

CHAPTER 2

SIE GRAMMAR OUTLINE

0. INTRODUCTION

As noted in the previous chapter, Sie is the sole surviving viable language of Erromango, representing a continuation of Yoku, the prestige mission language of the west coast, but affected to an unknown extent by Sorung, a now extinct language once spoken in the south and east of the island.

0.1. Sie dialects

Little work has been carried out on dialect differentiation in Sie. Lists collected by Capell at Dillon's Bay in the central west, Ifo in the south, and Potnarvin in the north-east, show the following cognate percentages:

Dillon's Bay:	Potnarvin	-	91%
Dillon's Bay:	Ifo	-	91%
Potnarvin:	Ifo	-	95%

Phonologically, these dialects are very similar, with Dillon's Bay final /g/ corresponding with Ifo and Potnarvin final /k/ or, occasionally, Ø, and with many occurrences of Dillon's Bay /s/ corresponding with Ifo and Potnarvin /h/ (cf. 1.3. below). What little structural information there is available on Ifo and Potnarvin shows virtually no variation from the Dillon's Bay dialect, which forms the basis for the present study.

0.2. Genesis of the present study

In 1928, one of us (Capell) wrote a more comprehensive grammar sketch of Sie than that published in Ray (1926), but still a sketch based on the mission translations. This manuscript was later substantially revised after World War II when he was able to collect a certain amount of first-hand information on the Erromangan languages. However, neither this manuscript, simply titled 'Eromanga', nor its companion, 'An Eromangan Comparative Dictionary', has ever been published, although certain parts of them have appeared in other works of Capell's.

During the 1960s and 1970s, while carrying out fieldwork on Lenakel and other languages of the neighbouring island of Tanna, Lynch was also able to collect a certain amount of information on Sie. Again, very little of this information has been published.

Neither of us has felt that the amount of material we had independently collected was sufficient to allow for the publication of a 'respectable' grammar of Sie. Particularly since the language is not of the common type found in the better-known Eastern Oceanic areas of Melanesia, we felt that a detailed treatment was necessary. However, we now believe that a joint production is desirable at this stage, since linguistic activity on Erromango in recent years has been minimal, and is likely to remain so for some time. This joint production will at the very least allow what information is available on this historically important Austronesian language to see the light of day, and will point up areas — of which, needless to say, there are many — in which further research is urgently needed.

Accordingly, we have attempted to combine Capell's manuscript grammar with Lynch's unpublished analyses. The aim of this study is thus to present in as clear a form as possible what we do know about Sie. Where at all possible, example sentences are given from elicited data or spoken texts rather than the mission translations since these, especially in orthography, are not of good quality. In addition, areas of disagreement between our analyses have been highlighted rather than played down, since they may throw light either on dialect differences or, more probably, possible language change in the period between Capell's and Lynch's fieldwork.

Throughout the text, the first person plural indicates that both of us basically agree on a particular grammatical interpretation; the first person singular reflects only Lynch's interpretations of the grammatical data. Where possible or desirable, comparison has been made with what is known of other languages of Erromango, and with other languages of the Southern Vanuatu region. Cases of possible grammatical or phonological change in recent times have also been noted.

1. SEGMENTAL PHONOLOGY OUTLINE

This section presents an outline of the segmental phonology of Sie, together with a brief comment on Sie orthography. Previously published accounts of various aspects of the language (e.g. Ray 1926, Capell 1972) pay little attention to the phonology, and Ray's work in particular suffers from a number of inaccuracies, due in no small part to the poor orthography developed by the Presbyterian missionaries during the last century (see 1.7. below).

1.1. The phonemes

Twenty-three phonemes are recognised in Sie, eighteen consonants and five vowels. The phonemes are listed in chart form below.

TABLE I: Sie consonant phonemes

	Velarised Bilabials	Bilabials	Dentals	Alveolars	Palatal	Velars	Post-Velar
Voiceless stops	pw	p	t			k	
Voiced stop				d			
Voiceless fricatives		f	s				
Voiced fricatives		v				g	
Nasals	mw	m		n		ŋ	
Lateral				l			
Vibrant				r			
Semivowels	w				y		

TABLE II: Sie vowel phonemes

	Front Unround	Central	Back Round
High	i		u
Mid	e		o
Low		a	

Three sets of phonemes need to be justified before the allophones of the phonemes are discussed. These are the velarised bilabials /pw/ and /mw/, the voiced stop /d/, and the semivowels /y/ and /w/.

The velarised bilabial phonemes /pw/ and /mw/ are established as unit phonemes (as opposed to sequences of stop or nasal phoneme + /w/) largely in response to phonotactic pressure. The phonotactics of Sie are discussed in detail in 1.4. below, but what is relevant here are the following rules: first, initial consonant clusters are normally not permitted (although a few exceptional cases do result from the loss of a vowel in historical times); and second, the phonotactic rules of Sie normally allow medial clusters of no more than two consonants, the only exceptions being medial three-consonant clusters whose first two members are a nasal and a homorganic voiceless stop. However, [p^w] and [m^w] may occur initially:

(1)	/pwagah/	[p ^w áyah]	<i>day(light)</i>
	/mwor/	[m ^w óʔ]	<i>left (hand)</i>
	/pwarap/	[p ^w áʔap ^h]	<i>evening</i>

and clusters of consonant + /pw/ may occur medially:

(2)	/nelpwonoru-ŋ/	[nɛl ^ə p ^w ɔ́nóʔʉŋ]	<i>my arm</i>
	/pwagahpwagah/	[p ^w áyahp ^w áyah]	<i>midday</i>

(Note that /mw/ is rare in Sie, and no medial clusters involving /mw/ have been observed.) For these reasons, then, [p^w] and [m^w] are treated as unit phonemes /pw/ and /mw/.¹

There is only one voiced stop, /d/, which is also the only prenasalised stop in the language. Contrast between /t/ and /d/ is clear in all environments:

(3)	/ta-n/	[tán]	<i>his skin</i>
	/dan/	[ⁿ dán]	<i>day</i>
	/netukus/	[netúkʉs]	<i>salt</i>
	/nedu/	[nɛ ⁿ du]	<i>k.o. tree</i>
	/novlimet/	[noβ ^ə límɛt ^h]	<i>eyebrow</i>
	/dinme-d/	[ⁿ dín ^ə mɛ ⁿ d]	<i>their mother</i>

There is also clear contrast medially and finally between a cluster of /n/ + /t/ and the prenasalised stop /d/:

(4)	/tantop/	[tánt ^h ɔp ^h]	<i>long</i>
	/mado/	[má ⁿ dɔ]	<i>kava-bowl</i>
	/dinme-nt/	[ⁿ dín ^ə mɛnt ^h]	<i>our (inc.) mother</i>
	/dinme-d/	[ⁿ dín ^ə mɛ ⁿ d]	<i>their mother</i>

Since there is no non-prenasalised [d] in Sie, it is clear that /d/ is a unit phoneme.

As will be seen in 1.2., the high vowels /i/ and /u/ have non-syllabic allophones in certain environments. Nevertheless, semivowel phonemes /y/ and /w/ are also posited. Sequences of consonant + non-syllabic high vowel are always accompanied by close transition, whereas consonant + semivowel sequences are usually accompanied by open transition (symbolised here by a raised [ə] – see sections 1.4. and 1.5. for further discussion). Examples:

(5)	/orofenuo/	[əʔɔfɛ́nuɔ]	<i>k.o. yam</i>
	/nevenwane/	[nɛβɛn ^ə wáne]	<i>k.o. fish</i>
	/netuo/	[nɛ́tuɔ]	<i>fowl</i>
	/elwa/	[él ^ə wa]	<i>to vomit</i>

/malia/	[máɭia]	<i>k.o. yam</i>
/uvilyoru/	[ùβɪɭ ^ə yóʔu]	<i>breeze</i>

1.2. Allophones

In the tables below are given the allophones of the Sie phonemes, together with a phonetic description and a statement of distribution. The consonant allophones are given in Table III. It will be seen that all the voiceless stops follow the same pattern (aspirated finally and after nasals, lenis unaspirated elsewhere); the bilabial fricatives also both behave identically (labiodental before /a/, bilabial elsewhere).

TABLE III: Allophones of Sie consonants

Phoneme	Allophone	Description	Distribution
/pw/	[p ^{wh}]	Voiceless aspirated velarised bilabial stop	Finally and after a nasal
	[p ^w]	Voiceless lenis velarised bilabial stop	Elsewhere
/p/	[p ^h]	Voiceless aspirated bilabial stop	Finally and after a nasal
	[p]	Voiceless lenis bilabial stop	Elsewhere
/t/	[t ^h]	Voiceless aspirated dental stop	Finally and after a nasal
	[t]	Voiceless lenis dental stop	Elsewhere
/k/	[k ^h]	Voiceless aspirated velar stop	Finally and after a nasal
	[k]	Voiceless lenis velar stop	Elsewhere
/d/	[ⁿ d]	Voiceless prenasalised alveolar stop	All environments
/f/	[f]	Voiceless labiodental fricative	Before /a/
	[f ^w]	Voiceless velarised labiodental fricative	In free variation with [f]
	[ɸ]	Voiceless bilabial fricative	Elsewhere
	[ɸ ^w]	Voiceless velarised bilabial fricative	In free variation with [ɸ]; rare
/v/	[v]	Voiced labiodental fricative	Before /a/
	[v ^w]	Voiced velarised labiodental fricative	In free variation with [v]; rare
	[β]	Voiced bilabial fricative	Elsewhere

continued

Phoneme	Allophone	Description	Distribution
	[β ^w]	Voiced velarised bilabial fricative	In free variation with [β]; rare
/s/	[s]	Voiced dental fricative	All environments
/g/	[ɣ]	Voiced velar fricative	All environments
/h/	[h]	Voiceless glottal fricative	All environments
	[x]	Voiceless velar fricative	Sporadically, in free variation with [h] finally
/mw/	[m ^w]	Voiced velarised bilabial nasal	All environments
/m/	[m]	Voiced bilabial nasal	All environments
/n/	[n]	Voiced alveolar nasal	All environments
/ŋ/	[ŋ]	Voiced velar nasal	All environments
/l/	[l]	Voiced alveolar lateral	All environments
/r/	[ɾ]	Voiced alveolar flap	All environments
	[r̥]	Voiced alveolar trill	In free variation with [ɾ] after /t/
/w/	[w]	Voiced high back rounded semivowel	All environments
/y/	[y]	Voiced high front unrounded semivowel	All environments

The allophones of the vowel phonemes are given in Table IV below. A number of vowel allophone environments require a brief description of syllable-types in Sie. Briefly, closed syllables end in consonants and open syllables in vowels. A non-final vowel followed by CV ends an open syllable, whereas a non-final vowel followed by CCV forms the nucleus of a closed syllable. It will be seen that identical tensing and laxing rules apply to the two high vowels; however, the mid vowels behave differently from each other and from the high vowels in the matter of tensing/laxing. All vowels may occasionally reduce to [ə] in a pretonic syllable.

