sort of psychological action.
4.9 Noun modifiers

4.9.1 Articles

There are two particles which function before nouns to indicate definiteness or indefiniteness, the former also functioning as a case marker:

- *na* definite direct object
- *te* indefinite or partitive.

Neither is grammatically acceptable before proper names or location nouns (see 6.4.1).

4.9.1.1 Article: *na*

Historically, the preposed common article *$na$/*$a$, reconstructed for Proto Eastern Oceanic, by Pawley (1972), also discussed extensively by Crowley (1985) as POc common article, and by Ross (1988), is clearly reflected in noun marking in Tamambo. This marking is shown with a grammatical particle *na* which is used only when a common noun is in O syntactic position. As already described in 3.3.1.2 when discussing the grammatical relation of 'object', *na* is a portmanteau whose functions are to indicate case, marking the O of a transitive verb, and to indicate definiteness. It is glossed as ART for article in this description because of its posited history.

In Crowley’s discussion (1985) of POc article *$na$/*$a$ he distinguished four different categories of eastern Oceanic languages, with respect to the way they reflect the original *$na$/*$a* (see also Lynch et al. 2002:71). This ranges from a zero-marking system to a system in which there is ‘a fully productive marking of all common nouns in most grammatical constructions’ (Crowley 1985:161). It would seem that the use of *na* in this language is part way towards his Type II category where there is a ‘residual non-productive system involving a morphologically fused reflex of *$na$ or *$a$, ... attached only before some nouns and used only in some marginal constructions’ (p.161). But though Tamambo *na* is fused in some prepositions (such as ana, hina), it still is grammatically separable from the noun in a particular grammatical environment. This grammatical behaviour is close to a criterion that Crowley gives for his Type III category, as ‘regularly separable from the noun in a fairly wide range of clearly definable grammatical contexts’ (1985:161). So article *na* here would appear to share characteristics of both the Type II and Type III categories described by Crowley, as far as the present development of the particle is concerned. See also 6.4.1.1 for more on article *na*.

A brief mention only is made here of *a-*, prefixed only before some cardinal numerals e.g. *atea* ‘one’ *arua* ‘two’ etc. (6.2.5.1), and now morphologically and phonologically part of the word. It is described in the section on prefixes (5.2.1.5).

4.9.1.2 Indefinite article: *te*

Article *te* indicates an undefined or indefinite number or quantity, or an approximate number, and I gloss it as INDEF for ‘indefinite’. It can occur before common nouns or numerals that are functioning as core arguments or as part of the possessor in a possessive construction. See also 3.3.1.2 where indefinite reference can be indicated on the O by no marking, or by article *na + atea*.

Unlike article *na, te* has no case marking function, and cannot cooccur with *na*. It is distinguished from quantifiers, which also precede the noun, in that it can occur prior to them. It is further distinguished from numbers in that numbers, when functioning as modifiers, occur after the noun.
**Word classes**

**With subject:**

(66)  
\[
A \text{ te } \text{ tamalohi le } \text{ ovi te} \text{ mo } \text{ tete}?
\]
3SG INDEF person TA live or 3SG negative  
‘Is somebody here or not?’ (Nk-T83:13)

**With object of transitive verb:**

(67)  
\[
\text{Ale na soari te } \text{ manji...}
\]
if 3PL see INDEF fish  
‘If they see some fish...’ (E-T23:0)

**Preceding a numeral:**

(68)  
\[
\text{Ku boi ku voli te arua.}
\]
1SG want 1SG buy INDEF two  
‘I want to buy about two.’ (#c.445)

**With possessor in a possessive construction:**

(69)  
\[
\text{Ku vano asa-ni te tamalohi ...}
\]
1SG go traditional.place-LINK INDEF person  
‘I go to some person’s place …’ (E-T75:19)

Article te possibly derives from POc indefinite common article *ta (Ross 1988:357–60). Crowley (2002b:590) also lists a similar particle /tE-/ that he glosses as ‘partitive’ in Mwotlap, a language further north in Vanuatu, and Anejom (southern Vanuatu) has an ‘indefinite singular’ tah (Lynch et al. 2002:731).

### 4.9.2 Demonstrative modifiers

Demonstrative modifiers are posthead noun modifiers. As with demonstrative pronouns (4.7.2), demonstrative modifiers can be differentiated into those that refer to

- spatial deixis
- anaphoric reference
- emphatic reference.

Their form is in most, but not all, cases the same as the demonstrative pronouns, but they occur in a different slot and with a different function.

#### 4.9.2.1 Spatial deictic modifiers

This is a three way system based on distance from the speaker:

- **niani** ‘this’/‘these’ close to speaker
- **niae** ‘that’/‘those’ close to addressee
- **niala** ‘that’/‘those’ distant from both

---

12 Abbreviation of conjunction tene .
As modifiers to nouns, they can occur directly following the NP or following an
adjectival verb. The terms are most often used to refer to animate or inanimate things that
are visible entities, but this need not always be so, as shown in (73) with niae.

niani

(70) Ka mai ana jara tawera niani...
1PL come PREP place big this
‘We came to this big place...’ (C-T86:42)

(71) O boi mwende niani tene mo tete?
2SG want particular one this or 3SG negative
‘Do you want this one or not?’ (#c.438)

niae

(72) Hinau niae o lai-a ambea?
thing that 2SG take-O:3SG where
‘Where did you get that thing?’ (Nt-T22:20)

(73) O male lai na no-m samburu niae telei-sei?
2SG just take ART CLFR-P:2SG magic that PREP-who
‘Who did you just get that magic of yours from?’ (C-T86:80)

niala

(74) Tamalohi niala nia tamalohi dandani.
person that IP:3SG person lie
‘That man is a liar.’ (#c.402 VV)

4.9.2.2 Anaphoric referential modifiers
There are two modifiers that are used posthead to refer back to NPs. These are

rindi  ‘the’, ‘that’/’those’
mwende ‘that’/’those’, ‘that/those particular’.

rindi

This modifier is used posthead to indicate prior reference and is invariant for person and
number. Modifier rindi is used posthead as a demonstrative modifier to indicate prior
reference, that is, a NP that has previously been introduced into the discourse. It can
modify either animate or non-animate referents, and is invariant for person and number. It
does not introduce a new referent, but is used to give a definite reference in a later clause
to a referent already introduced. It occurs in the same slot as the spatial demonstratives but
cannot cooccur with them (see Table 6:5 for order of ‘slots’).

The new referent (bolded) can be just in the preceding clause, as in the next example:
I’m not sure that the example I listed is correct. In the original text, I think they mean: ‘I’d like to tell a story, the story that my old dad explained to me about...’

(Nk-T73:1)

Alternately, the introduction can be at an earlier stage in that string of narrative or conversation, as in the next example, where both new referents (bolded) are introduced by **atea**:

(76) **Tamalohi atea, sumbwe tawera, mo voli na vavine atea...**

person one chief big 3SG buy ART woman one

‘A man, a big chief, bought a woman...’ (Nt-T72:1)

And then, several clauses later in the same narrative, the woman is reintroduced as a definite known referent who is topical to this string of discourse:

(77) **...ne vavine rindi mo-te boi-a.**

but woman REF 3SG-NEG like-O:3SG

‘... but the woman didn’t like him.’ (Nt-T72:3)

As long as the referent has been already introduced, it can be brought back as the current topic as given information at any time, by the use of **rindi** modifying the noun. For further examples of this use of **rindi**, see Appendix 2, Text 1, sentences 6, 12, 14, and 16.

**mwende**

As a posthead demonstrative modifying a noun, **mwende** is similar to **rindi** in that it narrows down the reference of a previously introduced entity, but it is more specific than **rindi**.

Because this word functions also as a pronoun (4.7.2.2), I keep the same gloss for both functions, but note that it occurs in a different distributional slot in the different functions.

(78) **Na-re “Mo tete, tamalohi mwende mo-ta mai.”**

3PL-say 3SG negative person particular.one 3SG-REP come

‘They said, “No, that particular person hasn’t come again.”’ (Nt-T36:31)

(79) **Lei mo walau mo vano mo mahere mo vano ana**

L. 3SG run 3SG go 3SG straight 3SG go PREP

wamba-i tanume mwende.

cave-LINK devil particular.one

‘Lei kept on running straight towards the cave of that devil.’ (Nt-T33:14)
4.9.2.3 Emphatic reference modifier

This modifier is in the same form as pronoun niaro (4.7.2.3). Similarly to the pattern for mwende above, it has the same gloss as the pronoun but as a modifier, it can only occur posthead.

(80) Vevesai mara~maranjea nira na rongovosai na kastom niaro.
    every RED~old.man IP:3PL 3PL know ART custom EMPH
    ‘All the old men know about this very custom.’ (E-T75:17)

This modifier can follow rindi where the referent has been previously introduced and now has definite, ‘given’ status (as shown by rindi). The NP is then further emphasised with niaro. Where the two modifiers cooccur, rindi is usually abbreviated to ri.

(81) Na turu ana bongi ri niaro, na vit~viti na tamalohi
    3PL stand PREP day REF EMPH 3PL RED~tell ART person
    na mai...
    3PL come
    ‘Then at that very moment, they call all the men to come...’ (E-T43:9)

(82) ... hinau ri niaro le ovi matua barindi...
    thing REF EMPH TA live right today
    ‘... this very thing lives on strongly today...’ (Nk-T22:37)

(83) Ro Kastom ri niaro, nia mo tauhunju tuai...
    thus custom REF EMPH IP:3SG 3SG start long.ago
    ‘So that particular custom, it started in olden times...’ (E-T75:17)

4.9.3 Possessive classifiers and linkers

4.9.3.1 Classifiers

Possessive classifiers are noun adjuncts that are used in indirect possessive constructions. There are four classifiers that are semantically based.

- **ha-** edible, including anything chewed or sucked
- **ma-** drinkable
- **no-** personal property, general term
- **bula-** personal property, living things for which one is responsible, e.g. growing plants, animals

They must be linked to the possessor by pronominal suffix, linker -ni or linker -na, according to the type of possessor (see 7.4.2).

- **ha-ku bweta ma-m ti**
  - CLFR-P:1SG taro CLFR-P:2SG tea
  - ‘my taro’ (to eat) ‘your tea’
4.9.3.2 Linkers

These are particles that suffix to a possessed NP preceding a NP possessor. They cannot occur elsewhere and have no other function than to link possessed to possessor. There are two sets depending on the type of possessive construction and the nature of the possessor.

**Linkers in direct possessive constructions (7.5.1)**

- *-i* common noun possessor
- *-ni* named or kin term possessor

```
vanua-i vai-mwera vanua-ni tama-ku
house-LINK PL-male house-LINK father-P:1SG
'men’s house' 'my father’s house'
```

**Linkers in indirect possessive constructions (7.5.4)**

- *-na* common noun possessor
- *-ni* names or kin term possessor

These linkers must suffix to a possessive classifier, as in:

```
(84) tano no-na tamalohi rindi
      garden CLFR-LINK man REF
      'the man’s garden/s'
```

```
(85) bweta bula-ni Sera
taro CLFR-LINK Sarah
      'Sarah’s taro’(growing)
```

4.9.4 Quantifiers

Quantifiers are noun modifiers that can occur either before or after the noun to indicate non-specific quantity. They are differentiated from numerals in that they indicate non-specific quantity, and function in a different syntactic environment.

**Prehead**

*aiente* ‘some’ (with reference to time, place)
*vevesai* ‘every’, ‘each of’

**Pre or Posthead**

*tari* ‘many’

For examples and more discussion on each, see 6.4.3. There are also quantifying nouns, described in 6.2.5.5, and quantifying verbs, described in 9.2.4.3.
4.10 Verb modifiers

Some verbal modifiers have already been referred to as phrasal adverbs in 4.5.2. This section briefly enumerates the other modifiers that can occur within the verb phrase, and exemplification and discussion of all of the following is given in Chapter 9, (for the negative particle) or in Chapter 11 (for all TAM modifiers).

4.10.1 Negative particle

Negative particle *te occurs immediately before the verb and expresses negative polarity on the verb, in the same manner in all types of clauses.

(86) Ka-te ate aimo.
1PL-NEG sit home
‘We weren’t home.’ (#c.196)

This particle would appear to reflect ‘a negative particle *ta which preceded the verb phrase’ in POc (Lynch et al. 2002: 88). There is also a negative verb tete in Tamambo, described in 9.2.4.5.

4.10.2 TAM modifiers

There are a limited number of tense, aspect and modality marking particles that occur, only prehead, in the verb phrase. A number of aspectuals are shown in serial verb constructions, and irrealis marking is shown either by adverbs or, in 3SG only, with a variation in the subject pronouns.

These TAM particles follow the subject pronoun as an optional component within the verb phrase. In the list that follows, their meaning is given followed by their gloss in brackets. All are discussed in Chapter 11.

- mbo Future (FUT)
- m(o) Realis (REAL) This is a residual marker only, used rarely in this function.
(−)le i) IMPERFECTIVE (basic meaning) (TA)
     ii) relative time (secondary meaning) for 3SG only (TA)
ta repeated again (REP)
male recent past (REC)
tele ‘not yet’
tete ‘never’

4.11 Clitics

Clitics are regarded here as phonologically light particles that attach to an adjacent word or to another clitic. They are always grammatical forms rather than full lexical forms; they do not form a particular word class, but cut across several word classes.

Cliticisation is a process of attaching to a host, and so can often appear superficially similar to the behaviour of some affixes. As Bickel and Nichols (2007:175) observe, clitics are ‘unrestricted as to the syntactic category of the word they attach to’, while affixes are ‘usually more selective in which host they take’. All clitics in this language are
grammatical forms, rather than inflectional or derivational affixes, and they attach to an adjacent word or another clitic according to a distributional rule, and not because that host word is a member of a particular word class. Tamambo affixes, on the other hand, do attach to members of particular word classes, and often are even more selective, attaching only to a small subclass of certain word classes.

Additionally, as mentioned above, clitics are phonologically light, and when they attach, they are then part of a new phonological word, as shown by stress patterns (see 2.7.1 for phonological word and 2.7.3 for further examples with clitics). The grammatical forms that cliticise, and the distributional rules that affect them are given below.

### 4.11.1 Clitics at phrase level

i) All subject pronouns cliticise rightward to a host, whether it be a verb, a TAM or negative particle, or a verbal modifier, all within the verb phrase.

- *ku vano* → *kuváno* 'I go' / 'I went'
- *ku le vano* → *kubele váno* 'I am going'
- *ku hase vano* → *kuháse váno* 'I go by myself'

ii) Prehead TAM markers similarly cliticise rightward to the verb, if they have not already been joined by the subject pronoun, e.g.

- *le le ate* → *leáte* 's/he’s there'
- *mbo and ta o mbo ta mai* → *ömbo tamái* ‘will you come back’

iii) Object pronouns, with the exception of first plural exclusive and second plural (which retain the form of independent pronouns) cliticise leftwards to a host, whether it be a verb or a modifier, e.g.

- *mo viti iau* → *movitiáu* ‘he told me’
- *mo viti wanjuhi iau* → *moviti wanjùhiáu* ‘he told me quietly’

But *mo viti kamam/kamim* → *moviti kamám/kamim* ‘he told us/you’

iv) Articles *na* and *te* cliticise rightwards to the noun, e.g.

- *na manji* → *namánji* ‘the fish’
- *te manji* → *temánji* ‘some fish’

### 4.11.2 Clitics at clause level

Conjunctions *ne* ‘but’ and *te(ne)* ‘or’ cliticise to the first word of the clause that they precede.

(87) *ne sasatti-na mo mai tovoni bongi heli–heli-a*  
but bad-P:3SG 3SG come when day RED–dig.yam-NOM

*ne=sásatína momái tovón bóng hélhelía*  
‘But the worst of it was at harvesting time.’ (lit. but the bad of it comes time of yam digging) (Nt-T3:6)
4.12 Interjections, discourse particles, and greetings

I regard interjections for this language as words, usually exclamatory, which function as equivalents of exclamatory sentences or whole utterances. Generally, they are indications of the speaker’s attitude towards an event or what has been expressed in a previous statement.

On the other hand, there are discourse particles that are not equivalents of sentences, but instead function to keep the attention of the addressee, to downplay what is being said, or to check if the hearer is understanding the message— in other words to ‘solicit the hearer’s attitude’. Another kind of discourse particle is what I term a ‘filler’, which is used to maintain the speaker’s turn and hearer’s attention, while the speaker is formulating their next utterance.

Neither interjections nor the ‘discourse particles’ can be affixed or inflected. They have no syntactic status but function for pragmatic reasons only. The following are some that are of high usage.

Short greetings are also included here as ritualised, formulaic speech forms.

4.12.1 Interjections

Interjections attested are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interjection</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>io!</td>
<td>‘yes’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jut!</td>
<td>[tSSSSSt] a noise made to attract someone’s attention, either closeby or say, at some distance down a path or across a road. This is also common elsewhere in Vanuatu. (jutihī is the Tamambo verb to describe it)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ewe!</td>
<td>[ɛwe] exclamation of surprise or irritation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>welelei!</td>
<td>exclamation of surprise, such as seeing someone unexpectedly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sore!</td>
<td>exclamation of concern, sympathy (not an apology) from Bislama, in turn, from the English ‘sorry’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>atetewati!</td>
<td>‘impossible!’ ‘can’t be done!’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hinavono</td>
<td>‘doesn’t matter’, ‘no problem’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aen(i)!</td>
<td>‘truly!’ ‘really!’ an expression of surprise or disbelief at what one has been told (equates to Bislama Tru!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aente!</td>
<td>‘no idea! ‘don’t ask me!’ as with a shrug of shoulders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mosva!</td>
<td>‘what! whatever happened!’ an expression of dismay or astonishment (from mo siva lit. ‘it is doing what’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>batuhe!</td>
<td>‘that’s right!’ ‘for sure!’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

13 This is a question I am asked on a regular basis each time I visit Malo.
14 This is an expression borrowed from Schachter (1985:58), and repeated in Schachter and Shopen (2007:57), who use it in regard to mood markers.
niaro!    ‘that’s it then’ ‘okay, that’s it!’ as when s.t. is finished or presented (4.7.2.3)

(h)intama?    ‘why?’ ‘why on earth?’ a strong response that is querying an unexpected or unwelcome action (from hini tama lit. ‘by the father’)

4.12.2 Discourse particles
te ‘eh’

This is something like the Australian English word-final ‘eh’ or ‘you know’, and is used to elicit some sort of acquiescence from the hearer that they are understanding what is being said, or seeking affirmation of the message. It is used in informal discourse, and appears to be used rather more by women than by men. It is usually phrase final, and can attach to the end of any kind of full lexical word, as in:

(89)  Ro boe ngalailima-te tene..?
     thus boar fifty-DIS or
     ‘So there were fifty pigs eh, or .. ?’ (C-T86:36)

(90)  Mo re “O-le va-hani vonohi-ra-te.”
     3SG say 2SG-TA CAUS-eat for.nothing-O:3PL-DIS
     ‘He said, “You’ve been feeding them for nothing, you know”.’ (Nk-T32:35)

ro ‘thus’

As well as its literal meaning where it is used as a clause linker, or occasionally as a complementiser (Chapter 14), ro can be tacked on to phrases, similarly to te. It has less the idea of seeking affirmation from the hearer than te, and rather more of reinforcing the message, such as ‘that’s the way it was’, ‘like that’, ‘so that’s it’.

(91)  le ovi matua-ro, le mauru-te.
     TA live strong-thus TA alive-DIS
     ‘... while she was strong like that, while she was alive eh.’ C-T86:110)

(92)  O lai-a-ro, o lai-a ale a-tete-ro,
     2SG take-O:3SG-thus 2SG take-O:3SG if 3SG-negative-thus
     o mate!
     2SG die
     ‘You take it like that, you take it and if not that’s it, you’re dead!’ (Nk-T42:69)

si ‘just’

This particle functions to indicate some kind of limitation, and as such, could well be analysed as the same limiter sivo/si as described in 4.6.2. But si here occurs in a different syntactic environment, attaching only to verb phrases, and there are no examples in the data of sivo being used in the same way. Attachment of si to the verb phrase indicates that the action is limited to that verb, and downplays the significance of the action. It suggests that the action was not effective in whatever purpose it had.
It is usually followed by a negative verb phrase (12.4.7.3) as in the following:

(95) Mo maturu mo-ta tovi-a-si mo tete.
3SG sleep 3SG-REP call-O:3SG-LIM 3SG negative
‘She was asleep and he just called her again, (but) to no avail.’ (Nt-T31:17)

4.12.3 Fillers
4.12.3.1 Sentence-initial fillers
ale Bislama ‘alright’, used as ‘okay then.’
(96) Ale, tanume vorivori mo tovi-a..
alright devil little 3SG call-O:3SG
‘Okay then, the little devil called him.’ (Nt-40:5)

bole/bwele ‘well then.’, ‘so then.’
(97) Bwele, no-ta jivo no re no loloso..
well 2PL-REP go.down 2PL say 2PL bathe
‘Well then, you go back down and say you are having a wash …’ (Nt-T82:10)

This is often used where the speaker is formulating a question, as in:

(98) Bwele, niho o rongovosai-a tuai tene ...?
well IP:2SG 2SG know-O:3SG long.time or
‘So then, you’ve known it for a long time or …?’ (C-T86:109)

4.12.3.2 Fillers: sentence-initial or between clauses
There are a number of clause linkers (see 13.2.2.4) that are also often used as fillers. Speakers (particularly children) who perhaps are unsure of their story or argument, use these linkers not just to link clauses, but as a stalling device (often to excess) in order not to lose their ‘turn’ in the conversation.

mo/na turu (aie) ‘then’, ‘that being so’ (lit. it/they stand there)
moiso/aiso ‘then’, ‘after that’ (lit. it finishes)

4.12.3.3 Mid-clause fillers
hinau ‘what’ (lit. ‘thing’)
sava ‘what’, ‘whatever’

Either of these can be used when the speaker has forgotten the next word or ‘where they are’ in the story. Use of hinau or sava in this context is accompanied by a longish pause while the speaker gets back on track or changes direction.
Word classes 109

(99) Tovon uluran-dondo matan aaa hinau ... ro mo-ta vohi
when dawn SUB aaa thing … thus 3SG-REP change.to

uranji mo-ta sahe le ovi telei tina-na.
child 3SG-REP go.up TA live PREP mother-P:3SG
‘When it was dawn in order to... aaa... what... so he changed again into a child and
went back up there with his mother.’ (Nt-T84:45)

(100) Mo-iso-ro ... sava ... havo rindi mo re
3SG-finish-thus what crab REF 3SG say

“Are o bulahi-au ana alo...”
if 2SG toss-O:1SG PREP sun
‘So then ... what... the crab said ‘If you toss me up to the sun...” ‘(Nt-T60:10)

4.12.4 Greetings

The expected greeting (to other than family at home) when one meets someone for the
first time in the morning (say, on the way to the gardens or the store) is:

Ulurani duhu
morning good  ‘Good morning’

This is almost always followed by

Niho ambea?
2SG where  ‘Where are you going?’

It is not expected that the other should give a very specific answer; rather a general
indication of intent is expected, such as:

(101) Ku sahe aulu.
1SG go.up up.direction
‘I’m going up (to the gardens/ in a north-east direction)’.  OR

(102) Ku jivo bosinjivo.
1SG go.down down.direction
‘I’m going down (the road/to the area in south-west direction)’.

Niceties completed, the parting from each is

(103) Da rav’rav.  (abbrev. of Hinda raviravi)
1PL.I afternoon
lit. ‘we together this afternoon’, but colloquially equivalent to ‘See you later’.

If the parting is in the evening, and the speakers are not expecting to see one another
until the next day or for a few days, then the parting is abbreviated to
(104) Da vuo. (abbrev. of Hinda avuho)
   1PL.I tomorrow
   lit. ‘we together tomorrow’, but colloquially ‘See you sometime soon’.

Meeting and greeting in the afternoon can often dispense with the equivalent of ‘good afternoon’ (which would be Rav’ravi duhu), in favour of just Niho ambea? ‘You go where?’ or the more formal ritualised enquiry after health, such as

(105) Niho o-le rongo mo duhu tene mo tete?
   IP:2SG 2SG-TA feel 3SG good or 3SG negative
   ‘Are you feeling fine or not?’

The appropriate and expected answer to that question is:

(106) Le duhu manihi.
   TA  good  LIM
   ‘Just fine.’
5 Morphological processes

5.1 Introduction

The morphological processes that can be used in this language, either to inflect full lexical words or to derive new lexical words, are
i) prefixation
ii) suffixation
iii) reduplication
iv) compounding.

Prefixes and suffixes are morphemes that can attach to full lexical words. Reduplication involves full or partial repetition of full lexical words, and compounding involves the combination of full lexical words. While these processes are synchronically transparent in many cases, there are a number of words in the modern lexicon in Tamambo that appear to be the result of one of these morphological processes at an earlier stage of the language but which are no longer separable into their component parts. Examples are given in sections where relevant. As discussed in 4.11, clitics are differentiated from affixes; clitics can belong to various classes of grammatical forms, and attach according to rules of syntactic distribution rather than attaching to one particular word class. They are not further discussed here.

While the functions of each of the four processes listed above are particular to that process, the grammatical and semantic functions of the derivations are many and varied. Table 5.1 summarises the functions that correspond to the particular morphological processes.

Table 5.1: Grammatical and semantic functions of morphological processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source: N=noun V=verb</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Grammatical and semantic function of processes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prefixation</td>
<td>Suffixation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Cardinal number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Multiplicative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Repetition of number/constancy over time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Location/direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Membership in a particular semantic set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source: N=noun  V=verb</td>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Grammatical and semantic function of processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prefix-</td>
<td>Suffix-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ation</td>
<td>ation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N+N/V</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V+V/ modifier</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V+V</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N+V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prefixes and suffixes are discussed in 5.2, suffixes in 5.3, reduplication is detailed in 5.4, and then compounding in 5.5.

### 5.2 Prefixes

Prefixes can attach to some words classed as nouns (particular subclasses), or words classed as verbs. The form and function of prefixes are described according to their occurrence with those particular word classes.

#### 5.2.1 Prefixes to nouns

Prefixes to nouns have different functions, as shown in Table 5.1.
5.2.1.1 Plurality

Nouns generally show no difference in singular or plural form, so it is only a very limited and closed set that is inflected for plurality, made up just of kin terms, human nouns and trees.¹

**Plural: na-**

This morpheme is attached to all kin terms to indicate plurality. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sohoti-ku</td>
<td>na-sohoti-ku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>big.brother-P:1SG</td>
<td>PL-big.brother-P:1SG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘my big brother’ (F. possessor)</td>
<td>‘my big brothers’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tawai-m</td>
<td>na-tawai-m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>big.brother-P:2SG</td>
<td>PL-big.brother-P:2SG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘your big brother’ (M. possessor)</td>
<td>‘your big brothers’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vo-tambaluhi-na²</td>
<td>na-vo-tambaluhi-na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEM-wife-P:3SG</td>
<td>PL-FEM-wife-P:3SG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘his wife’</td>
<td>‘his wives’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Plural: va-**

This indicates plural number, but is attested on two ‘human’ nouns only:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>uranji</td>
<td>va-uranji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child</td>
<td>children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sumbwe</td>
<td>va-sumbwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chief</td>
<td>chiefs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A homonymous verbal prefix va- is described in 5.2.2.1.

**Plural: vai-**

Similarly this is attested only on two ‘human’ nouns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mwera</td>
<td>vai-mwera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male person (usually boy, rather than man)</td>
<td>males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ulivou</td>
<td>vai-livou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>young man</td>
<td>young men</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both va- and vai- resemble vei-, a nominal prefix in Fijian, ‘which indicates a collective plural’ (Pawley 1973:152). An old ‘Maloese’ word list (Macdonald 1891) lists vei as the plural for mwera, but nowadays it is clearly articulated vai and is accepted as such by native speakers.

---

¹ That trees are singled out for special morphological treatment is of interest culturally and historically, but I have no explanation to offer, other than the fact that they are of obvious cultural importance in an island society. Malcolm Ross (pers. comm.) notes that trees are also somewhat special morphologically in some languages of New Ireland and Nth Bouganville, although the processes do not resemble those here.

² The vo- FEMALE prefix (5.2.1.2) seems redundant to stem tambaluhi-, whose meaning is ‘wife’, with or without vo-.
**Plural: ra-**

This shows plurality on one specific human noun only, according to informants:

\[ \text{vavine} \rightarrow \text{ra-vavine} \quad \text{woman} \rightarrow \text{women} \]

Somewhat similarly, plural prefixes \textit{ra-} and \textit{re-} are used in Mota (Northern Vanuatu) ‘with words which describe persons with regard to age and relationship’ (Codrington 1885:263-4). Also Ray (1926:372) documents \textit{ravai} as showing plurality on ‘relationship names’ in Tasiriki (Santo). Interestingly some younger speakers <25 on Malo, whom I heard, used this term \textit{ravai} to also show plurality with \textit{mwera}, as in \textit{ravai mwera} ‘young men’, combining the \textit{ra} ‘female’ plural with the \textit{vai} plural as shown above. This usage resulted in instant disapproval from their older family members, who promptly corrected them. There is also another \textit{ra-} prefix described in 5.2.1.2 of this chapter.

**Plural: lo-**

This plural prefix is used only with trees and is fully productive. For example,

\[ \text{vuhai} \rightarrow \text{lo-vuhai} \quad \text{tree} \rightarrow \text{trees} \]
\[ \text{vuniu} \rightarrow \text{lo-vuniu} \quad \text{coconut palm} \rightarrow \text{coconut palms} \]
\[ \text{vumbue} \rightarrow \text{lo-vumbue} \quad \text{bamboo tree} \rightarrow \text{bamboo trees} \]

The \textit{vu-} prefix is described in the next section.

**5.2.1.2 Semantic sets**

While the vast majority of nouns have no prefix denoting any kind of noun class or set, there are a small number of prefixes that are used to show membership in a particular semantic set. There are no morphological or syntactic restrictions or otherwise resulting from inclusion in such a set, other than those shown in 5.2.1.3.

**Female: vo-**

This is a prefix to nouns indicating female gender. It can be affixed to all kin terms and to all traditional names.\(^3\) For example, with kin terms:

\[ \text{natu-ku} \rightarrow \text{vo-natu-ku} \quad \text{my son} \rightarrow \text{my daughter} \]
\[ \text{tawai} \rightarrow \text{vo-tawai} \quad \text{older brother/father’s father} \rightarrow \text{older sister/ father’s sister’s daughter} \]
\[ \text{taura} \rightarrow \text{vo-taura} \quad \text{mother’s brother} \rightarrow \text{mother’s brother’s wife} \(^4\) \]

And with traditional names, for example:

\(^3\) It is not affixed to names borrowed from English, which are now common.

\(^4\) There are other kin relationships that can be reflected in these terms depending on the gender and age of the speaker.
Morphological processes

Male name  Female name
Moli    Vomoli
Bani    Vombani
Liho    Voliho
Molehi  Vomolehi
Vira    Vovira
Vuro    Vovuro

In the eastern dialect of Malo island, this prefix for female names is ve-, as in

Moli    Vemoli
Vira    Vevira, etc.

This ve- prefix to indicate female is reflected in the closeby languages of Tasiriki in south Santo (Ray 1926:372), and nearby Araki (François 2002:310).

Tree: vu-

The prefix vu- is used only with trees, and is probably derived from POc *puqu(n) ‘stump, trunk’. For example:

mambue –> vu-mambue  chestnut/s –>  chestnut tree
niu –> vu-niu  coconut/s –>  coconut palm
ngaingai –> vu-ngaingai  canarium nut/s –>  canarium nut tree

Vines, ferns, tubers and grasses are not included in the ‘tree’ set. However, some large kinds of bushes are marked as trees, but only if they have a main central trunk. This seems to be a similar pattern to neighbouring Araki where tree terms take a similar vi- prefix (François 2002:50), but where many plants such as yam, taro, do not. For indication of plural combined with ‘tree’ prefix see 5.2.1.

Leaf: ra-

This is a prefix denoting leaf or leaves, presumably derived from POc *raun ‘leaf’. For example:

haviha –> ra-haviha  wild apple/s –>  leaf of wild apple tree
moli –> ra-moli  citrus –>  leaf of citrus tree
hatambola –> ra-hatambola  Nakatambol fruit –>  Nakatambol leaf [Dracontomelon vitiense]6

Person/s belonging to: ta-

This prefix means ‘person/s belonging to’ or ‘person/s from’. On Malo, it is an often-used and productive form. For example, Ambae is a comparatively recent name for the

---

5 Now used primarily to refer to oranges, with Bislama French-based words being more often used for grapefruit and lemons.
6 Scientific name from Wheatley (1992:257).
island previously known as Aoba/Oba/Lepers Island, but Tamambo speakers now refer to people of that island as ‘Tambae’. Further examples include:

- ureure→ ta-ureure  islands> person/s from other islands
- maringo→ ta-maringo  west→ person/s from the west (of Malo)
- Alotu→ ta-alotu  Santo→ person/s from Santo
- Tioraha→ ta-tioraha  Pentecost (island)→ person/s from Pentecost
- Vanavu→ ta-vanavu  Malakula (island)→ person/s from Malakula

Reflected throughout Eastern Oceanic languages, ta is also attested in languages of northern Vanuatu with much the same form and meaning, such as in Tangoa (Ray 1926:158), North-east Ambae tau’ (Hyslop 2001:98), and in Vurës (Hyslop pers. comm.). A form ta- has been reconstructed by Pawley (1973:148) for Protooceanic as ‘a preposition indicating locative and perhaps possessive relation’, and he has further suggested that *ta may be cognate with ... prepositional verb *tani ... reconstructed with the meaning “motion from”’(p.149). A more probable derivation for Tamambo ta- is POc *tau ‘person’, as described by Ross (1988:279), and Lynch et al. (2002:70).

5.2.1.3 Combining plurality and semantic sets

Where both plurality and semantic set are marked morphologically, the semantic set morpheme is prefixed directly to the noun, and then the plural prefix is attached. This applies only to plurals of kin terms and trees.

- vo-natu-na→ na-vo-natu-na  his/her daughter→ his/her daughters
- vo-tasi-ku→ na-vo-tasi-ku  my younger sister/cousin → my younger sisters/cousins
- vu-moli→ lo-vu-moli  citrus (orange) tree→ citrus (orange) trees/bluwater trees (Bislama: ‘bluwota’)
- vu-vilai→ lo-vu-vilai  bluewater tree→

Semantic sets indicated by ra- ‘leaf’ or ta- ‘belonging to a place’, are not differentiated morphologically for singular or plural number.

5.2.1.4 Location a-

Synchronically in Tamambo, the prefix a- is a bound form. Where it is prefixed to a noun it signifies location in/at a place in relation to the speaker. Some nouns, such as the following, are separable in their source form, for example:

- vareo→ a-vareo  boundary of land around house → within the outside area of house
- lolo→ a-lolo  inside part of s.t. → within the inside part of s.t.

Others can take on an extended meaning when prefixed with a-. For example:

---

7 Analyzed as a preposition by Hyslop.
Morphological processes

ulu→ a-ulu top part of something→ ‘on top’/at ‘the gardens’ (the area higher and further away from the coast)
tano→ a-tano ground → down on the ground/downwards

But with other nouns, the a- has fused to the source word and the meaning of the source alone is no longer part of native speakers’ linguistic knowledge:

auta inland direction
alau shore direction
aimo home
ambea? where?

The majority of place names on Malo also begin with a- in this way, as do 60% of the 83 place names listed for Malo (Tryon & Gely, 1979). For example, the name of the place where most of my fieldwork was carried out is:

(1) A-vu-na-tari  
LOC-TREE-ART-type.of.breadfruit  
‘Avunatari’ (lit. ‘at the breadfruit tree’)

Historically, the prefix might be related to an independent form which has been reconstructed for POC, that is, spatial deictic *a (Ross 1988: 374–75). The form a- as a locative prefix meaning ‘at’ is listed in many older descriptions of Vanuatu languages, for example by Codrington (1885) for Maewo, Ambae (Aoba), Big Bay, Santo, and by Ray for Tangoa (1926:328). Clark (1985:208) notes that for PNCV (Proto North and Central Vanuatu), ‘*a survives as a preposition by itself in only a few languages’. In Tamambo, however, the a- prefix no longer has independent status.

But a is listed as a locative preposition in the brief ‘Maloese’ sketch by Landels in Macdonald (1891:28), and he gives an example where it appears to be independent:

a sava cinao? 8 ‘at what place?’

A noun such as sava ‘what’ could nowadays only have preposition ana preceding it (where locative a has fused with article na). It is hard to know whether a was truly independent in 1891, since Landels (1906:4–5) also uses a na (locative + article) separately before some nouns, as in:

a na sala to the road
a na zara (jara) to the place

Landels also uses a separately before lolo ‘inside part’, but with aulu, shows it as fused, suggesting that the situation with location words was not so very different then as one hundred years later.

a lolona inside (lit. at its/its inside part)  (1906:4)
aulu on high  (1906:10)

8 This word would be written as hin au in this description.
5.2.1.5 Counting prefix with numerals

Prefix *a-/ha-* is used only with some numerals to indicate cardinal number, for example, with *a-tea* ‘one’ *a-rua* ‘two’ etc. (see 6.2.5.1). The use of numeral roots such as tea, rua etc. in other words without the prefix, demonstrates some degree of separability. This prefix could be a residual reflex of POc article *a*, though a more probable alternative is POc counting prefix *ka* (Lynch et al. 2002:74), attached to numerals when counting objects, for example, *ka-rua, *ka-tolu* ‘two, three’. This is reflected in the articulation of many west Malo speakers pronouncing numerals with an initial /x/ (see 2.6.6.2) such as hatea, harua, hatolu ‘one, two, three’. Speakers of the eastern dialect on Malo use prefix e- before the equivalent cardinal numbers, as in etea, erua, etolu, ‘one, two, three’.

5.2.1.6 Multiplicative vaha- with numerals and quantifier

Prefix *vaha-* can attach to numerals 1–9, to interrogative numeral *avisa* ‘how many’, and to quantifier *tari* ‘many’. The prefix functions as a kind of causative, somewhat similarly to its use in prefixing verbs (see 5.2.2.1). When prefixing a numeral or quantifier, it gives a multiplicative meaning and derives an adverbial modifier:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{vaha-rua} & \quad \text{vaha-tolu} \\
\text{CAUS-two} & \quad \text{CAUS-three} \\
\text{‘twice’ (lit. it makes/causes two)} & \quad \text{‘three times’ (lit. it makes/causes three)}
\end{align*}
\]

Compare the use of *avisa* and *vahavisa* in the following:

(2) \[\text{Niho o vano ana tano avisa?} \]
  IP:2SG 2SG go PREP garden how.many
  ‘How many gardens did you go to?’ (#e.273a.)

(3) \[\text{Niho o vano ana tano vaha-visa?} \]
  IP:2SG 2SG go PREP garden CAUS-how.many
  ‘How many times did you go to the garden?’ (#e.273b.)

In the following, the prefix derives an adverb from *tari*, a quantifier.

\[
\text{vaha-tari} \quad \text{CAUS-many}
\]

‘often’ (lit. it makes/causes many)

The prefix derives from POc *paka* which, as well as its causative function (5.2.2.1), ‘also had the specialised use of deriving multiplicatives’ (Evans 2003:266).

5.2.2 Prefixes to verbs

Prefixes to verbs function to:

- increase, rearrange or decrease valency
- derive an ‘instrument’ noun from a verb.

---

9 POc *k –> Tamambo /x/ in most environments (2.4).
5.2.2.1 Increase in valency or valency rearrangement

Causatives vaha-/va- (as a prefix to numerals see 5.2.1.6 above.)

Evans (2003:266) states that ‘Proto Oceanic had two prefixes *pa- and *paka- which derived causative verbs from intransitive verbs’; this was earlier posited by Pawley (1973:130) as POc *paka- ‘causative prefix’. The modern reflexes of these are no longer productive in Tamambo, and function as causatives in only a handful of words. Instead, causative meanings are constructed by using verbs such as toro ‘allow’, loli ‘do’/‘make’, and vai ‘make’/‘cause’ in serial verb constructions (12.4.6.2), or using a cause-effect sequence of verbs (12.6.2.1). Nevertheless, there is also a term ava ‘let’ described in 11.3.2.2 which probably is derived from the va causative.

This morphological marking for causation can be prefixed to transitive or intransitive verbs, and the object of the causation (causee) can be animate or inanimate. Although the causee has no control over the action, the intent of the causer (in the very few examples that are attested in the data) appears comparatively benign. I have no examples that indicate force, or something done against the will of the object of the causation. This contrasts with the type of causative meanings indicated by the use of serial verb constructions where the causer has strong control.

Where va-/vaha- is prefixed to an intransitive verb, it acts to increase the valency, where S -> O; new A.

vaha- prefix


3SG alive 3SG CAUS-alive-O:3SG

‘S/he is alive/living.’ ‘S/he saved him/her.’

There are other examples of vaha- prefixed verbs that are no longer separable. For example, in the following, vaha- appears to be fused to the verb and the verb either does not exist in source form, as in vahasahi ‘clean up things’ (*sahi ), or cannot be used separately, as in vahatusi ‘cover s.t.’(tusi ‘across’) (see 5.5.3.3 for more examples with tusi).

Transitive verb vahatauhi ‘get s.t. ready’/‘prepare s.t.’ would appear to derive from transitive tau ‘put s.t. in place’ from a semantic point of view. But transitive verb tauhi ‘promise s.o. or s.t.’ is also a possibility. Whichever is the derivation, there is no change in valency.

In the following example, the meaning of the source verb changes to quite a different meaning when prefixed with vaha-:

mautu –> vaha-mautu be broken –> resolve s.t./make s.t. right

(6) Va-sumbwe na vahamautu na vuro.

PL-chief 3PL resolve ART fight

‘The chiefs resolved the conflict.’ (#e.708)

---

10 For a full discussion of this POc prefix as a causative see Evans 2003:240–49.
va- prefix

Verb vahani ‘feed’ is only one of three verbs in my data with va-, so it seems likely that it was originally vaha-hani, but that a medial syllable has been weakened and subsequently been lost. With a transitive verb such as hani ‘eat s.t.’, prefixation of the causative va- indicates:

O →Ø, A →O; new A.
(7) Mo-le hani-a  (8) Mo-le va-hani-a.
  3SG-TA eat-O:3SG  3SG-TA CAUS-eat-O:3SG
  ‘S/he is/was eating it.’ ‘S/he is/was feeding him/her.’ (#e.263b)

If the original O, as in (7), is to be indicated after affixation with va- to the verb, then that O will be demoted to an oblique argument, and the following applies:

O →Prep. O, A →O; new A.
(9) Mo-le va-hani-a hini-a.
  3SG-TA CAUS-eat-O:3SG PREP-O:3SG
  ‘S/he is/was feeding him with it.’ (#e.263c)

Other forms with va- are:

soari → va-soari see → meet each other
    turu → va-turu-hi stand→ make s.t. stand up

Note that this last form has the transitivising suffix -hi, described in 5.3.2.1. It is not possible to use either just the va- prefix or the -hi suffix alone with intransitive turu ‘stand’, as in *va-turu or *turuhi.

5.2.2.2 Valency changing: ma-

This prefix reflects POc *ma- ‘stative derivative prefix’ (Pawley 1972:38), and is ‘found in a wide range of Oceanic languages’ (Evans and Ross 2001:271; see also Evans 2003:267–79 for an extensive discussion of this prefix). In Tamambo, it is used in three different ways:

as a prefix to a transitive verb,
as a prefix to an intransitive active verb, and
as a fossilised prefix on stative verbs.

Each is discussed in turn.

Anti-causative: ma- with transitive verbs

A →Ø; O → S

This usage of ma- in Tamambo occurs with only a small number of verbs attested in my data, and has the effect of reducing valency, deriving an intransitive stative verb from a transitive active verb.

There is some variation in the type of transitive verb. The first five are active telic verbs, high in transitivity:
Morphological processes

\[\begin{align*}
duru & \rightarrow \quad ma-nduru & \text{split s.t.} & \rightarrow & \quad \text{be split (like walls, teeth,)} \\
bila & \rightarrow \quad ma-mbila & \text{shatter s.t.} & \rightarrow & \quad \text{be shattered, broken into pieces} \\
dare & \rightarrow \quad ma-ndare & \text{crack s.t.} & \rightarrow & \quad \text{be cracked (like a pot, cement)} \\
kamwe & \rightarrow \quad ma-kamwe & \text{snap, break s.t.} & \rightarrow & \quad \text{be broken (like a tree)} \\
londo & \rightarrow \quad ma-londo & \text{break s.t.} & \rightarrow & \quad \text{be broken (like a leg)}
\end{align*}\]

The valency decreasing of these verbs describe a process where some object is caused by something or someone ‘to lose its physical unity’.\(^\text{11}\) The ‘something’ or ‘someone’ usually cannot be expressed, so while the pattern of valency decrease is that of a passive construction, that is, where the O of a transitive verb $\rightarrow S$, there is no possibility for an animate A to become other than zero. So it is possible to say:

(10) \(Vo-tasi-ku\) mo bila na glas.
    FEM-younger.sibling-P:1SG 3SG break ART glass
    ‘My little sister broke the glass.’ (#e.111)

But with the prefixation of the anti-causative \(ma-\), the animate A cannot be expressed. The following is acceptable:

(11) Glas mo \(ma-bila\).
    glass 3SG INTR-shatter
    ‘The glass is shattered.’ (#e.109)

However it is not acceptable to demote the animate A to an instrumental role as in the following:

(12) *Glas mo \(ma-bila\) hini vo-tasi-ku.
    glass 3SG INTR-shatter PREP FEM-younger.sibling-P:1SG
    ‘The glass was shattered by my little sister.’

Similarly, to express the idea that ‘my dress was torn by someone’, it is possible to say it as in either (13) or (14):

(13) Atea mo dare-a.
    one 3SG tear-O:3SG
    ‘Someone tore it.’

Or alternately,

(14) No-ku ruru mo ma-ndare.
    CLFR-P:1SG dress 3SG INTR-tear
    ‘My dress is/was torn.’

It is not possible to express the original A as in

\[\text{\textsuperscript{11}}\text{ This is a phrase used by Dixon (1991:111) in describing a particular semantic set in English verbs.}\]
(15) *No-ku ruru mo ma-ndare hina atea.
CLFR-P:1SG dress 3SG INTR-tear PREP one
‘My dress was torn by someone.’

But where A is an inanimate causer, it can be relegated to peripheral status, as in:

(16) Simen mo ma-ndare hina mui nananovi.
cement 3SG INTR-crack PREP earthquake yesterday
‘The cement was cracked by the earthquake yesterday.’/ ‘The cement cracked as a result of the earthquake yesterday.’ (#e.813)

This pattern (where A→ peripheral argument) is uncommon for two reasons:

the preference of speakers is to use an overt A,
there are very few verbs (attested) which can take the valency-decreasing ma- prefix,
and not all of those lend themselves to an A which is an inanimate causer.

The following transitive verbs also derive stative verbs from the process, but there is some variation from the transitive form in that a final syllable is lost or reduplication occurs. Note that these verbs are not attested as intransitive s in reduplicated form without ma-, that is, teri cannot become *teriteri ‘be loosening’; songi cannot become *song’songi ‘be pushing back in’.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{vokati} & \rightarrow \text{ma-voka} & \text{open s.t.} & \rightarrow & \text{be open (like a door)} \\
\text{teri} & \rightarrow \text{ma-teriteri} & \text{loosen s.t.} & \rightarrow & \text{be loose (like a rope)} \\
\text{uli} & \rightarrow \text{ma-ululul} & \text{untie s.t.} & \rightarrow & \text{be frayed (like a rope, mat)} \\
\text{songi} & \rightarrow \text{ma-song’songi} & \text{push s.t. with a stick} & \rightarrow & \text{be pushed back in}
\end{align*}
\]

By contrast, there are other transitive verbs that synchronically can have two derivations of the root, one with reduplication to derive an active intransitive verb, the other prefixed with ma-, plus reduplication, to derive a stative:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{savi} & \rightarrow \text{sav’savi} & \rightarrow \text{ma-sav’savi} & \text{pound s.t.} & \rightarrow & \text{be pounding} & \rightarrow & \text{be soft, overcooked (like taro)} \\
\text{dunu} & \rightarrow \text{dun’dunu} & \rightarrow \text{ma-dun’dunu} & \text{soak s.t.} & \rightarrow & \text{be soaking} & \rightarrow & \text{be immersed} \\
\text{viri} & \rightarrow \text{viriviri} & \rightarrow \text{ma-viriviri} & \text{twist, braid s.t.} & \rightarrow & \text{be twisting, braiding} & \rightarrow & \text{be very thin, shrunken (like body)} \\
\text{kavi} & \rightarrow \text{kav’kavi} & \rightarrow \text{ma-kav’kavi} & \text{loosen up s.t (as with ground)} & \rightarrow & \text{be loosening up} & \rightarrow & \text{be soft (like laplap)}^{12}
\end{align*}
\]

The process here appears to indicate some change in the physical state of the object, even if it generally maintains its ‘physical unity’.

**ma- with active intransitive verbs**

Some active intransitive verbs can also be prefixed with ma- to derive a stative verb. Those prefixed include verbs with subject as Performer or Experiencer, as in:

\[
\text{vokati} \rightarrow \text{ma-voka} \rightarrow \text{be open (like a door)}
\]

\[
\text{teri} \rightarrow \text{ma-teriteri} \rightarrow \text{be loose (like a rope)}
\]

\[
\text{uli} \rightarrow \text{ma-ululul} \rightarrow \text{be frayed (like a rope, mat)}
\]

\[
\text{songi} \rightarrow \text{ma-song’songi} \rightarrow \text{be pushed back in}
\]

\[
\text{savi} \rightarrow \text{sav’savi} \rightarrow \text{ma-sav’savi} \rightarrow \text{be pounds} \rightarrow \text{be soft, overcooked (like taro)}
\]

\[
\text{dunu} \rightarrow \text{dun’dunu} \rightarrow \text{ma-dun’dunu} \rightarrow \text{be soaks} \rightarrow \text{be immersed}
\]

\[
\text{viri} \rightarrow \text{viriviri} \rightarrow \text{ma-viriviri} \rightarrow \text{be twists, braids} \rightarrow \text{be very thin, shrunken (like body)}
\]

\[
\text{kavi} \rightarrow \text{kav’kavi} \rightarrow \text{ma-kav’kavi} \rightarrow \text{loosen ups} \rightarrow \text{be loosened ups} \rightarrow \text{be soft (like laplap)}^{12}
\]

---

12 Laplap is a standard Vanuatu food comprising variations on grated root vegetables or banana, mixed with coconut milk and then steamed, or baked, in ‘pudding’ leaves.
Morphological processes

**hoho** bend down, ‘duck’ away  
*ma-hoho* be bent down, out of shape

**ololo** show respect  
*ma-ololo* be bent over in respect

**sova** breathe with difficulty  
*ma-sova* be ‘puffed’, out of breath

There is no change in valency, but since the S is no longer actively engaged in the event, they would seem lower in transitivity.

Others are verbs with subject as Patient\(^{13}\) where the derived stative verb can show some semantic shift, such as:

**here** be flat (like ground)  
*ma-here* be straight

**hasuhasu** be steaming (like food)  
*ma-hasuhasu* be sweaty

**livelive** bend over, like tree branch  
*ma-livelive* be bent over (inanimate)

### ma- with stative verbs

Additionally there are many other Tamambo stative verbs with no known simple form, where *ma-* is a ‘fossilized prefix’ of POc *ma-,* reflected also in other Oceanic languages (Evans and Ross 2001:275). The following include some of them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th><em>ma-</em> Verb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>mando</strong></td>
<td>be thirsty</td>
<td><strong>masere</strong> (^{14})</td>
<td>be full (stomach)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>marua</strong></td>
<td>be hungry</td>
<td><strong>maroto</strong></td>
<td>be hungry all the time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>mahamanu</strong></td>
<td>be shy</td>
<td><strong>mangisi</strong></td>
<td>be happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>malala</strong></td>
<td>be smooth</td>
<td><strong>mamasa</strong></td>
<td>be dry (like ground)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>matua</strong></td>
<td>be firm, strong</td>
<td><strong>makira</strong></td>
<td>be unripe (like fruit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>mahari</strong></td>
<td>be cold</td>
<td><strong>manjine</strong></td>
<td>be kind, generous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>maturu</strong></td>
<td>be asleep</td>
<td><strong>mamavo</strong></td>
<td>be cooled down, as with a drink</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is also one that appears derived from a noun: *lulum* ‘moss’ → *malulum* ‘be soft’.

In my data, the *ma-* stative verbs, whether they are derived from intransitive active verbs, from a noun (as above), or are those with the fossilised prefix, all indicate a physical property of an object, or a physical or mental state of a person. While some of these suggest a kind of change to a physical state, none of them have the connotation of some sort of change to physical unity that the valency-decreasing *ma-* exhibits with transitive verbs.

5.2.2.3 Decrease in valency: vari-

**Anti-passive vari-** ‘inclined to’

A → S; O → Ø

This is a valency-decreasing affix where O is demoted. The original O cannot be included as a peripheral argument.

The prefix clearly reflects ‘a verbal prefix *paRi-... widely attested in Oceanic’ (Pawley 1973:150). Verbs formed with this prefix are often referred to as ‘reciprocal verbs’ in grammars, and Pawley suggests that verbs formed with this prefix ‘imply mutual...

---

\(^{13}\) See Table 9:3, Chapter 9, for semantic roles of intransitive verb subjects.

\(^{14}\) Given the generosity of Malo people with sharing their food, this was one of the first words I learnt to use, as in *ku-le masere* ‘I’m full!’

\(^{15}\) It is possible that this derives from *turu* ‘stand’. It can also be reduplicated as *maturuturu* ‘be sleepy’. 
interaction between the entities denoted by the subject of the verb’. While all examples in my data (all with active verbs) indicate a capacity and predilection for some particular kind of habitual activity of an interactive nature, the label ‘reciprocal’ is not appropriate for Tamambo, and I gloss the prefix as INCLIN ‘inclined to’.

Semantically, the vari- prefix indicates that the subject of the verb has the capacity and inclination to VERB, and makes a practice of doing so. It is a habitual behaviour of the subject of the verb. Use of the prefix appears to be fully productive and examples include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Tamambo</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bite</td>
<td>vari-hati</td>
<td>inclined to bite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>often pinches</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boxes often</td>
<td>vari-tutuhi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in their nature to help/often helps</td>
<td>vari-tuani</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(17) *Puskat mo vari-harosi-te?*
*cat 3SG INCLIN-scratch-DIS*
‘The cat is likely to scratch eh?’ (#c.879NK)

(18) *Nia tamalohi mara vari-tutuhi.*
*IP:3SG person man INCLIN-box*
‘The man is a boxer.’ (#e.880)

(19) *Tina-ra mo vari-tuwa asena.*
*mother-P:3PL 3SG INCLIN-smack INTEN*
‘Their mother is inclined to smack a lot.’ (#e.882)

(20) *Nira na-le vanovano turuvui nira na-le vari-losu asena.*
*IP:3PL 3PL-TA walk always IP:3PL 3PL-TA INCLIN-fight INTEN*
‘They were always walking around fighting a lot.’ (Nk-T22:3)

5.2.2.4 *Instrumental nominalisation*

This verbal prefix *i-*, from POc *i- ‘instrument nominaliser’ (Lynch et al. 2002:70) is extremely productive in Tamambo. The process involves the prefixation of *i- to an active verb to derive a noun meaning ‘an instrument for “verbing” ’, described as such by Comrie and Thompson (2007:338) for other languages where it is also a productive morphological process. In Oceanic languages see, for example, Mota (Codrington 1885:262), Boumaa Fijian (Dixon 1988:191). For this language, plentiful examples include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Tamambo</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>shoot s.t. with arrow</td>
<td>i-vine</td>
<td>arrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>walking stick</td>
<td>i-tiho</td>
<td>walk like an old person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>short digging stick</td>
<td>i-heli</td>
<td>dig s.t.-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>long digging stick</td>
<td>i-ndule</td>
<td>dig to plant yams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grater (root vegetables)</td>
<td>i-mbiri</td>
<td>grate root vegetables</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Morphological processes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Suffix to Noun</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tevi</td>
<td>-tevi</td>
<td>sweep s.t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bea</td>
<td>-mbea</td>
<td>lure, entice s.o. or s.t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sau</td>
<td>-sau</td>
<td>hook s.t. (usually a fish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horo</td>
<td>-horo</td>
<td>block s.t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kolo</td>
<td>-kolo</td>
<td>carry s.t. heavy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kari</td>
<td>-kari</td>
<td>comb hair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rasu</td>
<td>-rasu</td>
<td>scoop up liquid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3 Suffixes

Suffixes can attach to words classed as nouns and to words classed as verbs. The form and function of particular prefixes are described with regard to their occurrence in each word class.

5.3.1 Suffixes to Nouns

Suffixes to nouns function to:

i) indicate ‘possession’
ii) derive verbs
iii) indicate regular occurrence over time/distributive number.

5.3.1.1 Possession

This function is only briefly outlined here. For a full description see Possessive constructions, Chapter 7. Possessive pronominals suffix to common nouns in direct possessive constructions, for example:

- tama-ku  hisa-m  vanua-mam
  - father-P:1SG  name-P:2SG  house-P:1PL.E
  - ‘my father’  ‘your name’  ‘our house’

Possessive linkers -ni and -i attach to the possessed noun where the possessor is a NP, (as described in 4.9.3.2, and 7.5).

- leo-ni  voi  tamanatu-i  vavine  rindi
  - voice-LINK  mum  husband-LINK  woman  REF
  - ‘mum’s voice’  ‘the woman’s husband’

Ordinal marking -na

The 3SG possessive pronominal -na can also be used as a suffix to cardinal numbers in order to indicate ordinals, e.g.:

- arua-na  avati-na  sangavulu-na
  - two-P:3SG  four-P:3SG  ten-P:3SG
  - ‘second’  ‘fourth’  ‘tenth’

See 6.2.5.2 for further discussion on ordinal numbers.
Comparison of size

Adjectival words belonging to the small closed set of Dimension (see 10.3.1) can be suffixed in direct possessive constructions in the same way as any prototypical noun (7.4.1.2) but here the function is different. The possessive constructions here indicate a comparison of size as a superlative, either by use of the possessive pronominal suffix:

(21) \textbf{Nia baravu-ra.}\newline IP:3SG tall-P:3PL \newline ‘He is the tallest of them.’ (lit. he is their tall (one)) (#e.740b)

or by the use of possessive linker -i where the possessor is a common noun:

(22) \textbf{Vila nia tawera-i batui-vanua Vanuatu}\newline V IP:3SG big-LINK village V. \newline ‘Vila is the biggest Vanuatu town.’ (E-T66:33) (lit. Vila is the big one of Vanuatu towns)

Comparative and superlative are not differentiated grammatically but are generally understood from context. The more usual way of expressing comparison is to use an intensifier or \textit{mo liu} ‘it wins/exceeds’, as in

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{mo tawera} ‘it’s big’
  \item \textit{mo tawera asena} ‘it’s very big’
  \item \textit{mo tawera mo liu} ‘it’s the bigger/biggest’ (lit. ‘it’s big it wins’)
\end{itemize}

5.3.1.2 \textit{Suffix -ha : Derivation of some intransitive verbs, including adjectival verbs of colour}

This suffix can be attached to common nouns of no obvious semantic connection. It derives intransitive verbs which are ‘\textit{NOUN}-like’, and appears to be a fully productive process, as with:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{ivao} \rightarrow \textit{ivao-ha} \quad \text{crowd} \rightarrow \quad \text{be crowded}
  \item \textit{bua} \rightarrow \textit{bua-ha} \quad \text{deep water} \rightarrow \quad \text{be deep}
  \item \textit{dondo} \rightarrow \textit{dondo-ha} \quad \text{night} \rightarrow \quad \text{be dark/very cloudy}
  \item \textit{tamalohi} \rightarrow \textit{tamalohi-ha} \quad \text{person} \rightarrow \quad \text{be inhabited}
  \item \textit{banoi} \rightarrow \textit{banoi-ha} \quad \text{volcanic ash} \rightarrow \quad \text{be covered with ash}
  \item \textit{vulu} \rightarrow \textit{vulu-vulu-ha} \quad \text{hair} \rightarrow \quad \text{be hairy}
  \item \textit{bamba} \rightarrow \textit{bamba-ha} \quad \text{fence} \rightarrow \quad \text{be fenced, bounded}
  \item \textit{maka} \rightarrow \textit{maka-ha} \quad \text{mud} \rightarrow \quad \text{be muddy}
\end{itemize}

The following shows a slight semantic shift:

\textit{batu} \rightarrow \textit{batu-ha} \quad \text{head} \rightarrow \quad \text{be wise}

This suffix is attested in early descriptions for other languages of northern Vanuatu in similar function, for example by Codrington (1885:167) for Maewo (as \textit{-sa}) and for Raga, by Ray (1926:362) for Tangoa, and in recent times by François (2002:38), for Araki.
From this productive derivational process in Tamambo comes a small set of colour terms that function as adjectival words (10.3.3), such as:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{dae} & \rightarrow \text{dae-ha} & \text{blood} & \rightarrow \text{(be) red} \\
\text{jori} & \rightarrow \text{jori-ha} & \text{yellow fever} & \rightarrow \text{(be) yellow}
\end{align*}
\]

**5.3.1.3 Suffix \text{–hi}: Derivation of transitive verbs**

Suffix \text{-hi}, which usually has an applicative function and derives a transitive verb from an intransitive (5.3.2.1) can also be used with common nouns, as follows, to derive a transitive verb. There are very few such derivations attested in my data.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{boe} & \rightarrow \text{boe-hi} & \text{boar} & \rightarrow \text{make a special payment (e.g. a pig) to s.o.} \\
\text{mata} & \rightarrow \text{mata-hi} & \text{eye} & \rightarrow \text{look after s.o.} \\
\text{reu} & \rightarrow \text{reu-hi} & \text{water} & \rightarrow \text{moisten s.t.}
\end{align*}
\]

**5.3.1.4 Suffix \text{–hi}: Repetition or constancy over time**

Some nouns expressing location in time are able to take a suffix \text{-hi} to indicate a regular repetition of events over time (see use of other \text{-hi} suffixes in previous sections).

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ulurani} & \rightarrow \text{ulurani-hi} & \text{morning} & \rightarrow \text{every morning} \\
\text{raviravi} & \rightarrow \text{raviravi-hi} & \text{afternoon} & \rightarrow \text{every afternoon}
\end{align*}
\]

(23) \text{Le maturu raviravi-hi tene mo tete?}

TA sleep afternoon-DISTRIB or 3SG negative

‘She sleeps in the afternoons or not?’ (#c.483)

Similarly it can be attached to a reduplicated form of the cardinal numbers 1–9, to indicate a distributive meaning or a repetition of the number. This suffix appears to have no obvious connection with \text{-hi} verbal transitivising suffix, and is glossed in examples as DISTRIB.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a-vati} & \rightarrow \text{a-vati-vati-hi} & \text{four} & \rightarrow \text{four by four/ four each}
\end{align*}
\]

(For other examples see 5.4.3 this chapter.)

**5.3.2 Suffixes to verbs**

Suffixes to verbs function to:

- change valency,
- derive nouns.

**5.3.2.1 Increase in valency with transitive suffixes: \text{-hi}, \text{-si}, and \text{-Ci}**

Transitive suffixes have been reconstructed for Proto Oceanic as \text{*-i} and \text{*-aki —akini} (Pawley 1973:114), and the transitivising functions of the reflexes of \text{*akin(i)} in many Oceanic languages are discussed in Evans (2003:120-135).
While the majority of transitive verbs in Tamambo already end with -i, there are also two transitivising suffixes -hi and -si that can derive transitive verbs. There are two categories of transitive verb forms exemplified here:

i) those that are derived from intransitive verbs,
ii) those where the suffix is no longer separable from source verb.

\textit{Applicative: -hi}

Suffixation with applicative transitiviser -hi is a productive process in Tamambo. The effect of this suffix is to derive a transitive verb from an intransitive, where

\[ S \rightarrow A; \text{ new } O \]

Examples with -hi include the following:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{sora} \rightarrow \textit{sora-hi} \quad \text{talk} \rightarrow \quad \text{relate s.t., talk about s.t.}
  \item \textit{stori} \rightarrow \textit{stori-hi} \quad \text{talk} \rightarrow \quad \text{relate s.t., talk about s.t.}
  \item \textit{tinomalio} \rightarrow \textit{tinomalio-hi} \quad \text{forget} \rightarrow \quad \text{forget s.t./s.o.}
  \item \textit{mana} \rightarrow \textit{mana-hi} \quad \text{laugh} \rightarrow \quad \text{laugh at s.t./s.o.}
  \item \textit{matahu} \rightarrow \textit{matau-hi} \quad \text{feel scared} \rightarrow \quad \text{fear s.t./s.o}
  \item \textit{viri} \rightarrow \textit{viri-hi} \quad \text{twist} \rightarrow \quad \text{wring out liquid, (e.g. clothes, lemon, but not coconut)} \text{ Cf. } \textit{virisi} \text{ in -si section below}
\end{itemize}

This process occasionally generates the following:

\[ S \rightarrow O, \text{ new } A, \text{ as in} \]

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{dono} \rightarrow \textit{dono-hi} \quad \text{sink, drown} \rightarrow \quad \text{make s.t. sink, drown s.o.}
  \item \textit{sale} \rightarrow \textit{sale-hi} \quad \text{float} \rightarrow \quad \text{make s.t. float}
\end{itemize}

Often there is no overt oblique argument or peripheral with the intransitive verb that moves to the new O of the transitivised verb, as one might expect in a prototypical applicative. Nevertheless, there are examples of some intransitive verbs which do have an overt oblique, that is, \( S + P \)-object, and the speaker can choose between two options, both with core arguments: \( S+P \)-object, or \( A+O \).

This type appears to be a more ‘prototypical’ applicative, where a \( P \)-object in the core can move to take up the function of the new O. However, such \( P \)-objects can only be in the semantic role of locutional topic or cause/source of emotion or reaction. For example,

\[ S + P \text{-object} \]

(24) \text{Mo matahu hina vuria.}
\text{3SG scared PREP dog}
\text{‘S/he’s frightened by dogs.’} \ (#c.401a)

\textsuperscript{17} From Bislama, now widely used in lieu of \textit{sora} ‘talk’ as a preface to story telling.

\textsuperscript{18} Transitive form loses \textit{h}.
Morphological processes

A + O

3SG fear-TR-O:3SG
‘S/he fears it/ s/he’s frightened of it/him/her.’ (#c.401c)

S + P-object

(26) ...tamalohi na-le sundu-a, na-le sora hini-a,
...people 3PL-TA learn-O:3SG 3PL-TA talk PREP-O:3SG
na-le welu hini-a.
3PL-TA dance PREP-O:3SG
‘... men used to learn it, they used to talk about it, and used to dance it.’ (Nt-T73:4)

A + O

(27) Iau ku-mbo sora-hi na vai~vai-a...
IP:1SG 1SG-FUT talk-TR ART RED~do-NOM
‘I will talk about the customs ...’ (Nk-T12:1)

S + P-object

(28) Ku-mbo stori hina tutunu-a.
1SG-FUT talk PREP roast-NOM
‘I’m going to talk about cooking.’ (E-T87:1)

A + O

(29) Ku-mboi ku stori-hi na no-ku ovi-a.
1SG-want 1SG talk-TR ART CLFR-P:1SG live-NOM
‘I want to relate my life (story).’ (E-T52:1)

There are many transitive verbs where the -hi is no longer separable. They include:

bulahi throw/toss s.t. 
takahī remove s.t.
dawahi look/stare at s.t. 
tirohi visit s.o.
dirahi stretch out s.t 
borohi put a hard cover over s.t.

There are also intransitive verbs ending in -hi that are more probably derived historically from compounding rather than from the addition of suffixes. But their component parts are no longer known, as in teterahi ‘get up’, or possible components seem unlinked to the word, as in avutehi ‘suddenly appear’ (??avu ‘fly’), (tehi ‘call out in a particular way’, used by males only). Any such word is now regarded as a unitary whole.

Applicative: -si

Suffixation of applicative transitiviser -si to verbs is no longer a productive process. Similarly to -hi, it results in a valency increase, where S→A; new O.

lua → lua-si vomit-> vomit on s.t./s.o.
kiri → kiri-si rain → rain on s.t./s.o.
tangi → tangi-si cry → cry/mourn for s.o.
$deo \rightarrow deo-si$  defecate $\rightarrow$ defecate on s.t.
$viri \rightarrow viri-si$  twist, ‘milk’ $\rightarrow$ squeeze coconut milk on s.t.

Additionally, the following has undergone some shift in meaning:

$ngara \rightarrow ngara-si$  cry $\rightarrow$ criticise, reprimand s.o.

Semantically, most of these verbs indicate a physical process involving movement of some kind of liquid matter. Most of these verbs can take a peripheral. This means that when suffixed with -si, the applicative effect is as follows:

**S→ A; peripheral prepositional phrase→ O**

The semantic role of the peripheral appears limited, from my data, to a locative, or instrumental:

S + peripheral

(30)  $Mo\ lua\ ana\ tavalu-i\ sala.$
3SG  vomit  PREP  side-LINK  path
‘He vomited on the side of the path.’ (i.e. he was there when he vomited)

A + O

(31)  $Mo\ lua-si\ na\ tavalu-i\ sala.$
3SG  vomit-TR  ART  side-LINK  path
‘He vomited on the side of the path.’ (his vomit landed on the side of the path)

In the following expository narrative, the same speaker uses both forms in adjoining sentences.

S + peripheral

(32a)  $...ka\ lai\ na\ dangbirohi,\ ka\ mai\ ka\ viri\ hini-a.$
1PL  take  ART  coconut.shell  1PL  come  1PL  twist  PREP-O:3SG

A + O

(32b)  $Ka\ viri-si\ na\ wewe...$
1PL  squeeze.milk.on  ART  laplap
‘... we take the empty coconut shell, and we come and ‘milk’$^{19}$ with it. We squeeze coconut milk over the laplap...’  (E-T59:17-18)

Transitive verbs where -si is no longer separable include:

$rurusi$  pull out s.t. long
$harosi$  scratch s.t.
$varasi$  stamp foot on s.t.

---

$^{19}$ Note that the term *viri* ‘twist’ or ‘squeeze’ is used in this sense to mean that the speaker is ‘milking’, i.e. pouring the milk, from the grated, squeezed coconut. There are strict respect distinctions that have to be made as to whether the ‘milk’ can be poured directly by hand, or must be poured from the empty coconut shell, depending on the recipient of the food.
There are also occasional examples where the meaning of the transitive verb has shifted semantically to some extent from its source word:

- **avu** lime ash—*→* avusi take out ash from earth oven
- **dumi** measure—*→* dumisi explain s.t.

**Other valency changing suffixes: -Ci and -Cu**

There are some other intransitive active verbs which have a transitive counterpart derived by suffixes other than -si or -hi. There are not sufficient in the data to establish any firm semantic connection with various suffixes. Nevertheless, the meanings indicated by particular transitive endings as posited for Fijian by Arms (1973) seem to have some correlation, for example, -m: ‘insertion, going inside’; -v: motion ‘to/for/over’.

- **-mi**
  - inu drink
  - dono sink
  - **-vi**
  - eno lie
  - hoho bend over
  - **-ni**
  - sara shine
  - **-ngi**
  - tavu bake in earth oven
  - doro knock
  - **-ti**
  - havuhavu give on tenth day
  - **-tu**
  - laha lift leg

**Nominalisation**

Nouns can be productively derived from either transitive verbs or intransitive verbs by suffixing with -a, -e, -i or -na according to phonological restrictions. As Comrie and Thompson point out (2007:335), most languages in the world make use of one or more devices for such nominalisations that generally function to name the ‘fact, the act, the quality or occurrence of that verb...’.

Nominalisation of verbs in this way, by suffixing with -na, -ana, -ian, -nV has long been attested as common in languages of the area (Codrington 1885:138, 409, 432). Some (but not all) transitive verbs reduplicate to their intransitive form to be nominalised.

**With transitive verbs**

- **vai** —> no intransitive form
- **lako** —> lako—lako —> lako—lako—a decorate s.t. —> be decorating —> decorations
- **hani** —> han—hani —> han—hani—a eat s.t. —> be eating —> food/feast

---

20 This may be reduplication back from the transitive form, where the last syllable has weakened and been lost.
21 With suffixation on this verb, there is a semantic shift and so there is not a direct S—>A or S—> O correspondence.
22 This refers to the ritualised giving-out of money, yams, meat etc. to relatives of someone who has died. It is held on the tenth day after the death.
Chapter 5

With intransitive (active) verbs

- luhu -> luhu-a hide -> refuge
- dule -> dule-a be clearing bush -> activity of clearing bush

With intransitive (stative/adjectival) verbs (see also 10.3.8)

- mangisi 23 -> mangisi-a be happy -> happiness
- manjine -> manjine-a be kind -> kindness
- lokoloko -> lokoloko-a be lazy -> laziness
- matasuri -> matasuri-a be jealous -> jealousy
- retinduhu -> retinduhu-a be truthful -> truth
- manamana -> manamana-e be friendly -> friendliness

While the Tamambo nominaliser is generally -a, it dissimilates to -e after a, example above, and also:

- sora -> sora-e talk -> language/stories
- sahasaha -> sahasaha-e work at s.t. -> job/work

There are a few exceptions to the general rule as stated above, such as:

- ate -> ate-i sit -> chair/place to sit
- evui -> evui-na end s.t. -> the end/the finish

Nominalisation by suffixation is very productive, and compounds are also attested as being nominalised as shown below. In these next examples, the nominalising suffix, in both cases, does not go on the first verb but on the second element of the compound.

(33) sala-i turu horo-a
    path-LINK stand block-NOM
    ‘the way of trapping’ (E-T24:2)

(34) no-na sai dangedange-a
    CLFR-P:3SG search shellfish-NOM
    ‘his shellfish hunt’ (E-T23:4)

This applies even when the second element is a noun, as in the last example where dangedange ‘shellfish’ is already a noun in its own right. (See 5.5.4.1 for complete sentence, and more on compounding.)

5.4 Reduplication

Reduplication is a widespread and often productive morphological process in many Oceanic languages, and has been documented from the very earliest language descriptions. It is used extensively in Tamambo over a variety of word classes and fulfils a variety of functions.

23 It is not known if the first two adjectival verbs here were originally terms prefixed with ma-, but there are no simple jine or ngisi forms that I am aware of.
5.4.1 Processes and sources

Tamambo has full and partial reduplication of full lexical words. (See 2.6.1.1 for phonological rules on syllable reduplication.)

Full reduplication

This consists of repeating two syllables of two syllable words, e.g.

- mai → mai-mai come → come in quantity
- hutu → hutu-hutu louse → rub

Partial reduplication

This kind of reduplication is as follows:

i) Leftward repetition of the first syllable of a two or three syllable word e.g.,
   baravu→ ba~mbaravu tall/long (SG) → tall/long (PL)

ii) Leftward repetition of the first two syllables of a three or four syllable word, e.g.,
   turuvui→ turu~turuvui always→ just all the time/never stops

iii) Leftward repetition as in ii) but with distributive affix added, as with cardinal numbers (see 5.2.1.5. re the a- prefix), e.g.,
   a-tolu→ a-tolu~tolu-hi three → three by three.

Full reduplication of two syllables is a very common and fully productive process, and reduplication of two syllables of a three+ syllable source word is also common. Reduplication of only one syllable from a two or three-syllable source (5.4.4.2 and 5.4.4.3) is uncommon. Reduplication of more than two syllables is not grammatically possible.

For some phonological constraints to reduplication, see 2.6.1.1 and 2.6.5.1.

Source words for reduplication

Words classed as common nouns, numerals, transitive and intransitive verbs, phrase and clause level modifiers, can all function as source words for reduplication processes.

The reduplicated forms derived from the process will generally belong to the same word class as their source, but there is some flexibility. In particular, intransitive verbs as reduplicated forms can be derived from quite a wide range of sources. There are also a considerable number of words in Tamambo that have a reduplicated form, but no attested ‘simple form’ as a source, that is, they are inherently reduplicated.

5.4.2 Common nouns derived by reduplication

In Tamambo, all common nouns as reduplicated forms are effected by the repetition of two syllables, the most usual of the reduplication processes. They are derived predominantly from other nouns, that is, the process is ‘category-preserving’ (Aikhenvald 2007:42). By contrast there are only two examples listed in the data where nouns derive from transitive verbs. In addition there are several nouns with a reduplicated form with no attested simple form.

While derivation of nouns by reduplication from other nouns is not as common in Oceanic languages as verbal reduplication, it is nevertheless attested in quite a few descriptions over time, some of which, for example, are Mota and Ambae (Codrington
Chapter 5

1885), Tangoa (Ray 1926), Lenakel (Lynch 1978), Manam (Lichtenberk 1983), Samoan (Mosel & Hovdhaugen 1992), Saliba (Mosel 1994), North-East Ambae (Hyslop 2001).

5.4.2.1 No simple forms

It is likely that the following are historically derived from simple forms, but they have no locally attested simple forms at this time. They include names of some trees, birds and fish such as:

- **karakara** white-bellied swiftlet (bird)
- **laholaho** ground dove
- **ngaingai** canarium nut/s
- **dengadenga** green palm lorikeet

Other nouns that are inherently reduplicated include:

- **raviravi** afternoon(s)
- **nuenue** rainbow
- **mangamanga** chest

5.4.2.2 Common nouns as source

Anderson (1985b:170) says that ‘in nouns, we typically find reduplication marking plurality or diminutive (or augmentative) …’. This is borne out in Tamambo, but reduplication of nouns is not a productive process. There are several functions and the reduplicated forms are grouped according to those functions.

**Diminution** as in

- **mesu**–> **ra-mesu**–**mesu**²⁴ bush–> grass

This function is also described in Lenakel (Lynch 1978: 27) and Samoan (Mosel and Hovdhaugen 1992:229).

**Plurality**

Several nouns attested in my data show plurality by reduplication:

- **hinau**–> **hina**–**hinau** thing–> things
- **ure**–> **ure**–**ure** island–> islands/big island
- **lanje**–> **lanje**–**lanje** piece of coral–> coral
- **tahasi**–> **taha**–**tahasi** stone–> stones
- **vona**–> **vona**–**vona** kind of thing–> all/many kinds
- **sava**–> **sava**–**sava** what/thing –> whatever, lot of things
- **(vo)maranjea**–> **(vo)mara**–**maranjea** old (wo)man–>old (wo)men

²⁴ The prefix *ra-* most commonly denotes ‘leaf’, as in this case. There is also a prefix *ra-* for nouns denoting ‘female plural’ (5.2.1.1).
This plural function is also listed for reduplicated nouns in other northern Vanuatu languages, such as Mota and Ambae (Codrington 1885:263, 422), and North-East Ambae (Hyslop 2001:347).

**Intensity or Augmentation** as in

\[
\text{moru} \rightarrow \text{moru} \sim \text{moru} \quad \text{creek/pit} \rightarrow \text{valley}
\]

This function is also attested in a neighbouring language of northern Vanuatu, Tangoa (Ray 1926:358), and also further south in Lenakel (Lynch 1978:27). It is not common in Tamambo.

**Extension of meaning** as in

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mata} & \rightarrow \text{mata} \sim \text{mata} \quad \text{eye} \rightarrow \text{signs} \\
\text{mwata} & \rightarrow \text{mwata} \sim \text{mwata} \quad \text{snake} \rightarrow \text{laplap made in bamboo (snake shape)} \\
\text{bisu} & \rightarrow \text{bisu} \sim \text{mbisu} \quad \text{type of ‘soft’ yam, grows in clumps} \rightarrow \text{fingers} \\
\text{bona} & \rightarrow \text{bona} \sim \text{mbona} \quad \text{nose} \rightarrow \text{lumps on a tree trunk} \\
\text{vulu} & \rightarrow \text{vulu} \sim \text{vulu-i mata} \quad \text{hair} \rightarrow \text{eyelashes (lit. hair-hair of eye)}
\end{align*}
\]

5.4.2.3 **Transitive verbs as source**

Transitive verbs as a source for nouns are unusual and I have two examples only in the data. Both simple forms are ‘verbs of speaking’, *dami* ‘ask s.o.’ and *viti* ‘speak to s.o. /speak of s.t.’. When either is reduplicated, it can function as either a verb or a noun. First, *dami* ‘ask s.o.’ can reduplicate to become *dam~dami* ‘prayer/s’:

\[(35)\quad \text{ne ka-mbo le domdomi-ho hina no-mam damdami.} \quad \text{but 1PL-FUT TA think-O:2SG PREP CLFR-P:1PL.E prayers ‘but we will be thinking of you with our prayers.’ (WI-T11:6)}
\]

or it can be used as an intransitive verb:

\[(36)\quad \text{Ka damdami.} \quad \text{1PL pray ‘Let us pray.’}
\]

Second, compare the two reduplicated meanings of *viti* ‘speak to s.o./of s.t.’. It can function as a noun in reduplicated form, taking a possessive marker:

\[(37)\quad \text{Viti~viti-na le turu...} \quad \text{RED-speak-P:3SG TA stand ‘The memory of his words remain...’ (Wh:5.7)}
\]

Note that the high vowel is retained in this reduplication, because this is from a written, published hymn, as compared with *damdami* in (35), in an informal letter from my ‘family’, and the spoken church usage of (36).

Additionally, *viti* can still function as a transitive verb when reduplicated (see also Plurality of patients in 5.4.5).
5.4.3 Numerals derived by reduplication

Numerals can only be derived from other numerals and have a distributive function in their reduplicated form. This almost parallels Boumaa Fijian (Dixon 1988:99) and Paamese (Crowley 1982:154) in form and function, except that the Tamambo cardinal numerals also take a distributive suffix -hi when reduplicated as shown in 5.3.1.4 (see also 6.2.5.3). For example:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{arua} & \rightarrow a-\text{rua}~\text{rua-hi} & \text{two} & \rightarrow \text{two by two/ two each} \\
\text{alima} & \rightarrow a-\text{lima}~\text{lima-hi} & \text{five} & \rightarrow \text{five by five/ five each}
\end{align*}
\]

(39) No mai atea~tea-hi!
2PL come RED-one-DISTRIB
‘Come in one at a time!’ (#e.PB)

(40) O sile-ra vetai atolu~tolu-hi.
2SG give-O:3PL banana RED~three-DISTRIB
‘Give them three bananas each.’ (#e.PB)

5.4.4 Intransitive verbs derived by reduplication

Reduplicated forms as intransitive verbs are widespread in Oceanic languages, with verbs a very common source, a fact noted early by Codrington (1885:191) as an areal feature. Tamambo has intransitive verbs in reduplicated form deriving from nouns, transitive verbs, intransitive verbs (both active and stative), and even one deriving from a verbal modifier.25 This seems a particularly wide source group in comparison to many other Oceanic languages.

5.4.4.1 No simple forms

Similarly to some nouns, some intransitive verbs are inherently reduplicated, in that no simple form is currently attested. Some examples include:

Active intransitives:
\[
\begin{align*}
lukuluku & \quad \text{fold up legs underneath one} \\
vindivindiri & \quad \text{pick up leaves} \\
dalingalinga & \quad \text{overflow} \\
wotowoto & \quad \text{aim straight}
\end{align*}
\]

Stative intransitive verbs, including some adjectival:
\[
\begin{align*}
lengalenga & \quad \text{be cranky} \\
maomao & \quad \text{be tame}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\text{25 But note that it is quite likely that many verbal post-head modifiers (9.4.2.2) were once full verbs, as shown by their morphological and syntactic behaviour.}
\]
**Morphological processes**

- **melomelo** be colourless
- **lokoloko** be lazy
- **rovorovo** be dry
- **vortvori** be little
- **ngandingandira** be rough textured
- **savusavura** be brave
- **malamala** be silly, useless

### 5.4.4.2 Nouns as source

The following are some of those attested from my data:

- *bwero* → *bwero~mbwero* inside part of ear → deaf
- *hutu* → *hutu~hutu* louse → rub hard
- *simba* → *simba~simba* knife → peel off, as with skin of yam
- *ivi* → *iv~ivi* fan → be fanning
- *bange* → *bange~mbange* stomach → be pregnant
- *asu* → *asu~asu* smoke→ be smoky/smoking
- *huri* → *huri~huri* skin→ wipe one’s backside
- *tahisa* → *tahi~tahisa* friend → make friends

### 5.4.4.3 Intransitive verbs as source

Lynch et al. (2002:44) note that ‘reduplication is almost universally used in Oceanic verbal morphology ... with a wide range of meanings’. So terms such as ‘multiplicity of action’, ‘continuance’, ‘repetition’ occur constantly in grammars of Oceanic languages to describe the function of reduplicated intransitive verbs. Some Tamambo examples only are listed.

**Emphasis of meaning**

These Tamambo stative verbs emphasise the meaning of the active verbs from which they derive.

- *mana* → *mana~mana* laugh → be friendly
- *sale* → *sale~sale* float → be light (in weight)
- *siala* → *sia~siala* slip→ be slippery
- *tunu* → *tu~tun(u)* cook on top of fire→ be hot

Note that the last listed indicates one-syllable partial reduplication.

**Progressive**

- *sahe* → *sahe~sahe* go up→ be going up/go up in quantity
- *doro* → *doro~ndoro* make a sharp snapping noise→ be knocking

---

26 See 2.6.5.1 for deletion of an identical vowel in a sequence.
Continuing or habitual action over time:

ngiri –> ngiri~ngiri  buzz (as of cicadas) –> keep on buzzing
kolo –> kolo~kolo  flow –> keep flowing (as of river)
kore –> kore~kore  tell a lie –> keep on lying/ tell lies constantly
ronjo –> ronjo~ronjo  be sick –> be sick all the time
tio –> tio~tio  jump –> be restless, can’t sit still

Plurality

Two adjectival intransitive verbs of Dimension are marked for plurality by one syllable partial reduplication. This applies in two cases only, as shown below, while the other two Dimension adjectival verbs are marked for plurality by suppletion (see 10.3.1). This marking of plurality is one of the few indications of dependent marking in the language, where these attributive, more noun-like adjectival words agree with their head noun, as described in the patterns for attributive phrases as described by Nichols (1986:60).

busohi –> bu~mbusohi  be short (SG) –> be short (PL)
baravu –> ba~mbaravu  be tall/long (SG) –> be tall/long (PL)

This is almost identical to the Boumaa Fijiian pattern of balavu (SG) –> ba~balavu (PL) ‘tall’ (Dixon 1988:232).

Intensity

This process of reduplication of stative (including adjectival) verbs is common and just some examples are given here.

mangisi –> mang~mangisi  be happy –> be extremely happy
duhu –> duhu~duhu  be good –> be wonderful
baru –> baru~mbaru  be fat –> be very fat

Extension of meaning

The following can assume quite different meanings when reduplicated.
sati –> sa~sati  be bad –> be dead (as predicate)
                                          be bad –> be bad/selfish by nature (as attribute)

Opposite

vono –> vono~vono  be empty –> be solid
boni –> bon~boni  stinks –> smells delicious

Plurality of actors

This same function of reduplication is described by Crowley (1982:153) for Paamese as ‘simultaneous plural action … to indicate a large number of actors all at once’.

mai –> mai~mai  come –> come in quantity (lots of people/animals)
jovi –> jovi~jovi  fall/come back down –> fall/come back down in quantity
sahe –> sahe~sahe  go up –> go up in quantity (lots of people/animals)
                                          (also can indicate a progressive as shown in an earlier section)
A somewhat similar pattern exists in Boumaa Fijian (Dixon 1988:226).

**Narrowing of meaning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Reduplicated</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>vano</em> → vano~vano</td>
<td>go → walk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>divi</em> → divi~ndivi</td>
<td>have a cold → have a runny nose</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>tiho</em> → tiho~tiho</td>
<td>walk like an old person → limp</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**5.4.4.4 Transitive verbs as source**

**Decrease in valency**

As Crowley says (1982:153), ‘the most important syntactic function of verbal reduplication in many Oceanic languages … is its ability to change a verb from transitive to intransitive’. Certainly it is by far the most productive and common use of reduplication in Tamambo and those intransitive verbs listed below are some only of the very many reduplicated forms that are in use. A–>S; O–>ø

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Reduplicated</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>sau</em> → sau~sau</td>
<td>hook a fish/lift up → go fishing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>sohi</em> → sohi~sohi</td>
<td>hide → play hide and seek</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>lavo</em> → lavo~lavo</td>
<td>plant s.t. → plant, be planting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>biri</em> → biri~mbiri</td>
<td>grate s.t. (but not coconut) → grate, be grating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>sari</em> → sari~sari</td>
<td>spear s.t. → spear, be spearing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>tovi</em> → tovi~tovi</td>
<td>call s.o. → call out (usually tov~tovi)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>hani</em> → han~hani</td>
<td>eat s.t. → eat, be eating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>vaso</em> → vaso~vaso</td>
<td>encourage s.o. → be encouraging</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>uri</em> → uri~uri</td>
<td>urge s.o. → keep on urging</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>tevi</em> → te~tevi</td>
<td>sweep s.t. → sweep, be sweeping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>vine</em> → vine~vine</td>
<td>shoot s.t. with bow and arrow → go shooting with bow and arrow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All examples are full reduplication of the simple form, with the exception of *tetevi*, which now shows partial reduplication only. It would seem that this is a fairly recent development, as it is recorded in a short Malo word list in Macdonald (1891:220) as tevtevi. This suggests that V₂ of the source verb tevi (‘sweep s.t.’) had already been weakened, as discussed under phonological constraints in 2.6.5.2, was presumably then omitted, and that now the consonant has also been lost.

**Widening of meaning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Reduplicated</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>saha</em> → saha~saha</td>
<td>fix/repair s.t. → work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All intransitive active verbs nominalised by suffixation of a vowel derive from a transitive verb. There are very few active transitive verbs that can be directly nominalised. The majority must first be reduplicated, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Reduplicated</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>lavo</em> → lavo<del>lavo→lavo</del>lavo-a</td>
<td>plant s.t. → plant → planting time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>vai</em> → vai<del>vai→ vai</del>vai-a</td>
<td>do s.t. → be busy at s.t. → custom/s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>lako</em> → lako<del>lako→ lako</del>lako-a</td>
<td>decorate s.t. → decorate → decoration/s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.4.4.5 Verbal modifier as source

I have only one example, that of

\[\text{toho} \rightarrow \text{toho–toho}\] quickly\(\rightarrow\) play, fool around/go about the place

which could reflect a narrowing in meaning.

5.4.5 Transitive verbs derived by reduplication

Reduplicated forms that are transitive verbs can only be derived from other ‘simple form’ transitive verbs. They are not nearly as common as intransitive verbs becoming reduplicated forms, but have some interesting functions. The valency of the verb does not change.

**Widening of meaning**

\[\text{domi} \rightarrow \text{dom~domi}\] feel sorry for s.o. or about s.t. \(\rightarrow\) think about s.o./s.t.

**Extension of meaning**

\[\text{hati} \rightarrow \text{hat~hati}\] bite s.t.\(\rightarrow\) cause to itch s.o.

**Plurality of patients**

Some examples only are listed.

\[\text{takahi} \rightarrow \text{taka~takahi}\] remove s.t.\(\rightarrow\) remove every/many thing/s
\[\text{evui} \rightarrow \text{evu~evui}\] complete s.t.\(\rightarrow\) complete every/many thing/s
\[\text{sile} \rightarrow \text{sile~sile}\] give to s.o. \(\rightarrow\) give to many/all people
\[\text{lau} \rightarrow \text{lau~lau}\] lie to s.o. \(\rightarrow\) lie to each other/to many people
\[\text{tuani} \rightarrow \text{tua~tuani}\] help s.o. \(\rightarrow\) help each other/many people
\[\text{tau} \rightarrow \text{tau~tau}\] put s.t. in place\(\rightarrow\) put many/all things in place
\[\text{viti} \rightarrow \text{vit~viti}\] speak to s.o. \(\rightarrow\) speak to many/all the people
\[\text{soari} \rightarrow \text{soa~soari}\] see s.t.\(\rightarrow\) look around at many/all the things

5.4.6 Modifiers derived by reduplication

All verbal modifiers and adverbs in reduplicated form in this language are derived from the same word in its simple form. The reduplication here functions to intensify the modifier.

**Verbal modifiers**

\[\text{vosai} \rightarrow \text{vosa~vosai}\] extremely good\(\rightarrow\) perfectly
\[\text{dalihahi} \rightarrow \text{dali~dalihahi}\] all about\(\rightarrow\) just everywhere
\[\text{sohena} \rightarrow \text{sohe~sohena}\] the same\(\rightarrow\) always the same

**Sentential adverb**

\[\text{turuvui} \rightarrow \text{turu~turuvui}\] always\(\rightarrow\) just all the time/never stops
5.5 Compounds

I take the process of compounding here as defined by Aikhenvald (2007:24), ‘word formation based on the combination of two potentially free forms, most frequently members of open lexical classes’.\(^{27}\) Component words in Tamambo can function as independent words, and the resulting compounds also function as independent words. There is one exception in Tamambo to this independence, where one particular component only ever functions as part of a compound (5.5.3.3).

There are many words in Tamambo that appear to be compounds from observing their syllabic structure, and from recognising one part of the word that can be an independent lexeme, but where the other component or components of the word have no known source form. However tantalising this may be when one recognises a ‘bit’, many lexical components of such apparent compounds are lost in history. Consequently, I attempt here to look at compounding from primarily a synchronic perspective in grouping the compounds, but make reference to possible membership in other groupings which may be applicable from a historical perspective.

A distinction needs to be made here between the compounding process and lexicalised compounds. The formation of compounds describes which kinds of full lexical words can combine and in which order; lexicalised compounds are words that have gone through a compounding process and have become part of the lexical inventory of language speakers. See also discussion 12.6 about particular kinds of serial verb constructions.

5.5.1 Criteria for identification as independent ‘lexical items’

Drawing on the work of Pawley (1986, 1992, 1996) in discussing lexicalisation of derived words, compounds and phrases, lexicalised compounds here are acknowledged as independent lexemes ‘... for the good practical reason that they are recognised by the speech community as standard names or ways of saying standard concepts, in contrast to those expressions of concepts that are ad hoc or less conventional’ (Pawley 1992:331).

But compounds, as with any word formation process, presumably do not suddenly become standard. There are degrees of lexicalisation as new words move in or out of a language over time, and some words combine to become the acceptable way of referring to something. So it seems reasonable to suggest that there is some sort of continuum of lexicalisation and that candidates for inclusion as ‘lexical items’ fulfil a greater or lesser number of criteria. Nevertheless, the compounds that are referred to here as ‘lexicalised’ are recognised as ‘standard ways of referring to familiar concepts’ (Pawley 1986:101). In addition, they all fulfil at least some of both the phonological and grammatical criteria from the following list. Many of the criteria listed are drawn from Anderson (1985a:40–51), Aikhenvald (2007:25–28), or from a list by Pawley (1986)\(^{28}\) as indicated.

**Phonological criteria**

i) often form one phonological word (Aikhenvald p.25)

ii) ‘internal pause is unacceptable’ (Pawley p.107, also Anderson p.45).

---

\(^{27}\) This is essentially the same criterion as that given by Anderson (1985a:40).

\(^{28}\) Note however, the 27 (1986) criteria for lexicalisation listed by Pawley are not all applicable as a ‘test’ for lexicalised compounds in this description. For example, those appertaining to ‘Writing’ are not applicable to an essentially non-literate culture.
iii) ‘conventionally reduced pronunciation’ (Pawley p.108), with some occasional syllable deletion.

**Grammatical criteria**

i) fixed constituent order (Aikhenvald p.26)

ii) ability to function as a base for other derivations (Pawley p.107)

iii) inseparability of components, in that ‘they cannot be interrupted by other morphemic material’ (Pawley p.107), ‘other morphemes cannot be inserted’ (Aikhenvald p.27) as they are ‘syntactically unitary’ (Anderson p.44)

iv) ability to function as a unit, e.g. in possessive constructions (nouns)

v) different grammatical behaviour as a compound component from that of the same word class as an independent lexeme.

**Semantically,** such compounds

i) can fulfil the ‘naming test’ as described by Pawley (pp.102–104), where a ‘name for X’ has conventionalised status in common usage as referring to X

ii) are frequently ‘non-compositional’ (Anderson p.44).

### 5.5.2 Formation and types of compounds

Compounding can consist of different combinations of word classes, some extremely productive and creative, while others appear to be limited in their application. All examples given have become lexicalised, at least to some degree.

I differentiate here between coordinate compounds, and non-coordinate compounds.

**Coordinate compounds**

These are made up of compounds where the components come from the same word class, with no linking form. Each component is ‘equal’ in form, and the compound can only be of the same word class as its joint components, that is, V+V=V, N+N=N. Coordinate compounds are not suggested as being semantically coordinate.

**Non-coordinate compounds**

These compounds are made up of combinations of different word classes, for example N+V, or V+modifier, or where the combination of two words of the same word class do not result in a compound of that word class, as with V+V= N.

### 5.5.3 Coordinate compounds

**5.5.3.1 Nouns as coordinate compounds: N+N = N**

The first example illustrates the way the speakers can create compounds of this sort, but a variety of other nouns can be substituted.
At yam planting time, if the people didn’t finish clearing the gardens in the daytime … (Nk-T3:4)

The following examples illustrate N+N compounds of this type that have become lexicalised and no longer completely retain the meaning of their parts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compound noun</th>
<th>Component parts (N+N)</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ulu-rani</td>
<td>top + day</td>
<td>morning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dondo-ulurani</td>
<td>night + morning</td>
<td>dawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tama-natu</td>
<td>father + child</td>
<td>husband</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mara-rohai</td>
<td>man + leaf</td>
<td>medicine man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mara-vitviti</td>
<td>man + speech</td>
<td>teacher, preacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mara-aimo</td>
<td>man + home</td>
<td>man who lives according to custom/lives a traditional lifestyle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The nouns have no linking suffix, showing different grammatical behaviour from what might be expected. In the textual example (41), the first component of the compound, bongi, already ends in -i, so if a linking suffix were to be used, it would be deleted under phonological rules (see 2.6.5.1).

Looking at their meanings, I suggest that many such compounds were once linked in a direct linking possessive construction (such as shown in the next section), and that as they have become more and more lexicalised as a unit, the possessive linker has been deleted with common usage. For example, it is likely that tama-natu ‘father + child’ (‘husband’) may have been tama-i natu ‘father of child’/child’s father’ and that mara-rohai ‘man+leaf’ (‘medicine man’) may have been mara-i rohai ‘man of leaf/leaves’.

Similarly, it seems semantically likely that ulu-rani ‘top +day’ (‘morning’) was once ulu-i rani ‘top of day’/‘the day’s top’ and, since such possessive constructions can work recursively, that dondo-ulurani ‘night’/‘dark time’ + morning (‘dawn’) may once have been dondo-i ulu-i rani ‘dark time of the top of the day’.

### 5.5.3.2 Lexicalised noun phrases: N+ -i + N =N

In this group, the second noun (possessor) is linked to the first (possessed) by -i, a possessive linking suffix (see 7.5.3) translated as ‘of’, as in N-i +N. Strictly speaking, such constructions are not compounds, in that they are still linked, but they illustrate that some compounds, as in 5.5.3.1 may well have derived from this construction. Nevertheless, these NPs have become fixed terms, expressing particular concepts.
### Compound nouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compound noun</th>
<th>Component parts: N-link N</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vanua-i ronjo-a</td>
<td>house + of + sickness</td>
<td>hospital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vembe-i hambu</td>
<td>butterfly + of + fire</td>
<td>flame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>klas-i suvu-suvu-a</td>
<td>glass + of + diving</td>
<td>snorkelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>malako-i wae</td>
<td>large stone + of + wae</td>
<td>reef edge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wamba-i isau</td>
<td>cave + of + nose</td>
<td>nostril/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>batu-i vanua</td>
<td>head + of + house</td>
<td>village/town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hamba-i mata</td>
<td>wing + of + eye</td>
<td>eyebrow/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wawa-i bima</td>
<td>mouth + of + hook</td>
<td>anchorage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some, such as vanua-i ronjo-a ‘hospital’ and wawa-i bima ‘anchorage’ are semantically transparent, but they are also accepted standard ‘names’ for places, and as such have earned their place in the lexicon as the standard way of expressing that particular concept. This differs from other such possessive constructions where the components are not fixed but can be varied as in the following:

- matesia-i wamba  
  - door of cave
- matesia-i vanua  
  - door of house
- bwere-i ravae     
  - top shoots of the vae leaves
- bwere-i maniok    
  - top shoots of the manioc

Such direct possessive constructions remain two linked but distinct ‘lexical items’, rather than one unit.

One particular example above, malako-i wae ‘reef edge’, has its origins in literal compositionality but younger speakers no longer have a knowledge of the components. For example, malako are large kinds of coral formations that wae shellfish cling to, and these ‘rocks’ are common just where the reef ends and the deep water begins. But now only older speakers appear to know the names of the different kinds of rocks and coral, although every Malo island dweller would know malakowae, usually pronounced [mala ə kə wae], as ‘the edge of the reef where the deep water begins’ because of their reliance on fishing and boat travel. So it appears that some such NPs can move from:

1. a possessive construction where the components are not fixed and are semantically transparent (e.g. bwere-i ravae ‘top shoots of vae leaves’) →
2. a fixed lexicalised expression, still retaining possessive linker -i phonologically, and usually but not always semantically non-compositional (e.g. vanua-i ronjoa ‘hospital’, vembe-i hambu ‘flames’ OR →
3. a fixed lexicalised expression where linker -i is lost and the meaning of parts is lost or unrecognisable to most speakers (e.g. malakowae ‘edge of reef’ as explained above; tamanatu ‘husband’, ulurani ‘morning’ as in 5.5.3.1).

#### 5.5.3.3 Verbs as coordinate compounds: V + V/ verbal modifier = V

The compounding of V+V, as a process, is essentially the same as nuclear serialisation, where two contiguous verbs can combine with no additional marking. Lexicalised compounds, on the other hand, are those verb combinations that have become fixed in
order, and have usually lost their original semantic composition to become another verb in the lexicon. Since serialisation versus compounds is discussed in 12.8, this section looks only at *lexicalised* compounds of this V+V type.

The examples give some idea of the progression of lexicalisation, in that all have probably gone through the process of serial verb construction → lexicalised compound. Some are still partly compositional in that the original semantic meaning of the parts is retrievable, while many of the others are now semantically non-compositional.

\[ V + V = V \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compound verb</th>
<th>Component parts (V+V)</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>bosi-mate</em></td>
<td>turn + die</td>
<td>extinguish (lamp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>dom-tau</em></td>
<td>feel sad + put in place</td>
<td>believe in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>dom-tutunu</em></td>
<td>feel sad + heat up/be hot</td>
<td>(be) conscientious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>lolovunga-vurohi</em></td>
<td>be angry + be empty</td>
<td>(be) bad-tempered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>reti-duhu</em></td>
<td>complain + good</td>
<td>(be) truthful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>hinu-vono-hi</em></td>
<td>use s.t + empty +TR</td>
<td>do for no reason/be dishonest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>rong~rong-vono</em></td>
<td>RED~hear + empty +TR</td>
<td>be stupid, have no idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>hani-maomao</em></td>
<td>eat + be tame</td>
<td>yawn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>rongo-vosai</em></td>
<td>hear + be perfect</td>
<td>know s.t. or s.o./ understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>tau~tau-vosai</em></td>
<td>RED~put + be perfect</td>
<td>prepare s.t. well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>viti-vosa~vosai</em></td>
<td>speak+ RED~be perfect</td>
<td>correct s.t/s.o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See also 12.8.2.3 for pathway from V+V to lexicalised compound.

\[ V + verbal modifier = V \]

The following is a small but productive subset of verb compounds where the second component is *tusi* ‘cross’. But *tusi* can no longer operate as an independent word. It could be argued that *tusi* is a verbal suffix rather than a verbal modifier but since it can cooccur with a causative prefix, ends with a ‘transitive suffix’ -si, and fits the phonological pattern of Tamambo words, it is probable that it may have been once a verb in its own right. I thus choose to give *tusi* ‘component’ status for a compound. If we accept that *tusi* could once have been an independent verb, then it is highly likely that many such compounds began as serial verb constructions with the first component an active intransitive verb, such as *walau* ‘run’, *alo* ‘swim’ and so on.

The posited history of *tusi* is shown below:

---

29 See 12.8.2.3 for possible history of these compounds.
30 The meaning of *reti* in the East Malo dialect is ‘speak’, but in West Malo, it has narrowed to mean ‘whinge’, ‘complain’. It is interesting that the compound obviously derives from the meaning still retained in the East.
As an independent verb:  
\[ mo \text{ walau} \text{ mo} \text{ tusi} \]
3SG run 3SG cross s.w.

\[ \rightarrow \]

As nuclear SVC or V+modifier:  
\[ mo \text{ walau} \text{ tusi} \]
3SG run across s.w.

\[ \rightarrow \]

Present form, as compound:  
\[ mo \text{ walatusi} \]
3SG run/go across s.w.

Similar transparent compounds with \textit{tusi} are listed below. In verb \textit{hatusi} ‘bite off’, from \textit{hati} ‘bite’+ \textit{tusi} ‘cross’, it is incorporated to such an extent that the verb form is phonologically reduced, that is, \textit{hati tusi} \( \rightarrow \) \textit{hatusi}.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compound verb</th>
<th>Component parts: (V+ modifier)</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>alo-tusi</td>
<td>swim + cross</td>
<td>swim across s.w.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avu-tusi</td>
<td>fly + cross</td>
<td>fly across s.w.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wala-tusi (reduced from walau-tusi)</td>
<td>run + cross</td>
<td>run across s.w.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tai-tusi</td>
<td>cut + cross</td>
<td>slash, cut across s.t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ha-tusi (reduced from hati-tusi)</td>
<td>bite +cross</td>
<td>bite off s.t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vaha-tusi</td>
<td>CAUS + cross</td>
<td>cover over s.t.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(See also \textit{enotusi} ‘crossbeams’, 5.5.4.1, \textit{salatusi}, ‘cross over s.w.’, 5.5.4.2)

5.5.4 Non-coordinate compounds

5.5.4.1 Nouns as non-coordinate compounds

This compounding is fully productive and is a rich and creative source of new nouns. The type of modification is particularly productive in describing people, where the verbal component delimits the kind of person being described.

\[ N+ V \text{ (intr./trans.)} = N \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compound noun</th>
<th>Component parts N+V (intr./trans.)</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tamalohi vono</td>
<td>person + empty</td>
<td>a ‘rubbish man’ (i.e. no good)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamalohi tiri</td>
<td>person + persuade</td>
<td>a ‘sweet talker’, a ‘con’ man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamalohi vuro</td>
<td>person + fight</td>
<td>a warrior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamalohi mere~merei</td>
<td>person + RED~cheat</td>
<td>a cheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamalohi kore~kore</td>
<td>person + RED~lie</td>
<td>a liar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamalohi do~ndoro 31</td>
<td>person + RED~knock</td>
<td>trouble-maker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamalohi los~losu</td>
<td>person + RED~strike</td>
<td>‘poison man’ (i.e. practises black magic)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ ^{31} \text{The use of } dondoro \text{ here is a contraction from the usual } doro~ndoro \text{ (see 5.4.4.3, also example no.86 in Chapter 6), here used in a lexicalised expression.} \]
The examples following are similar to those above in that N+V=N, but semantically they do not delimit the kind of thing/person from others or, if delimiting, as with maranjea ‘old man’, are now completely lexicalised. Similarly to above, this type involves a noun modified by a verb, rather like a ‘subject predicate’, but with none of the usual marking on the verb as in a verb phrase. (See 6.4.4.2 for textual examples of N+V combinations, where the components combine in this manner, but semantically retain their meanings.)

Many (though not all) compounds of this kind describe natural phenomena, and while some are semantically evocative of their parts, they are generally non-compositional.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compound noun</th>
<th>Component parts (N+V)</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mara-njea</td>
<td>man + ripe</td>
<td>a mature or old man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mara-sai</td>
<td>man + search</td>
<td>stranger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toa-njea</td>
<td>fowl + ripe</td>
<td>a wise, wealthy man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dondo-tawera</td>
<td>night + big</td>
<td>midnight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jara-vono</td>
<td>place + empty</td>
<td>wilderness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vitu-sarasara</td>
<td>moon + shine</td>
<td>stars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>batu-sari</td>
<td>head + spear</td>
<td>thunder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>batu-liu</td>
<td>head + win</td>
<td>mountain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hambu-hani</td>
<td>fire + burn</td>
<td>volcano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hambu-tango</td>
<td>fire + walk at night without light</td>
<td>bushfire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>langi-losu</td>
<td>wind + strike</td>
<td>hurricane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vulu-mate</td>
<td>hair + die</td>
<td>wig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aka suasua</td>
<td>boat + paddle</td>
<td>canoe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tasi wala-walau</td>
<td>sea + RED~run</td>
<td>tsunami</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compound noun</th>
<th>Component parts (Adj.V+V)</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>baravu-lieu</td>
<td>tall-wins</td>
<td>middle finger</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Given that all other examples of this type have a noun as the first component, I would argue that the adjectival verb here as this first modified component gives more credence to the fact that baravu ‘tall’, a member of the Dimension set, was originally a noun. (See also 10.3.1 re the noun-like features of this set.)

\[ V.\text{intr.} + V.\text{intr.} /\text{adv.} /\text{modifier} = N \]

This process is where a noun is derived from the combination of two intransitive verbs, or an intransitive verb with either an adverb or a verbal modifier.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compound noun</th>
<th>Component parts: V.\text{intr.} + V.\text{intr.} /\text{verbal modifier/adverb}</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>eno-tusi</td>
<td>lie + cross</td>
<td>crossbeam/s (in house)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>turu-talom</td>
<td>stand + first</td>
<td>firstborn child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>turu-hitahu</td>
<td>stand + last</td>
<td>last-born child</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Their status as nouns is shown by the fact that they can function as arguments of verbal or non-verbal clauses, and one is attested as being affixed by a possessive suffix, turuh-hitahu-na, ‘her last-born child’.

\[
\text{V+N = N}
\]

This type, verb-object compounding, is unusual in Tamambo, and I have a few examples only. One such type from a text is:

(42) \text{Mara tuai, nia no-na sai dangedange-a} \\
\text{man long.ago IP:3SG CLFR-P:3SG search shellfish-NOM} \\
\text{tovon le suv~suvu, nia mo suv~suv mo tinambu.} \\
\text{when TA RED~dive IP:3SG 3SG RED~dive 3SG different} \\
\text{‘(For) a man of olden times, his shellfish hunt when he was diving, was that he} \\
\text{dived differently.’ (Nk-T23:4)}

The evidence for it being regarded as a compound is explained in spite of its transparency in meaning, is that the nominalising suffix is added to the noun (5.3), an otherwise impossible morphological marking. It receives a nominalising suffix because it is the compound that is being nominalised, not just a single word.

The following are the only compounds of this type attested that have become lexicalised and become semantically non-compositional; they do not have any nominalising suffix.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compound noun</th>
<th>Component parts (V+N)</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tai~tai-mata</td>
<td>RED~cut+ eye</td>
<td>wasp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viri-niu</td>
<td>twist+ coconut</td>
<td>coconut milk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.5.4.2 Verbs as non-coordinate compounds:

\[
\text{N+V = V}
\]

The following are lexicalised examples in spite of, at least, some metaphorical connection in some compounds, with many using body parts, especially \textit{mata} ‘eye’, as the first component.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compound verb</th>
<th>Component parts (N+Vtr. /Vintr.)</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mata-tauhi</td>
<td>eye/s + promise</td>
<td>choose s.t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mata-suri</td>
<td>eye/s + follow</td>
<td>(be) jealous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mata-hoso</td>
<td>eye/s + come ashore</td>
<td>(be) beautiful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mata-vosai</td>
<td>eye + be perfect</td>
<td>know how/ be able to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mata-titisi</td>
<td>eye + cut a way through</td>
<td>(be) opportunistic/find the biggest/best for oneself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mata-teri</td>
<td>eye + untie</td>
<td>follow with one’s eyes, study s.t.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mata-wanju-hi</td>
<td>eye + be quiet + TR</td>
<td>watch carefully</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Many of the various verb compounds can also be the base for further derivation as in

\[ \text{lolonjivo} \rightarrow \text{lolonjivo-a} \quad \text{(be) patient} \rightarrow \text{patience} \]

with other examples in 5.3.2.2.

**N + Verbal modifier = V**

Lastly, modifier *tusi* ‘across’ (5.5.3.3) can be used with a noun to result in the following compound:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compound verb</th>
<th>Component parts (N+/Verbal modifier)</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>sala-tusi</em></td>
<td>road + cross</td>
<td>cross over somewhere</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

\[32\] The Bislama term ‘stronghed’ has the same meaning, and describes someone, especially a child, who is naughty or obstinate. The term enjoys high usage throughout Vanuatu.
6 Nouns and the noun phrase

6.1 Introduction

This chapter describes
i) the category of ‘noun’ in this language
ii) heads of noun phrases and functions of noun phrases
iii) the optional components of the noun phrase
iv) how noun phrases are coordinated.

In 6.2. I list and give examples of the various forms that can function as the head of the noun phrase (henceforth NP). In 6.3, I outline the non-obligatory modifying components of the NP, and discuss them in turn. The functions of NPs according to the type of head are outlined in 6.4, and appositional noun phrases in 6.5. Lastly in 6.6, the coordination of NPs is described.

6.2 Nouns

Words classed as nouns can function as the head of a noun phrase. As the head of a noun phrase, they can function as:

- core arguments of a verbal clause
- subject and/or predicate of a non-verbal clause
- object of a preposition in a prepositional phrase.

Nouns are subdivided into common nouns, proper nouns, relational nouns, location nouns and numerals. The particular characteristics that distinguish them one from another are shown in Table 6.1.

6.2.1 Common nouns

Common nouns can be further divided into subsets:

- animate
  - kin terms
- human
- non-human
- non-animate.

Kin terms include words which encode family relationships, such as father, mother, older same-sex sibling, maternal grandmother/grandfather, paternal grandmother/grandfather, mother’s brother, father’s brother and so on. Kin relationships are complicated
in this patrilineal society, and for full detail, reference should be made to Rubinstein 1978 and 1981. Human nouns include all words such as those for woman, man, child, youth; non-human animate nouns include all words for spirits and the animal world, including birds, fish, and insects.

**Table 6.1:** Morphosyntactic characteristics of nouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Morphosyntactic characteristics</th>
<th>Common nouns</th>
<th>Proper nouns</th>
<th>Relational nouns</th>
<th>Location nouns</th>
<th>Numerals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definite object marked by article na</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes (ordinals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singular or plural entities</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can indicate plurality morphologically</td>
<td>some</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In possessive constructions can function as possessed</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In possessive constructions can function as possessor</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes (rare)</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can be quantified</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-referenced on the verb phrase for number</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can modify other nouns</td>
<td>some</td>
<td>some</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can be modified by adjectival verbs or demonstratives</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the subsets of common nouns share many morphosyntactic behaviours, there is some grammatical marking which can distinguish them. Sometimes there is an animate-inanimate split; other times the difference is shown on human against non-human nouns. With other morphosyntactic behaviours, each category has a different marking. But the most commonly marked grammatical ‘split’ is for kin terms (and proper names) as compared to common nouns.

The grammatical marking that reflects a hierarchy of animacy or individuation is given in Table 6.2. For further detail, reference is made to places in the grammar where each of the listed points is discussed.

**Table 6.2:** Grammatical indications of an individuation hierarchy within nouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatical variations</th>
<th>Common nouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Animating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kin terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositional marking to instrumental or thematic PP (8.2.6)</td>
<td>hini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositional marking to a reason PP (8.2.5)</td>
<td>matani</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Grammatical variations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammatical variations</th>
<th>Common nouns</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kin terms, preceded by linker (7.5.2, 7.5.3)</td>
<td>Animate</td>
<td>Human</td>
<td>Non-human</td>
<td>Inanimate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linked with comitative (6.6.1, 8.2.3)</td>
<td>Inanimate</td>
<td>mana</td>
<td>mana</td>
<td>mana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plurality morphologically marked by prefix (5.2.1.1, 6.2.1.1)</td>
<td>Human</td>
<td>some</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>trees only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plurality marked by reduplication (5.4.2.2)</td>
<td>Inanimate</td>
<td>one only</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As possessed, in indirect possessive constructions, marked by a classifier (7.5.5, 7.5.6)</td>
<td>Inanimate</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can be possessor in indirect possessive constructions (7.5.5, 7.5.6)</td>
<td>Inanimate</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepositional marking indicating spatial location (8.2.1, 8.2.2)</td>
<td>Inanimate</td>
<td>telei</td>
<td>telei</td>
<td>ana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singular/plural differentiation indicated by quantifying verb phrase (9.2.4.3)</td>
<td>Inanimate</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantity shown by <em>batu</em> ‘head/s’ vs. <em>bwanu</em> ‘bundle/s’ (6.2.5.3)</td>
<td>Inanimate</td>
<td>not applicable</td>
<td>batu</td>
<td>bwanu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 6.2.1.1 Morphological marking of plurality on common nouns

Most nouns are not marked morphologically for plurality, though all kin terms indicate plurality by prefixing with *na-* (5.2.1.1). Additionally, they show more morphological marking than other nouns in that they almost always occur in direct possessive constructions as ‘possessed’ (7.4.1.1). A singular/plural morphological distinction is also made for some other particular human nouns, by prefixing with *va-, vai- or ra-* and *lo-* for human kin terms. The only inanimate nouns that show plurality by prefixing, with *lo-* are all terms for trees, as described in 5.2.1.1.

There are some other exceptions to the lack of plural marking on common nouns in that a few nouns reduplicate for plurality, but it is not productive, for example:

- *tahasi* $\rightarrow$ *taha~tahasi*  stone $\rightarrow$ stones
- *maranjea* $\rightarrow$ *mara~maranjea*  old man $\rightarrow$ old men

For a fuller list of some that are attested in my data see 5.4.2.2.

### Proper names

This is an open sub-class of nouns which is further divided on grammatical criteria into subsets which generally correspond to semantic groups of names of people, names of places of fixed location, names of calendar dates, i.e. days of the week, months, holiday names.
Grammatically, this sub-class has a wide functional use, being able to fulfil all functions listed for the head of a NP in 6.3.2.

Proper names behave in the same way as kin terms for prepositional marking, possessive constructions, and comitative constructions as listed in Table 6.2. But proper names differ from common nouns in that they

i) can only ever be categorised for singular number, since they refer to specific people, animals, places, days, months, holidays, and thus are already quantified

ii) cannot take the article *na* when in O position, as can common nouns.

### 6.2.2.1 Names of people

This subset includes all given names for people, e.g. *Vomulehi, Sale, Moli, Voliho*, and also the names of non-human story characters, which can take on human characteristics in a narrative. Many children nowadays have more westernised names (e.g. Konnie, Sera) but nevertheless will always have a traditional name as well, which is bestowed at birth by a close male relative, usually the maternal grandfather, and which has some significance to the family circumstances.1 The subset also includes all familiar address terms for kin, the most frequently used being given below:

- *voi* mother (mum) (reciprocal, also used between older women)
- *mama*2 father (dad)
- *tata* paternal grandmother
- *tawai* paternal grandfather/big brother/friend (M)
- *bumbu* maternal grandmother/grandfather

This subset of names of people is differentiated from other proper names of places or calendar dates in that it reflects an animate/non-animate distinction in locative prepositional phrases. In such phrases, names are always preceded by *telei*, as are kin terms, whilst names of places take no preposition.

(1) *Ku tau-a a mai telei voi.*
1SG put.in.place 3SG come PREP mum
‘I sent it to mum’.

(2) *Ku tau-a a mai Ostrelia.*
1SG put.in.place 3SG come A.
‘I sent it to Australia.’

### 6.2.2.2 Proper names of places of fixed location

This subset includes names of other countries, islands of Vanuatu, towns, villages, schools, stores. Its members take no locative preposition, neither *telei* nor *ana*. See (2) above and following examples:

---

1 For example, if a father has been travelling a great deal, the son may be called *Sale* (‘float’ or ‘travel’) or the daughter *Vosal*. And twin girls that were born away from Malo were named by their grandfather as *Vomule* (*mule* ‘return home’) and *Vovarea* (*varea* ‘boundary of land’), because he wanted them to come back to their ‘place’.

2 The term *mama* for ‘dad’ is used only by older speakers, see 1.3.6 ‘Young people’s Tamambo’.
(3a) Titus mo-le ovi Avunavae  (3b) *Titus mo-le ovi ana /telei Avunavae.
Titus 3SG-TA live Avunavae
‘Titus lives at Avunavae.’

As a locative marker, a- is now fused with the rest of the word, as in:

(4) A vu- na vae
LOC TREE ART vae.tree
‘the place of the vae tree/s’ (lit. at/to the vae tree/s)

But its history as a separable marker is transparent, as explained in 5.2.1.4. Consequently, any kind of additional locative preposition would be redundant.

6.2.2.3 Calendar names
These include days of the week, months, and special times of the year. Local terms for times of the year are generally used only by older speakers, and correspond to certain seasons; for example, March/April is approximately the time when the ngandi ants hatch out and is known as Bongi ngandi ‘time ngandi’, October/November is the time for catching palolo worms and is known as Bongi eli ‘time palolo’ and so on.

Proper names for days of the week, months of the year, Christmas, Easter and such like are all Bislama terms (for example, Wenesde, Krisimis) but are incorporated grammatically into Tamambo.

All of these, however, whether local time-of-year names or Bislama terms, are differentiated grammatically from other proper names, in that they always must be preceded by the ‘all purpose’ locative preposition ana ‘from/to/at’, as in:

(5) Tovon ana rara vorivori, ka vano ka loli tano...
when PREP coral.flower little 1PL go 1PL make garden
‘When it’s early in the winter, we go and make gardens ...’ (lit. When at (the time) coral flowers are little, we go...) (E-T53:2)

(6) …sohen ra-vavine arua ana Krisimis.
like PL-girl two PREP Christmas
‘...like two girls at Christmas...’ (WI-T8:14)

(7) Mo-iso-ro ana Julae mo mahariri tina...
3SG-finish-thus PREP July 3SG cold INTEN
‘Then in July it’s really cold...’ (E-T61:56)

6.2.3 Relational nouns
This small set of nouns expresses relational location, that is, the spatial location of something relative to something else. These terms are:

ulu         top part of s.t.
ruhuruhu    underneath part of s.t.
lolo         inside part of s.t.
Nouns and the noun phrase

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Additional, there are several which are only used relative to ‘house’.

baravita outside part (of house under eaves)
humbuta back part (of house)
bangona front part (of house)

They differ from other common nouns in that they are usually linked to another common noun to specify the referent to which they relate, that is, ruhuruhi ‘underneath part’, must be the underneath part of something else, and ulu ‘top’ must be the top of something and so on. They are used in direct linking possessive constructions with linker -i (as described in 7.5.3) and occur most frequently with the ‘all purpose’ preposition ana in a prepositional phrase.

(8) ana ulu-i vanua
PREP top.part-LINK house
‘on top of the house’ (lit. on the top part of the house)

(9) ana ruhuruhi-i vuhai
PREP underneath.part-LINK tree
‘under the tree’ (lit. in the underneath.part of the tree) (in #83)

(10) ana lolo-i hete
PREP inside.part-LINK basket
‘in the basket’ (lit. in the inside part of the basket) (#e.339)

(11) ana baravitu-i vanua
PREP under.eaves-LINK house
‘under the outside eaves of the house’ (#e.337b)

(12) ana humbuta-i vanua
PREP back.part-LINK house
‘at the back part of the house’ (#e.337b)

(13) ana bangona-i rombu
PREP front.part-LINK traditional.house
‘in the front of the traditional house’ (Nt-T20:16)

(14) ana bahisa-i reu
PREP edge-LINK water
‘at the edge of the water’

Just livuhi ‘middle’ is attested in my data as being able to be used also with linker -ni (7.5.2) where the possessor is not a common noun but a named noun. Compare the two following:
Relational nouns are also occasionally suffixed with the 3SG possessive pronominal to refer to a common noun as referent.

*lolo-na* ‘the inside of it’  
*ulu-na* ‘the top of it’

But since relational nouns are almost always used in prepositional phrases at the periphery of the clause, it is more common to use locational nouns derived from these two words, *alolo* ‘inside’ and *aulu* ‘on top’, ‘up direction’, which function as oblique and peripheral arguments (6.2.4).

Of the relational nouns, only *tavalu* is attested with other possessive pronominals referring either to animate or inanimate possessors.

(16a)  
\[
\text{ana tavalu-ku} \\
\text{PREP side-PL3SG} \\
\text{‘at my side’ (#e593)}
\]

(16b)  
\[
\text{ana tavalu-na vanua-ku} \\
\text{PREP side-P:3SG house-P:1SG} \\
\text{‘at the side of my house’ (#e594)}
\]

Although there are terms *matua-ku* ‘my right hand’ and *marau-ku* ‘my left hand’, it is more usual to use *tavalu* to specify at the side of someone rather than use ‘left’ or ‘right’.

Relational nouns are rarely used without a locational referent, but if such a referent has already been specified, then it can be omitted. For example, in the following example, it has already been explained that in a particular method of fishing, people stand on one side of a narrow channel which opens out to a wider ‘inside part’, and the fish are directed up there. So the listener knows that *tavalu* ‘side’ relates to the channel, and that *lolo* ‘inside part’ refers to an area amongst the rock pools.

(17)  
\[
\text{Tua-na na turu ana tavalu na dingi-ra na sahe} \\
\text{some-P:3SG 3PL stand PREP side 3PL chase-O:3PL 3PL go.up} \\
\text{ana lolo.} \\
\text{PREP inside.part} \\
\text{‘Some of them stand at the side (of the channel) and chase them up inside (the shallows)’ (E-T25:4)}
\]

In a different narrative, there is one example where the same two relational nouns occur in a direct possessive construction with one another, as follows:

(18)  
\[
\text{... na va-turu-hi na litu rindi ana tavalu-i lolo.} \\
\text{3PL CAUS-stand-TR ART reed REF PREP side.part-LINK inside part} \\
\text{‘... they stand up the reeds on the edge of the hole.’ (lit. they cause stand the reeds at the side part of the inside part) (E-T43:21)}
\]
6.2.4 Location nouns

Words classed as location nouns are the same as common nouns in that they can function as:

- an oblique or peripheral argument in a verbal clause
- a modifier to another NP.

But they differ from common nouns in that they can function only rarely as

- a core argument, or
- a predicate of a non-verbal clause.

Nor can they be linked by conjunctions as can other nouns.

As Sasse (1993:682) points out, such words ‘often cause extreme difficulty in word classification because of their intermediate status between nouns and adpositions/adverbs’.

The words classed here as location nouns have a very restricted distribution, and function in many instances like an adverb. Additionally, their most common distribution is the same as a prepositional phrase. For example, compare the following minimal pairs:

**Common noun in prepositional phrase**

(19) na kakau ana oneone...
3PL reach PREP sand
‘they got to the beach …’ (N.ch-T5:12)

**Location noun**

(20) na kakau auta...
3PL reach shore.direction
‘they got to the shore …’ (N.ch-T4:11)

In both verbal clauses above, there is an oblique argument, the first expressed by a prepositional phrase and the second by a location noun in the same environment. Location nouns most frequently function as an oblique core argument such as in (20), or at the periphery of the clause.

I choose to analyse such ‘location nouns’ as a closed subclass of nouns on their synchronic grammatical form and distribution, in that

i) they are not now prefaced with a separable preposition, having apparently fused in most cases with residual locative marker *a*, or with other prefixes

ii) they can function as oblique core arguments in the same frame as some P-objects

iii) they can modify nouns and thus do not meet the main criterion for adverbs as outlined in 4.5

iv) they can be suffixed with a 3SG possessive pronominal (see 7.4.1.4).

Location nouns can be divided into two subsets, corresponding to semantic groups of

i) location relative to speaker

ii) location relative to village.
6.2.4.1 Location nouns—location relative to speaker

With some members of this subset, the direction can vary, according to the reference point of the speaker.

All of the following directional nouns begin with a- (see also 5.2.1.4 with reference to Malo village names). Where they derive from a noun or a verb still in current use, that word is indicated in brackets. All directional nouns are of extremely high lexical usage in day-to-day conversation, greetings, and narrative.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aulu</td>
<td>up direction, bush/gardens, away from the coast (ulu ‘top part’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alau</td>
<td>down direction, coast, from anywhere inland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>auta</td>
<td>i) shore, from reference point of sea, as in boat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aima</td>
<td>home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avareo</td>
<td>outside, but inside family village limits, from inside house (varea ‘boundary’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asa</td>
<td>to/at traditional place/land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alolo</td>
<td>inside (lolo ‘inside part of s.t.’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>atano</td>
<td>on the ground/down (tano ‘ground /garden/s’)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.4.2 Location nouns—location relative to village

These particular locational terms differ from the previous terms in that they are restricted to function with either verb sahe (movement up) or verb jivo (movement down), as an argument in a verbal clause. (See Chapter 9.2.4.1 for further explication of ‘basic motion’ verbs.) This subset is limited to the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bosahe</td>
<td>coastal area north-east of Avunatari village as far as Avunavae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bosinjivo</td>
<td>coastal area south of Avunatari village as far as Nanucu³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tausahe</td>
<td>somewhere ‘up over there’ in the direction of ‘bosahe’ area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taunjivo</td>
<td>somewhere ‘down over there’ in the direction of ‘bosinjivo’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nanjingo</td>
<td>coastal area around north-east part of Malo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>natavalu</td>
<td>mid-coastal area on east side of Malo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first two are suggested as deriving from bosi ‘turn’ + movement verb (direction up/down), e.g. bosi-njivo: ‘turn + go down.direction.’ The second two terms appear to be compounds of tau ‘put in place’ + the movement verbs as above. The last two appear to be compounds of na (from POc *na common article) + jingo ‘mouth’/‘point of land’ and tavalu ‘side’, respectively.

6.2.5 Numerals

6.2.5.1 The number system and cardinal numerals

Cardinal numerals share some characteristics with other common nouns and some with verbs in that they:

³ This official spelling of Nanucu, now pronounced as [nanuku] illustrates the difficulty outlined in 2.9.3 with the older orthographic representation of the velar fricative as c, being read by younger people as [k]. In fact, the ‘proper’ name of the place according to older people is pronounced as [nanuxu].
i) are prefixed from 1–9 with *a-/*ha-, suggested as most probably from the posited POc counting prefix *ka (see also 5.2.1.5)

ii) can be suffixed with 3SG possessive -na to form ordinal numbers (as introduced in 5.3.1.1)

iii) can be modified with the indefinite article te

iv) can be prefixed with vaha- to form multiplicatives (5.2.1.6)

v) can reduplicate and take suffix -hi to form distributive numerals (5.3.1.4, 5.4.3).

While i) to iii) are noun-like characteristics, numerals are unusual in that they can take what are normally verbal affixes: the causative prefix vaha-, and a suffix -hi, synonymous with the transitive suffix -hi. With such affixes, they function as verbal modifiers.

Syntactically, cardinal and ordinal numerals can fulfill all functions available to words classed as nouns in this language. Semantically, numerals carry information about specific quantities. (For non-specific quantities see 6.2.5.4 for non-defined number, 6.2.5.5 for quantifying nouns, 6.4.3 for quantifiers, and 9.2.4.3 re quantitative verbs.)

Tamambo numerals are a base ten system. Cardinal and ordinal numbers are in common use to 10, cardinal numbers for multiples of 10 are also used quite often and, in theory, there is an open numeral system to 1000+. However, any number past several hundred is more usually expressed as tari ‘many’ and occurs as such in a custom story about how a village on the south coast of Malo derives its name, Ataripoi.4

A-tari-poi
LOC-many-boar
‘Place of 1000 pigs’ (i.e. Ataripoi)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cardinal</th>
<th>Ordinal</th>
<th>Multiplicative</th>
<th>Distributive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 atea</td>
<td><em>talom</em></td>
<td>vaha-tea</td>
<td>atea-tea-hi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 arua</td>
<td>arua-na</td>
<td>vaha-rua</td>
<td>arua-rua-hi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 atolu</td>
<td>atolu-na</td>
<td>vaha-tolu</td>
<td>atolu-tolu-hi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 avati</td>
<td>avati-na</td>
<td>vaha-vati</td>
<td>avati-vati-hi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 alima</td>
<td>etc.</td>
<td>etc.</td>
<td>etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 aiono</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 ambitu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 awalu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 asuwa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 sangavulu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 sangavulu ngalai rua-na ateal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 ngalai rua (a lei rua)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 ngalai rua ngalai tolu-na ateal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 As noted in Appendix 1, there are voiceless unaspirated stops rather than prenasalised stops in the East Malo dialect; thus West Malo [mb] -> East Malo [p] and [mbœ] ‘boar’ -> [poe]. The different, ‘official’ spelling of Ataripoi dates from around the 1979 census time (Tryon & Gely 1979).

5 Talom ‘first’ is an exception in the paradigm; see section on ordinal numerals, 6.2.5.2.
### Cardinal Ordinal Multiplicative Distributive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Cardinal</th>
<th>Ordinal</th>
<th>Multiplicative</th>
<th>Distributive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>ngalai tolu (a lei tolu)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>ngalai tolu ngalai vati atea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>ngalai vati (a lei vati)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>ngalai lima (a lei lima)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>ngalai sangavulu (galsagavul)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>ngalai sangavulu vaha-rua</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300</td>
<td>ngalai sangavulu vaha-tolu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000</td>
<td>vaha-sangavulu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is a simpler system from 11–19 which is said to have originated in the eastern dialect, and which some ‘West’ speakers know and use.

11    
12    domana arua
13    domana atolu
14    domana avati, etc.

But the practical reality with Tamambo numerals is that children learn English number names at school from kindergarten onwards, and any money payments for cash cropping or work are calculated in English-based numbers. So while the majority of younger primary school-age speakers know and can confidently use Tamambo cardinal numbers 1–5 and 10, they are often unsure about cardinals 6–9. And they do not know well, and certainly prefer not to use, the fairly unwieldy cardinal system of the West from 11–19, 21–29, and so on. To use such numbers, both the lower and upper limits of the ten range are given, that is, for numbers 11–19, both 10 and 20th are included in the number, for numbers 21–29, 20 and 30th are included, for 31–39, 30 and 40th and so on. For example:

(21) ngalai rua ngalai atolu-na atea  
      twenty thirty-P:3SG one  
      ‘twenty-one’ (lit. twenty thirtieth one)

(22) ngalai vati ngalai lima-na awalu  
      forty fifty-P:3SG eight  
      ‘forty-eight (lit. forty fiftieth eight)

#### 6.2.5.2 Ordinal numerals

Ordinal numerals are formed by sufffixing the 3SG possessive pronominial, -na, to the cardinal number, (5.3.1.1).

(23) ...atolu-na nia Vulitulitu.  
      three-P:3SG IP:3SG V.  
      ‘... the third was Vulitulitu’ (Nt-T21:2)

---

6 These upper numbers appear to date from the time of the first missionary (late 19th Century). See bracketed examples in the cardinal numbers for the spelling used in Landels (c.1890).
Examples of cardinal numerals, and ordinals derived from cardinals, in their different function as NPs, are given in 6.3.3.5. However, the exceptions to the derived ordinals are ‘first’ talom, and ‘last’ hitahu/evuina.

**talom ‘first’**

This word is classed as an adverb expressing location in time ‘before’, ‘first of all’ (4.5.1.2), but frequently functions as an ordinal number as in:

(24) *Na mai ana matesia talom.*

3PL come PREP door first

‘They came to the first door.’ (Nt-T20:79)

Although it primarily has an adverbial or numerical role, it can be transitivised with the suffix -hi to function as a verb in the sense of ‘lead s.t. or s.o. (14.3.7.1, example (69).)

**hitahu ‘(be) last’**

This is classed as an intransitive verb, as in

(25) *Hunju-na mo hitahu.*

stump-P:3SG 3SG be.last

‘Its stump was last.’ (as with removing a tree) (Nt-T21:107)

But it can be used to modify other verbs as in

(26) *Mo mai hitahu.*

3SG come be.last

‘He came last.’ (#c.428)

One of the most common uses of talom and hitahu is indicating comparative age in a family, as in:

```
turu   talom       turu   hitahu
  stand first    stand be.last
‘first born’ i.e. ‘oldest’ ‘last born’ i.e. ‘youngest’
```

The resulting compound noun can then be suffixed, as in this appositional phrase:

(27) *Natu-na, turu hitahu-na, mo soari na manji atea.*

child-P:3SG stand be.last-P:3SG 3SG see ART fish one

‘Her son, her last-born, saw a fish.’ (Nt-T32:6)

**evuina ‘the last one’**

See also 7.4.1.2. This is a noun, an ordinal numeral, derived from the verb evui:

*evui-na*

finish-NOM = (lit.) the finish/ the last one
(28) *Na turu, matesia, evuina-i matesia, alima-na ‘nao’.*
3PL stand door last.one-LINK door five-P:3SG now
‘Then, the door, the last of the doors, the fifth now.’ (Nt-T20:51)

6.2.5.3 **Multiplicative and distributive number**

**Multiplicative (times)**

Multiplicative numbers are formed by prefixation to a cardinal number as described in 5.2.1.6.

(29) *Mo bulahi mwende arua vaha-tea, na sahe mai*
3SG hurl particular.one two CAUS-one 3PL go.up come

*na hoso.*
3PL come.to.shore
‘He hurled those two up in one go, and they landed up on the shore.’ (Nt-T20:122)

Multiplicatives to three times are used fairly often, but similarly to Australian English, multiplicatives beyond ‘three or four times’ are not in great lexical demand, and the concept of ‘lots of times’ is expressed by *vaha-tari* ‘often’ (lit. CAUS-many).

**Distributive**

Distributive numbers are derived through reduplication with suffixation (5.4.3).

*a-tea~tea-hi* one at a time, one each, one here one there
*a-rua~rua-hi* two at a time, two each
*a-tolu~tolu-hi* three at a time, three each
*a-vati~vati-hi* four at a time, four each
*a-lima~lima-hi* five at a time, five each, etc.

(30) *Manji na vano arua~rua-hi.*
creature 3PL go two~RED-DISTRIB
‘The animals went two by two.’ (#e.PB)

(See also Chapter 5, example 40.)

Similarly to multiplicatives, distributives as in ‘one by one’, ‘two by two’, are used quite often for low order numbers, but for higher numbers, the term ‘bundles’ or ‘heads’ is more often used, according to an animacy distinction.

(31) *O tau-a bwanu sangavulu!*
2SG put.in.place bundle ten
‘Put them in bundles of ten!’ (as with yams, and other inanimates)

(32) *Kamim no-isonduhu no mai batu-na sangavulu!*
IP:2PL 2PL-all 2PL come head-P:3SG ten
‘You all get into groups of ten!’ (lit. You all come its head ten) (as with people and animals)
6.2.5.4 **Non-defined number: avisa and tolu**

There are two words that do not fit so easily into either group of quantifiers or numerals. Semantically, they accord more with the idea of quantifiers, but syntactically they function like numerals and so are included here.

**avisa**

The term *avisa* can be used as an interrogative ‘how many’, or as a NP argument (similarly to other numerals) indicating ‘a few’. It refers to a number but the number is not defined.

The stem of *a-visa* can also be prefixed with *vaha-* for the meaning ‘how many times?’ The following examples illustrate the difference:

(33) *O-mbo vano ana tano avisa?*  
2SG-FUT go PREP garden how many  
‘How many gardens are you going to?’ (#273a)

(34) *Nira avisa manihi na mai.*  
IP:3PL a few LIM 3PL come  
‘Only a few came.’ (#1162c)

(35) *O-mbo vano vaha-visa ana tano?*  
2SG-FUT go CAUS how many PREP garden  
‘How many times are you going to the garden?’ (#273b)

**tolu**

The second word that expresses a non-defined number indicates a ‘total’ number, the number of things or people ‘all together’, although that actual number is not made explicit by a cardinal numeral. It must, however, refer to a total number of three or many more together, reflecting its origin from cardinal numeral *atolu* ‘three’. It occurs in two main frames. First, it follows an independent pronoun prior to the nucleus of the verb phrase:

(36) *Kamam tolu ka-mbo han~han.*  
IP:1PL E total 1PL-FUT RED eat  
‘We’ll all eat together.’ (#c.1121)

This is the same pattern as a cardinal numeral modifying an independent pronoun. For instance, compare the two following:

(37) *Hinda tolu ka vano.*  
IP:1PL.I total 1PL go  
‘We’ll go together’ (3+ of us) (#c.500)

(38) *Hinda arua ka vano.*  
IP:1PL.I two 1PL go  
‘We two will go.’ (#c.500b)
Second, it can be used where NPs are coordinated to indicate the total number of the NPs. In this usage it precedes the comitative prepositions mana or mai, but still follows a noun or an independent pronoun to indicate totality.

(39) ...tua-na na-le loli na ‘net’ hina asi huri malai, 
...some-P:3SG 3PL-TA make ART net PREP vine bark malai

\textit{tolu} mana asi tinambu. 
total PREP vine different
‘... some of them make the nets with vines, malai bark together with different vines.’ (E-T43:3)

(40) ...na vano na-isondu hu nira \textit{tolu} mai natu-ra niaro.
...3PL go 3PL-all IP:3PL total PREP child-P:3PL EMPH
‘... they all went together with that child of theirs.’ (Nt-T77:4)

6.2.5.5 Quantifying nouns: tua and werehi

There are two words that have a quantifying function but can be regarded as nouns on the basis of their morphosyntactic behaviour:

- \textit{tua} - some part of a greater part (some of what there is)
- \textit{werehi} - a large quantity/ many

\textbf{tua-}

The noun \textit{tua-} takes a direct possessive construction and it is linked with either -\textit{i} or a possessive pronominal to its ‘possessor’ common noun. In these direct possessive constructions, it functions in its own right as a head of a NP, as shown in 6.3.3.6. It occurs in a direct possessive construction similarly to relational nouns (see 7.4.1 and 7.5.1 for more detail on direct possessive constructions).

(41) \textit{Tua-i} va-uranji tauni-ra aiono.
some-LINK PL-children year-P:3PL six
‘Some of the children are six.’ (#e.201)

It can be preceded by the article \textit{na}:

(42) \textit{O} lai na tua-i biskit a mai!
2SG take ART some-LINK biscuit 3SG come
‘Bring me some of the biscuits!’ (#e.760)

Or it can follow both the article and classifier + pronominal, as below:

(43) \textit{Mo-le} lai na bula-nda tua-i toa!
3SG-TA take ART CLFR-P:1PL.1 some-LINK fowl
‘He’s taking some of our chickens!’ (#e.767)

\textbf{werehi}

This word can function either as the head of a NP, or posthead as a modifier indicating quantity. Its use is uncommon, and I have only five examples in my data, all from more
‘traditional’ speakers. Younger speakers whom I questioned were not familiar with its use. By contrast, predicative *mo were/na were* ‘it is many’/ ‘they are many’, to which it is clearly related, is a high usage term amongst speakers of all ages (see 9.2.4.3 for verb were).

When *werehi* is used as a NP head, it is used in a direct possessive construction, and is followed by either a possessive pronominal or a possessive linker, somewhat similarly to *tua-*.

(44) *Werehi ni-Vanuatu* na mai Brisbin.  
many ni-Vanuatu 3PL come Brisbane  
‘Lots of Vanuatu people come to Brisbane.’ (#c.210)

(45) *Werehi-ra tauni-ra alima.*  
many-P:3PL year-P:3PL five  
‘Lots of them are five years old.’ (#e.212)

When it is used posthead, it functions as a modifier of quantity.

(46) *O-le tuani kamam hina hinau werehi.*  
2SG-TA help O:1PL.E PREP thing many  
‘You help us with lots of things.’ (W1-T11:2)

6.2.6 Multi-function words

There are a few words attested in the data that can function both as common nouns and as verbs, with no change in form. These words listed below are classed as nouns rather than verbs because they show rather more noun-like characteristics than verbal characteristics. For instance, they can enter into possessive constructions, and the three listed as ‘other’ can show plurality as nouns morphologically (5.2.1.1 and 5.4.2.2). And as nouns they can function as the head of a noun phrase, for example as the subject argument in a verbal clause or as the object of a preposition. But although they are classed as nouns, they can sometimes function as a verb. Words of this type include borrowings from English through Bislama.

**Borrowings**

- *skul(i)* ‘school’/’church’  
  *mo skul(i)* ‘s/he goes/went to school/ church’
- *pasta* ‘pastor’  
  *mo pasta* ‘he became a pastor’
- *dokta* ‘doctor’  
  *mo dokta* ‘s/he became a doctor’

**Other**

- *hinau* ‘thing’  
  *mo hinau* ‘it is/was there’
- *sumbwe* ‘chief’  
  *mo sumbwe* ‘he became a chief’
- *maranjea* ‘old man’  
  *mo maranjea* ‘he is/was an old man’

Alternately, the Tamambo terms that are time, tide, and weather words as listed below are primarily classed as verbs (see 9.2.4.4) but also can function as nouns.

---

7 Ni-Vanuatu (sometimes abbreviated to ‘Ni-Vans’) is the term common throughout Vanuatu as the name for Vanuatu people. In this case, the *ni* also functions as the possessive linker to the head *werehi.*
Meteorological terms

Functioning as noun | Functioning as verb
--- | ---
rani | daytime | mo rani | ‘it became daylight’
butengi | midday | mo butengi | ‘midday came’
dondo | night | mo dondo | ‘it became night’
ua | high tide | mo ua | ‘the tide is up’
mati | low tide | mo mati | ‘the tide is down’
kiri | rain | mo kiri | ‘it rains’
alo | sun | mo alo | ‘it is sunny’
langi | wind | mo langi | ‘it is windy’

6.3 Heads of noun phrases and their functions

6.3.1 Heads

The only obligatory component of a noun phrase is the head. The head of a NP can be:

i) a noun, as described above in 6.2:
   - common nouns
   - proper names
   - relational nouns
   - location nouns,
   - numerals and quantifying nouns, or
   - multi-function words as described in 4.6.3 and 6.2.6.

ii) a proform, as described in 4.7:
   - independent pronouns
   - interrogative proforms
   - demonstrative pronouns, or
   - object pronouns.

The head can be modified by prehead and posthead modifiers which are described in 6.4. Some of these modifiers can also function as heads of NPs in particular syntactic circumstances. For example, possessive classifiers can appear in a head function, but are analysed here as modifiers to the head because the noun which they are modifying is ellipsed and could be included in the NP.

So although the language is primarily head marking, dependency relations are not rigidly fixed, in that there are some constructions where a modifier by classification can function as a head, and there are some other modifiers which carry dependent marking.

6.3.2 Functions of NPs

A noun phrase can function as:

i) a direct core argument of a verbal clause
ii) an oblique core argument of a verbal clause
iii) a peripheral argument of a verbal clause
iv) the subject of a nominal clause
v) the predicate of a nominal clause

---

8 Words that refer to full days (‘today’, ‘yesterday’, etc.) are classed as sentential adverbs.
vi) modifier to another noun phrase.

The types of words which have been listed in 6.3.1 as being able to function as the head of a noun phrase can occur in some or all of the above syntactic constructions, as shown in Table 6.4.

The examples following illustrate the various types of head according to the different syntactic constructions in which they can occur, as listed in the table.

Table 6.4: Functions of the NP according to head

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heads of NPs</th>
<th>Functions possible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direct core argument: verbal clause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common noun</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proper noun</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational noun</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location noun</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numerals</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantifying noun</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent pronoun</td>
<td>yes (as S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interrogative proform</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrative pronoun</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object pronoun</td>
<td>yes (as O)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.3.3 Nouns as heads of NPs

6.3.3.1 Common noun as head

Refer also to common nouns as definite or indefinite, as described in 3.3.1.

Direct core argument, as subject:

(47) Tovona sorae no-ni Taro le turu matua...
now talk-NOM CLFR-LINK T. TA stand  right
‘Nowadays Taro’s words stand strong...’ (N.ch-T6.15)

Direct core argument, as object:

(48) Na teterahi na-te sai daui...
3PL get up 3PL-NEG search coconut.crab...
‘They got up, they didn’t look for coconut crabs...’ (Wl-T8:17)

Note the object above is indefinite, as described in §3.3.1.2.
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Oblique core argument, as P-object:

(49) ...ne o tinerani hina lulungi waitina.
       but 2SG watch.out PREP wave PL.big
   ‘... but watch out for the big waves!’ (Wl-T8:8)

Peripheral argument:

(50) Tamalohi mo losu na heletu tawera hina simba.
       person 3SG kill ART pig big PREP knife
   ‘The man killed the big pig with a knife.’ (#e.672)

Subject of a non-verbal clause:

(51) Tama-ku nia mara aimo.
       father-P:1SG IP:3SG man home
   ‘My father was a custom man.’ (N.ab-T 78:6)

Predicate of a non-verbal clause:

(52) Mwera nira havo.
       male IP:3PL twin
   ‘The boys are twins.’

Modifier to another noun:

(53) ...tama-ku tina-ku, na -te lai na hinau tamaute...
       father-P:1SG mother-P:1SG 3PL-NEG take ART thing white.man
   ‘...as for my father and my mother, they didn’t get white man’s things...’ (N.ab-T52:3)

6.3.3.2 Proper names as head

Direct core argument, as subject:

(54) Vevesai bongi Avurmakal a jivo alau...
       Every day Avurmakal 3SG go.down coast.direction
   ‘Every day Avurmakal would go down to the coast...’ (Nk-T1:4)

Direct core argument as object:

(55) Voi mo sahe aulu mo-iso.
       mum 3SG go.up up.direction 3SG-finish
   ‘Mum’s gone up to the gardens already.’ (#e.41)

Oblique core argument:

(57) O-mbo jivo Vila?
       2SG-FUT go.down V.
   ‘Are you going to Vila?’ (#c.166)
Peripheral argument:
(58) *Ku-mbo jivo Vila ana Fraere wik a mai.*
1SG-FUT go.down V. PREP Friday week 3SG come
‘I’m going to Vila Friday of next week.’ (#c.868)

Subject of a non-verbal clause:
(59) *Moli Rani Vahatea nia mara Aravita...*
chief R.V. IP:3SG man A.
‘Chief Rani Vahatea is/was an Aravita man...’ (Nk-T44:1)

Predicate of a non-verbal clause:
(60) *Tina-na Loreen.*
mother-P:3SG L.
‘His mother is Loreen.’ (#190)

Modifier to another noun:
This is used particularly where the modifier is the name of a place. Names of people
tend to be in appositional NPs (see 6.5).

(61) ...*ne mara Buentar nira na rongovosai-a...*
but man B. IP:3PL 3PL know-O:3SG
‘... but Buentari people, they know it ... ’(Nk-T73:2)

6.3.3.3 *Relational nouns as head* 9

Direct core argument, as subject
(62) ...*lolo-na vanua-ku mo aira.*
inside.part-P:3SG house-P:1SG 3SG wet
‘... the inside of my house was wet.’ (#1101)

Direct core argument, as object:
(63) *Ku soari na ulu-i tarusa sohen mo duhu...*
1SG see ART top.part-LINK sea like 3SG good
‘The ocean surface looks okay...’ (lit. I see the surface of the sea like it’s good..)
(#e.724)

Oblique core argument:
(64) *Mo tau-a ana lolo-i hete.*
3SG put-O:3SG PREP inside.part-LINK basket
‘S/he put it in the basket.’ (#e.339)

Peripheral argument:
(65) *Tua-na na turu ana tavalu...*
some-P:3SG 3PL stand PREP side
‘Some of them stand at the side...’ (E-T25:4)

---

9 Although relational nouns usually (but not always) occur in a direct possessive construction as
‘possessed’, they are analysed as the head of the NP (see Chapter 7 re Possessive constructions).
6.3.3.4 Location nouns as head

Location nouns cannot function as a direct core argument in a verbal clause. But in an oblique or peripheral argument, they function in the same way as common nouns, except that they are not marked with a preposition (see 6.2.4).

Oblique core argument:

(66) O tau-a avareo!
   2SG put-O:3SG outside
   ‘Put it outside!’

(67) ... na kakau alau.
   3PL reach coast.direction
   ‘... they got to the shore.’ (Nt-T83:45)

Peripheral argument:

(68) Mo-le vinjahi na ivine-na aulu, turu aie...
   3SG-TA shake ART arrow-P:3SG up direction stand there
   ‘It was shaking his arrow all around up high (in the tree), and that being so...’ (Nk-T27:9)

Predicate of a non-verbal clause:

(69) Kamam ‘i gat’ no mam tano atolu, atea taunjivo,
   IP:1PL.E 3SG have CLFR-P:1PL.E garden three one down.there
   atea Nanuku, atea aulu tausahe niala.
   one N. one up.direction up.there there
   ‘We’ve got three gardens, one down over there, one at Nanuku, and one up in the bush up there that way.’ (pointing) (E-T10:11)

Modifier to another NP:

(70) Avurmakal mo tau telei mwende aulu matan
   A. 3SG leave PREP particular.one up.direction SUB
   a jivo...
   3SG go.down
   ‘Avurmakal went away from those who were up in the bush (more lit. ‘bush ones’) in order to go down...’ (Nk-T1:5)

(71) Ra-vavine bosaha, ra-vavine bosinjivo na mai.
   PL-woman n.e.area PL-woman s.w.area 3PL come
   ‘Bosahe women, and women from Bosinjivo area came.’ (C-MW’96)

6.3.3.5 Numerals as head

Cardinal and ordinal numbers function as heads of NPs. Distributive and multiplicative numbers (6.2.5) do not function as heads of NPs but as adverbials.
Direct core argument, as subject:

(72) *Alima na-le ovi aulu.*
    five 3PL-PREP live up.direction
    ‘Five lived up in the bush.’ (Nk-T1:3)

Direct core argument, as object: with cardinal number

(73) *Ku boi ku voli te arua.*
    1SG like 1SG buy INDEF two.
    ‘I want to buy about two.’ (#c.445)

and with ordinal number:

(74) *...ku-ta stori-hi na arua-na...*
    1SG-REP story-TR ART two-P:3SG
    ‘... I’m going to tell the second one again...’ (E-T53:1)

Oblique core argument:

(75) *Avati manihi. O sile-au avati.*
    four LIM 2SG give-O:1SG four
    ‘Just four. Give me four.’ (#c.597)

Peripheral argument:

Where a numeral functions with a preposition in a peripheral argument, an ordinal numeral is used:

(76) *...na vano na vano ana atolu-na.*
    3PL go 3PL go PREP three-P:3SG
    ‘... they kept on going to the third (one).’ (Nt-T20:40)

Alternately, a cardinal number is used in a direct linking possessive construction (see also 7.5.3.2):

(77) *Mo vano ana alima-i matesia...*
    3SG go PREP two-LINK door
    ‘He went to the second door...’ (lit. he went to the two of doors) (Nt-T20:52)

Subject of a non-verbal clause (with both cardinal and ordinal numerals):

(78) *Atea hisa-na Tombarumbaru, atea hisa-na Tavalu-i*
    one name-P:3SG Tombarumbaru one name-P:3SG side-LINK

    *Manji, atolu-na nia Vulitulitu.*
    fish three-P:3SG IP:3SG Vulitulitu
    ‘One was called Tombarumbaru, one was called ‘Half-Fish’, and the third was Vulitulitu.’ (Nk-T21:2)
Predicate of a non-verbal clause:

(79) **Na-natu-ku atolu.**
    PL-child:P:1SG three
    ‘I have three children.’ (lit. my children are three)

Modifier to another NP:

Since cardinal numerals also function commonly as modifiers but in a different slot to other noun modifiers, that role is described in the section on optional components of the NP (in 6.4.8).

### 6.3.3.6 Quantifying nouns as head: tua and werehi

**tua**

Examples are given here of quantifying noun *tua* as a NP head in the two functions found in my data. I have no examples of *tua* as a head of a NP in any other syntactic slot, although the two functions given here are common.

Direct core argument, as subject:

(80) **Tua-ra na-le sahasaha, tua-ra na-le sora~sora manihi.**
    some-P:3PL 3PL-TA work some-P:3PL 3PL-TA RED~talk LIM
    ‘Some of them were working, and some of them were just chatting.’ (#e.766)

Direct core argument, as object:

(81) **O lai tua-na a mai!**
    2SG take some-P:3SG 3SG come
    ‘Bring over some of it!’ (#c.404)

**werehi**

Examples in the data of *werehi* are limited. As already shown in the examples in 6.2.5.5, it can function as the subject of a verbal clause, the subject of a non-verbal clause, and as a modifier. Additionally, it can function as a predicate.

Predicate of a verbal clause:

(82) **Aien, ka-te werehi...**
    here 1PL-NEG many
    ‘Here, there’s not many of us...’ (C-T68:73)

### 6.3.3.7 sohena as head

Occasionally *sohena* can function as the NP predicate of a non-verbal ascriptive clause as described in 3.4.2.1:

(83) **No-na ovi-a sohena turuvui.**
    CLFR-P:3SG live-NOM the.same always
    ‘His life was always the same.’ (Nk-T12:8)
It can also function as the NP predicate of a semi-verbal clause as in 3.5, example (42). See 4.6.3 for the other functions of sohena.

6.3.4 Proforms as head

Proforms do not function as modifiers to other nouns, as is indicated in Table 6.4.

6.3.4.1 Independent pronouns as head

Independent pronouns as heads are restricted (as attested in the data) to the following functions:

Direct core argument, as subject:

(84) Nia mo lai na no-ku harimbai.
     IP:3SG 3SG take ART CLFR-P:1SG stick
     ‘He took my stick.’ (#e.90)

Subject of a non-verbal clause:

(85) Ku tawera mo-iso, iau vavine, mo-iso ...
     1SG big 3SG-finish IP:1SG woman 3SG-finish
     ‘I had already grown up, I was a woman, and then...’ (N.ab-T78:21)

The functions of independent pronouns as heads are limited compared to other heads of NPs. However, independent pronouns complement to some degree the functions of object pronouns as heads (6.3.4.4) and are the same form for 1SG, 1PL.E. and 2PL (see 4.7.1 for some discussion as to similarities).

6.3.4.2 Interrogative proforms as head

Interrogative proforms can appear in almost all functions as heads of NPs, as appropriate to the word class to which they belong.

Direct core argument as subject:

(86) Hisei mo-le doro~ndoro?
     who 3SG-TA RED~knock
     ‘Who’s knocking?’

Direct core argument as object:

(87) No-le loli sava?
     2PL-TA do what
     ‘What are you doing?’ (#c.238)

Oblique core argument:

(88) Sohoti-m le ovi ambea tovona?
     brother-P:2SG TA live where now
     ‘Where is your brother living now?’ (#c.168)
Ku-mbo ruru hina sava?
1SG-FUT dress PREP what
‘What will I wear?’ (lit. I will dress with what?) (#e.668)

Subject of a non-verbal clause:
This function is attested as only being available to hisei ‘who’ of the interrogatives. Interrogative sentences retain declarative word order, and all other interrogative proforms can only occur clause-finally, where subjects cannot usually occur, because of the strict word order in the language (3.8.1). But this following usage of hisei is common.

Hisei niala?
who there
‘Who’s there?/ Who’s that?’ (#c.237)

Predicate of a non-verbal clause:
Na-natu-m avisa?
PL-child-P:2SG how.many
‘How many children have you?’ (lit. your children how many?)

6.3.4.3 Demonstrative pronouns as head
Direct core argument, as subject:
Spatial deictic:
Niani mo boni.
this 3SG stink
‘This one stinks.’ (#e.576)

Anaphoric reference:
Mo sahe aulu, mwende na-le turu aulu
3SG go.up up.direction particular.one 3PL-TA stand up.direction

na revei-a.
3PL pull-O:3SG
‘He went up, and those ones standing on top pulled her up.’ (Nt-T31:19)

Direct core argument, as object:
Spatial deictic:
O soari niala le mai!
2SG see that TA come
‘Look at that one coming!’ (Nt-T20:22)

The pronoun mwende can itself be modified by a demonstrative (see the next three examples). Here, the speaker has already explained several different ways of traditional fishing, and is about to describe yet another one:

10 A routine and frequent question to any visiting woman, including me, from local women, as they become acquainted.
Melao nia mo were, ne iau ku-mbo sora-hi
fishing.net IP:3SG 3SG many but IP:SG 1SG-FUT talk-TR

**mwende niani, melao atea na-le loli-a na re tara.**
particular.one this net one 3PL-TA do-O:3SG 3PL say tara
‘Fishing nets are common, but I am going to talk about this particular one, a net
they make called tara.’ (E-T26.2)

**Oblique core argument:**
(96) O sile-au hina mwende niani.
2SG give-O:1SG PREP particular.one this
‘Give me this very one!’ (#e.157b)

The following comes from a story about two flying foxes who were arguing about the
size of their respective wing spans, and get into a fight about it, threatening to hit out with
their wings at each other.

**Peripheral argument:**
(97) Ku tua-ho hina mwende niani, o mate!
1SG hit-O:2SG PREP particular.one this 2SG dead
‘I hit you with this one, and you’re dead!’ (Nt-T42:44)

**Subject of a non-verbal clause:**
(98) Niaro evui-na-i no-ku stori.
EMPH end-NOM-LINK CLFR-P:1SG story
‘That’s it the end of my story.’ (Nt-T32:37)

**Predicate of a non-verbal clause:**
(99) Sora-e rindi nia niani.
talk-NOM REF IP:3SG this
‘The story goes like this.’ (lit. the story is this) (Nk-T67:2)

### 6.3.4.4 Object pronouns as head

Object pronouns operate in the same functional slot as any full NP that is the object of a
transitive verb. Although their distribution is limited, in that they function only as one kind
of direct core argument, or as an oblique or at the periphery in a prepositional phrase, they
nevertheless fulfil a necessary syntactic criterion for status as head of a NP.

**Direct core argument, as object:**
(100) ... are no hisi-a, a-mbo hati kamim.
if 2PL touch-O:3SG 3SG-FUT bite O:2PL
‘... if you touch it, it will bite you.’ (Nt-T32:9)

An object pronoun that suffixes to a transitive verb is regarded as part of the
phonological word because the strict rules on penultimate stress still apply (see 2.6.2), but
the pronoun is analysed syntactically as a grammatical word and a NP.
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(101) Ku soari-a.
    1SG see-O:3SG
    ‘I saw him/her.’

Oblique core argument, as P-object:

(102) O sile-a telei-au!
    2SG give-O:3SG PREP-O:1SG
    ‘Give it to me!’ (#157a)

Peripheral argument:

(103) Hisei mo jivo Vila telei kamim?
    who 3SG go.down Vila PREP O:2PL
    ‘Who went to Vila with you?’

6.3.5 Heads other than nouns and proforms

6.3.5.1 Possessive classifiers

Possessive classifiers are analysed as modifiers but can function as the head of a NP, as mentioned in 6.3.1. (Chapter 7 gives further detail on the classifiers, possessive linkers and the kind of constructions in which they function). The classifiers can be suffixed by possessive pronominals or linked with a NP possessor, and can function as a head, just like other NPs, in at least three syntactic environments as shown:

Subject of a verbal clause:

(104) No-ku nia mo-ta vorivori.
    CLFR-P:1SG IP:3SG 3SG-again little
    ‘Mine is smaller.’ (#117NK)

Object of a verbal clause:

(105) Na tutun ha-ra na tau-a le hinau...
    3PL cook CLFR-P:3PL 3PL put.in.place TA thing
    ‘They cooked their food and put it there...’ Nt-T36.53)
    (lit. they cooked their ‘to eat’ they put it in place it was ‘something-ing’)

Predicate of a non-verbal clause:

(106) Mandarin nira ha-ra.
    mandarin IP:3PL CLFR-P:3PL
    ‘The mandarins are their food./ The mandarins are for them (to eat).’ (#e.1088)

Further examples are given in 7.4.4 where ellipsis is discussed. However, possessive classifiers are analysed in this description primarily as modifiers to nouns and further examples are given of their modifying function in 6.4.2 and 6.4.5.2.

6.4 Non-obligatory components of the NP

The head as the obligatory component of the NP and the non-obligatory components are shown in Table 6.5. These optional components are prehead and posthead attributes that
function within the noun phrase to modify the head. There are some restrictions as to which slots can co-occur:

i) Slot components cannot co-occur with any other component of the same slot.

ii) Any two of the three prehead slots can co-occur.

**Table 6.5: Order of possible components of the noun phrase**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obligatory and optional components</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poss. link</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Slots 1 and 2:

(107) *O lai te ha-ku havera!*

2SG take some CLFR-P:1SG island.cabbage

‘Take some of my cabbage!’ (N.ch-T6.7)

(108) *Mo soari na no-m ihambe...*

3SG see ART CLFR-P:2SG wooden.spoon

‘He saw your wooden spoon...’ (Nt-T36.30)

Slots 1 and 3:

(109) *No sahe no lai na vevesai havera.*

2PL go.up 2PL take ART every island.cabbage

‘Go up (to the gardens) and get all the cabbage.’ (#e.206)

Slots 2 and 3:

(110) *Mandarin nira ha-na vevesai tamalohi.*

mandarin IP:3PL CLFR-P:3SG every person

‘The mandarins are for everyone [to eat]. (#c.1089)

iii) Possessive constructions with classifiers cannot co-occur with other possessive constructions with classifiers, e.g. Slot 2 cannot co-occur with Slot 9.

iv) Preference of native speakers is for no more than two posthead attributes.

v) Relative clauses cannot occur after:

a) demonstratives, modifying numerals, nor after possessive constructions with classifiers, since those attributes already define the reference of the noun.

b) heads of NPs other than common nouns, numerals, demonstrative pronouns.

Each of the optional components is discussed in turn.
6.4.1 Articles

The article *na*, or the indefinite *te*, can occupy the first possible slot in a NP. They cannot co-occur.

6.4.1.1 Article *na*

This is a particle that codes case and definiteness. I justify my use of the term ‘article’ in 4.9.1, where its posited history reflecting POc article *na* is outlined. As shown in 3.3.1.2, this ‘article’ marks a common noun as the definite direct object of a transitive verb, while the use of *na +atea* marks a direct object but not a definite direct object.

Plural or singular objects can be preceded by article *na* whether they are differentiated morphologically for number, or whether plurality is only disambiguated by context, as in the next example:

(111) *Tama-ku mo losu na heletu.*
father-P:1SG 3SG strike ART pig
‘My father killed the pig/s.’

But where a common noun does indicate plurality morphologically, as detailed in 5.2.1.1, the use of article *na* is still required.

(112) *Tamalohi atea mo-le tai na vuhai.*
man one 3SG-TA cut ART tree
‘A man is cutting the tree.’ (#e.29a)

(113) *Tamalohi atea mo-le tai na lo-vuhai.*
man one 3SG-TA cut ART PL-tree
‘A man is cutting the trees.’ (#e.30b)

Article *na* is not used before nouns which are kin terms, even when they are in O syntactic position. This is because, as with proper names, they are already ‘uniquely identified’ as a referent.

(114) ... *mo boi a-ta losu tambaluhi-na.*
3SG want 3SG-REP strike wife-P:3SG
‘...he wanted to hit his wife again.’ (Nt-T22:18)

(115) *Niho, o lai vo-natu-nda, o vano*
IP:2SG 2SG take FEM-child-P:1PL.I. 2SG go

* o tau-a asa-n’ tumbu-na.*
2SG put.in.place-O:3SG traditional.place-LINK grandmother-P:3SG.
‘You, you take our daughter and go and put her at her grandmother’s place.’ (Nt-T74:3)
Note that *na-* in the following sentence with a kin term as O, is not the article\(^\text{11}\) but a particular plural prefix that attaches only to kin terms (see 5.2.1.1) and is part of the noun head.

(116) ...a Soari na-vo-tomaluki-na mwende na-le
    3SG See PL-FEM-wife-P:3SG particular.one 3PL-TA
    ovi alau.
    live coast.direction
    ‘... to see the wives who lived down the coast.’ (Nk-T1:4)

The restriction does not apply to other nouns as O in direct possessive constructions, and so article *na* can be used as in the following:

(117) ...mo sahe mo hisi na asituatua-na.
    3SG go up 3SG touch ART belt-P:3SG
    ‘... it came up as far as his belt.’ (Nk-T13:9)

(118) O vahi-au, o lai na hutu-ku...
    2SG groom-O:1SG 2SG take ART louse-P:1SG
    ‘Groom me, take out my lice...’ (Nt-T40:74)

6.4.1.2 Article *te*

Indefinite *te* is the only other particle besides article *na* that can occur in Slot 1 of a NP. As described in 4.9.1.2, *te* differs from article *na* in that it can modify a common noun regardless of its syntactic function. It is able to occur as the only prehead modifier:

(119) Tene ale te tamalohi Avunambue a mai...
     or if INDEF person A 3SG come
    ‘Or if any Avunambue person should come...’ (E-T75:8)

It can also occur with posthead modifiers:

(120) O ruru te ruru haramba!
    2SG dress INDEF dress new
    ‘Put on some clean clothes!’ (#e.918)

Also, *te* can combine with a classifier in an indirect possessive construction:

(121) No lai te ha-ku havera ana no-ku
    2SG take INDEF CLFR-P:1SG cabbage PREP CLFR-P:1SG

\(^{11}\) In addition to article *na*, the 3PL subject pronoun, a particular plural prefix and the 3SG possessive suffix are indicated by *na*, *na-* , and *-na* respectively. The subject pronoun *na* can be easily distinguished from article *na* by word order, since 3PL subject pronoun *na* must precede a verb (see Verb Phrase chapter). The *na-* plural prefix pluralises kin terms only. The 3SG possessive suffix *-na* attaches to nouns in direct possessive constructions.
tano.
garden
‘You fetch some cabbage of mine/ some cabbage for me to eat/ from my
garden.’ (N.ch-T6.7)

6.4.2 Classifier + possessive pronoun

This is the only type of possessive construction that can precede the head. It is an
indirect possessive construction as described in 7.4.2, where one of four, semantically
based, classifiers must be used. Since they have been listed in 4.9.3.1 and are described at
some length in the next chapter, brief examples only are given here.

(122) …ne no-ra stori le mauru matua
but CLFR-P:3PL story TA alive strong
‘... but their story lives on.’ (Nk-T3:10)

Article na is always retained preceding an indirect possessive construction where the
NP is in O syntactic function, as in:

(123) O sile-au na no-m harimbai!
2SG give-O:1SG ART CLFR-P:2SG stick
‘Hand over your stick!’ (#e.89)

(124) Hei, o soari na bula-m puskat!
hey 2SG see ART CLFR-2SG pussycat
‘Hey, look at your pussycat!’ (#6.JB)

(125) Tamalohi mwera atea mo-le loli na no-na
person male one 3SG-TA make ART CLFR-P:3SG
rombu...
traditional.house
‘One man was making his house ...’ (E-T58:2)

6.4.3 Quantifiers prehead and posthead

The following quantifiers can occur prehead in Slot 3:

vevesai ‘every’, ‘each one’
tari ‘very many’
aiente ‘some’ (with reference to time/place)

In addition, tari can also occur posthead. See also 6.2.5.5 for nouns that can function as
quantifiers.

6.4.3.1 vevesai

Quantifier vevesai is similar to quantifying noun tua- (6.2.5.5) in that it can be preceded
by article na when it modifies a common noun as O.
Nouns and the noun phrase

(126) *No lai na vevesai havera!*  
2SG take ART every cabbage  
‘Pick every cabbage!’  (#e.206)

In all examples in my data, I have only heard *vevesai*, but a small reading primer published by the last Australian missionary to the area has an example with *vevesa-ni*:

(127) *Ava vevesa-ni mwende na-le ovi ana verama*  
let every-LINK particular.one 3PL-TA live PREP world  
*na haso~haso God.*  
3PL RED~praise God  
‘Let all those living in the world praise God.’  (Sykes 1955:32)\textsuperscript{12}

This suggests that *vevesai* could once have had origins as a noun *vevesa* ‘each one’ and function in a possessive construction (similarly to what I posit for *tua*), with possessive linking suffix *-ni* or *-i*. However the word is now firmly *vevesai*, suggesting that possessive linker *-i* has fused in all environments and, synchronically in this analysis, *vevesai* can be regarded as a modifier.

(128) ... *vevesai tamalohi ana verama*  
every person PREP world  
‘... all the people in the world’  (#e.20)

(129) *Mo sora-e hina vevesai sahasaha-e aimo.*  
3SG talk-O:3SG PREP every work-NOM home  
‘He talked to her about all the jobs at home.’  (Nt-T72:2)

### 6.4.3.2 *tari*

Quantifier *tari*, glossed as ‘many’, is described by several speakers as an ‘old word’ and, like *werehi* (6.2.5.5), has largely been supplanted by the quantitative verb *were* as in *mo were*, ‘it is many’. In my data, it is used only by older speakers.

(130) ... *varilosu-a no-na tari manji...*  
fight-NOM CLFR-P:PL many creature  
‘... the fighting of many animals ...’  (Nk-T22:28)

But it is more often used posthead:

(131) ... *tamalohi tari na mai na dami-ra ...*  
person many PL come 3PL ask-O:3PL  
‘... many men came and asked for them ...’  (Nt-T20:5)

\textsuperscript{12} I have changed the orthography slightly in the sentence from the original (c–>h), to conform with elsewhere in this description. The glosses and translation are also mine.
6.4.3.3 aiente

This is the only quantifier that is limited in the type of common noun that it can modify. It occurs in NPs only to modify non-animate nouns, usually of time and place. It is not attested in my data as occurring with other prehead modifiers.

Example:

(133) Aiente bongi mo losu-a, mo walau mo vano ana mesu.
Some day 3SG strike-O:3SG 3SG run 3SG go PREP bush
‘Sometimes he hit her, and she ran away into the bush.’ (Nk-T22:6)

6.4.4 Noun or verb as posthead modifier

Posthead, it is possible to have either a noun or a verb as a modifier. Where they occur immediately posthead with no other modifiers, the combination of noun+noun or noun+verb are analysed in this description as types of compounding processes, as previously discussed in 5.5. The attributive noun or the attributive verb gives additional descriptive information about the head noun.

6.4.4.1 Noun as modifier to other noun

All types of nouns can function posthead as an attribute of the noun without any linking suffix. Examples of such modifiers have already been shown for common nouns (6.3.3.1), for proper names (6.3.3.2), for location nouns (6.3.3.4), and for sohena (4.6.3). Numerals function slightly differently as modifiers, and examples are given in 6.4.8. This modifying function is reasonably productive as a compounding process although only some compounds are lexicalised into the language. The examples given, in the sections as noted, are not lexicalised and clearly keep their literal meaning.

Although a modifying noun most commonly occurs with no other posthead modifiers, occasionally other modifiers can intervene, such as where a location noun is used as modifier within the NP.

6.4.4.2 Verb as modifier to noun

Just as a noun can be used to modify the noun head, a verb without the mandatory subject pronoun of the verb phrase can also function as a modifier in a NP, although it appears not to be a common process. This verbal modifier directly follows the noun head in a compounding process. Some such noun+verb compounds have moved through usage
to become lexicalised into the language as described and listed with examples only in 5.5.4.1.

Those that are shown here are used by the speakers as literal descriptive attributes of the head. They are not compounds that have been lexicalised into new lexemes for all speakers.

(136) ...\textit{manji hati na wala}u.  
fish bite 3PL run  
‘... feeding fish were running.’ (as in a school of fish moving fast together) (Nk-T13:6)

(137) ...\textit{manja rindi tanume viti, sohen tanume na vanjangi}  
fighting.stick REF devil talk like devil 3PL teach  
na vavine hini-a.  
ART woman PREP-O:3SG  
‘... that fighting stick is devil talk, in that devils taught the woman about it.’  
(Nk-T22:23)

(138) ...\textit{stori rindi, na viti-a na re sora-e welu}  
story REF 3PL tell-O:3SG 3PL say talk-NOM dance  
no-na mara Buentari.  
CLFR-P:PL man Buentari.  
‘... as for that story, they said that it was a dance story belonging to the Buentari people.’  
(Nk-T73:3)

6.4.5 Posthead possessive constructions as modifiers

6.4.5.1 Possessive suffixes -ni/-i

This kind of possessive construction directly links a NP ‘possessor’ to the ‘possessed’ which functions as the head of a NP. As shown in Table 6.5, no other modifiers can occur between the possessed and the possessor. Some such ‘direct possessive’ constructions with -\textit{i} can sometimes become lexicalised phrases over time (5.5.3.2).