TABLE IV: Allophones of Sie vowels

Phoneme	Allophone	Description	Distribution
/i/	[i̥]	High front tense unrounded non-syllabic vowel	Adjacent to another vowel
	[i]	High front tense unrounded vowel	In open syllables
	[ɪ]	High front lax unrounded vowel	In closed syllables
/e/	[e]	Mid front tense unrounded vowel	Before /y/ or a vowel
	[ɛ]	Mid front lax unrounded vowel	Elsewhere
/a/	[a]	Low central lax unrounded vowel	All environments
/o/	[o]	Mid back tense rounded vowel	Before a vowel
	[ɔ̃]	Mid back lax rounded nasalised vowel	Before a nasal consonant
	[ɔ]	Mid back lax rounded vowel	Elsewhere
/u/	[u̥]	High back tense rounded non-syllabic vowel	Adjacent to another vowel
	[u]	High back tense rounded vowel	In open syllables
	[ũ]	High back tense rounded nasalised vowel	In free variation with [u] before a nasal consonant
	[ʊ]	High back lax rounded vowel	In closed syllables
	[ũ]	High back lax rounded nasalised vowel	In free variation with [ʊ] before a nasal consonant

1.3. Contrast

Evidence is given in this section to show that the phonemes listed in the previous sections contrast with one another. For reasons of space, only pairs or groups of phonemes with a certain amount of phonetic similarity are contrasted in the examples below.

Contrast between the five vowel phonemes can be established from a number of sets like the following:

- | | | | |
|-----|-------------|-------------|---------------------|
| (6) | /navanavan/ | [nàvanávan] | <i>fugitive</i> |
| | /nevar/ | [névař] | <i>load, burden</i> |
| | /nival/ | [níval] | <i>mast</i> |

/novar/	[nóvař]	<i>wall</i>
/nuval/	[núval]	<i>fat (n.)</i>
/are/	[ářε]	<i>make excuses</i>
/ereveni/	[ěřεβéni]	<i>draw, attract</i>
/ire/	[ířε]	<i>today</i>
/orei/	[óřei]	<i>scratch</i>
/ure/	[úřε]	<i>argue</i>

Examples of contrast between pairs or groups of phonetically similar consonant phonemes are given below:

(7) /pw/:/p/:/f/:/v/:/w/

/pwoŋku/	[p ^w ɔŋk ^h u]	<i>k.o. tree</i>
/poŋvat/	[pɔŋ ^h vat ^h]	<i>thick</i>
/fonfati/	[fɔŋ ^h fáti]	<i>k.o. tree</i>
/voŋi/	[βɔŋi]	<i>yield fruit</i>
/wolu/	[wɔlu]	<i>k.o. tree</i>
/pwatni/	[p ^w át ^h ni]	<i>banana sp.</i>
/patmonu/	[pat ^h mɔnu]	<i>heart</i>
/fan/	[fán]	<i>flesh</i>
/vavgom/	[váβ ^h γɔm]	<i>a fan</i>
/warki/	[wář ^h ki]	<i>strong</i>

(8) /m/:/mw/:/w/

/mori/	[móři]	<i>k.o. tree</i>
/mwor/	[m ^w ɔř]	<i>left (hand)</i>
/woraŋi/	[wɔřáŋi]	<i>laugh at sth. bad</i>

(9) /t/:/d/:/r/

/ta-n/	[tán]	<i>his skin</i>
/dan/	[ⁿ dán]	<i>day</i>
/ra/	[řá]	<i>locative preposition</i>

(10) /t/:/s/

/tempelei/	[tɛmp ^h éleĩ]	<i>smooth</i>
/sempelog/	[sɛmp ^h éloɣ]	<i>joist, beam</i>
/tompoi/	[tɔmp ^h oi]	<i>bush</i>
/sompog/	[sɔmp ^h ɔɣ]	<i>snore</i>

- (11) /d/:/n/
- | | | |
|---------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| /dogu/ | [ⁿ dóyu] | <i>axe</i> |
| /nogut/ | [nóyut ^h] | <i>louse</i> |
| /deve/ | [ⁿ déβε] | <i>how many?</i> |
| /neven/ | [néβen] | <i>freshwater eel</i> |
- (12) /l/:/n/:/r/
- | | | |
|--------|-------|-----------------|
| /tal/ | [tál] | <i>taro</i> |
| /ta-n/ | [tán] | <i>his skin</i> |
| /tar/ | [táʔ] | <i>to fight</i> |
- (13) /k/:/g/
- | | | |
|----------|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| /kimi/ | [kími] | <i>you (pl.)</i> |
| /gimpit/ | [γímp ^h it ^h] | <i>k.o. fish</i> |
| /kuri/ | [kúʔi] | <i>dog</i> |
| /gumpam/ | [γúmp ^h am] | <i>yam sp.</i> |
- (14) /g/:/h/
- | | | |
|----------|----------|-------------------|
| /noguog/ | [nóγuoγ] | <i>earthquake</i> |
| /nohuo/ | [nóhuo] | <i>yam sp.</i> |
- (15) /g/: no phoneme
- | | | |
|--------|----------------------|-------------------|
| /dogu/ | [ⁿ dóyu] | <i>axe</i> |
| /dou/ | [ⁿ dóu] | <i>ship, boat</i> |
- (16) /h/: no phoneme
- | | | |
|-------|-------|--------------|
| /hai/ | [háĩ] | <i>one</i> |
| /ai/ | [áĩ] | <i>blunt</i> |
- (17) /n/:/ŋ/
- | | | |
|-----------|----------|-----------------|
| /noura-n/ | [núʔʔan] | <i>his bone</i> |
| /noura-ŋ/ | [núʔʔaŋ] | <i>my bone</i> |

Variation between /s/ and /h/ was mentioned in the previous chapter, and also in section 0.1. above. There is a sound change in progress in Sie, by which /s/ and /h/ are merging, as [h]. Contrast between /s/ and /h/ is clear from the work of earlier scholars, and Capell's manuscript dictionary (MSb), for example, shows such forms as *horoŋ powerful* in contrast with *soroŋi to seek for*. It seems to me that /s/ changed to /h/ first in final position, then non-finally before non-front vowels, especially /a/. Influence of non-standard dialects, or of now dead languages, has variously been held as the cause of the change, but the reasons for and the history of the change are still obscure. It should be noted, however, that a similar change, though far less advanced in its effects, seems to be taking place in the languages of Tanna.²

Since the change is still in progress in Sie, it is on the one hand impossible to say that /s/ has merged with /h/, and on the other hand difficult to give minimal pairs for the two phonemes, since most Sie-speakers will accept – even if they do not themselves necessarily produce – forms containing either /s/ or /h/. A form such as /vetmis/ *sky*, for example, will be more often heard as [βét̪mɪs], but [βét̪mɪh] is also acceptable; while a form like /hai/ *one*, written sai in earlier works, will normally be heard as [háɪ], but [sáɪ] will be accepted. The amount of individual variation is not clear, and further research is needed to document the nature and process of the change. In this work, we write /h/ in words where [h] is heard more frequently than [s], and /s/ where [s] is more frequent.

1.4. Phonotactics

A syllable in Sie normally requires a vowel, and may contain two vowels, providing that one of them is non-syllabic (i.e. the [i̯] or [u̯] allophones of /i/ and /u/). A syllable may begin with a single consonant, and may end with either a single consonant or a homorganic nasal + stop cluster. Thus medial consonant clusters are generally of no more than two consonants, but three-consonant medial clusters may occur if the first two consonants are nasal + homorganic stop. Some examples of the syllable structure of words are given below; the period in the phonetic representation indicates the syllable-boundary.

(18)	/ehapi/	[ɛ.há.pi]	<i>to count</i>
	/netuo/	[né.tuɔ]	<i>fowl</i>
	/nam/	[nám]	<i>word</i>
	/empgo/	[émph.əɣɔ]	<i>to dance</i>
	/isut/	[f.sut ^h]	<i>far</i>
	/urait/	[ú.řait ^h]	<i>rope</i>
	/novlaimpgo-n/	[noβ.əɪláɪmph.əɣɔn]	<i>its tail</i>

A handful of words, however, show initial two-consonant clusters. A list of these is given below, together with the form in which they are given in Capell's manuscript dictionary (MSb):

(19)	Forms with initial CC		Capell (MSb)
	/dvat/	<i>four</i>	devat
	/dve/ ~ /deve/	<i>how many?</i>	deve
	/mran/	<i>tomorrow</i>	mran
	/nmah/	<i>clothes, sail</i>	nemas
	/nmah/	<i>low tide</i>	nemas
	/nmap/	<i>ground</i>	nemap
	/nmar/	<i>breadfruit</i>	nemar
	/nraŋaŋon/	<i>animal</i>	-
	/nva-/	<i>thigh</i>	nevan
	/nvaŋ/	<i>food</i>	nevaŋ
	/nvat/	<i>stone</i>	nevat
	/nworopatevi/	<i>condemnation</i>	nworopatevi
	/pruvgum/	<i>morning</i>	pruvogom

Capell's MS also notes that a number of these forms were (irregularly) stressed on the final syllable. It seems to me that, possibly because of this final stress, pretonic /e/ weakened first to [ə] and was then lost, with original [nemáʔ] *breadfruit*, for example, becoming first [nəmáʔ] and then [nmáʔ] (or, more accurately, [nəmáʔ] with open transition between [n] and [m]). Something similar seems to be taking place now with /deve/ *how many?*, which I recorded on different occasions as [ndéβɛ], [ndɛβɛ] and [ndəβɛ].