-\textit{ni} where possessor is a kin term or name

(139) ...\textit{no soari na vuti-ni Ambae} ...  
2PL see ART hill-LINK Ambae  
‘... you see the hills of Ambae ...’  
(Nk-T12:32)

-\textit{i} where possessor is a common noun:

(140) \textit{Ku voli na sola-i veta}i \textit{atea}.  
1SG buy ART bunch-LINK banana one  
‘I bought a/one bunch of bananas.’  
(#c.15)
6.4.5.2 Classifier + linker

The suffix linking to a classifier, when there are NP possessors, is either -ni or -na, depending on the semantics of possession, as explained in Chapter 7. The classifier and linker are bolded here and are followed by the NP possessor.

(141) Ku-mbo hani na manj bula-ni Tanume Vorivori.
1SG-FUT eat ART creature CLFR-LINK devil little
‘I’ll eat Little Devil’s bird.’ (Nt-T40:29)

(142) Ro niaro sala-i manji-a no-na mara
thus EMPH way-LINK fish-NOM CLFR-LINK person
Tamambo tuai.
Malo long.ago
‘So that’s the way of fishing of the Malo men long ago.’ (E-T43:37)

Note that the example above also has a -i linking construction.

6.4.6 Adjectival verbs as modifiers

Words classed as in the subset of stative verbs as adjectival can be used attributively to modify a common noun head within a NP. They only occur post head, in Slot 6 of the NP. (See also Chapter 10.)

The preference of native speakers is to use no more than two attributes following the noun phrase, e.g.

i) two adjectival verbs (but marginally acceptable only)
ii) one adjectival verb + demonstrative (esp. Dimension + DEM)
iii) one adjectival verb + numeral (esp. Dimension + Numeral).

Where two attributes are used, it will most often be ii) or iii). The adjectival words most commonly used attributively, rather than predicatively, are those belonging to the ‘Dimension’ type, such as tawera ‘big’ and vorivori ‘little’.

(143) Tamalohi mo lasi na heletu tawera hina asi baravu.
person 3SG tie ART pig big PREP rope long
‘The man tied up the big pig with the long rope.’ (#e.49)

(144) Mo-iso uranji vorivori mo soari tina-na.
3SG-finish child little 3SG see mother-P:3SG
‘Then the baby saw his mother.’ (#c.1063)

Where adjectival verbs of age and dimension combine, the attribute of dimension follows that of age.

(145) Tama-ku mo noha na aka haramba tawera.
father-P:1SG 3SG has ART boat new big
‘My father has a big new boat.’ (#e.389b)
Where adjectival verbs of colour and dimension combine, once again the dimension attribute follows the other. Note that these next two examples and the preceding one are elicited. This next one is barely acceptable because the number of attributes exceeds the preferred maximum for a NP.

(146) O soari na mwata vuriha tawera niala!
     2SG see ART snake black big that
‘Look at that big black snake!’ (#e.916)

Because of that, the following is preferred:

(147) O soari na mwata tawera niala, mo vuriha!
     2SG see ART snake big that 3SG black
‘Look at that big snake, it’s black!’ (#e.915)

6.4.7 Demonstrative modifiers

The demonstratives in the language variously signify
- spatial reference
- anaphoric reference
- emphatic reference.

Modifiers to NP heads that indicate spatial deixtics are described in 4.9.2.1, those that indicate anaphoric reference in 4.9.2.2, and the emphatic reference modifier in 4.9.2.3. They have already been discussed in their function of demonstrative pronouns (4.7.2) and adverbs (4.5.1.3).

6.4.8 Numerals as modifiers

Cardinal numerals can function posthead in the NP to modify common nouns in two ways:

- to introduce a new referent into the discourse
- to indicate a specific number as an attribute of the head.

**New referent:**

The number *atea* here modifies the subject to indicate the ‘referential indefinite meaning (“specific”)’ (Foley and Van Valin 1985:285) and primarily functions to introduce the character into the storyline. It is used with common nouns only.

(148) Toa atea mo tao tolu-na alima.
     hen one 3SG lay egg-P:3SG five
‘A hen laid her five eggs.’ (Nt-T32:3)

In the following, *atea* is used twice, once to introduce the ‘story’ as the new information to be discussed, and immediately again in a prepositional phrase (as a predicate of a non-verbal clause) to introduce the locutional topic of the custom story.
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No-ku stori atea matai dam atea, ka tovi
CLFR-P:1SG story one PREP yam one 1PL call
na hisa-na Bisuroi.
ART name-P:3SG B.
‘A story of mine is about a yam, we call it Bisuroi.’ (Nk-T38:1)

Specific number:
Where there are other attributes, the numeral follows to indicate specific number, as in:

Nira va-uranji waririhi avati, na batundira.
IP:3PL PL-child PL.little four 3PL naughty
‘They are four naughty little boys.’ (lit. they are four little boys they are naughty.) (#c.388b)

Mo lingi na ra-vavine rindi arua ...
3SG transport ART PL-woman REF two
‘He carried the two women (in the boat)…’ (#e.904)

A cardinal numeral can also modify an independent pronoun as head. (This is the same syntactic frame as is shown in 6.2.5.4, with the use of tolu.)

No vano, kamim avati no-mbo matahi tasi-mim
2PL go IP: 2PL four 2PL-FUT look.after younger.sibling-P:2PL

‘Off you go, and the four of you must look after your youngest brother.’ (Nt-T32:15)

6.4.9 Relative clauses as modifiers
A relative clause can modify common nouns. It is a post-nominal external clause embedded within the NP. Relative clauses are usually, though not always, introduced by the demonstrative mwende, functioning as a relative proform. They are discussed in detail in Chapter 14, and brief examples only are given here. The relative clauses are bolded.

Beru mwende maranjea le lavo-a mo-te turu.
housepost particular.one old.man TA plant-O:3SG 3SG-NEG stand
‘The housepost that the old man put in/had put in/ wasn’t there.’ (Nk-T9:6)

Voi manji mwende niho o-le boi-a a niani!
mum fish particular.one IP:2SG 2SG-TA like-O:3SG 3SG this
‘Mum, the shellfish that you want/wanted might be this one!’ (Nt-T32:7)

... matan o vano ana jara mwende o-mbo ovi aie.
SUB 2SG go PREP place particular.one 2SG-FUT live there
‘... in order to go to the place where you will be staying.’ (Wi-T8:3)
6.5 Appositional NPs

An appositional noun phrase directly follows another NP without any linking suffix. It differs from a modifying noun as in 6.4.4.1, in that it is not a descriptive attribute of the head but functions as an explanatory equivalent to it; that is, the second NP is referring to the same entity as the first NP. The appositional NP does not form a separate syntactic argument in the clause. There is usually a slight intonation break or pause between the NP and the appositional NP, which is indicated by a comma in the examples below. The appositional phrases are bolded.

(156) ...tama-ni papa, Baniuri, mai tina-ni papa, Vomaranda ...
father-LINK dad Baniuri COM mother-LINK dad V.
‘... my dad’s father, Baniuri, and my dad’s mother, Vomaranda ...’ (Nk-T9:1)

(157) Na-le ovi mo vano ra-vavine, na-vo-natu-na, na watitina.
3PL-TA live 3SG go PL-woman PL-FEM-child-P:3SG 3PL PL.big
‘They kept on living (there) until the girls, his daughters, were grown-up.’ (Nt-T20:4)

(158) ...na vai~vai-a no-na tamalohi marasa-ku, mara Buelivurombu.
ART RED~do-NOM CLFR-P:3SG person traditional.place-P:1SG
man B.
‘... the customs of the people from my traditional place, Buelivurombu people.’
(Nk-T12:1)

6.6 Coordination of noun phrases

Coordinated NPs are two separate NPs referring to two different referents but which form a constituent (NP). They differ from appositional NPs above which are two separate NPs referring to the same referent.

Most NPs can be coordinated by the use of particular coordinators, a ‘conjunctive’ coordinator or a ‘disjunctive’ coordinator (terms from Haspelmath 2007). These NPs are those whose head is an independent pronoun, a noun, a name or a kin term, but NPs whose head is a location noun are not coordinated in the same way. Instead, such NPs use juxtaposition or repetition of full clauses in which the NP is one of the core arguments. At phrase level, the following are possible:

Conjunctive coordinator: Comitatives *ma-/ ‘and’/ ‘together with’
Disjunctive coordinator: Alternative tene ‘or’

6.6.1 Coordination with mai and mana

As Haselpath notes (2007:29) ‘in many of the world’s languages, the conjunctive coordinator for NPs is identical in shape with the marker of accompaniment, i.e. the comitative adposition or case marker’. This is the case in Tamambo where the comitative prepositions mai and mana (see 8.2.3) are extended to express conjunctive coordination of NPs. This appears to have been the pattern also in Proto Oceanic. Comitative *ma- has
been posited by Pawley (1973:142–47); additionally Lynch et al. (2002:75) note that the morpheme that functioned to conjoin NPs was ‘often *ma “and” ’. These authors further note that the ‘morphology [of *ma] indicates that it was (originally at least) a preposition rather than a conjunction’.

In Tamambo the comitatives *mai and *mana both give a head-marking agreement pattern, with -i and -na representing POc personal and common articles *i and *na together with ma. This is the only clear indication of POc personal article *i, although the -ni suffix that is used before proper names or kin terms in direct possessive constructions and with preposition matan(i) are also possibly derived from POc P:3SG *n(a) + personal article *i.

Comitative *mana is used in conjunctive coordination where the second NP is a common noun, and comitative *mai is used to conjoin NPs where the second NP is a kin term or proper name. That is, the ‘status’ of the first NP is thus irrelevant, as the second NP determines the choice of comitative. This ranking of names and kin terms differently from unnamed animates or inanimates indicates levels of salience within an animacy or individuation hierarchy as shown in Table 6.2.

6.6.1.1 Comitative *mana

The second of the two coordinate NPs (as a common noun) can be either human, or non-human animate, or inanimate, as shown in the following examples:

(159)  
Vavine *mana mwera atea na lahi na vasusu  
woman COM man one 3PL marry 3PL give.birth

vo-natu-ra atea.  
FEM-child-P:3PL one

‘A woman and a man married and gave birth to their daughter.’ (Nt-T74:2)

(160)  
Ana bong atea, harivi *mana puskat atea na-le ovi  
PREP day one rat COM cat one 3PL-TA live

ana vanua vorivori ana mesu.  
PREP house little PREP bush

‘One day, a rat and a pussycat were living in a little house in the bush.’ (N.ch-T2:1)

(161)  
Vevesai bongi, ku-le va-hani na bula-ku vuria  
every day 1SG-TA CAUS-eat ART CLFR-P:1SG dog

hina bamiken *mana viri.  
PREP pumpkin COM coconut.milk

‘Every day, I used to feed my dog with pumpkin and coconut milk.’ (D-T7:7)

(162)  
Na-le loli-a sohena matai suli-suli-a  
3PL-TA do-O:3SG the.same PREP RED~burn.off-NOM
Nouns and the noun phrase

mana lavo–lavo-a.
COM RED–plant-NOM
‘They used to do it in the same way for the burning off and the planting time.’ (Nk-T3:5)

In the following, although the second NP has an appositional phrase that in fact gives a name, and the first NP is an object pronoun, the strict restriction on mana before common nouns is preserved.

(163) Mama mo lai-au mana vavine atea hisa-na Vomboe,
dad 3SG take-O:1SG COM woman one name-P:3SG V.

vomaranjea, na kolo-iau...
old.woman 3PL carry-O:3SG
‘Dad took me and a woman called Vomboe, an old woman, and they carried me...’ (N.ab-78:14)

6.6.1.2 Comitative mai
Second NP as a kin term:

(164) Mo-iso-ro tama-ra mai tina-ra na tau
3SG-finish-thus father-P:3SG COM mother-P:3SG 3PL leave

aulu...
up-direction
‘Then afterwards, their father and mother left the gardens...’ (Nt-T48:9)

(165) ...tamalohi rindi mai tambaluhi-na na sai natu-ra.
man REF COM wife-P:3SG 3PL search child-P:3PL
‘... the man and his wife searched for their son. (Nt-T77:10)

Second NP as a name of person, story character, or place:

(166) Nellie mai Alice nira arua na tuani-au.
N. COM A. IP:3PL two 3PL help-O:1SG
‘Nellie and Alice both help me.’ (#c.1108)

(167) Toa mai Bao na vano matan na lakolako.
fowl COM swamp.hen 3PL go SUB 3PL decorate
‘Fowl and Purple Swamp Hen went off to decorate themselves.’ (Nt-T28:5)

(168) ... na mai ana livuha-i Alotu mai Natamambo.
3PL come PREP middle-LINK Santo COM Malo
‘... they came to the middle part between Santo and Malo.’ (Nt-T20:109)

Note the traditional use of mana ‘dad’ by this woman in her 60s, as compared with the Bislama term used by a man in his early 30s in (156), and by a child in example (169).
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The next example illustrates the use of both *mai* and *mana*, dependent on the ‘ranking’ of the following NP. It is from a story recorded by a nine-year old girl, and her use of Bislama words for family terms reflect the changing lexicon of younger speakers, as mentioned in 1.3.6. It is interesting that her grammatical constructions are completely ‘Tamambo’ while her lexicon is interspersed with Bislama nouns.

(169) Mo losu na papa-na *mai* mama-na
     3SG strike ART father-P:3SG COM mother-P:3SG

     *mana* no-na famle.
     COM CLFR-P:3SG family

‘He killed his father and his mother and his family.’ (Nt-T46.15 KM)

6.6.1.3 Inclusory pronominals

The term given to such patterns here of ‘inclusory pronominals’ is that of Lichtenberk (2000) who has made an extensive study of different forms of inclusory constructions. Where an independent pronoun combines with a name or a kin term as in the following Tamambo examples, the independent pronoun as the first NP takes on the number of the conjoined NPs. That is, the second NP following comitative *mai* is included in the number of the first NP. This is a pattern mentioned by Payne (1985:32) as being used in other languages, including Fijian, and is also discussed in Haspelmath (2007:34) who gives examples where the ‘inclusory conjunct and the included conjunct occur contiguously’.

The number of the independent pronoun can be unchanged as in the following, where the speaker has already indicated by the previous preverbal subject marking that the number is plural. This example uses *tolu*, the ‘total undefined number’ and is repeated from 6.2.5.4.

(170) ...na vano na-isonodu hu *nira* tolu *mai* natu-ra niaro.
     3PL go 3PL-all IP:3PL total COM child-P:3PL EMPH

     ‘... they both went together with that particular son of theirs.’ (Nt-T77:4)

But often the independent pronoun must change to reflect the number of conjunctive NPs, as in the next examples:

(171) Na jivo na kakau alau, turu aie,
     3PL go.down 3PL reach coast.direction stand there

     *nira* *mai* tina-na na-le eno.
     IP:3PL COM mother-P:3SG 3PL-TA lie

     ‘They went down as far as the coast, and that being so, he and his mother stayed on.’ (lit. they with his mother...) (Nk-T83:45)

(172) *Kamam* *mai* Nancy *ka* *mai* nananovi.
     IP:1PLE COM N. 1PL come yesterday.

     ‘Nancy and I came yesterday.’ (lit. We with Nancy...) (#c.281)

It is not acceptable to reverse the order, as below:
The independent pronoun must come first and as such must always be plural, as it reflects the coordinate number. Consequently, the number indicated by the independent pronoun is potentially ambiguous, but in reality is either understood from context or from grammatical clues. For example, in (172), kamam mai Nancy uses the 1PL exclusive pronoun, so only a ‘we two’ subject is possible. In (171), the use of nira ‘they’ may at first suggest that more than one person may be with the mother, but the second NP tina-na indicates a singular possessive construction, ‘his mother’. So the possibility opens up of ‘one plus mother’ or ‘more than one plus mother’ but from the previous events in the narrative, it is known that only the son was with his mother.

So while grammatical marking will assist in clarifying the number distinction, contextual clues are often necessary to eliminate ambiguity.

### 6.6.1.4 Non-adjacent NPs in a conjunctive/comitative structure

Sometimes, mai + NP2 is not adjacent to NP1, but comes after a VP. In such a case, the NPs are not ‘coordinate’ or ‘conjunctive’ in the strict sense, but in fact are discontinuous. Nevertheless, the number marking on the VP anticipates the second NP, in the same way as the examples in 6.6.1.3. For example, in the following text extract, there is a singular NP1 (Voi ‘mum’) as understood from the narrative, which is then followed by 2PL preverbal subject marking. However, the VP is then followed immediately by the preposition and second NP, i.e. mai + NP2, (bolded) to justify the plurality on the verb.

(175)  
Voi, no-le ate mai vo-natu-ku, iau
mum 2PL-TA stay COM FEM-child-P:1SG IP:1SG

ku jivo ku bara~mbara.
1SG go.down 1SG RED~walk-on.reef

‘Mum, you stay (there) with my daughter, as for me I’m going down to look for shellfish.’ (lit. mum you plural stay with my daughter...) (Nt-T74:6)

Similarly in the next example, the NP1 subject, the first NP of the pair (tamanatuna ‘her husband’), is indicated early and then tracked with preverbal subject pronoun mo, until the 3PL marking on the verb anticipates the ‘conjunctive’ NP (votambaluhi ‘his wife’).

(176)  
Tamanatu-na mo heli buru-na, mo heli buru-na mo-iso
husband-P:3SG 3SG dig hole-P:3SG 3SG dig hole-P:3SG 3SG-finish

mo-turu na-le tangisi-a mai votambaluhi-na.
3SG-stand 3PL-TA mourn-O:3SG COM wife-P:3SG

‘Her husband dug her (the daughter’s) grave, (and when) he had finished digging her grave then he and his wife were crying\(^{14}\) for her.’ (lit. ...they were crying for her with his wife) (Nt-T74:35)

---

\(^{14}\) This is the ritualised crying expected at the gravesite for a certain time.
The same pattern reoccurs in the next example.

(177) Tamalohi rindi niaro na jivo mai tambaluhi-na

person REF EMPH 3PL go.down COM wife-P:3SG

na jivo na lai na ra-talaua...
3PL go.down 3PL take ART leaf-sago.palm

‘That very man went down with his wife, they went down and got the sago palm leaves...’ (lit. that very man they went down with his wife..) (Nk-T80:22)

Payne (1985b:32) suggests that such splitting by the verb suggests ‘an intermediate stage between the straightforward comitative and straightforward conjunction’ once again using Fijian as an example. The Tamambo data would appear similar.

6.6.2 Coordination with tene ‘or’

Disjunctive tene is the only coordinator that can combine NP with NP, and clause with clause. Here I give examples of its use with NPs. Its clausal use is described in 13.4.

Similarly to comitatives mai and mana, it can be used with all NPs excepting those with a location noun as head. It can link two or more NPs in a contrastive role. There is potentially no limit on the number of NPs, but four, as in (179), would seem to be about the discourse limit, and tene is then often abbreviated to te as in that example. As the abbreviated disjunctive coordinator, it is not to be confused with negative particle te that always occurs preverbally, quantifier te which can precede a single NP, or discourse particle te which can be cliticised to the last word of a phrase, as in the following:

(178) ...ku-mbo manatu ku soari mahambui-ku-te, tene
1SG-FUT go.known.place 1SG see grandchild-P:1SG-DIS or

vo-mahambui-ku.
FEM-grandchild-P:1SG

‘... I’ll go there and see my grandson eh, or my granddaughter.’ (E-T81:11)

(179) Na soari na halili tene lala tene malmalum te sava~sava
3PL see ART halili or lala or clam or RED~what

dangedange, ro na lai-a.
shellfish thus 3PL take-O:3SG

‘They see halili shellfish or lala or clams or whatever shellfish, and so they take them.’ (E-T23:7)

(180) ...o matavosai o lai na taksi tene bus...
2SG be.able 2SG take ART taxi or bus

‘... you can take taxis or buses...’ (WI-T8:3)
6.6.3 Juxtaposition of NPs

Where there is listing of several NPs, especially as objects in a verbal clause as in the first two examples following, or as predicate in a non-verbal clause as in (183), then simple juxtaposition is often preferred.

(181) *O vahatauhi no-m sari, no-m simba, bake-m, ivine-m, ka vano...*  
2SG prepare CLFR-P:2SG spear CLFR-P:2SG knife bow-2SG  
arrow-P:2SG 1PL go  
‘Get ready your spear, your knife, your bow and arrows, and let’s go...’  
(Nt-T20:128)

(182) *Kamam ka sahe ka lai na bweta, manioko, wasurusuru, dam, ka mai ka-mbo vosai-a...*  
IP:IP.E 1PL go.up 1PL take ART taro maniok  
sweet.potato yam 1PL come 1PL-FUT bake-O:3SG  
‘We go up (to the gardens) and get taro, maniok, sweet potatoes, yams, (and then) we come and we’ll bake it...’  
(Nt-T46.10)

(183) *Niani stori matai manji atolu, bilahe, toa, bao.*  
this story PREP creature three banded.rail fowl swamp hen  
‘This story is about three animals, a buff-banded rail, a fowl, and a purple swamp hen.’  
(Nt-T28:1)

It was mentioned in 6.6 that location nouns can only be coordinated by juxtaposition of the NPs or juxtaposition of a full clause, rather than by the use of conjunctive coordinators. The next example shows this juxtaposition of location nouns, where one follows directly after the other. The clausal example in (185) following is included for comparison.

(184) *Na-uruanji na-le tio–tio aulu atano, aulu atano.*  
PL-child 3PL-TA RED–jump up.direction on.ground up.direction  
on.ground  
‘The children are jumping all about up and down, up and down.’  
(#e.MW41)

(185) *Lo-vuhai rindi na-le sula auta, na-le sula alau.*  
PL-tree REF 3PL-TA grow inland 3PL-TA grow coast.direction  
‘Those trees are growing in the bush, and growing on the coast.’  
(#e.MW42)
Possessive constructions

7.1 Introduction

Possessive constructions are a set of noun phrase constructions based primarily on the semantic relationships between two nouns. These relationships can refer to possession in the sense of ownership, of something belonging to someone, but they also include kinship relations, part-of-whole relations, body part relations, associative relations and so on. In this description, the head of the NP in a possessive construction is referred to as the ‘possessed’ and the attribute is referred to as the ‘possessor’. The possessor can be a common noun, a personal pronoun or a proper noun/kinship term. The possessed is typically a common noun, although some words classed primarily as adjectival verbs or quantifiers function in the same way as common nouns when they are possessed heads of a NP.

In 7.2, I outline the terminology used with regard to possessive constructions, and 7.3 outlines the different types of possessive constructions in this language. The main descriptive sections are 7.4, dealing with pronominal possession, and 7.5 describing constructions with NP possessors. Other issues of benefactives, and a possible emerging classifier are discussed in 7.6; a summary of main points is made in 7.7.

7.2 Terminology and semantic parameters

7.2.1 Inalienable and alienable possession

The terms ‘inalienable’ and ‘alienable’ possession have been used by different authors in different ways: for classification into noun classes, to describe certain kinds of NP constructions, or as overall descriptors for the differences in the semantics of possession, in Oceanic languages in particular. I take the terms as such descriptors and, following the example of Lichtenberk (1985), characterise inalienable possession through Lyons’ proposition (1968:301) as that in which the possessed is ‘necessarily associated with’ the possessor, and alienable possession as that in which the possessed is ‘contingently associated with’ the possessor. As Lynch suggested in an early study (1973:76), ‘inalienable possession implies that the possessed is closely or inextricably linked to the possessor, who usually has no choice in the matter of whether the possession is his or not’ whereas ‘… alienable possession implies links of a more distant nature and some measure of choice or control by the possessor’.

These parameters of firstly, a close or distant association between possessed and possessor and second, some control or lack of control over ownership on the part of the possessor, are borne out in the data from this language. So in using the terms ‘alienable’ or ‘inalienable possession’, I am referring to these parameters of the semantics of possession.
I use the terms ‘direct’, ‘indirect’, ‘direct link’, and ‘indirect link’ to describe the grammatical constructions that encode such possession (see 7.2.2 and 7.3).

I do not use the terminology ‘bound’ and ‘free’ nouns, as the particular possessive construction used depends on both the possessed and the possessor, and the relationship between them, rather than on some intrinsic quality of just the possessed noun. Nevertheless, there are nouns in particular semantic fields, such as ‘kinship’ and ‘body parts’, which most often occur in the role of ‘possessed’ and also most often occur in a particular possessive construction. This reflects to some degree the principles put forward by Pawley and Sayaba (1990) in looking at possessive constructions in Fijian languages, that ‘possessive marking of some nouns … is strictly determined by noun class’ and the ‘possessive marking of other nouns is determined by semantic relation’ (p.148). But although there are nouns in Tamambo in some semantic fields such as ‘kinship’ and ‘body parts’ mentioned above, which almost always show an obligatory possessor and reflect a kind of ‘noun class’, these nouns in certain circumstances do not have to appear in any kind of possessive construction (see 7.4.1.1 and 7.4.1.2). This is rather more flexible than in many other Oceanic languages.

7.2.2 Direct, indirect and linking constructions

7.2.2.1 Pronominal possessor

With pronominal possession, following Lynch (1993:1), direct constructions are those ‘in which the possessive pronoun is affixed—usually suffixed—to the possessed noun’, and indirect constructions are those ‘in which the pronoun is affixed to some other morpheme’. In Tamambo, the possessive pronoun is always suffixed. Thus the direct construction *batu-ku* ‘my head’ can be compared with the indirect construction *no-ku simba* ‘my knife’.

‘A set of pronominally suffixed possessive constituents or “classifiers” ’ (Lynch et al. 2002:41) as they are now more generally called, denote the element in some possessive constructions that can ‘classify entities on the basis of some semantic criteria’ (Lichtenberk 1985:96). For further explication see 7.4.3.

7.2.2.2 NP as possessor

In possessive constructions where the possessor is a full NP rather than a pronominal suffix, there is a kind of linker between the possessed and possessor. NPs as possessed and possessor cannot simply be juxtaposed as in some Western Oceanic languages, such as Saliba (Mosel 1994:22–26). These linking constructions in Tamambo reflect a Proto Austronesian possessive construction of the form Noun -{/i/ni }- Noun described by Reid 1983. In this description, I refer to them as ‘possessive linkers’, and in glosses, they are referred to as LINK.

In Tamambo, direct link constructions are those where the possessive linker attaches directly to the possessed, for example, *vanua-ni Vui* ‘Vui’s house’. On the other hand, indirect link constructions are those where the possessive linker attaches to a classifier, for example *toa bula-ni Vui* ‘Vui’s chickens’.

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7.3 Types of possessive constructions

These are the four types of possessive constructions at phrase level:

1) Direct
   
   | possessed   | possessor |
   | NP         | possessive pronominal suffix |

2) Indirect
   
   | possessor   | possessed |
   | classifier + possessive pronominal suffix | NP |

3) Direct Link
   
   | possessed   | possessor |
   | NP         | possessive linker |

4) Indirect Link
   
   | possessed   | possessor |
   | NP         | classifier + possessive linker |

Of the four types listed above, Types 1 and 2 indicate pronominal possession, and the possessor is shown by a possessive pronoun; types 3 and 4 have possessors which are a full NP, either a proper name or kin term, or a common noun. Types 2 and 4 can be further subdivided, depending on the kind of classifier used. In types 3 and 4, -ni is always used for the possessive linker where the possessor is a proper noun or kin term. For common noun possessors, -i is the possessive linker in Type 3, and -na in Type 4.

7.4 Pronominal possession

7.4.1 Type 1: Direct possessive constructions

   | possessed   | possessor |
   | NP         | possessive pronominal suffix |

This NP construction is a direct possessive construction. The possessive pronominal (the possessor) is suffixed to the NP head (possessed) and becomes part of the phonological word. The possessive pronominal suffixes are shown here with those posited for POc according to Pawley, Lichtenberk, and Ross for comparison. The Tamambo forms closely parallel those posited for POc by all authors.
Table 7.1: Possessive pronominal suffixes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tamambo possessive pronominal suffixes</th>
<th>POc as posited by Pawley (1973)</th>
<th>POc as posited by Lichtenberk (1985:113)</th>
<th>POc as posited by Ross (1988:112)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1SG</td>
<td>-ku</td>
<td>-ngku</td>
<td>-gu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG</td>
<td>-m</td>
<td>-mu</td>
<td>-mu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG</td>
<td>-na</td>
<td>-ña-na</td>
<td>-ña</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL.I</td>
<td>-nda</td>
<td>-(n)ta</td>
<td>-da</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL.E</td>
<td>-mam</td>
<td>-mami</td>
<td>-mami -ma, -ma, -mi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL</td>
<td>-mim</td>
<td>-m(i)u</td>
<td>-m[i]u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3PL</td>
<td>-ra</td>
<td>-nda</td>
<td>-dra</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The types of words that can function as a possessed NP with a pronominal possessor in a direct construction encompass a very broad range. They are broadly categorised as follows:

- **Kinship terms**
- **Part-whole relationships**
  - Body parts and things closely associated with the body
  - Things intrinsic to self, such as name, voice
  - Things regarded as integral parts of the house
  - Comparison of size, one of several
  - Quantity, ‘some of...’
  - Order, one of several such as second, fifth, last
- **Member of a group**
- **Items of personal use**
  - Some clothes and body decoration
- **Special places and things**
- **Social knowledge, such as stories, language**
- **Spatial relations**
- **Temporal relations**
- **Causal relations.**

These categories are discussed in turn.

### 7.4.1.1 Kinship terms

When kinship terms are used in possessive constructions in the function of ‘possessed’, they must occur in ‘direct’ possessive constructions and they reflect inalienable possession. To show pronominal possession, kinship terms as ‘possessed’ only occur in a Type 1 construction. Where the possessor is a full NP, a Type 3 direct link construction is used (7.5.1).

(1) **tama-ku**
father-P:1SG
‘my father’

(2) **tawai-nda**
older.brother-P:1PL.IPL.I
‘our big brother’ (M.Sp.)
Address terms for kin, such as *tata* (father’s mother), *voi* (reciprocal term mother–daughter), are listed in a subclass of proper names (6.2.2.1), and do not occur in possessive constructions as ‘possessed’.

Usually, but not always, kinship terms occur in possessive constructions as ‘possessed’. That is, a mother (or sister-in-law or son) are almost always thought of and spoken of as ‘someone’s’ mother (or sister-in-law or son), such as ‘her mother’, John’s sister-in-law’, ‘our son’ and so on. But occasionally, and unusually, kin terms can occur in NPs where no possessive constructions are used, as in the following:

(7) *Vevesai tina na-mbo mai ana skul ana Wenesde.*
    each.of mother 3PL-FUT come PREP school PREP Wednesday
    ‘All mothers are to come to the school on Wednesday.’ (#e.PB)

(8) *Vevesai tama na sahasaha asena.*
    each.of father 3PL work INTEN
    ‘The fathers all worked very hard.’ (#e.PB)

### 7.4.1.2 Part-whole relationships

**Body parts and things closely associated with the body**

Characteristic of many Oceanic languages, names of parts of the body, or things which are regarded as intrinsic to self, most commonly reflect inalienable possession, in that they are, by necessity, ‘closely or inextricably linked to the possessor’ (Lynch 1973:76). Where they occur as the ‘possessed’ head, they occur in direct constructions, either with pronominal possessors as in this type, or with a full NP possessor in a Type 3 construction. The category includes the following:

- Parts of the body, such as head, face, hand, stomach, ankle, hair
- Bodily discharges such as blood, faeces, vomit
- Things closely associated with the body such as head lice.

(9) *lima-ku*  
    hand-P:1SG
    ‘my hand’

(10) *dae-ra*  
    blood-P:3PL
    ‘their blood’

(11) *suhu-na*  
    elbow-P:3SG
    ‘his/her elbow’

(12) *bau-m*  
    knee-P:2SG
    ‘your knee’
Body part nouns like this almost always occur in direct constructions, and it is unusual for them not to show possessor, but there are certain contexts where it is admissible. For example, if the speaker does not know the ‘possessor’ of the blood, one can say:

(15) **Ku soari dae ana oneone.**

1SG see blood PREP sand

‘I saw blood on the sand.’

and in this context, ‘blood’ does not reflect inalienable possession, as it does in (10).

If one uses *lima* ‘hand’ or *karu* ‘foot’ in the same context, without showing a possessor, it has a somewhat different result:

(16) **Ku soari lima/karu ana oneone.**

1SG see hand/foot PREP sand

‘I saw (a) handprint/s/ footprint/s on the sand.’ (#e.PB’95)

**Things regarded as intrinsic to self**

These include voice, name, ideas, shadow/reflection, years of age, which are specific to oneself. They are used in the same way as body part nouns.

(17) *leo-ku*  

voice-P:1SG

‘my voice’

(18) *hisa-m*

name-P:2SG

‘your name’

(19) *sala-ra*

path-P:3PL

‘their ideas’/ ‘way of doing s.t.’

(20) **Tua-i va-uranji tauni-ra aiono**

some-LINK PL-child year-P:3PL six

‘Some of the children are six.’ (lit. some of children their years six) (#e.201)

Some nouns can function in either a Type 1 or Type 2 possessive construction for pronominal possession, depending on the nature of the relationship between possessed and possessor. If they are regarded as ‘part’ of that person, a direct construction is used; if not so closely associated, then an indirect construction is used. For example, nouns such as *bau* ‘knee’ and *hisa* ‘name’ do not have the option of an indirect construction. But with a noun such as *nunu* ‘likeness’, when used to mean a shadow, a reflection or a photo of someone, a direct construction is obligatory; but where it refers to photos or pictures that someone owns, an indirect construction is used, as in:

*nunu-ku*  

‘my photo/reflection/picture/shadow’ (a likeness of me), but

*no-ku nunu*  

‘my photo/s, picture/s that belong to me.’

Another noun, usually intrinsic to self, that has this option is:

*tanume-na*  

‘his/her spirit/soul’ (that’s always part of self)

*bula-na tanume*  

‘his/her spirit’ (that belongs to the person, and can move in and out of the body for good or bad reasons to influence behaviour).
Things regarded as an integral part of the house

All of the following show pronominal possession by direct construction where the items are regarded as having become ‘part’ of the house.

- *bwalata-ku* ‘my floor mat’ (that I use for sleeping) / ‘my sheet’
- *valavala-m* ‘your bed’, used by you
- *matesia-na* ‘his door’ (when it is part of the house)
- *ilunga-ku* ‘my pillow’, used by me

When something like a door or mat is not yet part of the house, as when a man is still making or choosing a door, or a woman is making or buying a mat, then an indirect possessive construction is used:

(21) **no-ku  bwalata**
    CLFR-P:1SG  mat
    ‘my floor mat’ (‘that I am making/have bought’)

(22) **no-na matesia**
    CLFR-P:3SG  door
    ‘his door’ (‘being chosen/made’)

Pronominal possession of other things in the household that tend to be more portable, or used by different people, such as plates, knives, axes, baskets, cooking pots and so on, is not shown by a direct construction, but by an indirect Type 2 construction, as shown in 7.4.2. But the choice of possessive construction used is relatively fluid, and where a speaker wants to emphasise a particular relationship between the possessed and possessor, a direct construction can be used. In one text, for example, *itiho-na* ‘his walking stick’ is used to indicate that, in that particular narrative, the walking stick was essentially ‘part’ of the main character, inseparable from him. Yet ‘walking stick’ as with other similarly derived nouns (*itevi* ‘broom’, *iheli* ‘digging stick’, *isura* ‘umbrella’) otherwise all show possessors by an indirect or indirect link construction—if ownership is to be indicated at all—just like most other household items.

Comparison of size with one of several

As described in 5.3.1.1, adjectival words for ‘big’, ‘small’, ‘tall’, ‘short’ (see 10.3.1) can occur in this kind of direct possessive construction to indicate comparison, and then function just like common nouns. See example (21), Chapter 5.

See also 7.5.3.2 for such adjectival words in a direct link construction.

Quantifying noun: *tua-*

Quantifying noun *tua-* ‘some part of what there is’, cannot stand alone, but otherwise functions like a noun in its ability to use a Type 1 possessive construction, as in

- *tua-nda* ‘some of us’
- *tua-ra* ‘some of them’

in both subject and object functions as in:
Possessive constructions

(23) Tua-ra na-le sahasaha tua-ra na-le sora-sora manihi.
    some-P:3PL 3PL-TA work some-P:3PL 3PL-TA RED-talk LIM
    ‘Some of them were working but some of them were just chatting.’ (#e.766)

(24) Ku-te rongovosai na tua-na.
    1SG-NEG know ART some-P:3SG
    ‘I don’t know some of it.’   (#c.MW51)

A direct link possessive construction as shown in 7.5.3.2 can also be used with tua-.

Ordinal numbers, and evuina ‘end, last one’

Use of an ordinal or ‘last’ indicates a particular one in an order of more than one, that is, one part of a larger group or whole. Ordinal numerals are formed by adding a 3SG possessive pronominal suffix to a cardinal numeral; they are possessed head nouns in a limited Type 1 construction. I use the term ‘limited’ here, because only a 3SG pronominal possessor can be used (textual examples in 6.3.3.5).

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\text{arua-na} & \text{alima-na} & \text{sangavulu-na} \\
\text{two-P:3SG} & \text{five-P:3SG} & \text{ten-P:3SG} \\
\end{array}
\]

‘second’ (lit. its two)  ‘fifth’  ‘tenth’

This pattern of pronominal possession on the ordinal numerals is reflected quite widely in other Oceanic languages, for example as in Fijian languages, (Geraghty 1983:244) and also in Samoan (Mosel and Hovdhaugen 1992:323), using the 3SG possessive pronoun na. The same pattern as shown here is paralleled exactly in Kwara’ae,1 Deck (1934:253), and Saliba ordinals are formed in just the same way (Mosel 1994:20).2

Another use of pronominal possession in this direct construction is much the same as with ordinal numbers. As shown in 6.2.5.2, transitive verb evui ‘end s.t.’ can be nominalised to form evui-na ‘the end’, ‘the last one’, to effect an ordinal. It can then take the 3SG possessive suffix, as in:

    IP:3SG finish-NOM-P:3SG
    ‘That’s his/her last one.’ (c.873)

Additionally, it can appear in a direct linking construction, as in 7.5.3.2.

Member of a group

Direct pronominal possession can be used to refer to one member of a group as in:

(26) Hise-i vona-ra?
    who-LINK kind-P:3PL
    ‘Which one of them?’ (lit. who of their group?) (#e.PB)

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1 An Oceanic language of Malaita, Solomon Islands.
2 In her analysis of this Milne Bay language, Mosel describes this pronominal suffix as a ‘number suffix’.
7.4.1.3 Personal use

Some clothing and body decorations

Pronominal possession of clothing can be shown by a Type 1 construction:

- **ruru-na** ‘his/her clothes’ (whether being worn or otherwise)
- **himbu-ku** ‘my skirt’
- **walisi-m** ‘your custom 3 loin cloth’ (now also, ‘nappy’)

I have noticed that younger speakers almost always use *ruru* ‘clothes’ in an indirect construction, so that *no-na ruru* ‘his/her clothes’ often replaces *ruru-na* above, probably because most clothes now are store-bought. This is similar to the interchangeable use of possessive constructions with personal items such as *aka* ‘boat’ and *vanua* ‘house’ (see the section below ‘Special places and things’).

One would imagine that all body decorations are closely associated with the body, and indeed there are particular items where a direct construction is obligatory to show a pronominal possessor, such as:

- **asituatua-na** ‘his (custom) belt’
- **indongo-ku** ‘my feather headdress’ (custom).

But others show that an indirect construction is preferred, as in:

- **no-ku jomi** ‘my custom necklace’
- **no-r”m bani** ‘your custom armband’
- **no-ra teletele** ‘their custom bracelets’
- **no-na undu-i baheo** ‘his shark’s tooth’ (lit. his tooth of shark) (as a necklace)

I do not know why there is this morphological distinction other than to suggest that it has a semantic base. Perhaps small things added to the body as extra decoration, such as armbands and necklaces, are less ‘attached’ to the body, and are seen as less inherent. Or there could be a correlation here between what could be seen as the obligatory and optional elements of particular custom costumes with inalienable and alienable possession, which is then reflected in direct and indirect possessive constructions.

**Special places and things**

A direct construction can also be used for NPs that are places or personal possessions regarded as part of one’s day-to-day life, and where the close link between possessed and possessor is to be emphasised. For example:

- **asa-nda** traditional place-P:1PL.I
- **aka-na** boat-P:3SG
- **vanua-ku** house-P:1SG

‘our own place’ ‘his boat’ ‘my house’

Sometimes a direct construction is used with words that, in most contexts, do not occur in a possessive construction. This is done in order to show a particularly strong relationship in that context. For example, a narrator in one text uses *wamba-ra* ‘their caves’ in

---

3 All things designated as kastom (custom) refer to things regarded as important elements of traditional life.
Possessive constructions

reference to caves that were homes for people long ago, and closely associated to their particular way of life, although in most contexts, wamba ‘cave’ would not merit any kind of possessive construction.

One’s ‘traditional place’ asa-, is only ever expressed in a direct construction, representing the strongly-felt affiliation on Malo to one’s father’s land. It was explained to me as ‘the place where you think of as home’. In the following example from a hymn, asa- is used as a reference to heaven.

(27) Hinda ka-mbo  ovi asa-na  aulu ...
   IP:1PL.I. 1PL-FUT live traditional.place-P:3SG up.direction
   ‘We shall live in His place on high …’ (Wh:91)

However, aka ‘boat’ and vanua ‘house’ can also be used in indirect constructions where the relationship is not perceived to be as strong. It seems too that younger speakers use indirect constructions interchangeably with these two words, so that often, the direct construction vanua-na will be supplanted by the indirect construction nona vanua ‘his house’. Pertinent to this use of indirect constructions, is Geraghty’s observation (quoted in Lynch 1993:10) that ‘there is a drift or tendency in Oceanic languages away from direct suffixed possession’. So it would appear that this usage by young Tamambo speakers may be part of a more widespread pattern. Perhaps this perceived shift to indirect constructions reflects a more ‘modern’ idea of ownership on Malo, where things such as houses and boats are bought and sold, rather than seen as something fashioned by one’s own hand and inherent to oneself. Certainly this appears not to apply to borrowings for kin terms, so that one hears younger speakers using papa and mama for ‘father’ and ‘mother’ respectively, but using them within the grammatical rules of Tamambo direct possessive constructions (see 6.6.1.2).

Most tools show possessor by an indirect construction, but others can still be directly possessed, for example:

(28) Na re  ‘O vahatauhi no-m  sari no-m  simba,
   3PL say 2SG prepare CLFR:2SG spear CLFR-P:2SG knife
   baka-m,  ivine-m,  ka  vano ...
   bow-P:2SG arrow-P:2SG 3SG go
   ‘They said, “Get your spear and knife ready, your bow, arrow, and let’s go” …’ (Nt-T20:128)

Initially it seems surprising that ‘spear’ and ‘knife’ as against ‘bow’ and ‘arrow’ appear in different kinds of possessive constructions, although a bow and arrow are more finely adjusted for one’s own personal use, and perhaps regarded as more a ‘part’ of the possessor. But current usage may offer some clue. Bows and arrows are still personally made when one needs them for hunting birds or flying fox. But spears, on the other hand, would now only be used for custom ceremonies and probably borrowed for the occasion. And bushknives nowadays are always bought, and although intrinsic to almost every facet of island life from an early age, are an ‘owned’, paid-for item.

Social knowledge

Similarly to things that can almost be regarded as a part of oneself, such as one’s name or reflection, the social knowledge of stories and one’s own language is often referred to in
a direct construction. The type of construction used depends on the perceived closeness of
the relationship. Where the relationship is regarded as inalienable, then a direct
construction is used; if not, an indirect construction is used.

stori-ku ‘my story’ (about me)
no-ku stori ‘my story’ (that I told)
sora-e-na ‘his language’/ ‘the story about him’
no-na sora-e ‘his words’/ ‘his story’ (spoken by him)

7.4.1.4 Spatial and temporal relations

Spatial terms for relational nouns such as ‘underneath’, ‘inside’, ‘front part’, etc., and
also location nouns such as ‘coast direction’, ‘up direction’, can take a 3SG possessive
pronominal suffix to function in a limited Type 1 construction. This is quite similar to the
pattern as shown with ordinal numbers and evuina ‘end’ in 7.4.1.2.

(29) ...ku sahe ku-le ate ana matavuresi-na ...
   1SG go.up 1SG-TA sit PREP very.top-P:3SG
   ‘...I went up and was sitting in the very top of it...’ (the tree) ... (Nk-T73:10)

(30) ...mo sora-e matan a vano alolo-na...
   ...3SG talk-O:3SG SUB 3SG go inside-P:3SG
   ‘...he talked to her in order that she would go inside’ (lit. ‘... to its inside’)
   (Nt-T72:7)

Location nouns can be suffixed, as in the previous example, to function as locative
arguments, but the suffixation of the 3SG possessive pronominal can also derive nouns that
then take on different meanings. So location nouns such as aulu ‘up direction’, alau ‘coast
direction’, atano ‘on/to ground’ plus 3SG pronominal possessor, can also mean ‘the one in
the location’, as follows:

aulu-na ‘the one on top’
alau-na ‘the one down at the coast’
atano-na ‘the one on the ground’

This usage does not imply that the referent belongs there all the time, but is in that
location at the time of discourse.

Similarly to spatial terms and ordinal numbers, some temporal terms such as ‘day’,
‘night’, ‘morning’, can take a 3SG possessive suffix in the same kind of limited Type 1
construction, as first mentioned in 4.5.1.2.

bongi-na dondo-na ulurani-na
   day-P:3SG night-P:3SG morning-P:3SG
   ‘that day’ ‘that night’ ‘that morning’

The use of the 3SG pronominal suffix narrows down and emphasises a reference time
already introduced in the discourse. For example, a story might start:

Ana bongi atea, (‘One day’) X happened and then ... uluranina (‘that morning’)… etc.
7.4.1.5 Causal relations with mata

This is a look-alike possessive construction that appears to have become almost completely grammaticalised into a prepositional use. It has already been mentioned in 4.8.2 and is discussed further in 8.2.5. The original meaning of the ‘possessed’ NP is now lost, and is translated as ‘because of’, ‘for’, since its structure suggests that mata equates to the ‘reason for’ or the ‘cause of’ something. It functions freely with all pronominal possessors, and also in direct linking constructions with NP possessor. But with pronominal possessors it functions as an argument of the predicate as in:

(31) Truk mo mai mata-ra/ mata-nda/ mata-m.
    truck 3SG come PREP-P:3PL/ PREP-P:1PL.I/ PREP-P:2SG
    ‘The truck came for them/us/you.’ (#e.1087)

It provides a reason for the action of the predicate, that is ‘they’ or ‘we’ or ‘you’ were the reason that the truck came. Similarly in the next example, the possessed NP (‘because of us’) is the reason for the action of the predicate.

(32) Hisei mo mate mata-nda, Iesu no-nda Moli.
    who 3SG dead PREP-P:1PL.I Jesus CLFR-P:1PL.chief
    ‘Who died for us, Jesus our Lord.’ (Wh:32)

7.4.2 Type 2: Indirect possessive constructions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>possessor</th>
<th>classifier + possessive pronominal suffix</th>
<th>possessed</th>
<th>NP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

In this type of possessive construction, the pronominal possessor is suffixed to one of the four classifiers described below. In this description, constructions of this type are labelled ‘indirect’.

Classifiers are only used in possessive constructions where actual ownership is indicated. The possessed can be said to belong to the possessor, and the classifier indicates the kind of relationship between them. In all cases, this type of construction reflects the semantics of alienable possession in that the possessor has some measure of choice or control over the ownership.

7.4.3 Classifiers

Tamambo has four classifiers that occur in indirect constructions (as listed in 4.9.3.1):

- no- personal property, general term
- ha- edible
- ma- drinkable, including most things chewed or sucked
- bula- living things which one owns, and for one’s own use, typically growing plants, animals.

The first three clearly reflect their origins from POc in which ‘there is broad agreement among scholars that three POc classifiers can be reconstructed’ (Lynch et al. 2002:77), posited as *ka- ‘food’, *m(”)a- ‘drink’ and *na- ‘general’.
The origins of bula as a classifier are less clear than the first three. It is reflected in Mota’s pulai ‘a choice possession’ (Codrington 1885:272), and as bila ‘valued possession’ in Raga in north Pentecost (Walsh 1966). Capell (1943:229) notes that ‘it is found also in the northern New Hebrides e.g. in Marina pila-, Tangoa bula-, Vao ta-valu-’ and also mentions that it ‘reappears in Nada … as bula, referring to chattels and animal property’. In the Lolovoli dialect of North-east Ambae, it appears also as bula for ‘natural entities’ (Hyslop 2001:178). There is also a word bula, meaning ‘live, healthy’, in a list of ‘lexical items exclusive to eastern Fijian’ (as compared to Western dialects) (Geraghty 1983:313), and Pawley (1973:165) has previously commented that the ‘Bauan verb “be alive” may be cognate’ with the forms as suggested by Capell. Further remarks on bula are made in 7.4.3.4.

All classifiers denote the kind of relationship in which the possessed exists with regard to the possessor. Classifiers are only used in possessive constructions where actual ownership is implied.

Although some nouns, as possessed, can only ever occur with a particular kind of classifier (for instance, simba ‘knife’, can never be used with the classifiers for edible, drinkable or living things), there is considerable overlap. This term ‘overlap’ is used by Lynch (1973) to describe the predilection of Oceanic languages to use NPs in more than one kind of possessive construction. Thus many possessed nouns can occur with various classifiers depending on the relationship between possessed and possessor at the time of use in discourse. Examples of overlap are given in 7.4.4.

Additionally, there is an incipient classifier koru, which appears to be in the process of becoming grammaticalised into possessive constructions, and which is used with the names of NP possessors who have recently died (see 7.6.2).

### 7.4.3.1 Classifier no-

This classifier is used to show ownership of (usually) inanimate items, of states and endeavours. It covers a broad range and includes possession where the possessor is, using a term of Pawley and Sayaba (1990:166),

1) **‘owner, user or custodial possessor’ of**

- trucks, boats, bicycles and canoes
- places such as one’s garden, house
- tools, such as knives, carrying and digging sticks, garden baskets;
- household items such as cooking utensils, cutlery and dishes, chairs/stools;
- some clothing, esp. Western clothing;
- personal items such as books, pictures, cigarettes, house decorations, some body decorations.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{(33) } & \text{no-m } \text{ ihele} & \text{(34) } & \text{no-ra } \text{ aka } \text{sua-sua} \\
\text{CLFR-P:2SG } & \text{dig.stick} & \text{CLFR-P:3PL } & \text{boat } \text{ RED~paddle} \\
\text{‘your digging stick’} & & \text{‘their canoes’} &
\end{align*}
\]

---

4 A language of Banks-Torres, northern Vanuatu.
5 Nada is a language of Milne Bay, PNG.
Possessive constructions

All the above imply some kind of active possession in that the possessor has a measure of choice or control over the ownership.

On the other hand, there are some things that can be more passively owned, in that the possessor has less personal control over the possessed. In this case, the possessor is a:

2) **passive owner or custodial possessor of**

   traditional custom ways of doing things, e.g. *sumbwe* system of chiefs, the rituals of birth, marriage and death, dances, songs, legends, custom stories, language.

Such things, especially language and some customs, can often be inherently possessed by a community rather than an individual. In such cases a direct construction would be used.

The *-no* classifier can also be used where the possessor is

3) **‘an experiencer’ of a deverbal noun expressing an inward emotion or attitude, or the external expression of emotion or attitude, such as**

   crying, laughter, kindness, happiness, laziness, patience.

The possessor of such nouns presumably still exerts a measure of control over the possessed, reflecting alienable possession. (See also 7.6.1 for benefactive uses with this classifier.)

7.4.3.2 **Classifier ha-**

This classifier is used where the possessor ‘owns’ things that are regarded as edible. More recently introduced species of fruit (orange, mango, pineapple) all take *ha-*,
regardless of the fact that one can chew and suck the juice of an orange in much the same way as sugarcane, which was introduced much earlier,\(^6\) and which takes ma-.

\[(43)\] 
\[ha-ku\] taro  
CLFR-P:1SG ‘my taro’ (to eat)

\[(44)\] 
\[ha-na\] banana/s  
CLFR-P:3SG ‘his/her banana/s’ (to eat)

\[(45)\] 
\[ha-ra\] orange  
CLFR-P:3PL ‘their oranges’ (to eat)

\[(46)\] 
\[ha-m\] coconut  
CLFR-P:2SG ‘your coconut/s’ (to eat)

**7.4.3.3 Classifier ma-**

Classifier ma- is used to show ownership of things that are regarded as drinkable.

\[(47)\] 
\[ma-ku\] water  
CLFR-P:1SG ‘my water’ (to drink)

\[(48)\] 
\[ma-m\] beer  
CLFR-P:2SG ‘your beer’

\[(49)\] 
\[ma-ku\] sugarcane  
CLFR-P:1SG ‘my sugarcane’ (to suck)

\[(50)\] 
\[ma-na\] coconut  
CLFR-P:3SG ‘his/her coconut’ (to drink)

**7.4.3.4 Classifier bula-**

This classifier is prototypically used for all live plants and animals that one owns, with the exception of pigs, which always take no-. Such things owned must also be primarily for one’s own use.

\[(51)\] 
\[bula-ku\] chicken  
CLFR-P:1SG ‘my chicken/s’

\[(52)\] 
\[bula-na\] manioc  
CLFR-P:3SG ‘his manioc’ (growing)

\[(53)\] 
\[bula-m\] dog  
CLFR-P:2SG ‘your dog’

\[(54)\] 
\[bula-ra\] pawpaw  
CLFR-P:3PL ‘their pawpaw’ (growing)

This classifier is also used for radios, as in bula-ku redio ‘my radio’, bula-m kitar ‘your guitar’. Initially it seemed to me that this might be because these were personal things that could be made to ‘talk’ or ‘sing’, and could be regarded perhaps as ‘live’. But then as technology became more accessible with more people with more vatu to spend, cassette players, cameras, CDs, and DVDs have appeared\(^7\), all of which must take the no- classifier, as in no-na kaset ‘his cassette player’, DVD no-ni Pakoa ‘Pakoa’s DVD/s’, etc. So it seems that these more recent kinds of bought possessions are taking the default option of the no-classifier.

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\(^6\) Sugar cane was apparently well established in western Melanesia by about 2500 to 3000 years ago, along with bamboo, taro, bananas, yams, since those plants were then carried eastwards in ‘double canoes’ to Tonga, Samoa and later the Marquesas, Hawaii and Easter Island, as described in Horridge (1995:135).

\(^7\) With no electricity supply on the island, however, such items requiring electrical power are run on batteries, or are only used when over on the ‘big’ island of Santo.
However, the *bula* classifier is used with ‘tattoo’, as in *bula-na tatu* ‘his tattoo’. This seems at first surprising, but if we look to semantics for an explanation here, the ‘owner’ has some choice or control over the ownership, and so an indirect construction that indicates alienable possession must be used (i.e. with classifier). Since a tattoo is neither edible, drinkable or inanimate in a strict sense, then *bula-*, which is used for living things, is the only viable, and remaining, classifier. Additionally, some speakers suggest that some tattoos are like ‘flowers’ (which would take *bula-*).

In a discussion of classifier *bula-*, Clark suggests (1985:211) that the ‘prototypical example’ is a pig. This is most definitely not borne out on Malo. Older speakers, especially men approximately 35+, are adamant in not accepting *bula-* with the various words for pig (*heletu* ‘female or young pig’; *boe* ‘male tusked pig’, *rawe* ‘intersex pig’) but use classifier *no-* since they say that ‘pigs are money’. Pigs are something to be traded, or given away in ceremony or for brideprice, and never something for their own ‘at home’ use, as are chickens and vegetables. On the other hand, almost all younger speakers that I heard, use *bula-* with the various words for the various kinds of pigs (unless corrected by their exasperated elders), presumably generalising from the possessive constructions used to talk about all other village animals.

### 7.4.4 Overlap

It can be seen that some nouns only sometimes function as the possessed head in a possessive construction. For example, when *tauni* means years of age, a direct construction is used, as in *tauni-ku* ‘my years’, but other times, *tauni* as ‘year’ as in *tauni a mai* ‘next year’ (lit. year to come) does not use a possessive construction. As discussed in 7.4.1.3, some ‘possessed’ nouns can move from indirect to direct possessive constructions depending on how integral they are to the possessor.

Some ‘possessed’ nouns can take different classifiers within an indirect construction. These cases of ‘overlap’ occur, as Lynch says (1973:76), because ‘a different relationship between possessor and possessed, or a different attitude of possessor towards possessed, is implied’.

- *no-m reu* ‘your water’ (to wash)
- *ma-m reu* ‘your water’ (to drink)
- *bula-ku dam* ‘my yam/s’ (growing)
- *ha-ku dam* ‘my yam/s’ (to eat)
- *no-na boe* ‘his pig’ (as property)
- *ha-na boe* ‘his pig’ (to eat, as at a feast)

### 7.4.5 Type 2 constructions with ellipsis of the ‘possessed’

All classifiers with pronominal possessor can stand alone as the NP in discourse, and are commonly used, for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(55)</th>
<th>Ha-m!</th>
<th>‘It’s yours to eat/ it’s for you’ (as food is offered)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(56)</td>
<td>Ma-m!</td>
<td>‘It’s yours to drink/ it’s for you’ (as drink is offered)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(57)</td>
<td>Nira ha-na vai-mwera.</td>
<td>IP:3PL CLFR-LINK PL-male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘It’s for the boys to eat.’ / ‘It’s the boys’ food.’ (#e. 1089c)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(58) Ka-le hani-a hinda arua, ne ha-m  
1PL-TA eat-O:3SG IP:1PL.I two but CLFR-P:2SG  
o-le hani-a ku rongo mo doro ana undu-m.  
2SG-TA eat-O:3SG 1SG hear 3SG snap PREP tooth-P:2SG  
‘We were eating it we two, but what you were eating I heard it snap in your teeth!’” (Nt-T40:70)

(59) No-na hisei?  
CLFR-P:3SG who  
‘Who does it belong to?’ (with ref. to inanimate possessions such as a truck, boat, tools, pots, some clothes, etc.).

(60) Bula-na hisei?  
CLFR-P:3SG who  
‘Who does it belong to?’ (with ref. to chicken, bullock, vegetables etc.)

Although classifiers in the above examples function as heads of NPs, it would not be ungrammatical to include the ellipsed noun in any of the examples. For example, the previous example could equally be expressed as:

(61) Buluk bula-na hisei?  
cow CLFR-LINK who  
‘Who does the cow belong to?’(#e.1171)

7.5 Possessive constructions with NP possessors
7.5.1 Type 3: Direct link constructions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>possessed</th>
<th>possessor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NP</td>
<td>ni/i</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The so-called ‘genitive’ system of POc (as discussed by Pawley, 1972, 1973, Reid 1983, Hooper 1985) suggest reflexes of i/qi, and a Proto Austronesian *ni ‘personal actor/owner’ is also widely attested (Pawley and Reid 1980:115, 125).

Tamambo uses either i or ni~n as the ‘possessive linker’ between two NPs in this kind of possessive construction. These ‘possessive linkers’ ni and i suffix directly onto the possessed NP, but the choice of which of the two linkers is used depends on the possessor. As Hooper (1985:147) has observed for four Oceanic languages using a similar construction, ‘it is the genitive noun which selects i, not the head noun or the type of possession’. She further notes that i is frequently used in Oceanic languages in ‘noun-genitive-noun phrases’ where there are ‘personal noun possessors’ referring to ‘… proper nouns and to words like chief and father when used to refer to an individual’ (p.144). For example, Lifu (Loyalty Islands), Tigak and Tolai (New Ireland), and Standard Fijian all use i for proper names or kin terms.

---

8 Often abbreviated to n.
By contrast, Tamambo, and at least two other closely languages, Tasiriki (Ray 1926) and Araki (François 2002:96) use *ni* where the possessor is a proper name or kin term; Tasiriki also uses *i* with a common noun possessor. This is just the opposite to Standard Fijian, which uses *i* where Malo people use *ni~n*, and *ni* where Malo people would use *i*.

### 7.5.2 Possessed -ni possessor

In this type of construction, *ni* links a specifically named possessor with the same set of common nouns that can occur as possessed NPs in direct possessive constructions, such as body parts.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(62) leo- <em>ni</em></td>
<td><em>vo-natu-ku</em></td>
<td>(63) <em>naho-n’</em> voii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voice-LINK</td>
<td>FEM-child-P:1SG</td>
<td>face-LINK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘my daughter’s voice’</td>
<td>‘mum’s face’</td>
<td></td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(64) <em>domi-ni</em></td>
<td>Boodgy</td>
<td>(65) <em>na</em> dae-<em>n’</em> tina-na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neck-LINK</td>
<td>B.</td>
<td>ART blood-LINK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Boodgy’s neck’</td>
<td>(name of dog)</td>
<td>‘her mother’s blood’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The possessor must be named, either by a proper noun or kinship term, and can be animate (people or pets) or inanimate (such as places). It is this *naming* of NP possessors that determines the use of the *ni~n* linker.

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<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(66) <em>sumbwe-ni</em></td>
<td>Buelivurombu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chief-LINK</td>
<td>B.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘a Buelivurombu’s chief’ (Nk-T12:3)</td>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(67) <em>tandono-ni</em> marasa-<em>ku</em></td>
<td>Avunavae</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>legend-LINK</td>
<td>traditional.place-P:1SG</td>
<td>A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘a legend of my own place, Avunavae’ (Nt-T20:134)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(68) …<em>no</em> soari na vuti-<em>n</em></td>
<td>Ambae.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL see</td>
<td>ART hill-LINK</td>
<td>Ambae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘…you see the hills of Ambae (island).’ (Nk-T12:32)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Nouns such as *sumbwe* ‘chief’, *tandono* ‘legend’, *vuti* ‘hill/s’, as in the last three examples, do not usually occur as ‘possessed’, but in these contexts are intrinsic to the ‘possessor’. They are seen as an inherent part of the island or locality, not owned by it. If they were perceived as ‘owned’, in the sense of custodial possession, then such possessed nouns would take a classifier. Such a construction also works recursively, as in the following:

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(69) <em>Votambaluhi-ni</em> tawai-<em>n</em></td>
<td>John mo mai.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wife-LINK</td>
<td>uncle-LINK</td>
<td>John 3SG come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘John’s uncle’s wife came.’ (#e.PB)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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9 A place on Malo.
Although almost all examples show a proper noun or kin term as possessor, it is possible to use *mwende* ‘particular one/s’ as the possessor. I suggest that this occurs because *mwende* refers back to a particular nominal referent that has already been named in the discourse. For example, in the following, the possessor had already been identified in the narrative (as the first of ten *Tanume Ambe*, ‘the devil/s of killed people’):

(70)  

\[
\text{atea a turu ana bwili-ni mwende atea, aiso-ro...}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{one} & \quad \text{3SG stand PREP shoulder-LINK particular.one one} \\
\text{‘one would stand on the shoulders of that particular one, so then …’} & \quad \text{(Nt-T77.26)}
\end{align*}
\]

In the next example, where *mwende* is also used, the names of two wayward daughters (*Vomangisivono* and *Vomborovaoova*), who are the possessors of the boat, have already been established in the story:

(71)  

\[
\text{Mo soro na aka-n’ mwende arua...}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{3SG} & \quad \text{spit.out ART boat-LINK particular.one two} \\
\text{‘He spat out the boat of those two …’} & \quad \text{(Nt-T20:111)}
\end{align*}
\]

### 7.5.3 Possessed -i possessor

In this construction the ‘possessed’ noun is linked with -i to the common noun possessor.

Because this construction is so productive, it can at first seem as if it is used for generic or non-specific possessors only, and is an ‘associative’ relationship, forming many lexical compounds. But this is only part of its function. The first important criterion is that the possessor must be a common noun. It can be specific or non-specific, animate or inanimate, but never ‘named’ in the sense of a proper noun or kin term. The second criterion is that the possessed is not perceived as owned by the possessor, that is, the possessive construction does not intimate ownership. Examples follow:

#### 7.5.3.1 Human relationships

(72)  

\[
\text{ne na-vo-natu-i tamalohi rindi na-le turu...}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{but PL-FEM-child-LINK man REF 3PL-TA stand} \\
\text{‘but the man’s daughters were there …’} & \quad \text{(Nt-T20:19)}
\end{align*}
\]

(73)  

\[
\text{Tamanatu-i vavine rindi mo biri na no-na ‘akes’...}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{husband-LINK woman REF 3SG sharpen ART CLFR-P:3SG axe} \\
\text{‘The woman’s husband sharpened his axe …’} & \quad \text{(Nt-T74:33)}
\end{align*}
\]

While both possessors (in the examples above) are human, and definite as shown by *rindi*, they are not kin terms. So even though the possessed are kin terms, the possessors as the common nouns of ‘man’ and ‘woman’ necessitate the use of -i.

---

10 This is in reference to a devil who had previously sucked in the sea and, with it, the boat of the two women he was chasing.
7.5.3.2 Part-whole relationships

**Body parts and some things intrinsic to self**

(74) karu-i mwera (75) karu-i heletu
   leg-LINK boy          leg-LINK pig
   ‘boy’s leg’ (generic) ‘pig’s leg’ (generic)

(76) karu-i mwera rindi
   leg-LINK boy   REF
   ‘the boy’s leg’ (a particular boy)

(77) Hisa-i manji niae hisei?
    name-LINK animal there who
   ‘What’s the name of that animal just there?’

**Other parts of things**

(78) vira-i vuhai (79) sarasara-i alo
    fruit-LINK tree      ray-LINK sun
    ‘fruit of the tree’  ‘the sun’s rays’

(80) matesia-i wamba mo malanga...
    door-LINK cave 3SG slide.open
    ‘the door of the cave slid open …’ (Nt-T20:38)

(81) Ku tai te bwere-i ravae atea...
    1SG cut INDEF top.shoot-LINK vae.leaf one
    ‘I cut some top shoots of a vae bush …’ (E-T75:6)

**Containment**

(82) ne hete-i sava niala?
    but basket-LINK what there
    ‘but what’s in the basket over there?’ (lit. but the basket-of-what over there?)
    (Nk-T73:22)

(83) tamanatu-na mo mai mo turu ana buru-i
    husband-P:3SG 3SG come 3SG stand PREP hole.in.ground-LINK
    reu niani...
    water this
    ‘her husband came and stood at this well …’ (Nt-T72:28)

**Comparison of size**

(84) Nia mo baravu-i vorae.
    IP:3SG 3SG tall-LINK sibling/s
    ‘He is the tallest of the brothers.’ (#e.740a)

For discussion on comparison of size see 5.3.1.1, and examples (21), (22) in that section.
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Part of a quantity

(85) Kamam ka-ta welu na tua-i welu-a.
   IP:1PL.E. 1PL-REP dance ART some-LINK dance-NOM
   ‘We danced some of the dances again.’ (Nk-T73:8)

(86) O lai na tua-i biskiti a mai!
   2SG take ART some-LINK biscuit 3SG come
   ‘Bring over some of the biscuits!’ (#c.295)

Order

See also 6.3.3.5.

(87) Mo soari na arua-i humbwewari...
   3SG see ART two-LINK ‘strongbak/s’
   ‘She saw the second ‘strongbak’ (kind of shell fish) …’ (lit. she saw the two of
   strongbaks) (Nt-T74:13)

(88) vo-tasi-na mo lai na evui-na-i ra-mbora
   FEM-younger.sibling-P:3SG 3SG take ART end-NOM-P:3SG leaf.bora
   rindi...
   REF
   ‘her younger sister took the last one of those bora leaves …’ (Nt-T20:120)

7.5.3.3 Associative relationships

(89) ne niani sala-i turu horo-a...
   but this way-LINK stand block-NOM
   ‘but this is the way of trapping …’11  (E-T24:2)

(90) Tamalohi atea nia sumbwe-i welu-a rindi.
   man one IP:3SG chief-LINK dance-NOM REF
   ‘A man was the chief of the dance.’ (Nk-T73:3)

7.5.3.4 Spatial relationships

(91) ana ruhuruhi-i vu-tavoa
   PREP underside-LINK TREE-tavoa
   ‘underneath the tavoa tree’ (lit. at the underside of the tavoa tree)

(92) na-le turu ana bangona-i rombu.
   3PL-TA stand PREP front.part-LINK traditional.house
   ‘they were standing at the front part of the house.’ (Nt-T20:16)

7.5.3.5 Lexicalised phrases

Such possessive constructions are extremely productive and also lend themselves to
lexicalisation. Lexicalised examples are given in 5.5.3.2.

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11 Turu horo is a serial verb construction literally meaning to ‘stand +block’. It is nominalised here to mean
‘trap’.
Possessive constructions

7.5.4 Type 4: Indirect link constructions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>possessed</th>
<th>classifier + possessive linker</th>
<th>possessor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NP</td>
<td>classifier + possessive linker</td>
<td>NP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This construction is used where actual ‘ownership’ is perceived on the part of the possessor, and they have some measure of control over the ownership. Semantically it is similar to the Type 2 indirect construction. In the same way, the possessor can be a proper noun (or kin term) or a common noun that can indicate the kinds of possession as described in 7.4.3.1 to 7.4.3.4. The possessed head NP is followed by the classifier suffixed with -ni/-na.

7.5.5 Possessed CLFR-ni possessor

Where the possessor is a kinship term or a proper name, the -ni linker is used. This is the same linker as described in 7.5.2, the only difference here being that -ni suffixes to a classifier. Any of the four classifiers can be used in this indirect link construction, with the same kind of semantics attaching to each as described in 7.4.3.1 to 7.4.3.4.

7.5.5.1 With classifier no-

**Kin term possessor:**

(94) Mo te rongo na tang~tangi-a no-ni tamanatu-na
3SG NEG hear ART RED~cry-NOM CLFR-LINK husband-P:3SG
‘She didn’t hear her husband’s wailing.’ (Nt-T72:13)

**Named person possessor:**

(95) aka-sua~sua no-ni Vuro
boat-RED~paddle CLFR-LINK Vuro
‘Vuro’s canoe’ (N.ch-T4:4)

(96) hina boi~mboi-a no-ni God ...
PREP RED~love-NOM CLFR-LINK God
‘with the love of God …’ (Wh:VV)

**Named place possessor:**

(97) skul no-ni Avunatari (98) harba no-ni Vila
school CLFR-LINK Avunatari harbour CLFR-LINK Vila
‘Avunatari’s School’ ‘Vila’s harbour’

In the possessive constructions used in the previous two examples, it appears that the school is regarded as something that has been constructed and belongs to the community at Avunatari, and similarly the commercial harbour at Vila is seen as a place that has been
developed, and that belongs to the town. By comparison, the named place in 7.5.2 (example 68) uses a direct construction, presumably because the ‘possessed’ (the hills) are perceived as something intrinsic to the place.

There is no limitation on the possessor being inanimate when it is named—that is, a proper name, whether of a person or a place, has equal ‘ranking’ as to the type of possessive linker used.

### 7.5.5.2 With classifier ha-

(99) O-te lai-a! Niala tuluk ha-ni Marie!
    2SG -NEG take-O:3SG that tuluk CLFR-LINK M.
    ‘Don’t take it! It’s Marie’s tuluk!’ (to eat)12

### 7.5.5.3 With classifier ma-

(100) Nia ti ma-ni Vomoli.
    IP:3SG tea CLFR-LINK V.
    ‘It’s Vomoli’s tea.’

### 7.5.5.4 With classifier bula-

**Kin term possessor:**

(101) buluk bula-ni natu-ku
    cow CLFR-LINK child-P:1SG
    ‘my son’s cows’ /‘the cows belonging to my son’

**Named person possessor:**

(102) lo-vu-niu bula-ni Fred
    PL-tree-coconut CLFR-LINK Fred
    ‘Fred’s coconut trees’ /‘The coconut trees belonging to Fred’

### 7.5.6 Possessed CLFR -na possessor

Where the possessor is a common noun, -na suffixes to the classifier. It thus equates in function to the -i linker in a direct link construction. There is no distinction made as to plurality with the possessor (as the next two examples show), nor is there an animacy or human/non-human distinction.

**Singular human possessor**

(103) Ku rongo na wete no-na vavine atea.
    1SG hear ART song CLFR-LINK woman one
    ‘I heard a woman’s singing.’ (#e.219b)

**Plural human possessor**

(104) Ku rongo na wete no-na va-uranji.
    1SG hear ART song CLFR-LINK PL-child
    ‘I heard the children’s singing.’(#e.219a)

12 Tuluk is a kind of laplap (grated root vegetables baked with coconut milk) with cooked meat added.
Non-human possessor

(105) varilosua no-na heletu varilosua no-na tari manji…
    fighting CLFR-LINK pig fighting CLFR-LINK many animal
    ‘the fighting of the pigs, and the fighting of lots of animals …’(Nk-T22:28)

The next two examples show the distinction between CLFR with -ni and the CLFR with -na in the linking constructions, where the possessed NP is the same but there is a difference between named possessors and common noun possessors.

(106) Niaro, sala-i manji-a no-ni Ian mai Stewart.
    EMPH path-LINK fish-NOM CLFR-LINK Ian COM Stewart
    ‘So that’s it, Ian’s and Stewart’s way of fishing.’ (#e.PB)

(107) Niaro, sala-i manji-a no-na mara Tamambo tuai.
    EMPH path-LINK fish-NOM CLFR-LINK man Malo long.ago
    ‘So that’s it, the way of fishing of the Malo men of olden times.’ (E-T43:37)

7.6 Some residual issues

7.6.1 Benefactive uses in possessive constructions

7.6.1.1 Ambiguity of meaning

In both types of Indirect Possessive constructions, with either a pronominal or NP possessor, the construction can have a benefactive interpretation, as well as that of ‘ownership’. For example, in these next two constructions with NP possessor, two interpretations are possible:

(108) Mo loli na vanua haramba atea no-ni votambaluhi-na.
    3SG make ART house new one CLFR-LINK wife-P:3SG
    ‘He made a new house for his wife.’/ ‘He made his wife’s new house.’ (#e.105)

(109) Mo voli na buk atea no-ni John.
    3SG buy ART book one CLFR-LINK John
    ‘S/he bought a book for John.’/ ‘S/he bought a book of John’s.’(#e.747)

Compare both interpretations with a pronominal possessor:

(110) Vavine vorivori mo lai na no-ku tete-i vuhai lulu.
    girl little 3SG take ART CLFR-P:1SG flower-LINK tree

    ‘The little girl picked /the white flower for me/ my white flower.’(#e.PB)

And with a NP possessor:
Chapter 7

(111) *Vavine vorivori mo lai na tete-i vuhai lulu*  
girl little 3SG take ART flower-LINK tree white  

*no-ni tina-na.*  
CLFR-LINK mother-P:3SG  
‘The little girl picked /the white flower for her mother’/her mother’s white flower.’  
(#e.103)

7.6.1.2 More benefactive interpretations with classifiers

As mentioned in 7.4.5, a classifier can stand alone with a possessive pronominal to indicate that something is ‘for’ someone:

(112) *Ha-ra!* ‘It’s for them.’ (to eat)

(113) *Ma-ku!* ‘It’s mine’/It’s for me.’ (to drink)

(114) *No-mim* ‘It’s for you all.’ (as when offering a present to several people)

Using ‘general’ classifier *no-* with a pronominal possessor in a non-verbal clause, the following meaning results:

(115) *Nia no-ku sahasaha-e.*  
IP:3SG CLFR-P:1SG work-NOM  
‘It’s my work/job.’

But by comparison, where the classifier + pronominal possessor follow an intransitive verb phrase, then only a benefactive interpretation is possible, as in:

(116) *Mo sahasaha no-ku.*  
3SG work CLFR-P:1SG  
‘He worked for me.’(i.e. my work but he did it as a favour/ for pay/ to be kind)

Other similar benefactive examples with classifier *no-:

(117) *Mo oso-oso no-ku.*  
3SG feed.pigs CLFR-P:1SG  
‘He fed the pigs for me.’(i.e. my pigs but he did it as a favour/ to help) (#e.JB)

The following two examples were from a grandfather to his small grand daughter:

(118) *Lani, o welu no-nda!*  
L. 2SG dance CLFR-P:1PL.I  
‘Lani, dance for us!’ (because we want you to) (#c.VV’01a)

and with himself as the NP possessor:

Note that *lulu* ‘white’ modifies *tetei vuhai* indicating, in this case, a white flower growing on the tree. Grammatically the construction is ambiguous between a white flower and a flower from the white tree, but pragmatically, trees are given specific names on the island, and are not referred to by colours.
(119) Lani, o welu no-ni bumbu!
L. 2SG dance CLFR-LINK maternal.grandfather
‘Lani, dance for grandpa!’ (#e.VV’01 b)

7.6.1.3 Benefactives without classifiers
By contrast, if someone had a commitment to perform in, say, a custom dance but was unable to go for some reason, they would not say to a friend:

(120) O welu no-ku.
2SG dance CLFR-P:1SG
‘Dance for me’.

Although it is grammatically acceptable, it would mean that they were asking their friend to perform just for them, which would be culturally inappropriate to other than a small child, as in (118). Instead they could use the following:

(121) O vano o welu lavwe-ku.
2SG go 2SG dance affect-P:1SG
‘You go and dance for me.’ (that is, to perform on my behalf) (#e.JB7)

Similarly, lavwe can be used with other verbs to give this idea of doing something on behalf of another.

(122) Mo oso~oso lavwe-ku
3SG RED~feed.pig affect-P:1SG
‘He fed the pigs for me.’ (that is, my pigs and my job, but he did it on my behalf) (#e.JB15)

(123) Anies mo-le biribiri lavwe-na.
A 3SG-TA grate affect-P:3SG
‘Anies is doing the grating for him’. (it’s his job but Anies is doing it on his behalf.) (#e.JB14)

However, the use of classifier no- is rejected by speakers in examples with transitive verbs where it follows the O.

(124) *Na welu na sawana no-nda.
3PL dance ART sawana CLFR-P:1PL.I
‘They danced the “sawana” dance for us’. (#e.JB10)

Instead, the following is acceptable:

(125) Na welu na sawana lavwe-nda.
3PL dance ART sawana affect-P:1PL.I
‘They danced the “sawana” dance for us’. (#e.JB12). (i.e. it’s our dance, but they did it on our behalf, e.g. if we were unable to go)
(126) *Na welu na sawana mata-nda.
   3PL dance ART sawana PREP-P:1PL.I
   ‘They danced the “sawana” dance for us’. (JB11). (it’s our dance, but they did it for 
a special reason)

Similarly to example (110) earlier in this chapter, the following is acceptable where the 
classifier + pronominal possessor precede the O:

(127) Mo loli no-ku vanua.
   3SG make CLFR-P:1SG house
   ‘He made my house’/’He made a house for me.’

but neither of the following are acceptable:

(128) *Mo loli na vanua no-ku.
   3SG make ART house CLFR-P:3SG
   ‘He made the house for me.’

(129) *Mo loli-a no-ku.
   3SG make-O:3SG CLFR-P:1SG
   ‘He made it for me.’

But as shown with earlier examples, lavwe and mata can also be used in transitive 
constructions to express slightly different ‘benefactives’.

(130) Mo loli na vanua lavwe-ku.
   3SG make ART house affect-P:1SG
   ‘He made a house for me.’ (where it was my responsibility to do it, but he did it on 
my behalf) (#e.JB16)

(131) Mo loli na vanua mata-ku.
   3SG make ART house PREP-P:3SG
   ‘He made a house for me.’ (for some special reason )(#e.JB17)

7.6.2 An incipient classifier koru-
When someone has died, personal items belonging to them can no longer be referred to 
by classifiers no- or bula-. Instead the word koru is used, literally meaning ‘be dry’, as of a 
tree that has died and is without its life sap, as in:

(132) Vu-mbaheo mo koru.
   tree-breadfruit 3SG dry
   ‘The breadfruit tree has died.’ (#ES1.’96)

So with possessive constructions, indirect possession marked by no- such as someone’s 
axe or knife, or belongings marked by bula- such as someone’s growing plants, chickens 
or bullocks, can no longer take those classifiers. That is, classifiers no- and bula-

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14 See Chapter 8 for more on the mata prepositions.
Possessive constructions essentially collapse to *koru*. For example, possessive constructions such as the following change after the death of the owner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner alive</th>
<th>(133) simba no-ni mama</th>
<th>(134) simba koru-ni mama</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>knife</td>
<td>CLFR-LINK dad</td>
<td>knife dry-LINK dad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘dad’s knife’</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘dad’s knife’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner dead</th>
<th>(135) toa bula-ni bumbu</th>
<th>(136) toa koru-ni bumbu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fowl</td>
<td>CLFR-LINK grandpa</td>
<td>fowl dry-LINK grandpa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘grandpa’s chickens’</td>
<td></td>
<td>‘grandpa’s chickens’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Possessive *koru* constructions with NP possessors that are names (as above) are the same as any indirect possessive constructions with classifiers. But where there is a pronominal possessor, *koru* + possessive pronominal come after the possessed noun.

(137) *Simba koru-na ambea?*  
knife dry-P:3SG where  
‘Where’s his knife?’ (ref. to a knife of a s.o who has recently died) (#c.ES.2’96)

This suggests that at this point in time, *koru* + linker or *koru* + possessive pronominal is grammatically an appositional phrase. And so the previous examples may mean, more literally, ‘knife, the lifeless thing of dad’ or ‘his chickens, his dry things’. Belongings continue to be referred to in this way until they are allotted to others, or much time has passed, for example:

(138) *Buk koru-n’ Anji no-ku.*  
book dry-LINK A. CLFR-P:1SG  
‘The book that was Anji’s (who is dead) is mine.’ (#e.ES.3.’96)

But when I questioned speakers about *koru* meaning ‘dry’ or ‘dying’, and hence ‘lifeless’ in this context, the metaphorical connection seemed non-obvious to them and they insisted that it was ‘a different word’ from *koru* ‘dry’ and ‘just a word that people used for things’ when the owner was dead. Given that the original meaning appears to be bleached in this possessional usage, it may be that *koru* is in the process of becoming grammaticalised to the status of a classifier.

7.7 Some conclusions

Comment has been made on the characteristics of the four main types of possessive constructions as discussed in turn. I wish to summarise here some major morphosyntactic points only:

i) In three of the four types, Possessed precedes Possessor. Possessor can only precede Possessed in a Type 2 Indirect construction (7.4.2).

ii) Classifiers are only used where actual ownership is implied, and are determined by the semantic relationship between Possessed and Possessor.

iii) Where the Possessor is a NP, some kind of possessive linker must be used.
iv) Linker *ni* must always be used where the NP Possessor is a kin term.

v) Linker *ni* must always be used where the NP Possessor is a proper name, regardless of whether the named possessor is animate or non-animate.

vi) An Indirect (Type 2) and an Indirect Link (Type 4) construction, using classifiers, indicate alienable possession, as understood from the definition of alienable and inalienable possession in 7.2.1.

vii) Where inalienable possession is indicated, the morphosyntax is simpler and closer, reflecting a closer relationship between Possessor and Possessed.
8 Prepositional phrases

8.1 Introduction

This chapter describes prepositional phrases and the prepositions that introduce them. These prepositions precede any other prehead modifiers to the NP.

Sasse (1993:681) remarks that spatio-temporal relations and circumstantials tend to be expressed by adpositions in languages, and central participants by case affixes or position. As seen in 3.8.1 and 3.8.2, this is so for the central participants which are direct core arguments in Tamambo, and there are also some central participants as oblique core arguments introduced by prepositions, and which are also fixed in linear order (see 3.8.3). But while there are just some prepositions that are able to function within the core, all prepositions are at home in the periphery of the clause. Whether the prepositional phrase occurs within the clause at core or peripheral level depends on the semantic role of the preposition in that particular context with that particular predicate.

There are some functions of particular prepositions that are unusual. Three prepositions, sohen(i), matai and hina can introduce the predicates of non-verbal clauses (as shown in Chapter 3,) as well as introducing the arguments of verbal clauses. Preposition sohen(i) also can introduce the predicate of a semi-verbal clause. Since predicative functions within the core of clauses have been described in Chapter 3, they are referred to briefly here but are not repeated.

In addition, there is one type of prepositional phrase that is particularly interesting in that preposition hina can introduce certain adjectival words. Such prepositional phrases can function as the predicate of a non-verbal clause as seen in 3.4.2.3. But in addition, they can function as a secondary predicate and also as the attribute of a NP. The constructions with hina are discussed in section 8.2.6 of this chapter and the semantics of the adjectival words involved are described in Chapter 10.

In 8.2, the semantic roles and syntactic functions of all Tamambo prepositions are listed, and the prepositions are described individually in sections 8.2.1 to 8.2.6.

8.2 Prepositional roles in prepositional phrases

In Table 3:5, 3.8.3, I posited a hierarchy of the semantic roles which can be expressed by objects (as direct core arguments) and/or by P-objects (as oblique core arguments). In addition, the grammatical behaviour of such P-objects within the core was described in 3.8.3. But prepositions have a much wider variety of grammatical functions and semantic roles than as the first components of oblique arguments.

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1 This is not unusual, in that much the same pattern occurs in English.
Table 8.1 lists all prepositions and their semantic roles in conjunction with their functions in prepositional phrases (henceforth PPs). The table also indicates the rigid restrictions on the use of particular prepositions with particular kinds of NPs, according to a hierarchy of individuation shown in Table 6:2, Chapter 6. Additionally, it shows the restrictions with constructions that have become grammaticalised in the function of prepositions, but which still strongly retain the form of possessive constructions.

Where a PP is able to function either at the periphery, or as a P-object within the core (as oblique), the two functions are shown in the table divided by slashes. Where a PP has these two options, then the choice of syntactic function of the PP is dependent on the nature of the verbal predicate and its relationship to its arguments. For discussion on the the status of PPs as central participants or circumstantial components, see 3.8.3.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preposition</th>
<th>Able to precede:</th>
<th>Semantic role</th>
<th>Function as PP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>telei</td>
<td>animate nouns or object pronouns</td>
<td>recipient</td>
<td>oblique core argument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>object of attitude</td>
<td>oblique core/peripheral component</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>source</td>
<td>oblique core/peripheral component</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>comitative</td>
<td>oblique core/peripheral component</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>spatial location</td>
<td>oblique core/peripheral component</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ana</td>
<td>non-animate nouns (but see footnote 2)</td>
<td>locational goal or locative source</td>
<td>oblique core/peripheral component</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>spatial location</td>
<td>oblique core/peripheral component</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>location in time</td>
<td>oblique core/peripheral component</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mana</td>
<td>common nouns</td>
<td>comitative</td>
<td>peripheral component</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mai</td>
<td>names, kin terms, object pronouns</td>
<td>comitative</td>
<td>peripheral component</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sohen(i)</td>
<td>nouns, demonstrative, and independent pronouns</td>
<td>simulative</td>
<td>peripheral component</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>predicate of non-verbal clause</td>
<td>predicate of semi-verbal clause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>matai</td>
<td>directly possessed common nouns</td>
<td>reason</td>
<td>peripheral component</td>
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<tr>
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<td>purpose</td>
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<td>time duration</td>
<td>peripheral component</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>locutional topic</td>
<td>predicate of non-verbal clause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>matana</td>
<td>indirectly possessed nouns</td>
<td>reason</td>
<td>peripheral component</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>purpose</td>
<td>peripheral component</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mata-</td>
<td>possessive pronominals</td>
<td>reason</td>
<td>peripheral component</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>matani</td>
<td>names, kin terms</td>
<td>reason</td>
<td>peripheral component</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Prepositional phrases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preposition</th>
<th>Able to precede:</th>
<th>Semantic role</th>
<th>Function as PP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hini</td>
<td>names, demonstrative, and object pronouns</td>
<td>theme</td>
<td>oblique argument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>locutional topic</td>
<td>oblique argument</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>cause of emotion</td>
<td>oblique argument</td>
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<td></td>
<td>object of attitude</td>
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<tr>
<td>hina</td>
<td>demonstrative pronouns</td>
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<td>peripheral component</td>
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<td>cause</td>
<td>peripheral component</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(partitive) theme</td>
<td>oblique core argument</td>
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<td>locutional topic</td>
<td>oblique core argument</td>
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<td>object of attitude</td>
<td>oblique core argument</td>
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<td>cause of emotion</td>
<td>oblique core argument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>source</td>
<td>attribute of NP in verbal clause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>‘evidenced’ adjectival verbs</td>
<td>predicate of non-verbal clause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>attribution</td>
<td>secondary predicate of verbal clause</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>reference</td>
<td>attribute of NP in verbal clause</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.2.1 *telei*

This preposition can only precede animate referents. Depending on the semantic role of *telei*, it can be translated as ‘to’, ‘from’, ‘towards’, ‘with’. It is usually used at the periphery for ‘spatial location’ and ‘comitative’, but can be used in the core as discussed in 3.8.3. The semantic roles of ‘recipient’ and ‘object of attitude’ seem to appear only in the core, whilst ‘source’ and ‘comitative’ are more likely to switch between core and periphery.

**Spatial location**

(1) *Ku ate maravitu telei pilot.*

1SG sit close PREP pilot

‘I sat next to the pilot.’ (#c.328)

**Source**

(2) *Mo vano mo dami-a telei tama-i vavine.*

3SG go 3SG ask-O:3SG PREP father-LINK woman

‘He goes and asks the girl’s father for her (to marry her).’ (lit. he goes he asks her from the father of the girl) (C-T81:3)

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2 In fact, in almost every example in the data, *telei* precedes human referents. Older speakers very occasionally use *ana* with animal as well as non-animate referents and keep *telei* exclusively for human referents, but younger speakers use *telei* with all animate referents. See Appendix 2, Text 4, #7 with animals as story characters. Thus it may be that *telei* and *ana* are undergoing some sort of reanalysis as far as speakers are concerned.
(3) Mo voli na buk atea telei na tamalohi atea niala.
   3SG buy ART book one PREP ART person one there
   ‘He bought a book from a man over there.’  (#e.749)

Object of attitude
(4) Mo sasati telei-au.
   3SG bad PREP-O:1SG
   ‘He treats me badly.’  (lit. ‘he is bad towards me’)  (#e.499)

Recipient
(5) O sile na tua-i biskit telei Selina.
   2SG give ART some-LINK biscuit PREP S.
   ‘Give some of the biscuits to Selina.’  (#c.297)

(6) Ku te sile wati-a telei-ho.
   1SG NEG give unable-O:3SG PREP-O:2SG
   ‘I can’t give it to you.’  (#e.858)

Comitative
From my data, it appears that preposition telei is used for comitatives primarily with human referents, and often where some directional movement is suggested. Data on comitatives suggest that it is used with verbs such as ‘work’, ‘stay’, ‘live’, ‘talk’, where the actor goes to the location of the activity, or, in the case of ‘speak’ or ‘talk’, their words ‘move’ towards the addressee. Otherwise comitative prepositions mai and mana are used (8.2.3). For example, the following sentences indicate that some movement towards a locative goal is suggested, as well as a comitative.

(7) Na-mbo vano na ovi telei tumbu-ra.
   3PL-FUT go 3PL live PREP grandmother-P:3PL
   ‘They are going to live with their grandmother.’(#c.95 JB)

(8) Ku-mbo vano ku sahasaha telei no-ku vorae.
   1SG-FUT go 1SG work PREP CLFR-P:1SG sibling
   ‘I will go and work with my sister.’  (#e.MW95)

(9) Ku sora telei vo-tahisa-ku.
   1SG talk PREP FEM-friend-P:1SG
   ‘I talked with my girlfriend.’  (#e.5)

8.2.2  ana
Preposition ana precedes NPs that are non-animate (but see f.n.2). It appears to be an amalgam of a residual locative marker a, possibly from POc spatial deictic *a (Ross 1988:459) and article na (see 4.9.1.1). Some mention of residual locative a is also made in 5.2.1.4.

It is translated as ‘to’, ‘at’, ‘in’, ‘on’, ‘from’, ‘in front of’, ‘out of’, and occurs in PPs almost always at the periphery to set the locational or temporal scene.
Prepositional phrases

Spatial location

Preposition *ana* cannot be used with place names, presumably because of the restriction on using an article (or in this case, a preposition derived from article *na*) before proper nouns. Thus it is simply *Vanuatu* for ‘in Vanuatu’, not *ana Vanuatu*. The same restriction applies to names of towns, other countries and so on.

(10) *Ku vano ana Aloatu.* but not *Ku vano ana Aloatu.*
1SG go S:1SG
‘I’m going’/’I went to Santo’.

(11) *Mo vano ana arua-i matesia.*
3SG go PREP two-LINK door
‘S/he went to the second door.’ (Nt-T20:33)

(12) *Mo tio mo jivo ana oneone.*
3SG jump 3SG go.down PREP sand
‘He jumped down on the sand’. (Nt-T18.9)

Preposition *ana* can be freely used where human or animal body parts indicate spatial location, as in the following examples.

(13) *Mo-le ate ana matua-ku.*
3SG-TA stay PREP right.hand-P:1SG
‘He is there on my right’. (#e.340)

(14) *Avua mo manjinga mo-iso mo lai tahisa-na*  
turtle 3SG happy 3SG-finish 3SG take friend-P:3SG

*Harivi ana tura-na.*  
rat PREP back-P:3SG
‘Turtle was happy so he took his friend Rat on his back.’ (N.ch-T5:10)

(15) *Ku mangisi asena matan ku matavosai ku turu*  
1SG happy INTEN SUB 1SG be.able 1SG stand

*ana na ho-mim balosuro ana dondo niani.*  
PREP face-P:2PL present.time PREP night this
‘I’m very happy that I can stand in front of you (lit. before your faces) now tonight.’  
(E-T66:1)

The last example has the first *ana* PP (with body part) as a spatial location, and the second *ana* PP as a location in time (also shown in examples below).

Locational goal

(16) *Va-uranji na walau na jivo na kakau ana oneone.*  
PL-child 3PL run 3PL go.down 3PL reach PREP sand.
‘The children ran down and got to the beach.’ (#e.92)
Locative source

(17) O lai takahi-a ana reu!
2SG take remove-O:3SG PREP water
‘Take it away from the water!’ (#e.JB.07)

Location in time

Preposition ana can be used with

times of the day:

- ana raviravi ‘in the afternoon’
- ana ulurani ‘in the morning’

and times referring to preceding or following weeks, months or years, such as:

- ana wik a mai ‘next week’
  PREP week 3SG come
- ana tauni le vano ‘last year’
  PREP year TA go
- ana vitu a mai ‘next month’
  PREP month 3SG come

Preposition ana can be also used with names of days of the week or names of months, special times of the year, as in:

- ana bongi rara ‘in the winter’ (lit. at the time of the coral tree)
- ana bongi eli ‘in late spring’ (lit. at the time of the palolo worms)
- ana vitu vuvuti ‘at full moon’
- ana Krismis ‘at Christmas’
- ana Wenesde ‘on Wednesday’
- ana Ogis ‘in August’

Note that ana can be used only with the proper names that are terms introduced into the language.

8.2.3 Comitatives mana and mai

The posited history of these comitatives has already been discussed in 6.6.1 where their function as conjunctive coordinators in linking NPs is discussed. Because of this other function, I also gloss them here as COM.

As with most of the other prepositions listed here, there is a distinction made according to an individuation hierarchy, as to which is used with various nouns.

8.2.3.1 mana

Comitative mana is used where the NP which it precedes is a common noun, either animate or non-animate, but not a kin term or name. This is the same restriction as with mana as a comitative conjunction.
(18) *Mary mo boi a tohotoho mana bula-na viria.*
M. 3SG like 3SG play COM CLFR-P:3SG dog
‘Mary likes to play with her dog.’ (#e.51MW)

Where the common noun following *mana* is plural, it is usual to also include *tolu* (see 6.2.5.4).

(19) *Mary mo boi a tohotoho tolu mana va-uranji.*
M. 3SG like 3SG play total COM PL-child
‘Mary likes to play together with the children’. (#e.52MW)

(20) *Na-le lol’ na net hina asi hurimalai, tolu mana asi tinambu.*
3PL-TA make ART net PREP rope tree.bark together COM

‘They used to make the net with tree-bark vines, together with different vines.’ (E-T43:3)

8.2.3.2 *mai*

Comitative *mai* precedes names, kin terms, or object pronouns referring to specific people, (similar to the pattern of *mai* in its function as a comitative conjunction, 6.6.1.2).

(21) ...*mo-iso ka-le mule mai Lorna* ...
3SG-finish 1PL-TA head.home COM L.
‘... then I was going home with Lorna.’ (D-T7:3)

Compare the next example with example (8) where some movement is suggested.

(22) *Ku sahasaha mai no-ku vorae.*
1SG work COM CLFR-P:1SG sibling
‘I work (together)with my sister’. (#e.MW97)

Similarly to *mana*, where the NP preceded by *mai* is plural, it is usual to use *tolu*.

(23) *O vano tolu mai-ra?*
2SG go total COM-O:3SG
‘Are you going (together) with them?’ (#c.1311)

It is possible to omit *mai*, and use just *tolu* where the total number is understood to be three or more.

(24) *O jivo Ataripo tolu na-tahisa-m?*
2SG go.down A. total PL-friend-P:2SG
‘Are you going to Ataripo with your friends?’ (#c.1314)
8.2.4  Similative sohen(i)

This preposition is described as similative (3.4.2.3). The final vowel is bracketed to indicate that its use is now marginal. It is essentially deleted from the speech of speakers of all ages, and I have examples of it as soheni in letters only. Although in this way its demise appears similar to the final vowel of matan(i) (8.2.5.4), there is at least use of the final -i of matani from older speakers in conversation, but not so with sohen(i). I refer to it henceforth as sohen.

Note that sohen is used less as a preposition than in its function as a subordinating clausal conjunction to introduce a variety of clause types, primarily some adverbial clauses and in some complement clauses (Chapter 14). In its range of functions, it appears somewhat similar to the behaviour of a ‘similative’ adposition in Manam (a Western Oceanic language) that also functions as a clausal complement (Lichtenberk 1983:528–29). I gloss it as ‘like’, and it has no restrictions as to the type of NP that it can precede, other than it does not precede object pronouns.

(25)  Bole are mo-te na-vo-natu-m sohen nira, ale.3  well if 3SG-NEG PL-FEM-child-P:2SG like IP:3PL alright

    a te vavine tinambu a mai …
3SG INDEF woman different 3SG come
‘Well, if there are none of your daughters like them, okay, (but) should some different woman come along …’ (C-T86:130)

Similative as predicate of non-verbal clause and semi-verbal clause

Preposition sohen can also introduce the predicate of an ascriptive non-verbal clause. This is a frequent function for sohen. See 3.4.2.3, examples (36–38).

It can also introduce the predicate of a semi-verbal clause as shown below.

(26)  Mo-te sohen tanume, nia hambalewa. 3SG-NEG like devil IP:3SG half man.halfshark
‘He wasn’t like a devil, he was half man, half shark’.4  (#e.MW)

8.2.5  The mata prepositions: matai /matana /mata- / matani

Reason and cause prepositions

‘Prepositions’ matai, matan(i), mata- (+ possessive pronoun), and matana, are closely allied to possessive constructions but appear to be now almost fully grammaticalised as prepositions. (Note that matan(i) also functions as a complementiser and a subordinator, as described in Chapter 14.)

The first three mata ‘prepositions’ clearly reflect direct possessive constructions in this language, in that -i links only common nouns and -ni links only names and kin terms; that is, the same pattern applies in direct possessive constructions as with these prepositions. It is possible that ni could be an amalgam of POc 3SG possessive pronominal *n(a) with personal article *i. Thus the following can be suggested:

---

3 This speaker, in her 30s, uses Bislama ale ‘alright’, and so uses are rather than ale for Tamambo ‘if’ (see also Conditional Clauses, Chapter 14).

4 A hambalewa is a man who is believed to change at will from a man to a shark.
matai < *mata -i
matan < *mata -*n(a) +*i
    eye - P:3SG +Pers. ART.

Only possessive pronominals can occur after mata-. Preposition matana can occur only before indirectly possessed NPs, the -na probably reflecting POc common article marker *na.

In all of these ‘reason’ prepositions, matai, matani, matana and mata-, mata is homophonous with mata ‘eye’ (also ‘POc *mata ‘eye’). But Tamambo speakers have no ‘translation’ for the mata occurring in these constructions, other than ‘because’, or ‘for’, so it appears that whatever the original meaning once was, it has now been lost in the grammaticalisation of the construction. Whether it was some semantic extension of ‘eye’ as perhaps ‘focus’ or ‘perceived reason’ is now only a matter for conjecture. So although the lexical meaning of the NP as ‘possessed’ has been bleached, the grammatical patterning has been retained for the possessors, whether common nouns, pronouns, names or kin terms.

All four of the mata based forms indicate reason and purpose relationships. Only matai has other semantic functions. As noted earlier, matan(i) is also used as a complementiser or subordinator, and its role as a preposition is more limited.

8.2.5.1 matai

The construction matai with a common noun possessor equates to a direct possessive construction:

\[
\text{mata-i} \quad + \text{NP (possessor)}.
\]

reason-of \quad + \text{NP}

Its primary use is to express reason and purpose, and is simply glossed as PREP for preposition.

**Purpose**

(27) Tamalohi na mai matai welu-a.
    person 3PL come PREP dance-NOM
    ‘Men came for the dance.’ (lit. ‘men came purpose of dance’) (Nt-T20:11)

(28) Mati nia bongi duhu mo liu matai sai dangedange-a
    low.tide IP:3SG day good 3SG exceed PREP search shellfish-NOM
    ‘Low tide is the best time for a shellfish hunt.’ (#e.SV)

**Reason**

(29) O vano matai sava?
    2SG go PREP what
    ‘Why are you going?’ (lit. you go cause of what) (#c.167)

---

5 The work of Ann Chowning (1993) details the wide semantic range of mata in a variety of Oceanic languages.
Aiente bong tamalohi mo matawanjuhi na tamalohi

some day person 3SG watch.closely ART person

matai mana-e.

PREP laugh-NOM

‘Sometimes a person spies on people for fun.’ (E-T-VJ.p41)

O manjine matai vetai.

2SG be kind PREP banana

‘Thank you for the banana/s. ’(lit. You are kind reason of banana/s) (#c.1039)

O manjine matai nunu.

2SG be kind PREP photo

‘Thank you for the photo/s.’ (lit. You are kind reason of photo) (#c.1036)

Some such constructions often involve some sort of tangible or perceived exchange as the reason.

Ku loli-a matai wan taosen vatu.

1SG make-O: 3SG PREP one thousand vatu

‘I made it for 1000 vatu.’ (#e.1159c)

Ku loli-a matai mana-e manihi.

1SG make-O: 3SG PREP laugh-NOM LIM

‘I made it just for fun. (#e.1159d)

Duration of time

Ku jivo Ataripo matai Krisimis.

1SG go.down A. PREP Christmas

‘I went to Ataripo for Christmas.’ (#c.1158)

Mo tangisi tahisa na matai bongi atolu.

3SG mourn friend P:3SG PREP day three

‘He cried for his friend for three days.’ (N.ch-T2:10)

Locutional topic

In this semantic role, it is translated as ‘about’.

Ku-mbo stori-hi na stori atea niani matai tutunu-a.

1SG-FUT tell.story-TR ART story one this PREP roast-NOM

‘I’m going to tell this story about cooking.’ (E-T54:2)

Locutional topic as predicate of a non-verbal clause

Preposition matai can also introduce the predicate of a non-verbal clause, in the semantic role of locutional topic, as shown in 3.4.2.3.
(38)  Mo-isoro, ku-mbo viti na stori rindi tovona-ro,
     3SG-finish-thus 1SG-FUT tell ART story REF now-thus

     stori rindi matai uranji atea.
     story REF PREP child one

     ‘So, I am going to tell the story now then, the story concerns a child.’  (Nt-T79:2)

8.2.5.2  matana

Preposition matana can only operate with a possessor in the form of an indirect possessive construction (see 7.4.2 for indirect possessive constructions).

matana + CLFR-Poss.Pronominal +NP
reason-his/her/its + classifier +noun

It is glossed here as PREP for preposition, since it is grammaticalised in that function. Compare the next two examples with (31) and (32) earlier using matai.

Reason
(39)  O manjine matana no-m sora-e.
     2SG be.kind PREP CLFR-P:2SG talk-NOM
     ‘Thank you for your stories.’ (lit. ‘you are kind its reason your stories’) (#e.1034)

(40)  O manjine matana ha-ku vetai.
     2SG be.kind PREP CLFR-P:1SG banana/s
     ‘Thank you for the banana/s (for me to eat)’  (#e.1041)

Purpose
(41)  Ale ku boi no mai no loli no-ku bamba matana
     if 1SG like 2PL come 2PL make CLFR-P:1SG fence PREP

     no-ku tano, ivao na mai, na loli-a.
     CLFR-P:1SG garden crowd 3PL come 3PL make-O:3SG
     ‘If I wanted you to come and build my wooden fence for my garden, heaps of
     people would come, and they’d do it.’  (C-T89:18)

8.2.5.3  mata-

When the object of mata consists only of a pronoun, then the possessive pronominal form suffixes to mata- in the form of a direct possessive construction.

mata- + Possessive pronoun
reason of me/of you/of them/ etc.

The possessive pronominal suffix indicates the possessor of the cause of the event.

(42)  Truk mo mai mata-nda.
     truck 3SG come PREP-P:1PL.I
     ‘The truck came for us.’  (#e.1087a).
(43) **Truk mo mai mata-na ne nia mo-te ate aimo.**  
truck 3SG come PREP-P:3SG but IP:3SG 3SG-NEG sit home  
‘The truck came for him but he wasn’t home.’ (#e.1086)

(44) **Morrison, Emma mai Stewart na sohi mata-na.**  
M. E. COM S. 3PL hide PREP-P:3SG  
‘Morrison, Emma and Stewart hid because of him.’ (#e.1117b)

### 8.2.5.4 matan(i)

As mentioned in 2.6.5.2, word-final high vowels are often omitted after a nasal, with only some older speakers retaining their use. So here I bracket the final -i of *matani* in my discussion of it; in examples I use *matani* where the speaker has used *matani*, and *matan* where the speaker has used *matan*. I have heard only a few older speakers (55+) using *matani* in speech, and have only two examples of it in letters from somewhat younger speakers (ages 24 and 42). When queried as to whether the word in question is *matan* or *matani*, most speakers, and all those 20ish and younger, told me that there is ‘*matan manihi*’, that is, ‘just *matan*’.

As a preposition, *matani* has a limited use in that it can only introduce names or kin terms in a construction indicating a reason. The named or kin term possessor is linked with -ni in a direct possessive relationship and is the reason for the event’s occurrence, that is, they are the ‘possessor’ of the event.

\[
    \text{mata-ni} \quad + \quad \text{named or kin term NP} \\
    \text{reason of} \quad + \quad \text{Person}
\]

Compare the next two examples with (42) to (44) above (where *mata*- suffixes with pronominal possessors).

(45) **Truk mo mai matan Alice.**  
truck 3SG come PREP A.  
‘The truck came for Alice’ (#e.1087c).

(46) **Morrison, Emma mai Stewart na sohi matan Pakoa.**  
M. E. COM S. 3PL hide PREP P.  
‘Morrison, Emma and Stewart hid because of Pakoa.’ (#e.1117a)

(47) **Tamalohi rindi mo mate matani vo-tahisa-na.**  
person REF 3SG die PREP FEM-friend-P:3SG  
‘The man died for his girlfriend.’ (that is, his girlfriend was the reason he died)(Nk-T15:17)

### 8.2.6 hini and hina

Similarly to *matana* and *matani* above, prepositions *hina* and *hini* reflect the -na/-ni contrast used in indirect possessive constructions to differentiate between kin and proper noun possessors where the possessed is linked with -ni, and common noun possessors where the possessed is linked with -na.
Both prepositions *hini* and *hina* appear to derive from *hi* marking instrumental (see 4.8.1). Preposition *hini* introduces PPs with ‘named’ nouns, object pronouns, and anaphoric referent *mwende* ‘particular one’. Preposition *hina* introduces PPs with common nouns and occasionally demonstrative pronouns. Both *hini* and *hina* can be translated by ‘with’, ‘about’, ‘by, ‘of’.

PPs with *hina* and *hini* are the ones most likely to be within the core of the clause as P-objects, functioning as an oblique argument of the verb. As shown in Table 8.1, these *hini/hina* PPs can occur in the semantic roles of theme, partitive theme (*hina* only), locutional topic, cause/source of emotion/reaction, and the object/goal of attitude.

**Theme**

(48) *O* sile-au *hini-a!*  
2SG give-O:1SG PREP-O:3SG  
‘Give it to me!’ (lit. Give me of it) (#c.612)

(49) Tovon mo mati, *na losu taka~takah* hina manji rindi.  
when 3SG low.tide 3PL strike RED~remove PREP animal REF  
‘When the tide went down, they completely cleared out those fish.’ (E-T43:33)

**Partitive theme**

Where preposition *hina* is used to mark a partitive P-object, the verb indicates some sort of outward transfer of an amount or a quantity of an entity away from the subject. Not all of the entity is necessarily transferred. For example:

(50) *Voi* mo sile-au *hina tua-i* ti.  
mum 3SG give-O:1SG PREP some-LINK tea  
‘Mum gave me some tea.’ (#e.763)

**Locutional topic**

The locutional topic indicates what something is about, what it is concerned with.

(51) *Ku-mbo* ta stori *hini mwende* atea niani ...  
1SG-FUT REP tell.story PREP particular.one one here  
‘I’ll have another chat about one particular thing here...’ (E-T25:1)

(52) *Mo* tere a-ta *sora hina uranji mwende.*  
3SG leave.off 3SG-REP talk PREP child particular.one.  
‘He left off ever talking again about that particular child.’ (Nt-T33:32)

**Source or cause of emotion/reaction**

(53) *Mo-le* mangisi *hina na-natu-na.*  
3SG-TA happy PREP PL-child-P:3SG  
‘He is proud of his children.’ (#e.458b)

---

6 For an extensive study of POc*akin[i]* as reflected in modern languages, see Evans 2003:119–170.
...animal sea-DIS 3PL surprised PREP make.noise-NOM
‘...the fish, eh, they were surprised by the noise.’ (E-T25:6)

**Goal/object of attitude**

(55) *Ka domtau hini-ho matan...*  
1PL believe PREP-O:2SG because
‘We believed in you because...’  (Nt-T32:20)

(56) *Na-te ololo hini taura-ra.*  
3PL-NEG respect PREP mother’s.brother-P:3PL
‘They have no respect for their uncles.’ (E-T57:14)

But these are not the only roles of *hina* and *hini* PPs. In particular, a *hina* PP is common in an instrumental or causer role, mostly at the periphery of the clause, rather than as an argument within the core.

**Instrumental**

(57) *Tovon o kakau Vila hini Air Vanuatu, taksi mana bus*  
when 2SG reach V. PREP A. V. taxi COM bus

  na-le wet ana epot.  
3P-TA wait PREP airport
‘When you get to Vila with Air Vanuatu, taxis and buses are waiting at the airport.’  (Wl-T8.2)

(58) *Mo tivovo-ra hina boro-na.*  
3SG cover-O:3PL PREP ear-P:3SG
‘He covered them over with his ears.’ (Nt-T20:60)

(59) *Ka-mbo le domdomi-ho hina no-mam damdami.*  
1PL-FUT TA think.of-O:2SG PREP CLFR-P:1PL.E prayers
‘We will be thinking of you with our prayers.’  (Wl-T11:7)

(60) *Tambaluhi-na mo turu horo-a hina vuhai ...*  
wife-P:3SG 3SG stand block-O:3SG PREP stick
‘His wife blocked him with the stick ...’  (Nk-T22:18)

**Causer (non-animate)**

(61) *Aka mo dono hina lulungi tawera.*  
boat 3SG sink PREP wave big
‘The boat sank with the big wave.’/ ‘The boat was sunk by the big wave.’(#e.106)

See also 5.2.2.2: example (16).

---

7 The initiator of this action in the legend was a devil with large wing-like ears.
8.2.6.1 **hina PP as an attribute of a NP**

A *hina* PP can be used as an attribute of a NP as in the following. Only this one example is attested in my data.

(62) *Mo lai no-na teletele hina dangilala.*
3SG take CLFR-P:3SG necklace PREP green.snail
‘He took his necklace of green snail shells.’(#e.955)

8.2.6.2 **hina PPs with adjectival verbs**

Preposition *hina* is the only preposition that can take an adjectival verb as its object. This is an unusual construction and is not reflected in other Oceanic languages to my knowledge other than a somewhat similar construction in Salib a (Western Oceanic)\(^8\) ‘formed by a comitative preposition and a reduplicated nominalisation’ (Mosel 1994:34), which can function as a predicate or an attribute. While the Tamambo adjectival terms are not nominalised, and can show some noun-like characteristics, they are sufficiently different from nouns not to be regarded as such (4.4: Table 4.2). Such a PP can function (as shown in examples below):

i) as the predicate of a non-verbal clause

ii) as a secondary predicate in a verbal clause

iii) as an attribute of a core argument in a verbal clause.

**hina PP as predicate of a non-verbal clause**

Such clauses are ascriptive non-verbal clauses. One example is given here for convenience; for other examples and discussion of these types of predicates, see 3.4.2.3.

(63) ...
3SG deep.water-like INTEN inside 3SG big path-P:3SG

*hina* vorivori, na turu na tiu donohi-a mo jivo...
PREP little 3PL stand 3PL leave drown-O:3SG 3SG go.down
‘... it was very deep, the inside was big and the channel to it was little, so that being so they sank it down there...’ (E-T26:6)

**hina PP as a secondary predicate in a verbal clause**

This use of a *hina* PP as a secondary predicate,\(^9\) occurs where the attributive PP applies to the O of the verbal clause (in all cases here shown by a 3SG object pronoun). For example, the ‘little’ in the next example refers to the mixture that is rolled up, showing a ‘resultative’, that is, where it expresses ‘a state which is interpreted as a result of the state of affairs encoded by the main predicate’ (Himmelmann and Schultze-Berndt 2006:4).

---

\(^8\) I am grateful to Malcolm Ross for drawing this to my attention.

\(^9\) Also referred to in the literature as ‘subsidiary predicate’ (Andrews 1985:67, also 2007a:136).
...ka biri-a mo-iso ka wandi-a hina waririhi.  
...1PL grate-O:3SG 3SG-finish 1PL roll-O:3SG PREP PL.little  
‘...we grate it and then we roll them really small.’ (E-T59:6)

Another example of a ‘resultative’ is shown in Chapter 10, example (83).

Himmelmann and Schultze-Berndt also describe a ‘depictive’, a generally more common type of secondary predicate, which expresses ‘a state that holds during the reference time of the event encoded by the main predicate’ (2006:4). Such a depictive is shown in the following where the secondary predicate, hina baro, refers to the object of the eating (known from the narrative to be a pig).

(65) Mo hani-a hina baro.  
3SG eat-O:3SG PREP raw  
‘He ate it raw.’ (Nt-T20:68)

**hina PP as modifier within an NP argument: attributive reference**

A prepositional phrase of hina + adjectival verb is commonly used in this function.

(66) Ro stori hina busohi manihi le iso ro.  
thus story PREP short LIM TA finish thus  
‘So the story that’s just short finishes thus.’ (Nk-T29:8)

(67) Manjione mwende hina henjaha na-le tovi-a  
karong.fish particular.one PREP blue-green 3PL-TA call-O:3SG

na re ‘manjione henja’...  
3PL say blue.karong  
‘The particular karong fish that’s a blue-green colour, they call “blue karong”...’ (E-T43:35)

Since use of this attributive construction depends critically on the type of adjectival word that can be used, just two examples are given above and further discussion is left to Chapter 10.

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10 This is in reference to a particular kind of small laplap, like a spring roll, being made. So although the object pronoun of the verb ‘roll’ is singular, the plural of ‘little’ is used to indicate that quite a few rolls are produced.
9  Verbs and the verb phrase

9.1 Introduction

In the first part of this chapter, I differentiate between the various kinds of verbs in Tamambo and describe their functions. In 9.2, I give a general introduction to the class of verbs in this language, describe the open subclass of transitive verbs in 9.2.2, the open subclass of intransitive verbs in 9.2.3, and the closed subclass of intransitive verbs in 9.2.4. Within those headings, various subsets of ambitransitive, extended transitive, and extended intransitive verbs are discussed.

The second half of the chapter is concerned with the structure of the verb phrase. In 9.3, the obligatory complements of the verb phrase are given, and in 9.4 the optional components of the verb phrase are listed. In 9.4.1 and 9.4.2, I describe in detail some of those optional components, the negative marker *te*, and the prehead and posthead phrasal adverbs which function to modify the verb for manner, location and direction, and non-result. The expression of reflexive and reciprocal meanings is described in 9.5. Although tense, aspect and modality markers are briefly listed in 9.4, a full discussion of them is left until Chapter 11.

9.2 Verbs

Verbs, as a class of words, have been shown in Table 4:2, Chapter 4, to be differentiated from other open word classes in Tamambo on morphosyntactic criteria. The vast majority of verbs belong to an open subclass, with just a small number in closed sets.

Table 9.1: Open and closed subclasses of verbs and their subsets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPEN</th>
<th>CLOSED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transitive verbs</td>
<td>Closed subclasses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended transitive</td>
<td>Other: quantitative,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ami-btransitive</td>
<td>meteorological, negative,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>interrogative, some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intransitive verbs</td>
<td>adjectival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intransitive</td>
<td>Basic motion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>active, stative,</td>
<td>and posture verbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incl. some</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adjectival</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended intransive</td>
<td>Other: quantitative,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>meteorological, negative,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>interrogative, some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>adjectival</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I distinguish between transitive verbs and intransitive verbs, noting that there are subsets within those two subclasses for this language.
**Open subclass**

The open subclass of verbs consists of the following subsets:

- **Transitive verbs** = two obligatory core arguments, A and O
- **Extended transitive verbs** = three core arguments, A, O, oblique O
- **Ambitransitive verbs** = either one core argument S or two core arguments, A and O
- **Intransitive verbs** = one obligatory core argument, S, either active or stative
- **Extended intransitive** = two obligatory core arguments, S and oblique O.

All core arguments are taken as being within the obligatory inner core, or the optional outer core, of a verbal clause as described in 3.3; this does not include peripheral elements of the clause.

**Closed subclass**

The closed subclass of verbs consists just of a small number of intransitive verbs in small subsets. These are differentiated on morphosyntactic criteria, and correspond to particular semantic groups as shown in Table 9.1. All words classed as verbs:

- can function as the head of a verb phrase
- cannot function as a core or peripheral argument of a verbal clause
- are marked by a subject pronominal proclitic
- can be marked for tense and aspect, excluding some intransitive verbs
- can be marked for polarity, excluding some closed sets of intransitive verbs.

### 9.2.1 Differentiating between transitive and intransitive verbs

There is no overt marking on the actual verb form to differentiate between transitive and intransitive verbs in Tamambo. Initially it may seem as if verbs that end with -i are transitive, reflecting the close transitive suffix *-i* posited for Poc. But both transitive and intransitive verbs can end with -i, and both transitive and intransitive verbs can end with all other vowels. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transitive</th>
<th>Intransitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>buni</em></td>
<td>‘throttle s.o.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>kari</em></td>
<td>‘comb s.t.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>tua</em></td>
<td>‘slap s.o.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>kore</em></td>
<td>‘lie to s.o.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>hovo</em></td>
<td>‘hit s.t. with a stick’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>duru</em></td>
<td>‘break s.t.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transitive and intransitive verbs are also similar in that both can include or omit overt indication of their subject by a NP or independent pronoun, but must always retain the subject pronominal clitic, which cross-references the person and number of the subject.\(^2\)

Thus the only reliable indication of whether a Tamambo verb is transitive or intransitive is the presence or otherwise of a pronominal or NP direct object.

---

1. Nevertheless, on a word check of ~700 verbs, there is more likelihood that verbs that end in -i are in fact transitive verbs, because they make up 63% of all transitive verbs in my data (this includes verbs that end with -hi and -si, see 9.2.3.1) while only 34% of the intransitive verbs in the data end with -i.

2. The exceptions with 3SG where it omits the pronominal subject marker is described in 11.4.3.
9.2.2 **Open subclass of transitive verbs**

All transitive verbs belong to the open subclass. They have a valency of two, except for extended transitives (ditransitives), which have a valency of three. The object of a transitive verb must always be shown by an object pronoun or a NP, and cannot be omitted. Transitive verbs are further divided as follows:

- Transitive only
- Transitive verbs that have an additional transitive counterpart
- Transitive verbs that have an intransitive counterpart
- Extended transitive (ditransitive).

9.2.2.1 **Active transitive**

These verbs are active verbs that require two arguments—subject and object. There is only one non-active transitive verb in my data, *noha* ‘have s.t.’, which is discussed in 9.2.2.2. All active transitive verbs can take tense and aspect marking.

Examples of the semantic roles of transitive verb types that can occur with particular subjects and objects are shown in Table 9.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semantic roles of objects</th>
<th>Semantic roles of subjects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agent (intentional)</td>
<td>Causer (non-intentional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dehi ‘carry’</td>
<td>komo ‘split open’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lavo ‘plant’</td>
<td>sarani ‘shine on’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hatusi ‘bite off’</td>
<td>bimbasahi ‘fall on’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loli ‘make’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lako ‘decorate’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evui ‘finish’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sari ‘spear’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sai ‘search’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recipient</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sile ‘give’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kele ‘payback’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voli ‘sell’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kalai ‘respect’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>niro ‘examine’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kou ‘keep’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soari ‘see’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boi ‘like’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>borongi ‘smell’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rongovosai ‘know’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locutional topic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sorahi ‘talk about’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dumisi ‘explain’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locational goal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alotusi ‘swim across’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kakau ‘reach’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>losu ‘strike’</td>
<td>&lt;--jomahi ‘tire’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jumi ‘kiss’</td>
<td>&lt;--jinajina ‘attract’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jarovi ‘stroke’</td>
<td>&lt;--hanji ‘hurt’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘Agent’ encompasses here all intentional performers of actions, those that are high in agency such as *losu* ‘strike’ where the patient or experiencer object is highly affected, and
those lower in agency such as *sai* ‘search’ where the object can be little affected. While there is certainly a semantic difference between such verbs, they are not differentiated grammatically by morphological marking or by syntax in Tamambo.

Experiencer subjects differ from other subjects in that they cannot be followed by aspectuals that indicate continuative or completive aspect. However, they can be modified with *TA le* to indicate an imperfective meaning of ‘used to’.

Patients are differentiated from experiencers in that as Comrie says (1981:55) ‘for an entity to be an experiencer presupposes that it must be sentient, capable of receiving sensory experiences, and this is crucial in distinguishing experiencer from patient’. Experiencers however, have no necessary control over the experiences. Verbs that express uncomfortable experiences such as ‘tire’, ‘hurt’, ‘itch’ take experiencer objects. It is not possible to have an experiencer subject to express ‘I’m itchy’, ‘I’m tired’, ‘I’m sore’, but rather, as shown:

(1) *Mo jomahi-au* lit. it tires me ‘I’m tired’
*Mo vasuhi-au* lit. it makes-sore me ‘I’m sore’
*Mo hanji-au*. lit. it hurts me ‘I’m hurt’
*Mo hathati-au* lit. it itches me ‘I’m itchy’

The examples in Table 9.2 do not preclude semantic overlap. For example, an unintentional causer subject, such as a cyclone, can ‘destroy s.t.’ as in

(2) *Langlosu mo komo vanua-na.*
cyclone 3SG destroy house-P:3SG
‘The cyclone destroyed his house.’

But an agentive intentional subject with intent can also ‘destroy s.t.’. Similarly, experiencer objects can have ‘dummy subjects’ as in (1) above, or be acted upon by both intentional and non-intentional subjects, so for instance, *hanji* ‘hurt’, can have a causer non-intentional subject as:

(3) *Bange-ku mo hanji-au.*
stomach-P:1SG 3SG hurt -O:1SG
‘My stomach hurts.’ (lit. hurts me)
or an agentive intentional subject, as in:

(4) *Mwera atea mo hanji-au.*
boy one 3SG hurt-O:1SG
‘A boy hurt me.’

The largest class of verbs in the language is made up of those which have agentive subjects, and patient or experiencer objects, where the agent acts with intent, has a high degree of control and the patient or experiencer is affected to a greater or lesser degree.
9.2.2.2 Non-active transitive

The only non-active transitive verb is noha.\(^3\) It differs from active transitive verbs in that it cannot take any TA marking. It has two functions:

i) to express ownership, as in ‘X has Y’

ii) to indicate existence, as in ‘There is/are Y’.

Ownership with noha

(5) \(\text{Ka noha heletu mana puskat atea...}\)
1PL have pig and cat one
‘We have/had pigs and a cat …’ (D-T7:2)

(6) \(\text{Tama-ku mo noha na aka tawera.}\)
father-P:1SG 3SG have ART boat big
‘My father has/had a big boat.’ (#389c.)

(7) \(\text{Ale, tamalohi mo noha na natu-na atea...}\)
alright person 3SG have ART child-P:3SG one
‘Alright then, a man has a son …’ (N.ab-T78:16)

In this ownership function, noha appears to be losing out to Bislama \(i\ gat\) ‘have’, ‘be’ with younger speakers (teenagers and children), but they incorporate \(i\ gat\) into a Tamambo grammatical pattern to a greater or lesser degree, as with this example from a fourteen year-old speaker. She uses the independent pronoun to fill the subject slot, but does not use the usual preverbal subject pronominal. (Full example in 6.3.3.4.)

(8) \(\text{Kamam i gat no-mam tano atolu...}\)
IP:1PL.E have CLFR-P:1PL.E garden three
‘We have three gardens …’ (N.ab-T10:11)

‘Ownership’, as expressed by possessive constructions at phrase level, is described in Chapter 7.

Existential use of noha

The second use of noha, as ‘there is’, is only possible with 3SG marking, but this is essentially a dummy subject, since there is no possible NP or independent pronoun to fill the subject slot.

(9) \(\text{Mo noha uranji atea nia le ate...}\)
3SG exist child one IP:3SG TA stay
‘There was a child there …’ (Nt-T56:2)

(10) \(\text{Mo noha moli Ostrelia.}\)
3SG exist orange Australia
‘There are oranges in Australia.’

\(^3\) Homophonous with noha ‘cooked’, ‘ready (when cooked)’. 
This sentence arose from a conversation with a teenager where she used Bislama *i gat* in its existential ‘be’ sense, asking me:

(11) *I gat moli Ostrelia tene mo tete?*  
    have orange Australia or 3SG negative  
    ‘Are there oranges in Australia or not?’

Sometimes the use of 3SG can be ambiguous as in:

(12) *Mo noha reu tutun.*  
    3SG have/exist water hot  
    ‘There is hot water.’ / ‘S/he has hot water.’

### 9.2.2.3 Transitive verbs with further transitive counterparts

Some transitive verbs have further transitive counterparts which do not affect the primary valency of the verb but affect the transitivity of the verb, in Hopper and Thompson terms (1980:253), in that the object is less individuated. For example:

- *takahih* ‘remove s.t.’  
  *taka~takahih* ‘remove every/many things’
- *evui* ‘complete s.t.’  
  *evu~evui* ‘complete every/many things’

See also 5.4.5 for other examples of these reduplication patterns.

### 9.2.2.4 Transitive verbs with intransitive counterparts

**Simple form (transitive) → reduplicated form (intransitive)**

A large number of active transitive verbs have intransitive counterparts derived by reduplication. The reduplication reduces the valency of the verb from a primary valency of two to one, and derives an active atelic verb from an active telic verb. Thus A→S.

- e.g. *hani* ‘eat s.t.’  
  *han~hani* ‘eat, be eating’
- *sari* ‘spear s.t.’  
  *sari~sari* ‘go spearing’

Further examples of such reduplication are given in 5.4.4.4.

**Prefixation with ma-**

Some active transitive verbs are attested as having intransitive counterparts derived by prefixation with *ma-* This reduces the valency to one, and derives a non-active atelic verb from an active telic, highly punctual verb, where the transitive O→intransitive S. For example, *bila* ‘shatter s.t.’ → *ma-bila* ‘be shattered’. See discussion in 5.2.2.2.

### 9.2.2.5 Extended transitive verbs

These verbs are frequently referred to in the literature as ditransitive verbs. They are verbs that have a primary valency of three, which is represented in this language by A, O and Oblique. I use the Dixon (1994) term ‘extended transitives’ in that, similarly to ‘extended intransitives’, they obligatorily take an oblique (usually P-object) within their primary valency.
I know only of two verbs, *sile* ‘give’ and *viti* ‘tell’, which always have a valency of three. The O and P-object are able to alternate as shown.

(13) \[ Mo \ viti-ra \ hini-a. \]
    \[ 3\text{SG} \ tell-O:3\text{PL} \ PREP-O:3\text{SG} \]
    ‘Sh/e told them about it.’

(14) \[ Mo \ viti-a \ telei-ra. \]
    \[ 3\text{SG} \ tell-O:3\text{SG} \ PREP-O:3\text{PL} \]
    ‘S/he told it to them.’

(15) \[ Mo \ sile-au \ hini-a. \]
    \[ 3\text{SG} \ give-O:1\text{SG} \ PREP-O:3\text{SG} \]
    ‘S/he gave it to me.’ (lit. he gave me of it)

(16) \[ Mo \ sile-a \ telei-au. \]
    \[ 3\text{SG} \ give-O:3\text{SG} \ PREP-O:1\text{SG} \]
    ‘S/he gave it to me.’

Other verbs as listed below all often function as extended transitives, but only have a primary valency of two, which is often extended to three:

\begin{align*}
\text{vanjangi} & \quad \text{‘teach’} \\
\text{vorongi} & \quad \text{‘show’} \\
\text{dami} & \quad \text{‘ask’} \\
\text{toro} & \quad \text{‘allow’} \\
\text{voli} & \quad \text{‘sell’} \\
\text{kore} & \quad \text{‘tell lie’}
\end{align*}

### Ambitransitive verbs

Verbs are generally either transitive or intransitive in Tamambo, and only a few verbs are attested in the data as functioning both as transitives and as intransitives with no change in form. Most are those where S=A, as follows:

\begin{align*}
\text{alovi} & \quad \text{‘beckon’} \\
\text{unu} & \quad \text{‘hunt’} \\
\text{sora} & \quad \text{‘talk’} (\text{can also be } \text{sora-hi} \ ‘\text{talk about s.t}’)
\end{align*}

The only ambitransitive verb attested in the data as a S=O type is:

\begin{align*}
\text{bosi} & \quad \text{‘turn around’}
\end{align*}

### Open subclass of intransitive verbs

Intransitive verbs in the open subclass have a primary valency of one, with an obligatory subject. They are divided into active and stative verbs.

Semantically, the open subclass of intransitive verbs can be divided into the following, with some examples only given here to illustrate the different semantic roles. All subsets have a large amount of members.
### Table 9.3: Semantic roles of subjects of active and stative intransitive verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active</th>
<th>Intransitive verbs</th>
<th>Stative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+ control</td>
<td>- control</td>
<td>- control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performer S</td>
<td>Experiencer S</td>
<td>Patient S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>damidami ‘pray’</td>
<td>ronjo ‘sick’</td>
<td>mandohi ‘be thirsty’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hanhani ‘eat’</td>
<td>bwatuwah ‘have accident’</td>
<td>banglebang ‘be pregnant’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>korekore ‘tell lies’</td>
<td>burasa ‘have pins and needles’</td>
<td>mwala ‘be naked’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tangtangi ‘wail’</td>
<td>materetere ‘shiver’</td>
<td>marua ‘be hungry’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>walau ‘run’</td>
<td>dum ‘explode’</td>
<td>masova ‘be breathless’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suvu ‘dive’</td>
<td>sale ‘float’</td>
<td>vuso ‘be blind’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>jalo ‘grow along’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dono ‘sink’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nini ‘swell up’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sulu ‘grow upwards’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ronjo ‘sick’</td>
<td>koro ‘be dry’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>banglebang ‘be pregnant’</td>
<td>dovo ‘be rotten’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mwala ‘be naked’</td>
<td>malumalu ‘be shady’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>marua ‘be hungry’</td>
<td>bahocho ‘be curved’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>masova ‘be breathless’</td>
<td>mauliuli ‘be frayed’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vuso ‘be blind’</td>
<td>bere ‘be crooked’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Experiencer subjects are only differentiated from patient subjects in that experiencers must be animate.

Active verbs have more freedom to take tense and aspectual marking than stative verbs, but it depends on the semantics of the verb. For instance, the active verbs in the next two examples have no constraints on the use of TA (11.4.3) or the future marker -mbo (11.3.3) but the following stative verb (dilo) is not able to use le.

**Active:**

(17) Mo-le davindavili.
     ‘He’s walking all around.’

(18) Na-mbo teterahi.
     ‘They will get up.’

**Stative:**

(19) Mo dilo
     ‘He’s bald.’

(20) *Mo-le dilo.
     * ‘He is being/getting bald.’

On the other hand, there are stative (adjectival) verbs that can use TA le in an inchoative or in a continuing imperfective sense, as in

(21) Na-le tawera.
     ‘They are getting big.’ (as with children)

(22) Le mahere?
     ‘Is this correct?’

### 9.2.3.1 Intransitive verbs with transitive counterparts

The applicative process where an intransitive verb is suffixed with -hi or -si (or occasionally other -Ci suffixes) derives a transitive verb. The original S becomes A or O, depending on the verb. See 5.3.2.1 for an extensive discussion.

- S→ O sale ‘float’
- S→ A tinomalio ‘forget’
- S→ A tangi ‘cry’
- sale-hi ‘make s.t. float’
- tinomalio-hi ‘forget s.t./s.o.’
- tangi-si ‘cry for s.o.’
9.2.3.2 Extended intransitives

There is a small subset of intransitive verbs that have a primary valency of two, but whose obligatory arguments are S and an oblique (always a P-object). That is, they cannot take a direct object but must occur with an oblique in a simple verbal clause. These verbs include:

- domtau ‘believe’
- vai lengalenga ‘fool, trick’
- juehi ‘turn back from, stray’
- tinerani ‘watch out for’

For example:

(23) Ka domtau hini God.
1PL believe PREP God
‘We believe in God.’ (#MW’96)

1SG-NEG stray PREP CLFR-P:3SG believe-TR-NOM
‘I didn’t stray from my beliefs.’ (N.ab-ES96)

(25) Votambaluh-i-na mo-te vano ne tamalohi mo vai lengalenga
wife-P:3SG 3SG-NEG go but person 3SG cause cranky
hini-ra.
PREP-O:3PL
‘His wife hadn’t gone but the man fooled them about it.’ (#e.965)

There are other verbs which can be monovalent, but which also frequently take a P-object, such as the following:

- volvoli ‘trade, barter’
- mahanuhanu ‘be shy, embarrassed (about s.t.)’
- donosere ‘choke (on)’
- matahu ‘be frightened (of/ about)’

(26) Na lai na manji niaro na-le volvoli hini-ra.
3PL take ART fish EMPH 3PL-TA trade PREP-O:3PL
‘They took those very fish and used to trade them.’ (E-T43:34)

(27) Mo donosere hini-a, mo vuru...
3SG choke PREP-O:3SG 3SG cough
‘He choked on it and coughed …’ (Nt-T20:113)

(28) Mo soari-a ro mo mahanuhanu hini-a.
3SG see-O:3SG thus 3SG embarrassed PREP-O:3SG
‘He saw it and so was embarrassed about it.’ (Nt-T28:10)

---

4 In the sense of ‘to remember’, tinerani takes a direct object.
5 As a verb, domtau cannot be transitivised, yet surprisingly, here it must take a transitive suffix as part of its nominalisation.
9.2.4 Closed subset of intransitive verbs

These verbs are differentiated from those in the open set in that they are limited by particular grammatical restrictions as to distribution or occurrence with particular person and number. Some have become grammaticalised to some extent. The subsets of motion and posture verbs differ from other intransitive verbs in that one of the seven verbs is always obligatorily used in a core layer same subject serial verb construction (12.4.2 and 12.4.3).

9.2.4.1 Basic motion verbs

Basic motion verbs are a small closed subset of four intransitive verbs:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mai} & \quad \text{‘come’} & \text{jivo} & \quad \text{‘go in down direction’} \\
\text{vano} & \quad \text{‘go’} & \text{sahe} & \quad \text{‘go in up direction’}
\end{align*}
\]

All are used as independent verbs and all are used extensively in serial verb constructions. The first two are general terms indicating movement away from, or movement towards a point of reference.

mai ‘come’

This is most commonly used in its literal sense to denote movement towards the place where the speaker is at the time of speech.

(30) \textit{Ku-mbo ta mai ne ku tele rongovosai savai.}

1SG-FUT REP come but 1SG not.yet know when

‘I’ll come back (here) again but I don’t know when yet.’

It also has several other functions, indicating:

i) direction in a serial verb construction ‘towards’ (see 12.4.3.1 and 12.6.4)

ii) a future time as in:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{wik a mai} & \quad \text{‘next week’ (lit. week to come)} \\
\text{vitu a mai} & \quad \text{next month (lit. month to come)}
\end{align*}
\]

iii) ‘become’ before NPs as in the next two examples:

(31) \textit{Nia mo mai mara viti–viti.}

IP:3SG 3SG come man RED–speak

‘He became a teacher.’ (#e.725)

(32) \textit{Aiente bong, stori niani mo mai hinau retinduhu ne …}

some day story this 3SG come thing true but …

‘Sometimes, these stories become the truth but …’ (Nt-T20:135)
vano ‘go’

Similarly, this verb is most frequently used in its literal sense, as movement away from the reference point that the speaker has established:

i) from speaker as deictic centre, as in

(33)  O vano!
2SG  go
‘Go away!’ (from this place where I am now)

ii) from a reference point that is already established in the discourse or is known to the hearer:

(34) ...na hoso alau, na vano na soari na boe
...3PL  get.to.shore coast direction 3PL go 3PL see ART boar

le turu ...
TA  stand …
‘… they reached the shoreline and went (away from the shore) and saw the pig there …’ (Nk-T44:6)

Verb vano is also used as:

i) a directional indicator in serial verb constructions ‘away’ (12.4.3.1)

ii) an aspectual indicating continuative (12.7.1)

iii) past time, e.g. vitu le vano ‘last month’.

sahe ‘go up’ and jivo ‘go down’

The second pair, sahe ‘go up’ and jivo ‘go down’ are obligatorily used for movement to particular ‘location nouns’, as described in 6.2.4.1 and 6.2.4.2. It is ungrammatical to use words other than jivo or sahe to indicate movement to such locations.

(35) Ku sahe auta
1SG  go.up inland.direction
‘I’m going up “on top”.’

(36) Ku sahe aulu
1SG  go.up up.direction
‘I’m going up to the bush/gardens.’

(37) Ku sahe bosahie
1SG  go.up NE area.
‘I’m going up bosahie way.’

(38) *Ku vano bosahie
1SG  go NE area
*I’m going to bosahie.’

(39) Ku jivo alau.
1SG  go.down coast.direction
‘I’m going down to the shore.’

(40) Ku jivo bosinjivo.
1SG  go.down SW.area
‘I’m going down bosinjivo way.’

(41) Ku sahe nanjingo
1SG  go.up NE corner
‘I went up nanjingo way.’

(42) *Ku vano nanjingo
1SG  go NE corner
*I went to the nanjingo area.’
Table 9.4: Movement to some of the places for which the use of *sahe* or *jivo* is obligatory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>sahe</em> ‘go in up direction’</th>
<th><em>jivo</em> ‘go in down direction’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>aulu</strong> up direction, gardens on top, up in the bush</td>
<td><strong>alau</strong> coast direction, shore, from reference point on land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>auta</strong> inland direction, further than the gardens from reference point of coast; shore, from reference point of sea</td>
<td><strong>atano</strong> on the ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>bosaha</strong> area in NE direction</td>
<td><strong>bosnjivo</strong> area in SW direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>tausaha</strong> up over there in NE direction</td>
<td><strong>taunjivo</strong> down over there in SW direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>nanjingo</strong> coastal area in NE</td>
<td><strong>natavalu</strong> mid-coastal area on east side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanuatu from Australia</td>
<td>All places regarded as a long way from Malo: PNG, Fiji, Australia, and Solomon Islands regardless of compass direction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These motion words are used with these locations from the perspective of an Avunatari speaker, on the west. If one lives ‘down’, that is on the southern coast, say at Ataripoi, then one uses *jivo* ‘go down’ with *nanjingo* to get to the NE corner of the island (see Map 3). Similarly, some of the location nouns (e.g. *auta*) denote different areas of the island from the perspective of an Ataripoi speaker. The verb *vano* ‘go’ is used in reference to travel to islands regarded as relatively close to Malo within Vanuatu, such as Santo, Ambae, Malakula, Pentecost, regardless of north, south, east or west orientation.

9.2.4.2 Posture verbs

This is a small closed subset of three verbs:

- **ate** ‘sit’/ ‘stay’
- **turu** ‘stand’
- **eno** ‘lie’

They can function as can all other active intransitive verbs in their literal sense, but are also used for other functions to indicate:

i) location, in serial verb constructions (12.4.3.2)

ii) ‘be (at)’, as in

(43) *Le ate?*  
TA sit  
‘Is s/he there?’

(44) *Mo-le ate vatarahi.*  
3SG-TA sit wait  
‘S/he’s there waiting.’ (#e.463)

(45) *Ku sahe ku-le eno vatarahi na heletu jala.*  
1SG go.up 1SG-TA lie wait ART pig wild  
‘I went up (to the bush) and was there waiting for the wild pig.’ (#e.464a)

---

This would involve travel in a northerly direction from Ataripoi. By contrast, going ‘north’ in Australian English is usually conveyed by ‘going up’, rather than ‘going down’ as in this example.
Length of time is tied to the semantics of the verb, in that *turu* ‘stand’ denotes a shorter length of time to be somewhere than *ate* ‘sit’, which in turn is a shorter time span than indicated by *eno* ‘lie’.

### 9.2.4.3 Quantitative verbs

There are only three ‘quantitative verbs’. Each of them can be used to quantify a NP argument in a verbal clause.

- **3SG /3PL subject pronoun + *were***
  - ‘many’

- **3SG /3PL subject pronoun + *rihi***
  - ‘not enough, insufficient’

- **3SG /1PL /2PL /3PL subject pronoun + *isonduhu***
  - ‘all’

### Verb *were* ‘many’

An animacy/non-animacy distinction is made with verb *were*. The obligatory subject pronoun is 3SG for non-animates, but is 3PL for animates, as shown in examples. This verb can be marked for polarity.

(46) *mo were*

3SG many

‘there is/was a lot’

(lit.) it is many

(47) *na-te were*

3PL-NEG many

‘there aren’t/weren’t a lot’

(lit.) they are not many

(48) *Ku soari vanua mo were.*

1SG see house 3SG many

‘I saw/see lots of houses.’

(49) *Ku soari manji na were.*

1SG see fish 3PL many

‘I saw/see many fish.’

Similarly,

- **ravavine na were***
  - ‘many women’

- **heletu na were***
  - ‘many pigs’

- **toa na were***
  - ‘many chickens’

but,

- **sala mo were***
  - ‘many paths’

- **litu mo were***
  - ‘many canes’

- **dam mo were***
  - ‘many yams’

### Verb *rihi* ‘insufficient’

I have only two examples with *rihi*, where it is used with 3SG for a singular referent and 3PL for a plural referent.

---

7 No examples exist in my data of 1PL and 2PL with either *were* or *rihi*. Since *isonduhu* is able to take both these plurals, the other quantifying verbs may also be able to do so.
(50) _Hanhan mo rihi._
food 3SG insufficient
‘There’s not enough food.’

(51) _Tamalohi na rihi._
person 3PL insufficient
‘There are not enough people.’

**Verb _isonduhu_ ‘all’**

This quantifying verb can be used with 3SG or any plural subject pronouns following a noun or an independent pronoun argument, according to animacy restrictions. With non-animate referents it can only take 3SG as follows:

(52) _O lai na wewe a isonduhu!_
2PL take ART laplap 3SG all
‘Take all the laplap!’ (a kind of food) (#e.683)

(53) _Nia mo lai na lanje mo isonduhu._
IP:3SG 3SG take ART coral 3SG all
‘He took all the coral.’ (#e.682SV)

But with human arguments (any plural number) it takes the person and number, as appropriate to that argument:

(54) _Kamim no isonduhu no mai!_
IP:2PL 2PL all 2PL come
‘You all come!’ (#c.205)

(55) _tamalohi na isonduhu_
person 3PL all
‘all the people’(who are here) / ‘everyone’ (who was expected)

(56) _Are na lahi, ka isonduhu ka-mbo rongo a duhu._
if 3PL marry 1PL all 1PL-FUT feel 3SG good
‘If they get married, we’ll all be pleased.’ (#c.1095)

When _isonduhu_ is used to refer to animals, either 3SG or 3PL is acceptable for a plural number of referents.

(57) _Mo lai na toa mo isonduhu /na isonoduhu._
3SG take ART chicken 3SG all /3PL all
‘He took all the chickens.’ (e.#SV/NC)

A distinction is made semantically between the quantifying verb _isonduhu_ ‘all’ and the quantifier _vevesai_ ‘each of’, ‘every’ (see 6.4.3.1). Where the quantity is known, as in ‘all of you’, ‘all the food’, ‘all the people’ (who are here), then _isonduhu_ is used. But where the quantity is not known, _vevesai_ is preferred, as in:

---

8 3SG irrealis because event has not been realised.
9.2.4.4 Meteorological verbs

These verbs take a ‘dummy’ subject and have zero valency. They are cliticised with the 3SG preverbal subject pronominal within the inner core of the verb phrase, but the subject slot in the outer core cannot be filled by either an independent pronoun or a noun.

All words listed as meteorological verbs can also function as nouns (see 6.2.6).

Times of the day:
- *mo rani* ‘it is/was daylight’
- *mo buteng* ‘it is/was midday’
- *mo dondo* ‘it/was nighttime’

Tides:
- *mo ua* ‘the tide is/was up’
- *mo mati* ‘the tide is/was down’

Weather/other natural phenomena:
- *mo kiri* ‘it rains/it rained’
- *mo alo* ‘it’s sunny/it was sunny’
- *mo langi* ‘it’s windy/it was windy’
- *mo mahariri* ‘it’s cold/it was cold’
- *mo tutun* ‘it’s hot/it was hot’
- *mo mui* ‘there is/was an earthquake’

‘Tides’ and ‘weather’ words are more verb-like than the ‘times of the day’ words, in that most can be also used with either 3SG irrealis or TA particle *le* denoting a present occurrence in process, as in:

- *a kiri* ‘it may rain’
- *le kiri* ‘it’s raining (right now)’
- *le ua* ‘the tide is coming up’
- *le mati* ‘the tide is going down’

Additionally, ‘times of the day’ words do not indicate polarity, whereas some (but not all) ‘weather/natural phenomena’ words can use a negative, for instance:

- *mo-te kiri* ‘it’s not /wasn’t raining’
- *mo-te alo* ‘it’s not /wasn’t sunny’
- *mo-te mahariri* ‘it’s not /wasn’t cold’

but not

* *mo-te mui* ‘there’s no earthquake’

Two of the weather words also exhibit more prototypical verb-like characteristics in that one can be reduplicated to indicate intensity, and one suffixed to derive a transitive verb:
mo lang–langi  ‘it’s very windy’
mo kiri-si-a  ‘it rained on it/him/her’

9.2.4.5 Negative verb tete

Similarly to meteorological words functioning as verbs, the negative verb tete can only be used with 3SG, which is always obligatory. However, tete can have a valency of zero or of one. (12.4.7.3 shows the use of the negative verb in a serial verb construction.)

Zero valency

With zero valency, there is a dummy subject and the subject slot cannot be filled with a NP or independent pronoun. This is the most common use of the negative verb as follows:

(59)  Mo tete.
3SG negative ‘No’.

The 3SG pronoun can also be irrealis as in answering in the negative to a question about the future to which one cannot know the answer.

(60)  A kiri?  A tete.
3SG.IRR rain 3SG.IRR negative ‘Will it/might it rain?’ ‘No.’

But if you know the answer to an event in the future, because it is dependent on your own decisions or other knowledge, then mo tete is correct.

(61)  O-mbo vano ana maket avuho?  Mo tete.
2SG-FUT go PREP market tomorrow 3SG negative ‘Are you going to the market tomorrow?’ ‘No.’

The negative verb tete can also have a negative existential meaning, with a ‘dummy’ subject, as in the following:

(62)  Tuai, Natamabo, mo tete tamalohi...
long.ago Malo 3SG negative person ‘Long ago, on Malo, there were no people …’ (Nk-T80:3)

(63)  Ne mo tete a rongo-ra ro na alo na sahe auta.
but 3SG negative 3SG hear-O:3PL thus 3PL swim 3PL go.up shore.direction ‘But there was no-one to hear them so they swam up to the shore.’ (N.ch.-T4:10)
Valency of one (existential use)

Where tete functions with a valency of one, the intransitive subject precedes the verb as in a prototypical verb phrase, as shown below. Both singular and plural can only be represented by 3SG marking.

(64)  ... biskete nia mo tete.
      biscuit IP:3SG 3SG negative
   ‘…(but) there weren’t biscuits.’ (C-T89.29)

(65)  Tuai, bisuroi mo tete.
      long.ago bisuroi.yam 3SG negative
   ‘Long ago, there were no bisuroi yams.’ (Nk-T38:2)

(66)  … ne no-ra boi~mboi-a mo tete telei te
      but CLFR-P:3PL RED~like-NOM 3SG negative PREP INDEF

tamalohi nira na-le mai.
      person IP: 3PL 3PL-TA come
   ‘… but they didn’t like any of the men who were coming.’ (lit. their liking it was negative towards any men coming) (Nt-T20:117)

9.2.4.6 Adjectival verbs

Within the list of closed stative verbs are the adjectival verbs of the small subsets of:

- dimension
- difference ‘be different’
- colour ‘be red/ black/ blue-green/yellow/ white’
- value ‘be good/bad’
- difficulty ‘be hard/easy’
- age ‘of long ago’.

These are described in detail in Chapter 10.

9.2.4.7 Interrogative verbs

Tamambo has an intransitive interrogative verb, siva ‘to do what’.

(67)  Mo siva?
      3SG do.what
   ‘What’s s/he doing?’

This is often abbreviated to the exclamation, always with 3SG to:

(68)  Mosva! ‘Whatever happened!’

But siva is not limited to 3SG only.

(69)  Mo-iso na-mbo siva?
      3SG-finish 3PL-FUT do.what
   ‘Then what will they do?’ (Nt-T20:62)
The intransitive verb can be suffixed to increase valency with -hi or -ni, which reflects a difference in the degree of control of the subject. The -hi suffix intimates a high degree of control on the part of the subject, and means ‘to intentionally do what with/to/about/for s.o./s.t.’. Objects are often, but not necessarily, animate.

(70)  
\[\text{O siva-hi tasi-ku?} \]
\[\text{2SG do.what-TR younger.sibling-P:1SG} \]
‘What have you done to my little brother?’ (Nt-T50:6)

(71)  
\[\text{Hinau na-le vano, ka dam na tamalohi ...aaaa...} \]
\[\text{thing/s 3PL-TA go 1PL ask ART말로hi ...aaaa...} \]
‘...o voli-a te o-siva-hi-a’?
\[\text{...2SG sell-O:3SG or 2SG-do.what-TR-O:3SG} \]
‘Stuff is disappearing, and we ask people ... aaah ... “did you sell it or what did you do with it?” ’ (C-T68:164)

(72)  
\[\text{Mo mai ku viti-a hini-a, mo re} \]
\[\text{3SG come 1SG speak-O:3SG PREP-O:3SG 3SG say} \]
‘Ka-mbo siva-hi-a bumbu?’
\[\text{1PL-FUT do.what-TR-O:3SG grandma} \]
‘She came and I spoke to her about it and she said, “What will we do about it grandma?” ’ (C-T86:101)

Suffix -ni suggests less control on the part of the subject, so that sivani, frequently abbreviated to sivan’, means ‘cause what to happen,’ ‘make what happen’, with no surety that something can be organised to happen. It is lower in valency than sivahi.

(73)  
\[\text{O soari tovona tanume mo lai-ho ku-mbo} \]
\[\text{2SG see now devil 3SG take-O:2SG 1SG-FUT} \]
\[\text{siva-ni-ho?} \]
\[\text{make.what.happen-TR-O:2SG} \]
‘See now the devil has got you what am I going to fix up for you?’ (lit. ...what will I make happen for you) (Nt-T33:19)

(74)  
\[\text{Bole o siva-n’ o mai nian?} \]
\[\text{well 2SG make.what.happen-TR 2SG come here} \]
‘Well then what did you manage to do to get here?’ (lit. you made what happen to come here) (Nt-T33:50)

This verb can, in fact, take a 3SG ‘dummy’ subject, as in the following:

(75)  
\[\text{Tina-na mo dami-a mo re ‘Voi, vo-natu-ku} \]
\[\text{mother-P:3SG 3SG ask-O:3SG 3SG say mum FEM-child-P:1SG} \]
The interrogative verbs cannot be marked for polarity.

**9.3 The verb phrase and its obligatory components**

Verb phrases occur in the same form in independent declarative clauses, imperatives and questions. They comprise obligatory and non-obligatory components, which are discussed in turn. The only obligatory components of a verb phrase are the:

- **Subject pronoun + head**

The head can be a:

i) transitive or intransitive verb (including adjectival)

ii) serial verb construction (transitive or intransitive)

iii) multi-function word (noun functioning as an intransitive verb)

iv) location noun (functioning as an intransitive verb).

The head can be modified by prehead and posthead modifiers as described in 9.4. Given that the head can be other than a word *classed* as a verb, it could well be argued that ‘predicator phrase’ would be a more felicitous term. However, a prototypical predicate here is a verb, and the terminology ‘verb phrase’ is well established in descriptions of Oceanic languages with a variety of predicates (e.g. Mosel and Hovdhaugen 1992: 330) and so the term is used as a convenient label.

**9.3.1 Preverbal subject pronouns**

A subject pronoun as a preverbal clitic precedes the head of a verb phrase, although it is sometimes possible for this subject pronoun to be deleted in restricted environments where *le*, primarily analysed as a TA marker, is used (see 11.4.5). Where an independent pronoun or a full NP functions as the subject of a verbal clause, the preverbal subject pronouns fulfil the function of cross-referencing in the verb phrase the person and number of the subject. NP or independent pronoun subjects are not obligatory if ‘recoverable’ from context. As Lynch et al. (2002:83) note,

‘in all probability in POc, as in many Oceanic languages, the typical clause in narrative or conversation had no core noun phrase, or at most one, as the task of referent tracking was performed by the clitics, which also remained when the relevant noun phrase was present.’

This is the situation in Tamambo for subjects, and referent tracking can at times be difficult for non-native speakers with a plethora of 3SG subject pronominal clitics and few NPs.

Although a preverbal subject pronoun cliticises to the next rightward component in the VP, it is the preference of native speakers to write the subject pronouns separately, and that
convention is followed in the description. For ease of reference, the obligatory preverbal subject pronoun forms are listed here:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronoun</th>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Lightweight Forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ku</td>
<td>1SG</td>
<td>ka 1PL E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>2SG</td>
<td>no 2PL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mo/a</td>
<td>3SG</td>
<td>na 3PL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ka</td>
<td>1PL I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A differentiation can be made, if necessary, between 1PL Inclusive and 1PL Exclusive by the addition of the independent pronouns *hinda* and *kamam* as shown:

- *hinda ka* 1PL.I
- *kamam ka* 1PL.E

The difference in use between *mo* and *a* for 3SG is one of realis and irrealis and this is described in 11.3.1 and 11.3.2.

### 9.3.2 Head of the verb phrase

The form of the verb does not vary within the phrase, except for reduplication and or the possible addition of valency-changing affixes (Chapter 5). Examples are given below of verb phrases within the basic Speech Act types of indicative, imperative and interrogative.

#### 9.3.2.1 Transitive or intransitive verb as head

**Independent declarative clause:**

(76) *Mo tuwa na asi…*

3SG put.around.waist ART rope

‘He put the rope around his waist…’ (Nt-T82: 5)

**Imperative:**

(77) *Mui, o tawera!*

earthquake 2SG big

‘Earthquake, be a big one!’ (Nt-T40:84)

**Question:**

(78) *A-iso-ro matani tamaute na mai?*

3SG-finish.thus because white.person 3PL come?

‘Perhaps because the white people came?’ (C-T86:56)

#### 9.3.2.2 Serial verb constructions as head

Two or three verbs can function as a single head in a serial verb construction, with the same number of arguments as if there was only one verb as head. All verbs functioning in serial constructions are verbs that can otherwise operate independently as head of a verb phrase. They are not the same as the phrasal adverbs that function as ‘verb-like’ modifiers within a VP, as described in 9.4.2. (For a full description and analysis of serial verb constructions see Chapter 12.)
Independent declarative clauses:

Core layer serialisation

(79) ... ta-Ambae mo dono mo jivo ana tarusa.

belong-Ambae 3SG sink 3SG go.down PREP sea

‘… the Ambae man drowned in the sea.’ (Nk-T67:59)

Nuclear layer serialisation

(80) ...na-mbo mule, na re sava mo vano na domdomi sai

3PL-FUT go.home 3PL say what 3SG go 3PL think search

sala.

path

‘... they would go home, (so) they keep on asking how until they get an idea.’ (Nt-T20:65)

Imperative:

(81) O tau sohi-a!

2SG put.in.place hide-O:3SG

‘Hide it!’ (#c.299)

Question:

(82) O matavosai o sevu mo-isoro o sahe ate?

2SG be able 2SG hang 3SG-finish-thus 2SG go.up sit

‘Can you hang upside down and then go back up there?’ (Nt-T29.3)

9.3.2.3 Multi-function words as head

A few words that are primarily classed as nouns (6.2.6) can fill the slot as head of a verb phrase.

(83) Tovon ku-le skul iau ku-le boi mats...

when 1SG-TA school IP:1SG 1SG-TA like maths

‘When I was going to school, I used to like maths ...’ (N.ab-T10:13)

(84) Tama-ra mo sumbwe mo losu boe...

father-P:3PL 3SG chief 3SG strike pig

‘Their father became a chief and killed pigs ...’ (Nt-T20:25)

Other words, such as times of the day (‘meteorological’ verbs listed in 9.2.4.4) and hinat ‘thing’, also multi-function word sohena, can also function as verbs, but are restricted to marking with the 3SG subject pronoun or TA le.

(85) Mo turu mo hisi mo butengi.

3SG stand 3SG touch 3SG midday

‘He stood (there) until it was midday.’ (Nk-T13:10)
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(86) Ku tau-a  mo hinau ana oneone.
     1SG place-O:3SG 3SG thing PREP beach
     ‘I left it there on the beach.’ (lit. I place(d) it, it something-ed on the beach)
     (#c.244)

(87) ... a sohena mo-le viti-a.
     3SG the.same 3SG-TA tell-O:3SG
     ‘… it would be the same as he says.’  (N-T13:16)

Such examples in the data are only of declarative clauses, although there appears no reason why they should not also occur in questions or imperatives.

9.3.2.4 Location noun as head

Usually, location nouns such as alolo ‘inside’, auta ‘inland direction’, atano ‘down on the ground’, etc., function as locative arguments, such as in na ate alolo ‘they stay inside’. Just one example of such a noun functioning as a predicate exists in the data:

(88) Nira na alolo mo-iso.
     IP:3PL 3PL inside 3SG-finish
     ‘They were already inside.’  (N-T20:64)

9.3.2.5 Borrowings as head

Where verbs are borrowed from Bislama, they are used in the same way as in a Tamambo verb phrase, such as in these two examples from two different ten year olds:

(89) mo blokem-i-ra
     3SG block-i-O:3PL
     ‘he prevented them’  (Nt-T48:7)

(90) O mat’sai⁹ o helpem-iau.
     2SG be.able 2SG help-O:1SG
     ‘You can help me.’ (Nt-T62:7)

They have used Bislama verbs blokem and helpem, already with their transitive verb ending -em, and have used them within a Tamambo verb phrase structure. Both too have accorded with the phonological rules of the language concerning syllable structure.

9.4 Optional components of the verb phrase

There are approximately thirty modifiers which can combine with the Subject Pronoun and Head in the verb phrase. They function to express modality or aspectual marking, or to modify the verb according to parameters of manner, location/direction or result. Some occur prehead and some occur posthead, and the order in which they can occur is shown in Table 9.5.

⁹ Abbreviated, as in most children’s speech, from matavosai.
The posthead modifiers that directly modify verbs, which indicate manner, directional movement and non-result, behave in many ways like verbs. They could well be regarded as a semi-open class in the language, in that it seems very likely that certain verbs are predisposed towards this modifying role and could move into a more restricted role as modifiers (see discussion on grammaticalisation pathways in 12.8). Most of these modifiers end in -i, -si or -hi as do many transitive verbs, and many of those that occur posthead can be suffixed with an object pronoun as can a transitive verb. Consequently, they could well be regarded a sub-class of verbs, but they have no existence independent of the verb which they modify. They cannot function as the head of a verb phrase or take an object pronoun independent of the verb. In this analysis, they are not regarded as components of serial verb constructions, although it is highly likely that they have moved from that function (see 12.8.2.1). So in spite of their verbal characteristics, their synchronic function is as modifiers of verbs, hence the label ‘adverb’ in this description (9.4.2).

Table 9.5: Order of possible components of the verb phrase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obligatory (shaded) and optional components</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  Subject pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2  Modality markers of Realis mo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Aspectuals le</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  Negative te</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  Negative aspectuals tele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6  Manner modifiers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7  Manner modifiers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Modifiers within any numbered position are mutually exclusive. However, a modifier from one slot can cooccur with another from another slot in the same VP, with the following provisos:

i) when mo is used as a residual realis marker (11.3.1) it is not used with any other modifier

ii) FUT -mbo cannot occur with any of Slot 4 except le (11.3.3).

More detail on each of these restrictions is provided as each modifier is discussed. The semantics of the verb in the VP will also necessarily restrict which modifiers are used. All grammatical forms that indicate tense, aspect or modality with the verb phrase, i.e. all modifiers in Slots 2, 3 and 4, are described in detail in Chapter 11. The exception is the negative particle te which is described below.

9.4.1 Negative te

Negative particle te can occur in Slot 4 of the Verb Phrase. It is clearly related to negative verb tete (9.2.4.5). It can occur with verb phrases with an event time prior to speech time, as in:
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(91) Vavine atea mo-te soari-a le mai ...
woman one 3SG-NEG see-O:3SG TA come
‘One girl didn’t see it coming …’ (WI-T8:15)

It can occur in the sense of habitual present, such as the next two examples:

(92) Tamalohi na mai na dami kamim no-te boi-ra,
person 3PL come 3PL ask IP:2PL 2PL-NEG like-O:3PL
no-te manjinga....
2PL-NEG agree
‘Men come and ask for you both and you don’t like them, you don’t agree …’
(Nt-T20:8)

(93) … ne ka-te tau na wewe ana hambu ...
…but 1PL –NEG put.in.place ART laplap PREP fire
‘ … but we don’t put the laplap on the fire…’ (E-T59.14)

There is no variation for imperatives:

(94) O-te lus na no-ku buk!
2SG-NEG lose ART CLFR.P:1SG book
‘Don’t lose my book!’ (#e.124)

Negative te does not allow any other modifier between the subject pronominal clitic and itself. Additionally, there are no examples in the data of a modifier occurring between te and the head.

There is no grammatical way of expressing what could be called a ‘negative progressive’, by using TA le with te, other than with lete ‘never’. So that to express an idea such as ‘He’s not doing it’, the potentially ambiguous unmarked form must be used, or negative aspectuals can be used (11.4.6).

(95) Mo-te loli-a.
3SG-NEG do-O:3SG
‘He didn’t do it.’/ ‘He’s not doing it.’

Similarly, if one wanted to verify if someone was at home or not, right there and then, the following would be used:

(96a) Io, na-le ate. or (96b) Motete, na-te ate.
yes 3PL-TA sit no 3PL-NEG sit
‘Yes, they’re there.’ ‘No, they’re not there.’

Negative marker te cannot occur with the FUT marker -mbo, since -mbo indicates a confident expectation that an event will be realised. Instead, for 3SG, the a irrealsis is used, as in:
(97) Mo matahu matan taura-na a-te mai.
3SG frightened SUB uncle-P:3SG 3SG-NEG come
‘He is afraid that his uncle might not come.’ (#e.978)

And for person and number other than 3SG, only the usual preverbal subject pronouns can be used with the negative. There is not the 3SG option of irrealis. This means that the time of the event is potentially ambiguous, and must be understood from context or by additional lexemes. It can be seen that the following could have various interpretations depending on context.

(98) Mo matahu matan bula-na dam na-te sula.
3SG frightened SUB CLFR-P:3SG yam 3PL-NEG grow
‘S/he is/was afraid that her yams didn’t grow/are not growing/won’t grow/mightn’t grow.’ (#e.551)

9.4.2 Phrasal adverbs

Approximately twenty phrasal adverbs function closely with the verb to modify the manner, direction, location or speaker attitude to the proposition. Only four such modifiers are attested as occurring in the slot immediately preceding the verb head, with many more possible posthead, immediately following the verb head. There are no examples in the data of a prehead and posthead phrasal adverb occurring in the same VP.

9.4.2.1 Modifiers of manner (prehead)

All prehead modifiers of manner occur in Slot 5 of the VP. All express some idea of the degree or manner of participation in the event, whether the participation is skilful, or faked, or done independently or without any planning. These modifiers can be cliticised by the subject pronominal as its closest rightward host. They can cooccur with future particle -mbo but are not attested in the data as occurring with either negative te or TA le.

**hase** ‘by oneself’, ‘independently’

This modifier emphasises that the subject of the verb is acting independently of others, without any help from anyone else.

(99) Ku hase vano.
1SG by.self go
‘I went by myself.’ (#c.377)

(100) A-mbo hase loli-a.
3SG-FUT by.self do-O:3SG
‘He’ll do it by himself.’

(101) No-na simba mo hase tai-a.
CLFR-P:3SG knife 3SG by.self cut-O:3SG
‘Her knife accidentally cut her.’ (lit. her knife by itself cut her) (W1-T8:16)
mandi ‘simply’, ‘merely’

This modifier indicates participation that is unexpected or unplanned. The speaker may even be somewhat surprised because the event occurs regardless of whatever else had happened previously. It just ‘simply’ happens, in the sense of something that happens ‘just like that’ without necessarily planning that it should happen, or thinking about it beforehand.

(102) *Mo vano mo mate, ku mandi loli-a.*
3SG go 3SG die 1SG simply do-O:3SG
‘Time went on, she died and I simply just did it.’ (C-T86:147)

(103) *Na mandi soari-a matani mo randa…*
3PL simply see-O:3SG because 3SG clear
‘They simply saw it because it was clear…’ (Nt-T20:56)

(104) *Mo dondo mo mandi mule vano asa-na.*
3SG night 3SG simply head.home go tradit.place-P:3SG
‘Night came and he simply went back to his own place.’ (N.ch-T6:10)

(105) …*na mandi mai sohen ka-le soari-a barindi.*
3PL simply come like 1PL-TA see-O:3SG today
‘…they simply became as we see (it) today.’ (Nk-T21:16)

andi ‘good at’, ‘skilful’

This modifier suggests an ability to do something skilfully, whether or not the referent is participating in that activity at that time or not.

(106) *Mo andi loli hinau.*
3SG good.at do thing
‘He is good at doing things.’ (#e.VD12/7)

(107) *Tamalohi na haso-a matani mo andi walau asena.*
person 3PL praise-O:3SG because 3SG good.at run INTEN
‘People admire him because he’s extremely good at running.’ (#e.424)

(108) *Mo andi sora~sora.*
3SG good.at RED~talk
‘He speaks very well.’ (#e.NC)

limbo ‘pretend’

Use of this modifier indicates that the subject gives an erroneous impression of carrying out, or having carried out, the event.

(109) *Tamalohi mo limbo vai-a matan votambaluhi-na mo vano*
person 3SG pretend do-O:3SG SUB wife-P:3SG 3SG go
Alotu ne mo-te vano.
Santo but 3SG-NEG go
‘The man pretended that his wife had gone to Santo but she hadn’t gone.’ (#e.964)

(110) Emma mo limbo loli-a matan a mai vavine vosai.
E. 3SG pretend do-O:3SG SUB 3SG come woman perfect
‘Emma pretended to become a very good girl.’ (#e.1156)

When reduplicated, this modifier can indicate a progressive meaning in an intransitive clause, as shown. It is not used with TA le to indicate a progressive.

(111a) Na limbo~limbo sohi.
(111b) *Na-le limbo sohi.
3PL RED~pretend hide
‘They were pretending to hide.’ (#c.545)

9.4.2.2 Modifiers of manner (posthead)

All posthead modifiers follow directly after the verb head. If a transitive verb is the head of the VP, the object pronoun follows or cliticises to the posthead modifier, unless a full NP is functioning as the direct object of the VP.

Four of the posthead manner adverbs, tamahi, vonotahi, wanju(-hi) and toho/tohi, end with or can be suffixed with -hi. As previously mentioned, -hi can function as a transitivising suffix to a number of independent intransitive verbs (5.3.2.1) and there are also number of transitive verbs ending in -hi, which are not segmentable. The morphology of these manner adverbs suggests that they may have been independent verbs at an earlier stage and have moved into a more limited modifying role over time.

All these modifiers indicate some result. Head verbs can be realised ‘quietly’, ‘carelessly’, ‘really well’, ‘quickly’, or ‘with difficulty’, but there is a result that was either obtained or anticipated.

**tamahi ‘with difficulty’**

This modifier expresses the realisation or potential realisation of an event that is deemed extraordinarily difficult to carry out. The speaker is indicating that they cannot possibly imagine how the subject of the verb will realise the event, and often does not want to think about the difficulty involved in doing it. There are no examples of this modifier occurring with intransitives.¹⁰

(112) O loli tamahi-a?
2SG do with.difficulty-O:3SG
‘How on earth did you do it?’ (#725)

(113) Ku wala tiu tamahi-ho.
1SG go.about leave with.difficulty-O:2SG
‘I am going off and leaving you with difficulty.’ (Nt-T71:9)

¹⁰ In this it appears similar to vonotahi; note that both end with hi, indicating perhaps an earlier fusing of the transitive suffix –hi.
wanju (hi) ‘quietly’

This modifier takes the simple wanju form when modifying intransitive verbs, as with:

(114)  
O sahasaha wanju!  
2SG work quietly  
‘Work quietly!’ (#c.584)  

(115)  
O ate wanju!  
2SG sit quietly  
‘Be quiet!’ (#c.621b)  

In this form, the modifier can be used attributively with nouns, but cannot be used independently as a predicate.

(116)  
Nia tamalohi wanju.  
IP-3SG person quiet  
‘He’s a quiet/gentle man.’

(117)  
*Tamalohi mo wanju.  
person 3SG quiet  
*The man is quiet.’

But when the modifier follows a transitive verb, the transitive -hi is suffixed to wanju:

(118)  
O hani wanju-hi-a!  
2SG eat quietly-TR-O:3S G  
‘Eat it quietly!’ (#c.621)  

(119)  
Mo loli wanju-hi-a.  
3SG do quietly-TR-O:3SG  
‘He did it quietly.’ (#e583)

toho/tohi ‘fast’

This is another of the posthead manner modifiers that can end in -hi. Modifying an intransitive verb, this modifier takes the form of toho, as in

(120)  
Aka mo mai toho.  
boat 3SG come fast  
‘The boat came fast.’ (#c.228)  

(121)  
Camilla mo-le haraha toho.  
Camilla 3SG-TA crawl fast  
‘Camilla is crawling fast.’ (#c.324)

But when modifying a transitive verb, this modifier changes to tohi:

(122)  
O hani tohi-a!  
2SG eat fast-O:3SG  
‘Eat it quickly!’ (#c.620)

The next example shows the modifier with both intransitive and transitive verbs.

(123)  
Matani are na sora toho, ka-te matavosai ka-mbo  
because if 3PL talk fast 1PL-NEG be.able 1PL-FUT  

rongo tohi-a...  
hear fast-O:3SG  
‘Because if they talk fast, we won’t be able to catch on quickly…’ (C-T68:90)

vonotahi ‘carelessly’

This modifier ending in -hi is similar to tamahi (earlier in this section) in that -hi is not separable. Semantically, it indicates that the head verb is realised, but the realisation is carried out in a careless manner. I have no examples of this modifier being used with an intransitive verb. The object pronoun, or the full NP as object, follow the modifier.
Verbs and the verb phrase

(124) Mo sahe vonotahi-a
3SG fix carelessly-O:3SG
‘He fixed it carelessly.’ (#e.770)

(125) Nira na loli vonotahi na vanua niani.
IP:3PL 3PL do carelessly ART house this
‘They built this house in a careless way.’ (#e.936)

(vosa)vosai ‘perfectly’
As vosai ‘perfect’, ‘really good’, this term can be used as an attributive modifier to a noun, as in Nia vavine vosai ‘She’s a very nice woman’, but cannot be used predicatively. It is similar to wanju ‘quiet’ in this respect. As a verbal modifier, examples are as follows:

(126) Voi le tau~tau vosai matan a sahe aulu.
mum TA RED~put.in.place perfect SUB 3SG go.up up.direction
‘Mum is getting everything ready to go up to the gardens.’ (#e.39)

(127) Mo-ta ate vosai.
3SG-REP sit perfect
‘He is reinstated.’11 (lit. he again sits well) (#c.633)

This modifier is verb-like in that it is able to reduplicate, but is unusual in that the reduplicated form must be used to modify transitive verbs rather than intransitive. As with other posthead phrasal adverbs, the O of a transitive verb follows the modifier.

(128) Ku viti vosa~vosai-a.
1SG tell RED~perfect-O:3SG
‘I corrected him.’ (#e.395)

(129) Mo saha vosa~vosai-a.
3SG fix RED~perfect-O:3SG
‘He fixed it up very well.’ (#e.395b)

9.4.2.3 Modifiers of location or direction
These are posthead modifiers that can occur in Slot 6 of the VP. They indicate the direction or place relevant to the event realisation of the head verb. If the direction or location is to be indicated relative to somewhere else, a full NP object or object pronoun follows the modifier.

The modifiers include lalihi ‘in turn’, ‘back and forth, lulusi ‘all over the place’, maravitu(-hi) ‘near’, dalihahi ‘all about’, bwaki ‘encircling’, wotowotongi ‘facing’. It is probable that there are others, as directional and locational concepts play an important part in Tamambo discourse. All can be used in conjunction with intransitive or transitive head verbs.

Such modifiers can be candidates for a possible change of grammatical status to a compound component. I suggest that one, tusi ‘across’, has not only moved from a verb to

11 It was explained to me that this expression is used when someone may have lost some position of importance, and has won it back or been given it back.
a modifier, but is well on the way to becoming a compound component. As such, it is not included here in the discussion of phrasal adverbs, but is discussed in 12.8.2.2.

**lalihi ‘back and forth’**

This modifier suggests constant movement going from one place to another. Where there is a single subject, it suggests movement such as ‘to and fro’, ‘back and forth’, never staying long in one place. Where there is a plural subject, it denotes that the various subjects all have a turn at Verb-ing. As such, it could perhaps be included in modifiers of manner. Modifier *lalihi* can be used with both intransitive and transitive verbs.

(130) *Le eno, mo-iso mala atea nia le avu lalihi.*  
TA lie 3SG-finish hawk one IP:3SG TA fly back.forth  
‘There he was, and then a hawk was flying to and fro.’ (Nt-T45:3)

(131) *Na sora lalihi-a.*  
3PL talk back.forth-O:3SG  
‘They talked in turn about it.’ (#e.1171)

**lulusi ‘all over’**

This modifier is similar to *lalihi*, in the sense that it indicates movement in different places, but *lulusi* emphasises the idea of spreading movement over a large area.

(132) *Na walau lulusi.*  
3PL run all.over  
‘They ran about all over the place.’ (#e.772)

(133) *Bongi dondo-i kiri mo lai lulusi na tukahenja.*  
time night-LINK rain 3SG take all.over ART sky  
‘Big dark clouds filled the sky.’ (#e.907)

(134) *Hambu-hani mo lai lulusi-a hina banoi.*  
fire-eat 3SG take all.over-O:3SG PREP volcanic.ash  
‘The volcano covered everything with ash.’ (#e.855)

**maravitu(-hi) ‘near’**

This has a locational meaning of ‘being closeby’, ‘near’. The following examples are with intransitive verbs:

(135) *Mo-le ovi maravitu.*  
3SG-TA live near  
‘He lives closeby.’ (#e.183)

(136) *Le mai maravitu a kakau Ambakarihi.*  
TA come near 3SG reach A.  
‘He was nearly at Ambakarihi.’ (Nk-T41:23)
Verbs and the verb phrase

(137) *Ku-le ate maravitu telei pilot.*
1SG-TA sit near PREP pilot
‘I was sitting next to the pilot.’ (#c.328)

The next two examples are interesting in that transitivising *-hi* is suffixed to *maravitu* when it follows the intransitive verbs of motion *vano* and *mai*:

(138) *Mo turu tovon mo-le vano maravitu-hi-a ...*
3SG stand when 3SG-TA go near-TR-O:3SG
‘So when she was going close to him …’ (Nt-T74:25)

(139) *Na-ta vano na loli vuro, na mai maravitu-hi Avunavevaba.*
3PL-REP go 3PL do war 3PL come near-TR A
‘They went again and fought, (and) came close to Avunavevaba.  (Nk-T41:25)

dalihahi ‘all about’

This modifier indicates being in many different places at the same time or within a short time, being or going ‘all about’ the place. There are no examples in the data with a transitive verb, but it would seem likely that it could modify transitive verbs, similarly to other posthead modifiers.