Supporting evidence for this hypothesis comes from another regular feature of Sie phonotactics, to which we now turn. Although geminate consonant clusters do not occur, there appear to be very few restrictions on the composition of two-consonant clusters. The phonemes /pw/, /mw/, and /f/ are of low frequency in Sie, and this makes it difficult to provide a complete general statement. However, the first consonant of a cluster may be any consonant except /pw/, /f/, /mw/, /w/, and /y/, while the second consonant of a cluster may be any consonant except /d/ and /mw/. Clusters of homorganic consonants involve close transition, while heterorganic clusters involve open transition, with an epenthetic schwa-vowel which, however, is not relevant to the assignment of stress. Compare:

(20)	/tantop/	[tánt ^h ɔp ^h]	<i>long</i>
	/sompat/	[sɔmp ^h at ^h]	<i>to shut</i>
	/gumpam/	[ɣũmp ^h am]	<i>yam sp.</i>

with

(21)	/novlimet/	[nɔβ ^ə lɪmɛt ^h]	<i>eyebrow</i>
	/warki/	[wáʔ ^ə ki]	<i>strong</i>
	/nelve-n/	[nɛl ^ə βɛn]	<i>his tooth</i>
	/pwatni/	[p ^w at ^ə ni]	<i>banana sp.</i>

In such cases of epenthesis, when the first member of the consonant cluster is /h/, then the epenthetic vowel is not [ə] but a copy of the preceding vowel:

(22)	/mehkai/	[méh ^ɛ kai]	<i>six</i>
	/nahvu/	[náh ^a βu]	<i>turtle</i>

All vowels occur initially, medially, and finally. All consonants also occur initially and medially, and all except /pw/, /v/, /mw/, /w/, and /y/ also occur finally. Geminate vowels do not occur. All other combinations of two vowels may occur within Sie morphemes, with the exception of clusters of mid vowels (* /eo/, * /oe/) and clusters involving /a/ + mid vowel (* /ae/, * /ao/).³

1.5. Stress

Apart from a handful of words with stress on the final syllable, primary stress in Sie falls on the vowel of a monosyllable and the penultimate vowel of a polysyllable:

(23)	/nup/	[núp ^h]	<i>yam</i>
	/nomu/	[nɔ́mu]	<i>fish</i>
	/umole/	[umóle]	<i>ant</i>

Epenthetic vowels inserted to break up heterorganic consonant clusters are not stressed, nor are they counted as syllabic in the assignment of stress:

- (24) /nelve-n/ [nɛl^əβɛn] *his tooth*
 /novlaimpgo-n/ [nɔβ^əlái^{hə}mp^əγɔn] *its tail*
 /mehkai/ [mɛh^ɛkaɪ̃] *six*

Secondary stress occurs on the initial syllable of words of more than three syllables:

- (25) /orutenmogi/ [òʔuten^əmɔ̃gi] *to sink (trans.)*
 /osavlahakgi/ [òsaβ^əlahák^əgi] *to turn over (trans.)*

1.6. Morphophonemics

Sie morphemes undergo a considerable amount of morphophonemic variation. Most of these processes are peculiar to one grammatical context, and will be dealt with in the appropriate section of the grammar. There is, however, one process which is more general in application, and that process is discussed here.

There is a rule of Sie phonology that an unacceptable underlying consonant cluster occurring across a morpheme-boundary is broken up by the insertion of a vowel. At the present stage of research, we are unable to define precisely which such clusters are unacceptable. Certainly, medial three-consonant clusters are unacceptable, and the vowel is inserted between the second and third of these consonants. In addition, final two-consonant clusters are unacceptable. (In both these cases, of course, a homorganic nasal + stop cluster is an exception to these general statements.) However, certain medial two-consonant clusters are also unacceptable, and it is in this area where our uncertainty lies.

Whatever the exact environment, the rule itself is clear. The inserted vowel is /o/ if one of the consonants involved is a velar; otherwise, the inserted vowel is /e/.

- | (26) | Underlying | Surface | |
|------|---------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| | /g-okil-g/ | /gokilog/ | <i>he knew you (sg.)</i> |
| | /g-tai/ | /gotai/ | <i>he hit it</i> |
| | /sukrim-duru/ | /sukrimeduru/ | <i>seven</i> |
| | /kok-l-n-eni/ | /koklennen/ | <i>we (inc.) will eat</i> |

1.7. Orthography

The original (in more than one sense) Presbyterian mission orthography for the Erromangan languages included such exoticisms as *ī* for the sequence /ai/, *x* for /au/, and *c* for /oi/. These, fortunately, were soon abandoned. However, no version of the mission orthography recognised the velarised bilabials /pw/ and /mw/, nor was a distinction made between the velar stop /k/ and the velar fricative /g/. As in many other areas of Oceania, the symbol *g* was used to represent the velar nasal /ŋ/.

Perhaps the only significant points regarding the orthography used here are the symbolisation of the velar fricative (g) and the velar nasal (ŋ). We have avoided the use of g as a symbol for either of these phonemes, since its use is likely to cause some confusion. A previous attempt to use x for the velar fricative (Lynch 1974) was not well received by Erromangans, and the use of gh for /g/ would also lead to confusion, many Erromangans treating this as /ŋ/ + /h/. Although the symbol c is used in Anejom (Aneityumese) for the velar fricative, we have not thought this convention worth introducing.

2. VERBAL MORPHOLOGY AND THE VERB PHRASE

We begin the discussion of Sie grammar with its most complex area, the morphological structure of the verb, and in this section we also examine the structure of the verb phrase, which is relatively simple.

2.1. Verb morphology

The verb in Sie consists of a complex of affixes attached to a verb root. These affixes refer, inter alia, to the person and number of the subject and the object, tense and aspect, negativity, and various modalities. The system is complicated by fairly complex morphophonemics, including consonant alternation within the verb root itself. The general structure of the verb will not be given at this stage, since different tense/aspects require different structures. However, it can be pointed out at this stage that prefixes to the verb root include those marking person and number of subject, negativity, and tense/aspect; while suffixes include those marking person and number of object, transitivity, and completion.

2.1.1. Verb root

Over half the verb roots in Sie, as in all the other non-Polynesian languages of Southern Vanuatu, are vowel-initial. This vowel is perhaps most often /a/, /e/, or /o/; /i/- and /u/-initial verbs are quite rare. Historical evidence shows that this initial vowel is an accretion to an original consonant-initial root; compare the following Sie verb roots (many including the transitive suffix -i) with their original forms in Proto-Oceanic (POC):

(27)	Sie	POC	
	atki	*tuki	<i>pound</i>
	avan	*pano	<i>walk, go</i>
	elua	*luaq	<i>vomit</i>
	etri	*tuRi	<i>sew</i>
	oghi	*kita	<i>see</i>
	orŋi	*doŋoR	<i>hear</i>

Whatever functions this initial vowel might once have had, it no longer has any function in modern Sie.⁴

A number of Oceanic languages show variant forms of the verb root, one form occurring in what might loosely be termed the realis mode, and the other in the irrealis mode. These variants generally involve alternation between nasal and

non-nasal consonants, or between oral and prenasalised consonants, or between the reflexes (often fricative) of POC oral grade consonants and the reflexes (often stop) of POC nasal grade consonants.⁵ In Sie, this oral/nasal alternation occurs, in various forms, with a large number of verb roots, though not all. The oral grade is used in the past tenses and the past conditional, while the nasal grade is used in the non-past tenses (present, future, and future conditional tenses) – i.e. the distinction can loosely be termed a realis/irrealis distinction. For example:

(28)	General past tense: Oral grade	Future tense: Nasal grade
	<i>g-oghi</i> <i>he saw</i>	<i>g-aŋhi</i> <i>he will see</i>
	<i>g-ovoli</i> <i>he turned</i>	<i>g-ampoli</i> <i>he will turn</i>
	<i>g-orŋi</i> <i>he heard</i>	<i>g-adŋi</i> <i>he will hear</i>
	<i>g-ete</i> <i>he stayed</i>	<i>g-ante</i> <i>he will stay</i>

For convenience, we refer to 'past' and 'non-past' tenses in discussing this alternation in Sie.

It should be obvious from (28) above that not only is there a change from oral grade to nasal grade in the first *consonant* of the verb root, but there is also a change in *vowel quality* in the initial, historically accreted, vowel. Thus the past/non-past alternations in Sie verb roots involve not only consonantal alternations of the kind *g/ŋ*, *v/mp*, *r/d*, etc., but also vowel alternations of the kind *o/a*, *e/a*, etc. Although, as mentioned earlier, not all verb roots undergo these alternations, it will be convenient to show the nature of these alternations first in tabular form, and then discuss their operation in more detail. The alternations, with examples, are given in Table V below.

TABLE V: Verb root alternations					
Initial segment(s) of verb root		Example			
Past	> Non-Past	Past	Non-Past		
v-	amp-	velam	ampelam	<i>come</i>	
ov-	amp-	ovoŋi	ampoŋi	<i>give</i>	
ev-	amp-	evip	ampip	<i>rain</i>	
t-	nt-	taloŋi	ntaloŋi	<i>kill</i>	
ot-	ant-	otihep	antihep	<i>put</i>	
et-	ant-	etvani	antvani	<i>spit</i>	
or-	ad-	oruh	aduh	<i>swim, bathe</i>	
ogh-	aŋh-	oghi	aŋhi	<i>see</i>	
og-	aŋk-	ogol	aŋkol	<i>dig</i>	
ok-	aŋk-	okili	aŋkili	<i>know</i>	
e-	a-	elua	alua	<i>vomit</i>	

The alternation rules shown in Table V are partly ordered: i.e. the rule *ogh-* > *aŋh-* precedes the rule *og-* > *aŋk-*, since this latter rule applies to all *og-* initial verb roots except those in which the initial *og-* is followed by *h*. The rules clearly involve.

- change of the initial vowel to /a/; and
- addition of a nasal before the first consonant of the root

if that consonant was an obstruent; non-stopped obstruents change to stops in this environment (thus *v* > *amp-*, for example). Presumably, the case of *ogh-* > *aqh-* (for excepted ***aqkh-*) involves later deletion of the /k/ before /h/ for reasons which are not clear at this stage.

Vowel-initial verb roots which do not fit the structural description of any of the rules in Table V add /n/ to the past form to form the non-past form: thus *avan* > *n-avan* *walk*, *isor* > *n-isor* *copulate*, *ouyoŋ* > *n-ouyoŋ* *awaken*, etc. There are very few examples of consonant-initial verb roots where the consonant is not /t/ because of the historical process of initial vowel-accretion discussed earlier; of these, almost all fit the structural description of one of the rules in Table V. Of those which do not, a vowel seems to be prefixed to the past to form the non-past. I have found a few verb roots with initial /s/ and /y/ which add /e/ to form the non-past (*sag* > *e-sag* *go up*, *yevi* > *e-yevi* *pull*), and a couple of verbs with initial /m/ which add /a/ to form the non-past (*mah* > *a-mah* *die*).

There are, however, a number of exceptions to these rules – i.e. verb roots which fit the structural description of one of the rules in Table V but, instead of undergoing the alternation, simply add /n/. Some of the more common verb roots which are exceptional are listed below:

(29) Past Root	Expected Non-Past	Actual Non-Past	
<i>ovi</i>	<i>**ampi</i>	<i>n-ovi</i>	<i>cut</i>
<i>orei</i>	<i>**adei</i>	<i>n-orei</i>	<i>scratch</i>
<i>oravi</i>	<i>**adavi</i>	<i>n-oravi</i>	<i>flow</i>
<i>oral</i>	<i>**adal</i>	<i>n-oral</i>	<i>flow</i>
<i>esomsah</i>	<i>**asomsah</i>	<i>n-esomsah</i>	<i>breathe</i>
<i>elgavi</i>	<i>**algavi</i>	<i>n-elgavi</i>	<i>hold</i>
<i>elimsi</i>	<i>**alimsi</i>	<i>n-elimsi</i>	<i>blow, of wind</i>
<i>eni</i>	<i>**ani</i>	<i>n-eni</i>	<i>eat</i>

Historically, the explanation for these irregularities may well be that the initial vowel of these verb roots is not in fact the accreted prefix but is the first vowel of the root itself. Thus *eni* *eat* derives from POC **kani*, and *orei* *scratch* may well derive from POC **kori*; in each case, verb-initial **k* has been lost, and the vowel which is now verb-initial is in fact part of the original root. Whether or not this historical explanation is accurate, however, is largely irrelevant to the present discussion; what is relevant is that the process of alternation is probably no longer productive in Sie. That is, given any verb root which fits the structural description of one of the rules in Table V, one cannot predict whether that verb will in fact undergo the alternation.