(140) *Mo walau dalihahi Natamambo.*
3SG run all.about Malo
‘He ran all about in Malo.’ (Nt-T20:13)

It can be reduplicated for intensity:

(141) *Manji rindi hisa-na hurumbuewari na mo ate dali~dalihahi...*
animal REF name-P:3SG H. 3PL REAL sit

RED—all.about
‘Those shellfish called Hurumbuewari were just everywhere …’(Nt-T74:8)

bwaki ‘encircling’

This indicates some sort of circular state or motion, and often can be translated as ‘around’. However, since English ‘around’ has often a more general notion of location or movement ‘all about’, *bwaki* is glossed as ‘encircling’ in order to differentiate it from other similar modifiers.

(142) *Mwera rindi a welu, a welu bwaki, a-iso*
boy REF 3SG dance 3SG dance encircling 3SG-finish

*a welu a sahe ana wota-na ...*
3SG dance 3SG go.up PREP platform-P:3SG
‘The boy would dance, he’d dance all around, and after that he’d dance up to his pig-killing platform …’ (E-T58:8)
\[(143) \ ...na ate bwaki na tahasi rindi. \\
\quad 3PL sit encircling ART stone REF \\
\quad ‘… they were there encircling the rock.’ (Nt-T74:8)\]

**wotowotongi ‘facing’**

This modifier derives from intransitive verb *wotowoto* ‘aim straight’. I have one example only in the data, modifying an intransitive verb.

\[(144) Mo mai mo turu wotowotongi na vu-tavoa ... \\
\quad 3SG come 3SG stand facing ART tree-tavoa \\
\quad ‘He came and stood facing the tavoa tree …’ (Nt-T27:5)\]

### 9.4.2.4 Non-resultative modifiers

These four posthead modifiers are grouped together as ‘non-resultative’ in this description. They indicate that no result is necessarily anticipated from the event of the main head verb, or that no result is possible from that event.

**lesi ‘try’**

\[(145) Mo hao lesi mo-iso mo jovi. \\
\quad 3SG climb try 3SG-finish 3SG fall \\
\quad ‘He tried to climb and then he fell.’ (#e.516)\]

\[(146) O mai o ruru lesi-a! \\
\quad 2SG come 2SG dress try-O:3SG \\
\quad ‘Come and try it on!’ (#e.519)\]

\[(147) Avuho ka-mbo loli lesi-a. \\
\quad tomorrow 1PL-FUT do try-O:3SG \\
\quad ‘Tomorrow, we’ll try and do it!’ (Nt-T42:41)\]

but not

\[(148) *Ka-mbo lesi-a! \\
\quad 1PL-FUT try-O:3SG \\
\quad ‘We’ll try it.’\]

**vatarahi ‘wait’**

This modifier suggests that even a possible result is unknown. It is used to modify basic posture verbs (9.2.4.2).

\[(149) Mo-le turu vatarahi-a. \\
\quad 3SG-TA stand wait-O:3SG \\
\quad ‘He stood waiting for it/him/her.’ (#e.463)\]

\[(150) Ku sahe ku-le eno vatarahi na heletu jala. \\
\quad 1SG go.up 1SG-TA lie wait ART pig wild \\
\quad ‘I went up (to the bush) and was lying in wait for wild pigs.’ (#e.464a)\]
(151) Mo-le ate vatarahi tina-na mo vano ne mo-te mai.
3SG-TA sit wait mother-P:3SG 3SG go but 3SG-NEG come
‘He was sitting/there/waiting for his mother (and) time went on but she didn’t come.’ (#e.464c)

wati ‘unable’

This modifier can only be used in conjunction with prehead negative marker te. This is the only ‘double negative’ that is used in the language, perhaps indicating an earlier pattern of indicating negation. It indicates inability to do something, as shown:

(152) A-te vano wati.
3SG-NEG go unable.
‘He wouldn’t be able to go.’ (Nt-T40:84)

(153) Ku soari ne ku-te lai wati-a.
1SG see but 1SG-NEG take unable-O:3SG
‘I see but I can’t get it.’ (Nt-T61:48)

(154) Ku-te sile wati-a telei-ho.
1SG-NEG give unable-O:3SG PREP-O:2SG
‘I am unable to give it to you.’ (#e.527)

The usage is now used less by younger speakers (<30) in favour of te matavosai VERB ‘not able to verb’ (usually articulated by this age group as te matsai). For example, te ... wati is used in the following, by a speaker 50+.

(155) Tamalohi na-te barambara wati aie.
person 3PL-NEG walk.on.reef unable there
‘People can’t walk on the reef there.’ (E-T23:14)

But younger speakers are more likely to use the single negative construction such as:

(156) Tamalohi na-te mat’sai na barambara aie...
person 3PL-NEG be.able 3PL walk.on.reef there
‘People can’t walk on the reef there.’

The term wati is also used in the following exclamation usually restricted to older speakers, and younger speakers refer to such talk as ‘heavy’, meaning formal, ‘old-style’, traditional.12

(157) A-tete-wati!
3SG-negative-unable
‘Impossible!’

12 However, see the introduction to Text 4, in Appendix 2.
vonohi ‘for nothing’

This modifier derives from stative verb *vono* ‘be empty’. It indicates that the event of the head verb was realised, but that it was an ‘empty’ result in that nothing of importance was achieved by its realisation. It thus has a somewhat different idea of non-result than the other modifiers listed in this section.

(158)  *Voi, o-le va-hani vonohi-ra-te*...

mum 2SG-TA CAUS-eat for.nothing-O:3PL-DIS
‘Mum, you’ve been feeding them for nothing, you know …’ (Nt-T32:35)

(159)  *Ku viti vonohi-a, ne ku domtau ku re*...

1SG speak for.nothing-O:3SG but 1SG believe 1SG say
‘I’m not sure (lit. I speak emptily), but I believe that …’ (C-T68/p.65)

9.5 Verbal expression of reflexive and reciprocal meanings

9.5.1 Reflexive meanings

Reflexive constructions are taken as being where the agentive subject of a transitive verb is coreferential with the object, that is A=O. There is no grammatical marking of such meaning in Tamambo, but rather a basic verbal clause, as shown:

(160)  *Ku tai-au.*

1SG cut-O:1SG
‘I cut myself.’ (lit. I cut me)

For 3SG or 3PL, it can be potentially ambiguous, as in the following example. To make a distinction, contextual clues or additional information would need to be added.

(161)  *Na tai-ra.*

3PL cut-O:3PL
‘They cut them.’/‘They cut themselves.’

9.5.2 Reciprocal constructions

Reciprocal constructions are taken as being a minimum of two simultaneous (or closely sequential) occurrences of an event by a minimum of two agentive or experiencer subjects. This is expressed in English as something like ‘X and Y Verb each other’. In Tamambo, it is indicated by one of the following:

i) reduplication

ii) use of distributive numeral (with two only participants)

iii) use of serial verb construction with *vatavuhi* ‘meet/join together’ (two participants)

iv) use of causative *va-* (two participants).

As with reflexive constructions, the object suffix is coreferential with the subject. Where the number of participants is more than two, as in the next three examples, only reduplication is possible.
(162) Vai-mwera na losu~losu-ra.
   PL-male 3PL RED–strike-O:PL
   ‘The boys (all) hit each other.’ (#e.MW14)

(163) ...na tambwa~tambwahi-ra mo suiha asena.
   3PL RED–crush-O:3PL 3SG strong INTEN
   ‘… they crushed each other very hard.’ (Ni-T21:7)

(164) ... ka-mbo mata~matavosai-nda.
   1PL-FUT RED–understand-O:1PL.I
   ‘… we will (all) understand each other.’ (E-T75:4)

Where the number of participants is restricted to two, the reduplication strategy is still acceptable, though context would need to disambiguate whether there are two, or more than two.

(165) Na tua~tuani-ra.
   3PL RED–help-O:3PL
   ‘They help each other.’

Additionally, the distributive numeral for one, ateateahi ‘one by one’ (see 6.2.5.1), can also be used, in which case the verb is not reduplicated.

(166) Na tuani-ra atea~tea-hi.
   3PL help-3PL one~RED-DISTRIB
   ‘They help each other. ‘(lit. they help them one by one) (#e.MW13)

(167) Na kore-ra atea~tea-hi.
   3PL lie-O:3PL one~RED-DISTRIB
   ‘They lied to each other.’ (#e.MW16/a)

or

(168) Na kore~kore-ra.
   3PL RED–lie-O:3PL
   ‘They lied to each other.’ (#e.MW16/b)

With some verbs, it is also acceptable to use vatavuhi ‘meet/join together’ in a serialising construction as follows (number of participants can be two or more than two).

(169) Ravavine na sora vatavuhi.
   PL-woman 3PL talk meet.together
   ‘The women talked to each other.’ (#e.MW1)

There is one other possibility to express a reciprocal meaning that is attested with one verb only and where it is prefixed with causative va- (5.2.2.1). It is used as an intransitive verb, with the original causative meaning (‘cause to see’) presumably now lexicalised to this meaning of ‘meet’.
soari -> va-soari  see -> see each other, meet one another

(170) Kamam ka va-soari asa-ni Nellie.
    IP:1PL.E 1PL CAUS-see trad.place-LINK N.
    ‘We’ll see each other at Nellie’s place.’ / ‘We’ll meet at Nellie’s place.’

Note that the other verbs, used reciprocally, express either multiple action, such as losu ‘hit’ (162), or express actions or states that can either repeat or continue over time, such as tuani ‘help’ (166), mata-matavosai ‘understand s.t’ (164). But the reciprocal meaning where va- is used as in (170) expresses the idea of just one event at one time.

Additionally, there are a number of inherently reciprocal verbs, as for example:

sorasora  ‘chat’
loli  ‘quarrel’ (homophonous with loli ‘do’)
jivi  ‘play chasings’.
10  Adjectival words and functions

10.1  Introduction

In Tamambo, adjectival words can function as:

i) a predicate of an intransitive verbal clause

ii) a modifier to a noun.

In addition, some can also function:

iii) in a prepositional phrase introduced by preposition *hina* as:

  a predicate in a non-verbal clause (3.4.2.3)
  a secondary predicate (8.2.6.2)
  part of a NP in a verbal clause.

Different authors over time have commented on the variation in languages in expressing adjectival concepts: Givón (1984:13), for example, states that ‘the class of adjectives is a notorious swing category in languages’, and Dixon (2004:14) differentiates primarily between two types of adjective classes, those that ‘can function as intransitive predicates’ and those that ‘may fill the copula complement slot’. Dixon also points out that nearly all members of both classes are able to modify a noun within a NP in some way. For the purposes of description here, I take Tamambo to be of the first type.

Defining this further, I regard adjectival words in this language such as those described by Ross (1998b:91) as ‘a subclass of stative verb whose members (i) serve as modifier to a noun (i.e. need no relative clause marking) and (ii) have the predicate syntax of a stative verb’. Nevertheless there are morphosyntactic behaviours of some adjectival words that are noun-like, suggesting that they also could be considered as a subclass of nouns. But in the Tamambo of today, verbal predicative use is more often preferred to modification of a noun, and so adjectival words are listed here under the umbrella of ‘stative verb’.

Many stative verbs can function to describe some attribute of a noun in predicative function, but not all can be used as a modifier of a noun. Those subsets of stative verbs that fulfil both criteria are regarded here as belonging to an adjectival class.

In the next section, 10.2, I list those subsets according to their main morphosyntactic variations, and give the semantic sets that correlate with them. In 10.3, I describe the morphosyntactic behaviours of the adjectival verbs within their respective semantic sets, and give examples of their predicative and modifier functions. In 10.4, I discuss the unusual type of syntactic construction that also exists in this language to express adjectival concepts – the preposition *hina* with adjectival verbs.
10.2 The adjectival subsets of stative verbs

The four subsets of stative verbs that fulfil criteria for belonging to an adjectival class can be divided further on morphosyntactic criteria. As shown in Table 10.1, these smaller sets then correspond to some degree to particular semantic types as established by Dixon (1982 and 2004:4–5) though not necessarily in the order as listed by Dixon, nor is it his complete list.1 They vary from very small closed sets, with four members or less, to large open sets.

Table 10.1: Adjectival subsets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun-like</th>
<th>Derived from noun</th>
<th>Prefixed to intransitive verb, or noun</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can show plurality, possessive marking</td>
<td>Can show plurality, can take distributive suffix-hi</td>
<td>Suffixed with -ha</td>
<td>Physical property incl. one only of Difficulty Qualification (one only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dimension</td>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>Colour Physical property (one only)</td>
<td>Physical propensity Qualification (one only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Physical property incl. one only of Difficulty Qualification (one only)</td>
<td>Physical property, incl. one only of Difficulty Value Age</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each is discussed in turn with examples as a noun modifier, and as a predicate of a verbal clause.

10.3 Functions of adjectival verbs within semantic sets

10.3.1 Dimension

This is a closed subset, limited to four ‘adjectives’ only. This type is the most noun-like, differing morphologically from other adjectival words in being able to show plurality, and to take possessive marking.

Plurality is marked to agree with the noun that is being modified. Two dimension terms are marked by suppletion, two by reduplication. This is one of the few indications of dependent marking in Tamambo, as mentioned in 5.4.4.3.

1 Other semantic types from Dixon (1982) and (2004:5) are ‘Speed’, ‘Quantification’, ‘Position’, and ‘Cardinal Number’. In Tamambo, ‘Speed’ is shown by verbal modifiers; ‘Quantification’ is expressed though quantifying verbs, quantifying nouns, and an indefinite or partitive article; ‘Position’ is generally expressed through location nouns, and ‘Cardinal number’ through a subset of nouns.
Adjectival words and functions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>big</td>
<td>tawera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little</td>
<td>vorivori</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tall/long</td>
<td>baravu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>short</td>
<td>busohi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The dimension terms are used often in both predicative and modifying roles, such as the next four textual examples show.

As a verbal predicate:

(1) Mo-iso tovona no-nda skul mo tawera
3SG-finish now CLFR-P:1PL.E school 3SG big
ololoa mo-iso, ololoa mo-tete.
respect 3SG-finish respect 3SG-negative
‘So then now our church is big respect is finished, there’s no respect.’ (E-T57:18)

As modifier to a noun in a verbal clause:

(2) Ro nia stori busohi niaro le iso ro.
Thus IP:3SG story short EMPH TA finish thus
‘So that particular short story finishes like that.’ (Nt-T28:14)

As modifier to a nominal predicate in a non-verbal clause:

(3) Mo iso ana bongi atea, nia lafet\(^3\) tawera, tutunu-a
3SG finish PREP day one IP:3SG party big cook-NOM

tawera, ana jara tinambu.
big PREP place different
‘Then one day there was a big party, a big feast, in a different place.’ (Nt-T77:2)

(4) Kailaho manja ba~baravu, Livuha mana manji Taramalai
K. fighting.stick PL.long L. COM fighting.stick T.

manja bu~busohi.
fighting.stick PL.short
‘Kailaho are long fighting sticks, Livuha and Taramalai are short fighting sticks.’
(E-T22:36)

Like nouns, and unlike verbs, these four adjectival words can be used in direct possessive constructions with a possessive linking suffix -i to express a comparison (see 5.3.1.1, example (22), and 7.5.3.2, example (84). But degree can also be shown periphrastically as in:

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2 *Skul* is often used for ‘church’ as well as ‘school’.
3 Bislama word derived from French. The speaker then adds an appositional phrase with a Tamambo equivalent.
The terms for ‘big’ and ‘little’ cover a broader range than their English counterparts. A road is described as *sala tawera* lit. ‘big path’, and a narrow path as *sala vorivori* lit. ‘little path’. Similarly, a thick rope is *asi tawera* lit. ‘big rope’, a thin rope *asi vorivori* lit. ‘little rope’. A deep voice is *leo tawera*, and a high or squeaky voice is *leo vorivori*.

Although Dimension words are ‘noun-like’ in many ways, they can also be specified for verb-like categories. All can be intensified with *asena* or *tina* (4.6.1):

(6) *Uranji rindi mo vorivori tina.*

child REF 3SG little INTEN

‘The child was really little.’

They can also modify intransitive verbs with no linking suffix as in:

(7) *Mo hao mo sahe, mo sahe vorivori ...*

3SG climb 3SG go.up 3SG go.up little

‘He climbed up, he went up a bit …’ (Nk-T27:9)

(8) *Mo han’hani vorivori manihi.*

3SG eat little LIM

‘She just eats a little bit.’ (#c.213)

(9) *niho o-mbo ovi busohi manihi ana verama.*

IP:2SG 2SG-FUT live short LIM PREP world

‘you will live only a short time in the world.’ (N.ch-T6:14)

Aspectual marker *le* (see 11.4.3), which often has an imperfective use, can be used inchoatively with Dimension words:

(10) *Moli mo-le tawera.*

Moli 3SG-TA big

‘Moli is getting big.’ (#921)

Semantically, an adjectival verb of Dimension denotes a stable kind of feature. Things that are big or small or long or short usually stay that way, at least for a reasonable time. Size is not usually thought of as a quickly-changing feature of most entities. And entities with the ‘highest time stability, those which do not change their identity over time or (change it rather slowly) … are those (which) tend – universally – to lexicalise as nouns’ (Givón 1984:14).

This time stability of these Dimension words is probably the reason why they can take on such noun-like characteristics. Although they do share some verb-like characteristics, and can certainly be used as verbal predicates, they can be specified for more noun-like categories than any other adjectival type, suggesting that these adjectival verbs have something of the more permanent nature of what is embodied by nouns, such as to

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4 The word for ‘middle finger’ is *baruvuliu*, lit. ‘tall exceed’.

5 There is, however, a term for ‘thin’, used with animates. It belongs in the ‘Physical property’ set.
‘identify a ... certain kind of thing’ (Wierzbicka 1988:470). They reflect the relatively unchanging, visible nature of the feature that each of them represents.

10.3.2 Difference

The ‘set’ suggested by Dixon (2004) as ‘Similarity’ includes terms like ‘similar’, ‘different’, ‘like’, ‘unlike’, ‘other’, ‘strange’. In Tamambo, the only one of these that fulfils the criteria for adjectival word, as given in 10.1, is ‘different’. To express ‘similar’, ‘like’, the preposition sohen is used in a prepositional phrase (8.2.4); for ‘the same as’, the multifunction word sohena is used (4.6.3).

The term for ‘different’ tinambu enjoys high usage in both verbal and non-verbal clauses. But unlike many other adjectival verbs, its primary use is as a modifier. In textual examples in my data, the ratio of its modifier use to its predicative use is about 8:1.

As modifier to a noun in a verbal clause:

(11) … te a-mbo los’ te tamalohi tinambu.
     …or 3SG-FUT hit INDEF person different
     ‘… or she will hit some other man.’ (Nk-T22:47)

(12) Na lasi na litu tinambu …
     3PL tie.on ART wild.cane different
     ‘They tied on a different cane …’ (E-T43:19)

As modifier to a nominal predicate in a non-verbal clause:

(12) Sora-e nian matai mara Buelivurombu tinambu atea.
     talk-NOM this PREP man place.name different one
     ‘This story is about a different Buelivurombu man.’ (Nk-T15:1)

As a verbal predicate:

(14) Tovona hina~hinau mo bosi, talom nia mo tinambu.
     now RED~thing 3SG change before IP:3SG 3SG different
     ‘Nowadays have things have changed, (in times) before it was different.’ (C-T88:12)

In its predicative role, it is often used to make a general comment about things, as in the next example from a conversation:

(15) Bole, o soari na va-uranj-ni barindi, nira sohen
     well 2SG see ART PL-child-LINK today IP:3PL like
     va-uranji ni tuai tene…?
     PL-child LINK long.ago or
     ‘Well, you see children of today, [and] they are like children of long ago or …?

[Other speaker interrupting]
Mo tete. Mo tinambu.
3SG negative 3SG different
‘No. It’s different.’ (C-T86:38–40)

It is my strong impression over the years since I first went to Malo, that younger speakers are more likely to use predicative forms, while older speakers use modifier forms. This is shown, for example, in a conversation between a speaker in her 20s (Q = question) with a speaker in her 70s (A = answer), in talking about the ‘olden’ days. The younger speaker consistently uses the predicative form, while the answer from the older woman in both examples comes back as a modifier in referring to the same noun.

(16) Q: Tohotoho-a tuai nia mo tinambu, tele sohen tovona?
play-NOM long.ago IP:3SG 3SG different not.yet like now
‘Games of long ago were different, not yet like nowadays?’

(17) A: Tohotoho-a tinambu, nia ana Kastom, nia tinambu.
play-NOM different IP:3SG PREP custom IP:3SG different
‘Play was different, it was in the custom way, it was different.’ (C-T89:21–22)

See another example with tinambu with the same speakers in the same text (Appendix 2, Text 5:40–41).

The term tinambu ‘different’/‘other’ has noun-like attributes in that it can be reduplicated to show plurality like some nouns (and like two of the dimension words). It is then also suffixed with ‘distributive’ –hi, which can indicate repetition of number, or constancy over time. This suffix is otherwise attested rarely in the data, and only on nouns (5.3.1.4, and not to be confused with the applicative -hi suffix).

As a verbal predicate:

(18) Lo-vuhai na tina~tinambu-hi.
PL-tree 3PL RED~different-DISTRIB
‘The trees are all different’. (D-T66:42)

As a modifier to a nominal predicate:

(19) Na tele skul, nira buru tina~tinambu-hi,
3PL not.yet school IP:3PL eating.hearth RED~different-DISTRIB
atea no-na buru nian, atea nian...
one CLFR-P:3SG eating.hearth here one here
‘They were not yet going to church, and the eating hearths were all different, (so that) one person’s hearth was here, another here …’ (pointing) (C-T68:47)

10.3.3 Colour

Adjectival verbs of colour are a small group within a larger subset of stative verbs derived from nouns by suffixation with -ha. (5.3.1.2). This process was recognised more than one hundred and twenty years ago by Codrington (1885:273) for some other

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6 This refers to the sumbwe (chief) system current until around 1950s, in which chiefs of different rank ate separately at different eating hearths.
neighbouring languages of Vanuatu as -ga, a ‘termination … added to Substantives or other words to make Adjectives’.

- **dae-ha** blood-like = red
- **jori-ha** yellow fever-like = yellow
- **henja-ha** fish of blue-green colour-like = blue/green
- **vuriha** black/dirty (*ha* not separable)

Other derivations with -ha within the larger set, generally do not function as modifiers to nouns (with the exception of *suiha* ‘strong’ 10.3.4.1) and can only be used predicatively, as with *mo ivao-ha* ‘it’s crowded’, *mo dondo-ha* ‘it’s dark/cloudy’. Therefore such stative verbs are not regarded as adjectival verbs.

Colour words can be used to modify nouns, but are usually preferred as verbal predicates.

(20)  

\[
O \text{ soari na mwata vuriha!} \quad 2\text{SG see ART snake black}
\]

‘Look at the black snake!’ (#e.914)

(21)  

\[
Bula-ku \text{ vuria rindi, manjihi-na mo lulu mo-iso} \quad \text{CLFR-P:1SG dog REF colour-P:3SG 3SG white 3SG-finish}
\]

\[
domi-na \text{ mo vuriha.} \quad \text{neck-P:3SG 3SG black}
\]

‘As for that dog of mine, he was white and then his neck was black.’ (D-T7:9)

Contrary to my expectation, there are no examples in my data with adjectival words of ‘colour’ as part of a nominal predicate, suggesting that colour, as a feature, is not something that is used to categorise a *kind* of thing. Since colour is a stable kind of feature, this seemed initially surprising, but similarly to ‘age’ words, I suggest that this is because many specific nouns exist that already incorporate the colour. That is, the noun itself specifies the kind of thing, for example, *ngandi* ‘black ant’, *kala* ‘green lizard’, *dangilala* ‘green snail’ and so on.

It is ungrammatical to specify the colour words for intensity. Either an entity is red (or green or black), or it is otherwise. It cannot be ‘very red’ or ‘very black’ in this language. Nor can such adjectival words be specified for degree to become, say, the ‘reddest’ or the ‘whitest’.

Additionally, they are not attested as being able to be marked for TAM.

10.3.4 Physical property

Words denoting ‘Physical property’ make up a very large group semantically. However, most of them function only as verbal predicates, and are not regarded as belonging to the adjectival subsets, in that they do not function as modifiers to nouns. So many of the words that describe a physical property of animates, such as ‘thirsty’, ‘hungry’, ‘full (stomach)’, ‘deaf’, ‘blind’, are classed just as stative verbs. Similarly, words that express the physical

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7 The term for ‘white’, also the name of a large white bird [*Tyto Alba*].
attributes of non-animates, such as ‘rough’, ‘faded’, ‘ripe’, are also expressed by stative verbs, although the odd exception appears in the data.

Semantically, this ‘physical property’ group includes antonyms such as ‘soft, hard’; ‘light, heavy’; ‘fat, skinny’. They come from three subsets of stative verbs as shown in Table 9:1. These are described in turn.

10.3.4.1 **Suffixed with –ha**

The only one of this type in my data is *suiha* ‘strong’. It appears to have derived from *sui* ‘bone’ + *-ha* =’bone-like’, and can be used as:

Modifier to a nominal predicate in a non-verbal clause:

(22) O, iau a-iso, na re iau mara suiha.
    oh IP:1SG 3SG-finish 3PL say IP:1SG man strong
    ‘Oh, well me perhaps, they say I’m a strong man.’ (Nt-T77:29)

Verbal predicate:

(23) Heletu nian mo suiha mo liu-ra.
    pig this 3SG strong 3SG exceed-O:3PL
    ‘This pig is the strongest.’ (lit. this pig is strong he exceeds them.) (#e.675)

Unlike the colour terms derived by the same process, it can be marked periphrastically for degree, as shown above.

It is also able to be used with TA *le* to denote ‘still’/’continuing’ as in, for example, a much-used expression asking after someone’s health:

(24) Le rongo mo duhu? Le suiha?
    TA feel 3SG good TA strong
    ‘S/he’s feeling okay? Still strong?’

10.3.4.2 **With prefix ma**-

Of the stative verbs with prefix *ma-* as described in 5.2.2.2, only three are attested in my data as being able to be used as modifiers to a noun as well as predicatively. These are *mamasa* ‘(be) dry’, *malulum* ‘(be) soft’, *mahere* ‘(be) straight’.

As a verbal predicate:

(25) Aien’, tamalohi na male dulendule matan tano na mamasa
    here person 3PL just plant because ground 3PL dry

    tina.
    INTEN
    ‘Here, people have only just planted because the gardens are really dry.’ (C-T68:23)

(26) Tovon tano mo malulum ...
    when ground 3SG soft
    ‘When the ground is soft …’ (#c.853)
(27) Sala nian mo mahere.
    path this 3SG straight
    ‘This path is straight’. (#e.303b)

As modifier to a noun:
(28) Are manji na were na hire-ra mo vano ana
    if fish 3PL many 3PL tip.out-O:3PL 3SG go PREP
    tano mamasa.
    ground dry
    ‘If there were lots of fish, they would tip them out onto dry land.’ (E-T26:9)

As modifier to a noun in a non-verbal clause:
(29) Io, tama-ku mahere.
    yes father-P:1SG straight
    ‘Yes, he’s my straight father.’ (i.e. biological father) (C-T68:54)

(30) Hisa-ra manji malulum.
    name-P:3PL fish soft
    ‘They’re called “blufis”’ (Bislama term for a kind of reef-dwelling fish) (#c.705)

In the following, mahere is used in its qualitative sense as ‘correct’ or ‘exact’.

(31) Le mahere?
    TA straight
    ‘Is that correct?’(#c.261)

(32) Iau tauni-ku twanti mo mahere.
    IP:1SG year-P:1SG twenty 3SG straight
    ‘I was exactly twenty years old.’ (lit. my years twenty it was straight) (N.ab-T78:28)

10.3.4.3 Those that take no additional marking
These include words like ‘hot’, ‘fat’, ‘thin’.

As verbal predicates:
(33) Iau vavine vorivori, ku baranga.
    IP:1SG girl little 1SG thin
    ‘I was a little girl, I was skinny.’ (T.ab-78:22)

As a modifier to a noun in a verbal clause:
(34) Ku-le tunu na toa baranga-te.
    1SG-TA roast ART chicken thin-DIS
    ‘I’m cooking the skinny chicken you know.’ (Nt-T79:41)

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8 The same expression is used in Bislama ‘hemi strey papa blong mi’; this in comparison to other males who might be in a classificatory father relationship to speaker.
Sometimes the time stability of an attribute varies according to its predicative or modifying use. See also 10.3.8, where this is important with other adjectival verbs.

(35) Ka noha reu mo tutun.
    1PL have water 3SG hot
    ‘We have water and it’s hot.’ (#e.142a.)

So where the term functions as a verbal predicate, as above, it suggests that the water at that time is hot, but in the following example, as a modifier to a noun in a verbal clause, it means that having hot water is a continuing state of affairs.

(36) Na noha reu tutun.
    3PL have water hot
    ‘They have hot water.’ (#e.142b.)

Underived adjectival verbs can sometimes be intensified through reduplication (5.4.4.3) as with baru ‘fat’.

    there woman RED~fat IP:3SG FEM-person.belong-Malakula
    ‘Over there? The very fat woman? She’s a Malakula person.’ (C-T68:181)

Otherwise such terms can be intensified by asena ‘very’, or tina ‘really’ (4.6.1):

(38) Tamalohi mo baru tina.
    person 3SG fat INTEN
    ‘The man’s really fat.’

10.3.5 Difficulty

Included in the set of underived terms is the word for ‘hard’, ‘difficult’, or ‘strict’: dira. It can be used to describe a physical property, say, of wood or metal, but also in the sense of a hard, difficult job or task, or a strict custom that is hard or difficult to follow. It is most often used as a verbal predicate:

(39) Vuhai nian mo dira mo liu mwende niala.
    tree this 3SG hard 3SG exceed/win particular.one there
    ‘This wood is stronger than that one over there.’ (#e.VJ)

(40) ...tamalohi mwende mo-te rongovosai-a, mo dira matan a
    person particular.one 3SG-NEG know-O:3SG 3SG hard SUB 3SG
    lai tohi-a.
    take fast-O:3SG
    ‘... [for] the person who doesn’t know it, it’s difficult to ‘catch on’ quickly.’
    (C-T68:122)
Adjectival words and functions

(41) Ana bongi tuai ovi-a mo dira ...
    PREP day long.ago live-NOM 3SG hard
‘In the old days life was hard . . .’ (C-T68:88)

(42) Mo dira lavwe-ku.
    3SG hard affect-P:1SG
‘It’s difficult for me.’ (#c.1160)

But it can also be used as a modifier in a nominal predicate:

(43) Matani nia kastom dira asena, nia sora-e sohi.
    because IP:3SG custom hard INTEN IP:3SG talk-NOM hide
‘Because it was a very strict custom, it is a secret story.’ (Nk-T73:26)

The antonym to dira ‘hard, difficult’ is malulum ‘easy’. In 10.4.1, examples are shown
in its sense of being physically ‘soft’. Here its usage as ‘easy’ is given in predicative and
modifying roles.

(44) No-na sahasaha-e mo malulum.
    CLFR-P:3SG work-NOM 3SG easy
‘His/her work is easy.’ (#c.391a)

(45) Niaro, mo iso, sahasaha-e malulum manihi.
    EMPH 3SG finish work-NOM easy LIM
‘That’s it, finished, just an easy job.’ (#c.391b)

10.3.6 Age

There are only two members in this semantic category that function as adjectival verbs,
antonyms haramba ‘new’ and tuai ‘long ago’/‘long time’. Human age, however, is
indicated by specific nouns such as:

uranji   ‘child’
uranji vorivori ‘baby’ (lit. little child)
vavine vorivori ‘young girl’ (lit. little girl)
mwera vorivori ‘young boy’ (lit. little male)
uluvou   ‘young man, youth’
maevo    ‘adolescent girl’ (approx 12-18 years)
maranjea ‘old/mature man’
vomaranjea ‘old/mature woman’

To describe a young animal, or even a young tree, once again the dimension term
vorivori ‘little’ is used, as in heletu vorivori ‘young pig’, vu hai vorivori ‘young/little tree’.
The word jea ‘mature’ appears now to be used almost exclusively in lexical compounds for
‘old man’ and ‘old woman’, as shown above.

Both haramba and tuai, in the sense of how long something has existed, are used for
non-animate referents, such as baskets or clothes or boats. But tuai can be used for people
in the sense of location in time (that is, person/s located in the ‘long ago’). Both haramba
and *tuai*, like *tinambu* ‘different’, are mostly used as modifiers to a noun, rather than predicatively, though both usages can occur.

**haramba**

As a verbal predicate:

(46) *Mo-le ovi ana vanua tawera niala, mo haramba.*

3SG-TA live PREP house big that 3SG new
‘He lives in that big house, it’s new.’ (#e.387b)

As a modifier to a noun in a verbal clause: (also 3.8.2.1, example 71)

(47) *Bot haramba mo walau tina.*

boat new 3SG run INTEN
‘The new boat goes really fast.’ (#e.420)

The term can also be used in the sense of ‘clean’:

(48) *O ruru-te ruru haramba!*

2SG dress-DIS clothes new
‘Put on some clean clothes eh!’ (#e.918)

**tuai**

This word is primarily classed as a clausal adverb indicating location in time ‘long ago’ (4.5.1.2). When used as a modifier to a noun, it is used in this sense of distance in time, rather than the sense of actual age in measurable years. See also example 16 this chapter.

(49) *Matai mara tuai, mara Tamambo.*

PREP man long.ago man Tamambo
‘It’s about men of long ago, Malo men.’ (lit. ...long-ago men...) (Nk-T22:2)

In this same sense it is often used in a formulaic introduction to stories:

(50) *Ana bongi tuai ... *

PREP day long.ago
‘In the olden days...’ (lit. in the long-ago days...)

It can also function as a stative verb, here as a verbal predicate:

(51) *Mo tuai.* ‘It was a long time ago.’

(52) *A te tuai:* ‘It should not be long’ (in time)

While the previous examples have indicated location in time relative to the present, *tuai* can also express duration of time, in that something can last for ‘a long time’. This is expressed in the following where it functions:
As a modifier to a nominal predicate in a non-verbal clause:

(53) \[\text{Nia vo-tahisa-ku tuai.}\]

IP:3SG FEM-friend-P:1SG long.time

‘She is my old friend.’ (a friend I have known for a long time) (#e.663)

I suggest that it is from this idea of something lasting for a long time, and hence that it becomes ‘old’, that \textit{tuai} can be used to describe inanimates:

As a modifier to a noun in a verbal clause:

(54) \[\text{O tau-a ana hete tuai.}\]

2SG put-O:3SG PREP basket long.time

‘Put it in the old basket.’ (#e.390)

(55) \[\text{Bot tuai mo walau mo renje.}\]

boat long.time 3SG run 3SG slow

‘The old boat runs slowly.’(#e.421)

But \textit{tuai} cannot be used to express actual age in years, that is, duration in time, for animates. So to express human age, as a contrast to example (53), one would say:

(56) \[\text{Nia vo-tahisa-ku vo-maranjea}\]

IP:3SG FEM-friend-P:1SG FEM-mature.woman

‘She is my old friend.’ (i.e. she is old in years) (#e.662)

Similarly to adjectival words of olour, it is ungrammatical to mark either \textit{haramba} or \textit{tuai} for degree to become, say, ‘newest’ or ‘oldest’. To describe the youngest or oldest of a family, the terms ‘first-born’ \textit{turu talom} (lit. ‘stands first’) and ‘last-born’ \textit{turu hitahu} (lit. ‘stands last’) are used.

10.3.7 Value

Antonyms \textit{duhu} ‘good’ and \textit{sati} ‘bad’ are the two members of this small semantic set, within the subset of stative verbs that are underived. However, \textit{duhu} can be used more widely than \textit{sati}.

\textit{duhu}

As a verbal predicate:

(57) \[\text{Bosi-na mo duhu.}\]

attitude-P:3SG 3SG good

‘His attitude is good.’ (#c.568)

As modifier to a noun in a non-verbal clause:

(58) \[\text{Ne asua nira tamalohi duhu ...}\]

but nine IP:3PL person good

‘But nine of them were good men …’ (Nt-T77:27)
The wide-ranging meanings of duhu ‘good’ encompass ‘lovely’, ‘delicious’, ‘cute’, ‘nice’, and it can be reduplicated for an intensity of meaning, as in

(59)  Nia  mo loli hinau duhu–duhu.
    IP:3SG 3SG do thing RED–good
    ‘He did wonderful things.’  (#e.PB6/95)

Alternately, either of the adverbial intensifiers asena or tina can be used.

(60)  Mo  duhu asena.
    3SG  good INTEN
    ‘It’s very good.’

Unlike sati, duhu can be nominalised by a causative prefix and a nominalising suffix. Thus, duhu ‘good’ → vai-duhu-a ‘goodness’. The term also can be qualified for degree by the verbal mo liu ‘it exceeds/it wins’, as in mo duhu mo liu ‘it’s better/the best’, as in:

(61)  No-m bot niala mo duhu mo liu no-ku.
    CLFR-P:2SG boat there 3SG good 3SG exceed CLFR-P:1SG
    ‘Your boat over there is better than mine.’  (#e.679)

Further, duhu is frequently used with TA le, in an informal agreement to a proposition:

(62)  Le  duhu.
    TA  good
    ‘Okay’/ ‘Fine’.

The term vosai ‘very good, perfect’, generally used as a modifier as described in 9.4.2.2, can be used attributively, but cannot be used as a verbal predicate with this meaning. In my data, it is only used to describe people, and then only occasionally as a particular compliment. It was described to me as a word that is ‘not used much any more’.

(63)  Nia  vavine vosai.
    IP:3SG woman perfect
    ‘She is a very nice woman.’  (by nature) (#c.630)

sati

In its simple form, sati can only be used as a verbal predicate:

(64)  Mo  re, ‘Aa undu-ku mo sati, ro ku hani-a sohena’.
    3SG say aah tooth-P:1SG 3SG bad thus 1SG eat-O:3SG the.same
    ‘He said, “Aah, my teeth are bad, and so I ate it that way”.’  (Nt-T40:71)

Similarly to duhu, it can also take the intensifier asena as in mo sati asena ‘it’s very bad’. But when it reduplicates it takes a different sense, as introduced in 5.4.4.3 (in the section on ‘Extension of meaning’):

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9 Predicatively it has a quite different sense, ‘to bake’, as with using stones in an earth oven.
Adjectival words and functions

Thus as a verbal predicate, *sati* means ‘bad’, but cannot be used as a modifier. Instead the reduplicated form *sasati* is used.

(67) *Nia tamalohi sati*
*IP:3SG person bad*
‘He’s a bad man.’

(68) *Nia tamalohi sa-sati*
*IP:3SG person RED~bad*
‘He’s a bad/selfish man. ‘(#e.496)

However, *sasati* used predicatively, can mean ‘dead’ (as seen in example 66) or ‘bad to’, as in the following:

(69) *Mo sa-sati telei-au.*
*3SG RED~bad PREP-O:1SG*
‘He’s bad to me.’ (i.e. treats me badly)  (#e.499)

10.3.8 Human propensity

This is an open set within the subset of stative verbs that are underived. It includes concepts like ‘lazy’, ‘happy’, ‘friendly’, ‘naughty’, and includes the more qualitative term ‘truthful’. Members of this set have more grammatical verb-like characteristics than most other types. They share with many other intransitive verbs an ability to nominalise and an inability to use the preposition *hina* (see 10.4). In addition, they show that they can have TAM marking and be intensified, suggesting that these types have some feature about them which could be described as ‘signalled by a verb…normally seen as transient, as a temporary state of affairs, characterising a particular state of time as much as a particular entity’ (Wierzbicka 1988:486). See 10.3.4.3 examples (35) and (36) for this transient/permanent distinction with *tutun* ‘hot’.

Similar patterns exist, of course, in other languages. This is described for English by Bolinger (1967:8–14), and for Oceanic languages, Lichtenberk (1983:329) describes a similar semantic difference in Manam, where ‘adjectival predicators indicate more permanent qualities, while verbal predicators indicate more temporary qualities’. François too (2002:91), notes that for Araki, words that refer to ‘temporary states’ are expressed by intransitive verbs. Examples of some of those that meet the criteria for adjectival verbs follow.

As modifiers to a noun in a non-verbal clause:

(70) *Nira va-uranji batundira.*
*IP:3PL PL-child naughty*
‘They are naughty children.’ (#c.388)

(71) *Selina nia vavine manamana.*
*S. IP: 3SG woman friendly*
‘Selina’s a friendly (kind of) girl.’
As verbal predicates:

(72) Na mangisi matani na lai na manu.
    3PL happy because 3PL take ART flying.fox
    ‘They were happy because they caught the flying fox.’ (#e.54)

(73) Nia mwe a sahasahsa ne mo lokoloko tina.
    IP:3SG the.one 3SG work but 3SG lazy INTEN
    ‘He should work but he’s really lazy.’ (#e.1151)

They can be used with TAM markers, as in the following:

(74) Are na lahi, ka-isonduhu ka-mbo mangisi.
    if 3PL marry 1PL-all 1PL-FUT happy
    ‘If they get married, we’ll all be happy,’ (#e.1095)

While all of the adjectival verbs of this set describe human attributes that are not visible or long-lasting in the same way as those of dimension or colour, what is important for the speaker, in particular contexts, is to convey this permanent or transient distinction. A contrast in time dimension is shown by the choice of modifier or predicative use, as in the examples of ‘qualitative’ retinduhu ‘truthful’, ‘be true’.

(75) Nia vavine retinduhu.
    IP:3SG woman truthful
    ‘She’s a truthful woman.’ (#e.331b)

This shows a kind of continuing quality conveyed by the attribution. Alternately, a verbal predicate would mean that the woman is being truthful at that time, even although she may not always be so, as in:

(76) Vavine mo retinduhu.
    woman 3SG truthful
    ‘The woman’s right’/ ‘The woman’s told the truth.’(#e.331a)

Adjectival verbs of this set also differ from those in other sets in that they can be nominalised by a derivational process, as shown in 5.3.2.2.

10.4 The **hina** construction

The many varied semantic roles of prepositional phrases introduced with *hina* have been shown in 3.8.3.1 in its grammatical function as a P-object, and *hina* PPs are shown in instrumental and causer roles in 8.2.6. Like any well-behaved preposition, it precedes nouns in those constructions. But where *hina* precedes an adjectival verb in a prepositional phrase it always has a special function – to single out and identify a particular referent, or to emphasise a particular, distinguishing feature of a referent.

The *hina* construction does not co-occur with an intensifier. Perhaps this is because *hina* + adjectival word always emphasises a feature, and since one particular type of emphasis is intensity, the *hina* construction has the effect of replacing any intensifier.

Most importantly, the feature preceded by *hina* must be visible (or able to be visualised) or audible, which depends on the semantics of the adjectival term used. So if the feature is
not obvious by sight (or occasionally by ear) to both speaker and listener, *hina* is not used. Thus terms of ‘Human propensity’ or ‘Difficulty’ are not acceptable, since presumably one cannot verify by sight whether the human referent is jealous or happy or lazy, or whether something is difficult or easy. Interestingly, there is some limited use of the value adjectival verb ‘good’ with the *hina* construction, but only ever with non-human referents where the feature is regarded as visible, as is shown in 10.4.3.

The fact that the feature of the referent must be able to be evidenced if *hina* is used, means that the feature has some idea of permanence or time-stability about it, a more noun-like quality that is exemplified in the adjectival term used. So, unsurprisingly, dimension terms are most often used; size is an easily visible property, and the characteristics of that adjectival type, as described in 10.3.1, show that it shares many morphosyntactic traits with nouns. There are three syntactic functions of *hina* +adjectival verb:

i) as a predicate in a non-verbal clause (3.4.2.3)

ii) as a secondary predicate (8.2.6.2)

iii) as part of a NP in a verbal clause.

Both i) and ii) have already been discussed with examples in sections as indicated, so they are just briefly reintroduced here:

### 10.4.1 Adjectival verbs in a *hina* PP as a clausal predicate

While the structure of the *hina* construction in a non-verbal clause is shown in 3.4.2.3, I list here the different semantic types that can be used in such predicates.

#### Dimension

In the following, the speaker is emphasising a particular feature – that her legs were unacceptable to her promised-to, prospective husband.

(77) **Ku baranga, karu-ku hina waririhi,**
    1SG thin leg-P:1SG PREP PL.little

    *nia mo-te boi vavine sohena.*
    IP:3SG 3SG-NEG want woman the.same

    ‘I was skinny, my legs were little, he didn’t want a girl like that.’ (N.ab-T78:14)

Similarly in 8.2.6.2 example (63), the speaker is emphasising the features of different parts of the place where fish are caught.

#### Difference

The next example is an introduction to a third method in a series of descriptions of traditional fishing, so the speaker is pointing out that this one will be different from the previously described methods. But the feature of difference is one that the listener will hear, rather than see.
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(78) Mo-iso-ro atea nian le sohena, hina tinambu.
3SG-finish-thus one this TA the.same PREP different
‘So then this one, similarly, is different.’ (E-T24:1)

Physical property

In the next example, the pig as a referent has been introduced for some time into the narrative, but the physical feature of rawness is quite a dramatic ‘twist’ to be emphasised in the story.

(79) ... na-te matavosai na hani duru na boe matan boe
3PL-NEG be.able 3PL eat split ART boar because boar

hina baro.
PREP raw
‘… they couldn’t chew through the pig because the pig was raw.’ (Nt-T20:55)

In the following, the required characteristic of what is needed for roofing is particularised.

(80) Ka vano ka lai na ra-talaua, mwende nia
1PL go 1PL take ART leaf-s ago.palm particular.one IP:3G

hina malulum.
PREP soft
‘We go and get the sago palm leaves, the kind that are soft/ that kind is soft’
(E-T55:4)

Colour

(81) Vulu-na hina vuriha.
hair-P:3SG PREP black
‘His hair is black.’ (#c.667)

Age

(82) Truk mo duhu, enjin hina haramba, mo walau asena.
truck 3SG good engine PREP new 3SG run INTEN
‘The truck’s good, the engine’s new, and it runs fast.’ (#e.PB)

Adjectival verbs of dimension, difference and colour are relatively common as clausal predicates with hina; those of physical property and age are uncommon (though more likely with older speakers); no clausal predicates are attested with either human propensity, difficulty, or value adjectives.

10.4.2 Adjectival verbs in a hina PP as a secondary predicate

This structure has already been introduced in 8.2.6.2. The only examples attested in my data are those with features of dimension, difference, or physical property.
Dimension

See 8.2.6.2, example (63).

Difference

This next example comes from an explanation as to various ways of making fishing nets, so the feature of difference is a visible one.

(83) *Ne matani melao ro nia sala-na mo were,*
but because net thus IP:3SG path-P:3SG 3SG many

*tua-na na loli-a hina tinambu.*
some-P:3SG 3PL do-O:3SG PREP different
‘But because the fishing net like that had lots of methods (of construction), some of it they made differently.’ (E-T26:13)

Physical property

See 8.2.6.2, example (65).

10.4.3 Adjectival verb with *hina* within a NP

In this type of construction, *hina* + adjectival verb is the attribute modifying a noun, and the NP is a core argument of the verb. Adjectival verbs are attested from all semantic types except those of difficulty and human propensity.

Dimension

(84) *…mo iso tandono mo dingi-ra, mo lai mwende*
3SG finish devil 3SG chase-O:3PL 3SG take particular.one

*hina vorivori.*
PREP little
‘… then the devil chased them, and caught the little one/ one that was little.’
(Nt-T48:9)

Difference

The next example indicates a feature that is not literally visible, but is evidenced by ear.

(85) *Iau ku-ta noha atea nian’ hina tinambu.*
IP:1SG 1SG-again have one this PREP different
‘I have this other different one.’ (referring to a story about to be told) (E-T23:1)

Physical property

Note that ‘short’ here is used in the sense of time, once again evidenced by ear.

(86) *Ro stori hina busohi manihi le iso ro.*
thus story PREP short LIM TA finish thus
‘So the story that’s just a short one is finishing like this.’ (Nt-T29:8)
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Colour

(87) Manjione mwende hina henjaha na-le tovi-a
karong fish particular one PREP blue green 3PL TA call O 3SG

na re ‘manjione henja’...
3PL say blue karong
‘The particular karong fish that’s a blue-green colour they call “blue karong”…’

(E-T43:35)

Value

In the next example, a choice is being made at a local market and the discourse participants emphasise the property desired by using the hina construction.

(88) O lai na dam hina duhu!
2SG take ART yam PREP good
‘Get the good yams! the yams that are good!’ (c PB)

It is understood that they can agree on whether the yams (or taro or manioc) are good or bad by actually looking at them, whereas with humans, value features such as ‘good’ or ‘bad’ are not regarded as visible properties.

10.5 Summary

The data show that:

i) Adjectival verbs as predicates occur across all semantic types. Their usual discourse function is to introduce a new and often impermanent feature to the referent. They make up the most frequent use.

ii) Adjectival verbs within a NP as a non-verbal predicate categorise an established referent as a kind, often ascribing a permanency to the feature, using terms to express dimension, difference, physical property and value, sometimes of human propensity, but not attested with adjectival verbs of colour, and rarely with those of age.

iii) Adjectival verbs as a modifier to a NP within a verbal clause introduce a new referent and a new feature. They are not attested as occurring with adjectival verbs of human propensity or value.

iv) Preposition hina with an adjectival verb, as a predicate in an independent clause or as a secondary predicate stresses a new or particular feature of a known referent. This construction is used with terms that describe easily evidenced features of dimension, difference, physical property, colour and sometimes age. It is rejected by Tamambo speakers with adjectival verbs of human propensity, difficulty, and value.

v) Preposition hina with an adjectival word, as a PP within a NP, limits the reference by emphasising a feature. It is used to distinguish and identify a particular referent. It is used with the same adjectival verb sets as iv), but value ‘adjectives’ can be used for non-human referents only.
11 Tense, aspect, and modality

11.1 Introduction

In Chapter 9 the obligatory components of the verb phrase were described. This chapter deals with the optional morphological components of the verb phrase that can occur between the subject proclitic and the head. These are the components that deal with notions of temporality or alternate realities – the notions of tense, aspect, and modality.

The following table has been adapted from Table 9.5. Note that the negative *te* and the prehead modifiers of manner have already been described in 9.4.1 and 9.4.2 respectively, and are not discussed here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT pronoun</th>
<th>Realis: <em>mo</em></th>
<th>Aspectual: <em>ta</em></th>
<th>Negative: <em>te</em></th>
<th>Modifiers of manner</th>
<th>HEAD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Future: -<em>mbo</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 11.2, I outline the terminology that is used with regard to these parameters of temporality and modality. Section 11.3 discusses the representation of reality and modality, with a description of the present usage and posited past history of a realis marker, and the availability of irrealis marking for 3SG. This section also describes future tense/modality within Tamambo. Aspectual markers within the VP are discussed in 11.4, with the main part of this section being taken up with the use of TA *le* in main and subordinate clauses. In the last section 11.4.6, negative aspectuals are described.

11.2 Terminology

11.2.1 Temporality

Timberlake (2007:315), points out that ‘both tense and aspect have to do with situations in time’. He says that ‘tense locates an event with respect to the here and now of speech’, a definition expressed in much the same way by Comrie (1976:1–2), that tense ‘relates the time of the situation referred to to some other time, usually to the moment of speaking’. Thus when a speaker talks about an event or situation, there are different points of reference in time. ‘Speech time’ is the term used here to refer to the moment of speech
when such an event is talked about. ‘Event time’ is the term used to refer to the time at which the event has occurred, is occurring or is expected to occur. Sometimes, Speech time and Event time co-occur; at other times, the event time can be anterior or posterior to the moment of speech. In Tamambo, there is a contrast between future and non-future, with a marked future and an unmarked non-future.

Where there is a clause subordinate to the main clause in Tamambo, there can be more than one ‘event time’. The times of the event reported in the subordinate clause and that of the event in the main clause can be simultaneous, sequential, or overlapping. In fact, different grammatical marking applies in this language in some types of clauses according to whether these event times occur simultaneously or sequentially. That is, the marking can vary for absolute time as against relative time. While this would seem to indicate differences in ‘tense’, it would seem to be more appropriate in some such cases to refer to what Timberlake (2007:315) suggests as a general category of ‘temporality’, rather than expressly either ‘tense’ or ‘aspect’.

Aspect, as contrasted with prototypical ‘tense’ in viewing the event from Speech time, looks at the event or situation relative to the internal time of that event. So markers of aspect show ‘different ways of viewing the internal constituency of a situation’ Comrie (1976:3), that is, they indicate the ‘progress or change or results or liminality’ (Timberlake 2007:315) of an event. Event times can be very short, as with punctual events (e.g. *toro* ‘drop’, *bila* ‘shatter’), or they can stretch over an interval of time (e.g. *vanovano* ‘walk’, *sai* ‘search’) or be a situation or state that exists without temporal boundaries (e.g. *bahoho* ‘be curved’, *manjine* ‘be kind’). Liminal, processual, and stative predicates such as these inherently indicate aspect, that is, aspect is part of the lexical packaging of those verbs. So the use of the term ‘aspect’ can often result in ambiguity, a fact pointed out by Sasse (1990:32), in that the term has variously been used to describe:

i) ‘the grammatical category of aspect (perfective, imperfective... etc.)

ii) “aspectual” classification of verbs (stative, dynamic, punctual, etc.)’ also referred to as ‘aktionsart’ and

iii) “aspectual verbs” (begin, end, etc.).

Tamambo, like many other languages, uses all of these three options for ‘aspect’ and ‘aktionsart’. So there is a range of morphological marking, verbal reduplication, use of particular verbs in serial constructions, and many lexemes to express distinctions in temporal reference. Specifically, within the verb phrase, there are:

i) some grammatical markers which indicate temporal reference (‘aspect’)

ii) particular verbs which inherently indicate telic, dynamic, or stative aspect (‘aktionsart’)

iii) reduplication of some activity verbs to indicate progressive and continuing aspect

iv) serial verb constructions which indicate completive aspect, using the verb ‘finish’, and continuative aspect, using verb ‘go’, and so on.

In addition, at clause level, there are lexical items that indicate anaphoric and deictic temporal reference (‘aktionsart’).

In this language description I use the term ‘aspectuals’ to describe all of these – the grammatical markers, the lexical items, and the particular serial verb constructions, at phrase and clause level – that all function to distinguish a temporal or event viewpoint,
following Sasse (1990:44) that ‘... aspectuality is always a matter of the correlation of lexical semantics and TAM categories’.

Reduplication of verbs to indicate progressive and continuing aspect is described in 5.4.4.3. The process of grammaticalisation from verbs to ‘aspectuals’ in serial verb constructions is discussed in 12.7 and 12.8.1.3.

This chapter then deals only with the grammatical marking of aspect within the verb phrase.

11.2.2 Modality

Modality can be regarded as the ‘consideration of alternative realities’ (Timberlake 2007:315). Alternative realities in this language are shown by expressions of realis vs irrealis, and non-future vs future. While these can sometimes overlap, as in realis and non-future, there are different grammatical markers for expressing different modalities.

‘Realis’ in Tamambo refers to the grammatical or lexical marking of an event or situation that has happened (or not) or is happening (or not) relative to Speech time.

‘Irrealis’ refers to the grammatical or lexical marking of an event or situation that may have happened, or that may or may not happen in the future. The preverbal 3SG subject pronoun also carries modal meanings as described in 11.3.2. Other expressions of modality in Tamambo are by lexemes at clause level (see 4.5.1.1).

The expression of an event time in the future, where the speaker confidently expects or predicts the event to be realised, is expressed by a marker within the verb phrase. Otherwise the verb is not marked¹ and indicates a non-future. The future marker closely resembles the verb boi [mboi] ‘want/like’, and historically could well be derived from it. Bybee, Perkins and Pagliuca (1994:254), in their discussion of distinct lexical sources converging ‘in grammaticisation paths’, point out that ‘all futures go through a stage of functioning to express the intention, first of the speaker, and later of the main verb’ and demonstrate that ‘a common agent-oriented pathway to future begins with desire’.

It could be argued that this marker is inflectional and has become a tense marker. However, I prefer to analyse -mbo as a modality marker, given that the expression of futurity in any language is primarily modal rather than temporal. It is glossed in examples and texts as FUT, and is described in 11.3.3.

11.3 Realis and irrealis

11.3.1 mo as a marker of realis

Throughout this description there are plentiful examples of mo as the 3SG non-future subject proclitic. As a subject pronoun, it indicates realis in 3SG only. Other subject pronouns than 3SG are now ambiguous for realis or irrealis, and modality can only be indicated by context or additional lexemes.

But it is highly likely that this was not the original function of mo. It seems probable that, historically, mo is a realis marker that has now filled the preverbal 3SG subject pronoun slot in general use, but has slipped from use as a realis marker after other subject pronouns with the majority of speakers. Occasionally it is used as a marker of realis by older speakers (age 50+). Where used as such, it occurs in the Verb Phrase following a subject pronoun other than 3SG.

¹ With the exception of 3SG in independent and some subordinate clauses, see 11.3.
... they wanted to build a house so that being so, they went down and stayed at the water’s edge.’ (E-T80:16)

‘They lay down to sleep for the night, (but) the girl didn’t sleep...’ (Nt-T37:13)

‘Then their father talked to them and said “You are of marriageable age...” ’ (lit. you sit/stay you are mature trees) (Nt-T20:7).

‘The shellfish called ‘Hurumbwewari’ were just everywhere, they ... they were there encircling the rock...’ (Nt-T74:8)

‘They left their food there with their bush knives...’(lit. they let go their food and knives they lay there...) (Nt-T33:26)

In all examples in my corpus where mo remains as a separate realis, it precedes a vowel and, as shown in the examples listed, mo appears to be used most often with the posture verbs (9.2.4.2). But it is also occasionally used with other verbs, as in the next examples from a much older woman who leads a more traditional lifestyle.

‘...we talk to them and they show respect, (but) they never...’ (C-T86:48)

‘We lived there and so I had my son Tahau.’ (C-T86:13)

‘We lived there thus 1SG take son-P:1SG T.

‘...we talk to them and they show respect, (but) they never...’ (C-T86:48)

‘We lived there thus 1SG take son-P:1SG T.

‘...we talk to them and they show respect, (but) they never...’ (C-T86:48)

‘...we talk to them and they show respect, (but) they never...’ (C-T86:48)
mo-iso  ku  lai-a ...
3SG-finish  1SG  take-O:3SG
‘I brought the leaves and tied it all up together, and then I took it (the bundle)...  
(C-T86:113)

This use of mo has also been sighted in a 1906 translation of part of the New Testament  
(Landels 1906:5) as in na movi Betleem ‘they lived in Bethlehem’. The first missionary-  
author has shown the particle as a phonologically reduced prefix to the intransitive, vowel  
initial verb, similarly to the speaker of (7).

The rationale for its posited history as a realis marker is based on the fact that there is an  
areal phenomenon in Vanuatu, very unusual in the world’s languages, of the irrealis  
preverbal subject pronouns being unmarked and the realis being marked. This is supported  
by previous analyses of data undertaken by Pawley, Lynch, and Crowley, as referred to in  
this section, the present Tamambo data where mo is still occasionally used, and a  
comparison with areal data for realis or ‘non-past’ marking.

In 1972, Pawley posited a non-future particle *ma- ‘non-future’ for Proto- North  
Hebridean-Central Pacific (1972:48) with the reflexes mo in Big Bay, Tangoa and Tasiriki  
(Santo), Maewo, Ambae, Raga (Pentecost); me in Mota (Banks), ma in Merlav (Banks)  
and in a dialect of Bauan Fijian, and m- in Volow (Banks). Other languages of northern  
Vanuatu also show mV as a marked realis/non-future with subject pronominals (for  
instance, Sakao, Uripiv, Vurës, Mwootlap, Gaua).

While not all local Vanuatu languages exhibit such a clear reflection of the mV reflex as  
many of these northern languages of Vanuatu do, nevertheless there are also some  
languages in central Vanuatu, including Lewo, Paama and Nguna, where ‘... the irrealis  
mode is basic, the realis being indicated by a change of the initial oral consonant of the  
verb to the corresponding nasal grade consonant’ (Lynch 1975:90). Also with reference to  
central Vanuatu, Crowley (1991:202) points out that ‘verbs in all of the languages of Epi  
which have invariant roots can be preceded by a separate realis marker that has the form  
m- before consonants and mi- before vowels, while the irrealis is marked by ø-‘.

Looking at the history of the realis/irrealis distinction in central Vanuatu languages,  
Lynch (1975:93) has posited an elegant explanation of a five-stage process in the  
development of the oral-nasal alternation, as summarised below:

Stage 1:  *ma is a free preverbal particle marking realis
Stage 2:  *ma becomes a clitic normally prefixed to the verb
Stage 3:  the vowel of the prefix is lost
Stage 4:  the m assimilates to the following consonant
Stage 5:  prenasalised consonants may undergo subsequent sound changes.

I suggest that in Tamambo, the process is between (what is described above as) Stages 2  
and 3 for older speakers, as shown in the examples; that is, mo or m- could once have been  
used with all subject pronouns in Tamambo to indicate realis. Now however it is retained  
for 3SG only for the majority of speakers. I further suggest that it has been reanalysed as  
the 3SG subject pronominal, retaining its realis quality in comparison to 3SG irrealis a, but  

2 All these are islands of northern Vanuatu except for Bauan Fijian. Modern names for these places are  
given here, rather than the names which are no longer in use, but used in the original descriptions, e.g.  
Aoba=Ambae; Bay of SS Philip and James= Big Bay, and so on.
still used occasionally by a few older speakers in its realis form. It is not grammatically acceptable to use *a mo VERB or *mo mo VERB.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject pronoun</th>
<th>Posited past forms</th>
<th>Present day forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Realis</td>
<td>Non-future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1SG</td>
<td>ku-mo Verb</td>
<td>ku (mo) Verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG</td>
<td>o-mo Verb</td>
<td>o Verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG</td>
<td>ø-mo Verb</td>
<td>mo Verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL</td>
<td>ka-mo Verb</td>
<td>ka (mo)Verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL</td>
<td>no-mo Verb</td>
<td>no (mo)Verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3PL</td>
<td>na-mo Verb</td>
<td>na(mo)Verb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bracketed forms indicate mo or m- marking that is attested with present-day older speakers.

It is worth noting that the initial consonant of approximately 35% of all Tamambo verbs listed in my data begin with a prenasalised stop or a nasal, and with all such verbs, the nasalisation is always heard between the obligatory subject pronominal and the verb, as in:

- **ku jivo** [kunjivo] 3 ‘I went down’
- **o boi-a** [omboia] ‘you like it’
- **na dule-ra** [nandulera] ‘they planted them’ (the yams).
- **na ngara** [nangara] ‘they are crying’
- **ka mule** [kamle] ‘let’s go home’

While this is not suggested as an explanation for the present lack of mV realis marking with subject pronouns, the nasalisation may have been a contributing factor towards the demise of a separate mo or m- marking in other than 3SG, and the subsequent reanalysis as posited above.

### 11.3.2 3SG a as irrealis

For all speakers, 3SG can also be expressed as a preverbal subject pronoun by a. When a is used as 3SG, it denotes Irrealis, as well as cross-referencing person and number. It expresses the idea that an event has not yet occurred, being most often used in a hypothetical sense with regard to non-past. In such contexts, a is freely used by speakers of all age groups.

(9) *Hei! Atea a tuani kamam!*
    hey One 3SG help O:1PL.E
    ‘Hey! Someone help us!’ (N.ch-T4:9)

(10) *Are voi a toro-iau ku-mbo vano.*
    if mum 3SG let-O:1SG 1SG-FUT go
    ‘If mum lets me I’ll go.’ (#c.218)

---

3 As noted in Chapter 2, local preference is for prenasalisation of stops to be written word medially only, e.g. *dondo* ‘night’, rather than *ndondo* or *dodo*.
Where 3SG subject combines with the future modal -mbo, the irrealis a must be used as the event, naturally enough, has not been realised.

(11) Nia a-mbo savutahi.
IP:3SG 3SG-FUT surprised.
‘He will be surprised.’ (#c.160)

The ‘definiteness’ of the meaning in (11) comes from the nature of the future modal in this language, rather than from the a. For example, compare:

(12a) A kiri.  
3SG.IRR rain
(12b) A-mbo kiri.  
3SG.IRR-FUT rain
(12c) Mo kiri.  
3SG rain
'It might rain.'  'It will rain.'  'It rained/it’s raining'

3SG irrealis a, as with any subject pronoun, can be combined with the negative marker te, as in:

(13) No-na sora-e a-te bosi.  
CLFR-P:3SG talk-NOM 3SG-NEG turn
‘His words will not change.’ (Wh-1:3)

(14) ...ne are vuhai a-te vano tiu tahasi, ku-mbo turu aien but if wood 3SG-NEG go leave stone 1SG-FUT stand here
a-va-hisi ku mate.  
3SG-CAUS-touch 1SG die
‘...but if the stick should not come away from the stone, I will stand here until I die.’ (Nk-T12:15)

The complement of several verbs all take a or mo, with 3SG usage, depending on the realisation or otherwise of the verbal complement (see 14.3.3.1 for detail on such complements).

(15) Niu a matavosai a mauru...  
Coconut 3SG be.able 3SG live
‘“Coconut” may be able to live...’ (N.ch-T6:16)

(16) ...mo ovi nira tolu, mo-iso mo boi a–ta  
3SG live IP:3PL together 3SG-finish 3SG like 3SG-REP
sahe aulu.  
go.up up.direction
‘...he stayed together with them, and then he wanted to go up to the bush again.’ (Nk-T12:11)

(17) Mo mandi tauhunju mo han~hani.  
3SG simply start 3SG RED~eat
‘He simply started to eat.’ (#e.207)
Those combined with NEGative te take Irrealis a because of the non-realisation of the event, regardless of whether realis or irrealis is used in the main verb phrase. Compare the next two examples:

(18a) Mo-te matavosai a vanovano.
3SG-NEG be.able 3SG walk
‘He isn’t/wasn’t able to walk.’ (#e.116a.)

(18b) A-te matavosai a vanovano.
3SG-NEG be.able 3SG walk
‘He might not be able to walk.’ (#e.116b.)

Since other subject pronouns for all person and number other than 3SG do not have this realis/irrealis option, they use the same form for both. For example:

(19) Mo boi a jivo Vila.
3SG.REAL want 3SG IRR go.down V.
‘S/he wants to go to Vila.’

but for 1SG:

(20) Ku boi ku jivo Vila
1SG want 1SG go.down V.
‘I want to go to Vila.’

If irrealis is to be indicated with person and number other than 3SG, it must be shown by additional clause level lexemes, or understood from context.

11.3.2.1 3SG a as past habitual aspect

3SG Subject pronoun a also has a secondary use of past habitual aspect in Event times prior to Speech time, as well as the irrealis meaning described above. Similarly to the irrealis meaning, this sense of ‘past habitual’ is available to 3SG only and, for other person and number, must be understood from context or other temporal clause-level lexemes. A ‘timeless habitual’ is one of meanings that can be conveyed by unmarked subject pronouns or sometimes the TA particle le.

Habitual aspect, as it is interpreted here, means the predictable repetition of the same event or events over an extended period of time, so extended that the event is seen ‘... as a characteristic feature of a whole period’ (Comrie 1976:28).

For Tamambo, 3SG a as a marker of past habituality is most often used in narrative texts. The following sentences illustrate the ‘mix’ of modal/aspectual meanings for 3SG a. In some cases, its use could be analysed as either. In these examples only, (HAB) Habitual and (IRR) Irrealis are shown in the glosse s for contrast. Elsewhere in examples, 3SG Subject pronouns a and mo are simply glossed as 3SG.

(21) Tovon alo mo suvu a suvutoho a mai aimo
when sun 3SG set 3SG.HAB hurry 3SG.IRR/HAB come home
a han–hani a-iso a maturu.  
3SG.IRR/HAB RED–eat 3SG.IRR-finish 3SG.HAB sleep
‘When the sun set, he would hurry to come home to eat and then he would sleep.’  
(N.ch-T6:5)

(22) Vevesai bongi Avurmakal a jivo alau a  
every day Avurmakal 3SG.HAB go.down coast 3SG.IRR/HAB
soari na vo-tamba-huhi-na mwende na-le ovi alau,  
see ART FEM-wife-P:3SG particular.one 3PL-TA live coast
a-iso a sahe a soari mwende alima  
3SG.IRR-finish 3SG.HAB go.up 3SG.IRR see particular.one five
na-le ovi aulu.  
3PL-TA live up.direction
‘Every day, Avurmakal would go down the coast to see his wives that lived at the coast, and after that he would go up to see those five living up in the bush.’  
(Nk-T1:4)

(23) Vevesai bongi a vano a sohi matan a soari  
every day 3SG.HAB go 3SG.HAB hide SUB 3SG.IRR see
na hinau mwende le hani bul-a-na maniok ...  
ART thing particular.one TA eat CLFR:P:3SG manioc...
‘Every day, he would go and hide in order to see what had eaten his manioc...’  
(N.ch-T2:6)

Initially, it may seem surprising that a past habitual meaning should be conveyed by an irrealis marker since, as Givón (1995:116-117) points out, habituality is pragmatically like realis in that an event is asserted to have occurred or persisted. But Givón also notes that unlike realis, ‘a habitual-marked assertion does not refer to any particular event that occurred at a specific time...’ and describes the status of the habitual as ‘... a swing modal category par excellence’ (p.116), which has been grouped in some languages with realis and in others with irrealis.

Brinton too (1988:140-1), in her discussion of aspectualisers in English, observes that ‘habitual aspect has similarities to epistemic modality because a present habit is presumed to continue into the future: the statement of habit is a kind of prediction’. It seems that habituality extends an event from without and distributes it over an entire time period. This idea of prediction is normally a modal one, so it is reasonable that an irrealis marker can also function to encode the idea of predicting the repetition of an event.

The same pattern mix of modal, aspectual and tense properties is not unknown in other languages.4 Ross (1993:49) describes for Takia, a language of PNG, an enclitic which ‘marks the events in an irrealis chain as habitual as commonly occurs in the description of processes’. But to have a past habitual marked as an irrealis, as in Tamambo, appears unusual. A parallel, however, is found in Bargam, a Papuan language. Roberts (1990:383),

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4 Alan Rumsey has also brought to my attention another ‘mix’ in an Australian language, Ungarinjin, where a negative imperative, obligatorily marked with irrealis, is also marked for a continuative aspect.
in comparing habitual past in closeby languages, makes the following observation that ‘the interesting feature of this language (Bargam), however, is that whereas in Amele and Nobonob the habitual past is categorized as realis modality, in Bargam it is categorized as irrealis along with the future tense’. This is very similar to the situation in Tamambo for 3SG.

However, where past habituality is to be indicated in other than 3SG, the subject pronoun for that person and number is used with no additional marking, and the habituality of the event is understood from context or by the presence of additional clause level lexemes. For example, in the next example from a narrative text about small mythical creatures, the duli, the speaker is relating a pattern of events that reoccurred over time. But the 3PL subject pronouns are unmarked and although there is no overt marking of habituality, an habitual aspect is clearly indicated from the narrative.

(24) *Tovon rani, na vano na sohi ana wamba-ra.*
when day 3PL go 3PL hide PREP cave-P:3PL
‘When it was daytime, they would go and would hide in their caves.’

*Tovon dondo mo mai, na vano ana tano na lai na*
when night 3SG come 3PL go PREP garden 3PL take ART
‘When night came, they would go to the gardens and get the

*vira-i dam mana bwere-i havera na lai-ra*
flower-LINK yam COM top.shoot-LINK island.cabbage 3PL take-O:3PL
yam flowers and the top shoots of the cabbages and take them

*mo vano ana wamba-ra. Ana bongi dule-a, are tamalohi*
3SG go PREP cave-P:3PL PREP day clear-NOM if people
away to their caves. At the time for clearing the gardens, if people

*na huli rani mo-te iso, dondo duli na mai*
3PL clear day 3SG-NEG finish night duli 3PL come
didn’t finish clearing in the daytime, (then) in the night the duli would come

*na huli evui na tano.*
3PL clear complete ART garden
and would finish off clearing the ground.’ (Nk-T3:2–4)

### 11.3.2.2 3SG ava as optative

Some older people are attested as using the term *ava* ‘let’, expressing an optative as in:

(25) *Ka lai na lo-vu-mbora nira ava ka lol’ na*
1PL take ART PL-TREE-wild.pandanu IP:3PL let 1PL make ART

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5 All three are ‘linguistically unrelated’ (Roberts 1990:384) languages of Madang Province, PNG.
6 Roberts (p.383 fn.13) also makes the point ‘that in English too an irrealis habitual past can be expressed using the modal verb would. For example, ‘When we were children we would often play at being grown-ups.’
vanua hini-a.
house PREP-O:3SG
‘We’ll get the wild pandanus, it’ll let us build a house with it.’ (Nk-T80:17)

(26) Speaker 1: Tamalohi na mai barindi!
person 3PL come today
‘The people are coming today!’

Speaker 2: Ava na mai!
let 3PL come
‘Let them come!’ (#e.886)

(27) No tamburongo – ava ku sora!
2PL listen let 1SG talk
‘You listen – let me talk!’ (#c.833)

It is also heard at the end of prayers in church, as in:

(28) Ava sohena.
let the.same
‘May it be like that.’

The lexicalised term *ava* would appear to come from the 3SG irrealis *a* + *va* causative marker to express ‘may it cause...’. This combination of *a-va* also appears in the aspectual *a-va-hisi* ‘until’ (lit. ‘may it cause to touch’ as described in 12.7.2). As shown here and in that section, it can be used in various environments, although its usage as *ava* is uncommon.

My main informant tells me that younger speakers today are unlikely to use it in conversation, and to express the sentiment of ‘let them come’ as in (26), they would say:

(29) Toro-ra na mai!
allow-O:3PL 3PL come
‘Let them come!’ (lit. allow them they come) (#JB)

11.3.3 Future modality

Grammatical marker *-mbo* indicates a future modality. It occurs in Slot 2 of the Verb Phrase (see Table 11.1) and cliticises to the preverbal subject pronoun. Ross (1988:103) suggests that ‘it is possible that POc had a future-marking morpheme *ba* ...’ and it seems likely that the Tamambo *-mbo* reflects this. Reference to the possible historical development of *-mbo* as a grammatical marker has also been made in 11.2.2.

As mentioned in 11.3.2, where the future modal combines with the 3SG, the subject pronoun must be the Irrealis *a*, since any verb marked for future modality will be unrealised at the time of speaking. So future with 3SG is always shown as *a-mbo* Verb, never *mo-mbo* Verb.

11.3.3.1 *-mbo* as predictive

The basic meaning of *-mbo* is that the speaker confidently expects the event to occur. The speaker is predicting that the event will, in fact, happen at some time after Speech
time. It is a firm definite ‘future’, and indeed negative te or aspectuals incorporating te cannot be used with it, as in:

(30)  *Aka a-mbo mai avuho.
boat 3SG-FUT come tomorrow
‘The boat will come tomorrow.’ (#e.10a)

(31)  *Aka a-mbo te mai avuho.
boat 3SG-FUT NEG come tomorrow
‘The boat will not come tomorrow.’ (#e.10b)

To convey negative polarity for an Event time after Speech time for 3SG, the irrealis form can be used, as in:

(32)  Aka a-te mai avuho.
boat 3SG.IRR-NEG come tomorrow
‘The boat may not come tomorrow.’ (#e.10c)

(33)  Mo matahu matan taura-na a-te mai.
3SG frightened SUB uncle-P:3SG 3SG-NEG come
‘He's scared that his uncle mightn’t come.’ (#e.978)

But only the unmarked form can be used for a negative with person and number other than 3SG, and the future modality is only indicated by context or additional adverbials as follows:

(34)  Aka na-te mai avuho.
boat 3PL-NEG come tomorrow
‘The boats will not come tomorrow.’ (#e.10d)

Future modal -mbo can combine with:
most modifiers of manner, direction, and non-result as described in 9.4.2. aspectuals ta (11.4.1) and le (11.4.3) as shown in the examples below.

(35)  O-mbo ta vano savai?
2SG-FUT REP go when
‘When will you go again?  (#e.292)

(36)  ... ka-mbo le domdomi-ho...
1PL-FUT TA think-O:2SG
‘...we will be thinking of you...’ (Complete example in Chapter 5 (example 35).)

(37)  ...ku hani-a, a-iso-ro ka-mbo ta-le tohotoho.
1SG eat-O:3SG 3SG-finish-thus 1PL-FUT REP-TA play
‘...I’ll eat it, and then afterwards we’ll keep playing again.’ (lit. ... we will again be playing)  Nt-T36:43)
Future modal -mbo cannot occur with:

- ‘recent past’ male, since male indicates an Event time prior to Speech time
- negative te as mentioned above
- negative aspectuals tele ‘not yet’ and lete ‘never’
- posthead modifier wati ‘unable’ (9.4.2.4), since this modifier occurs in conjunction with the negative, and this ‘definite future’ does not allow a negative.

11.3.3.2 -mbo as hortative

Modal -mbo can also have an interpretation where the speaker is exhorting another to do something, as in:

(38a) Ka-mbo vano! but not (38b) *Ka-mbo te vano!
    1PL-FUT go 1PL-FUT NEG go
    ‘Let’s go!’ ‘Let’s not go!’

(39) Ka-mbo bara hinda arua!
    1PL-FUT walk.on.reef IP: 1PL.I two
    ‘Let’s walk on the reef, the two of us!’ (Nt-T61:15)

11.3.3.3 -mbo as hypothetical

Additionally, -mbo occasionally has a secondary use to indicate a hypothetical future, as shown:

(40) Ka-mbo mule ka re sava...
    1PL-FUT head.home 1PL say what
    ‘We would go home but how?’ (Nt-T20:73)

See also Appendix 2, Text 2, sentence 6 with ku-mbo mule: ‘I would go in the house’.

In the next example, either a positive or negative interpretation can be placed on the hypothetical assertion, although there is no negative marking in the clause.

(41) Are Philip a mai, ro ka-mbo loli te han~hani-a
    if P. 3SG come thus 1PL-FUT make INDEF RED~eat-NOM
tawera.
    big
    ‘If Philip arrives, then we will make a big feast.’ OR
    ‘If Philip should arrive, then we would make a big feast. (but we don’t think he’ll come) #e.1095/6

In such cases, the ambiguity must be differentiated by additional information. For more on the hypothetical use of -mbo, see 14.4.5.3. And for a combination of several examples of the modal FUT -mbo and modal irrealis a in various VPs, in order to illustrate the mix possible, see Appendix 2, Text 2, sentence 17.
11.4 Aspectuals

The aspectual function of the 3SG irrealis a has been described in 11.3.2. This section describes aspectuals that occur prehead in the VP and can function with all preverbal subject pronouns. Other aspectuals that are serial verb constructions are described in 12.7.

11.4.1 ta ‘repeating action’

Aspectual ta indicates that the event has occurred again or is expected to occur or be repeated again, at least once, in another period of time. It is glossed as REP, signifying an event that repeats at a different time from the first occurrence of that event.

It is different from instantaneous but multiple events that repeat quickly, such as wuru ‘cough’ or taratara mata ‘blink eyes’. Such ‘multiple-event activities’, as described by Smith (1991:46), are essentially processes within the same event frame, and are often described as ‘iteratives’7 in the literature. This ta marker does not indicate iterativity in that sense. It is also different from a habitual aspect where the same event or events reoccur, making a predictable pattern over a whole period of time.

Event times using ta are usually prior to Speech time as shown in example (42), or can follow Speech time, as shown in (43).

(42) Mo-ta vohi uranji mo-ta sahe le ovi telei
    3SG-REP change.into child 3SG-REP go.up TA live PREP
tina-na.
mother-P:3SG
‘He once again changed into a child, and went up again to the bush and was living with his mother.’ (Nk-T83:48)

(43) O-mbo ta mai ?
    2SG-FUT REP come
‘Will you come back again?’ (#c.274)

Aspectual ta can also be used in conjunction with a 3SG irrealis, as in the following:

(44) Are a-ta sumbwe a lai na rawe ...
    if 3SG-REP chief 3SG take ART hermaphrodite.pig/s
    ‘If he should move up through the chief system8 again, he would take hermaphrodite pigs ...’ (C-T86:23)

Although it is unusual for ta to be used with a verb at an Event time simultaneous with Speech time, the following is possible:

(45) Iau ku-ta noha atea, niani hina tinambu...
    IP:1SG 1SG-REP have one this PREP different
    ‘I again have one, this one is different...’ (E-T23:1)

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7 Iterativity in this sense is not shown by aspectual marking in this language, but as a characteristic of particular verbs. Smith calls such verbs ‘semelfactives’, and describes them as ‘dynamic, atelic, instantaneous events’ (1991:6).

8 See 1.5.3 re the sumbwe system.
Where *ta* cooccurs with aspectual *le*, it almost always precedes it, see example (37). But occasionally *ta* can follow *le*, with no apparent difference in meaning:

(46) *Ra-vavine na-le ta vano na bao~baoti sohen barindi*...
    PL-woman 3PL-TA REP go 3PL RED–walk about like today
    ‘Girls are going around again, they walk all about like today...’  (C-T86:65)

11.4.2  *male* recent past

Aspectual *male* indicates an Event time in the immediate or recent past, and as such, cannot co-occur with Future *-mbo*. It is glossed as REC (recent) and is translated as ‘just’, in the sense of something concluded only just before Speech time. It is often used with reference to someone’s arrival. As with some other aspectuals that can occur in this slot (*lete, tele*) it appears to be derived from the TA *le* (11.4.3).

(47) *Ka male mai.*
    1PL REC come
    ‘We’ve just come.’  (#c.35)

(48) *Mo kiri mo iso niho o male mai.*
    3SG rain 3SG finish IP:2SG 2SG REC come
    ‘Before you came it was raining.’  (lit. ‘it rained it finishes you just came’) (#c.711)

(49)  *…matani niho o male soari na hari-ro...*
    because IP:2SG 2SG REC see ART shellfish-DIS
    ‘...because you just saw the hari (shellfish) eh ...’  (Nt-T32:30)

11.4.3  *le*: Some general comments

The grammatical form *le* is a tense and aspectual morpheme with both basic and secondary meanings.9 It is a high usage TA morpheme10, being used in verb phrases in main and subordinate clauses.

It is most often used with preverbal subject pronominals, but it can be used without the 3SG preverbal subject pronominal in specific syntactic environments. It cannot be used with negative marker *te*, except as a fused component of a negative aspectual (for more detail see 11.4.6). So all uses of *le* have a positive polarity.

**Basic meaning**

The basic meaning of *le* is to indicate imperfectivity. Imperfectivity is taken here to mean ‘unbounded in time’, what Comrie (1976:24) calls ‘viewing a situation from within’. Dik (1994:36) also notes that ‘an imperfective predication can be “broken into”...’, a useful observation referred to later with (56).

Particle *le* has this basic meaning of imperfectivity when used in any main clause with any person and number.

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9 See Comrie (1985a:18-23) for a discussion on basic and secondary meanings.
10 On a text count of approximately 10 000 words, *le* is used either alone or in conjunction with a preverbal subject pronoun at a rate of 2.79 times per 100 words.
Secondary meaning

The secondary meaning of *le* is to signify relative time, the relative time reference being one ‘which is interpreted relative to a reference point provided by the context’ (Comrie 1985a:58), and further that ‘the reference point is taken to be that established by the tense of the closest verb with absolute time reference’ (p.60). It has this secondary meaning only in specific syntactic environments, and never in a main clause.

11.4.4 Use of *le* with preverbal subject pronouns in main clauses

When *le* is used with the usual preverbal subject pronoun in a verb phrase in a main clause, its basic meaning is imperfective. Within the range of imperfectivity, *le* can also denote a progressive aspect, a continuous aspect, or an inchoative aspect with particular types of verbs. It can be used with verbs where the absolute time of the event encoded in the VP is prior to, following or simultaneous with Speech time.

‘Progressive’ is understood here to be an event continuing in process, that has ‘a connotation of dynamism’ (Smith 1991:112), so that it cannot be used in that sense with an intransitive stative or with a transitive experiencer verb. Comrie (1976:49) observes that ‘with a dynamic situation ... the situation will only continue if it is continuously subject to a new input of energy’.

Also, as mentioned, *le* has a positive polarity and so negative *te* cannot be used in the same VP. So where *le* has a progressive interpretation, the event must be continuing in process, rather than *not* continuing in process. Such progressive events that are not actually ‘in process’, that is, the ‘negative progressives’ (e.g. ‘I am not running’, ‘You are not eating your food’) must be expressed in an unmarked form as shown in 9.4.1.

‘Inchoative’ is used here to mean the coming about of a state, with no particular emphasis on the inception of the change.

These various uses within the basic meaning of imperfective are exemplified below.

11.4.4.1 General imperfective

Event time prior to (or simultaneous with) Speech time

The basic meaning of ‘unbounded in time’ can be indicated when *le* is used with any type of verb. The state holds or an experience or action continues over some time.

(50) *Alima na-le ovi aulu, mo-iso alima na-le ovi alau.*

five 3PL-TA live up.direction 3SG-finish five 3PL-TA live coast.direction

‘Five of them used to live up in the bush, and five of them used to live down at the coast.’ (Nk-T1:3)

The following extract from a description about different kinds of fishing, exemplifies the use of imperfective *le* in VPs, interspersed with unmarked VPS. From the context of the narrative it is clear that the events precede Speech time (the unmarked VPS are best interpreted by a habitual reading). But grammatically, a present interpretation is also possible, as is shown in the alternative translation.
(51) *Ale na-le sale, na ta sahe na-le Sale,*
if 3PL-TA float 3PL REP go.up 3PL-TA float
‘If they were ‘sale’-ing (the sit, float and wait type of fishing), they’d go up (to the
surface) again and float’,
‘If they are ‘sale’-ing (the sit, float and wait type of fishing), they go up (to the
surface) again and they are floating,

_ale na vano na soari te lala te sava hinau, na suvu_
if 3PL go 3PL see INDEF trochus or whatever 3PL dive
and if they continued and saw some trochus or whatever, they’d dive
and if they continue and see some trochus or whatever, they dive

_na jivo na lai-a a sahe ro na-le ate,_
3PL go.down 3PL take-O:3SG 3SG go.up thus 3PL-TA sit
they would dive down and bring it up and so they used to sit there,
they dive down and bring it up and so they are sitting there,

_na lete alo, nira na-le ate ana aka._
3PL never swim IP:3PL 3PL-TA sit PREP boat
they never swam around, they used to stay in the boat.’
they never swim around, they are sitting in the boat.’ (E-T23:10)

Transitive verbs that have experiencer subjects (see Table 9:2) cannot take _le_ to indicate
an experience continuing at Speech time, but prefer an unmarked subject pronominal. Interestingly, such verbs can take _le_ to indicate a continuing experience prior to Speech
time. Thus compare the use of _boi_ in the next two examples, with and without _le_:

(52a) *Tovon ku-le skul, iau ku-le boi mats...*_
when 1SG-TA school IP:1SG 1SG-TA like maths
‘When I was going to school, I used to like maths...’ (N.ab-T10:13)

(52b) *Tovon ku skul, iau ku boi mats...*_
when 1SG school IP:1SG 1SG like maths
‘When I go to school, I like maths...’
* ‘Whenever I am going to school I am liking maths...’*

Speech time prior to Event time
Future and _le_ can combine to indicate a situation continuing in the future:

(53) *A-mbo le turu losu...*_
3SG-FUT TA stand forever.
‘It may be standing forever’/’May it be standing for ever...’ (#e.430)

11.4.4.2 Progressive interpretation of imperfective
The following examples show the imperfective where it takes on the more dynamic
characteristics of a progressive, being the expression of a ‘positive in-process’ event with
active verbs. There are, of course, some active verbs that can never indicate a progressive
‘in process’ event because they are punctual, telic verbs, such as:
As explained at the beginning of 11.4.3, there is no grammaticalisation of a ‘negative progressive’ using le.

**Event time prior to Speech time/ simultaneous with Speech time**

Grammatically, there is no difference in marking between non-future events where le is used, and only context or other lexical clues disambiguate event times, but note differences with experiencer verbs as in (52a) and (52b).

(54) *Va-uranji na-le sua~sua.*
   PL-children 3PL-TA RED~paddle
   ‘The children are/were paddling (the canoe).’ (#c.11)

(55) *No-le loli sava?*
   2PL-TA do what
   ‘What are/were you doing?’ (#c.43)

The next example describes two creatures in a playful fight; it is known to be in the past from the context of the narrative, although grammatically it would be expressed the same way in a present time frame.

(56) *Na bimbisahi-ra mo suiha asena, tovon na-le bimbisahi-ra*
   3PL fall.on-O:3PL 3SG strong INTEN when 3PL-TA fall.on-O:3PL
   *na-le kunikuni, na-le tambwa~tambwahi-ra sohena.*
   3PL-TA repress.laugh 3PL-TA RED~crush-O:3PL the.same
   ‘They fell on each other very hard, and while they were falling on each other they were holding in their laughter, and they were crushing each other in the same way.’
   (Nt-T21:8)

Where there are sequential clauses, one event can ‘break into’ another, a characteristic possible of any imperfectives, as mentioned in 11.4.3. This is shown in the previous example where the event time of the ‘holding in of the laughter’ overlaps the event time of the ‘falling’. Such setting of the background event, or overlapping, frequently occurs with tovon ‘when/while’ adverbial clauses (14.4.1).

**Speech time prior to Event time**

A progressive aspect in the future can be indicated by the use of future -mbo + le with an active verb, as already shown in (37).

11.4.4.3 **Inchoative use of le**

This use of le is restricted to some kinds of verbs and is used in the sense of ‘becoming’ or ‘getting’. It also appears to be restricted to an inchoative event that one can verify by actually seeing it. Thus the following is acceptable:


(57) *Moli mo-le tawera.
Moli 3SG-TA big
‘Moli is getting big.’ (#e.921)

But a VP using *le with the following is unacceptable:

(58) *Vui mo-le dilodilo.
Vui 3SG-TA bald
‘Vui is getting bald.’

because, according to one informant, ‘you can't see it happening’. In such a case, any proposition about Vui’s baldness would be expressed as one of the following:

(59a) Vui mo dilodilo.  ‘Vui is bald.’
(59b) Vui mo-te dilodilo.  ‘Vui isn’t bald.’
(59c) Vui mo dilodilo vorivori.  ‘Vui is a little bit bald.’

11.4.5 Use of *le without preverbal subject pronouns

TA *le can be used alone for 3SG without the preverbal subject pronoun in:

main verbal clause
adjuncts of a VP
some subordinate clauses.

This cannot occur for any other person and number than 3SG.

Table 11.3: Variations with *le in main and subordinate clauses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For 3SG only</th>
<th>Main clauses, most subordinate clauses</th>
<th>VP adjunct (participle-like)</th>
<th>Simultaneous complements</th>
<th>Relative clauses and sohen manner clauses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*le +Verb</td>
<td>imperfective non-future, often a present orientation (subject slot must be filled, 11.4.5.1)</td>
<td>simultaneous with main clause (past/present/future)</td>
<td>simultaneous with main clause; past relative to Speech time</td>
<td>past relative to main clause, past relative to Speech time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mo-le + Verb</td>
<td>imperfective non-future</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>simultaneous with main clause and Speech time</td>
<td>simultaneous with Speech time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a + Verb</td>
<td>irrealis</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>irrealis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For other than 3SG</th>
<th>Main clauses, and most subordinate clauses</th>
<th>VP adjunct (participle-like)</th>
<th>Simultaneous complements</th>
<th>Relative clauses and sohen manner clauses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject pronoun + *le</td>
<td>imperfective non-future</td>
<td>simultaneous with main clause</td>
<td>simultaneous with main clause</td>
<td>simultaneous with OR past relative to Speech time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For some of these constructions, the meaning of the particle keeps its basic meaning of imperfective, and sometimes for other constructions takes on its secondary meaning of relative time. The interpretation of most of these constructions is straightforward, but various combinations of main clause and subordinate clause in Event times other than Speech time are sometimes problematic. Some of these combinations require the use of le alone for 3SG (le + Verb) and others require the usual subject pronoun with le before the verb (mo-le + Verb). The various restrictions and combinations are briefly set out in Table 11. and then the various constructions are looked at in detail to justify the analysis.

Since the marking does not vary for person and number other than 3SG, the discussion is restricted to 3SG.

11.4.5.1 In main clauses

TA particle le can be used with a verb as the nucleus of a VP in a main clause, but only when these conditions are met:

i) the subject slot is filled by a NP or the 3SG independent pronoun nia, except in lexicalised expressions such as shown in (66–68)

ii) preverbal subject pronoun mo/a is omitted.

The subject is thus understood to be 3SG. That is, le + verb can function as the predicate without the 3SG preverbal subject pronoun. Such VPs I call ‘restricted VPs’ since they do not have a preverbal subject pronoun. This cannot occur for person or number other than 3SG and although neither preverbal ‘future’ -mbo nor any of the preverbal TA particles (Table 11.1) can function in this way, the le marking is nevertheless reminiscent of the mo/a person, number and modality marking.

As with main clauses which do have a 3SG preverbal subject pronoun, the basic meaning of le as imperfective is retained. There can be an interpretation of a general ‘unbounded in time’ meaning, or the more dynamic progressive aspect of the imperfective.

General imperfective with an ‘unbounded in time’ orientation

The situation applies at the moment of speech, it applied prior to the moment of speech, at least for some time, and is expected to continue into the future at least for some time.

(60) Tovona sora-e no-ni Taro le turu matua.
    now talk-NOM CLFR-LINK Taro TA stand strong
    ‘Nowadays the words of Taro still remain.’ (N.ch-T6:15)

(61) Ale mo mati ne tarusa le eno aie...
    if 3SG low.tide but sea TA lie there
    ‘If the tide goes down but the saltwater is lying there...’ (E-T24:8)

(62) Karai nia le sevu ne jiviro nia le ate,
    flying.fox IP:3SG TA hang but parrot IP:3SG TA sit
    ne tuai nira na-le ate na isondhuu.
    but long.ago IP:3PL 3PL-TA sit 3PL all
    ‘Flying Fox hangs upside down but Parrot sits, yet in the olden days they both used to sit up.’ (Nt-T29:7)
Questioning of speakers confirms that the addition of 3SG preverbal subject pronoun *mo* is only marginally acceptable in the above examples.

**Imperfective with a more bounded orientation in time**

The use of *le* without the subject proclitic with predicates that have a more dynamic quality, such as *hani* ‘eat’, *lai wete* ‘sing’, *tua* ‘hit’, can indicate a present or past time orientation; that is the Event time can either be simultaneous with or prior to Speech time, as long as the ‘event’ is seen as ‘in process’.

(63)  
* Nia * le tua tasi-ku.  
 IP:3SG TA hit younger.sibling-P:1SG  
 ‘He’s hitting/was hitting my little brother.’

In the following examples the past orientation is known from the context of the texts, although the restricted VP form is the same as those with a ‘present’ orientation.

(64)  
* Nia le lai wete sohena...  
 IP:3SG TA take song the.same  
 ‘He was singing like that...’ (Nt-T79:15)  
 (but could be ‘He is singing the same way’)

(65)  
* Tama-ku nia mara aimo, nia le hase hani.  
 father-P:1SG IP:3SG man home IP:3SG TA by.self eat  
 ‘My father was a ‘custom man’, he ate by himself...’ (N.ab-78:6)  
 (but could be ‘My father is a custom man, he eats by himself’.)

An overt subject, either as a NP or independent pronoun, can be omitted in lexicalised, high usage expressions, and these will have a present orientation.

(66)  
* Le mahere?  
 TA straight  
 ‘Is it correct?’

(67)  
* Le ate?  
 TA sit  
 ‘Is s/he there?’

(68)  
* Le hinau  
 TA thing  
 ‘It’s there.’

11.4.5.2  
**With VP adjunct modifying same subject VP**

The following use of a ‘restricted VP’ as a VP adjunct is not a predicate but modifies the previous full VP. Both the main VP and restricted VP must share the same subject and the Event times. The participle-like VP adjunct *le* keeps its imperfective meaning, indicating an event in process. As with all restricted VPs, this use is exclusive to 3SG only. The Event times can be past or present relative to Speech time, but the restricted VP is always simultaneous relative to the main VP.

In the following example, the ‘crying’ event time and the ‘waking up’ event time, are simultaneous.

(69)  
* Uranji mo leleo le ngara  
 child 3SG wake TA cry  
 ‘The child woke up crying.’ / ‘The child wakes up crying.’ (#e.1060)

If the events were sequential, the speaker would say:
(70) Uranji mo leleo, (mo-iso) mo ngara.
   child 3SG wake 3SG-finish 3SG cry
   ‘The child woke up, and (then) cried.’/‘The child wakes up and (then) cries.’
   (#e.1061)

In the next example, the Event times of both the main VP and the restricted modifying
VP are known to be past from the context of the narrative, but their grammatical marking
could equally indicate a present time frame for the main VP and the restricted VP. The
alternative ‘simultaneous present’ is shown bracketed underneath.

(71) ...turu talom mo bwelumbwelu le sombe na tanume rindi...
   stand first 3SG close.eyes TA follow ART devil REF
   ‘...the firstborn (sister) closed her eyes following the devil...’
   (‘...the firstborn (sister) closes her eyes following the devil…’) (Nt-T20:31)

To express simultaneity with other than 3SG, the speaker must use a full VP (i.e. with
subject pronoun). The verbal clauses are then grammatically sequential but can be
understood as simultaneous or sequential. For example, to use the previous example, but
replacing 3SG with 3PL, the following interpretations are possible, showing that for other
than 3SG, the construction is ambiguous unless there are further contextual clues.

(72) na bwelumbwelu na sombe na tanume rindi.
   3PL close.eyes 3PL follow ART devil REF
   As simultaneous: ‘they close/closed their eyes (and are/were) following the devil.’
   As sequential: ‘they close/closed their eyes (and then) they are/were following the
devil.’

11.4.5.3 In simultaneous complements

These describe events where the Event time of the complement is simultaneous with the
Event time of the main VP. Speech time can be simultaneous with or follow the Event
times. The predicate of the main VP, the complement-taking predicate, is always one of the
Noonan notes (2007:143), ‘semantically it is the entire event, not the argument encoded as
the matrix direct object, that is perceived’.

If the simultaneous events are past relative to Speech time, 3SG is marked by le only in
the simultaneous (participial-like) complement. If the simultaneous events are present
relative to Speech time, 3SG is marked by subject pronoun +le, that is, mo-le in the
complement.

For other than 3SG, the simultaneous events are marked in the simultaneous
complement by subject pronoun + le, for both past and present, and are disambiguated by
context, adverbials or other additional lexical or pragmatic information.

Figure 11.1: Event times of main clause and subordinate clause in past

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>--Past---------------------------------------------------------</th>
<th>----Present----</th>
<th>--Future--&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>{Event time of main clause}</td>
<td></td>
<td>{Speech time}</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>{Event time of simultaneous (participial) complement}</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(73) Ku rongo na aka le mai.
1SG hear ART boat TA come
‘I heard the boat coming.’ *‘I hear the boat coming.’

(74) Uranji vorivorii mo soari na tina-na le mana.
child little 3SG see ART mother-P:3SG TA laugh
‘The baby saw his mother laughing.’ *‘The baby sees his mother laughing.’ (#1062)

(75) Nananovi ku burongi na wewe le noha.
yesterday 1SG smell ART laplap TA cook
‘Yesterday, I smelt the laplap cooking.’ (#1075)

Although nananovi ‘yesterday’ gives this sentence a specific temporal location, the use of le in the simultaneous complement for 3SG still indicates an event which is past relative to Speech time, even if nananovi is omitted.

The posture verbs in the restricted VPs in the next two examples can be interpreted either literally or as copula verbs.

(76) Mo soari na wembe atea le ate aulu ana
3SG see ART wembe.bird one TA sit up.direction PREP
bwere-na.
top.shoot-P:3SG
‘He saw a wembe bird sitting up/up there in the top of the tree.’ (Nt-T27:7)

(77) Na soari Avua le eno...
3PL see turtle TA lie
‘They saw Turtle lying...’/ ‘They saw Turtle there...’ (Nt-T62:10)

Where the Event times of the main clause and complement are simultaneous but in the same frame as Speech time, then 3SG must use the subject pronoun in the subordinate clause.

**Figure 11.2:** Event times of main clause and subordinate clause same as Speech time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&lt;---Past------------------</th>
<th>Present----------</th>
<th>Future--&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>{Event time of main clause}</td>
<td>{Event time of complement}</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>{Speech time}</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(78) Ku burongi na weve mo-le noha.
1SG smell ART laplap 3SG-TA cook
‘I smell the laplap cooking.’ (#e.1073)

(79) Ku rongo na aka mo-le mai.
1SG hear ART boat 3SG-TA come
‘I hear the boat coming.’ (#e.1069)
Simultaneous complements with other than 3SG

It is ungrammatical to use *le* alone in such complements except for 3SG. Thus the next example is acceptable, but *le* alone, as in (81), is not grammatically acceptable.

(80) *Mo mai mo soari ra-vavine arua na-le loloso...*
3SG come 3SG see PL-woman two 3PL-TA bathe
‘He came and saw the two women washing themselves ...’ (Nt-T82:4)
(past known from narrative but could also mean:
‘He comes and sees the women washing themselves’)

(81) *Mo mai mo soari ra-vavine arua le loloso...*
3SG come 3SG see PL-woman two TA bathe

11.4.5.4 In relative clauses and sohen manner clauses

Relative clauses (see 14.2) modify a NP argument and also differ from simultaneous complements in that they can be introduced by *mwende* ‘particular one’ (optional but preferred in most environments). Adverbial clauses of manner with *sohen* (14.4) function to modify a main clause, and can be similar to relative clauses in their structure.

For 3SG, as shown in Table 11.3, the use of *le* without the subject pronominal does not indicate imperfective, but rather a preceding event relative to Speech time. This is regardless of whether the Event time of the main clause has a past, present or future orientation relative to Speech time. So there are several possible scenarios.

With some combinations it seems initially as if the use of *le* + Verb in the subordinate clause is used where the Event time of the subordinate clause is past relative to the Event time of the main clause. This works well for the combinations listed below as Types 1, 2 and 3. But it does not hold for Type 4, where the Event time of the main clause is in the future, and the subordinate clause is still past relative to it but simultaneous with Speech time. And simultaneity with Speech time seems to be what is critical for a change in marking. While it is more usual for languages to use relative time in the sense relative to main clauses (as indeed happens here with the participial-like, simultaneous complements) it is also possible that Speech time can serve as a reference point. Comrie (1985a:58) observes that ‘... the present moment is, unless barred by context, always available as a reference point for relative tenses’.

So in Tamambo, if the Event time of the relative clause or the *sohen* adverbial clause is prior to Speech time, then the representation of 3SG in that subordinate clause is always *le* without the subject pronoun.

Because relative clauses and the *sohen* adverbial clauses behave similarly with regard to relative time, examples of both are included in this section. The subordinate clauses are bracketed.

**Type 1**

**Figure 11.3**: Subordinate clause event past relative to Speech time, and also past relative to main clause

```plaintext
<--Past-------- ------------------------------ Present---------------- ----Future-->
{Event time of subordinate clause}
{Event time of main clause}
{Speech time}
```
Here, the events of both clauses are understood to be in the past. From context, the event of the subordinate clause is known to be prior to that of the main clause and prior to Speech time.

**Relative clause**

(82) *Heletu na hani na dam mwende voi le lavo-ra.*

Pig 3PL eat ART yam particular.one mum TA plant-O:3PL

‘The pigs ate the yams that mum planted/had planted/was planting.’ 11 (#e.96a)

* ‘The pigs ate the yams that mum plants/is planting.*

The grammatical marking for this type does not preclude an imperfective overlapping interpretation, but the relative clause must be in the past relative to Speech time.

(83) *Ku soari na tamalohi mwende le rovi na heletu.*

1SG see ART person particular.one TA steal ART pig

‘I saw the man that stole/had stolen/was stealing the pig/s.’ *…steals/is stealing the pig/s.*

**Adverbial clause with sohen**

Both these examples are very similar to relative clauses in that both could optionally include *mwende* as shown.

(84) *No-na sora-e mo masoso sohen (mwende) le viti-a.*

CLFR-P:3SG talk-NOM 3SG happen like (particular.one) TA tell-O:3SG

‘His words happened like (the way) he said/had said/was saying.’ (Nk-T12:39)

(85) *Mo sumbwe sohen (mwende) le tauhunju le sumbwe niaro.*

3SG be.chief. like (particular.one) TA begin TA become.chief

EMPH

‘He moved up to the next rank of sumbwe chief like (the way) he began/had begun/was beginning’ (*begins/*is beginning) that very sumbwe process.’ (Nk-T85:24)

(86) *Betty mo toro na tamalohi mwende le losu.*

B. 3SG drop ART person particular.one TA strike

‘Betty left the man who beat her/used to beat her/had beaten her.’ (#e.693a)

---

11 Note that this last option ‘was planting’ is grammatically possible, but pragmatically implausible, as the person planting is hardly likely to allow the pigs to forage amongst the yam garden.
Chapter 11

Type 2

Figure 11.4: Subordinate clause event past relative to Speech time, and past relative to main event time in the present

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event time of subordinate clause</th>
<th>Event time of main clause</th>
<th>Speech time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

This type varies from Type 1 in that the main clause is indicated as being in process in the present. The subordinate clause is prior relative to the main clause and to Speech time.

(87) O soari, heletu na-le hani na dam mwende voi le lavo-ra.
2SG see pig 3PL-TA eat ART yam particular.one mum TA plant-O:3PL
‘Look, the pigs are eating the yams that mum planted/has planted/was planting’
(#e.96b)

Type 3

Figure 11.5: Subordinate clause event past relative to Speech time, and past relative to main event in the future

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event time of subordinate clause</th>
<th>Speech time</th>
<th>Event time of main clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The main clause events in this type are set in the future, the subordinate clause is past relative to it, and also past relative to Speech time. TA le +verb is used in the subordinate clause.

(88) Ku-mbo stori telei na vavine mwende le vano Alotu.
1SG-FUT talk PREP ART woman particular.one TA go Santo
‘I will talk to the woman who went/has gone (*goes/*is going) to Santo.’

(89) Avuho ka-mbo loli-a sohen mwende vavine rindi le loli-a.
tomorrow 1PL-FUT do-O:3SG like particular.one woman REF TA do-O:3SG
‘Tomorrow we’ll do it like that woman did it/has done it/was doing it.’
(*does/ *is doing it)’ (#e.1024)

Now so far for all examples in Types 1, 2 and 3, the subordinate clause has been in the past relative to Speech time and past relative to the main clause in either a past, present or future orientation. It may well seem as if the le + Verb marking depends on the Event time of the subordinate clause being relative to the Event time of the main clause. But Type 4 shows that in fact, that analysis does not hold.
Type 4

In this type, the Event time of the main clause is in the future, as in Type 3, and the subordinate clause is past relative to the main clause. But here the subordinate clause cannot take le. Although it is past relative to the main clause, it is simultaneous with Speech time and must take mo-le +Verb. And so it would seem that the Event time of the main clause does not impinge on the grammatical marking on the verb in the subordinate clause, but rather the marking in the subordinate clause depends on the relationship between the subordinate clause and Speech time.

Figure 11.6: Subordinate clause event simultaneous with Speech Time, past relative to main event in the future

![Diagram showing time lines for main and subordinate clauses] (90) Ku-mbo stori telei na vavine mwende mo-le vano Alotu.
1SG-FUT talk PREP ART woman particular.one 3SG-TA go Santo ‘I will chat with the woman who is going (on her way) (*went/*has gone/*was going) to Santo.’

(91) Ka-mbo lai na toa rindi mwende mo-le wala~walau avareo.
1PL-FUT take ART chicken REF particular.one 3SG-TA RED~run outside ‘We’re going to get that chicken that’s running (*ran/*was running) around outside.’ (#MW)

Type 5

In this type, the particle le is not used and the grammatical marking of 3SG to express an unrealised event in the subordinate clause is the same as in main clauses and in other types of subordinate clauses. An example is included here for comparison only.

Figure 11.7: Subordinate clause event future relative to Speech time, main event in the past or the present

![Diagram showing time lines for main and subordinate clauses] (92) Ku soari na bot mwende a sahe Bankis.
1SG see ART boat particular.one 3SG go.up B. ‘I see/saw/have seen/the boat that’s to go up to Banks.’
11.4.5.5 Combinations of two subordinating clauses

It is possible for a simultaneous complement and a relative clause to cooccur in the same sentence. As seen from the examples in 11.4.5.4, if there is no subject pronoun with 3SG, then the subordinate clauses indicate a time relative to Speech time.

The relative clause modifying the noun occurs immediately after the nominal argument that it modifies, while the complement following (bolded) focuses on the overall event. Since these are sentences with complements as arguments, the Event times of the verb of the main clause and the complement must be simultaneous, as shown in 11.4.5.3.

(93) Ku rongo na bot mwende le sahe Bangis le mai
     1SG hear ART boat particular.one TA go.up Banks TA come
     ‘I heard the boat coming that went up to Banks/that has been up to Banks.’

(94) Ku rongo na bot mwende le sahe Bankis mo-le mai.
     1SG hear ART boat particular.one TA go.up B. 3SG-TA come
     ‘I hear the boat coming that went up to Banks/that has been up to Banks.’

(95) Ku rongo na bot mwende mo-le sahe Bankis
     1SG hear ART boat particular.one 3SG-TA go.up B.
     mo-le mai.
     3SG-TA come
     ‘I hear the boat coming that is going up to Banks (on its way now).’

11.4.5.6 Non-3SG with relative and sohen clauses

Relative clauses and sohen adverbial clauses of manner with subject and person other than 3SG show no grammatical difference between past and present relative to the time of speech or relative to the main clause, as shown in Table 11.3.

(96) Mo re, ‘Voi manji mwende niho o-le boi-a
     3SG say mum animal particular.one IP:2SG 2SG-TA like-O:3SG a niani.
     3SG here
     ‘He said, “Mum, the fish that you like/liked/used to like might be here”!’  (Nt-
     T32:7)

(97) Ana sala mwende va-uranji na-le loli-a mo sati
     PREP path particular.one PL-child 3PL-TA do-O:3SG 3SG bad
     asena.
     INTEN
     ‘The way that the children did it/were doing it/had done it was terrible.’/
     ‘The way that the children are doing it is terrible.’  (#e.698)
Hunju-i dam rindi mo avutehi ana jara niaro
beginning-LINK yam REF 3SG appear PREP place EMPH
sohen ku-le store hini-a.
like 1SG-TA tell.story PREP-O:3SG
‘The origins of that yam appeared in that very place as I’m telling you about/told you about/have told you about/was telling you about.’ (Nk-T38:15)

11.4.6 Negative aspectuals

Negative aspectuals occur in Slot 4 of the VP (see Table 11.1). Similarly to negative marker te, they allow no other modifiers between them and the head of the VP. There are two, lete ‘never’ and tele ‘not yet’, and both appear to be derived from a combination of TA le with the negative particle te.

11.4.6.1 lete ‘never’

This aspectual is often used with regard to Event times prior to Speech time:

(99) Ne mo lete soari na hinau rindi.
but 3SG never see ART thing REF
‘But he never saw the/that thing.’ (N.ch-T2:6)

(100) Na lete skul.
3PL never school
‘They never went to church.’

But it can also refer to hypothetical situations, as in the following where 3SG irrealis a can be used with the negative aspectual just as it can with negative te.

(101) Ne are sohen a lete lai na manji. a-mbo turu aie
but if like 3SG never take ART animal 3SG-FUT stand there
a hisi a mate...
3SG touch 3SG die
‘But if it was such that he never caught any fish, he would stand there until he died...’ (Nk-T13:16)

11.4.6.2 tele ‘not yet’

This negative aspectual can only be used where the events are referring to an Event time prior to or simultaneous with Speech time.

(102) Tovon mo manjuri mo-le jivo mo tele kakau atano,
when 3SG descend 3SG-TA go.down 3SG not.yet reach on.ground

The term skul as a verb, can refer to either going to school or going to church, owing to the fact that the schools, both at Ataripoi in the ‘East’ where this example originates, or on the west side of the island, were started at the churches. In this example, it is referring to church in comparison to ‘Kastom’, traditional custom ways.
wembe rindi...
wembe.bird REF
‘When he was coming down (but) he was not yet on the ground, the wembe bird...’
(Nt-T27:14)

(103) Mo-iso na-le ovi, na-natu-ra na tele suiha...
3SG-finish 3PL-TA live PL-child-P:3PL 3PL not.yet strong
‘So then they were living there, (but) their children were not yet strong...’
(Nt-T36:3)

Often an event that is simultaneous with Speech time will overlap, in that the Event
time begins prior to the moment of speech but is expected to continue at least into the
immediate future:

(104) Mo tele ate ana sahasaha-e.
3SG not.yet sit PREP work-NOM
‘He’s not yet in the job.’ (#c.930)

The differences between the negative te and negative aspectuals tele and lete are shown
in the following:

(105) Mo te loli-a.
3SG NEG do-O:3SG
‘He didn’t do it.’/‘He’s not doing it.’

(106) Mo tele loli-a.
3SG not.yet do-O:3SG
‘He’s not yet done it.’

(107) Mo lete loli-a.
3SG never do-O:3SG
‘He’s never done it.’
12 Serial verb constructions

12.1 Introduction

Serialisation of verbs is well attested in many languages of the world from Africa to South America. As far as Oceanic languages are concerned, early recognition of the phenomenon of serialising verbs was made by Dempwolff in his 1939 study of Yabem in PNG, but primarily because of the interference of world events, his work was only rediscovered and acknowledged first by Bradshaw in the early 1980s. Since that time, interest in ‘serial verbs’ has surged, and a considerable number of descriptions and analyses have been made of such constructions, most recently with regard to Oceanic by Crowley (2002a), and by Bril and Oeanne-Rivierre (eds) (2004).

In this chapter, I first define the notion of a serial verb construction for Tamambo, and refer to the frameworks or parameters used by various scholars in classifying serial verb constructions (12.2). Next, in 12.3, I give a brief overview of such constructions in this language. Sections 12.4 to 12.6 describe core level serialisation, some problems with ambiguity between conjoint constructions and core layer serialisation, and nuclear layer serialisation. In 12.7, aspectual serialisation is detailed, and finally, in 12.8, I outline the possible pathways of development towards grammaticalisation or lexicalisation of serialising verbs in Tamambo.

12.2 Terminology and parameters used in description

12.2.1 Definition of serial verb constructions

A Serial Verb Construction (henceforth SVC) in Tamambo is defined here as a sequence of two or more verbs that combine to function as a single predicate. Verbs in the sequence are independent grammatical words, each of which can:

- function as a predicate in a monoverbal clause
- encode sub-parts of a single overall event
- share at least one core argument
- share the same TAM and polarity value
- have no grammatical marking of a clause boundary between them
- have the intonational properties of a mono-verbal clause
- have no marker of subordination or coordination within the sequence.

The criteria given above are drawn from Bradshaw (1983), Foley and Olson (1985), Crowley (1987), Givón (1991), Durie (1997), and Aikhenvald (1999), although the criteria

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1 This does not apply to so-called ambient serialisation, 12.4.7.
2 But note that one type of SVC has substantially moved towards grammaticalisation as a complementiser.
are not necessarily common to all authors. The list above also concurs with the seven
criteria listed by Bril (2004:2–3), though worded and ordered differently.

12.2.2 Parameters used for classifying serial verb constructions

There have been various parameters used for discussing serialisation and to describe
serialising constructions in previous studies. These have included:

i) the clause layer where serialisation occurs (Foley & Van Valin (1984), Foley &

ii) the occurrence and cooccurrence of contiguous sequencing and incorporation (Durie
1997)

iii) the types of verbs most likely to enter into serialisation (a serialisation hierarchy)
(Foley & Olson 1985, Crowley 1987)

iv) the sequencing of verbs according to membership in open or closed classes
(Aikenvald 1999)

v) the occurrence of verbs with respect to the arguments that they share, resulting in
same-subject, switch-subject, multiple object, ambient, and cumulative subject types
of serialisation

Various aspects from most of the above are used in this description.

12.3 An overview of Tamambo verb serialisation

The various parameters outlined in 12.2.2 are used for different kinds of classification.
The main classification here is made between serialisation at the core and nuclear layers
of the clause. The layered structure of the clause, as outlined in Chapter 3, is used here to
describe serialising constructions at the nuclear layer where two or more verbs join
together, or at the core layer where ‘two cores, each with their own nucleus and
corresponding arguments, are joined together to form a larger complex core’ (Foley and
Olson 1985:47). Just one example of each type is given here, with a full description in later
sections of the chapter. The type of serialisation described as ‘multiple object’ serialisation
(Crowley 1987:39) is not found in Tamambo.

Core layer serialisation

(1) Mo karu mo jivo mo turu ana tarusa...
    3SG wade 3SG go.down 3SG stand PREP sea
    ‘He waded down there in the sea...’ (Nt-T20:105)

Nuclear layer serialisation

(2) Mo mandi walau sombe-a, tamanatu-na mo mai ana
    3SG simply run go.after-O:3SG husband-P:3SG 3SG come PREP

    horosala...
    big.road
    ‘She just ran after him, (but) her husband got to the big road...’ (Nt-T72:23)
Serial verb constructions

Switch-subject serialisation

(3) Na lai-au ku jivo ana skul.
3PL take-O:1SG 1SG go.down PREP church
‘They brought me down to the church.’ (lit. they take me I go down...) (N.ab-T78:9)

Cumulative switch-subject

(4) O sombe tawai-m no sahe no lai te
2SG go.after older.brother-P:2SG 2PL go.up 2PL take INDEF
ha-ku havera.
CLFR-P:1SG cabbage
‘You follow your big brother up and get some of my island cabbage.’ (lit. you go after your big brother you both go up and take...) (N.ch-T6:7)

Ambient serialisation

(5) Niho o-le rongo mo duhu?
IP:2SG 2SG-TA feel 3SG good
‘Are you feeling well?’ (lit. you are feeling it is good?)

In complex sentences, clauses can be made up of different types of serialisation within the sentence. There is no restriction on co-occurrence of serialisation. So there can be combinations of a core layer, same-subject serialised sequence leading into a switch-subject, and another clause may have a nuclear layer sequence within it, followed by a conjoint clause, and so on. In fact, it is almost impossible to find Tamambo sentences with no examples of serialisation within them, so productive is this process for expressing common events. For example, the following sentence has four clauses, three of which are made up of serial verb constructions (numbered and bracketed). The first SVC has an ambient aspectual SVC, the second a core layer same-subject three-verb sequence, and the last another same-subject SVC.

(6) Ku-le tirohi-a, [tirohi-a mo vano mo sula]₁
1SG-TA take.look-O:3SG take.look-O:3SG 3SG go 3SG grow
‘I used to go and keep an eye on it (the garden), kept on watching it until it grew,

[mo sula mo sahe mo baravu]₂
3SG grow 3SG go.up 3SG tall
it grew up tall

[ku vano ku rangoe-ra]₃.
1SG go 1SG train.on.rango.pole-O:3PL
(and then) I went and trained them (the yams) on the rango poles.’ (E-T53:10)

The various types of serialisation are listed under the broad categories of core and nuclear layer.
12.4 Core layer serialisation

This type of serialisation is made up of one proposition or one event encoded by a sequence of two or more verbs. Sequences of two or three verbs are common in Tamambo, but there are no examples attested of more than three verbs in the sequence. Core layer serialisations can often look like a string of verbal clauses, but must meet the criteria for defining SVCs listed in 12.2.1. Especially important is the role of intonation to differentiate between conjoint clauses and core layer SVCs, as is explained in 12.5. Core layer serialisation in Tamambo can be grouped into three main types:

- same subject
- switch-subject including cumulative subject
- ambient.

These in turn can further be divided according to the transitivity of verbs that are allowable in different constructions.

Table 12.1: Core layer serialisation according to transitivity of verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb sequence</th>
<th>Same subject</th>
<th>Switch subject (including cumulative subject)</th>
<th>Ambient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both/all intransitive</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrans. + trans.</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. + intrans.</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both transitive</td>
<td>yes¹</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within the blanket terms of transitive and intransitive, there is also a hierarchy of the kinds of verbs that can occur. The serialisation hierarchy posited cross-linguistically (Foley and Olson 1985:41–43) suggests that verbs most likely to be serialised are intransitive verbs of motion, followed by postural verbs, stative and process verbs and last of all transitive verbs. Tamambo reflects this hierarchical pattern for core layer serialisation, but the reverse is true at the nuclear layer.

Table 12.2: Core layer serialisation according to a serialisation hierarchy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most likely</th>
<th>1. Basic motion intransitive (closed subset)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>vano</em> ‘go’, <em>mai</em> ‘come’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>sahe</em> ‘go up’, <em>jivo</em> ‘go down’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a. Posture intransitive: <em>turu</em> ‘stand’, <em>ate</em> ‘sit/stay’, <em>eno</em> ‘lie’ (closed subset)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b. Active intransitive: (open set)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e.g. <em>walau</em> ‘run’, <em>hao</em> ‘climb’, <em>karu</em> ‘wade’, <em>hilo</em> ‘look’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Stative/process intransitive (open)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Other intransitives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Transitive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Least likely</th>
<th>3 Restricted to one very limited set.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 Stative verbs are attested as occurring in ambient serialisations, see 12.4.7.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 This is a similar pattern to serialisation in Paamese (Crowley 1987: 68–72)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12.4.1 Core layer serialisation according to semantic functions

Variations of verb sequencing according to a parameter of semantic functions are described by several authors. Durie suggests (1997:330) that ‘verb sequencing is often iconic in its ordering’ as exemplified by Cause-effect, Causative, Goal/Benefactive, Motion, and Instrumental Serialisation. He also recognises a number of types where iconic principles do not apply such as ‘Coincident motion or posture serialization’, ‘Manner serialization, ‘Synonymic serialization’ (pp.336–338).

In Tamambo, the overall semantic functions of the SVCs fall into particular groups as shown in Table 12.3, patterning according to the transitivity of verbs and the semantic restrictions inherent to particular verbs.

Table 12.3: Core layer serialisation according to semantic functions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible semantic functions</th>
<th>Same-subject</th>
<th>Switch-subject</th>
<th>Ambient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core layer serialisation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same-subject</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both/all</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrans.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans/intrans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position/motion and associated action</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event in specified direction/location</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utterances</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manner or non-result</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspectual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen that same subject serialisation makes up half of the categories according to semantic function, but in the actual quantity of examples in my data, same subject serialisation makes up around 75% of all serialisation. It is well established as a clausal structure in children’s speech as attested in recordings of children from age four, and is used frequently by speakers of all ages.

Two or often three verbs can be sequenced all sharing the same subject. The use of two different subjects is ungrammatical, unless they are used in different clauses. Preverbal subject pronouns obligatorily precede each of the serialising verbs, although a NP subject will be already introduced or understood from the context. Preverbal subject cross-referencing is obligatory on the verb in core layer serialisation, just as in conjoint clauses, but only the first verb can have a NP in the preverbal nominal slot. If that subject NP has been previously introduced into the discourse, or is understood from context, it is not repeated. For instance, in the following example, the subject NP (in this case tanume rindi ‘the devil’) has already been introduced, but each of the three same-subject verbs in the SVC must obligatorily have its own preverbal pronominal.

(7) ...mo karu mo jivo mo turu ana tarusa, mo romi
    ...3SG wade 3SG go.down 3SG stand PREP sea 3SG suck
...he waded down there in the sea, and sucked up the saltwater...’ (Nt-T20:105)

Core layer serialisation is now discussed according to the semantic functions shown in Table 12.3.

12.4.2 Motion or position and associated action

12.4.2.1 Motion and associated action: intransitive verbs only

One of the four basic motion verbs (9.2.4.1) must occur in a sequence. It is also quite common for two such verbs to co-occur in one sequence or for a basic motion verb to co-occur with a posture verb (9.2.4.2). The other verbs in the sequence can be any of the active intransitive verbs. Stative verbs cannot occur in this type of SVC.

Two verb sequences:

Such constructions are extremely common in all types of discourse. The SVCs are bolded in the following examples.

mai ‘come’

(8) O dami na tamalohi na mai na welu...
2SG ask ART person 3PL come 3PL dance
‘Ask the people to come and dance...’ Nt-T20: 11)

vano ‘go’

(9) Mo rani, na vano na maturu...
3SG daytime 3PL go 3PL sleep
‘Day came, and they went and slept...’ (T42:66)

jivo ‘go in down direction’

(10) Na turu aie, na jivo na bara...
3PL stand there 3PL go.down 3PL walk.on.reef
‘That being so, they go down and walk on the reef...’ (T32:6) See (67) for complete example.

sahe ‘go in up direction’

(11) ...manji na sahe na ruhu auta...
animal 3PL go.up 3PL go.under shore.direction
‘...the fish went up and holed up on shore...’ (E-T25:9)

Three verb sequences

Similarly to two verb sequences, a basic motion verb in Slot 1 keeps its literal meaning:

(12) mo boi a maturu, mo vano mo jovi mo maturu.
3SG like 3SG sleep 3SG go 3SG fall.down 3SG sleep
‘... he wanted to sleep [so] he went and lay down and slept.’ (Nt-T20:54)
12.4.2.2 Motion and associated action: intransitive + transitive

Similarly to the ‘all intransitive type’ described above, there must always be one verb from the closed set of basic motion verbs. In this type, it always occurs in the initial slot with its literal meaning, prior to the transitive verb and expresses the motion type that is an immediate prelude to the transitive action.

There is a slight semantic difference with these SVCs from the ‘only intransitive’ types in that the motion verb seems to intimate a purposeful movement. But where the intent is strong, then it is more usual to use matan ‘in order to’ to introduce an adverbial clause (see 14.4.4).

mai ‘come’

(13) Na mai na dami kamim...
3PL come 3PL ask O:2PL
‘They come and ask for you both...’/‘They came to ask for you both...’ (Nt-T20:132)

vano ‘go’

(14) ...ku vano ku lai na ra-talaua...
1SG go 1SG take ART leaf-sago.palm
‘...I go and get/I went and got the sago palm leaves’/
‘...I go/went to get the sago palm leaves...’(E-T55:3)

jivo ‘go down’

(15) Ka jivo ka sai ha-nda manji.
1PL go.down 1PL search CLFR-P:1PL.I animal
‘We go/went down and look(ed) for fish for us to eat’/
‘We go/went down to look for...’ etc. (Nt-T32:15)

sahe ‘go up’

(16) Na sahe na sauvi-a.
3PL go.up 3PL wait.for-O:3SG
‘They go/went up and wait(ed)/to wait for her.’(Nt-T31:5)

12.4.2.3 Literal position and associated action: intransitive verbs only

Unlike basic motion verbs, posture verbs are not commonly attested in Slot 1 of a SVC. They are used more often as single verbs in a VP or in non-initial slots in SVCs. Where they do occur in Slot 1, they keep their literal meaning, as in the following:

ate ‘sit’, ‘stay’

(17) ...mo sahe vorivori, mo ate mo hilo mo jivo
3SG go.up little 3SG sit 3SG look 3SG go.down
atano.
ground.direction
‘...he went up a little bit, and sat and looked down below.’ (Nt-T22:9)
eno ‘lie’

(18) Na eno na maturu dondo, vavine ri’ mo-te maturu.

3PL lie 3PL sleep night woman REF 3SG-NEG sleep

‘They lay down to sleep for the night, (but) the woman didn’t sleep.’ (Nt-T37:13)

turu ‘stand’

(19) Vu-mbue rindi nia mo turu mo sahe aulu.

TREE-bamboo REF IP:3SG 3SG stand 3SG go.up up.direction

‘That bamboo tree stands up in the bush.’ (Nt-T79:8)

Surprisingly, there are no ‘posture’ verbs attested in the corpus that occur in a core level SVC prior to a transitive verb, although posture verbs can occur in nuclear serialisation. While mo turu ‘it/he/she stands’ keeps its literal meaning when used independently as a VP, as well as in Slot 1 of a SVC as above, its most common use nowadays is as an illocutionary device, linking or introducing a clause, and meaning ‘that being so’ (see 13.2.2.4).

12.4.3 Action or event in a specified direction/location

12.4.3.1 Action in a specified direction: intransitive verbs only

Where the basic motion verb occurs in the non-initial slot (either in Slot 2 or 3) it always has a directional meaning. Such a function for ‘come’ forms, marking movement towards the deictic centre, and for ‘go’ forms, indicating direction away from the deictic centre, is described as a comparatively common grammatical use also for some other Oceanic languages (Lichtenberk 1991b:488–490; also Ross 2004:300–309). In Tamambo, verbs sahe ‘go up’ and jivo ‘go down’ are also used as directionals, as well as the ‘come’ and ‘go’ forms.

The other types of verbs that can occur in these SVCs must be intransitive active atelic verbs. They are usually verbs of physical motion.

Two verb sequences:

(20) ...bwere-i ra-vae mo tisu mo vano

top.shoot-LINK LEAF-vae 3SG point 3SG go

asa-na...

traditional.place-P:3SG

‘...the tips of the vae leaf point away towards his place...’ (E-T75:20)

(21) Vuvahole mo rongo-a, mo ayu mo mai.

V. 3SG hear-O:3SG 3SG fly 3SG come

‘Vuvahole heard him and came flying (to him).’ (Nt-T40:5)

(22) Vavine le hilo le sahe, ta-Ambae mo dono mo jivo

woman TA look TA go.up belong-A 3SG sink 3SG go.down
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‘While the woman was looking up, the Ambae man drowned in the sea.’ (Nk-T67:59)

(23) Harivi mo tio, mo walau mo vano auta...
    rat 3SG jump 3SG run 3SG go inland.direction
    ‘Rat jumped off and ran away inland...’ (N.ch-T5:13)

Three verb sequences:

In these examples, the locative goal is shared by the verbs in the sequence:

(24) Vavine mo walau mo jivo mo rasitaka ana oneone.
    woman 3SG run 3SG go.down 3SG poke.through PREP sand
    ‘The woman ran down through onto the beach.’ (Nt-T67:45)

The directional motion can also combine with consequent action, as in the following:

(25) ...mo walau mo vano mo sohi ana mesu.
    3SG run 3SG go 3SG hide PREP bush
    ‘...he ran away and hid in the bush.’ (Nt-T36:21)

Alternately, an action (which can also be a verb of motion) can precede the directional motion, as in the next example:

(26) ... uranji rindi mo vano mo hao mo sahe ana matavuresi
    child REF 3SG go 3SG climb 3SG go.up PREP top.branch
    vu-mambwe.
    TREE-chestnut
    ‘... the child went and climbed up into the top of the chestnut tree.’ (Nk-T73:21)

There are also ‘switch-subject’ SVCs that are semantically similar, and which also express action or event in a specified direction, but since their syntactic structure is quite different, I leave a description of them until 12.4.6.1.

A variation with final slot

Although the basic motion verb vano ‘go’ in the non-initial slot in a SVC of this kind can function to indicate direction, as has been seen above, it also can often function as an aspectual marking continuative action.

(27) Mo ate mo domdomi mo vano mo re...
    3SG sit 3SG think 3SG go 3SG say
    ‘He sat and kept on thinking (and then) he said...’ (Ni-T36:72)

Serialised verbs that function as aspectuals in this way are discussed in 12.7.
12.4.3.2 Action in function as specified location: intransitive verbs only

Posture verbs in a non-initial slot always take on a locative anaphoric meaning such as ‘there’, where the specific location is previously stated in the narrative. This applies to either two or three verb sequences.

The choice of *turu* ‘stand’, *eno* ‘lie’, or ‘ate’ *sit*, does seem to depend to some extent on the literal meaning of the verb, as the examples show, and also to some extent on temporal factors. For example, *eno* ‘lie’ can mean ‘on an horizontal plane’, or it can signify a somewhat longer time span than, for example, *turu* ‘stand’. But Tamambo speakers do not accept a literal gloss for posture verbs in these slots.

(28) **Mo mate mo eno ana lanjelanje.**

3SG die 3SG lie PREP coral

‘He died there on the coral.’ (Nt-T72:45)

If the meaning of the previous example was ‘he lay down and died’, then the order of the verbs would be reversed to *mo eno mo mate*, indicating iconic sequencing for such combinations.

Examples with other posture verbs follow:

(29) **Nia mo vano mo sohi, mo sohi ana horosala,**

IP:3SG 3SG go 3SG hide 3SG hide PREP big.road

*mo sohi mo ate mo tuai vorivori.*

3SG hide 3SG sit 3SG long.ago little

‘He went and hid, he hid on the road, he hid there a little while.’ (Nt-T36:55)

(30) **Mo ua mo sahe mo turu ana bau-na.**

3SG high.tide 3SG go.up. 3SG stand PREP knee-P:3SG

‘The high tide came up to his knee.’ (lit. ‘it high-tided it went up it stood at his knee’) (Nk-T50:9)

(31) **Mo karu mo jivo mo turu ana tarusa...**

3SG wade 3SG go.down 3SG stand PREP sea

‘He waded down there in the sea...’ (Nt-T20:105)

Although the literal meaning of the posture verbs is not acceptable as a translation in these examples, it is not possible to alternate them. So for example, in (28), one could not use *ate* ‘sit’ for the location/position of dying. In the same way in (29), it would not be possible to switch *ate* ‘sit’ to *turu* ‘stand’ or it would seem a very strange way of hiding. And similarly for (30) and (31), *ate* ‘sit’ or *eno* ‘lie’ would not be possible as a replacement for *turu* ‘stand’. This indicates that while speakers do not accept a literal translation for the posture verb in the non-initial slot, some lexical meaning of the typical position of each of the posture verbs is certainly retained.

**Generalisations re basic motion and posture verbs**

All SVCs so far discussed have included a basic motion or posture verb. The generalisations can be made that
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i) in same subject serialisation, one of the verbs in an all-intransitive sequence must be one of the four basic motion verbs or one of the three posture verbs;

ii) with same subject, intransitive + transitive SVCs, the intransitive verb is most likely to be a basic motion or posture verb;

iii) if a basic motion or posture verb is the initial verb in the serialisation, it retains its literal meaning;

iv) if a basic motion verb is non-initial, it indicates action in a specified direction OR an aspectual meaning; if a posture verb is non-initial, it indicates an event in a specified place.

This dependency on slot placement for the semantic function of the verb is summarised in the following table:

**Table 12.4:** Slot placement of basic motion/posture verb and semantic function

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position of verb</th>
<th>Type of verb</th>
<th>Semantic function of SVC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial slot</td>
<td>Basic motion verb</td>
<td>Motion (literal meaning) + associated action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Posture verb</td>
<td>Position (literal meaning) + associated action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-initial slot</td>
<td>Basic motion verb</td>
<td>Action/s in a specified direction OR Aspectual meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Posture verb</td>
<td>Action of event in a specific place</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**12.4.4 Comparatives: same-subject intransitive + transitive**

Where the serialisation functions to indicate a comparative, both verbs share the subject argument and the O is an argument of the final transitive verb. There can be only two verbs in the sequence. The first slot is always filled by an intransitive verb (can be an adjectival verb) as in examples below. The second verb is always **liu** ‘exceed’/ ‘win’. For other discussion on comparatives see 5.3.1.1 and 10.3.1.

(32) *Nia mo skul mo liu na tua-na.*
    IP:3SG 3SG school 3SG exceed ART some-P:3SG
    ‘He attends school better than some of them.’ (#504JB)

(33) *Heletu niani mo suiha mo liu-ra.*
    pig this 3SG strong 3SG exceed-O:3PL
    ‘This pig is the strongest of them.’ (lit. this pig is strong he beats them) (#e.675)

For a similar example, see also Chapter 4 (59).

This comparative function for same-subject serialisation is also attested in a similar form in Numbami and Jabem (PNG) as discussed by Bradshaw (1993:148-149), where the transitive verb with similar semantic function is glossed as ‘surpass’. Early, too, briefly mentions this comparative function as a function of ambient serialisation in Lewo (1994:389). Seuren lists this function as one of the semantic prototypes for SVCs within the world’s languages, and refers to it as ‘the COMPARATIVE class’ (1990:28).
12.4.5 Utterances: same-subject transitives

This is a very limited set, restricted to re ‘say’ as Verb2. The SVC has two functions:

i) to indicate a kind of synonymic semantic function, as described below

ii) as an incipient complementiser, where the object argument of the SVC is a complement clause (see 12.8.1.2).

Synonymic serialisation is a term used by Durie (1997:337) to describe ‘the combining of verbs that are closely related in meaning’ and where ‘the two verbs are not ordered either causally or temporally’. In such locutionary serialisation in Tamambo, Verb1 is most often viti ‘speak’/‘tell’, but can also be any other utterance verb, such as sora ‘talk’, dami ‘ask’, darami ‘answer’. Verb2 is always re ‘say’, as in the following:

Direct speech:

(34) Tina-ra mo viti-ra mo re, ‘Ka jivo ana barambara’...

mother-P:3PL 3SG tell-O:3PL 3SG say 1PL go.down PREP reef.at.low.tide

‘Their mother said to them, “Let’s go down on the reef”...’

(lit. ‘Their mother spoke to them she said...’ etc.) (Nt-T32:5)

Reported speech:

(35) Tahisa-na mo viti-a mo re na-mbo vano...

friend-P:3SG 3SG tell-O:3SG 3SG say 3PL-FUT go

‘Her boyfriend told her that they would go...’ (Nk-T15:4)

Naming:

(36) Stori rindi, na viti-a na re sora-e welu.

story REF 3PL tell-O:3SG 3PL say talk-NOM dance

‘As for that story, they call it a dance story.’ (Nk-73:1)

In his discussion of SVCs in general terms of semantic functions, Seuren remarks that a ‘common category of SVCs is the SAY-class, where V2 does the work done by the subordinating conjunction that in English’ (1990:18). This is the second function of the re ‘say’ type in Tamambo as in (35), where the SVC is moving to a grammatical role. The choice of verb as a complement taking predicate, Verb1 of the SVC, is often filled by viti ‘tell’, but the slot is not restricted to it.

(37) Ku viti-a ku re no-le ate aimo, mo tete.

1SG tell-O:3SG 1SG say 2PL-TA sit home 3SG negative

‘I told you to stay home, (but) no. ‘(lit. ‘I spoke it I said you are staying home...’)

(Nt-T33:33)

(38) Ka vano ka dami-a ka re ka sombe na tamalohi, 1PL go 1PL ask-O:3SG 1PL say 1PL go.after ART person
ne ka sombe na tanume-te.
but 1PL go.after ART devil-DIS
‘We went and asked if we could marry a man, but we married a devil eh.’ (Nt-T20:128)

(39) Selina mo viti tau-hi-a mo re a-mbo vano Alotu.
S. 3SG tell put-TR-O:3SG 3SG say 3SG-FUT go Santo
‘Selina promised that she would go to Santo.’ (#e.1043b)

Further mention of the grammaticalisation of this type of SVC is made in 12.8.1.2, and a discussion of the types of other verbs which function as complement-taking predicates with re, with examples, are found in 14.3.6.

12.4.6 Switch-subject serialisation

This kind of serialisation is sometimes referred to in the literature as ‘causative serialisation’ and is a very productive process in Tamambo. In fact, it is better subdivided into two types in this language, according to semantic function:

i) action in a specified direction/location

ii) ‘causative’.

The intransitive verbs that can function in the serialisations are different for each functional type.

In both types of ‘switch-subject’ serialisation, a transitive verb only can occupy slot 1 in the sequence with an intransitive verb in slot 2, (as shown for ‘switch-subject’ in Table 12.1). The object of the transitive verb is also the subject of the following intransitive verb. The object can be shown either by a NP or by an object pronoun cliticised to the transitive verb. The pattern is as follows: \(A_1 V_1 O_1 /S_2 V_2\)

12.4.6.1 Action in a specified direction or location: transitive + intransitive

Semantically, this type is similar to those discussed under the heading 12.4.3.1 and 12.4.3.2 with intransitive verbs. In this type of switch-subject serialisation, it can be seen that the first verb indicates volitional action. In turn, this action causes the associated directional motion or location of the second verb. (This type could perhaps also be labelled ‘cause-effect’, but because the emphasis with the second verb is on the motion or location effected by the action, I prefer to have that concept of motion or place expressed in the label.) \(V_{b2}\), the intransitive verb, is almost always one of the four basic motion verbs:

(40) Ku-mbo tau vero a mai telei Selina
1SG-FUT put.in.place. seed 3SG.IRR come PREP S.
‘I’ll send seeds to Selina.’ (lit. I will put seed it may come to Selina ) (#279)

(41) Tamalohi na kolo na boe mo sahe na losu-a...
person 3PL carry ART boar 3SG go.up 3PL strike-O:3SG
‘Men carry the pig up and kill it...’(lit. men carry the pig it goes up) (E-T58:9)
(42)  \[ ...na revei-a mo jivo mai alau.^{6} \]
3PL pull-O:3SG 3SG go.down come coast.direction
‘...they dragged her down towards the coast’ (lit. they drag her she goes down comes) (Nt-T31:20)

(43a)  \[ Mo bulahi-a mo vano ana mesu. \]
3SG hurl-O:3SG 3SG go PREP bush
‘He hurled it away into the bush.’ (lit. ‘He threw it it went in the bush’) (Nt-T36:50)

While the last example could be interpreted as two separate clauses ‘he threw it and he went...’ since both O and S are 3SG, the context of narrative makes it quite clear that the O of Verb1 (a ‘knife’) is also the S of Verb2 (‘the going’ into the bush). In addition, the intonation is that of a monoverbal clause.

If it was to be interpreted as two clauses, the intonation (and meaning) would be different:

(43b)  \[ Mo bulahi-a, mo vano ana mesu. \]
3SG hurl-O:3SG 3SG go PREP bush
‘He threw it away, (then) he went into the bush.’

As well as the four basic motion verbs, Verb2 can occasionally be:

i)  a posture verb

ii)  \[ mule \] ‘head for home’, a commonly used intransitive verb of motion

iii)  \[ hinau \] ‘thing’ which is classed as a multi-function word (see 6.2.6).

(44)  \[ Mo-iso, ku turu ku tai-a, ku tai-a mo eno, mo koru. \]
3SG-finish 1SG stand 1SG cut-O:3SG 1SG cut-O:3SG 3SG lie 3SG dry
‘After that, then I slash it, I slash it there, (then) it dries out’ (lit. ‘...I slash it, I slash it lies, it dries’) (E-T53:2)

(45)  \[ Mo jina na-natu-na na mule. \]
3SG lead PL-child-P:3SG 3PL head.home
‘She led her children home.’ (lit. ‘She led her children they head for home’) (Nt-T71:30)

The locative argument in the next example is shared.

---

^{6}  This example also uses a nuclear SVC with \[ jivo mai. \]
(46) **Ku tau-a mo hinau ana oneone.**
1SG leave-O:3SG 3SG thing PREP beach
‘I left it there on the beach.’ (lit. ‘I left it it is/was something-ing on the beach.’)
(#244)

**Cumulative subject**

This type of serialisation, described by Crowley in 1987, is a variation of switch-subject where the subject and object of the earlier verb combine to form the cumulative subject of the serialising verb. This description follows Bradshaw (1993:152) in referring to such serialisation as ‘cumulative subject’ serialisation.7

It is uncommon in Tamambo, being limited in my data to a small subset of switch-subject serialisation.8 A transitive verb is followed by an intransitive, but the object of the transitive verb alone does not become the subject of Verb2. Rather the ‘second verb marks the pronominal category which represents the conjunction of both the initial subject and object categories...’, that is, ‘...both subject and object are involved in the action represented by the second verb’ (Crowley 1987:48). So the pattern is:

\[ A_1 V_1 O_1 S_2 V_2 \text{ where } S_2 = A_1 + O_1 \]

In the following two examples, the cumulative subject (switch-subject) SVC (curly brackets) leads into and overlaps a same-subject SVC (bolded).

In the next example, Subject1 = the son of the Ambae man, Subject2 = the son of the Ambae man + girl.

(47) **Vavine mo vanotakahi ana vu-mbHue, natu-ni Tambae**
woman 3SG go.remove PREP TREE-bamboo child-LINK Ambae.person
\{mo lai-a na mule\} na sahe na ovi.
3SG take-O:3SG 3PL head.home 3PL go.up 3PL live
‘The girl got herself out of the bamboo tree, and the son of the Ambae man brought her (with him) up home to live.’ (Nk-T85:17)

See also example (4), repeated in part here only, where Subject1 = the 2SG addressee; Subject2 = the 2SG addressee + older brother.

(48) **\{O sombe tawai-m no sahe\} no lai...**
2SG go.after older.brother-P:2SG 2PL go.up 2PL take
‘You follow your big brother up and get ...(lit. ‘you go after your big brother you both go up and take...’) (N.ch-T6:7)

The next example does not show as clearly the cumulative effect on the subject as the previous two examples, because the subject of Verb2 is marked as 2PL, the same as Verb1. However, the context of the narrative makes it clear that the men are all being instructed to go up and bring back the old woman with them, so while the subjects of both verbs are addressed as 2PL, there is to be an additional person as an actor-subject of Verb2 (mai

---

7 This type of serialisation is also referred to by Early (1993: 68) as ‘conjoined participant’serialisation.
8 A few examples only exist in my data, as against some hundreds of examples of ‘regular’ switch subject serialisations.
‘come’). That is, Subject$_1$ = the 2PL addressees; Subject$_2$ = the 2PL addressees + old woman.

(49) **No sahe, no lai na vo-maranjea rindi no mai.**
2PL go.up 2PL take ART FEM-old person REF 2PL come
‘You (all) go up, (then) bring back the old woman!’ (lit. ‘you go up, you take the old woman you come’) (Nt-T83:17)

### 12.4.6.2 Causative serialisation

In ‘causative’ switch-subject serialisation, the same pattern is used as with action and specified motion described above in 12.4.6.1, that is, the object of the first verb shares identity with the subject of the second verb. But in this type, Verb$_1$ is always a causative transitive verb and Verb$_2$ does not have to be from a closed class such as basic motion (although there is no restriction that it cannot be a basic motion verb). In fact it can be either a transitive or intransitive verb.

These constructions could also be analysed as sentential complementation, as they share many characteristics with complement clauses (see 14.3). However, they fulfil all criteria for SVCs listed in 12.2.1, and so are analysed here as serialising constructions of the ‘switch-subject’ type.

This kind of SVC is the main way of expressing strong causation in Tamambo, although causative prefixes *vaha-/va-* are still used to some extent (see 5.2.2.1), and there is a cause-effect type described in 12.6.2.1. The type of causation described here is attested only for animate subjects with strong control. The object of the causation has little control and may be forced into the action. Verb$_1$ is restricted to causative or ‘manipulative’ verbs only. They include:

- *loli* ‘make’, ‘do’
- *vai* ‘cause’
- *toro* ‘allow’/‘let drop’
- *horo* ‘block’
- *viti* ‘tell’ (in the sense of ‘tell to do s.t.’)

They are used in SVCs as in the following examples. Although the object of V$_1$ is coreferential with the second subject, neither can be omitted.

(50) **Tama-ku mo loli-au ku lahi.**
father-P:1SG 3SG make-O:1SG 1SG marry
‘My father made me get married. (lit. ‘my father made me I marry’) (#e.744)

(51) **Nira na vai vo-tasi-ku mo jovi.**
IP:3PL 3PL cause FEM-younger.sibling-P:1SG 3SG fall
‘They made my little sister fall.’ (lit. ‘they caused my little sister she fell’) (#e.66)

(52) **O toro-iau ku vano!**
2SG allow-O:1SG 1SG go
‘Let me go!’ (lit. ‘you allow me I go’) (#c.505)
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12.4.7 Ambient serialisation

This is a term introduced into the serialisation terminology by Crowley (1987:40), following Chafe in his discussion of particular verbs (1970:101-102). Chafe uses the term to describe a verb that ‘involves an all-encompassing event which is without reference to some particular “thing” within the environment’ (p.102). Thus Crowley (1987:49) uses the term ‘ambient’ to refer to a ‘construction in which a verb is serialised to another verb, but in which there is no specific referent associated with the subject of the serialised verb and the verb simply describes a general predication’.

Such serialised verbs do not manifest the criterion of argument sharing as do all other types of SVCs. Bradshaw (1993:152) calls them ‘adverbial serial verbs’ and refers to the type of SVC which Crowley calls ambient serialisation as ‘verbal subject’ serialisation, since such serialising verbs ‘appear to take verbal – not nominal – subjects’.

‘Ambient’ serialisation, as it will be known here, is a two-verb sequence where the first transitive or intransitive verb is followed by a verb that makes a predication about the previous event rather than about any particular participant. The serialising ‘ambient’ verb is only ever marked with the 3SG preverbal subject pronoun mo or a. It does not cross-reference in any way the person or number of the subject or object of the first verb in the sequence. The construction appears similar to the same type in Paamese (Crowley 1987:49–50), and also Numbami (Bradshaw 1993:152–53).

The ‘ambient’ type is common in Tamambo in that it is used often, but its frequent use appears restricted (in the data) to a limited number of ‘ambient’ verbs.

Slot 1: any active transitive or intransitive verb, with no apparent semantic restrictions.

Slot 2: a stative verb such as mahere ‘be straight’/’correct’

intransitive active verbs such as iso ‘finish’, vano ‘go’

adjectival verbs such as duhu ‘good’

the negative verb tete.

This is the only type of serialisation in this language that allows a stative verb. The semantic function of ‘ambient’ serialisation is to indicate:

i) manner (stative – including adjectival verbs)

ii) aspect (four only – particular intransitive verbs)

iii) non-result (negative verb).

The ambient 3SG serialisation only is bolded in these examples, and they are listed by semantic function.
12.4.7.1 Manner function

The 3SG marking must always be irrealis in the ambient verb when the predication of the first event is negated.

(55) *Ku wala ololo ku-te turu a mahere.*
1SG go.about respect 1SG-NEG stand 3SG straight
‘I went about respectfully, I didn’t stand up straight.’ (E-T57:7)

(56) *Ra-vavine na loli na hinau mo mahere.*
PL-woman 3PL do ART thing 3SG straight
‘The women do things in the right way.’(#c.1)

(57) *Government no-ni Vanuatu mo-te turu a matua.*
G. CLFR-LINK V. 3SG-NEG stand 3SG firm
‘The Government of Vanuatu didn’t stay strong.’ (#c.MB)

(58) *Na bimbisahi-ra mo suiha asena ...*
3PL fall.on-O:3PL 3SG strong INTEN
‘They fell on each other very hard ...’ (Nt-T21:8)

(59) *Tovona-ro ku-le rongo mo sati tina.*
now-thus 1SG-TA feel 3SG bad INTEN
‘So now I’m feeling terrible.’ (#c.370)

(60) *Na matahi-a mo duhu, mo-iso ...*
3PL watch.over-O:3SG 3SG good 3SG-finish
‘They would watch over it well, and then ...’ (E-T23:9)

The ambient verb can also be negated as follows:

(61) *O loli na hinau sohena mo-te duhu, hin’tama?*
2SG do ART thing the.same 3SG-NEG good why.ever
‘You did something like that badly, how come?’ (#c.718)

12.4.7.2 Aspectual function

There are four verbs that can be used aspectually at core layer, using ambient serialisation:

- *vano* ‘go’
- *iso* ‘finish’
- *hisi* ‘touch/reach’
- *vai* ‘cause’

Two of them are shown briefly here as examples, but aspectual serialisation is discussed in detail in 12.7. These verbs can also be used literally in SVCs but these examples show how they are used as ambient verbs, making a predication about the event, and not referring to any particular core argument.
The ‘continuative’ *mo vano* (lit. ‘it goes’) makes the predication about the previous verb that the action of the verb keeps on going until something else happens.

(62) *Mo-iso-ro mo dami-a mo vano mo viti-a*
3SG-finish-thus 3SG ask-O:3SG 3SG go 3SG tell-O:3SG

*hini-a.*
PREP-O:3SG
‘And so then he kept on and on asking her and she told him about it.’ (Nk-T22:21)

The ‘completive’ *mo iso* (lit. ‘it finishes’), below, makes the predication that the event time of the previous verb is finished. In both the last and next examples, it is also used sentence initially as a sequential linker (see 13.2.2.4 for this usage).

(63) *Mo-iso ra-vavine na loloso mo iso na sahe*
3SG-finish PL-woman 3PL wash.self 3SG finish 3PL go.up

telei tamanatu-ra...
PREP husband-P:3PL
‘Then the women finished bathing and went up to their husband.’ (Nt-T82:9)

12.4.7.3 Non-result function

This is an interesting use of the negative verb, which can be used in various other functions, primarily for ‘no’, as described in 9.2.4.5. But when it follows another verb in an ambient SVC, it makes the predication of indicating a negative result to the event of the previous verb. In this function, it is ungrammatical to insert other words or particles between verb *tete* and the previous verb.

(64) *Tama-na mo viti-a mo re “Tamalohi na dami-ho*
father-P:3SG 3SG speak-O:3SG 3SG say person 3PL ask-O:2SG

*mo tete.”*
3SG negative
‘Her father spoke to her and said “Men ask for you to no avail”.’ (Nt-T37:20)

(65) *...ka-te soari-a, ka sai-a mo tete.*
1PL-NEG see-O:3SG 1PL search O:3SG 3SG negative
‘...we didn’t see it, we looked for it (but) there was nothing.’
(lit. ‘we searched for it, it was negative’) (Nk-T44:20)

(66) *Tambaluhi-na mo turu horo-a hina vuhai, mo losu-a*
wife-P:3SG 3SG stand block-O:3SG PREP stick 3SG strike-O:3SG

9 Polygamous marriage was acceptable several generations ago.
mo tete.
3SG negative
‘His wife stood and blocked him with the stick, and he struck out at her to no avail.’
(lit. ‘he struck her it was negative’)  (Nk-T22:18)

12.5 Conjoint constructions versus core layer serialisation

Conjoint clauses differ from SVCs in that they are not constrained to be a part of an overall event, or to share a core argument or TAM or polarity. Following Foley and Olson’s framework, they link at the peripheral layer of the clause and indicate different events or states, not sub-parts of one overall event. But given the productivity of core serialisation in this language, it is difficult to find sentences that do not use some SVCs within them.

Importantly, the intonation pattern of conjoint clauses clearly marks the end of each clause by an upward intonational contour and a definite pause, with a clear downward intonational pattern on the last clause.

Because of the ambiguity that superficially attaches to the written examples of core layer serialisation, especially between same-subject serialisation and conjoint clauses, some further explanation is in order.

Often a clause is introduced by a clause linker, itself a verb phrase which has become lexicalised as a linker, such as mo-iso ‘then’ (lit. ‘it finishes’) or mo/na turu ‘that being so’/‘then’ (lit. it/they stand). For example, the following sentence has three main conjoint clauses (numbered) within which there is an appositional NP (within first slashes), an embedded relative clause (within second slashes), and one example of core layer same-subject serialisation (bolded), and one example of ambient aspectual serialisation which is a clause in its own right (second line bolding).

(67)  
\[
\begin{array}{l}
Na turu aie na jivo na bara \\
(3PL stand there 3PL go.down 3PL walk.on.reef) \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{l}
a bara mo vano, \\
(3PL walk.on.reef 3SG go) \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{l}
mo-iso-ro natu-na, /turu hitahu-na,/ \\
(3SG-finish-thus child-P:3SG stand last-P:3SG) \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{l}
mo soari na manji atea /hisana hari / \\
(3SG see ART animal one name-P:3SG hari) \\
\end{array}
\]

‘That being so they went down and walked around on the reef, they kept on walking around, and then her son, her last-born (son), saw a fish called ‘hari’. (Nt-T32:6)

Also in discourse, there is very frequent use of a sentence-initial repetition of the previous clause of the preceding sentence. This discourse device, ‘tail-head linkage’, is
Serial verb constructions

common in Oceanic languages, and as Early says for Lewo, ‘this resumptive restatement... provides cohesion, tying the sequence of events together very closely’ (1994:454). It is also known as ‘back reference’ and ‘recapitulation’ (see also Thompson and Longacre (1985:209). See Appendix 2, Text 3, for a series of tail-head examples. In Tamambo, as in Lewo, the repetition involves only one clause, and is another argument for SVCs being regarded as mono-clausal units.

This repeating device is often used with switch-subject SVCs. With same-subject SVCs, the last serialising verb tends to be repeated as the first component of the next SVC, supporting Durie’s contention (1997:330) that verb sequencing is often ‘iconic’ in its ordering.10 For example, in example (67) it can be seen that the last component of a same-subject SVC in the first clause is repeated as the first verb of an ambient SVC in the following clause.

Occasionally it can be difficult to recognise whether some clause sequences are made up of SVCs or conjoint clauses, unless one knows the context of the discourse, or is aware of the prior arguments introduced into a narrative. In such cases, intonation is particularly important. For instance, the following example initially appears to have most of the hallmarks of a straightforward core layer same-subject SVC. It has a sequence of particular motion verbs which are common in a SVC, the core arguments appear to be shared, there is no variation for TAM or polarity, there is no grammatical marking of a clause boundary. Consequently, looking at the written transcription, one might be tempted to think it is a monoclausal SVC and reads thus:

(68) Mo walau mo vano mo iso.
   3SG run 3SG go 3SG finish
   ‘She’s run away already.’

Instead of which, in the context of the previous flow of the narrative, and listening to the intonation, it is in fact two conjoint clauses (the second, in fact, made up of a SVC). It should read:

(69) Mo walau, mo vano mo iso.
   3SG run 3SG go 3SG finish
   ‘She ran (but) he had already gone.’ (Nt-T72:21)

See also example (43). So while core layer SVCs can appear very similar to conjoint constructions, if all the criteria listed in 12.2.1 are followed and contextual clues are also used as in the above example, there is essentially no ambiguity in discourse.

12.6 Nuclear layer serialisation

Nuclear layer serialisation is generally limited to two-verb, same-subject sequences, with just one example in the data of a three-verb sequence in 12.6.2. Unlike core layer serialisation, the sequencing is done within the nucleus of the verb phrase. The first obligatory component of the verb phrase, the preverbal subject pronoun, remains, but is followed by a verb sequence without further subject pronouns as there are in core layer

10 Durie (1997:336) recognises that there are a number of types of serialisation ‘where the juxtaposed verbs represent aspects or sub-components of events that are not sequenced in any clear causal or temporal way’.
serialisation. All verbs that can occur in such verb sequences are active verbs that can occur independently in verb phrases. This does not include words that can only function as verbal modifiers, regardless of their verbal similarities (see 12.6.5).

It should be made clear at the outset that the process of nuclear layer serialisation in Tamambo, that of combining two independent verbs, is one and the same as the process of verbal compounding. This has already been mentioned in 5.5.3.3 where some lexicalised compounds of this type are listed. The constructions have two contiguous verbs with no intervening morphological material. These contiguous verbs are independent grammatical words, which can fuse to become one grammatical word in that they can be affixed for nominalisation, transitivity or to indicate person and number of object. There is no phonological difference between a two-verb sequence that could be called a compound or a nuclear layer SVC.

I discuss the process of combining two or more verbs as ‘nuclear layer serialisation’ in this section in the understanding that it is the main type of verbal compounding in this language, but not the only type. That is, lexicalised compounds that are verbs can occasionally be derived by combining other than two verbs, as shown in 5.5.4.2. Furthermore, the process of combining two verbs can sometimes lead to an end-point where the nuclear layer SVC can become a lexicalised compound. This pattern appears to be the same as is documented by Bruce (1986:28) in his analysis of Alamblak (PNG) ‘compound words’, where he says that the data indicates ‘a progression from marginal lexical status for serial constructions to an unequivocal lexical status for idiomatic compounds’.11

This proposed continuum of SVC –> lexicalised compound is discussed further in 12.8. The following section is concerned just with the various processes of combining different types of verbs in SVCs.

12.6.1 Types of nuclear serialisation

The nuclear layer sequences can be subdivided into four types:

i) both/all transitive

ii) intransitive + transitive

iii) transitive + intransitive

iv) both intransitive.

Type 1 is extremely productive, type 4 reasonably productive and types 2 and 3 unusual.

As mentioned in 12.4, the Foley/Olson hypothesis (1985:48) that transitive verbs are the least likely to serialise is not borne out in Tamambo. In fact, the incidence of two transitive verbs in such constructions (type 1 above) is by far the most common nuclear serialisation in this language. The limitation to which verbs can occur in such sequences appears limited only to what is acceptable as a recognisable event-type, ‘used to describe (what are conceptualised by native speakers as) single events’ (Durie 1997:320).

Nuclear layer SVCs with one or more transitive verbs (types 1–3 listed above) can have the semantic function of one or both of the following:

11 Bruce differentiates between syntactic compounds and idiomatic compounds; that is, those that are semantically compositional and those that are semantically non-compositional.
i) cause-effect, where the ‘event-types’ are clearly iconic, and have a cause-effect function

ii) concomitant action, or ‘verb co-lexicalisation’ (a term used by Givón 1991:138), where two verbs each describe some part of the process, as with cause-effect, but where each is integral to the process. Occasionally these verbs can be closely related in meaning in a ‘synonymic serialisation’ combination (as described in 12.4.5). But note that not all concomitant action SVCs are synonymic.

Nuclear layer SVCs with two intransitive verbs cannot express cause-effect, but can have the function of

concomitant action, or

directional action.

The four types of nuclear layer serialisation and the various semantic functions that can be expressed are shown in Table 12.5.

### Table 12.5: Types of nuclear layer SVCs and their semantic functions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible Semantic Functions</th>
<th>Types of Nuclear Layer SVCs</th>
<th>Semantic Functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cause-effect</td>
<td>Verb1 Intrans + Verb2 Trans</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concomitant action/verb co-lexicalisation</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directional motion</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following are examples of nuclear layer serialisation for each semantic function, grouped according to the transitivity of the verbs in the sequence.

#### 12.6.2 Cause-effect

These verb sequences are clearly iconic, where Verb_1 indicates the cause and Verb_2 the effect of Verb_1. As shown in the table above, both verbs or Verb_2 must be transitive to indicate this kind of semantic function. This type of causative is once again different to that shown in 5.2.2.1 or 12.4.6.2. In this type, the agentive subject has complete control, and the O is either inanimate or, if animate, is totally affected and has no control. The result of the action appears inevitable.

#### 12.6.2.1 Cause-effect: transitive verbs only

Where the verbs are transitive, the verb sequence shares all core arguments. The NP or pronominal object must come after the final verb in the sequence.

(70) **Bot mo dono ne tamalohi na sau rake-hi-a.**

    boat 3SG sink but person 3PL hook grab-TR-O:3SG

    ‘The boat sank but the men rescued it.’(#e.1171)

Only one example of a transitive three-verb sequence is attested in the data:
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(71) Tamalohi na tai hunjurahi komo-komo na lo-vuhai.

person 3PL cut clear.completely RED-destroy ART PL-tree

‘The men completely destroyed all the trees.’ (#e.1056JR) 12

Two verb cause-effect sequences are particularly common where Verb2 is matei ‘kill’ or horo ‘block’, indicating the effect, where Verb1 indicates the type of preceding event responsible for the effect. So there can be, for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb1</th>
<th>Effect Verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>losu matei</td>
<td>‘strike-kill’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sari matei</td>
<td>‘spear-kill’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jahi matei</td>
<td>‘strike on stone-kill’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tua matei</td>
<td>‘hit-kill’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>revei horo</td>
<td>‘drag-block’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sangari horo</td>
<td>‘shut-block’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

and so on.

Although such sequences can be said to be iconic, the two events can often be almost immediate, since the effect can be essentially instantaneous with its cause. For example:

(72) ...mo lai na no-na sari, mo sari-a.

3SG take ART CLFR-P:3SG spear 3SG spear-O:3SG

mo sari matei-a.

3SG spear kill-O:3SG

‘...he took his spear, he speared him, he killed him by spearing him.’ (Nt-T36:84)

(73) ...mo losu matei na tanume rindi.

3SG strike kill ART devil REF

‘...he struck dead the devil.’ (Nt-T20:131)

(74) O sangari horo na boe!

2SG close block ART boar

‘Shut in the pig!’ (#e.511)

(75) ...ale na soari na manji na turu ana lolo, na turu

if 3PL see ART fish 3PL stand PREP inside 3PL stand

na revei horo-a.

3PL drag block-O:3SG

‘...if they saw the fish there inside, then they would drag it over (the net) and block it off.’ (E-T26:12)

Such cause-effect sequences of events can also be expressed by two separate clauses, where they are conceptualised as two separate events. As Bruce says (1986:26), ‘any sequence of events may be talked about in juxtaposed clauses but not every sequence of events may be described by a serial construction’. The following minimal pair illustrates the difference between two clauses, and with a single clause SVC:

12 The implication here, by using the reduplicated form of komo ‘destroy’, seems to be that the trees were destroyed deliberately and for no good reason, although the verb does not translate directly as such.
Serial verb constructions

12.6.2.2 Cause-effect: intransitive + transitive

In this next type, the verb sequence must be in the order shown, that is, the transitive verb must occur as Verb 2. An intransitive verb cannot generally follow a transitive verb in a nuclear layer SVC unless it is transitivised.

(78) ... mo mati mo mati mo mati mo mati mo vano,
3SG low.tide 3SG low.tide 3SG low.tide 3SG low.tide 3SG go

mo mati tiu na tung rindi.
3SG low.tide snare ART rock.pool REF
‘... the tide kept on going down and down and down, (and then) the tide trapped the rock pool.’ (lit. ... it low-tided trapped the rock pool) (E-T24:8)

(79) ... na turu horo-ra ana ua.
3PL stand block-O:3PL PREP high.tide
‘... they caught them in the high tide.’ (E-T24:15)

Note that the transitivising suffix -hi can only occur with Verb 2 in the serial construction as in the next example, although the verb vinja can take the –hi suffix when it is a non-serialised verb in the first clause. Thus from this and other examples (see also 77, 85), the generalisation can be made that the -hi transitivising suffix suffixes to the final verb, essentially transitivising the whole verb sequence. (But see also 12.6.3.3).

(80) Mo vinja-hi na ivine-na, mo vinja takahi-a, mo avu.
3SG shake-TR ART arrow-P:3SG 3SG shake remove-O:3SG 3SG fly
‘He shook off the [his] arrow, he shook it loose, and he flew away.’ (Nt-T27:18)

12.6.3 Concomitant action

There are some verb sequences that cannot easily be slotted into an iconic order, because they are parts of the overall event, each dependent on the other. These are referred to here as ‘concomitant action’. This semantic function can be expressed by contiguous sequences where verbs are both transitive, or intransitive + transitive, or both intransitive.

12.6.3.1 Concomitant action: transitive verbs only

This is a particularly productive form of serialisation, with many examples attested in narrative and conversation, such as shown below. Speakers can use the process to create new combinations according to need. Only those combinations that appeal sufficiently to enough speakers are possibly lexicalised in time though usage (see 12.8) but some nuclear SVCs of this type are quite probably ‘once off’ combinations.
As mentioned in 12.6.2.2, where Verb2 is an intransitive verb, as in the next example with mauru ‘be alive’, the verb can be transitivised by the transitive suffix -hi, so that there will be the same transitivity for both verbs in the sequence.

Sometimes the sequence can take on a lexical meaning different from the literal meaning that would apply where the verbs are used separately, suggesting that the sequence is moving toward lexicalisation. This is illustrated in the next examples:

Verbs which are closely related in meaning, the so-called ‘synonymic serialisation’ type, can also be grouped with SVCs expressing concomitant action, even although it is difficult to differentiate ‘parts’ of the action from the English glosses, as below:
12.6.3.2 Concomitant action: intransitive + transitive

Similarly to sequences with two transitive verbs, verbs in SVCs of this type each contribute to the overall event in no particular causal or temporal order. They are not nearly as common as those with two transitive verbs.

(90) ...mo mandi walau sombe-a...
3SG simply run go.after-O:3SG
‘... she just ran after him...’ (Nt-T72:23)

12.6.3.3 Concomitant action: transitive + intransitive

This is the only attested example of a nuclear layer SVC with an intransitive verb following a transitive verb. However, the nuclear layer SVC (bolded) in this example is actually part of a core layer SVC (in curly brackets). Since it is routine for an intransitive verb as Verb\textsubscript{2} following a transitive Verb\textsubscript{1} in a nuclear layer SVC to be transitivised (12.6.2.2), this type should be regarded as marginal.

(91) ...{mo tai suvu mo jivo} ana tarusa.
3SG peck dive 3SG go.down PREP sea
‘... he swooped down into the sea.’ (Nt-T40)

12.6.3.4 Concomitant action: intransitive verbs only

(92) ...na welu na welu na welu\textsuperscript{13} mo vano mo va-hisi
3PL dance 3PL dance 3PL dance 3SG go 3SG CAUS-touch
mo rani titivesi.
3SG daylight scrape
‘...they kept on dancing and dancing and dancing up until daybreak.
(lit. ‘... until it daylighted scraped’) (Nt-T20:25)

(93) Iau ku-le sora jalio turuvui.
IP:1SG 1SG-TA talk go.astray always
‘I’m always making mistakes.’ (#c.280)

See also concomitant action with \textit{wala ololo} ‘go.about + show.respect’ Appendix 2, Text 2, sentence 7.

It can be seen from the examples that some of these contiguous verb sequences of 12.6.3 have verbs that retain the literal meaning of the individual verbs, but also some sequences where only vestiges of the individual meanings remain as the two verbs fuse and ‘co-lexicalise’ (Givón 1991) and then become semantically non-compositional.

\textsuperscript{13} In the original, \textit{na welu} ‘they dance’ is repeated seven times; I have edited out some of those repetitions here for the sake of space. Note also the use here of an ambient aspectual SVC: continuative \textit{mo vano}. 
12.6.4 Directional action

Only intransitive verbs can indicate this type of semantic function in a nuclear layer SVC. The first verb in such sequences is limited to an active atelic verb, and it can be one of the basic motion verbs. But Slot 2 must be filled by one of the basic motion verbs, and the most often used is mai ‘come’, indicating movement towards.

(94) Na jivo mai alau na juri na aka.
3PL go.down come coast.direction 3PL pull.down ART boat
‘They went down towards the shore to drag the boat down.’ (Nt-T20:16)

(95) Mo walau mai mo rongo na leo-ni tamanatu-na...
3SG run come 3SG hear ART voice-LINK husband-P:3SG
‘She ran forward and heard her husband’s voice...’ (Nt-T72:20)

(96) ...mo hao sahe le ate ana bwere-i vu-niu.
3SG climb go.up TA sit PREP top.shoot-LINK TREE-coconut
‘...he climbed up there/he climbed up and was sitting/in the top of the coconut tree.’ (Nt-T18:4)

(97) ...na welu mo iso mo mule mai.
3PL dance 3SG finish 3SG head.home come
‘...they finished dancing and he came back home.’ (Nk-T73:8)

The following has two SVCs of this type, both bolded:

(98) Tovon mo hilo jivo mo soari na-le sahe mai.
when 3SG look go.down 3SG see 3PL-TA go.up come
‘When he looked down, he saw them coming up (towards him)’ (Nt-T20:128)

The constructions are essentially interchangeable with core layer same-subject SVCs as described in 12.4.3.1, and all use the motion verb in Slot 2 to express the same notion of direction ‘towards’, ‘downwards’, etc. There is no obvious explanation as to why both nuclear and core SVCs can both function in this way, other than speaker preference. Generational differences provide no clue, as the examples here come from three different, all relatively well-educated speakers, one a teenager, one middle-aged and one more elderly.

Given the fairly common use of mai ‘come’ in Slot 2, it appears that its movement towards a directional marker is well-established, as is common in Oceanic languages (see Ross 2004).

12.6.5 Nuclear serialisation versus modifiers

Verbs followed by a phrasal adverb such as those described in 9.4.2 also have similarities to, and differences from, nuclear serialisation. Such modifiers demonstrate many verb-like characteristics, and can look similar to a nuclear layer serialisation. But unlike the components of a serial verb construction, these adverbials are not independent verbs. Also, particular modifiers are fixed in a prehead or posthead position. For example:
Prehead: *andi* ‘skilful’  
Posthead: *vonotahi* ‘careless’

(99)  
3SG skilful run  
‘He’s good at running.’

(100)  
3SG make carelessly-O:3SG  
‘He made it carelessly.’

But it seems very likely that such modifiers once may have been full independent verbs with an ability to function in a serial verb construction as part of the head of a verb phrase, rather than fixed in position, modifying the head. For further discussion on the possible development from serialising verb to adverbial modifier see 12.8.2.1.

### 12.7 Aspectual serialisation

There are four verbs in Tamambo that can be used in ambient SVCs to indicate aspectuality, all in core layer serialisation. These were briefly introduced in 12.4.7.2.

#### Table 12.6: Verbs used as aspectuals within SVCs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Literal meaning</th>
<th>Meaning when used in a SVC as aspectual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>vano</em></td>
<td>‘go’</td>
<td>continuative aspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>hisi</em></td>
<td>‘touch/ reach’</td>
<td>terminative ‘until’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>iso</em></td>
<td>‘finish’</td>
<td>completive aspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>vai</em></td>
<td>‘cause’</td>
<td>potential ‘almost’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of these verbs is also closely reflected in the aspectual system of Bislama both syntactically and semantically, and examples are given for each within each section. (Other prehead aspectual markers within the verb phrase, denoting imperfective, immediate past, repeating events, ‘not yet’ and ‘never’, are described in Chapter 11.)

It is important to note that all four verbs maintain their independence as verbs in their own right, with their literal meanings, when used singly in a VP.

#### 12.7.1 Continuative *mo vano*

Basic motion verb *vano* ‘go’ has several functions and is perhaps the most versatile of all the motion verbs. As shown in 12.4.2, it can be used both literally and directionally in SVCs and can be used, of course, as a single independent verb in a VP. The table below briefly recaps those functions.

#### Table 12.7: Some functions of *vano* ‘go’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literal meaning</th>
<th>Used as single verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Ku vano ana maket</em></td>
<td>‘I went to the market.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literal meaning</th>
<th>Used as other than Verb1 in a 2 or 3 same-subject core layer SVC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Na vano na maturu ...</em></td>
<td>‘They went and slept ...’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Directional meaning</th>
<th>Used as other than Verb1 in a 2 or 3 same-subject core layer SVC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>... mo tisu mo vano ...</em></td>
<td>‘... it pointed away ...’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
But in addition, \textit{vano} is very commonly used for two other functions which are semantically similar to each other, indicating that:

i) a specific event time continues, or that

ii) time continues with no event being specified.

These two aspectual functions are discussed in turn.

\textbf{12.7.1.1 Continuative aspect where a specific event time continues}

‘Continuative’ here is in the sense used by Bybee, Perkins and Pagliuca (1994:127) ‘that a dynamic situation is ongoing – and additionally specifies that the agent of the action is deliberately keeping the action going’.

With the first aspectual function, \textit{mo vano} occupies the final slot of a core layer serialisation of the ‘ambient’ type, as described in 12.4.7. In this function, it only ever takes 3SG preverbal subject marker, and it makes a predication about the previous verb that the event time is continuing.

The following minimal pairs come from the same narrative, and contrast the literal and aspectual functions of \textit{vano} in two core layer SVCs, the first a same-subject SVC, the second an ambient SVC, indicating continuative aspect.

\begin{itemize}
\item[(101)] \textit{Ku vano ku ovi bongi avati}....
\begin{itemize}
\item 1SG go 1SG live day four
\item ‘I went and waited (there) four days...’ (E-T53:4)
\end{itemize}
\item[(102)] \textit{Ku vano ku-le ovi, ku ovi mo vano}...
\begin{itemize}
\item 1SG go 1SG-TA live 1SG live 3SG go
\item ‘I went and I was waiting, I kept on waiting...’ (E-T53:12)
\end{itemize}
\end{itemize}

The next two examples illustrate the use of \textit{mo vano} as continuative aspect following transitive verbs.

\begin{itemize}
\item[(103)] \textit{Mo lai-a mo vano mo sile-sile-a}.
\begin{itemize}
\item 3SG take-O:3SG 3SG go 3SG RED~give-O:3SG
\item ‘He kept on taking them and gave one to everyone.’\textsuperscript{14} (Nk-T38:11)
\end{itemize}
\item[(104)] \textit{Mo-iso-ro mo dami-a mo vano, mo viti-a hini-a}.
\begin{itemize}
\item 3SG-finish-thus 3SG ask-O:3SG 3SG go 3SG tell-O:3SG hini-a.
\item PREP-O:3SG
\item ‘And so he kept on and on asking her, (and) she told him about it.’ (Nk-T22:21)
\end{itemize}
\end{itemize}

In the next example, the speaker wishes to emphasise the continuation of the events over some considerable time, and uses a repetition of \textit{mo vano} to achieve this effect.