2.1.2. Subject and tense/aspect prefixes

The marking of person and number of subject and tense/aspect in the Sie verb is quite complex. The simplest way of proceeding here is first to give paradigms of the various tenses in all persons and numbers, and then to give an analysis. Accordingly, Table VI sets out the paradigms for the verb *oghi* (non-past *aqhi*) *see*. It should be noted that, as well as being morphologically complex, there are also complex morphophonemic processes involved; these will be discussed in the course of the establishment of the various prefixes.

The tense/aspects which have been identified for Sie verbs are as follows:

1. general past, which is used to refer either to an action which took place in the recent past, or to an action which took place at some unspecified time in the past;
2. mid past, which refers to an action which took place not recently but not long ago (some informants suggest that this can be used for any time between, say, 'last week' and 'last year', but this has not been adequately tested as yet);
3. far past, which refers to an action which took place much longer ago than those referred to by the mid past tense;
4. present, referring to an action which is taking place at the moment of speaking, or to a habitual action;
5. future, referring to an action which has not as yet taken place; and
6. conditional, of which both past and non-past forms occur, and which is used in certain syntactic environments which will be discussed in section 6 below.

TABLE VI: Verbal paradigms

	General Past	Future	Present	Mid Past
1 sg.	yogoghi	yagaghi	yagamaghi	yaumoghi
2 sg.	koghi	kanhi	kemaghi	kimoghi
3 sg.	goghi	gaghi	gamaghi	yoghi
1 inc.du.	kokughi	kokuaghi	kokumaghi	komughi
1 exc.du.	kakughi	kakuaghi	kakumaghi	kamughi
1 inc.pl.	{ kokloghi kologhi	{ koklaghi kolaghi	kokemlaghi	komloghi
1 exc.pl.	{ kakloghi kaloghi	{ kaklaghi kalaghi	kakemlaghi	kamloghi
2 pl.	kughi	kuaghi	kumaghi	kimughi
3 pl.	gughi	guaghi	gumaghi	dughi
	Far Past	Past Conditional	Non-Past Conditional	
1 sg.	yaumemoghi	yaupoghi	yaupemaghi	
2 sg.	kimumoghi	kipoghi	kipemaghi	
3 sg.	yemoghi	poghi	pemaghi	
1 inc.du.	komumoghi	kopughi	kopumaghi	
1 exc.du.	kamumoghi	kapughi	kapumaghi	
1 inc.pl.	komemloghi	koploghi	koplemlaghi	
1 exc.pl.	kamemloghi	kaploghi	kaplemlaghi	
2 pl.	kumumoghi	kipughi	kipumaghi	
3 pl.	dumoghi	pughi	pumaghi	

The subject-marking prefixes mark the same persons and numbers as are marked in the focal pronouns (cf. 3.2.1. below), with the addition of first person inclusive dual and first person exclusive dual, for which there are no corresponding focal pronominal forms. Certain subject + tense/aspect forms are bracketed together, indicating that modern Sie-speakers show some variation between the two forms involved.

Person and number prefixes. The marking of the person and number of the subject by prefixes to the verbs involves some complications: there are two distinct sets of person-marking prefixes, and the number-marking prefixes also exhibit some unusual features.

The two sets of prefixes marking person of subject are:

(30)	Set A	Set B
	'Subject Prefixes'	'Short Pronouns'
1 sg.	yag-	yau-
2 sg.	k-	ki-
3 sg.	g-	y-
1 inc. non-sg.	kok-	ko-
1 exc. non-sg.	kak-	ka-
2 pl.	k-	ki-
3 pl.	g-	d-

'Subject Prefixes' are distinguished from 'Short Pronouns' because of the much greater similarity of the latter to the focal pronouns (cf. 3.2.1. below). Set A subject prefixes are used with the more 'basic' tenses: general past, present, and future; Set B short pronouns are used with the mid and far past and the two conditional tenses. Note the identity of the second and third person singular and plural Set A forms, and the second person singular and plural Set B forms. Note also that the third person Set B forms have an allomorph $\emptyset$ in the conditional.

Number prefixes. Singular is unmarked. Non-singular subjects are marked as follows:

(31)	u-	1st dual, 2nd and 3rd plural
	l-	1st plural

Thus the combination of person and number prefixes gives the following complex of markers for the non-singular Set A forms:

(32)	Dual	Plural
1 inc.	kok - u-	kok - l-
1 exc.	kak - u-	kak - l-
2nd		k - u-
3rd		g - u-

and a similar table can be drawn up for the Set B forms.

Imperative. Although both person and number prefixes are normally required, person prefixes are deleted in the imperative, which uses the base (oral form) of the verb root, and prefixes u- (with accompanying morphophonemic changes) in the plural:

(33)	Singular Imperative	Plural Imperative	
	oghi	ughi	<i>see</i>
	enwi	unwi	<i>say</i>
	tai	utai	<i>hit</i>
	aɣri	uaɣri	<i>cry</i>
	yevi	uyevi	<i>pull</i>

Tense/aspect prefixes. The different tense/aspects are marked as follows:

(34)	Tense/aspect	Marker	Form of Root
	General Past	Ø	oral
	Mid Past	m-	oral
	Far Past	m-..em-	oral
	Past Conditional	pe-	oral
	Future	Ø	nasal
	Present	am-	nasal
	Non-Past Conditional	pe-..am-	nasal

The conditional uses a prefix *pe-*, with the non-past conditional compounding this with the present prefix *am-*. The other complex tense marking is in the far past, which uses the mid past prefix *m-* plus a further prefix *em-*.

The order of the prefixes in the verb complex, and the various morpho-phonemic changes which take place, will be held over until section 2.1.4. below.

2.1.3. Other prefixes

In addition to prefixes marking person and number of the subject and tense/aspect, there is a number of other prefixes to the verb root in Sie. These are briefly discussed below.

Echo-subject prefix. The echo-subject prefix *m-* replaces the person prefix when a verb has the same subject as the previous verb in a sentence. The syntax of this marker will be discussed in detail in 6.2. below; at this stage, only one or two examples are necessary:

- (35) *narai y-agan m-tai retpo-n m-etni*
Narai 3SG:A-angry ES-kill wife-his ES-burn
Narai was angry and killed his wife and burned her
- narai m numpwat d-u-sau unwo m-u-velam m-u-ve empatap*
Narai and Numpwat 3PL:B-PL-come:out *Unwo* ES-PL-come ES-PL-go north
Narai and Numpwat came out (of the ground) at Unwo and came and then went north

Negative. The underlying form of the negative prefix is *tu-*, although it appears as *etu-* in the singular imperative. (However, there is a possibility that the *e-* in *etu-* may in fact be an old singular imperative marker.)⁶ Some examples of imperative forms are given below:

(36)	Singular imperative		Plural imperative		
	affirmative	negative	affirmative	negative	
	<i>oghi</i>	<i>etughi</i>	<i>ughi</i>	<i>utughi</i>	<i>see</i>
	<i>tai</i>	<i>etutai</i>	<i>utai</i>	<i>ututai</i>	<i>hit</i>
	<i>yevi</i>	<i>etuyevi</i>	<i>uyevi</i>	<i>utuyevi</i>	<i>pull</i>
	<i>aŋri</i>	<i>etuaŋri</i>	<i>uaŋri</i>	<i>utuaŋri</i>	<i>cry</i>
	<i>orŋi</i>	<i>eturŋi</i>	<i>urŋi</i>	<i>uturŋi</i>	<i>hear</i>

It will be seen from the above examples that, in the imperative, the negative prefix follows the marker of number of subject.

This is the case also in the indicative forms: the negative comes fairly late in the array of prefixes. For convenience, Table VII gives the negative paradigms which correspond to the affirmative paradigms of Table VI. No far past negative exists; the mid past negative is used to negate both mid past and far past verbs.

TABLE VII: Verbal paradigms: negative			
	General Past	Future	Present
1 sg.	yogotughi	yogotuaqhi	yogotumaqhi
2 sg.	kotughi	kotuaqhi	kotumaqhi
3 sg.	gotughi	gotuaqhi	gotumaqhi
1 inc.du.	kokutughi	kokutuaqhi	kokutumaghi
1 exc.du.	kakutughi	kakutuaqhi	kakutumaghi
1 inc.pl.	{ kokletughi koletughi	{ kokletuaqhi koletuaqhi	koletumlaghi
1 exc.pl.	{ kakletughi kaletughi	{ kakletuaqhi kaletuaqhi	kaletumlaghi
2 pl.	kutughi	kutuaqhi	kutumaghi
3 pl.	gutughi	gutuaqhi	gutumaghi
	Mid Past	Past Conditional	Non-Past Conditional
1 sg.	yaumetughi	yaupetughi	yaupetumaqhi
2 sg.	kimetughi	kipetughi	kipetumaqhi
3 sg.	yetughi	petughi	petumaqhi
1 inc.du.	komutughi	koputughi	koputumaghi
1 exc.du.	kamutughi	kaputughi	kaputumaghi
1 inc.pl.	komletughi	kopletughi	kopletumlaghi
1 exc.pl.	kamletughi	kapletughi	kapletumlaghi
2 pl.	kimutughi	kiputughi	kiputumaghi
3 pl.	dutughi	putughi	putumaqhi

Reflexive. There is a reflexive prefix *pen-* whose use is not as yet clearly understood. The form does not appear in Capell's MS, and I only elicited a few examples:

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| (37) | yogo-pen-tai-yau
1SG:A-REFL-hit-me
<i>I hit myself</i>

go-pen-tai-Ø
3SG:A-REFL-hit-him
<i>He hit himself</i> | yogo-pen-ogh-iyau
1SG:A-REFL-see-me
<i>I saw myself</i> |
|------|---|---|

Other prefixes. A number of other prefixes are listed in Capell's MS. However, further analysis shows that these forms are really verbs, which participate in one of three constructions — verb serialisation, clause chaining with identical subjects (the second clause taking the echo-subject prefix *m-*), or verb + nominalised verb as object. Each of these types will be discussed in detail in the appropriate sections below.