\textsuperscript{14} This is referring to yams from one patch and so the singular is used as the object, but translated as ‘them’. 
Serial verb constructions

(105) Na losu-losu mo vano mo vano mo vano mo vano mo vano
3PL RED-strike 3SG go 3SG go 3SG go 3SG go
mo vano mo hisi mo mati...
3SG go 3SG touch 3SG low.tide
‘They continued on and on and on and on flailing (the water)\(^{15}\) until the tide went out...’ (E-T24:8)

Then later in the same lengthy sentence, the same speaker uses a repetition of the verb mati ‘low tide’, but then follows with mo vano as a continuative aspectual (as seen in example 78 this chapter).

The next example illustrates both the literal and aspectual uses of the verb vano ‘go’. It is repeated in its literal sense over and over, and then followed with the continuative (always 3SG) mo vano.

(106) Na turu, na-le vanovano, na-le vano, na vano na vano
3PL stand 3PL-TA walk 3PL-TA go 3PL go 3PL go
na vano na vano na vano mo vano ana arua-i matesia.
3PL go 3PL go 3PL go 3SG go PREP two-LINK door
‘That being so, they were walking along, they were going, (and) they kept on going and going and going and going to the second of the doors.’ (Nt-T20:36)

If the ‘event to be continued’ has not yet been realised, then the 3SG irrealis is used to indicate the continuative aspect, regardless of the person and number of the ‘event verb’, as in the next example:

(107) Are ku mate, no-mbo tatani-au a vano a-va-hisi
if 1SG die 2PL-FUT bury-O:1SG 3SG go 3SG-CAUS-touch
no turu ana tambu-ku, no soari na vuti-ni Ambae.
2PL stand PREP grave-P:1SG 2PL see ART hill-LINK A.
‘If I die, you will keep on adding earth to my grave until when you stand on my grave, you see the hills of Ambae.’ (Nk-T12.32)

This use of the ‘go’ verb is not unusual in Oceanic languages. Lichtenberk (1991b:491) says that in such languages, ‘the GO forms are used to indicate continuous, prolonged, persistent performance of an activity, or that a state of affairs persists for a long time’. It is of interest too that the aspectual usage of vano ‘go’ is closely reflected both syntactically and semantically in Bislama, where go-go has a similar use to Tamambo mo vano. An example of the similarity is given in the following two-clause sentences.

(108) Hem i kakae go-go hem i finisem. (Bislama)
Mo han-hani mo vano mo vano mo hani-a mo-iso.
3SG RED-eat 3SG go 3SG go 3SG eat-O:3SG 3SG finish
‘He ate and ate and ate and finished eating it.’ (Bislama example from Tryon 1987:166)

\(^{15}\) This is part of a text describing a method of fishing used to frighten fish back towards the shallows.
12.7.1.2 **Continuative aspect where time continues, event not specified**

The basic motion verb *vano* ‘go’ can also be used with the 3SG preverbal subject pronoun at the beginning of a clause to indicate that some time has passed after the previous event, and before the next event occurs in the narrative. In this sense, ‘continuative’ is not referring to the continuation of the action of a particular verb, but rather in the sense of *time* continuing to move on.

In this function, *mo vano* does not occur as part of a SVC, but is included here for comparison. In this function, *vano* is attested only as occurring with the 3SG realis preverbal subject pronoun, not with the irrealis.

(109) *Mo vano, ana bongi atea nira mai tahisa-na na vano...* 3SG go PREP day one IP:3PL COM friend-P:3SG 3PL go ‘Time went on, and one day he and his friend went...’  (N-T29:3)

(110) *Mo iso, mo vano mo hisi arua-na hisa-na Jara...* 3SG finish 3SG go 3SG touch two-P:3SG name-P:3SG J. ‘Afterwards, time went on until the second one called Jara ...’  (N.ab-T78:30)

12.7.2 **Terminative *hisi***

The verb *hisi* is glossed as ‘touch’ or ‘reach’ when used in its literal sense, e.g.

(111) *Votambaluhi-na a viti te ra-vavine na vano na hisi* wife-P:3SG 3SG tell INDEF PL-woman 3PL go 3PL touch *na boe...* ART boar ‘His wife would tell some women to go and touch the pig...’  (Nk-T58: 8)

It can also be used in a core layer same-subject SVC to indicate terminal distance:

(112) *Mo jivo, mo jivo mo hisi atano.* 3SG go.down 3SG go.down 3SG touch ground.direction ‘It goes down, down as far as the ground.’  (E-T59:13)

(113) *Mo sahe mo hisi na bange-na...* 3SG go.up 3SG touch ART stomach-P:3SG ‘It came up (the water) as far as his stomach...’  (Nk-T13:9)

However, when it occurs as Verb₂ in an ambient SVC, it has an aspectual function. It signifies that the event time of Verb₁ continues until something else occurs to interrupt it, or until some particular goal or time is reached. It can be used with either of the 3SG preverbal subject pronouns and with TA marker *le*. Sometimes it is prefixed with causative *va-*, and often the use of *hisi* and *vahisi* appear interchangeable. This is further discussed later in this section.
Table 12.8: Aspectual uses of *hisi*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspectual indicating</th>
<th>mo (va-) <em>hisi</em></th>
<th>a (va-) <em>hisi</em></th>
<th>le <em>hisi</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘until’ (past/present)</td>
<td>3SG (CAUS) touch</td>
<td>3SG.IRR (CAUS) touch</td>
<td>TA touch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘until’ (prospective)</td>
<td>‘until’ (past/present)</td>
<td>‘until’ (prospective)</td>
<td>‘until’ ‘continuing’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example (92) this chapter shows the usage of *va-hisi* ‘until’.

(114) *Turuvui a maturu a *hisi* a rani tawera.*
always 3SG sleep 3SG touch 3SG daylight big
‘He would always sleep up until the middle of the day.’ (N.ch-T6:3)

(115) *... mo sohi tuai, mo sohi le *hisi* barindi.*
3SG hide long.ago 3SG hide TA touch today
‘... he hid in olden times and he hides even until today.’  (Nk-T28:12)

It can be seen in Table 12.8 that there is an optional *va-* causative prefix which can occur with *hisi*. The following minimal pair from the same narrative illustrates the variation before verbs, and does not indicate any apparent reason for the inclusion or omission of *va*.

(116) *Ku-mbo turu aien a-*va-*hisi* ku mate.*
1SG-FUT stand here 3SG-CAUS-touch 1SG die
‘I will stand here until I die.’  (Nk-T12.8)

Then later in the same narrative, the speaker is recalling what the hero of the story had earlier said:

(117) *A-mbo turu a *hisi* a mate.*
3SG-FUT stand 3SG touch 3SG die
‘He will stand until he dies.’  (Nk-T12.16)

Similarly, the inclusion or otherwise of *va-* with *hisi* before nouns seems optional, as illustrated in (115) and (120).

Within the same sentence, aspectuals ‘continuative’ 3SG *vano* and ‘terminative’ 3SG *hisi* can often cooccur. The order is iconic in that the aspectuals are temporally ordered.

(118) *Mo ate vatarahi tina-na mo *vano* mo *hisi* mo mai.*
3SG sit wait mother-P:3SG 3SG go 3SG touch 3SG come
‘He sat waiting and waiting for his mother until she came.’  (#464b)

(119) *Ku-le turu aien a *vano* a *hisi* manji na-ta mai.*
1SG-TA stand here 3SG go 3SG touch animal 3PL-REP come
‘I am staying on here until the fish come back again.’  (Nk-T13:7)
**Parallels with Bislama**

Similarly to *mo vano*, *hisi* as an aspectual has a parallel in Bislama, where Tamambo *hisi* ‘touch’, ‘reach’ = Bislama *kasem* ‘reach’, ‘attain’, suggesting the substrate influences from Vanuatu languages on Bislama.16

(120) **Bambae oli spel go kasem Sande**
    **Na-mbo mambu a-va-hisi Sande.**
    3PL-FUT rest 3SG.IRR-CAUS-touch Sunday.
    ‘They will take a break until Sunday.’ (Bislama example: Tryon 1987:170)

**12.7.3 Completive *iso***

Before *iso* ‘finish’ is described as an aspectual, its other two uses are briefly listed for comparison.

First, the verb *iso* ‘finish’ can be used in its literal sense, as in the following:

(121) **Ra-vavine na iso skul.**
    PL-woman 3PL finish school
    ‘The girls have finished school.’ (#e.488MB)

(122) **Ku-mbo iso no-ku sahasaha-e.**
    1SG-FUT finish CLFR-P:1SG work-NOM
    ‘I will finish my work.’ (#c.491b)

Second, it is very frequently used as a clause linker, always with the 3SG preverbal subject pronoun, as in the following two examples. It is essentially fully lexicalised in this function as described in 13.2.2.4, and as such, is sometimes shown hyphenated, as below.

(123) **Mo-iso, na davi~ndavili mo vano na soari boe...**
    3SG-finish 3PL RED~walk.about 3SG go 3PL see boar
    ‘After that, they kept on walking around and saw the pigs …’ (Nk-T44:24)

(124) **Ku suli-a, mo-iso ku mule.**
    1SG burn.off-O:3SG 3SG-finish 1SG head.home
    ‘I burn it off, then I go home.’ (E-T53:3)

The verb *iso* is also commonly used in an ambient SVC as Verb₂, and it then functions as an aspectual indicating completion of Verb₁. This ‘completive’ function, which arises from a lexical source such as the verb ‘finish’, is common in the world’s languages, with Bybee et al. (1994:56) citing ‘to finish’ or ‘to be finished as ‘the most common dynamic verb source’ for completives and anteriors. Similarly to *hisi*, the verb *iso* functions with either of the 3SG preverbal subject pronouns (*mo* or *a*) or with *le* as an imperfective. By far its most frequent use is with the realis 3SG as *mo iso*.

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16 This use of *kasem* is also found in Solomon Islands Pijin.
Table 12.9: Aspectual functions of *iso*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspectual indicating</th>
<th><em>mo iso</em></th>
<th><em>a iso</em></th>
<th><em>le iso</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>completion</td>
<td>3SG finish</td>
<td>3SG.IRR finish</td>
<td>TA finish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prospective</td>
<td>completion</td>
<td>completion under way</td>
<td>OR ‘regular’ completion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Completion of event realised

In this usage, the speaker is referring to events that are past and that the speaker knows have been realised.

(125) ...*tovon na varasi na litu* *mo-iso*, *tanive na turu*
when 3PL hold.down ART reed 3SG-finish sardine 3PL stand

na va”
3PL go 3PL RED–poke.through
‘...when they (the men) finished treading down the reeds, the sardines then went poking through everywhere.’ (E-T43:32)

(126) *matani ku vinei-a mo-iso,* *a te matavosai*
because 1SG shoot.with.arrow-O:3SG 3SG-finish 3SG NEG be.able

*a-mbo avu.*
3SG-FUT fly
‘...because I’ve shot it already, it won’t be able to fly.’ (Nt-T21:13)

Prospective completion of event

Here, the speaker uses the 3SG irrealis form with *iso* because the event has not yet been realised.

(127) *Ka lasi-a ka lasi-a ka lasi-a, a-iso*
1PL tie-O:3SG 1PL tie-O:3SG 1PL tie-O:3SG 3SG-finish

*ka turu ka loli...*
1PL stand 1PL do
‘We keep on tying and tying it, and when it’s finished then we make...’ (E-T59:12)

This form has also been lexicalised as the adverbial ‘perhaps’:

(128) *A-iso-ro na-mbo mai.*
3SG-finish-thus 3PL-FUT come
‘Perhaps they’l1 come.’ (lit. should it finish thus...)

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17 Verb *vano* ‘go’ abbreviated to *va* in the core layer SVC in fast speech.
Completion of event on a regular basis

TA marker *le*, functioning as imperfective with *iso*, is used to indicate completion of the same event at the same time, or occasionally that the event is in the process of being completed.

(129) *Vevesai bongi ku-le sahasaha le iso ana alima.*
     every day 1SG-TA work TA finish PREP five
     ‘I finish work every day at 5 o’clock.’ (#e.867)

Parallels with Bislama

Bislama *finis* functions in the same way in its literal use, and also functions similarly as an aspectual, as in the following example, where *finis = moiso*.

(130) *Oli katam wud finis.*
     Na tai na vuhai mo iso.
     3PL cut ART wood 3SG finish
     ‘They have already cut the wood.’ (Bislama example from Tryon 1987:79)

12.7.4 ‘almost’ *le vai*

This construction (lit. TA ‘cause’) occurs as the first component of the SVC. It indicates that the event is potentially about to occur, but has not been realised at the moment of speech. It is included here in the discussion of aspectuals in verb serialisation, but its status as a part of a SVC is marginal. Certainly the verb *vai* (‘cause’) can operate as an independent verb and also in SVCs (see 12.4.6.2) but as an aspectual, it never occurs with the otherwise obligatory 3SG preverbal subject pronoun required of ambient SVCs.

It also differs from other serialising aspectuals in that it functions as Verb 1 in the SVC rather than as Verb 2. Because it functions like the fully grammaticalised prehead verbal aspectuals discussed in Chapter 11, I would suggest that it is moving from being a serialising verb to becoming almost entirely grammaticalised. Nevertheless, I include it here for comparison since it also fulfils some of the characteristics of the other SVC aspectuals, being a verb in its own right, and being used with a TAM particle.

(131) *Tovona le eno maromaro-na le-vai a iso.*
     now TA lie breath-P:3SG TA-cause 3SG finish
     ‘Now while he was lying (there) his breathing was almost finished.’ (Nt-T82:11)

(132) *Bange-na le -vai a vuai.*
     stomach-P:3SG TA-cause 3SG burst
     ‘His stomach almost burst.’ (Nt-T21:10)

Parallel with Bislama

This aspectual, also, has a parallel construction in Bislama where Tamambo *le vai* = Bislama *klosap* ‘nearly’, ‘almost’. This Bislama aspectual also functions pre-head.
Serial verb constructions

(133)  
Kloza  ni  fo$daon  long  ston.  
Iau  le-vai  ku  jovi  ana  taha-tahasi.  
IP:1SG  almost  1SG  fall  PREP  RED~stone  
‘I almost fell on the stones.’ (Bislama example from Tryon 1987:169)

12.8 Possible pathways to grammaticalisation and lexicalisation

Grammaticalisation and lexicalisation are both outcomes of serialisation that are suggested by various authors (e.g. Lord 1976, 1993; Seuren 1990; Bybee, et al., 1994; Durie 1997). This section describes what I posit for such development patterns for some SVCs for Tamambo.

Core layer

From core layer SVCs, there appear to be the following developmental tendencies:

*in same-subject SVCs:*
- basic motion verb in non-initial slot $\rightarrow$ deictic or geographical directional marker
- basic posture verb in non-initial slot $\rightarrow$ locational marker
- verb ‘say’ $\rightarrow$ complementiser

*in ambient SVCs:*
- Verb$_2$ $\rightarrow$ aspectual markers
- $\rightarrow$ adverbs of manner

Nuclear layer

From nuclear layer SVCs, the following developmental possibilities are posited:

- component verb $\rightarrow$ dependent verb in fixed position
- component verb $\rightarrow$ dependent verb in fixed position $\rightarrow$ component of lexicalised compound
- two verb sequence $\rightarrow$ lexicalised compound.

These are discussed in turn.

12.8.1 Development of core layer SVCs

12.8.1.1 Motion and posture verbs $\rightarrow$ directional or locative markers

Motion verbs with directional values as in basic motion verbs in the non-initial slot, are widely attested and reported on for serialising languages. Durie (1988:20) refers to them as one type of the ‘verbal preposition phenomena of Oceanic languages’; Lord (1993:9) calls them ‘locative verbs’ with prepositional functions, and Ross (2004:301) labels direction verbs that occur in SVCs as ‘geographic’, ‘deictic’ and ‘sequential’.

The seven verbs in the closed sets outlined in 12.4 take on the functions of direction or location when in a non-initial slot of a two or three verb same-subject core layer SVC (12.4.3) or a two-verb intransitive nuclear layer SVC (12.6.4), as shown in Table 12.10.
### Table 12.10: Functions of closed set of motion and posture verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Literal meaning</th>
<th>Directional meaning in non-initial slot of SVC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vano</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>away (from speaker)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mai</td>
<td>come</td>
<td>forwards, towards (to speaker)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jivo</td>
<td>go in down direction, go seaward, go south-west</td>
<td>down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sahe</td>
<td>go in up direction, go towards hill, go north-east</td>
<td>up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>turu</td>
<td>stand</td>
<td>there /there in vertical position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ate</td>
<td>sit/stay</td>
<td>there for some time/ present at a place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eno</td>
<td>lie</td>
<td>there for a long time/ there in horizontal position</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Basic motion verbs are often reduced phonologically when either of them appears in a non-initial slot. For example, in the following example, sahe ‘go up’ (in Slot 2 of a three-verb sequence) is reduced to [sa]. This equally applies to jivo –> [ji] ‘go.down’ and vano –> [va] ‘go’ (example (125)).

(134) Tamanatu-na mo karu mo sa’ mo tau ana
husband-P:3SG 3SG wade 3SG go.up 3SG put.in.place PREP
mangamanga-na.
chest-P:3SG
‘Her husband waded in up to his chest.’ (Nt-T72:35)

(135) Na hilo ji’ na soari na tanume rindi le mai.
3PL look down.direction 3PL see ART devil REF TA come
‘They looked down and saw the devil coming.’ (Nt-T-20:21)

Particularly where the phonological reduction occurs in a contiguous nuclear layer sequence, as in the last example, the SVC is moving closer to incorporation. So it could be that such verbs as directional are moving from core layer or non-contiguous SVCs to contiguous or nuclear layer SVCs. If then they are reduced phonologically on a consistent basis, they may in time become fully grammaticalised as directional or locative markers. At this stage, such a grammaticalisation process is speculative, in that although such verbs are already marking direction or location in a non-initial SVC slot, they still operate elsewhere as independent verbs.

#### 12.8.1.2 Verb re ‘say’ –> complementiser

The process where re ‘say’, as Verb2 of a core layer same-subject SVC, can function to mark a following complement clause, has already been effected to a considerable degree in Tamambo (see 12.4.5 for examples and also 14.3.6).

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18 The meanings for jivo and sahe listed here are from the point of view of a speaker in the Avunatari area (west Malo). See 9.2.4.1 for alternative geographic directions from the point of view of a speaker in the south-east.
The verb *re* is used with complement-taking predicates of the ‘utterance’ type, such as ‘explain’, ‘promise’, ‘ask’ but can also be used with the verb meaning ‘think’, and also with the verb meaning ‘know that’. Its syntactic form is the same as *say* (as Verb2) in the synonymic serialising type, and overlaps the functions of that type. However as the SVC with synonymic verbs is more grammaticalised, with *re* ‘say’ becoming a complementiser, Verb1, the complement-taking predicate, becomes less synonymic. For example, I suggest that the verbs for ‘promise’ and ‘explain’ in Tamambo, although utterance verbs, are less close to ‘say’ than is ‘tell’, and verbs ‘think’ and ‘know that’ are certainly not synonymic with ‘say’. So while *re* ‘say’ is well on the way to being grammaticalised as a complementiser, it also retains its other uses.

The growing influence from Bislama in this grammaticalisation process is also something to be considered, in that *se* ‘say’, is used ‘not only to introduce reported speech after verbs of saying, but is used with the same construction after verbs of thinking, believing, knowing and feeling’ (Tryon 1987:168).

See Complement Clauses in Chapter 14 for more discussion on markers of subordination.

### 12.8.1.3 Ambient SVCs: Verb2 → aspectual

Grammaticalisation of stance and motion verbs as aspectuals is well-attested in both serialising and non-serialising languages (Lord 1993, Bybee et al. 1994). In Tamambo, the verb ‘go’ *vano* is now well established as an aspectual indicating continuative aspect (12.7.1).

The other two verbs which behave in a syntactically similar way are *hisi* ‘touch’/‘reach’ and *iso* ‘finish’, which have also developed from independent, literal components of a single VP or a core layer same-subject SVC to aspectual function in an ambient SVC (see 12.7.2 and 12.7.3 respectively).

The fourth verb discussed as an aspectual in 12.7.4 is *le vai* ‘almost’, indicating a potential event. This appears to have already moved from a ‘true’ SVC, where it possibly could once have used the 3SG marking of the other SVC aspectuals. Such halfway situations do not preclude, as Lichtenberk says (1991a:39), ‘different tokens of a morpheme exhibiting properties characteristic of different categories. This is because a form may be in the process of being reassigned to a different category’. This appears to be the stage which *levai* has reached. That is, *le vai* now operates almost as do other prehead fully grammaticalised TAM markers such as *le* ‘imperfective’, and the three other prehead TAM markers with a *le* component (Chapter 11), as follows:

- **male**  recent past  (possibly from stative prefix *ma* +TA *le*)
- **tele**  ‘not yet’  (from negative particle *te* +TA *le*)
- **lete**  ‘never’  (from TA *le* + negative particle *te*)

### 12.8.2 Ambient SVCs: Verb2 → adverbs of manner

As already mentioned in 12.4.7, Bradshaw (1993) calls the ambient type of SVC ‘adverbial serial verbs’, and where Verb2 has a semantic function of manner, ‘adverbial serialisation’ seems a reasonable label. This is the type discussed in 12.4.7.1 and it was noted that the number of verbs as Verb2 is very restricted. Certainly the adjectival verb *duhu* ‘good’ in the slot for Verb2 in an ambient SVC is so common as to be almost part of every conversation or narrative, so it would appear that its function in an adverbial role is now standard.
12.8.3 Development of nuclear layer SVCs

12.8.3.1 Component verb -> adverb in fixed position

There are a small number of existing verbal modifiers that are fixed in a prehead or posthead position. Their functions are to indicate

i) manner (for example, tamahi ‘with difficulty’)

ii) directional motion or location (for example, bwaki ‘encircling’)

iii) non-result (for example,lesi ‘try’).

As described in Chapter 9, the posthead modifiers display many verbal characteristics, in that each of them can display at least one, and usually more of the following traits:

- end with -i
- ability to take transitive suffix -hi
- ability to be reduplicated
- can take object pronominal suffixes.

In addition, all can function in contiguous sequences with verbs to give the outward appearance of a SVC, although they are not classed as such, because they violate the criterion of independent verbs as components.

So it would seem highly likely that they were once independent verbs which could function in SVCs, and that they have become fixed in position now as adverbials. Given their semantic function (manner, directional motion/location, non-result), it is not surprising that they have taken on a modifying role. In addition, it is certainly not unusual, cross linguistically, for verbs expressing directional motion or location to move towards grammaticalisation. So while such modifiers in Tamambo, such as bwaki ‘encircling’, lalihi ‘moving all about’ are not fully grammaticalised as such, they are certainly now more restricted in their syntactic environments.

If the verbal modifiers that synchronically express non-result, such as wati ‘unable’, lesi ‘try’ were ever once independent verbs, it is not unexpected that they should lose their independent status and become modifiers, since such verbs must necessarily cooccur with another verb (that is, ‘try to V’, ‘unable to V’).

Thus it is suggested that all existing posthead verbal modifiers, now adverbs in this language, may once have been full independent verbs, able to operate in contiguous verbal sequences.

12.8.3.2 Component verb -> component of lexicalised compound

Now while some adverbs as described above may well have developed from nuclear layer verb -> verbal modifier, it is also highly likely that some, at least, have moved differently and developed directly into parts of a lexicalised compound. It is appropriate here to use Durie’s parameter (1997:302) of ± contiguous and ± incorporation. And so verbs that seem to have moved from a sequence of independent verbs to compounds, whatever the pathway, I classify as such in Tamambo if they are + contiguous and + incorporating.

Such a process of development is posited for tusi ‘cross s.t.’. It has the phonological characteristics of a prototypical transitive verb and indicates directional motion to somewhere. It seems that it may well have been a verb that became a modifier in the same way posited for directional modifiers discussed above in 12.8.2.1. Its posited history is shown in 5.5.3.3, where two independent verbs (e.g. mo walau mo tusi: ‘it runs it crosses)
could have moved to a nuclear SVC (mo walau tusi: + contiguous, - incorporating) and then to a compound (+ contiguous, + incorporating) as in the example below.

(136) Aka-ni Makali mo-le walatusi na tarusa.
boat-LINK M. 3SG-TA run-across ART sea
‘Makali’s boat is crossing the ocean.’ (#e.342)

A similar pattern is posited for some verbal modifiers, for example, lesi ‘try’ where in a contiguous sequence with a verb, it has incorporated into a lexicalised compound word:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{hani lesi} & \quad \text{lit. eat try} \\
\rightarrow \quad \text{hanlesi} & \quad \text{‘taste s.t.’}
\end{align*}
\]

The posited development of verb \(\rightarrow\) modifier \(\rightarrow\) lexicalised compound component described above results in transparent compounds, that is, sequences which are + contiguous, + incorporating, but also semantically compositional to a greater or lesser degree.

12.8.3.3 Two-verb sequence \(\rightarrow\) lexicalised compound

Unlike the modifier \(\rightarrow\) compound component development described above, nuclear layer serialisation of two independent verbs can travel a different pathway to arrive at a lexicalised ‘idiomatic’ compound. The nuclear SVC can be the first stage in a lexicalisation process.

In discussing the process of development of SVCs, I use the terminology of Bruce (1986) to distinguish between ‘syntactic compounds’ and ‘idiomatic compounds’. I regard a ‘syntactic compound’ in Tamambo as any nuclear SVC which is grammatically unitary but semantically compositional, and an ‘idiomatic compound’ as a nuclear SVC which is grammatically a unit and lexicalised as such. Such ‘idiomatic compounds’ have often (but not always) become semantically non-compositional in the process of development in languages, and have ‘an unequivocal lexical status’ (Bruce 1986:28).

The most likely starting point for such a process seems to be the types of nuclear layer SVCs, of the cause-effect type (12.6.2) and the concomitant action type (12.6.3). It is not suggested that all of these contiguous SVCs will develop into fixed compounded forms as new items in the lexicon of the language, but nevertheless a certain pattern is apparent.

First, cause-effect SVCs of the losu matei ‘strike kill’, sari matei ‘spear kill’ variety (12.6.2.1) are semantically transparent, and would seem to develop into fairly predictable compound constructions. Iconic ordering is a feature of the cause-effect type and so ‘fixed order’ is already part of their compounding. Common usage over time may well lead to their lexicalisation. Indeed, similar sequences have led to the interpretation of the initial verb in such combinations becoming reinterpreted as a prefix in some Western Oceanic languages showing incorporation as well as a contiguous sequence. Similar cause-effect constructions are those such as turu horo ‘trap’ (lit. ‘stand block’) (12.6.2.2). It is already treated as a syntactic compound in that it can be nominalised as turu-horoa ‘trapping’), and the frequency of its use would suggest that it is becoming lexicalised as a unitary ‘idiomatic compound’.

Second, the concomitant action variety, as discussed in 12.6.3, is a significant source of nuclear SVCs. Durie (1997:303), describes ‘contiguous verb sequencing [as] a fully productive process resulting in verb sequences which are as rich and as transparent in meaning as those found in non-contiguous sequencing’. In Tamambo, these are the most
creative and intriguing of the verb sequences. They are the only ones, too, with a certain freedom of order, constrained only by what is conceived to be a single unitary event in cultural terms, and the imagination and verbal skills of the speaker in coining a new sequence. Although all of this type are grammatically acceptable, some may never be heard again, and some will appeal to other speakers and find acceptance over time as the best way of ‘saying something’. Where this happens, the sequence becomes fixed and moves into the lexicon as a unit. As Pawley says (1996:189), ‘there is a continuum between nonce forms and highly conventionalised expressions...’. Thus lexicalised compounds are not the result of some kind of separate process, but appear to be a possible end-point in a continuum of lexicalisation of some serialised constructions.

A fully lexicalised idiomatic compound has the characteristics of +contiguous and +incorporating of the syntactic compounds, but often is no longer transparent semantically (see list in 5.5.3.3). One such word is *domtutun* ‘be conscientious’. Looking at its component parts, it could be suggested that it has proceeded along the following posited pathway of development:

**Past:** domdomi tutunu ‘be conscientious about s.t.’ (lit. think + heat/cook) (perhaps from the concept of thinking about something and keeping the idea warm/‘on the boil’) –>,

**More recent past:** domi tutunu (lit. feel sad + heat/cook) (where any semantic meaning of original now lost in phonological weakening) –>,

**Present:** *domtutun* ‘be conscientious about s.t’ (final high vowels lost on component parts, meaning of parts completely bleached).

Additionally, there are many verbs where the meaning of the parts is no longer known. For example, verbs such as *savutahi* ‘be surprised’, *saovitohi* ‘announce s.t.’, *likolikomahi* ‘swish s.t. around in mouth’, all have the phonological structure of a compound (see 2.6.2) but they are lexicalised to such an extent that the meaning of any original parts is now lost.

At the present time, nuclear SVCs (of the concomitant action type) which seem to me to be likely candidates for such a progression to lexicalisation might be ones such as the following:

- *sora jalo* talk + go astray ‘make mistake’
- *tai suvu* peck + dive ‘swoop’
- *hani duru* eat + split ‘chew’
- *lai vuvuti* take + extract ‘find out’

They are already moving towards semantic ‘non-transparency’, but whether their ‘event usage’ is sufficiently high to merit them becoming lexicalised only time will tell.

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19 Note that Pawley was not referring to serial verb constructions as such but expressions encompassing ‘derived and compound words, catch phrases and speech formulas’. Nevertheless the process is the same.
12.9 SVCs and their development: some conclusions

In conclusion, the following generalisations can be made about SVCs in Tamambo:

i) Serialising constructions must conform to a recognised single ‘event type’.

ii) Serialising constructions can function to indicate:
    directionality motion and location with associated action,
    comparatives,
    cause-effect,
    causation/manipulation,
    aspectuals,
    concurrent action.

iii) Serialising constructions of the core layer type can grammaticalise to indicate:
    adverbials of manner,
    aspectual markers,
    complementiser,
    directional/locative markers.

iv) Serialising constructions of the nuclear layer type can grammaticalise to indicate adverbial modifiers derived from verbs.

v) Serialising constructions of the nuclear layer type can lexicalise to indicate:
    verbal modifiers as lexicalised compound components,
    contiguous verb components as idiomatic lexicalised compounds.

Serialising constructions are evolving and developing verbal constructions, where streamlining changes or changes of focus can result in a SVC moving towards grammaticalisation or lexicalisation, or out of use altogether.
13 Coordinated clauses

13.1 Introduction

Coordinate constructions are those where two or more independent phrases or clauses are linked, and neither one is subordinate to the other. Coordinate NPs have already been discussed in 6.6. Coordinate VPs are here included in the discussion of clauses, since a VP can constitute a verbal clause. Coordinate clauses are linked by:

- juxtaposition
- lexicalised VPs functioning as coordinating conjunctions
- the coordinators *ro*, *ne* or *tene*.

The semantic types of coordination shown in clause linking are:

- conjunctive, including coupling (*A and B*)
- adversative, sometimes called contrastive (*A but B*)
- disjunctive, also known as alternative (*A or B*).

In addition, temporal relations of overlap and succession can be indicated by coordinate clauses.

Firstly, coordination of clauses according to conjunction is shown in 13.2, secondly, coordination of clauses according to contrast and disjunction is discussed in 13.3 and 13.4 respectively, and then lastly some aspects of temporal relations are detailed in 13.5.

13.2 Coordination of conjunctive clauses

Conjunctive clauses are coordinated by:

- juxtaposition (13.2.1)
- the use of lexicalised VPs as coordinating conjunctions (13.2.2).

Since intonation contours are useful guides in marking non-final and final clauses in a sentence, and a definite pause can indicate a clause boundary, intonation contours are indicated for some examples in this section. At all places in the text examples, a comma represents a pause from the speaker.¹

VPs that are coordinate are either individual verbal clauses or are part of a serial verb construction, and thus part of one verbal clause. Intonation contours clearly differentiate monoverbal from coordinate clauses (for more discussion see 2.6.1 and 12.5).

Conjunctive clauses are regarded as those independent clauses that are linked in such a way as to indicate ‘*A and B (and C)*’. There are subtypes, which are exemplified here.

¹ Speakers can, of course, also use pauses for other reasons, e.g. for left dislocations, for peripheral elements in the clause, and for all sorts of pragmatic considerations.
13.2.1 Conjunction as ‘coupling’

Clauses can be combined as conjuncts by simple juxtaposition. One type is that of ‘coupling’, defined by Longacre ‘as a non-temporal underlying and relation’ (2007:378). These take the form such as those shown below where there is no indication of any sequencing in time.

(1) Balosuro, ta-vonavu na were na-le ovi Alotu
     nowadays belong-Malakula 3PL many 3PL-TA live Santo

     na-le ovi Natamambo
     3PL-TA live Malo
     ‘Nowadays lots of Malakula people are living on Santo and living on Malo.’ (#MW40)

Propositions encoded in such coordinate clauses can often be an expansion or variation of one on the other, with no temporal sequencing implied, as in the following directions given to children by their parents in this three clause sentence.

(2) No-le ate, no-le ate wanju aimo, no-te vano avareo.
     2PL-TA stay 2PL-TA stay quiet home 2PL-NEG go outside
     ‘You both stay, you both stay quietly at home, and don’t you go outside.’ (Nt-T33:7)

Because such propositions are not governed by temporal sequencing, they can often be found in non-verbal clauses, which have a more general time reference.

(3) Atea hisa-na Tombarimbari, atea hisa-na
     one name-P:3SG T. one name-P:3SG

     Tavalui Manji, atolu-na nia Vulitulitu.
     side-LINK animal three-P:3SG IP:3SG V.
     ‘One was called Tombarimbari, one was called Half Fish, and the third was Vulitulitu.’ (Nt-T21:2)

13.2.2 Conjunction with temporal sequencing

In comparison to 13.2.1, there are also coordinate verbal clauses conjoined by juxtaposition, which do show strong iconicity, and in fact these would be the most common of the coordinate clauses. They indicate temporal sequencing by:

i) a straightforward succession of clauses

ii) use of the coordinating conjunction ro

iii) successive clauses but with verbs within the clause indicating time, such as tauhunjju ‘start’, mai ‘come’/‘become’ and aspectual SVCs, for example, indicating continuing aspect, ‘until’
iv) lexicalised VPs functioning as clause-initial conjunctions:

- moiso/ moisoro
- aiso/aisoro
- mo turu (aie)
- mo turu (matana)

v) ‘tail-head linkage’.

Brief examples are given of all the above. The term ‘tail-head linkage’ is described in 12.5; some examples only are given here.

### 13.2.2.1 Temporal succession by juxtaposition only

In this type of construction, there are no time words, no coordinating conjunctions, no aspectuals, and the temporal succession relies on the linear succession of clauses.

(4) *Na revei-a mo sahe, mo kakau mo rasitaka ana rani,*

3PL drag-O:3SG 3SG go.up 3SG reach 3SG poke.through PREP day

*na revei-a mo jivo mai alau.*

3PL drag-O:3SG 3SG go.down come coast.direction

‘They dragged her up, she poked through into the daylight, (and then) they dragged her down towards the coast.’ (Nt-T31:20)

### 13.2.2.2 Temporal succession with conjunction *ro*

This is similar to the above, except that linking conjunction *ro* ‘thus’/’so’ is used to express the idea of subsequent action. The conjunction is used clause initially, and indicates temporal succession where the following event is in some way dependent on the event or state of the clause previous to it.

(5) … *no-te manjinga, no-te boi, ro ku-te rongovosai*

2PL-NEG agree 2PL-NEG like thus 1SG-NEG know

*sava ku-mbo loli-a lavwe-mim.*

what 1SG-FUT do-O:3SG affect-P:2PL

‘… you don’t agree, you’re not pleased, *so* I don’t know what I’ll do on your behalf.’ (Nt-T20:10)

(6) *Mo re, ‘Aaa... iau, undu-ku mo sati mo sati, ro*

3SG say ah IP:1SG tooth-P:1SG 3SG bad 3SG bad thus

*ku hani-a sohena.*

1SG eat-O:3SG the.same

‘He said, “Aah … me, (well) my teeth are no good no good, *so* I eat it this way”.’

(Nt-T40:71)

(7) *Na matahu hini-a ro na bwaru-a.*

3PL feel.scared PREP-O:3SG thus 3PL throw.stones-O:3SG

‘They were scared of it *so* they threw stones at it.’ (Nt-T17:6)
Even my youngest story-teller (aged four at the time), uses *ro* for subsequent action, as in the following:

(8)  *mala* atea *mo* mai,  *ro* *mo* hani ... ² *mo* hani atea,

hawk one 3SG come thus 3SG eat 3SG eat one

*ro* *mo* avu.

thus 3SG fly

‘A hawk came, so he ate ... ... he ate one, so he flew away.’ (Nt-T16:2)

The same form *ro* can also be cliticised to the last word of a VP, where it functions as a discourse particle rather than as a coordinating conjunction (see 4.12.2).

13.2.2.3 Temporal succession by juxtaposition with additional use of aspectuals, or verbs of ‘time’

The following sentence is given as example of sequencing of basic independent clauses, but where ‘before and now’ succession of time is also conveyed by the use of particular verbs, ‘time’ words, and aspectuals within the clauses. It uses conjunction *ro*, but it does not use any lexicalised VPs functioning as conjunctions.

(9)  *Ro* Kastom rindi niaro, *nia* *mo* tauhunju tuai, *mo* mai

thus custom REF EMPH IP:3 SG start long.ago 3SG come

*mo* hisi barindi, vevesai mara~maranjea nira rongovosai

3SG touch today every RED~old.man IP:3P know

*na* Kastom niaro.

ART custom EMPH

‘So as for that particular custom, it began long ago, (and) has continued until today, (so) all the old men understand that custom.’ (Nk-T75:17)

13.2.2.4 Temporal succession with grammaticalised conjunctions

*moiso/ moisoro*

As a lexicalised clausal conjunction, *moiso* derives from

*mo*  *iso*

3SG.realis finish = ‘it finishes’/ ‘it is finished’

It is often combined with *ro* ‘thus’, giving a literal meaning of ‘it finishes/finished thus’. It is used as an aspectual with 3SG only (see 12.7.3), but can still be used in its literal sense with all other combinations of person and number. As an aspectual it is usually clause final, while as a conjunction it can only be clause initial.

Its most common usage today is in the function discussed here, as a temporal sequencer of realised events, such as ‘then’, after that’.

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² This is a longish pause while the speaker worked out what came next in his story; he was not about to give up his audience.
Then they went down to ... to the shore to see the devil, he came back again and then they spoke to him about it, and said “Your friend is very sick”. (Nt-T82:12)

So then his mother wailed, she was crying and crying, and then the four brothers told their little brother about it. (Nt-T32:12)

This particular lexicalised conjunction also enjoys high usage by children, so that when they are relating a story, there are almost as many uses of moiso or moisoro as VPs, in much the same way as English-speaking children use ‘and then ...’ ‘and then ...’ in their narration of events.4

aiso(ro)

This clause-initial coordinating conjunction derives from

a iso (ro)
3SG.irrealis finish (+thus ) = lit. ‘should it be finished (thus)’

This is used in much the same way as moiso but refers to a temporal succession of unrealised events, rather than realised events. Consequently it can indicate ‘perhaps’, indicating something that may happen if something else is realised.

The long pause here is because the speaker self-corrected after the preposition ana, realising she did not need a preposition if she was to use a location noun alau.

One 85-word, 18-clause story, recorded from a four year-old, has 7 uses of moiso or moisoro with long pauses, as he struggled to hold the attention of his audience and to remember the next event in the narrative.
aisoro ka-mbo ta-le tohotoho’.
then 1PL-FUT REP-TA play
‘He said, “Yes, well you bring it and I’ll eat it, and p’raps then we’ll play again”.’
(Nt-T36:43)

(13) ...vavine a soari-a a-mbo lai-a a-le tavilihahi,
woman 3SG see-O:3SG 3SG-FUT take-O:3SG 3SG-TA quick
aisoro a-mbo le losu tamanatu-na.
then 3SG-FUT TA strike husband-P:3SG
‘... should the woman see it she will quickly take it, and then perhaps she’ll be
beating her husband.’ (Nk-T22:41)

mo turu (aie)/ mo turu matana

As with moiso and aisoro above, these expressions are also VPs but are very often used as
lexicalised clause-initial conjunctions.

mo turu (aie)
3SG stand (there) = ‘then’, ‘that being so’ (lit.) ‘s/he/it stands (there)’

mo turu (matana)
3SG stand for.it = ‘then’, ‘that being so’ (lit.) ‘s/he/it stands (because of it)’

In this function they are used primarily as temporal sequencers, but they can also have
the idea of a definite action, consequent on what has gone before. However, mo turu is also
still used literally (12.4.2.3) or, as meaning ‘there’ (12.4.3.2). In fact, in the next example,
the second occurrence of mo turu aie could indicate either a literal or coordinating use, and
so the alternatives are given in slashes underneath:

(14) Maranjea rindi nia mo vuso, mo turu aie
old.man REF P:3SG 3SG blind 3SG stand there
mo lai na baka-na mana ivine-na, mo mai
3SG take ART bow-P:3SG COM arrow-P:3SG 3SG come
mo turu aie mo have na baka-na mo sahe
3SG stand there 3SG pull.back ART bow-P:3SG 3SG go.up
aulu, mo vine na manji mwende mo jovi.
up.direction 3SG shoot ART animal particular.one 3SG fall.down
‘The old man was blind, and so he took his bow and arrow, came over/and then/and
stood there/ drew back the bow and up it went, and he shot down that bird.’
(Nt-T51:6)

I have not been able to discern any difference in meaning between mo turu aie and mo
turu matana (as in the next example) as conjunctions, and speakers generally say they are
‘the same’, so it would appear to be a matter of stylistic preference.
mo tuwa na asi, na jom, mo tuwa-e mo-iso,
3SG put.on ART belt ART necklace 3SG put.on-O:3SG 3SG-finish

mo turu matana mo lai na no-ra bani …
3SG stand for.it 3SG take ART CLFR-P:3PL arm.band
‘he put on the custom belt, the necklace, (and when) he finished putting it on, then
he took their arm bands …’  (Nt-T82:5)

It is not unusual to have almost every new event introduced by one of these seqencers:

Mo turu aie, na mule na vano asa-ra,
3SG stand there 3PL head.home 3PL go trad.place-P:3PL

mo turu, tamanatu-na mo heli buru-na, mo heli buru-na
3SG stand husband-P:3SG 3SG dig hole-P:3SG 3SG dig hole-P:3SG

mo-iso, mo turu aie na-le tangisi-a mai votambaluhi-na.
3SG-finish 3SG stand there PL- TA mourn-O:3SG COM wife-P:3SG
‘That being so, they headed back home to their place and then, her husband dug
the (daughter’s) grave, (and when) he had finished digging her grave, then he and
his wife were crying for her.’  (Nt-T74:35)

But as with any temporal sequencer, mo turu (aie) is often used as a stalling device,
while the speaker collects their thoughts and decides on the next proposition. The
following example has longer-than-usual pauses:

Mo turu aie, mo-le ua, mo ua … …
3SG stand there 3SG-TA high.tide 3SG high.tide

mo turu aie … … mo lai~lai wete.
3SG stand there 3SG RED~take song
‘Then the tide was coming up, the tide was up … and then … he sang.’
(Nt-T50:5)

Of the two mo turu aie/mo turu matana expressions, mo turu aie is more often heard,
and as mentioned earlier, frequently there is a reduction to mo turu or turu:

Turu, tina-na mo dami-a mo re ...
stand mother-P:3SG 3SG ask-O:3SG 3SG say
‘Then, her mother asked her …’ (Nt-T74:17)

Some speakers prefer to use one of the mo turu options to the exclusion of moiso, or
vice versa, but both can be used. In such cases, moiso(ro) always precedes mo turu
(aie/matana) in all examples in my data.

Mo-iso-ro, mo turu matana atea mo-le sai ha-na
3SG-finish-thus 3SG stand for.it one 3SG-TA search CLFR-P:3SG
novu, mo-te lai tea.
stonefish 3SG-NEG take one
‘After that, then one [of them] was searching for stonefish for food [but] he didn’t get any.’(Nt-T50:4)

There are also occurrences in the data from adult speakers of na turu (‘3PL stand’) and ka turu (‘1PL stand’), being used clause initially in the same way in the sense of ‘then’. These usages agree in person and number with the subject pronouns preceding the verbs in the previous and subsequent clauses. But I have no examples of 3PL or 1PL usages with aie or matana. It would seem that only 3SG ‘mo’ can be used as in mo turu aie and mo turu matana.

(20) Na jivo na lai na ra-talaua, mo-iso-ro
3PL go.down 3PL take ART LEAF-sago.palm 3SG-finish-thus

na turu na mai, na turu na loli vanua hini-a.
3PL stand 3PL come 3PL stand 3PL make house PREP-O:3SG
‘They went down and got the sago palm leaves, and then came back and made houses with it.’ (Nk-T80:22)

(21) na tau-a aie, mo-iso na turu na mule...
3PL put-O:3SG there 3SG-finish 3PL stand 3PL head.home
‘they put it there, and then they headed home …’ (E-T75:11)

(22) …ale ka lasi-a mo-iso, ka turu ka-ta uli-a
alright 1PL tie-O:3SG 3SG-finish 1PL stand 1PL-REP unwind-3SG

aulu.
up direction
‘(so) alright we finish tying it, and then we unwind it again from the top.’ (E-T59:12)

(Also see example 24 for another example with ka turu.) However, my data from ten children from eight to ten years old consistently show their use of mo turu aie as a lexicalised coordinator, whereas I have no examples of the children using na turu where perhaps an older speaker would do so. For example, the second and third examples of mo turu aie in the next example are flanked by VPs in which 3PL is used, but the young speaker does not use na turu. In addition, children reduce the expression phonologically to [matraj] or [matraja], although they are written in full in the text.

(23) Mo turu aie mo-ta mai, na vosai, mo turu aie
3SG stand there 3SG-REP come 3PL roast 3SG stand there

ulurani na hani-a, mo turu aie na re...
morning 3PL eat-O:3SG 3SG stand there 3PL say
‘Then he came back again, and they cooked, and then in the morning they ate it, and then they said …’ (Nt-T64:13)
So it would seem that for older speakers, the literal meaning of *na turu/ka turu* has moved clause-initially from ‘they stand’/‘we stand’ to a conjunctive use such as ‘then’/‘that being so’, and that adult speakers also use *mo turu* (*aie/matana*) as conjunctions. But from children’s usage, it would appear that all their uses of *turu*, as part of a clause-initial conjunction, have become restricted to 3SG only, as with *mo turu*. This is very similar to the usage of *mo iso* (lit. ‘it finishes’) as a conjunction where it is now limited to 3SG marking. Such usage would indicate, that for these children at least, the grammaticalisation of the expression is complete.

13.2.2.5 Temporal succession by ‘tail-head’ linkage

Successive independent clauses can also indicate temporal sequencing by the restating of the clause event almost word for word, and then moving on to the next event. Such tail-head linkage is particularly used in procedural texts. Often linkers are also used, such as *ka turu* and *mo iso* as discussed above. The ‘repetition’ clauses in the tail-head linkages are bolded.

(24) *Ka tauhunju ka avusi na buru, ka avusi na buru*
1PL start 1PL clear.ash ART hole 1PL clear.ash ART hole
*a-iso ka turu ka tau na dila, ka tau na dila*
3SG-finish 1PL stand 1PL put ART stone 1PL put ART stone

*mo jivo, mo-iso ka lai na dangemburohi...*
3SG go.down 3SG-finish 1PL take ART coconut.shell
‘We begin to clear the ash out of the earth oven, and when we have finished clearing out the oven then we put the fireplace stones in place, we put the stones down in place, and then we take the scraped out coconut shells ...’ (E-T87:2)

See Text 3 in Appendix 2 for many other examples of tail-head linkage.

13.2.2.6 The notion of ‘pivot’ in coordinate clauses

There is no grammatical marking of pivot in this language to indicate coreferentiality between arguments. So there are coordinate clauses that are potentially ambiguous, because more than one interpretation is grammatically possible. However, one of those interpretations may be an interpretation that is pragmatically unlikely. For instance, in the following, it is more likely that the object of the hitting is the one that cries:

(25) *Vui mo losu Sale, mo ngara.*
V. 3SG strike S. 3SG cry
‘Vui hit Sale, and he (Sale) cried.’

But if the hearer has particular knowledge about the agentive subject that overrides the more likely pragmatic interpretation, as given above, then ‘Vui hit Sale and Vui cried’ is also possible, and also grammatically correct.

In the following, two interpretations are possible that are both grammatically and pragmatically acceptable.
(26) *Uranji vorivori mo soari tina-na, mo mana.*
child little 3SG see mother-P:3SG 3SG laugh
‘The baby sees his mother, and he/she laughs.’

Similarly in the following, it can be either referent that runs away:

(27) *Mwera rindi mo dingi na heletu, mo walau.*
boy REF 3SG chase ART pig 3SG run
‘The boy chased the pig, and (the boy) ran away.’ OR ‘The boy chased the pig and the pig ran away.’

But it is also entirely possible that any other referent that makes sense in that particular context could also be the subject of the running away, for example:
‘The boy chased the pig and she (the girl who had been watching) ran away.’

Nevertheless, such referent tracking appears to be not a problem for native speakers, who have certain expectations that particular event types are likely or otherwise. If there is ambiguity, then the NP can be added, as in:

(28) *Mwera rindi mo dingi na heletu, mo-iso heletu rindi mo walau.*
boy REF 3SG chase ART pig 3SG-finish pig REF 3SG run
‘The boy chased the pig and then the pig ran away.’

There is no ambiguity between referents in serial verb constructions of the core layer same-subject type (12.4.2 to 12.4.5) or the switch-subject type (12.4.6) as they are monoclausal units. Even a switch-subject example where, say, only 3SG referents are used, is not ambiguous in discourse, because of the intonational contour of the monoclausal unit, as well as the contextual clues available to the hearer. See example (43) in 12.4.6.1, and example (1) this chapter. (Differences between conjoint clauses and SVCs are discussed in 12.5.)

13.3 **Coordination of adversative clauses**

Adversative clauses are independent clauses that are coordinated by the use of *ne* ‘but’. They indicate a semantic contrast as in ‘A but B’ where A = Clause1 and B = Clause2. As Longacre describes (2007:378), ‘this notion of contrast requires paired lexical oppositions’. Payne (1985:6–8) suggests three varieties of adversative conjunction that can be distinguished. He calls these ‘semantic opposition’, ‘denial of expectation’, and ‘preventative’. These types are reflected in Tamambo, and all types use *ne* to link the two contrastive clauses.

13.3.1 **Semantic opposition**

‘Semantic opposition implies that the relationship between the conjuncts is simply one of contrast or opposition, uncomplicated by further presuppositions or dependencies’ (Payne 1985:6). So the two clauses (A and B) are similar in their ‘topic and structure but
different in lexical content’ (p.7). This is the simplest variety of adversative conjunction in that either the subject is the same in both clauses, or the verb is the same in both clauses.

First, an example is given of the type where the verb is the same in both clauses, as in ‘X verbs but Y does not verb’.

\[(29)\] \textit{Alotu mo kiri ne Natamambo mo-te kiri, mo kiri} 
Santo 3SG rain but Malo 3SG-NEG rain 3SG rain 
\textit{vorivori manihi.}

little LIM

‘On Santo it rains but on Malo it doesn’t rain, it only rains a little bit.’ (C-T68:31)

Another variety has a contrast between the event type in each clause, but the subject is the same in both, as in ‘X does Verb\textsubscript{1} but does not do Verb\textsubscript{2}’ (30), or vice versa, as in ‘X does not Verb\textsubscript{1} but does Verb\textsubscript{2}’ (31).

\[(30)\] \textit{Ka turu ka lai na niu mo mai ka virisi-a, ne} 
1PL stand 1PL take ART coconut 3SG come 1PL milk-O:3SG but 
\textit{ka-te tau na wewe ana hambu ...} 
1PL-NEG put.in.place ART laplap PREP fire

‘Then we bring the coconut and squeeze coconut milk over it, but we don’t put the laplap on the fire … ’ (E-T59:14)

\[(31)\] \textit{... ku wala ololo, ku-te turu a mahere ne ku} 
1SG go.about respect 1SG-NEG stand 3SG straight but 1SG 
\textit{mule atihai.}

head.home far

‘… I walk about crouching down, I don’t stand up straight but go in the house keeping at a distance.’ (E-T57:7)

13.3.2 Contrary to expectation

Payne (1985:7) calls this type ‘denial of expectation’ but I use the term ‘contrary to expectation’ for the Tamambo data, since ‘denial’ suggests some notion of non-volition that is not always apparent in my data. This type can have different subject and different event types in each clause. The coordinated clauses suggest that A happens/has happened, and because of that, one could expect that B will not happen, but in fact B does occur.

This would be the most common kind of adversative clause in the data. In these cases, \textit{ne} has the meaning of ‘nevertheless,’ ‘but regardless’, ‘yet’, ‘in spite of that’, as well as ‘but’, whereas for adversatives of semantic opposition, only ‘but’ is satisfactory. Several examples of this type are shown below:

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5 This is in reference to a respect relationship between women and their married sons, brothers and mother’s brothers, and the kind of behaviour that has traditionally been expected. See Appendix 2, Text 2.
(32) *Tovona mo tete duli a ovi, ne no-ra stori le now 3SG negative duli 3SG live but CLFR-P:3PL story TA mauru matua.
live firm
‘Nowadays there is not a duli (legendary creature) living, but their story lives on strongly.’ (Nk-T3:10)

(33) *Mo sahe mo sahe mo turu ana livuha-na, ne 3SG go.up 3SG go.up 3SG stand PREP middle-P:3SG but wembe rindi mo vinja-hi na ivine-na... wembe.bird REF 3SG shake-APPL ART arrow-P:3SG ‘He went up, up there in the middle of it, but in spite of that the wembe bird shook his arrow loose …’ (Nk-T27:18)

(34) *Na mai na mai ne no-ra boi~mboi-a mo tete 3PL come 3PL come but CLFR-P:3PL RED~like-NOM 3SG negative telei te tamalohi nira na-le mai. PREP INDEF person IP:3PL 3PL-TA come ‘They (the men) came and came but regardless they (the women) didn’t like any of the men that were coming. ‘(lit. …’but their liking was negative towards …’) (Nt-T20:17)

(35) *Tamalohi rindi mo ate vatarahi vo-tahisa-na, ne person REF 3SG stay wait FEM-friend-P:3SG but vo-tahisa-na mo-te mai. FEM-friend-P:3SG 3SG-NEG come ‘The man waited for his girlfriend, yet his girlfriend didn’t come.’ (Nk-T15:8)

13.3.3 Preventative

Another type of adversative is ‘preventative’ (Payne 1985:8) which is described as having the meaning: ‘A, which would otherwise take place, will fail to take place on account of B’. This type can occur in Tamambo with verbs of wishing, hoping or obligation in clause A.

(36) *Nia mwe a loli na no-na saha~saha-e IP:3SG the.one 3SG do ART CLFR-P:3SG RED~work-NOM ne mo ronjo tina. but 3SG sick INTEN ‘He should do his work but he is really sick.’ (#e.591)

(37) *Ku~mboi ku vano asena ne mo-te rorongo. 1SG-like 1SG go INTEN but 3SG-NEG possible ‘I would very much like to go but it’s impossible.’ (#c.986)
13.4 Coordination of disjunctive clauses

Disjunctive clauses are independent clauses which are coordinated by the use of tene ‘or’. As shown in 6.6.2, tene can also link NPs, and is the only coordinator to also operate as a clause linker. Semantically, disjunctive clauses indicate an alternative. In Tamambo, the stated alternative is offered in the clause following tene, and can be:

i) the negative counterpart of clause 1, where there will be a negative particle or the negative verb in clause 2, where one alternative excludes the other

ii) a different proposition entirely, where both alternatives are possible, or even another alternative is envisaged.

13.4.1 Clause 2 as a negative alternative to Clause 1

(38) *Hina~hinau tovona mo sohen tuai tene mo-te sohen*  
RED-thing now 3SG like long.ago or 3SG-NEG like *tuai?*  
long.ago  
‘Nowadays are things like the olden days or not like then?’ (C-T86:18)

The following is a standard greeting:

(39) *Kamim no-isonduhu no-le rongo mo duhu tene mo tete?*  
IP:2PL 2PL-all 2PL-TA feel 3SG good or 3SG negative  
‘Are you all well or not?’ (lit. ‘you all are feeling it’s good or it’s negative?’)

13.4.2 Clause 2 as a positive alternative to Clause 1

This type offers a different, but positive proposition in the coordinated clause following tene. It can have the same form and structure as clause 1.

(40) …*a re a-mbo mai a soari-a, tene a re a*  
3SG say 3SG-FUT come 3SG see-O:3SG or 3SG say 3SG  
*mai a losovi-a.*  
come 3SG wash-O:3SG  
‘… he would say he will come to view him, or he would say he might come to wash him.’ (E-T81:9)

(41) …*na lasi na tamalohi tene na lasi na boe,*  
3PL tie ART person or 3PL tie ART boar  
*motiso asi-na mo materiteri mo walau...*  
3SG-finish rope-P:3SG 3SG loose 3SG run  
‘…they tie up a person or they tie up a pig, and then their rope is loose (so) he (/it) runs away ….’ (E-T94:13)

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6 The ‘viewing’ or ‘washing’ is part of various rituals with a new grandchild.
The positive proposition in the second clause can also have quite a different form and content from the first clause, as shown in the next example:

(42) *Bole, niho o rongovosai-a tene bula-na tanume*  
well IP:2SG 2SG know-O:3SG or CLFR-P:3SG spirit  
*na viti-ho hini-a?*  
3PL tell-O:2SG PREP-O:3SG  
‘Well, do you know about it or do her spirits tell you about it?’ (C-T86:109)

### 13.5 Temporal relationships with coordinating clauses

Coordinating clauses can show temporal succession and temporal overlap by various means, as shown in examples in 13.2.2.1 to 13.2.2.5. Additionally, temporal succession can be shown in coordinating clauses by aspectual *mo vano*, indicating continuative aspect, and *mo (va)hisi* indicating terminative aspect (see 12.7.1 and 12.7.2).

However, temporal overlap can also be shown in coordinating clauses by use or otherwise of the tense-aspect particle *le*.

For example, in (43), there are no particular time words, aspectuals or lexicalised conjunctions to indicate either succession or overlap. But the juxtaposition of the four clauses indicates iconic sequencing, and overlap is also indicated. This particular type of overlap is referred to by Longacre (2007:380) as ‘continous-punctiliar’, and can be compared to ‘punctiliar-punctiliar’ overlap, which is reflected in this language by the use of an adverbial clause (see 14.4). The ‘continous-punctiliar’ overlap is achieved by the use of *le* with reference to the fire, which continues to burn at the same time that the women get the yams and peel them. All the other preverbal marking in the sentence indicates straightforward non-future (unmarked), but ‘the fire’ is referred to with the aspectual indicating imperfective *mo-le hani ‘it is burning’. This indicates that the process of burning continues while the next event begins.

(43) *Ka tiu-a mo sahe ana hambu, mo-le han’*  
1PL place-O:3SG 3SG go.up PREP fire 3SG-TA burn  
*ka lai na dam, ka simba-e,*...  
1PL take ART yam 1PL peel-O:3SG  
‘We put it up on the fire, and while it’s burning we get the yam and grate it…’ (lit.  
‘we place it it goes up on the fire, it is burning we take the yam, we peel it ’  
(E-T87:3)

There is similar overlap in the next example, where the event time of the first clause is still in process at the same time that the next event occurs.

(44) *Mo-le sahe mo rongo na vavine rindi mo re,*  
3SG-TA go.up 3SG hear ART woman REF 3SG say
‘Hinda avuho’?
IP:1PL.I tomorrow
‘While he was going up he heard the woman say, “Goodbye”.’ (N-T83:30)

Indications of temporal overlap and succession are, of course, not restricted in Tamambo to the coordination strategies detailed here and elsewhere in this chapter, but straightforward coordinated clauses are still able to convey a considerable amount of information to do with temporal relationships.

7 The literal meaning of the lexicalised expression for ‘goodbye’ is ‘we (inclusive) tomorrow’.
14 Subordinate clauses

14.1 Introduction

This chapter describes complex sentences, that is, sentences that have a minimum of two clauses in which one clause is subordinate to the other. They contrast with coordinate sentences described in the previous chapter where two ‘equal ranking’ independent clauses combine, and where neither clause is subordinate to the other.

Subordinate clauses link with the main clause either at the periphery of the main clause or at the core level of the main clause. Following Thompson, Longacre and Hwang (2007:238), three types of subordinate clauses are distinguished. They are ‘those which function as noun phrases (called complements), those which function as modifiers of nouns (called relative clauses), and those which function as modifiers of verb phrases or entire propositions (called adverbial clauses)’.

Relative clauses are described in 14.2 and complement clauses in 14.3. Adverbial clauses are described in 14.4.

14.2 Relative clauses

A relative clause (RC) is ‘a subordinate clause which delimits the reference of an NP by specifying the role of the referent of that NP in the situation described by the RC’ (Andrews 2007b:206). A relative clause in Tamambo is a post-nominal external clause, embedded within the noun phrase.

Tamambo speakers do not differentiate grammatically between restrictive relative clauses (RRCs) and non-restrictive relative clauses (NRRCs). There are only one or two examples in my data that suggest a marginal case could be made for a distinction between them on pragmatic and minor intonational differences, but I do not find the data sufficiently convincing to warrant making any distinction between them in this language. I refer to a relative clause henceforth as RC.

The terminology used in the description of relative clauses varies considerably with different scholars. Following Andrews (1975 and 2007b) and Keenan (1985), the notation $NP_{rel}$ is used to refer to the position in the RC that refers to ‘the elements in the domain of relativisation’ (Keenan 1985:146). This is what Lichtenberk (1983:554) calls the ‘position of relativisation’, referring to the ‘syntactic function that the nominal coreferential with the head noun would have if the relative clause in question were not a relative clause but an independent sentence’. I also make use of the term ‘common argument’ (henceforth CA) used by Dixon (1996) in referring to the NP relativised and its representation in the RC as $NP_{rel}$.

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This definition is the same as that in Thompson and Longacre (1985:172).

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The criteria for recognising a relative clause in this language are as follows:

i) position
ii) intonation
iii) use of *mwende* ‘the one’/‘particular one’ as a relative pronoun (not always obligatory) at the beginning of the RC
iv) other representation/marking of the $NP_{rel}$
v) use of a restricted VP (TA *le* + verb for 3SG without subject pronoun) where RC is past relative to Speech time.

As stated above, the RC always directly follows the NP modified. The structure of the RC is the same as a main clause except for some differences in 3SG marking, common to some other subordinate clauses in this language (see 11.4.5).

### 14.2.1 The role of intonation

The intonation contour with a relative clause is invariant over the whole NP including the RC. There is no pause between the head noun and its RC.

The intonation contour for a RC is different from coordinate constructions and left-dislocation constructions, both of which have very clearly marked pauses. Compare the following two examples, the first a coordinate construction, the second a relative clause.

(1) *Tamalohi rindi mo-le mai ana bot, moiso ku soari-a.*
    person  REF 3SG-TA come PREP boat then 1SG see-O:3SG
    ‘The man was coming in the boat, and then I saw him.’

(2) *Ku soari na tamalohi mwende le mai ana bot.*
    1SG see ART person particular.one TA come PREP boat
    ‘I saw the man who came in the boat.’ (#e.692)

Similarly the intonation contour is different between relative clauses and left-dislocations where the $NP_{rel}$ is in the syntactic function of direct object. This is important to note because the clause structure and the grammatical marking can be similar for a RC and for a left-dislocated clause. Following is a left-dislocation:

(3) *Moiso-ro rohai rindi, langi mo bulahi-a,* then-thus leaf REF wind 3SG hurl-O:3SG
    mo-le bosi, mo-le bosi ...
    3SG-TA turn 3SG-TA turn
    ‘Then as for that leaf, the wind tossed it up, and it was turning and turning …’ (Nk-T21:12)
By contrast, if it was a relative clause, the *mwende* is optional, but the intonation pattern is different, and the 3SG marking in the relative clause must be represented by *le* (11.4.5.4).

(4) **Moiso-ro rohai rindi (mwende) langi le bulahi-a**

then-thus leaf REF (particular one) wind TA hurl-O:3SG

*mo-le* bosi, *mo-le* bosi...

3SG-TA turn 3SG-TA turn

‘Then the leaf that the wind had tossed up was turning, turning…’

14.2.2 Use of *mwende* ‘particular one’

Before *mwende* is described in its function as a relative pronoun, I briefly review its other uses. The various functions of *mwende* are as

i) a pronoun (4.7.2)

ii) a demonstrative modifier (4.9.2.2)

iii) a relative pronoun.

It is invariable in form in all its functions, and neither person nor number is indicated.

As a relative pronoun

When *mwende* is used as a relative pronoun, it introduces the RC, immediately following the head noun.

(5) **Matai vuvuni, manji mwende o hani-a**

because vuvuni fish particular.one 2SG eat-O:3SG

*manji* mwende o-te hani-a mo mate.

fish particular.one 2SG-NEG eat-O:3SG 3SG die

‘Because with *vuvuni* (a kind of fishing), the fish that you eat and the fish that you don’t eat die.’ (E-T24:11)

As a relative pronoun, *mwende* is optional in almost all frames, but nevertheless is commonly used to introduce a RC. In this, it is reminiscent of what is described for a southern Vanuatu language by Lynch (1978:105). He discusses a word which is the ‘introducer of a Lenakel relative clause’ and which he translates as ‘“the one who”… optional in all contexts in which it appears’. This is very similar to the use of *mwende* ‘the one’/‘particular one’, although *mwende* is obligatory in just one syntactic frame (14.2.3.1). Because its obligatory inclusion in this frame depends on the nature of the NP_{rel}, it is treated in this analysis as a relative pronoun.
14.2.3 Representation of the NP\textsubscript{rel} in the relative clause

Allowed functions for CA in the main clause and the RC are any core or peripheral function in either the main clause or RC in any combination.

The statement or representation of the CA is included in the main clause as a NP, but it must also be marked in some way in the RC. Its representation in the RC as NP\textsubscript{rel} is as a personal pronoun or a locative proform, or mwende functioning as a relative pronoun; that is, there are different strategies for coding the representation is the RC depending on the different function of the NP\textsubscript{rel}. Examples to illustrate this are given later in this section.

This pattern of marking in the postnominal relative clause follows the Accessibility Hierarchy of Keenan and Comrie (1977:66): Subject $\rightarrow$ Direct object $\rightarrow$ Indirect object $\rightarrow$ Oblique (major oblique case NP) $\rightarrow$ Genitive (or possessor) $\rightarrow$ Object of comparison.

Keenan and Comrie further note (p.68) that ‘if a language can relativise any position on the AH (accessibility hierarchy), then it can relativise all higher positions’. They also maintain with regard to pronoun retention in RCs, that ‘once a language begins to retain pronouns it must do so for as long as relativization is possible at all’ (p.92). This generalisation was redefined by Keenan (1985:148) as ‘if a given language presents NP\textsubscript{rel} as a pronoun for any position in the Hierarchy then it presents NP\textsubscript{rel} as a pronoun for all lower positions on the Hierarchy’.

This is exemplified in this language by positions in the hierarchy from direct object to possessor.

14.2.3.1 NP\textsubscript{rel} as subject

When the NP\textsubscript{rel} is the subject, mwende is obligatory, regardless of whether the CA is subject in the main clause as in (6), or O in the main clause as in (7).

S in MC

(6) Vuria mwende na-le hani bula-ku toa vevesai bongi
dog particular.one 3PL-TA eat CLFR-P:1SG fowl every day
nira niala.
IP:3PL there
‘The dogs that are/were attacking my chickens every day are those over there.’
(#e.PB’95)

O in MC:

(7) Ku soari na tamalohi mwende le rovi na heletu.
1SG see ART person particular.one TA steal ART pig
‘I see/saw the man who stole/was stealing/has stolen (*is stealing) the pig/s.’
(#e.1016)

If mwende is not used, then the focus is on the action rather than the person, as in the following example—not a RC, but a simultaneous complement, where the event times of the main clause and the complement are the same (11.4.5.3).
Subordinate clauses

(8) Ku soari na tamalohi le rovi na heletu.
1SG see ART person TA steal ART pig
‘I saw the man stealing the pig/s.’

Some relative clauses such as (8) allow ‘reduced VPs’, as introduced in 11.4.5.1. A reduced VP is taken to be that where the usually obligatory 3SG subject pronoun of a VP is deleted and a TA marker le is used, as in

\[ \text{mo-le vano} \rightarrow \text{le vano} \]
\[ 3SG-TA go \rightarrow TA go \]

The use of le alone in relative clauses, without the usual obligatory subject pronoun, gives a past orientation. This is available for 3SG only. This use of le is quite opposite from its use in independent clauses where, when it is used without the 3SG preverbal subject pronoun, it can indicate a present orientation (11.4.5.1 and 11.4.5.2). But where the 3SG subject pronoun is used in conjunction with le (as mo-le) in the RC, it can only give an interpretation in the present, as in (9). For this variation in the basic and secondary meanings of le see 11.4.3 to 11.4.5.

(9) Ku soari na tamalohi mwende mo-le rovi na heletu.
1SG see ART person particular.one 3SG-TA steal ART pig
‘I see the man who is stealing (*who was stealing/*who stole) the pig’.

Exception to the obligatory use of mwende

There is one kind of exception to the obligatory use of mwende where NP_rel is S. The three posture verbs, ate ‘sit’/’stay’, turu ‘stand’, eno ‘lie’, or the verb ovi ‘live’, have become grammaticalised in some environments to denote a locative ‘there’ (see 9.2.4.2). When one of these is used in a RC, then the use of mwende is optional.2

(10) Ne tamalohi rindi (mwende) le ovi ana wamba
but person REF particular.one TA live PREP cave

\[ \text{rindi aulu mo manjuri} \ldots \]
\[ \text{REF up.direction 3SG come.back.down} \]
‘But the man (the one) living in the cave in the bush came back down …’
(‘But the man there in the cave in the bush … etc.’) (Nt-T31:2)

(11) Vanua (mwende) le ate ana tavalu-na vanua-ku
house particular.one TA stay PREP side-P:3SG house-P:1SG

\[ \text{mo hani}. \]
\[ 3SG burn \]
‘The house (the one) there at the side of mine burnt down.’ (#PB’95)

---

2 In all the examples in this section and elsewhere where mwende is marked as optional, I checked the acceptability of the RC in that particular sentence with and without mwende with several different speakers, and always received the same response as to whether its inclusion was optional or obligatory.
14.2.3.2 \textbf{NP}_{rel} as object

Where \text{NP}_{rel} functions as O, the use of \textit{mwende} is optional, but a resumptive pronoun is obligatory in the RC in the same slot as a NP object of an independent clause. This is retained whether \textit{mwende} is present or not.

(12) \textit{Heletu na hani na dam (mwende) voi le lavo-ra.}\footnote{Page 388}

\begin{tabular}{l}
pig \text{3PL} eat \text{ART} yam particular.one mum \text{TA} plant-\text{O:3PL} \\
\end{tabular}

‘The pigs ate/eat the yams that mum planted/was planting/had planted.’

(*plants/*planting) (#96)

(13) \textit{‘Voi, manji (mwende) niho o-le boi-a a niani!’}\footnote{Page 388}

\begin{tabular}{l}
mum fish particular.one \text{IP:2SG} 2SG-TA like-\text{O:3SG} 3SG here \\
\end{tabular}

‘Mum, the fish that you want/wanted/were wanting might be here!’ (Nt-T32:7)

14.2.3.3 \textbf{NP}_{rel} as P-object (oblique)

Where \text{NP}_{rel} functions as a P-object, that is, as an oblique argument of the main predicate, \textit{mwende} is optional, but the preposition + O pronoun in the RC is obligatory.

\textbf{Oblique as Locational Topic}

(14) \textit{Ku-mboi ku viti na stori (mwende) mara–maranjea}\footnote{Page 388}

\begin{tabular}{l}
1SG-want 1SG tell \text{ART} story particular.one \text{RED–old man} \\
\end{tabular}

\begin{tabular}{l}
na-le viti-au \text{hini-a} tuai. \\
3PL-TA tell-\text{O:1SG} PREP-\text{O:3SG} long.ago \\
\end{tabular}

‘I’d like to tell the story that the old men told me about a long time ago.’ (#1169)

\textbf{Oblique as Comitative}

(15) \textit{Vavine mo toro na tamalohi (mwende) le lahi}\footnote{Page 388}

\begin{tabular}{l}
woman 3SG leave \text{ART} person particular.one \text{TA} marry \\
\end{tabular}

\begin{tabular}{l}
telei-a. \text{PREP-O:3SG} \\
\end{tabular}

‘The woman left the man she was married to’. (#693)

14.2.3.4 \textbf{NP}_{rel} as object of preposition at periphery

\textbf{Spatial location}

Once again, the use of \textit{mwende} is optional; the locative adverb in the RC is obligatory.

(16) \textit{O matavosai o lai na taksi tene bus matan o vano}\footnote{Page 388}

\begin{tabular}{l}
2SG be.able 2SG take \text{ART} taxi or \text{bus} \text{SUB} 2SG go \\
\end{tabular}

\begin{tabular}{l}
a na jara (mwende) o-mbo ovi \text{aie}. \text{PREP place particular.one} \text{2SG-FUT} live there \\
\end{tabular}

‘You can take a taxi or a bus to the place where you will stay.’ (Wl-T8:3)
The following is an example of a left-dislocated head noun that is relativised. The object pronominal on the verb *komo-a* occurs as the pronominal trace of the left-dislocation, and the locative in the RC is the obligatory cross-referencing of the CA.

(17) *Batuivanua mwende le ovi aie, langlosu mo komo-a.*
    village particular.one TA live there hurricane 3SG destroy-O:3SG

‘As for the particular village where she lived/was living/has lived, the hurricane destroyed it.’ (#e.695)

14.2.3.5 **NP\text{rel} as possessor**

In this type, *mwende* is preferred and a possessive pronominal suffix in the RC is obligatory, in this case with a classifier.

(18) *Tamalohi rindi mwende no-na bot hina joriha*
    person REF particular.one CLFR-P:3SG boat PREP yellow

*mo-le ovi Aore.*
    3SG-TA live A.

‘That man whose boat is yellow lives on Aore.’ (#e.PB)

14.2.3.6 **NP\text{rel} as named possessor**

In the following, the direct possession construction is modifying the NP argument in the same post-nominal slot as other relative clauses. But *mwende* cannot be used in a NP possessed+NP possessor construction such as this one.

(19) *... mo soari ra-vavine arua na-le loloso, ne tamanatu-ra*
    3SG see PL-woman two 3PL-TA wash but husband-P:3PL

*hisa-na Navokasari, Navokasar’ le eno...*
    name-P:3SG N. N. TA lie

‘… he saw the two women bathing, but their husband (who was) called Navokasari, Navokasari was there …’  (Nt-T82:4)

14.2.4 **Summary of NP\text{rel} representation**

Table 14.1 summarises the representation of the CA in the RC and the use of *mwende*, as outlined in the above examples.

It can be seen that for all positions in the Accessibility Hierarchy there is some obligatory marking in the RC. For subject it is *mwende*, and for all other functions it is some pronominal or proform trace. Although *mwende* as a relative pronoun is only obligatory in introducing relative clauses in one particular syntactic frame as shown, it is nevertheless preferred by speakers for all relative clauses (other than the ‘named possessor’ type), as ‘more correct’ speech.
Table 14.1: Marking of NPrel according to function

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function of CA in Relative Clause (NPrel)</th>
<th>Marking in relative clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>mwende, obligatory (except as noted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct object</td>
<td>O pronominal suffix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oblique object (locutional topic/comitative)</td>
<td>PREP +O pronominal suffix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object of preposition (spatial location)</td>
<td>locative adverb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possessor (common noun)</td>
<td>CLFR + Poss. pronominal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possessor (named)</td>
<td>Possessive pronominal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14.3 Complement clauses

Complement clauses are those clauses that function as an argument of a predicate. In Tamambo, complement clauses follow the predicate of the main clause. There are no examples in my data of a complement clause functioning as an argument preceding the predicate (in subject position), in that there are no sentential subjects. However, complements can function either as direct core or oblique core arguments following the predicate.

Complement clauses in this language are most often ‘sentence like’, in that they have the same syntactic form as a main clause. These sentence-like (S-like) complements can be juxtaposed or introduced with a complementiser. But complements that are not sentence-like (non-S-like) can occur in the form of a nominalised clause or in the form of a ‘reduced VP’ (11.4.5 and 11.4.5.3). Verbs that take complement predicates are referred to, following Noonan (1985:43 and 2007:53), as ‘complement taking predicates’ (henceforth CTPs).

14.3.1 Types of complement clauses

Table 14.2: Types of complement clauses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non sentence-like complements</th>
<th>Sentence-like complements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simultaneous complement</td>
<td>With complementiser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(participle-like)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominalisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most common complement constructions are paratactic constructions, or clauses introduced with *matan* or with the verb *re*. All others are considerably less common. An example is given here of each and then they are discussed more fully in later sections. The complement clause is bolded.
Simultaneous complement:

(20) *Nananovi ku burongi na kakao le noha.*
    yesterday 1SG smell ART cocoa.beans TA cook
    ‘Yesterday I smelt the cocoa beans drying.’  (#e.1020a)

Nominalisation:

(21) *Ku-te boi na no-na losu–losu-a telei*
    1SG-NEG like ART CLFR-P:3SG RED~strike-NOM PREP
    *votambaluhi-na.*
    wife-P:3SG
    ‘I don’t like his hitting of his wife.’  (#e.1134)

Paratactic construction:

(22) *Na-te matavosai na-mbo vano tiu na tanume rindi.*
    3PL-NEG be.able 3PL-FUT go remove ART devil REF
    ‘They didn’t know how they would get away from that devil.’  (Nt-T20:57)

Clause introduced by *matan*:

(23) *Ku rongovosai-a matan o vano Alotu.*
    1SG know-O:3SG COMP 2SG go Santo
    ‘I know that you went to Santo.’  (#e.970)

Clause introduced by Verb *re*:

(24) *Na viti-a na re na-le barambara.*
    3PL tell-O:3SG 3PL say 3PL-TA walk.on.reef
    ‘They said that they were walking on the reef.’  (E-T23:13)

Clause introduced by *mwe*:

(25) *Na rongovosai mwe asa-ra aulu.*
    3PL know COMP traditional.place-P.3PL up.direction
    ‘They know that their home is on high.’  (Wh: p.285)  

Clause introduced by *sohen*:

(26) *Bao mo soari sohen naho-na mo sati.*
    swamp.hen 3SG see like face-P:3SG 3SG bad
    ‘Purple swamp hen saw that his face seemed no good.’  (Nt-T26:11)

---

3 Orthography from the hymnbook has been adapted to that used in this description (e.g. [m"w"] written as /mw/ rather than /mu/).
Clause introduced by sohen are/are sohen

(27) *Mo boi sohen are a mai dokta.*
3SG want like if 3SG come doctor
‘He hopes to become a doctor.’ (#c.994)

Clause introduced by ro

(28) *Ku soari-a ro o-ta mai.*
1SG see-O:3SG thus 2SG-REP come
‘I see that you came back.’

### 14.3.2 Non-S-like complements

There are two types of complements that can be regarded as non sentence-like, one functioning as a participial clause and the other as a nominalised clause.

#### 14.3.2.1 Simultaneous complements (participle-like)

First, these complements can have the form of reduced VPs as in (30) or the form of a basic, prototypical VP as in (31), according to person and number to be marked on the verb in the complement, and the time reference of the main and subordinate clauses. This use of a secondary meaning for TA le as 3SG has been discussed in 11.4.5 and seen in examples in 14.2 with relative clauses. Once again here with simultaneous complements, le without the 3SG subject pronoun, has a past orientation, but with the 3SG pronoun as in mo-le, indicates present.

(29) *Ku rongo Sale mo-le doro~ndoro ana matesia.*
1SG hear S 3SG-TA RED~knock PREP door
‘I hear (*heard) Sale knocking at the door.’ (#c.1140)

(30) *Ku soari na aka le mai.*
1SG see ART boat TA come
‘I saw (*see) the boat coming.’

(31) *Vo-tasi-na mo soari na-le mai maravitu...*
FEM-younger.sibling-P:3SG 3SG see 3PL-TA come close
‘Her little sister saw/sees/they were/are coming closeby …’ (Nt-T20:106)

The following two examples could also be interpreted in written form as two separate clauses as shown in the bracketed translations. But if they were to be understood as two clauses, there would be a clearly articulated pause between the two, and often a clause linker, neither of which is in these examples.

(32) *Ku soari-ho o-le mai.*
1SG see-O:2SG 2SG-TA come
‘I see/saw you coming.’ (*I see/saw you, you were coming.)
Subordinate clauses

(33) Nananovi ku dawahi na ra-vavine na-le tohotoho.  
Yesterday 1SG watch ART PL-woman 3PL-TA play  
‘Yesterday I watched the girls playing volley.’ (#c.1022) (*Yesterday I watched the girls, they were playing volley.)

All CTPs that occur in this type of non-sentential complementation are verbs of ‘immediate perception’ such as ‘see’, ‘hear’, ‘smell’, where the experiencer of the CTP is involved in being witness to part of the process as it actually occurs. The Event times of the matrix and complement events are simultaneous and the participants can be said to be shared.

14.3.2.2 Nominalised clauses

In a nominalised clause functioning as complement, the grammatical status of the predicate is a verbal noun. A nominalised clause such as this has both verb-like and noun-like characteristics.

In a declarative verbal sentence with an adverbial clause of reason, as shown below, the ‘dislike’ is focused on the person:

(34) Ku-te boi-a matan mo losu na votambaluhi-na.  
1SG-NEG like-O:3SG SUB 3SG strike ART wife-P:3SG  
‘I don’t like him because he hits his wife.’

But where the emphasis of the dislike is transferred to the action rather than to the instigator of the action, the verb is nominalised and the action as noun takes on some of the permanency of noun-hood, as shown in example (21).

Similarly in the next example, the object of ‘not liking’ is transferred to a nominalised action rather than to the addressee.

(35) Ku-te boi na no-m vai~vai-a telei-au.  
1SG-NEG like ART CLFR-P:2SG RED~cause-NOM PREP-O:1SG  
‘I don’t like your ways of doing things with me.’ (lit. I don’t like your customs to/with me) (#e.1136)

While nominalisation of verbs is common (5.3.2.2), the use of nominalised verbs as above is uncommon, and examples in sentences (21) and (35) were elicited, rather than occurring in text or day-to-day conversation.

14.3.3 S-like complements without complementisers

14.3.3.1 Paratactic constructions

This type of construction has no marking of the complement clause; the subordinating clause simply follows the CTP as the object argument of the main clause. These constructions differ from same-subject serial verb constructions in that the TAM and polarity values of the verb in the subordinate clause do not have to be the same as that of the verbal predicate (in these cases the CTP) of the main clause. While the subject of the complement is often the same as that of the main clause because of the semantics of the verb involved, it is not obligatory with the verb boi ‘want’, as shown in the examples.
The CTPs which have been attested as being able to take such an unmarked complement are the following verbs:

- **matavosai** ‘be able/know how to’
- **tauhunju** ‘begin to’
- **tinerani** ‘remember to’
- **boi** ‘want’

(36) **Ku-te matavosai ku loli-a sohena.**
1SG-NEG be.able 1SG do-O:3SG same
‘I can’t do it like that.’ (N.ch-T5:10)

(37) **Ka tauhunju ka avusi na buru...**
1PL begin 1PL clear.ash ART earth oven
‘We begin to clear the ash out of the oven …’ (E-T87:2)

(38) **O tinerani o-te lua!**
2SG remember 2SG-NEG vomit
‘Remember not to vomit!’ (N.ch-T5:8)

(39) **Ku boi o vano ana maket.**
1SG want 2SG go PREP market
‘I want you to go to the market.’ (#c.24)

Where there is a complement clause to express a negative futurity, a CTP of this type (bolded) can take the irrealis with the negative, and the verb in the complement clause can take a ‘positive’ future:

(40) **Lima-na mo vorivori ‘nao’, a-te matavosai a-mbo ta loli te hinau.**
hand-P:3SG 3SG little now 3SG-NEG be.able 3SG-FUT REP do INDEF thing
‘There was no room left in his claw now, and he wouldn’t be able to get anything else.’ (Nt-T61:47)

### 14.3.4 S-like complements with complementisers

As shown in Table 14.2, there are sentence-like complements which are introduced by various grammatical forms functioning as complementisers. The complementiser differs according to the type of verb that can function with them as CTPs, and marking on the CTP can also differ. For example, some verbs are always suffixed with a 3SG object before complements and others are not. And some CTPs take a NP direct object and then the complement clause as an oblique argument. These syntactic differences appear to have a semantic base.

The varying S-like complement clauses are discussed according to the different complementisers as shown in Table 14.2. Note that S-like complement clauses have no restriction that the subject of the complement clause must be the same as the subject of the CTP.
14.3.5 Complements introduced by matan

As seen in the chapter on prepositional phrases 8.2.5.4, matan(i) can be used as a preposition and in 14.4.4, its uses as a subordinating conjunction to adverbial clauses are discussed. The use or otherwise of the final high vowel has also been mentioned in 8.2.5.4, but there are no examples in my data of the use of matani when introducing a complement clause as discussed here. All are written as matan with one exception matana, which is given in 14.3.5.3. In this section, matan is glossed as COMP in its function as a complementiser.

14.3.5.1 Attitude or thought processes (nil marking on the CTP)

Grammatically, most of these verbs are ‘extended intransitives’ (see 9.2.3.2) in that they obligatorily take two arguments, S + P-object, or as here, S + complement. The verbs used as such CTPs (bolded) include ‘fear’, ‘believe’, ‘dream’, ‘wish’, ‘forget’, ‘be difficult’. Often, the speaker is projecting the attitude that they do not know if the proposition of the complement will be realised. Sometimes there is some doubt that the proposition even can be realised.

(41) Mo matahu matan tina-na a mate.
3SG afraid COMP mother-P:3SG 3SG die
‘He’s afraid that his mother might die.’ (#c.979)

(42) Mo domtau matan natu-na a mai.
3SG believe COMP child-P:3SG 3SG come
‘He believes that his son might come.’ (#e.962a)

(43) Tamalohi mo matu~maturu-soari matan votambaluhi-na mo vano.
person 3SG RED~sleep-see COMP wife-P:3SG 3SG go
‘The man dreamt that his wife had gone.’ (#e.966)

(44) … tamalohi mwende mo-te rongovosai-a, mo dira
person particular.one 3SG-N EG know-O:3SG 3SG difficult
matan a lai tohi-a.
COMP 3SG take quick-O:3SG
‘…(for)a person who doesn’t understand it, it’s hard to catch on quickly.’
(C-T68:90)

(45) Mo tinomalio matan ku-mbo vano Alotu.
3SG forget COMP 1SG-FUT go Santo
‘He forgot that I’m going to Santo.’ (#e.976)

The same construction applies even if the subject is the same in both clauses. Thus compare the previous example with the following:

4 An exception is dira ‘be hard/difficult’, which is a stative verb. It can function as it does here, and also as an adjectival verb.
Mo tinomalio matan a vano Alotu.
3SG forget COMP 3SG go Santo
‘He forgot to go/that he was going/ to Santo.’ (#c.975)

Where boi ‘like’/‘want’ is intensified and does not immediately precede the complement clause, matan is obligatorily used. So although boi alone functions with a paratactic construction, as in 14.3.1 where it is a transitive verb, it appears that the addition of the intensifier changes its function to an extended intransitive (which cannot take a direct object). The kind of complement then also changes.

Ku boi asena matan Marianne a mai ne
1SG want INTEN COMP M. 3SG come but
mo tete.
3SG negative
‘I wish Marianne could come but she can’t.’ (lit. ‘I want very much that M might come but it’s no.’) (#c.1000)

14.3.5.2 Perception and acquisition of knowledge (O marking on the CTP)

CTPs that indicate perception and/or acquisition of knowledge, such as ‘see that’, ‘hear that’, ‘know’, generally have some flexibility in the complementiser that they take. When matan is used as the complementiser, transitive verbs as CTPs take a 3SG object on the predicate, referring to the whole proposition. This object pronoun cannot be omitted, indicating that these constructions could perhaps indicate factives. The construction is thus: X knows it/ sees it/ hears it/ + COMPL clause.

John mo rongovosai-a matan Vula mo-le bwatawahi.
J. 3SG know-O:3SG COMP V. 3SG-TA have.accident
‘John knows that Vula is hurt.’ (lit. ‘J. knows it that V. is hurt by accident’) (#c.971)

Maranjea mo rongo-a matan langlosu mo komo
old.man 3SG hear-O:3SG COMP hurricane 3SG destroy
na vanua-na.
ART house-P:3SG
‘The old man heard (it) that the hurricane had destroyed his house’ (and it had). (#e.546)

Ra-vavine na soari-a matan aka mo were tina.
PL-woman 3PL see-O:3SG COMP boat 3SG many INTEN
‘The women saw (it) that the boat was really full’ (and it was). (#e.541)

14.3.5.3 Utterance (O marking on the CTP)

‘Utterance’ predicates for this language include the following:
Subordinate clauses

There are other verbs which describe differences in the manner of utterance, such as *vevenasa* ‘whisper’, *marasahi* ‘shout’, and so on, but the list above includes only those which are attested in my data functioning as CTPs. Verb *domdomi* ‘think’ is included in that it functions in the same way as ‘utterance’ verbs and semantically can be regarded as compatible with them.

The following are the utterance predicates attested with *matan*. Generally, speakers used *matan* in elicited examples, although when I suggested the use of *re* as an alternative, it was accepted (14.3.6).

**Type 1:** X says (it that … (O marking on the CTP)

(51) *Tamalohi na viti-a matan presiden mo ronjo tina.*

Person 3PL tell-O:3SG COMP president 3SG sick INTEN

‘People say that the president is really sick.’ (#e.537)

(52) *Selina mo viti tau-hi-a matan a-mbo vano Alotu.*

S 3SG tell put-TR-O:3SG COMP 3SG-FUT go Santo

‘Selina promised that she’d go to Santo.’ (#e.1043a)

There is one variation on its use in this kind of construction. When an utterance predicate prefaces an NP in an indirect possessive construction (as subject of the subordinate complement clause) *matana* must be used as the complementiser. This parallels the use of *matana* in prepositional phrases as described in 8.2.5.2. For example:

(53) *Lorna mo viti-a matana bula-na vuria ‘Attack’*

L. 3SG tell-O:3SG COMP CLFR-P:3SG dog A.

*mo lai na vuria waririhi avati.*

3SG take ART dog  PL.little four

‘Lorna said that her dog “Attack” had four puppies.’ (D-T7:4)

**Type 2:** X tells (it to)Y that … (O marking on the CTP +P-object)

(54) *Alice mo dumisi-a telei Suzy matan tama-na*

A. 3SG explain-O:3SG PREP Suzy COMP father-P:3SG

*mo jivo Vila.*

3SG go.down V.

‘Alice explained to Suzy that her father had gone to Vila.’ (#e.960a)

**Type 3:** X tells Y to … (NP or pronominal O required to the CTP)

The only utterance CTPs of this type in my data that can be used with *matan* are *dami* ‘ask’ and *viti* ‘tell’.

Unlike the other two types of complements with utterance CTPs, there is no obligatory 3SG object on the predicate, but instead the object is the recipient of the request or the
instruction. There is no indication if the request or instruction is realised, and the telling or asking by the subject of the main clause does not suggest any control over the realisation.

(55) Ku teterahi ku dami-a matan a sile atea telei-au.
1SG get.up 1SG ask-O:3SG COMP 3SG give one PREP-O:1SG
‘I got up and asked her to give one to me.’ (D-T7:5)

(56) Ku viti vo-tahisa-ku matan a mai.
1SG tell FEM-friend-P:1SG COMP 3SG come
‘I told my girlfriend to come.’ (#c.6)

(57) Tamalohi niala mo viti na mwera matan a lai na raes.
person that 3SG tell AR T boy COMP 3SG take ART rice
‘That man told the boy to get the rice.’ (#e.1128)

It is also common to use viti ‘tell’ in a causative switch-subject serialising construction, when used in the sense of telling someone to do something. But causative SVCs (12.4.6.2) with viti suggest that the instigator of the telling has much more expectation that the proposition will be realised than in the above complement constructions.

14.3.6 Complements introduced by the verb re

The verb re ‘say’ is obligatorily used for direct speech, such as the following:

(58) Manuaro mo re, “Niho, o tiu talom”.
M. 3SG say IP:2SG 2SG hit first
‘Manuaro said, “You, you hit first.”’

Manusowa mo re, “Mo-tete, niho!”
M. 3SG say 3SG-negative IP:2SG
‘Manusowa said, “No, you!” ‘ (Nt-T42:14-15)

But re is increasingly used as a complementiser, mostly with ‘utterance’ predicates but also, as shown here, with rongovosai ‘know’, ‘understand’, and domtau ‘believe’. It introduces the complement clause following the CTP, and a translation of ‘s/he/they said’ is not accepted by native speakers in any of the examples.

14.3.6.1 Attitude (nil marking on the CTP)

I have one example where domtau ‘believe’ is used with the verb re. This verb is otherwise used with matan or mwe complements. The example comes from a conversation where the speaker was discussing with his friend whether or not I would come back to Ataripoi (in the south-east) to collect more data from the eastern dialect, and says:

(59) Ne ... iau ku viti vono-hi-a, ne ku domtau ku re
but IP:3SG 1SG tell empty-TR-O:3SG but 1SG believe 1SG say
Because of the particular situation, the speaker could not vouch for my future movements. But by using verb re as the complementiser here rather than matan, he appears to project a more certain attitude, as CTPs with matan often appear to indicate that the speaker cannot vouch for the truth or realisation of the proposition.

14.3.6.2 Acquisition of knowledge (3SG.O marking on CTP)

(60) Ne matan tanume nia mo rongovosai-a, mo rongovosai-a
but because devil IP:3SG 3SG know-O:3SG 3SG know-O:3SG
mo re tamalohi mo-te vano...
3SG say person 3SG-NEG go
‘But because the devil knew it, he knew that the man hadn’t gone …’ (Nt-T36:58)
* ‘But because the devil knew, he knew it he said that the man hadn’t gone.’

In the example above, the storyline has already shown that devil was hiding alone in the bushes, and certainly did not want to draw attention to himself by speaking, so it is implausible that mo re should be translated as ‘he said’.

In the following, the context is that people will glance up and be aware of the rainbow and the weather to follow, but not necessarily talk about it:

(61) Nuenue mo mai, tamalohi na rongovosai-a na re
rainbow 3SG come person 3PL know-O:3SG 3PL say
a-mbo alo.
3SG-FUT sun
‘A rainbow comes, and people know that it will be sunny.’ (#c.854)
? ‘A rainbow comes, and people know it they say it will be sunny.’

And in the next example, the complementiser use of re appears even more clear, as a literal translation of talking fish would not make sense in an explanation of traditional fishing methods.

(62) ...manji na rongovosai-a na re nia hina vono.
fish 3PL know-O:3SG 3PL say IP-3SG PREP empty
‘… the fish know that it (the place) is empty.’ (E-T43:22)
* ‘…the fish know it they say it is empty.’

When verb re is used as a complementiser as above, the person/number marking on the preverbal subject pronominal with re must agree with that of the CTP, as shown in the previous examples. So although re functions as a complementiser, its marking is still that of an independent verb, suggesting that the grammaticalisation process is still underway. If
it was fully grammaticalised, it could be expected that the subject pronominal marking would be ‘frozen’, say, to 3SG, as is the case with some aspectuals (see 12.7.1, 12.7.3). Or it could disappear altogether as it has in Bislama, where se ‘say’ is used as a complementiser, not just with utterance verbs but also with a variety of other verb types (Tryon 1987). For example:

(63) *Em i talem se mama blong em i sik tumas.*

‘He says that his mother is very sick.’ (Bislama example—Tryon 1987:121)

(64) *Mi bilif se tingting ia i strett.*

‘I believe that this idea is correct.’ (Bislama example—Tryon 1987:168)

### 14.3.6.3 Utterance and thought (3SG.O marking on the CTP)

(65) *Na viti-a na re na-le barambara.*

3PL tell-O:3SG 3PL say 3PL-TA walk.on.reef

‘They told him they were walking on the reef.’ (E-T23:13)

(66) *Ka vano ka dami-ra ka re ka-mbo jivo Vila wik a mai.*

1PL go 1PL ask-O:3PL 1PL say 1PL-FUT go.down Vila week a mai.

3SG come

‘We went and asked them if we could go to Vila next week.’ (#c.291)

(67) *Uranji rindi mo domdomi-a mo re a-iso-ro voi mai mama nira na mule mo-iso.*

child REF 3SG think-O:3SG 3SG say 3SG-finish-thus

mum COM dad IP:3PL 3PL head.home 3SG-finish

‘The child thought that perhaps his mum and dad had already gone home.’ (Nt-T77:13)

The closer the complement to actual speech, it seems more likely that the speaker uses the verb *re* rather than *matan* or *mwe*. So for example, the following could be either translated as direct speech or as a complement clause, since the grammatical encoding is the same.

(68) *Vui mo viti-a telei Sale mo re Litu mo vano Alotu.*

V. 3SG tell-O:3SG PREP S. 3SG say L. 3SG go Santo.

‘Vui told Sale that Litu went/has gone to Santo.’/‘Vui told Sale “Litu has gone to Santo”.’ (#e.957)

### 14.3.7 Complements introduced by *mwe*

As explained in 4.7.2.2, the usage of this word is limited. Younger speakers tell me they understand it when it is used, but that they themselves would not use *mwe* in the following
examples, but would use matan, or occasionally re. Examples here are from the hymnbook *Vuete Tamambo*, published in 1999.

Similarly to matan, it is glossed here as COMP in its role as a complementiser, but note that it also functions as a subordinator in adverbial clauses of purpose (14.4.4.1).

### 14.3.7.1 Attitude or knowledge (nil marking on CTP)

(69) *Ku domtau mwe nia le taloma-hi-au.*

1SG believe COMP IP:3SG TA first-TR-O:1SG

‘I believe that he is leading me.’ (Wh:p.294)

(70) *Na rongovosai mwe asa-ra aulu.*

3PL know COMP trad.place-P:3PL up.direction

‘They know that their home is on high.’ (Wh:p.285)

Note that unlike in the usage of matan with verb rongovosai (example 48) there is no object marking on the CTP above.

### 14.3.7.2 Utterance: unrealised propositions (O required on CTP)

(71) *Iesu le tovi-ra mwe na mai.*

Jesus TA call-O:3PL COMP 3PL come

‘Jesus is calling them to come.’ (Wh:p.55)

(72) *Moli Iesu mo-le dami-ho mwe o hilo telei God.*

chief Jesus 3SG-TA ask-O:2SG COMP 2SG turn.around PREP God

‘Lord Jesus is asking you to turn towards God.’ (Wh:p.322)

### 14.3.8 Complements introduced by sohen

#### 14.3.8.1 Suggested appearance (nil marking on CTP)

This is a marginal subset of complements in that there are few examples in my data and all function with the CTP soari ‘see’. They appear very similar to some adverbial clauses of manner and exemplification introduced by sohen, as in 14.4.2 but this kind of complement functions as the O core argument to the verb soari ‘see’. The appearance of something is not definite, but only suggested, as in it ‘seems like’.

(73) *... na tara mo vano na tara na soari sohen*

3PL trap.fish 3SG go 3PL trap.fish 3PL see like

*mo were.*

3SG many

‘… they kept on trapping fish, they trapped fish and saw what seemed like a lot.’ (E-T28:8)

(74) *Bao mo soari sohen naho-na mo sati.*

purple.swamp.hen 3SG see like face-P:3SG 3SG bad

‘ Swamp hen saw that his face seemed no good.’ (Nt-T28:11)
(75) Tovon manji na sahe, na soari sohen manji na sahe
when fish 3PL go.up 3PL see like fish 3PL go.up

na sahe alolo.
3PL go.up inside
‘When the fish came up (the channel), they (the men) saw that the fish seemed to rise up and up inside.’ (E-T43:23)

14.3.8.2 Perception and/or acquisition of knowledge (3SG.O marking on CTP)
With this type, there is an obligatory 3SG object marking on the predicate, suggesting a possible factive interpretation similarly to example (50).

(76) Ku soari-a sohen o ronjo.
1SG see-O:3SG like 2SG sick
‘I see that you are sick.’ (and you are) (#e.967)

Occasionally ro ‘thus’ can function similarly as a complementiser, as in:

(77) Ku soari-a ro o vano Alotu.
1SG see-O:3SG thus 2SG go Santo.
‘I see that you went to Santo.’ (#e.968)

14.3.9 Complements introduced by are sohen or sohen are
14.3.9.1 Positive expectation (nil marking on CTP)
This is a small subset of sentence-like complements restricted to one kind of CTP. It is constructed with the verb ‘want’/‘like’ as the CTP, together with a complement clause similar to the protasis clause of a conditional sentence, using are/ale ‘if’.

(78) Ku boi are sohen o vano Ambae, ne le eno telei-ho.
1SG want if like 2SG go A. but TA lie PREP-O:2SG
‘I hope you’ll go to Ambae, but it’s up to you.’ (#e.988)

Some speakers reverse the order of are sohen to sohen are to introduce the complement clause. I am not aware of any particular age or gender differences that are reflected in the use of the reversal.

(79) Mo boi sohen are a mai dokta.
3SG want like if 3SG come doctor
‘She hopes to become a doctor.’ (#c.994)

(80) Ku boi sohen are Marie a evui na no-na
1SG want like if M 3SG finish ART CLFR-P:3SG

5 The variation are/ale is explained in Conditional Clauses, 14.4.5.
‘I hope that Marie will finish her work. (#c.992)

14.3.10 Some conclusions re complementation

The following information summarises the semantic types of CTPs and the marking and kinds of complements that they take.

Table 14.3: Kind of complement according to CTP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CTP</th>
<th>CTP marking and Complementiser</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immediate perception predicates: see, hear, smell</td>
<td>Non-sentential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive modal, achievement, desiderative predicates: can, begin, want, remember</td>
<td>Paratactic- no marking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude and thought predicates: believe, be difficult to, dream, forget, fear, wish believe</td>
<td>matan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggested appearance predicates: seems like</td>
<td>sohen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive expectation: hope</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception and knowledge predicates:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hear that, see that, know that</td>
<td>3SG.O + matan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>know that</td>
<td>3SG.O + Verb re</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>see that</td>
<td>mwe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>permeation predicates:</td>
<td>3SG.O + sohen/sohen are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utterance predicates:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 1: X says/promises/explains/asks/thinks that</td>
<td>3SG.O + matan/Verb re</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 2: X tells/promises/explains to asks Y that</td>
<td>3SG.O + P-object +Verb re/matan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 3: X tells/asks/calls Y to ...</td>
<td>NP object + matan/mwe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Causative and manipulative verbs such as ‘make’, ‘cause’, ‘allow’, ‘prevent’, are analysed in this description as the first verb in switch-subject serial verb constructions (12.4) rather than as CTPs of a complement clause. Nevertheless, the functions of such causative constructions are very similar to complement clauses.

The following generalisations can be made about Tamambo complementation:

i) Complements that describe processes, such as simultaneous complements, have no marking of subordination.

ii) Complements can function as direct or oblique object arguments but do not function as subject arguments.

iii) The subject of the main clause and that of the complement clause can be the same or different.

iv) Verb re is becoming grammaticalised as a complementiser.

v) Complements using mwe are not being used in day-to-day speech, and have been replaced with matan or the verb re.
vi) It is suggested that speaker attitude towards the definiteness of the proposition may
determine the use of the verb *re*, as against complementiser *matan*. Definiteness here
is taken to be whether the speaker can think that they know the proposition to be
true.

14.4 Adverbial clauses

The last two sections have dealt with complex sentences where subordinate clauses
modify an argument within the main clause or function as an argument of the main clause.
In this section, I describe subordinate clauses that link at the periphery of the main clause,
and function to modify the entire proposition of the main clause.

Subordinate clauses that fulfil this criterion in Tamambo are adverbial clauses, and all
are introduced by subordinating conjunctions except some purpose clauses. They can be
divided on the basis of their subordinating conjunctions into clauses indicating:

- time
- manner
- cause (purpose, reason and circumstance)
- condition.

Spatial location is not expressed by adverbial clauses but by single words, prepositional
phrases (see 8.2.1 and 8.2.2) or, at clause level, by relative clauses (see 14.2).

Adverbial clauses generally follow iconic sequencing. Adverbial clauses of time and
condition precede the main clause, in that time clauses set the scene before the main event
and clauses of condition are stated before the possible outcome of the main clause. On the
other hand, manner and causal clauses generally follow the main clause, but can precede it
for emphasis. Each of these is discussed in the following sections of this chapter: 14.4.1
deals with time clauses, 14.4.2 with adverbial clauses of manner and comparison, 14.4.3
with clauses of manner and exemplification, 14.4.4 with clauses of reason, purpose and
circumstance, and 14.4.5 with conditional clauses.

14.4.1 Adverbial clauses of time

Subordinating conjunctions used to introduce adverbial clauses expressing temporal
notions are:

- *tovon* ‘when/while’
- *(tovon) lai mwe* ‘just at that moment’

All such temporal clauses are linked at the periphery of the clause.

(81) *Tovon vanua-na a-iso ro, Marie a-mbo tau*

when house-P:3SG 3SG-finish thus M. 3SG-FUT put

*na no-ra hina~hinau aie.*

ART CLFR-P:3PL RED-thing there

‘When her house is finished, Marie will put their things there.’ (#e.714)
(82) Tovon alo mo suvu, a suvutoho a mai aimo ...
when sun 3SG dive 3SG hurry 3SG come home
‘When the sun set, he would hurry to come home …’ (N.ch-T6:5)

(83) Lai mwe bot mo hoso, bwatusari
just.when boat 3SG come.ashore thunder.and.lightning
mo sari-a vahatea.
3SG spear-O:3SG once
‘Just as the boat came ashore, lightning struck it one time.’ (#e.717)

(84) ... lai mwe mo donosere hini-a, mo vuru mo hasori
just.when 3SG choke PREP-O:3SG 3SG cough 3SG spit.out
hina tarusa...
PREP sea
‘... at the very moment he choked on it, he coughed and spat out saltwater…’ (Nt-T20:113)

(85) Lai mwe tambaluhi-na mo-le kilau, mo dondono
just.when wife-P:3SG 3SG-TA look.back 3SG drown.self
mo jivo ana tarusa.
3SG go.down PREP sea
‘Just at the moment that his wife was looking back, he drowned himself in the sea.’
(Nt-T72:43)

As Thompson, Longacre and Hwang (2007:244) point out, time clauses (as with locative and manner clauses) can often be replaced by a single word. So in this language, single words such as turuvui ‘always’ or nananovi ‘yesterday’ are often used to express time as phrasal or sentential modifiers. Such single words as adverbials can be used at the beginning or end of the verb phrase or clause that they modify. On the other hand, prepositional phrases (8.2) are preferred as preceding the main clause—in the same position as the adverbial clauses of time given above.

To express the concepts of ‘after’ and ‘until’, adverbial clauses are not used. For ‘after’, coordinate clauses are ordered iconically, and coordinating lexicalised conjunctions moiso(ro) or aiso(ro) are used. For example,

(86) Emma mo vindivindiri mo-iso-ro mo vano ana skul.
E 3SG pick.up.leaves 3SG-finish.thus 3SG go PREP school
‘Emma goes to school after she picks up the leaves.’ (lit. ‘Emma picks up the leaves it’s finished thus she goes to school’) (#e.715)

Such uses of lexicalised conjunctions are more fully discussed in 13.2.2.4 The concept of ‘until’ is conveyed by a serial verb construction functioning as an aspectual (see 12.7.2).
14.4.2 Adverbial clauses of comparison and manner

Adverbial clauses of comparison and manner are introduced by the subordinator sohen(i) ‘like’/‘as’. As already mentioned in 8.2.4, the final vowel of sohen(i) has virtually disappeared from use in speech, and sohen is used in a variety of frames. It is different from other subordinators in that it can introduce a variety of clause types:

- clauses of manner which involve comparison (this section)
- clauses of manner which involve exemplification, this chapter 14.4.3
- some clauses of reason and purpose, 14.4.4
- some complement clauses, 14.3.

In addition sohen can function as a preposition in attributive constructions with NPs (8.2.4.)

The sohen comparison and manner clauses must always follow the main clause. The manner or performance of the event verb in the main clause is compared with that of the same event verb in the subordinate clause, as in ‘X Verbs like Y Verbs’. These are the most common kind of manner clauses.

(87) O sora sohen nia mo-le sora!
   2SG talk like IP:3SG 3SG-TA talk
   ‘Say it like she does!’  (#e.1023JR)

(88) Mo mai mo lai wete sohen uranji vorivori le lai wete,
   3SG come 3SG take song like child little TA take song
   ne mo bosî na leo-na ...
   but 3SG turn ART voice-P:3SG
   ‘He came and sang like the little child sang/had sung, but he changed his voice…’
   (Nt-T79:21)

(89) … no-le ruru sohen ka-le ruru tovona-te?
   2PL-TA dress like 1PL-TA dress now-DIS
   ‘… you used to dress like we dress nowadays eh?’  (C-T89:35)

In this type of manner clause, the verb of the adverbial clause is understood to be the same as the verb of the main clause, and so it can be ellipsed in much the same way as a similar construction in English. Where the VP is ellipsed, an independent pronoun (bolded) must remain. The ellipsed VPs are bracketed.

(90) Ka mangisi asena matani o matavosai o hani
   1PL happy INTEN because 2SG be.able 2SG eat
   na vevesa-i hanhani soheni\(^6\) kamam (ka hani).
   ART each-LINK food like IP:1PL.E (1PL eat)
   ‘We are very pleased because you can eat all the foods like us’ (like we eat)
   (Wi-T11:4)

---

\(^6\) Note the final ‘i’ is retained here, as this is from a letter (written forms are often more precise than speech).
Subordinate clauses

Mo re “Niho o-mboi o sevu sohen iau (ku sevu)?
3SG say IP:2SG 2SG-want 2SG hang like IP:1SG 1SG hang
‘He said, “Do you want to hang upside down like me?”’ (like I hang) (Nt-T29:4)

These constructions with the ellipsed form above (sohen + Independent pronoun) appear initially like a sohen prepositional phrase described in 8.2.4 that also appears with sohen + Independent pronoun. For example,

Bole, are mo-te na-vo-natu-m sohen nira...
well if 3SG-NEG PL-FEM-child-P:2SG like IP:3PL
‘Well, if there are none of your daughters like them …’ (C-T85:130)

But the prepositional phrase in (92) above is referring to just the NP whereas the adverbial phrases in (90) and (91) are modifying a proposition.

A variation on the comparison type with same verb + different subject is where the same subject is used in the subordinate manner clause.

Mo sumbwe sohen le tahunju le sumbwe niaro.
3SG become.chief like TA begin TA become.chief EMPH
‘He moved up to the next rank of chief in the same way as he had begun that particular chief-ranking process.’ (lit. ‘he sumbwed like he began/had begun to sumbwe’) (C-T85:24)

Adverbial clauses of comparison and manner are very similar to relative clauses modifying ‘the way’ in which something is done. Thompson, Longacre and Hwang (2007:244–45) note that time, locative and manner adverbial clauses typologically ‘tend to take the form of, or share properties, with relative clauses’. This is certainly true in Tamambo for the clausal expression of manner, as below.

Tovona-ro o loli-a sohen mwende nia le loli-a
now-thus 2SG do-O:3SG like particular.one IP:3SG TA do-O:3SG

nananovni!
yesterday
‘So now do it like the way s/he did it yesterday!’ (p.35 JR)

Of the adverbial clauses, only those with sohen, indicating manner, can vary the construction by using mwende, similarly to a relative construction, to convey the same idea. And also similarly to relative clauses, sohen manner clauses use the same 3SG constructions with restricted VPs for 3SG in the past, as discussed 11.4.5.

14.4.3 Adverbial clauses of manner and exemplification

Although manner clause examples are plentiful with the same verb in both clauses, there is no requirement that the verb must be the same. ‘Manner’ in subordinate clauses can also be indicated by exemplification rather than by direct comparison, as in 14.4.2. Such sohen clauses can be in the form of a brief comment on the main clause as follows:
Chapter 14

(95) *No-na sora-e mo masoso sohen le viti-a.*

CLFR-P:3SG talk-NOM 3SG happen like TA tell-O:3SG

‘His words happened as he said /had said.’ (Nk-T12:39)

Alternately, the additional information to exemplify the event of the main clause can be a longish series of juxtaposed clauses embedded in a *sohen* subordinate clause.

(96) *Iau ku jivo, sohen ku vora barindi, ku vora...*

IP:1SG 1SG go.down like 1SG born today 1SG born

*barindi dondo ulurani, na lai-au ku jivo...*

today night morning 3PL take-O:1SG 1SG go.down

‘I came down, say like I’m born today, I’m born in the early hours of today, then they bring me down …’ (N.ab-T78:10)

Such subordinate clauses can also be a negative comment to the main clause as follows:

(97) *Ku hani-a, ku hani-a, sohen ku-te boi-a, ku-te boi na raes*

1SG eat-O:3SG 1SG eat-O:3SG like 1SG-NEG like-O:3SG

1SG-NEG like ART rice

‘I ate it, I ate it, (but) it wasn’t as if I liked it, I didn’t like the rice.’ (N.ab-T52:10)

This type of adverbial clause is also used to express the idea that something appears to be ‘verb-ing’ but that in fact, it does not do so. Such clauses can appear similar to complement clauses used with *soari* ‘see’, but here the *sohen* clause is not the O argument of the verb (as in 14.3.8), but modifies the main clause (which already has an O). A negative is often added in the next clause to contradict what has appeared to be so.

(98) *Ku soari vitusarasara sohen na waririhi asena ne mo tete, na watitina.*

1SG see star like 3PL PL.little INTEN but

3SG negative 3PL PL.big

‘I see the stars as if they’re very little but they’re not, they’re big.’ (#e.731)

(99) *Ku soari vavine rindi sohen mo lolovunga ne mo tete.*

1SG see woman REF like 3SG angry but 3SG negative

‘The woman seems cross but she’s not.’ (lit. ‘I see the woman like she is cross but it’s negative.’) (#e.732)

(100) *Ku soari na vanua niala sohen mo tete tamalohi*

1SG see ART house that like 3SG negative person

3PL-TA live there but 3SG negative old.man one TA live there

‘That house looks like there are no people living there, but no, an old man is living there.’ (#e.733)
14.4.4 Adverbial clauses of purpose or reason

These adverbial clauses can express purpose or reason or existing circumstance. The subordinators that can be used are:

- **mwe** ‘in order to/so that’ (purpose)
- **matan(i)** ‘in order to’ (purpose)/‘because’ (reason)
- **sohen** ‘as is, since, in that’ (existing circumstance)

Some purpose clauses can also be expressed without a subordinating conjunction.

### 14.4.4.1 Purpose clauses

‘Purpose clauses express a motivating event which must be unrealised at the time of the main event’ (Thompson, Longacre and Hwang 2007:250). In the spoken Tamambo of today, subordinating **matan(i)** introduces both purpose and reason clauses. However this appears to have been not always the case. A New Testament published in the language in 1906 by the first missionary to the island, uses **matan** for reason (‘because’) clauses, but uses **mwe** for purpose (‘in order to’) clauses, as in the following extract.⁷

(101) ...matan ka-le soari no-na vitusarasara Ist ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUB 1PL-TA</th>
<th>see</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CLFR-P:3SG</td>
<td>star east</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| ka-le mai mwe ka-mbo ololo hini-a. |
| IPL-TA come SUB 1PL-FUT respect PREP-O:3SG |

‘...for we have seen his star in the east ... and are come to worship him.’

(Matthew 2:2) ⁸ (in Landels 1906)

### Purpose clauses with mwe

The use of **mwe** as a subordinator introducing purpose clauses also appears in the 1999 publication of a new Tamambo hymnbook (mentioned in 1.3.5), with some words written by the last missionary to the area in the 1940s, but others written by older (50+ years) male members of the community in the 1990s.

(102) Mo mate **mwe** ka materitiu, **mwe** ka mauru duhu.

| 3SG die SUB 1PL | be.set.free SUB 1PL live good |

‘He died in order that we be set free, in order that we live well.’ (Wh:p.70)

(103) O loli no-mam manjinga-e na jivo **mwe**

| 2SG make CLFR-P:1PL.E agree-NOM 3PL go.down SUB |

| ka sombe-ho. |
| 1PL follow-O:2SG |

‘Make our will weaken so that we follow you.’ (Wh:p.70)

---

⁷ I have changed the spelling of some words in the examples from the Bible version to agree with current usage: **kabo** to **kambo**, **cinia** to **hinia** and **sori** to **soari**.

⁸ Interlinear glosses are mine. The English translation I have used here is the King James version of the Bible.
O tau no-m sora-e telei kamam mwe  
2SG place CLFR-P:2SG talk-NOM PREP O:1PL.E SUB

lolo-mam na-mbo sohen hambu hina no-m  
inside-P:1PL.E 3PL-FUT like fire PREP CLFR-P:2SG

boimboia.

‘Bestow your words on us so that our hearts will be afire with your love.’  
(Wh:p.131)

Moli o vanjangi kamam mwe ka boi-ho a-iso  
chief 2SG teach O:1PL SUB 1PL love-O:2SG 3SG.IRR-finish

ka-mbo ovi telei-ho.  
1PL-FUT live PREP-O:2SG

‘Lord teach us so that we love you and then might live with you.’  
(Wh:p.327)

My main informant (mid-30s) tells me that matan could replace mwe in all these examples, and although she understands the usage in the hymns, she herself would not use mwe. So it seems that mwe and matan(i) once had distinct and separate roles to indicate purpose and reason respectively, and that over time mwe has dropped out of use as a subordinator in anything other than this very formal usage (see 4.7.2.2 and 14.4.1 for other uses of mwe).

**Purpose clauses with matan(i)**

In the spoken Tamambo of today then, with the mwe/matan(i) distinction essentially lost, subordinating matan(i) has taken on both functions, and can introduce either purpose or reason clauses. The dual role is hardly surprising in that, as is pointed out in Thompson, Longacre and Hwang (2007:250) ‘both purpose and reason clauses can be seen as providing explanations for the occurrence of a given state or action’.

Examples of matani (with the retained vowel), rather than matan, are few and far between, and I bracket the final vowel as explained in 8.2.5.4 to indicate its optional use and language change in process. Both are glossed here as SUB, whether indicating purpose or reason.

Since purpose clauses express an unrealised ‘motivating event’, as mentioned earlier, this is reflected in 3SG irrealis marking, as in the next three examples. Note that, as explained in 11.3.1, this grammatical expression of irrealis is not available for person and number other than 3SG.

Mo losu na rawe rindi, na ‘wan taosen’ rawe,  
3SG strike ART intersex.pig REF ART one thousand intersex.pig

matan a sumbwe.  
SUB 3SG become.chief

‘He killed the rawe pigs, one thousand hermaphrodite pigs, in order to go through the chief-ranking process.’  
(Nk-T84:8)
Subordinate clauses

(107) **Avurmakal mo tau telei mwende aulu matan** A. 3SG leave PREP particular.one up.direction SUB

*a jivo a soari mwende alau.* 3SG go.down 3SG see particular.one coast.direction

‘Avurmakal left the ones in the bush in order to go down and see those at the coast.’ (Nk-T1:5)

While the motivation for the event is given by the purpose clause, its actuality is not indicated. For instance, in (106) we do not know whether the chief did proceed through the *sumbwe* process, and in (107), we have no means of knowing, at this stage in the narrative, if the purpose of Avurmakal’s trip to the coast was realised or not. Refer also to Appendix 2, Text 4, Sentence 15, for a similar example.

Although this clear marking of irrealis strategy is not available to other than 3SG, another strategy is possible. For example, in the two sentences following, the fact that the main clause uses the definite future, but the purpose clause (bolded) uses the unmarked form suggests that the purpose is not yet realised. Note too, that while a subordinating purpose clause almost always follow the main clause, it can precede it, as in the next example.

(108) ... *mo dondo, matan na maturu na-mbo tivovo hina sava?* 3SG night SUB 3PL sleep 3PL-FUT cover PREP what

‘... night came, (but) in order to sleep what will they cover themselves with?’ (Nt-T20:57)

(109) **O-mbo lai taksi matan o jivo Naone Ban.** 2SG-FUT take taxi SUB 2SG go.down N.B.

‘You’ll get a taxi in order to go down to Naone Ban.’ (Wl-T8:5)

**Purpose clauses with no subordinator**

Purpose can also be expressed by a clause with no subordinator, but in which the person and number marking must be the same as the main clause. For example:

(110) **Nananovi na teterahi ulurani na vindivindiri.** yesterday 3PL get.up morning 3PL pick.up.leaves

‘Yesterday they got up early to clean up the rubbish.’ (#c. 1029)

If it was to mean ‘Yesterday they got up and then they picked up the rubbish’, the sentence is more likely to use a linking conjunction, clarifying that one event is finished and then the next begins, as in the following:

(111) **Nananovi na teterahi ulurani mo-iso/ na-turu aie/ na yesterday 3PL get.up morning 3SG-finish/ 3PL-stand there 3PL**

---

9 In fact, the narrative later reveals that the purpose was not realised.
vindivindiri.
pick up leaves
‘Yesterday they got up early /and then/ that being so/ they cleaned up the rubbish.’

Similarly, in this next example, purposeful movement to carry out the event is indicated, while the addition of linker moiso ‘then’ in (113) would indicate a separate event

(112) Ka vano ana mission ka tohotoho.
1PL go PREP mission 1PL play
‘We went to the mission to play.’ (#e.JB)

(113) Ka vano ana mission, moiso ka tohotoho.
1PL go PREP mission then 1PL play
‘We went to the mission, and then we played.’

Purposeful movement can also be interpreted by the use of a type of core layer serial verb construction as described with examples in 12.4.2.1, where the first verb in the SVC is a basic motion verb. In such cases, there is a particular movement made (Verb1), for the purpose of carrying out a particular action (Verb2).

14.4.4.2 Reason clauses
‘Reason clauses express a motivating event which may be realised at the time of the main clause event’ (Thompson, Longacre and Hwang 2007:250–51). They are introduced with subordinator matan(i).

(114) ...mo vano mo dami-a telei tama-i vavine, matani
3SG go 3SG ask-O:3SG PREP father-LINK woman SUB
Natamambo nira na-le voli vavine, vavine mo lete dami
Malo IP:3PL 3PL-TA buy woman woman 3SG never ask
na mwera...
ART male
‘...he goes and asks for her from the girl’s father, because on Malo they buy
women, the woman never asks for the man …’  (C-T81:3)

The following has a non-verbal clause as a reason clause.

(115) tama-na mo rongo mo sati asena matan nia
father-P:3SG 3SG feel 3SG bad INTEN SUB IP:3SG
sumbwe-i welu-a ...
chief-LINK dance-NOM
‘his father felt very bad because he was the chief of the dances...’ (Nk-T73:16)

Reason clauses usually follow the main clause, as above, but can precede it where the speaker wishes to emphasise the reason that the main event occurred. In the following
example, the older brothers in the narrative are forcefully pointing out to the youngest brother that he caused his mother’s poisoning.

(116) *Na re, “Niho, matan niho o male soari na*

3PL say IP:2SG SUB IP:2SG 2SG REC see ART

*hari-ro, o viti-a-ro, Voi mo mandi kari-a...*

shellfish-DIS 2SG tell-O:3SG-DIS mum 3SG simply scratch-O:3SG

‘They said, “You, because you just saw the hari shellfish eh, you told her and that was it, Mum simply scratched at it”’  (Nt-T32:29)

While the reason clause does not have to be already realised, it is usually expected that it will occur, and as such determines the main event. For example, in the two examples following, the use of the definite future in the subordinate clause, rather than that of the irrealis alone, gives this firm expectation.

(117) *Mo vano le ate aie. Nia le ate aie matan a-mbo*

3SG go TA stay there IP:3SG TA stay there SUB 3SG-FUT

*losu na manji rindi a-mbo hani-a.*

strike ART animal REF 3SG-FUT eat-O:3SG

‘Time went on and he stayed there. He stayed there because he was going to kill the bird and eat it.’  (Nt-T79:234)

The subject of the story is quite definite in his plans for the bird’s fate. The use of two future markings within the subordinate clause indicate that there is no doubt about it. Similarly in the next example, the use of the future in the adverbial clause indicates a definite and positive attitude.

(118) *Mo sahe le lavo na bweta matan a-mbo vol~voli*

3SG go.up TA plant ART taro SUB 3SG-FUT RED~buy

*hini-a ana maket.*

PREP-O:3SG PREP market

‘He goes up planting taro because he’s going to trade it at the market.’  (Nt-T46:4)

14.4.4.3 Circumstantial clauses

As Longacre says (1985:245), ‘a further variety of causation is circumstance. This is a relation which means *in the circumstance that.*’ These next clauses, introduced by sohen, can also be translated by ‘because’, like the reason clauses just described. But these describe an existing circumstance which prevails, and can also be expressed by ‘in that’, ‘since’, or ‘in the circumstance that’.

The following clauses (bolded) give the reason or justification for the main event, which is a known circumstance, and often is of long standing. Such clauses appear quite similar to an adverbial clause type in Manam, as described by Lichtenberk (1983:548) where the ‘causing event (state) is old information’ and, as with Tamambo, a ‘similative’ conjunction is used.
Mo-iso mo matahi-au hina ‘milk’, mo-iso ku 3SG-finish 3SG look.after-O:1SG PREP milk 3SG-finish 1SG
sahe ku mauru, ne sohen Kastom no-ni Malo tovoni go-up 1SG live but like custom CLFR-LINK Malo when
vavine hina vorivori, ro tamalohi na mai na dami-a woman PREP little thus person 3PL come 3PL ask-O:3SG
matan na voli-a …
SUB 3PL buy-O:3SG
‘Then he looked after me with milk and so I grew up and lived (after all), (but) as is
the custom in Malo when a girl is little, so men come and ask for her in order to buy
her (for their wife) …’ (N.ab-T78:15)

The main clause in the following is a non-verbal clause, and the sohen conjunction
introduces the justification for what is said about the men.

Ne asua nira tamalohi duhu sohen embe-ra le duhu,¹⁰
but nine IP:3PL person good like body-P:3PL TA good
mo tete a ronjo …
3SG negative 3SG sick
‘But nine were good men in that their bodies were fine, no-one was sick…’
(Nt-T77:27)

The following has two adverbial sohen clauses, the first of the causal type ‘in the
circumstance that’ as part of a conditional clause, the second sohen manner
(exemplification) clause modifying the proposition of the main clause.

Ne are, sohen a lete lai na manji, a-mbo turu
but if like 3SG never take ART fish 3SG-FUT stand
aie a hisi a mate, sohen mo-le viti-a.
there 3SG touch 3SG die like 3SG-TA tell-O:3SG
‘But if, in the circumstance that he should never catch the fish, he would stand there
until he dies, like he says.’ (Nk-T15:10)

14.4.5 Conditional clauses

Conditional sentences are those where the subordinate clause (the protasis) expresses a
condition for the realisation of the event of the main clause (the apodosis). Following the
strong tendency to iconic ordering in clausal structure in this language, the condition must
exist before the main event, so the protasis clause always precedes the apodosis. The
protasis is introduced with the conjunction ale ‘if’, or occasionally with a 3SG irrealis.
Some younger speakers use are rather than ale, probably because ale is also a much-used

¹⁰ It is unusual to have le as marking 3PL as in this example for ‘their bodies’. I suggest that it is because le
duhu is lexicalised as ‘just fine’/ ‘okay’, regardless of whether it applies to singular or plural.
Bislama expression meaning ‘alright’, ‘okay then’, so some examples used here show are, and some ale, depending on the speaker.

This ‘condition’ protasis clause must always have the preverbal subject marking in the unmarked form or, in the case of 3SG only, irrealis (see 11.3.2 for explanation as to irrealis differentiation for 3SG only).

There are two main types of conditional sentences as shown by the difference in verbal marking in the main clause. The two types are referred to here as realis and irrealis conditionals. The realis conditional has a further sub-type that is a type of warning.

Table 14.4: Kinds of conditional sentences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Conditional clause (protasis)</th>
<th>Main clause (apodosis)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Realis conditional</td>
<td>3SG irrealis, other</td>
<td>3SG realis, other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sentence</td>
<td>person/number unmarked</td>
<td>person/number unmarked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative realis</td>
<td>As above + NEG</td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conditional sentence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrealis</td>
<td>3SG irrealis, other</td>
<td>Future marking on all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sentence</td>
<td>person/number unmarked</td>
<td>person/number OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3SG irrealis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14.4.5.1  **Realis conditional**

A realis conditional sentence has a VP in the main clause that shows its preverbal subject marking on the verb as realis (in the case of 3SG), or unmarked for all other person and number.

Semantically, a realis conditional sentence is one where the speaker can say that the event of the main clause is realised if the condition is fulfilled, and further that the speaker ‘expresses the belief that the condition might be fulfilled or the fact or assumption that it was/is fulfilled’ as Lichtenberk (1983:529) says in describing types of conditionals in Manam. That is, the speaker can have a strong expectation that not only can be the condition be met, but that the event dependent on it then has all probability of realisation. For example, (condition clause bolded):

(122)  \textit{Ale na vano na soari te lala te}^{11} \textit{sava hinau}.

\begin{verbatim}
if 3PL go 3PL see INDEF trochus or what thing
na suvu na jivo na lai-a a sahe.
3PL dive 3PL go.down 3PL take-O:3SG 3SG go.up
‘If they go along and see some trochus or whatever, they dive down and bring it up.’ (E-T23:10)
\end{verbatim}

Again, in the following, the condition must be stated first:

\textsuperscript{11} An abbreviation of tene.
Chapter 14

(123) *Ale a alo, vetai na sula a duhu*
   if 3SG sun banana 3PL grow 3SG good
   ‘If it’s sunny, bananas grow well.’ (#c.1091)

Refer also to Appendix 2, Text 2, sentences 5–6, where the *ale* ‘if’ condition clause precedes what the speaker would *not* do, and then what she would do.

14.4.5.2 Negative realis conditional

Similarly to the realis conditionals described above, these negative realis conditionals have the verb in the main clause in the unmarked or realis (for 3SG) form, never with a future marking. Such sentences express the idea that something will happen if the condition is *not* met. They are often used as an imperative or as a warning. The speaker outlines the expected condition, and then includes the ‘otherwise’, ‘if not’ component in the protasis clause. This condition plus the ‘if not’ warning (bolded) occur together prior to the main clause.

(124) *Balosuro ku vuro-ho hina hamba-ku niani o*
present.time 1SG fight-O:2SG PREP wing-P:1SG this 2SG
   laia-a, ro o lai-a ale a-tete-ro o mate!
take-O:3SG thus 2SG take-O:3SG if 3SG-negative-thus 2SG die
   ‘(So) now I’m going to fight you with these wings of mine and you defend yourself, so you defend yourself and if not then you’re dead!’ (Nt-T42:69)

The two next examples dispense with *ale* ‘if’, but still use *a tete* in the protasis clause prior to the apodosis. In this form, the protasis can be analysed as a non-result ambient serial verb construction as described in 12.4.7, where the SVC is commenting on the proposition (protasis bolded in following).

(125) *O-le domdomi te sala-m o-mbo vano a-tete*
2SG-TA think some path-P:2SG 2SG-FUT go 3SG-negative
   na losu-ho.
3PL strike-O:2SG
   ‘You’ve been thinking about some plan of yours, (now) get going and if not, they’ll kill you.’ (Nt-T41:12)

Such sentences do not always have to express a threat such as above, but can also refer to a situation where as a matter of course, a particular consequence will result should the ‘condition’ not be met.

(126) …*mo lai na boe-ambe, sohoti-na mo losu-a,*
3SG take ART boar-fine brother-P:3SG 3SG strike-O:3SG
   a-tete-ro taura-na mo losu-a…
3SG-negative-thus uncle-P:3SG 3SG strike-O:3SG
   ‘…she took the pig as repayment (a fine), (and) her older brother killed it, or if not her uncle killed it …’ (E-T57:15)
14.4.5.3 Irrealis conditional

Irrealis conditional sentences are those where the main clause (apodosis) is in future or irrealis, as compared to realis conditional sentences where the main clause uses the unmarked form for the preverbal pronouns (as shown in Table 14.4). These irrealis conditionals express doubt about the proposition of the main clause being realised. So unlike ‘realis conditionals’, the hypothetical scenario of the condition suggests there is less expectation on the part of the speaker that even the condition will be met, and consequently, less expectation that the event will be realised.

(127) Are voi a toro-iau, ku-mbo vano.
    if mum 3SG allow-O:1SG 1SG-FUT go
‘If Mum would let me, I’d go.’ (but I don’t know if she will let me)

See also Chapter 11, example (41).

Counterfactuals are also expressed in the same way, and the fact that the condition is not realised (and thus neither is the consequence) must be indicated by additional information, as in the following:

(128) Ale a soari-a a-mbo lolovunga, ne mo tete,
    if 3SG see-O:3SG 3SG-FUT angry but 3SG negative
    mo-te soari-a.
    3SG-NEG see-O:3SG
‘If he should see it he would be angry, but no, he didn’t see it.’ (#e.1099)

Occasionally, the use of 3SG irrealis alone is used in a hypothetical conditional sentence in the subordinate clause without ale (protasis bolded).

(129) AvurMakal mo turu mo ‘wet’ mo re itiho-na
    AvurMakal 3SG stand 3SG wait 3SG say walking-stick-P:3SG
    manihi a hase vanotakai ro, a-mbo jivo alau.
    LIM 3SG by.self come.off thus 3SG-FUT go.down coast direction
‘AvurMakal stood and waited and said should his walking stick come off just by itself, he would go down to the coast.’ (Nk-T1:8)

Noku soraie mo tau aien.
Appendix 1

The following is posited as the consonant and vowel phoneme inventory of Tamapo, the dialect of the east of Malo island, now spoken by only a very few people.

**Consonant phonemes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bilabial</th>
<th>Dental-Alveolar</th>
<th>Pre-Palatal</th>
<th>Velar/post velar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stops</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasals</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
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<td>η</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricatives</td>
<td>v</td>
<td>s</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trill</td>
<td>r</td>
<td>l</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral approximant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>w</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Vowel Phonemes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no prenasalisation of stops, nor is there any additional bilabialisation of the bilabial consonants. /p/ and /t/ are unaspirated voiceless stops; /t/ contrasts with /tʰ/. The vowels are all articulated with a very short release, so the general impression of ‘east’ talk is that is sounds very ‘staccato’, particularly without the prenasalised stops.

**West**

- [tʰdondo] ‘night’
- [xinda]
- [tinambu]
- [mmbosibi]
- [m²bweta]
- [mwata]
- [sombwe]
- [tʰdondo taβweri]

**East**

- [toto]
- [xita]
- [tʰinapu]
- [mposibi]
- [petʰa]
- [matʰa]
- [supe]
- [toto tʰavera]

‘night’
IP:1PL Incl.
‘different’
‘it turns’
‘taro’
‘snake’
‘chief’
‘midnight’
Appendix 2

Text 1: Takataka

As told by the late Titus Vatu, recorded at his home at Avunavae, Malo island.

This is a custom story describing the origins of people on Malo, and why local people use the sago palm leaves for building materials as they do, even today. There are examples of hisi (lit. ‘touch’) and vano (lit. ‘go’) being used as aspectuals (12.7), as well as repetition of a verb to indicate something continuing for a long time. Because there are several trees and leaves mentioned in the story, the tree and leaf prefixes vu- and ra- (5.2.1.2) feature predominantly.

1. Stori atea nian’ matan ku-mbo sora-hi-a nia tamalohi
   story one this SUB 1SG-FUT talk-TR-O:3SG IP:3SG person
   ‘This story that I’m going to tell is about the way that people
   mo tauhunju asa-nda, mo re sava bong tuai
   3SG begin tradit.place-P:1PL.I 3SG say what time long.ago
   began in our traditional home, it is said long ago.’

2. Kastom stori nian’ nia mo walau sohen mwende nian’.
   custom story this IP:3SG 3SG run like particular.one this
   ‘This custom story goes along like this.’

3. Tuai Natamambo mo tete tamalohi a ovi aien.
   long.ago Malo 3SG negative person 3SG live here
   ‘Long ago on Malo there was not a person living here.’

4. Ne ana jara atea Malo, asa-nda na hisa-na
   but PREP place one Malo tradit.place-P:1PL.I ART name-P:3SG
   Suleha.
   Suleha
   ‘But in one place on Malo, our traditional home is called Suleha.’

5. Kastom stori mo re tamalohi mo tauhunju ana jara niaro.
   custom story 3SG say person 3SG begin PREP place EMPH
   ‘The custom story relates that people began in that very place.’

6. Burusi atea mo hao ana vu-hatombola atea, mo sahe
   wild.fruit one 3SG climb PREP TREE-dragon.plum one 3SG go.up
   ‘A wild fruit (vine) climbed up on a dragon plum tree, it went up
mo vira, mo vira mo vano, mo iso ro mo tur’
3SG bud 3SG bud 3SG go 3SG finish thus 3SG stand
and budded, it kept on budding, and then after that

mo loa, mo loa mo vano mo mahere matan
3SG ripen 3SG ripen 3SG go 3SG straight PREP
it ripened, it kept on ripening properly for

no-na bong’ jov-i-a, mo iso mo jov-i mo jivo
CLFR-P:3SG day fall-NOM 3SG finish 3SG fall 3SG go.down
its time for the fruit to fall, then it (a wild fruit) fell downwards

mo vinjahi-a ana lambiti vu-hatambola rindi, mo
3SG strike-O:3SG PREP root TREE-dragon.plum REF 3SG
vuai arua.
split two
and struck itself against the buttressed roots of that dragon plum tree, and split into
two (people).’

7. Atea mo vano mo ovi ana tavalu-i vu-hatombola,
one 3SG go 3SG live PREP side-LINK TREE-dragon.plum
‘One (person) went and lived on one side of the dragon plum tree, the
lambiti vu-hatambola, atea mo vano ana lambiti
root TREE-dragon.plum one 3SG go PREP root
buttressed roots of the tree, and the other one (also) went in the roots of
vu-hatambola.
TREE-dragon.plum
the tree.’

8. Mo iso ro na ovi aie, atea le ovi ana tavalu-i
3SG finish thus 3PL live there one TA live PREP side-LINK
‘So then they lived there, one living on one side of
lambiti, atea ana tavalu-i lambiti.
root one PREP side-LINK root
the buttressed roots, and one on the other.’

9. Mo vano, na-le watitina wanju, na mai nira tamalohi.
3SG go 3PL-TA PL.big quiet 3PL come IP.3PL person
‘Time went on, and they were quietly growing big, and became grown-up people.’

10. Mwende ana tavalu, vavine mo-le tawera mwera mo-le
particular.one PREP side girl 3SG-TA big boy 3SG-TA
tawera.
big
‘One on (each) side, the girl was getting big, and the boy was getting big.’

11. Mo van’ mo van’ mo van’ na mai ana bongi-ra mo
3SG go 3SG go 3SG go 3PL come PREP day-P:3PL 3SG
‘Time went on and on and on until they came to the time

mahere, mo turu aie, na vanotiu na lambiti vu-hatambola
straight 3SG stand there 3PL leave ART root TREE-dragon.plum
that was right for them, and that being so, they left the roots of the dragon plum tree

na sahe avareo, atea mo soari atea mo iso ro atea
3PL go.up outside one 3SG see one 3SG finish thus one
and went up outside, (and then) each one thus

mo soari-a.
3SG see-O:3SG
saw the other.’

12. Mo iso ro mwera rindi mo dami na vavine rindi
3SG finish thus boy REF 3SG ask ART girl REF
‘So then the boy asked the girl

hini-a mo viti-a mo re, ‘Niho, o-le ov’ ambea?’
PREP-O:3SG 3SG tell-O:3SG 3SG say IP.2SG 2SG-TA live where
about it and said, “You, where do you live?”’

13. Mo re ‘Iau, ku-l’ ov’ ana lambiti vu-hatambola
3SG say IP.1SG 1SG-TA live PREP root TREE-dragon.plum

ri’ tauvano-la.’
REF over.there-DIS
‘She said, “Me, I live in the roots of that dragon plum tree over there you know.”’

14. Mo iso, vavine rindi ‘too’ mo dam’ na mwera rindi mo re
3SG finish girl REF too 3SG ask ART boy REF 3SG say
‘Then the girl also questioned the boy and said

‘Niho, o-le ovi ambea?’
IP.2SG 2SG-TA live where
“As for you, where do you live?”’

15. Mo re ‘Iau, ku-le ovi ana tavalu.’
3SG say IP.1SG 1SG-TA live PREP side
‘He said “Me, I live on (that) side.”’
16. Mo iso na teterahi na boi na lol’ vanua, na turu
3SG finish 3PL get.up 3PL like 3PL make house 3PL stand
‘Then they got up and and wanted to build a house (lit. wanted to house-build), so
that being so,

na jivo na-mo ate ana tavalu-i reu, reu rindi
3PL go.down 3PL-REAL sit PREP side-LINK water water REF
they went down and stayed for some time at the side of the water, the water

na-le viti-a na re Suleha, mo iso ro na turu
3PL-TA tell-O:3SG 3PL say Suleha 3SG finish thus 3PL stand
they call Suleha lake, and after that then

na soari na ra-niuniu, lo-vu-mbora, mo iso ro tari
3PL see ART LEAF-palm PL-TREE-pandanus 3SG finish thus many
they saw the palm leaves, the pandanus trees, and then so many

rorohai, mwende na-le turu ana bahisa-i reu.
kinds.of.leaves particular.one 3PL-TA stand PREP edge-LINK water
different kinds of leaves, the ones standing at the edge of the water.’

17. Mo iso ro na viti-a na re ‘Mo duhu, ka lai.
3SG finish thus 3PL tell-O:3SG 3PL say 3SG good 1PL take
‘Then they talked about it and said “Fine, we’ll get

na lo-vu-mbora, nira ava ka lol’ vanua hini-a.
ART PL-TREE-pandanus IP:3PL let 1PL make house PREP-O:3SG
the wild pandanus, that will allow us to build a house from it”.’

18. Bahuri atea mo ate ana vu-bambalo atea, mo-le ‘takataka’.
lizard one 3SG sit PREP TREE-babalo one 3SG-TA takataka
‘A lizard sat in a babalo tree, making the sound “takataka”.

19. Mo lai na viti na bora, mo re ‘takataka’.
3SG take 3PL tell ART pandanus 3SG say takataka
‘He understood (lit. he ‘got it’) that they spoke of the wild pandanus, and he said
takataka’.

20. Mo iso ro mo viti na vu-niuniu, mo re ‘takataka’.
3SG finish thus 3SG- tell ART TREE-palm 3SG say takataka
‘Then he (the boy) mentioned the palm trees, (but) he (the lizard) said “takataka”.

21. Mo iso na vano ana rohai tinambu, mo re ‘takatakatakas’.
3SG finish 3PL go PREP leaf different 3SG say takatakatakas
‘Then they went to different leaves, and he said “takatakatakas”.

22. Mo vano, mo viti-a mo mai mo hisi na
3SG go 3SG tell-O:3SG 3SG come 3SG touch ART
‘Time went on, and he (the boy) told her (the girl) to come and touch the
vu-talaua, mo iso mo-te ‘takataka’.
TREE-sago.palm 3SG finish 3SG-NEG takataka
sago palm tree, and then there was no “takataka’.’

23. Tamalo’ ri’ niaro, nira mai tambaluhi-na na jivo
person REF EMPH IP.3PL COM wife-P:3SG 3PL go.down
‘(So) that particular person (the boy), he and his wife went down

na lai na ra-talaua, mo iso ro na turu
3PL take ART LEAF-sago.palm 3SG finish thus 3PL stand
and got the sago palm leaves, and then that being so then

na mai, na turu na loli vanua hini-a.
3PL come 3PL stand 3PL make house PREP-O:3SG
they came, and then they built a house with it.’

24. Mo iso na turu, mo sohe-a mo sahe mo sahe
3SG finish 3PL stand 3SG push-O:3SG 3SG go.up 3SG go up
‘After that then, a generation went past (lit. it pushes it up) and

mo sahe mo sahe mo sahe ro barindi, hinda
3SG go.up 3SG go.up 3SG go.up thus today IP:1PL.I
generations continued on and on and on and on like that up to today, so we

mwende Natamambo ka-le loli vanua hini-a, ka-le
particular.one Malo 1PL-TA make house PREP-O:3SG 1PL-TA
who are Malo people do the house building with it, we

lai na ra-talaua ka-le loli na vanua hini-a
take ART LEAF-sago.palm 1PL-TA make ART house PREP-O:3SG
take the sago palm leaves and we make houses with it,

le hisi barindi hinda ka-isonduhu vaha-tea ka-le loli
TA touch today IP.1PL.I. 1PL-all CAUS-one 1PL-TA make
even up to today all of us as one build

vanua hini-a.
house PREP-O:3SG
houses with it.’

thus story REF EMPH IP.3SG TA finish here thus end-NOM-P:3SG
‘So as for this particular story, it is finishing here like this. That’s the end of it.’
Appendix 2

Text 2:  *Ololoa ‘Respect’*

As told by Vombani Rovo, *aulu* – ‘up in the bush’ – in a group of women, gathered together to practice traditional dancing.

The speaker is a middle-aged woman who lives away from the coast, and lives a more traditional lifestyle. She is concerned with change and what she sees as the loss of traditional ways because of the impact of church teachings. The customs described here of avoidance and respect (from women) towards one’s grown sons, older brothers, and maternal uncles, can also involve the particular preparation of food, avoidance of red-coloured clothes, meal serving, and seating, etc. Such ‘respect’ is still practised by older women and still, to a considerable extent, by younger women. Nevertheless, in spite of fairly wide adherence to these ‘rules’ by most females, the speaker deplores the behaviours of the younger people, whom she regards as insufficiently respectful of *Kastom*.

1.  *Iau hisa-ku Vombani Rovo.*

   IP:1SG name-P:1SG V.R,
   ‘My name’s Vombani Rovo.’

2.  *Tovona ku boi ta-stori hina ololo-a ana*

   now 1SG want REP-tell.story PREP show.respect-NOM PREP

   *Kastom.*
   custom
   ‘Now I want to tell another story about respect according to traditional custom.’

3.  *Talom, ololo-a mo suiha.*

   before show.respect-NOM 3SG strong
   ‘(Times) before, respect was strong.’

4.  *Tovona ololo-a mo iso.*

   now show.respect-NOM 3SG finish
   ‘Now respect is finished.’

5.  *Talom, ale taura-ku te sohoti-ku tene natu-ku atea*

   before if uncle-P:1SG or older.brother-P:1SG or child-P:1SG one
   ‘Before, if my uncle (mother’s brother) or my older brother or a son of mine

   a mai a-le ate, ku-te mule ana naho-na.

   3SG come 3SG-TA sit 1SG-NEG head.home PREP face-P:3SG
   should come and be there, I didn’t walk in the house in front of him.


   1SG-FUT head.home PREP back-P:3SG
   ‘I would go in the house at the back of him.’

7.  *Ku wala ololo, ku-te turu a mahere*

   1SG go.about show.respect 1SG-NEG stand 3SG straight
   ‘I went about respectfully, I didn’t stand up straight’
ne ku mule atihai.
but 1SG head.home far.away
but walked in the house keeping at a distance.’

8. *Ale ku vano asa-n* te natu-ku, ku mule
if 1SG go place-LINK INDEF child-P:1SG 1SG head.home
‘If I went to the house of any of my sons, I went in the house

ana humbuta, ku-te mule ana bangona.
PREP back.of.house 1SG-NEG head.home PREP front.of.house
in the back part, I didn’t walk in the house at the front.’

9. *Ale ku mule ana bangona, ku malai-a.*
if 1SG head.home PREP front.of house 1SG pay.fine-O:3SG
‘If I walked in the front of the house, I paid a fine for it.’

10. *Mo iso, ku soari na ololo-a mo vano,*
3SG finish 1SG see ART show.respect-NOM 3SG go
‘So then, I see that respect has gone,

mo vano mo hisi tovona-ro.
3SG go 3SG reach now-thus
it’s gone right up to nowadays you see.’

11. *Skuli mo mai, mo mai, no-nda skul mo mai*
church 3SG come 3SG come CLFR-P:1PL.I church 3SG come
‘The church came, it came, and our church became

mo tawera, ololo-a rindi mo iso, matan skul
3SG big show.respect-NOM REF 3SG finish SUB church
mo tawera.
3SG big
big, and that respect finished, because the church was strong.’

12. *Va-uranji, tovon na sahe, na-te rongovosai na*
PL-child now 3PL go.up 3PL-NEG know ART

ololo-a.
show.respect-NOM
‘Children, when they grow up, don’t know about respect.’

13. *Na vano asa-ni sohoti-ra, na mule ana*
3PL go place-LINK elder.brother-P:3PL 3PL head.home PREP
‘They go to their elder brothers’ places, they go in the house at

bangona, na mai na jivo aimo, na re
front.of house 3PL come 3PL go.down home 3PL say
the front, they come down home, they (other people) say
na-te ololo, ololo-a mo tete.
3PL-NEG show.respect show.respect-NOM 3SG negative they’re not respectful, there is no respect.’

14. Tene na vano asa-n’ taura-ra le sohena, or 3PL go place-LINK uncle-P:3PL TA the.same ‘Or they go to their uncles’ (mothers’ brothers) places (and) it’s the same,
na-te ololo hini taura-ra.
3PL-NEG show.respect PREP uncle-P:3PL they don’t show respect with their uncles.’

15. Talom, ale va-uranji, vavine vorivori, mo mule ana before if PL-child girl little 3SG head.home PREP ‘Before, if children, a little girl, walked in
bangona asa-ni taura-na tene asa-n’ front.of.house place-LINK uncle-P:3SG or place-LINK the front part of her uncle’s place or the house of
sohoti-na, mo lai na boe ambe, sohoti-na older.brother-P:3SG 3SG take ART boar fine older.brother-P:3SG her older brother, she got (charged) a pig as a fine, and her older brother
mo losu-a, a-tete-ro, taura-na mo losu-a,
3SG kill-O:3SG 3SG-NEG-thus uncle-P:3SG 3SG strike-O:3SG killed it, or if not, (then) her uncle killed it,
matan mo mule ana bangona asa-na.
SUB 3SG head.home PREP front.of.house place-P:3SG because she went in at the front part of his place.’

16. Tene le ate, mo mule ana naho-na, mo lai or TA sit 3SG head.home PREP face-P:3SG 3SG take ‘Or if he was there, and she walked in the house in front of him, he took
na boe ambe mo losu-a.
ART boar fine 3SG strike-O:3SG a pig as punishment and killed it.’

17. Vavine rindi a-mbo savutahi a rong–rongovosai girl REF 3SG-FUT surprised 3SG RED–know ‘That girl would be surprised and she would really understand
a tinerani, bong tinambu ale sohoti-na mo-ta 3SG remember day different if older.brother-P:3SG 3SG-REP and remember, (and so) another time if her older brother
mai le ate, a-mbo mule ana tura-na,
come TA sit 3SG-FUT head.home PREP back-P:3SG
came again and was there, she’d go in the house at the back of him,

a wala ololo a vano.
3SG go.about show.respect 3SG go
and she would crouch respectfully as she goes.’

18. Mo iso tovona, no-nda skul mo tawera,
3SG finish now CLFR-P:1PL.I church 3SG big
‘So then now, our church is big

ololo-a mo iso, ololo-a mo tete,
show.respect-NOM 3SG finish show.respect-NOM 3SG negative
and respect is finished, there’s no respect

matan no-nda skul mo tawera.
SUB CLFR-P:1PL.I church 3SG big
because our church is strong.’

3SG finish CLFR-P:1SG end-NOM-LINK story
So then that’s the end of my story.’

Text 3:  Tutunua ‘Cooking’

As told by Voliho Vira, recorded at her home at Avunatari, Malo island. This is a
procedural narrative explaining the preparations to cook ‘laplap’ (grated root vegetables or
banana mixed with coconut milk) in leaves in an earth oven.

The speech is characterised by ‘tail-head’ linkage (see 12.5) where a process described
in one clause (e.g. ‘we cut up the yams’) is repeated in the next clause with a completive
aspect (see 12.7.3) (e.g. ‘we finish cutting up the yams and then …’). This is a common
way of describing sequential processes in Tamambo.

1. Tovona iau ku-mbo stori hina tutunu-a.
now IP.1SG 1SG-FUT tell.story PREP cook-NOM
‘Now I will tell a story about cooking.’

2. Ka tauhuju ka avus’ na buru, ka avusi
1PL begin 1PL remove.ash ART earth.oven 1PL remove.ash
‘We begin by removing the ash from the earth oven, and when we have removed

na buru a iso, ka turu ka tau na dila,
ART earth.oven 3SG finish 1PL stand 1PL place ART small.stone
it from the fireplace, then we would put the small stones in place,
"ka tau na dila mo jivo, mo iso ka lai
1PL place ART small.stone 3SG go.down 3SG finish 1PL take 
we put the small stones down, and after that we get 

na dangeburohi, ka tau-a mo lai buaki na
ART scraped.coconut 1PL place-O:3SG 3SG take around ART 
scraped-out coconut shells, and put them down around the 

buru, mo iso ka lai na vunu ka tau-a,
oven 3SG finish 1PL take ART husk 1PL place-O:3SG 
earth oven, then we put the husks in place, 

mo iso ka tavuni hambu.
3SG finish 1PL light fire 
and after that we light the fire.’

3. Ka tavun’ hambu mo iso, ka lai na tahasi,
1PL light fire 3SG finish 1PL take ART stone 
‘After we have lit the fire, we take the big stone 

ka tiu-a mo sahe ana hambu, mo-le han’
1PL place-O:3SG 3SG go.up PREP fire 3SG-TA burn 
and place it up on the fire, and while it’s heating up 

ka lai na dam, ka simba-e, ka simba-e mo iso
1PL take ART yam 1PL slice-O:3SG 1PL slice-O:3SG 3SG finish 
we get the yams, and cut them up with a knife, and after we’ve finished cutting 
them up, 

ka tau-a mo jivo ana hirehire.
1PL place-O:3SG 3SG go.down PREP leaf.plate 
we put it (the sliced yam) down on a leaf plate.’

4. Ka tau-a mo jivo ana hirehire mo iso, ka simba
1PL place-O:3SG 3SG go.down PREP leaf-plate 3SG finish 1PL slice 
‘We finish putting it down on the leaf plate, we’ve sliced 

na dam mo iso, ku turu ka lai na imbiri
ART yam 3SG finish 1PL stand 1PL take ART grater 

ka biri-a.
1PL grate-O:3SG 
up the yam already, so then we get the grater and grate it.’

5. Ka biri-a mo iso, ka duelì na rohai,
1PL grate-O:3SG 3SG finish 1PL remove.mid.vein ART leaf 
‘We grate it and when that’s done, we strip out the strong mid-veins of the leaf,'
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ka dueli na rohai mo iso, ka loli na
1PL remove.mid.vein ART leaf 3SG finish 1PL take ART then when we’ve finished stripping the leaves, we take
jal’jali-na, ka tau na ver’veru-i jalijali, ka tau
rope-P.3SG 1PL place ART preparation.leaf-LINK rope 1PL place its ‘ropes’ (i.e. the midrib section of the leaf), and we put down the first leaf as preparation for the ropes, (then) we lay
na jal’jali mo jivo, mo iso ka vevesahi.
ART rope 3SG down 3SG finish 1PL lay.leaf the ropes down, and then we lay down the ‘pudding’ leaves.’

6. Ka vevesahi-a mo iso, ka turu ka tau na wewe
1Pl lay.leaf-O:3SG 3SG finish 1PL place ART laplap ‘When we’ve laid down the leaves, then we put the laplap (i.e. grated yam mixture)
mo jivo, ka jara-e, ka turu ka avuti-a.
3SG go.down 1PL spread-O:3SG 1PL stand 1PL tie-O:3SG down, we spread it out with our hands, and then we tie it up (in the leaves).’

7. Ka avuti na wewe mo iso, ka vano ka suhurijirij’
1PL tie ART laplap 3SG finish 1PL go 1PL spread.coals.in ‘After we’ve tied up the laplap in the leaves, we go and spread out the coals evenly
na hambu-na, ka lai taka~takai na hambu-na ka
ART fire-P:3SG 1PL take RED~remove ART fire-P.3SG 1PL in the fire for it, we take out all its burning parts and put them aside,
tau-a ka tau-a mo iso, mo iso ka
place-O:3SG 1PL place-O:3SG 3SG finish 3SG finish 1PL kalati na tahasi-na.
lift.with.tongs ART stone-P:3SG and when we’ve put them aside, then we lift out its (i.e. the oven’s) big stones with tongs.’

8. Ka kalat’ na tahasi, ka kalati-a mo iso,
1PL lift.with.tongs ART stone 1PL lift.with.tongs-O:3SG 3SG finish ‘We lift out the big stones with tongs, and when we’ve finished lifting it out (i.e. the large stone component),
ka turu ka anji na dila-na, ka kolo na
1PL stand 1PL spread ART small.stone-P:3SG 1PL lift ART then we spread out its small stones, (and) we lift up the
Appendix 2

wewe ka tau-a mo sahe ana buru.
laplap 1PL place-O:3SG 3SG go.up PREP earth.oven
the laplap and put it up on the earth oven.’

3SG finish 1PL stand 1PL cook.in.stones-O:3SG
‘Then we bake it in the stones.’

10 Ka vosai-a mo iso, ka turu ka lai na rohai
1PL cook.in.stones-O:3SG 3SG finish 1PL stand 1PL take ART leaf
ka ronjoi-a.
1PL cover-O:3SG
‘When we’ve finished baking it in the stones, then we get leaves and cover it over.’

11. Ka ronjoi-a mo iso, mo iso ro ka turu ka vano
1PL cover-O:3SG 3SG finish 3SG finish thus 1PL stand 1PL go
‘After we’ve covered it over, then that being so we go and

ka sai na niu-na, ka lai-a mo mai
1PL search ART coconut-P:3SG 1PL take-O:3SG 3SG come
look for coconut for it, bring it back

ka dule-a, ka dule-a ka saroi-a
1PL husk-O:3SG 1PL husk-O:3SG 1PL grate.coconut-O:3SG
and husk it, we husk it and grate the coconut

mo jivo ana hirehire.
3SG go.down PREP leaf.plate
down on a leaf plate.’

12. Ka saroi-a mo iso, mo iso ka turu
1PL grate.coconut-O:3SG 3SG finish 3SG finish 1PL stand
‘When we finish grating it, then that being so

wewe mwende mo noha, ka hinji-a
laplap particular.one 3SG be.ready 1PL take.from.oven-O:3SG
the laplap is ready, and we remove it from the earth oven.’

13. Ka hinji-a ka tau-a ana hirehire,
1PL take.from.oven-O:3SG 1PL place-O:3SG PREP leaf.plate
ka hanhan’.
1PL eat
‘We take it out of the oven and put it on a leaf plate, and we eat.’

14. No-ku stori le iso ro.
CLFR-P:1SG story TA finish thus
‘My story finishes thus.’
Text 4: Windi Harivi ‘The Rat’s Tail’

This little *tandono* (fable) was recorded in Brisbane, Australia, by my first ‘teacher’, Vomaranda Joy Baniuri (now Botleng).

While Joy was a student at university there, she wrote several short stories, based on ones she knew from her own childhood, for her nieces and nephews back at her family village of Moruhave on Malo, and for those in Vila.

In this little story, there are frequent uses of 3SG irrealis *a* as a past habitual (11.3.2.1). Note her use of the Bislama verb *traem*, ‘try’, towards the end of the story, rather than the Tamambo verbal modifier *lesi* (9.4.2.4) that older people would use. However, her use of the exclamation *atetewati* ‘impossible’ reflects the lexicon of more traditional speakers, and is unusual in the speech of younger people. Since she has not lived permanently on Malo since she was about 16 years old, in some ways her Tamambo partially reflects what she heard as a child.

1. *Ana bongi tuai, Harivi, Avua mana Siho na-le ovi ana*
   "Long ago, Rat, Turtle and Kingfisher used to live PREP on an island little one
   a little island.'

2. *Ana bongi rindi, harivi mo tete windi-ra.*
   "In those days, rats had no tails.'

3. *Vevesai bongi Avua a vano ana ureure tawera, mo iso*
   "Every day Turtle would go PREP to the big island, and then
   Siho le sohena.
   Kingfisher TA the.same
   Kingfisher the same.'

4. *Ne Harivi mo-te matavosai a vano ana ureure tawera matan*
   "But Rat couldn’t go to the big island because
   mo-te matavosai a alo, mo iso mo-te matavosai*
   "he couldn’t swim, and he couldn’t fly.'
5. *Vevesai bongi mo-le rongo mo sati.*
   every day 3SG-TA feel 3SG bad
   ‘Every day he used to feel terrible.’

6. *Tovon mo rongo mo sati, mo vano le ate ana*
   when 3SG feel 3SG bad 3SG go TA -sit PREP
   ‘When he felt bad, he went and sat
   ruhuruhu-i vuhai atea le ulo.
   underneath.part-LINK tree one TA cry
   underneath a tree crying.’

7. *Ana bongi atea, Harivi mo viti-a telei Avua mo re,*
   PREP day one rat 3SG tell-O:3SG PREP turtle 3SG say
   ‘One day, Rat said to Turtle,
   “Tahisa-ku Avua, ku boi o lai-au ku vano ku soari
   friend-P:1SG turtle 1SG want 2SG take-O:1SG 1SG go 1SG see
   “My friend Turtle, I want you to take me to go and see
   na ureure tawera.”
   ART island big
   the big island’.’

8. *Avua mo re, “Are ku lai-ho o vano ana ureure tawera,*
   turtle 3SG say if 1SG take-O:2SG 2SG go PREP island big
   ‘Turtle said, “If I take you to the big island,
   o tinereani o te lua.”
   2SG remember 2SG NEG vomit
   you remember not to vomit.” ’

9. “*Are o lua, ku-mbo tuu dono-hi-ho.*”
   if 2SG vomit 1SG-FUT leave sink-TR-O:2SG
   ‘‘If you vomit, I'll leave you to drown.” ’

10. *Harivi mo re, “Atetewati tahisa-ku, ku-te matavosai*
    rat 3SG say impossible friend-P:1SG 1SG-NEG be.able
    ‘Rat said, “Impossible my friend, I couldn’t
    ku loli-a sohena.”
    1SG do.O:3SG the.same
    do something like that.” ’

11. *Avua mo manjinga, mo iso mo lai tahisa-na Harivi*
    turtle 3SG agree 3SG finish 3SG take friend-P:3SG rat
    ‘Turtle agreed, and then took his friend Rat
12. When they reached the beach of the big island, Rat vomited on Turtle’s back, then he ran up onto the shore, climbed up into a tree,

13. ‘Turtle got very angry at Rat, but he wasn’t able to climb the tree.’

14. ‘Turtle got up and took a twig of a tree and hurled it up towards Rat.’

15. ‘Rat turned to run, but the stick got stuck in his bottom.

16. ‘Rat tried to get rid of the stick, but
mo-te matavosai a lai takahi-a.
3SG-NEG be.able 3SG take remove-O:3SG
he couldn’t remove it.’

17. Tovona are o soari na harivi, ranga-i vuha rindi
now if 2SG see ART rat branch-LINK tree REF
‘Nowadays if you see the rat, that tree twig

le turu matua – Windi Harivi.
TA stand strong – tail rat
is firmly attached (lit. is standing strong) – the Rat’s Tail.

Text 5: Conversation
This is part of a conversation with an elderly woman, who has lived all her life, as a
child, and as a married woman raising children, and now as a grandmother, in the area of
west Malo near Avunatari.
She (V), together with a young married woman Alice (A), and myself (D), were
chatting about how things used to be ‘in the olden days’, and we were asking her questions
about her own life. Although she has always used Tamambo, Bislama terms are creeping
into her lexicon, e.g. i gat ‘there is’, mared married, and ale ‘well, so then’ (although she
still uses Tamambo ale ‘if’ in #10, #39).
The sentences below begin after the usual greetings were made.

1.D: Ale Vuvahoro, niho vora ambea?
so.then V. IP:2SG be.born where
‘So then Vuvahoro, where were you born?’

2. V: Iau, iau ku vora bosinjivo.
IP:1SG IP:1SG 1SG be.born s.w.area
‘Me, I was born down bosinjivo way.’

3. D: Tina-m? Tama-m? Na vora ambea?
mother-P:2SG father-P:2SG 3PL be.born where
‘Your mother? Your father? Where were they born?

4. V: Tama-k’ mo vora bosinjivo.
father-P:1SG 3SG be.born s.w. area
‘My father was born in the bosinjivo area.’

5. D: Bosinjivo? Mo maravit’?
s.w.area 3SG close
‘Bosinjivo? Closeby?’

PREP particular.one 1SG be.born there
‘In the very place where I was born.’ (lit. in the particular one I was born there)
7. D: *Le duhu. Mo iso, tovona mo tinambu?* TA good 3SG finish now 3SG different
‘Okay. So then, it’s different now?’

8. D: *Ana bongi tuai, niho o domdom vevesai hinau* PREP day long.ago IP:2SG 2SG think every thing
mo tinambu tene mo tete?
3SG different or 3SG negative
‘In the olden days, do you think that everything was different or not?’
………..
Pause. V. laughs.

9. D: *Sondo mo noha hina−hinau duhu, hina−hinau sa−sati* perhaps 3SG have RED−thing good RED−thing bad
ana bongi tuai; ... ne hina−hinau duhu sava?
PREP day long.ago pause but RED−thing good what
‘Perhaps there were good things, and bad things in the olden days; … but what were the good things?’

10. V: *Mo noha mo duhu matan na tuani tamalohi, na lol’* 3SG have 3SG good because 3PL help person 3PL make
‘It was good because they (people) helped people, they made
no-ra alolona, na tua−tuan’, na mai, ale ku loli
CLRF-P:3PL garden 3PL RED−help 3PL come if 1SG make
their gardens, they would help each other, they would come, and if I made
te no-ku tano, no were no mai ka loli-a;
INDEF CLRF-P:1SG garden 2PL many 2PL come 1PL make-O:3SG
any garden of mine, lots of you would come and we’d do it;
ale ka dule bosinjivo bosae, na mai na
if 1PL plant.yams s.w. direction n.e. direction 3PL come 3PL
if we planted yams down bosinjivo way (or) up bosaehe way, they’d come and
dule no-ku tano.
plant yams CLRF-P:1SG garden
plant yams (lit. yam.plant) in my garden.’

11. V: *Balosuro mo-te sohena.* nowadays 3SG-NEG the.same
‘It’s not like that nowadays.’

12. D: *Mmmmm*
13.V: *Ana bongi tuai tuai iau ku-te rongovosai-a,* PREP day long.ago long.ago 1P:1SG 1SG-NEG know-O:3SG 'In the time a very very long time ago I don’t know about,

*ne ana mauru-ku-ro, ku soari-a sohena.*
but PREP life-P:1SG-DIS 1SG see-O:3SG the.same
but in my lifetime (it was) thus, I see it like this.’

14.V: *Ale ku-le viti-a no-ku tano, ale ku boi no* 1SG-TA speak-O:3SG CLFR-P:1SG garden if 1SG want 2PL 'If I was speaking about my garden, (and) if I wanted you (all)

*mai no tuani-au no-ku tano, tovon no-mbo* come 2PL help-O:1SG CLFR-P:1SG garden when 2PL-FUT to come and help me with my garden, (then) when you’d

*mai, iau ku tunu te reu, ku loli ku lai te* come IP:1SG 1SG heat INDEF water 1SG make 1SG take INDEF come, I’d boil some water, (and) make and bring some

*bisketi-te, tovoni no mai-ro no dule, no hiniti-a,*
biscuit-DIS when 2PL come-DIS 2PL plant 2PL pluck-O:3SG biscuits eh, when you come like that and plant yams, and pull out (weeds),

*aisoro no mule.*
then 2PL head.home
and then afterwards you’d go home.’

15.V: *Tene ku boi-a talom, ka lol’ bamba,* or 1SG want-O:3SG first 1PL make fence pause

*o rongovosai-a?* 2SG know-O:3SG
‘Or (if) I wanted it first, we’d make fences, … you know that word?’ (lit.you know it?)

*(Turns to me to check if I understand…)*

bamba’ 3SG fence
‘Bamba’ is a fence.’ (or fences)

*(A. turning to interpret for me in Bislama)*

17.D: *Okay le duhu.*  okay TA good
‘Okay that’s fine.’
18: V: *Ale ku boi no mai no loli no-ku bamba matana*.
If 1SG want 2PL come 2PL make CLFR-P:1SG fence/s SUB
‘If I wanted you to come and make my fences for

no-ku tano, ivao na mai, na loli-a.
CLFR-P:1SG garden crowd 3PL come 3PL make-O:3SG
my garden, lots of people would come, and they’d do it.’

19: V: *Na tuani-au, ku-te voli-ra balosuro mo-te sohena.*
3PL help-O:1SG 1SG-NEG pay-O:3PL nowadays 3SG-NEG the.same
‘They’d help me, and I wouldn’t pay them, (but) nowadays it’s not like that.’

20: V: *Ale ku boi no mai no tuani-au, ku voli kamim …* 
if 1SG want 2PL come 2PL help-O:1SG 1SG pay IP:2PL pause

*tuai, mo tete.*
long ago 3SG negative
‘If I want you to come and help me, I pay you … (but) long ago, no.’

21: A: *Tohotohoa tuai, nia mo tinambu, tele sohen tovona?*
game/s long ago IP:3SG 3SG different not yet like now

*Tohotohoa tovona?*
game/s now
‘Games of long ago were different, not yet like nowadays?’ ‘Games nowadays?’

22: V: *Tohotohoa tinambu, nia ana Kastom, nia tinambu.*
play was different, it was in the custom way, it was different.

23: V: *Nira na lia,¹ na hinitimbira,² … na tara,*
IP:3PL 3PL ‘Canes’ 3PL ‘prisoner’ pause 3PL volley

*balosuro mo-te sohena.*
nowadays 3SG-NEG the same
‘They did “Canes”, played “Prisoner” … did Volleyball, nowadays it’s not the same.’

24: D: *Mo iso, ovia no-n’ va-uranji mo tinambu balosuro?*
3SG finish life CLFR-LINK PL-child 3SG different nowadays
‘So then, life for children is different these days?’

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¹ *Lia* is a throwing game played in teams with wild canes (*litu*).
² *Hinitimbira* is a game where each team has a tree branch as a ‘base’. Each team must try to steal a leaf from the other team’s base without being taken ‘prisoner’. The word derives from the verb *hiniti* ‘pluck’, ‘pull out’, as in sentence #14.
yes
‘Yes.’

26.A: Sohena.sava?
how
‘How?’

27.V: Tuai, va-uranji ... va-uranj na-te vano ’sa-n’
long.ago PL-child pause PL-child 3PL-NEG go home-LINK
tamalohi tinambu.
person different
‘In the olden days, children ... children didn’t go to different people’s houses.’

28.V: Tuai, ka-te vano asa-n’ tamalohi atihai ...
long.ago 1PL-NEG go home-LINK person far.away pause
balosuro na tohotoho na van’ atihai.
nowadays 3PL play 3PL go far.away
‘In the olden days, we didn’t go to people’s homes a long way away ... nowadays they play and go far away.’

29.V: Tuai, ka matahu.
long.ago 1PL be.scared
‘Long ago, we were frightened.’

30.V: Ka van’ atihai, na-mbo le losu kamam.
1PL go far 3PL-FUT TA beat IP:1PL.E
‘We went off far away, (and) they’d be beating us.’

31.A: Aeni!
really
‘Really!’

Some laughter...

32.D: Mo iso, han’han mo tinambu?
3SG finish food 3SG different
‘So then, was the food different?’

33.V: Han’han sohen balosuru, dam ne mo tete rais.
food like present.time yams/s but 3SG negative rice
‘The food was like nowadays, yams but no rice.’

34.V: ... Mmm, rais mo bongi-ha.
pause mmm rice 3SG occasionally
‘.... Mmmm, rice occasionally’
35.A: Balosuro rais mo suiha!
nowadays rice 3SG strong
‘Nowadays rice is bigtime!’

36.V: Io, rais ‘i gat’! ... Mo were.
yes rice ‘have’ laughs 3SG many
‘Yes, there’s rice!’ ... laughs ... ‘Lots of it.’

37.V: Tuai, na han’han bweta, vetai, dam, suru, biskete
long.ago 3PL eat taro banana yam sweet potato biscuit

nia mo tete.
1P3G 3SG negative
‘Long ago, they ate taro, bananas, yams, sweet potato, there were no biscuits.’

38.D: Ti?
te
‘Tea?’

39.V: Ti mo noha, ka lai-a ne mo vorivori; ale
tea 3SG have 1PL take-O:3SG but 3SG little if

  o boi-a o lai-a, ne mo-te sohen tovona.
2SG want-O:3SG 2SG take-O:3SG but 3SG-NEG like now
‘There was tea, we got it but there wasn’t much; if you wanted it you got it, but it
wasn’t like now.’

40.A: Ana no-m bongi tuai, no-le ruru sohen ka-le
PREP CLFR-P:2SG day long.ago 2PL-TA dress like 1PL-TA

ruru tovona-te ... no-nda ruru ... te’ no-mim
dress now-DIS pause CLFR-P:1PL.I dress pause or CLFR-P:2PL

ruru mo tinambu?
dress 3SG different
‘In your time long ago, did you all dress like we dress now eh … our clothes
(pointing to own ‘island dress’) … or your clothes were different?’

41.V: Mo tete. Mo-te sohen tovona. No-mam ruru
3SG negative 3SG-NEG like now CLFR-P:1PL.E dress

tinambu. Tuai, ruru mo-te were.
different long.ago dress 3SG-NEG many
‘No. It wasn’t like now. Our clothes were different. Long ago, there weren’t a
lot.’
42.V: Kamam ka-te ruru, o soari sohena nia wal’walis'.
IP:1PL.E 1PL-NEG dress 2SG see the.same IP:3SG small.mat
‘We didn’t wear clothes, you see like this (pointing to a mat) it’s a Kastom mat.’

43.V: Iau sohena … ‘ale’, iau sohena, ku wal’walis.
IP:1SG the.same pause so.then IP:1SG the same 1SG wear.small.mat
‘I was the same … so then I was the same, I wore a Kastom mat.’

V. laughs as she holds it in front of her dress. Some exclamations … (unclear).

44.A: Moiso, ana no-nda kastom, tuai, tamalohi mo boi
so.then PREP CLFR-P:1PL.I. custom long.ago person 3SG want
a voli te tambaluhi-na, mo voli-a tovon le vorivori,
3SG buy INDEF wife-P:3SG 3SG buy-O:3SG when TA little
ne niho, tamanatu-m mo voli-ho tovon o-le vorivori
but IP:2SG husband-P:2SG 3SG buy-O:2SG when 2SG-TA little
tene o tawera mo iso?
or 2SG big 3SG finish
‘So then, in our custom, long ago, (if) a man wanted to buy some wife for himself,
he bought her when she was little, but you, your husband bought you when you
were little or you were already big?’

3SG negative IP:1PL.I like now
‘No. We (were) like now.’

46.V: Ku tawera mo iso. Kamam ka ‘mared’ ana skul.
1SG big 3SG finish IP:1PL.E 1PL married PREP church
‘I was already big. We were married in church.’

Interrupted by children playing outside, and then coming to the house.

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3 This term waliwalisi refers to a small woven mat, worn in pre-missionary times.


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