2.1.4. Structure and morphophonemics of prefixes

We have no information on the position of the reflexive prefix in the verb, apart from what is obvious from the examples in (37) – that it follows the person prefixes. The discussion which follows is thus restricted to the person markers (including the echo-subject marker *m-*), number prefixes, tense/aspect prefixes, and the negative prefix.

The basic structure of verbal prefixes seems to be:

(38) subject + tense/aspect + number + negative

but there are a number of exceptions. We can first catalogue those tense/aspects which do follow this basic order:

General Past:	subject + number + negative
Future:	subject + number + negative
Mid Past:	subject + <i>m</i> + number + negative
Past Conditional:	subject + <i>pe</i> + number + negative

The remaining three tenses, however, show some variation. In particular, the number prefix *l-* (plural of first person) often appears in a different position from the number prefix *u-* (dual of first person, plural of non-first person). Further, the present tense/aspect prefix occurs in a different position from the other tense/aspect prefixes. The structure of these tense/aspects is:

Present:	subject + <i>u</i> + negative + <i>am</i> + <i>l</i>
Far Past:	subject + <i>m</i> + <i>u</i> + <i>em</i> + <i>l</i>
Non-Past Conditional:	subject + <i>pe</i> + <i>u/l</i> + negative + <i>am</i> + <i>l</i>

Note further that in the non-past conditional the plural marker for first person, *l-*, is repeated: it occurs once in the regular 'number' slot, and again following the non-past marker *am-*.

A considerable number of morphophonemic changes occur in verbs when prefixes are attached to verb roots; unfortunately, these have not been well enough studied for us to give a comprehensive account of their nature. The remarks below, therefore, must be considered as preliminary, and the morphophonemics of the verb is a subject that requires further study.⁷

- (a) The vowel-insertion rules discussed in section 1.6. can be seen to operate in a number of cases in verbal forms; that is, certain consonant clusters containing a velar consonant require the insertion of epenthetic /o/, and other clusters require the insertion of epenthetic /e/. Examples (from Tables VI and VII):

(39)	Underlying	Surface	
	ko-m-l-tu-ogh-i	komletughi	<i>we</i> (inc.) <i>didn't see (it)</i>
	g-tu-ogh-i	gotughi	<i>he didn't see (it)</i>
	k-tu-am-aḡh-i	kotumaḡhi	<i>you</i> (sg.) <i>don't see (it)</i>

The /o/ inserted by this rule has a 'spreading' effect. It spreads back to the vowel of the first person singular prefix *yag-*, changing this to *yog-* either when the verb itself is o-initial, or when /o/ has been inserted by regular rule:

(40)	<u>Underlying</u>	<u>Surface</u>	
	yag-ogh-i	yogoghi	<i>I saw (it)</i>
	yag-orŋ-i	yogorŋi	<i>I heard (it)</i>
	yag-tai	yogotai	<i>I hit (it)</i>
	yag-n-aŋri	yogonagri	<i>I will cry</i>
	yag-tu-ogh-i	yogotughi	<i>I didn't see (it)</i>

This spreading has a paradigmatic effect in the first person singular, such that verbs with initial /e/ change this to /o/, and this in turn effects the vowel of the prefix:

(41)	<u>Underlying</u>	<u>Surface</u>	
	yag-enwi	yogonwi	<i>I spoke</i>
	yag-eni	yogoni	<i>I ate</i>

This in turn spreads through the paradigm, such that in the general past of eni *eat*, for example, the verb appears as *oni* in those forms where it is immediately preceded by a velar (and also in the third person plural):

(42)	<u>Underlying</u>	<u>Surface</u>	
	yag-eni	yogoni	<i>I ate</i>
	k-eni	koni	<i>you (sg.) ate</i>
	g-eni	goni	<i>he/she ate</i>
	kok-u-eni	kokueni	<i>we (inc.du.) ate</i>
	kak-u-eni	kakueni	<i>we (exc.du.) ate</i>
	kok-l-eni	kokleni	<i>we (inc.pl.) ate</i>
	kak-l-eni	kakleni	<i>we (exc.pl.) ate</i>
	k-u-eni	kueni	<i>you (pl.) ate</i>
	g-u-eni	guoni	<i>they ate</i>

- (b) Vowel elision is common in the prefixes when two vowels come together. Specifically, the following changes take place:

i) verb-initial /o/ and the initial vowel of the prefixes *am-* 'present' and *em-* 'far past' are lost when preceded by the number-marker *u-* 'first person dual/non-first person plural' or the negative marker *tu-*; examples:

(43)	<u>Underlying</u>	<u>Surface</u>	
	g-u-ogh-i	gughi	<i>they saw (it)</i>
	k-tu-ogh-i	kotughi	<i>you (sg.) didn't see (it)</i>
	k-u-am-aŋh-i	kumaŋhi	<i>you (pl.) see (it)</i>
	g-tu-am-aŋh-i	gotumaŋhi	<i>he doesn't see (it)</i>
	ka-m-u-em-ogh-i	kamumoghi	<i>we (exc.du.) saw (it)</i>

ii) The present prefix *am-* loses the initial vowel when immediately preceded by the conditional prefix *pe-* in the non-past conditional:

(44)	<u>Underlying</u>	<u>Surface</u>	
	yau-pe-am-aŋh-i	yaupemaŋhi	<i>[if] I see (it)</i>
	ki-pe-am-aŋh-i	kipemaŋhi	<i>[if] you (sg.) see (it)</i>

In other environments, *pe-* becomes *p-* before a vowel:

- (45)
- | Underlying | Surface | |
|------------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| ki-pe-u-am-aŋh-i | kipumaghi | [if] you (pl.) see (it) |
| yau-pe-ogh-i | yaupoghi | [if] I saw (it) |
- (c) Other morphophonemic changes affect individual person- or tense/aspect-markers:
- i) The third person singular and plural markers are lost before the conditional prefix *pe-*: cf. the past conditional *poghi* (sg.), *pughi* (pl.).
- ii) The mid past marker *m-* is lost in the third person singular and plural; this extends to the far past, which is normally marked by mid past *m-* + *em-*; examples:
- (46)
- | Underlying | Surface | |
|--------------|---------|---------------|
| y-m-ogh-i | yoghi | he saw (it) |
| d-m-u-ogh-i | dughi | they saw (it) |
| y-m-em-ogh-i | yemoghi | he saw (it) |
- iii) The third person singular short pronoun *y-* appears as either *yi-* or *i-* before a consonant-initial root: thus underlying *y-tai* (from *y-m-tai*, 3SG:B-MP-*hit*) is either *itai* or *yitai*.
- iv) The combination of /k/ + /l/ in *kok-l* (1:INC.-PL) and *kak-l* (1:EXC.-PL) tends to be avoided, by dropping the /k/. The resultant *ko-l*, *ka-l* forms are being reinterpreted as person-markers *kol-*, *kal-*, as an examination of the present negative will show.

2.1.5. Object and transitive suffixes

Sie has two transitive suffixes: *-i* and *-ŋi* (which since most verb roots are consonant-final, appears as *-oŋi* by the regular insertion of epenthetic /o/ before the velar consonant /ŋ/). However, we do not have sufficient information to tell whether there is any semantic or syntactic difference between these two suffixes.⁸ Evidence from the few verbs which may be used both transitively and intransitively is inconclusive: *ogol dig* has a transitive *ogl-i*, while on the other hand *ametet fear* and *oruh wash* have transitive forms *amtit-oŋi* and *oruw-oŋi*. Verbs like *tavtavi grope* and *tampi converse* appear to have suffix *-i*, but they also occur with suffix *-ŋi*, as *tavoŋi grope after* and *tampiŋi tell*. This is one area where considerably more work needs to be done.

When the object of a verb is a noun, the transitive suffix appears on the verb:

- (47)
- | | | |
|--|----------|---------|
| yag-am-aŋkil-i | etm-en | |
| 1SG:S-PRES-IRR:know-TR <i>father-his</i> | | |
| <i>I know his father</i> | | |
| yog-orŋ-i | nompŋahi | enoŋkik |
| 1SG:A-hear-TR <i>pig</i> POSS:your:SG | | |
| <i>I heard your (sg.) pig</i> | | |
| g-amtit-oŋi | lui | |
| 3SG:A-fear-TR <i>Lui</i> | | |
| <i>He was frightened of Lui</i> | | |

When the object is a pronoun, however, free/focal pronouns are not used; instead, special object forms are suffixed to the verb. The basic forms of these object suffixes are:

(48)	Singular	Plural
1 inc.		-goh
1 exc.	-yau	-gam
2nd	-g	-gum
3rd	-i	-or

(Note therefore that the third person singular is marked by the transitive suffix, whereas the other persons are marked by individual suffixes; note also that the third person singular object form is $\emptyset$ after a verb ending in /i/.) Normal vowel epenthesis occurs before consonant-initial suffixes (thus /o/ is inserted before g-initial suffixes); in addition, /i/ is optionally inserted between a root-final consonant and -yau *me*. The paradigm below illustrates the use of these suffixes:

(49)	Underlying	Surface	
	g-okil-yau	gokilyau ~ gokiliyau	<i>he knew me</i>
	g-okil-g	gokilog	<i>he knew you (sg.)</i>
	g-okil-i	gokili	<i>he knew him</i>
	g-okil-goh	gokilogoh	<i>he knew us (inc.)</i>
	g-okil-gam	gokilogam	<i>he knew us (exc.)</i>
	g-okil-gum	gokilogum	<i>he knew you (pl.)</i>
	g-okil-or	gokilor	<i>he knew them</i>

When the verb root itself ends in /ŋ/, g-initial suffixes become k-initial, and the second person suffix is dropped in favour of a form identical with the free form *kik*:

(50)	Underlying	Surface	
	g-orin-yau	gorin-yau ~ goriniyau	<i>he heard me</i>
	g-orin-g	gorinkik	<i>he heard you (sg.)</i>
	g-orin-i	gorŋi	<i>he heard him</i>
	g-orin-goh	gorinkoh	<i>he heard us (inc.)</i>
	g-orin-gam	gorinkam	<i>he heard us (exc.)</i>
	g-orin-gum	gorinkum	<i>he heard you (pl.)</i>
	g-orin-or	gorinor	<i>he heard them</i>

When the verb ends in the transitive suffix -ŋi, further changes occur: the sequence ŋ + g becomes ŋk, as above, but in the first person singular and third person plural, the ŋ of the suffix becomes g and, in addition, the third person plural suffix changes from -or to -od:

(51)	Underlying	Surface	
	g-taloŋ-yau	gotalogoyau	<i>he killed me</i>
	g-taloŋ-g	gotaloŋkik	<i>he killed you (sg.)</i>
	g-taloŋ-i	gotaloŋi	<i>he killed him</i>
	g-taloŋ-goh	gotaloŋkoh	<i>he killed us (inc.)</i>
	g-taloŋ-gam	gotaloŋkam	<i>he killed us (exc.)</i>
	g-taloŋ-gum	gotaloŋkum	<i>he killed you (pl.)</i>
	g-taloŋ-or	gotalogod	<i>he killed them</i>

Occasionally, the termination -ogoyau is shortened to -oyau under conditions that are not very clear at present: e.g. gamtitoyau *he was afraid of me*, from g-amtitoṅ-yau, for expected **gamtitogoyau.

Finally, Capell notes a suffix -amtoṅi indicating action against something, giving the following examples:

- | | | | | |
|------|--------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| (52) | sompat | <i>to close</i> | sompatamtoṅi | <i>to shut in, shut out</i> |
| | etur | <i>to stand</i> | eturamtoṅi | <i>to stand up against</i> |

2.1.6. Other suffixes

Other suffixes follow the pronoun object suffixes and, in general, follow the transitive suffixes as well. There are a number of groups of suffixes.

Perfective. The perfective suffix is -su, which is identical in form to the plural suffix to nouns (cf. section 3.1.1. below). Although most usually used with past tenses (and in particular the general past), it may be used also with the future, and with the present as a kind of stative. Examples:

- | | | |
|------|---|--------------------------|
| (53) | g-ogh-or-su | y-eni-su |
| | 3SG:A-see-them-PF | 3SG:B-eat-PF |
| | <i>He has seen them</i> | <i>He had eaten (it)</i> |
| | yag-aṅh-i-su penuri yag-aṅh-og | |
| | 1SG:A-IRR:see-TR-PF before 1SG:A-IRR:see-you:SG | |
| | <i>I will have seen him before I see you (sg.)</i> | |
| | yag-am-aṅh-i-su | |
| | 1SG:A-PRES-IRR:see-TR-PF | |
| | <i>I have already seen it (i.e. I know where it is)</i> | |

Directionals. Two directional suffixes, -sag upwards and -sep downwards, occur with verbs:

- | | | |
|------|---------|------------------|
| (54) | vai | <i>take</i> |
| | vai-sag | <i>take up</i> |
| | vai-sep | <i>take down</i> |

An interrogative directional suffix -ya *where?* is also found:

- | | |
|------|--------------------------------------|
| (55) | ki-m-ogh-or-ya? |
| | 2SG:B-MP-see-them-where |
| | <i>Where did you (sg.) see them?</i> |

Locative relative. A suffix -wi is used with anaphoric locative reference:

- | | |
|------|---|
| (56) | yag-am-aṅh-i-wi |
| | 1SG:A-PRES-IRR:see-him-LOCREL |
| | <i>I see him there; ... where I see him</i> |
| | y-etn-i-wi retpo-n |
| | 3SG:B-burn-TR-LOCREL wife-his |
| | <i>He burned his wife there; ... where he burned his wife</i> |

Other suffixes. Two other suffixes appear in Capell's MS grammar. One of these, -lap, indicates temporary action: Capell gives as examples such forms as ovoṅi-lap (*give-TMP*) *lend*, ete-lap-wi (*stay-TMP-INT*) *just stay a bit* and ko-l-aṅh-i-lap (1EXC:A-PL-IRR:see-TR-TMP) *let us (exc.) just see*.

The other suffix, -*no*, has a force which "is a little more difficult to define. Its main use is ? separative, disjunctive" (Capell MSa:62). Capell's examples include *ve-no* (*go-SEP*) *go off on one's own*, *velam-no* (*come-SEP*) *turn aside*, and *via-no* (*pass:away-SEP*) *pass away by itself*.

2.1.7. Verb serialisation

Verb serialisation plays an important part in Sie, but again this is an aspect which is at present poorly understood. A number of forms identified in Capell's grammar as verbal prefixes are in fact verbs, and some of these occur in series with a following verb (as opposed to occurring with a following verb with its own prefixes in a different clause). In addition, a causative-like construction is also formed by verb serialisation.

The forms identified by Capell as prefixes but which, it appears, are verbs appearing as the first member of a serial construction, are *ovum precede*, *tor* (with allomorphs *ror* and *gor*) *perform freely*, *morog temporarily assume a state*, and *vlu perform an action by coming and going*. Some examples from Capell's MS grammar:

- | | | |
|------|--|--|
| (57) | <i>g-ampum-ampelam</i> | <i>y-ovum-tor-ogoh</i> |
| | 3SG:A-IRR: <i>precede</i> -IRR: <i>come</i> | 3SG:B- <i>precede</i> - <i>lead-us</i> :INC |
| | <i>He will come first</i> | <i>He led us (inc.) first</i> |
| | <i>k-u-tor-vai</i> | <i>yi-morog-avan-lap</i> |
| | 2PL:A-PL- <i>perform</i> : <i>freely-receive</i> | 3SG:B- <i>temporary</i> : <i>state-walk</i> -TMP |
| | <i>You (pl.) have received freely</i> | <i>He advanced a little</i> |
| | <i>iror d-u-m-vlu-senti iyi ra lou</i> | |
| | <i>they</i> 3PL:B-PL-MP- <i>come</i> :and: <i>go-escort him LOC ship</i> | |
| | <i>They escorted him to the ship</i> | |

The causative construction uses a kind of verb serialisation, employing the verb *vi make* + pronoun object + verb. I have few examples of this construction, and Capell's examples tend to concentrate on the one verb 'save'. A description of the causative in Sie is complicated by a number of morpho-phonemic peculiarities:

1. Although the base of the first verb is *vi*, this form does not occur as a free form; the verb *make* in Sie is *ompi* (apparently the irrealis form of **vi*), but *ompi* has its own irrealis form *n-ompi*.
2. The form of the causative verb changes depending on both the tense and the following pronoun. Capell's MS gives the following list of forms:

<i>evi-</i>	before <i>yau me</i>
<i>am-</i>	before all except <i>-yau</i> , in future
<i>om-</i>	before second person, first person non-singular, past tense
<i>ov-</i>	before third person, past tense
3. The third person pronouns have special forms *-gor* (sg.) and *-goror* (pl.) in this construction.

Using the verb *eyowar save*, the following examples can be given:

- | | | |
|------|---------------------------------|---|
| (58) | <i>g-am-evi-yau-eyowar</i> | <i>yag-am-kik-eyowar</i> |
| | 1SG:A-PRES-CAUS- <i>me-save</i> | 1SG:A-CAUS- <i>you</i> :SG- <i>save</i> |
| | <i>He saves me</i> | <i>I will save you (sg.)</i> |

This construction needs further study.

2.2. Verb phrase structure

Given the extraordinary complexity of the verb itself, it will come as a relief to know that the verb phrase is very simple in structure: basically, most verb phrases consist of a verb alone, but the verb may be followed within the phrase by adjectives or other adverbial elements. Very few examples of verb phrases like these have actually been elicited, largely because so much information expressed in other languages by adverbials can be incorporated into the verb itself in Sie. Only one or two examples of verb + adjective/adverbial will be given here:

- | | | |
|------|--|---|
| (59) | yag-am-n-omp-i armai
1SG:S-PRES-IRR- <i>do</i> -TR <i>good</i>
<i>I do it well</i> | g-omp-i ur
3SG:A- <i>do</i> -TR <i>bad</i>
<i>He did it badly</i> |
|------|--|---|

3. NOMINAL MORPHOLOGY AND THE NOUN PHRASE

This section examines the structure of the noun phrase in Sie, and the morphological structure of elements which compose or appear in the noun phrase, including nouns themselves, pronouns, numerals, demonstratives, and adjectives. In addition, the grammar of possession and the structure of coordinate noun phrases will also be examined in this section.

3.1. Nouns

Over sixty percent of Sie nouns will be found in the accompanying vocabulary with initial n. This n was historically an article (deriving from Proto-Oceanic *na) which, however, has become fused with the noun in Sie, as indeed it has in the other languages of Southern Vanuatu. Thus fusion, then, means that noun-initial n is no longer analysable as an article; and although there is evidence that noun-initial i and u may also have functioned as articles at some stage, these have also fused with the following noun. There are thus no articles in Sie.⁹

3.1.1. Pluralisation

Three forms of the plural are possible for most nouns: a collective plural suffix -su, an indefinite plural prefix ovn- (becoming ov- before noun-initial n), and a definite plural marked by both the prefix ovn- and the suffix -su. Examples:

- | | | |
|------|--------------------------------------|--|
| (60) | nur
nur-su
ov-nur
ov-nur-su | (a) <i>place</i>
<i>every place, all places, everywhere</i>
<i>places</i>
<i>the places</i> |
|------|--------------------------------------|--|

Pluralising affixes are not used, however, when the plurality of the noun is marked in some other way in the noun phrase, as, for example, by a numeral:

- | | | |
|------|--|---|
| (61) | ovn-lou
PL- <i>canoe</i>
<i>Canoes</i> | lou duru
<i>canoe two</i>
<i>Two canoes</i> |
|------|--|---|

*ovn-lou duru
PL-canoe two

*ovn-lou-su duru
PL-canoe-PL two

Nouns which are kinship terms have a special plural formation, involving the suffixation of -me and the optional prefixation of r- (becoming re- before a consonant: see 1.6. above). Neither of us is aware of any semantic distinction carried by the presence or absence of r-. The examples below show noun roots with possessive pronominal suffixes (which are discussed in 3.6. below) and the plural affix:

- (62)
- | | |
|---------------|----------------------|
| itm-ed | <i>their father</i> |
| itm-ed-me | <i>their fathers</i> |
| r-itm-ed-me | <i>their fathers</i> |
| vevn-uŋ | <i>my sister</i> |
| vevn-uŋ-me | <i>my sisters</i> |
| re-vevn-uŋ-me | <i>my sisters</i> |

The noun *dinm-* mother is exceptional in allowing only the suffix -me but not the prefix r-:

- (63)
- | | |
|----------------|----------------------|
| dinm-ed | <i>their mother</i> |
| dinm-ed-me | <i>their mothers</i> |
| *re-dinm-ed-me | |

Although my own data suggest that the noun *nit-* child may not take this form of pluralisation at all, Capell's MS shows this noun used with suffix -me (though not with the prefix r-):

- (64)
- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| nit-ni | <i>his son</i> |
| nit-ni-me | <i>his sons</i> |
| *re-nit-ni-me | |

Other personal nouns show a number of irregular plural formations, generally involving loss of the fused article n and the prefixing of ov- (not ovn-); examples:

- (65)
- | | | |
|---------|--------------------|----------|
| neteme | <i>man</i> | ovateme |
| nahiven | <i>woman</i> | ovahiven |
| nalau | <i>child</i> | ovalau |
| nalalau | <i>young child</i> | ovalalau |

3.1.2. Formation

A verb or adjective may be nominalised by prefixing n- (c.f. the discussion regarding noun-initial n above). Examples:

- (66)
- | | | | |
|--------|--------------------|----------|------------------------|
| avan | <i>to walk</i> | n-avan | <i>a walk, walking</i> |
| omurep | <i>to be alive</i> | n-omurep | <i>life</i> |

Instrumental nouns are formed by prefixing wor- to verbs:

- (67)
- | | | |
|----------|------------|--|
| wor-oghi | (INS-see) | <i>something for seeing, telescope</i> |
| wor-avan | (INS-walk) | <i>shoes</i> |
| wor-tai | (INS-hit) | <i>something for hitting</i> |
| wor-eiti | (INS-tie) | <i>a bond</i> |

A possible change in progress is loss of initial /w/:

- (68)
- | | | |
|----------|--------------|-----------------|
| or-ahuwo | (INS-paddle) | <i>a paddle</i> |
|----------|--------------|-----------------|

A number of other nouns with initial *or-* have been recorded, but thus far no corresponding verb has been elicited: *oretete broom*, *orisampuwi comb*, *orsentu crutch*, *ortamprag pillow*.

3.2. Pronouns

Two major pronoun types may be recognised in Sie: personal and interrogative. Members of other word-classes (especially numerals and demonstratives) may often function pronominally, as the result of the deletion of the head noun of a noun phrase in a particular context, but these are specialised uses and will not be discussed here. This section concentrates on the pronouns proper.

3.2.1. Personal pronouns

Personal pronouns occur in Sie in a number of forms. Suffixes marking the person and number of the possessor will be discussed in section 3.6. below; prefixes marking (inter alia) person and number of the subject, and suffixes marking person and number of the object, were discussed in connection with other aspects of verbal morphology in section 2. We are thus concerned here with the free or 'focal' pronouns only.

The focal pronouns in Sie may function as the sole constituent of a noun phrase subject, or a disjunctive noun phrase. As subject, they are optional, since person and number of the subject are also marked, obligatorily, by verbal prefixes. When they do occur in this position, they are emphatic, as the following examples illustrate:

- | | | |
|------|--|---|
| (69) | yog-ogh-i
1SG:A-see-TR
<i>I saw it</i> | yau yog-ogh-i
<i>I</i> 1SG:A-see-TR
<i>I saw it, It was me who saw it</i> |
|------|--|---|

The focal pronouns in Sie distinguish singular and plural numbers and, within the plural, distinguish inclusive and exclusive first person. The focal pronouns are:

(70)	Singular	Plural
1 inc.		koh
1 exc.	yau	kam
2nd	kik	kimi
3rd	iyi	iror

Unlike the languages of Tanna and Aneityum, no dual or trial pronoun forms occur. The plural pronouns may be followed by a numeral – e.g. *koh duru we two* (inc.), *iror dehel they three* – but these forms are not distinct pronouns, merely pronoun followed by numeral in exactly the same way as their English translations.¹⁰

Like nouns, focal pronouns may take the collective plural suffix *-su* (though not the plural prefix *ovn-*). Compare *kimi you* (pl.) with *kimi-su all of you*.

There are no reflexive pronoun forms as such. Reflexive constructions are usually encoded (a) by the verbal prefix *pen-* (cf. 2.1.3. above) or (b) by using subject prefixes and object suffixes of the same person and number, as in:

- (71) yau yog-ogh-iyau
 I 1SG:A-see-me
 I saw myself

A reflexive sense, probably emphatic, is also apparently conveyed by the use of the particle *pe* between repeated forms of the focal pronoun, as in *yau pe yau I myself*. Unfortunately, there are no clear examples of this usage in Capell's MS, and I did not encounter it in my own work.

3.2.2. Interrogative pronouns

The interrogative pronouns are *me who?* and *se what?*. The pronoun *me* functions, without any formal change, as subject, object, and possessive:

- (72) me g-ogh-ogoh? k-ogh-i me?
 who 3SG:A-see-us:INC 2SG:A-see-TR who
 Who saw us (inc.)? Whom did you (sg.) see?
- nimo en me?
 house POSS who
 Whose house?

Capell gives a form *me-e-me* for the plural of *me*, as well as forms *wa-me* (singular), *wa-me-e-me* (plural) meaning *who of us?*.

The interrogative *se what?* was apparently originally *tie* (or *sie*). Again, it is used in all grammatical contexts without formal change:

- (73) se mah? se g-am-n-omp-i?
 what PREF what 3SG:A-PRES-IRR-do-TR
 What is that? What is he doing?

No plural form is known. Capell gives a form *mu(n)tie what else?*, which would presumably be *muse* or *munse* if indeed it still occurs in the language.

3.3. Demonstratives

Capell's and my data disagree on the position of the demonstratives within the noun phrase, as will become clear below. There is also not complete agreement between us on the forms of the demonstratives. However, it seems safe to say that at least the following can be recognised:

- (74) iyimo ~ imo this, near speaker
 iyihi this, here, near speaker
 mori nimpe this/that, near addressee
 iyuwi that, at some distance
 iyempe that, yonder
 mah this/that, previously referred to, given information
 mori this/that, previously referred to, given information

Examples:

- (75) nimo iyimo ov-nimo iyimo
 house this PL-house this
 This house These houses

nvat mori nimpe
stone that just:there
That stone (near you)

neteme iyempe
man that
That man

The demonstratives mah and mori produce a certain amount of confusion. Capell does not list mah, although he does give a form ima *that* which I think is the same form. On the other hand, I have only found mori used in the role of relative pronoun (cf. 6.1.2.), which is only one of the roles Capell assigns to it. Capell does not illustrate mori in its purely demonstrative use, so we cannot give examples of that form. Examples of mah from my own data are given below:

- (76) nimo mah
house PREF
This house (i.e. the one you know I'm going to)
- neteme mah
man PREF
That man (you know who I'm talking about)
- se mah?
what PREF
What is that? What about it?

3.4. Numerals and quantifiers

3.4.1. Numerals

Sie possesses an imperfect decimal system, with the numerals 'seven' to 'nine' being formed by compounds on the base sukrim *five*, but with separate forms for 'six' and 'ten'. The basic numerals are:

- | | | | | |
|------|-----------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| (77) | hai ~ sai | <i>one</i> | mehkai | <i>six</i> |
| | duru | <i>two</i> | sukrim-duru | <i>seven</i> |
| | dehel | <i>three</i> | sukrim-dehel | <i>eight</i> |
| | dvat | <i>four</i> | sukrim-dvat | <i>nine</i> |
| | sukrim | <i>five</i> | narwolem | <i>ten</i> |

Numerals between 11 and 19 are formed with the linking particle tavoqi, which may be the verb tavoqi *to grope for*. Examples:

- (78) narwolem-tavoqi-hai 11
 narwolem-tavoqi-sukrim-dvat 19

Numerals above 20 are formed by narwolem + numeral, as narwolem duru for 20, narwolem dehel for 30, etc.

In addition to the form hai ~ sai for *one*, two other forms should be noted: haimo is used for *one* only in counting; haiteven is *one* and only *one*.

The forms in (77) show what appears to be a prefix d- to the numerals two, three and four. This prefix also occurs on the interrogative quantifier deve ~ dve *how many/much?*, and may well be historically related to the third person plural (Set B) verbal subject prefix.¹¹

Apart from a special form ra novum *first*, the ordinals are formed by suffixing -oqi (probably the transitive suffix) to the cardinal forms, e.g.:

- | | | |
|------|-----------|-------------------------------------|
| (79) | dur-oŋi | <i>second</i> (note vowel deletion) |
| | dehel-oŋi | <i>third</i> |
| | dvat-oŋi | <i>fourth</i> |

A distributive suffix -ŋo may be added to the cardinal numerals, and also to the interrogative deve:

- | | | |
|------|---------|--------------------------|
| (80) | duru-ŋo | <i>two of each</i> |
| | deve-ŋo | <i>how many of each?</i> |

3.4.2. Quantifiers

The interrogative quantifier deve *how many/much?*, with its alternative form dve, has already been mentioned in 3.4.1. above. Its use is illustrated below:

- (81) talnevie deve k-am-aŋkil-i n-ogh-i?
taro how:much 2SG:A-PRES-IRR:know-TR NOM-see-TR
How much taro can you (sg.) see?
- deve lou?
how:much canoe
How many canoes?

Other quantifiers are:

- | | | |
|------|---------------|-----------------|
| (82) | ovon | <i>all</i> |
| | omwisu | <i>all</i> |
| | tamah | <i>many</i> |
| | oroŋ-tou | <i>many</i> |
| | noŋkon | <i>some</i> |
| | tawi-oroŋ-veh | <i>few</i> |
| | ton-tamah | <i>few</i> |
| | tawi | <i>no, none</i> |

3.5. Adjectives

Adjectives in Sie generally follow the noun they qualify (as in nimo virog (*house small*) *a small house*). Unlike other languages of Southern Vanuatu, where adjectives may take verbal prefixes or particles and, in some cases, are often difficult to distinguish from verbs, Sie adjectives form a distinct class, and may not take verbal affixes. There are, however, three aspects of the morphology of adjectives which require discussion.

Pluralisation of adjectives is optional in noun phrases, as such phrases as ov-nimo virog (PL-*house small*) *small house* have been recorded. An adjective may be pluralised, however, by

- the suffix -ŋo, which reduces to -o after a root ending in ŋ;
- the prefix ovn-, becoming ov- before n and o- before v;
- a combination of ovn- and -ŋo.

Examples:

(83)	Singular		Plural		
	potgon	<i>short</i>	potgon-ŋo,	ovn-potgon,	ovn-potgon-ŋo
	agumsu	<i>black</i>	agumsu-ŋo,	ovn-agumsu,	ovn-agumsu-ŋo
	virog	<i>small</i>	virog-ŋo,	o-virog,	o-virog-ŋo
	oroŋ	<i>big</i>	oroŋ-o,	ovn-oroŋ,	ovn-oroŋ-o

One exception to these rules is the following:

(84)	metetalam	<i>old</i>	ovotetalam-ŋo
------	-----------	------------	---------------

Examples:

(85)	ov-nimo oroŋ	}	<i>big house</i>
	ov-nimo oroŋ-o		
	ov-nimo ovn-oroŋ		
	ov-nimo ovn-oroŋ-o		

We do not know what semantic difference there is, if any, between the various forms of the plural.

The second point which requires discussion is the prefix *it-*. We are unable to give a clear meaning for this prefix, which often occurs on adjectives both in citation forms and in text. The following examples, however, give some clues:

(86)	virog	<i>small</i>	it-virog	<i>younger child, father's brother</i>
	nom	<i>quick</i>	it-nom	<i>speed</i>

This prefix is also found changing nouns into adjectives:

(87)	natman	<i>man</i>	it-natman	<i>male</i>
	nahiven	<i>woman</i>	it-nahiven	<i>female</i>

Historically, this prefix *it-* seems to be related to the adjectival prefixes *ir-*, *il-* in Lenakel and South-west Tanna respectively. In those languages, the prefix serves an identificatory function, as in Lenakel *owas old*, *ir-owas the old one*; *vi new*, *ir-vi the new one*; etc. (cf. Lynch 1978b, 1982b). The problem in Sie appears to be that a number of adjectives have fused this prefix, such that the root no longer seems to occur freely; for example, we can identify the adjectives *itvau new* and *itronko straight*, but no corresponding forms **vau* and **ronko*.

The third point concerns a prefix *n-*, probably the nominalising prefix (cf. 3.1.2. above). Most adjectives, or at least most vowel-initial adjectives, are given in citation form with initial *n*, and this *n* is sometimes retained when adjectives are used in noun phrases:

(88)	kuri agumsu	or	kuri n-agumsu
	<i>dog black</i>		<i>dog NOM?-black</i>
	<i>A black dog</i>		

Comparison of adjectives uses the form *momu more* placed before the adjective, with the locative preposition *ra* (*ira-* before a pronoun suffix) translating *than*:

- (89) momu armai ira-n
more good LOC-3SG
Better than it

A superlative sense is conveyed by placing the adverb wogon *only* or idowi *always* after momu + adjective; no data is at hand on the marking of the following prepositional phrase.

3.6. Possession

As in most languages of Oceania, the grammar of possession is not simple. The alienable/inalienable distinction, so common in Melanesia, is found also in Sie. Sie does not, however, show the same kind of complexity of alienable possessive structures as do other Oceanic languages, although the Sie system does show evidence of apparent dialect-mixture, or even of influence from the extinct Sorung. Like other Melanesian languages, Sie shows suffixation of pronominal forms directly to nouns in inalienable constructions, and suffixation of these pronominal forms to possessive morphemes in alienable constructions. Possession of nouns by nouns is handled somewhat differently, and it will be convenient to divide this treatment of possession into two sections, concerned respectively with pronoun and noun possessors. When the basic grammar of possession has been discussed, we will then examine the complex morphophonemic changes involved.

3.6.1. Pronominal possession

Inalienable. Inalienable possession of a noun by a pronoun requires the suffixation to the noun of special pronominal forms. These forms are:

(90)	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1 inc.		-nt
1 exc.	-ŋ	-mam
2nd	-m	-mi
3rd	-n	-d

These forms are illustrated in the following possessive paradigm of the noun noru- *hand*:

(91)	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1 inc.		noru-nt
1 exc.	noru-ŋ	noru-mam
2nd	noru-m	noru-mi
3rd	noru-n	noru-d

Alienable. Alienable possession of a noun by a pronoun requires the suffixation of pronominal forms to a possessive morpheme, this compound following the noun. Unlike the other non-Polynesian languages of Southern Vanuatu, Sie does not distinguish between eating, drinking, and general alienable possessive subtypes.¹² It does, however, show two distinct possessive morphemes which, as far as we are able to tell, are in free variation with each other, at least as far as pronominal possession is concerned. One is the form hor- (with an allomorph ihe- in the third person), which takes the suffixes in (90) above,

(with certain vowel additions when the suffix is a single consonant); the other is the morpheme *en-*, which takes suffixes which are closer in form to object suffixes to verbs. The forms of each are:

(92)	<u>Singular</u>		<u>Plural</u>	
1 inc.			horent	enoḡkoh
1 exc.	horuḡ	eniau	hormam	enoḡkam
2nd	horom	enoḡkik	horim	enoḡkimi
3rd	ihen	eni	ihed	eniror

As noted above, these forms follow the possessed nouns in alienable possessive constructions; examples:

(93)	nimo horuḡ	}	my house	lou ihed	}	their canoe
	nimo eniau			lou eniror		

3.6.2. Nominal possession

Inalienable. When a noun is possessed inalienably by another noun, the possessed noun takes the third person pronominal suffix corresponding in number to the possessor noun; the order of elements is possessed + possessor. Examples:

(94)	noru-n neteme	ov-noru-d ovateme
	<i>hand-his man</i>	<i>PL-hand-their PL:man</i>
	<i>The man's hand</i>	<i>The men's hands</i>

Alienable. Alienable possessive constructions also show the order possessed + possessor. In these constructions, however, the two nouns are linked by the possessive particle *en*.¹³ Examples:

(95)	nimo en neteme	ovn-lou en ovateme
	<i>house POSS man</i>	<i>PL-canoe POSS PL:man</i>
	<i>The man's house</i>	<i>The men's canoes</i>

Neither Capell's nor my data show any particle corresponding to the *horuḡ* or *ihen* forms of the pronominal possessive being used in nominal constructions in Sie.

3.6.3. Morphophonemics and irregularities

A number of morphophonemic changes take place when certain of the suffixes, which are consonant-initial, are attached to noun or possessive-morpheme roots which are consonant-final. This section deals with those changes, and also with certain other irregularities in possessive forms in Sie.

Regular morphophonemic changes. There are a number of regular morphophonemic changes which take place in the context of the suffixation of pronominal forms to nominal or possessive bases. These are detailed below.

(a) Regular vowel insertion.

In section 1.6. above, we noted that there is a regular vowel-insertion rule in Sie by which /e/ (or /o/ if one of the consonants is a velar) is inserted between two members of an unacceptable consonant cluster. Two such unacceptable clusters in Sie are final CC and final Cnt; in each case, a vowel must be inserted after the first C of the cluster. Thus possessive suffixes like

-ŋ '1SG', -m '2SG', -n '3SG', -nt '1INC:PL', and -d '3PL' would require that such a vowel be inserted after a consonant-final root. In the case of the last three of the suffixes mentioned above, this is what in fact happens:

(96)	Underlying	Surface	
	etm-n	etmen	<i>his father</i>
	dinm-d	dinmed	<i>their mother</i>
	neluam-nt	neluament	<i>our (inc.) tongues</i>

The suffixes -ŋ '1SG' and -m '2SG', however, do not behave regularly as far as this vowel insertion is concerned. The normal expectation would be for /e/ to be inserted before -m and for /o/ to be inserted before the velar -ŋ. In fact, the vowels so inserted are /u/ before -ŋ and /o/ before -m. Examples:

(97)	Underlying	Surface	
	vevn-	vevnuŋ	<i>my sister</i>
	nit-	nituŋ	<i>my child</i>
	nimt-	nimtuŋ	<i>my eye</i>
	vevn-m	vevnom	<i>your (sg.) sister</i>
	nit-m	nitom	<i>your (sg.) child</i>
	nimt-m	nimtom	<i>your (sg.) eye</i>

(b) /n/-final roots

Roots which end in /n/ lose this /n/ before any suffix which begins either with /n/ or a prenasalised stop (with initial phonetic [ŋ] – i.e. before -n '3SG', -nt '1INC:PL', and -d '3PL'. The examples below show the first and second persons singular as 'control' forms, and then the affected forms.

(98)	Underlying	Surface	
	vevn-ŋ	vevnuŋ	<i>my sister</i>
	vevn-m	vevnom	<i>your (sg.) sister</i>
	vevn-n	veven	<i>his sister</i>
	vevn-nt	vevent	<i>our (inc.) sister</i>
	vevn-d	veved	<i>their sister</i>
	man-ŋ	manuŋ	<i>my brother</i>
	man-m	manom	<i>your (sg.) brother</i>
	man-n	man	<i>her brother</i>
	man-nt	mant	<i>our (inc.) brother</i>
	man-d	mad	<i>their brother</i>

(c) /v/-final roots

Roots which end in /v/ change this /v/ to /p/ before any suffix which begins with /m/ – i.e. before -m '2SG', -mam '1EXC:PL', and -mi '2PL'. In this environment, the second person singular suffix -m has an allomorph -mu. Examples are given below, with the first and third singular forms as 'controls'.¹⁵

(99)	Underlying	Surface	
	nogv-ŋ	nogvuŋ	<i>my hand</i>
	nogv-n	nogven	<i>his hand</i>
	nogv-m	nogopmu	<i>your (sg.) hand</i>
	nogv-mam	nogopmam	<i>our (exc.) hands</i>
	nogv-mi	nogopmi	<i>your (pl.) hands</i>

Underlying	Surface	
av-ŋ-hai	avunhai	<i>my brother</i>
av-n-hai	avenhai	<i>his brother</i>
av-m-hai	apmuhai	<i>your (sg.) brother</i>
av-mam-hai	apmamhai	<i>our (exc.) brother</i>
av-mi-hai	apmihai	<i>their brother</i>

(d) /m/-final roots

Roots which end in /m/ lose this /m/ before a suffix beginning with /m/.

Examples:

(100)	Underlying	Surface	
	etm-d	etmed	<i>their father</i>
	etm-m	etom	<i>your (sg.) father</i>
	etm-mam	etmam	<i>our (exc.) father</i>
	etm-mi	etmi	<i>your (pl.) father</i>
	dinm-d	dinmed	<i>their mother</i>
	dinm-m	dinom	<i>your (sg.) mother</i>
	dinm-mam	dinmam	<i>our (exc.) mother</i>
	dinm-mi	dinmi	<i>your (pl.) mother</i>

(e) /t/-final roots

Two noun roots, whose underlying forms are nit- *child* and nimt- *eye*, show a number of irregularities, and the full paradigms are quoted here:

(101)	nit- <i>child</i>	nimt- <i>eye</i>
1 sg.	nitug	nimtug
2 sg.	nitom	nimtom
3 sg.	nitni	nipmi
1 inc.pl.	nitnint	nimint
1 exc.pl.	nitnomam	nimtomam
2 pl.	nitmi	nimtomi ~ nimetmi
3 pl.	nitnid	nimid

These forms show a number of irregularities, but one area of consistency is the third person singular allomorph -ni. Thus nit- + -n > nitni, and nimt- + -n probably went first to **nimtni, with later assimilatory and other changes giving nipmi.

Irregularities. Certain irregularities were alluded to immediately above, in the paradigms for nit- *child* and nimt- *eye*: in both forms, note particularly the intrusive /o/ (for expected /e/) in the first exclusive plural; with nit-, there is an intrusive /n/ in all plural forms except the second person; with nimt-, there is loss of /t/ in the first inclusive and third persons, and variable forms for the second person plural. Some other irregularities are:

a) The forms etm- *father* and dinm- *mother* show irregular vocative-like forms for the first person singular possessed form. Instead of the expected **etmug and **dinmug, the forms nate *my father* and namou *my mother* are used, not only as address terms, but also as reference terms.

b) The noun dinm- *mother* shows an irregular third person singular form dinme (for expected **dinmen).

c) The noun mogop- *grandchild* shows an irregular second person singular form mogum (for expected **mogopom, or perhaps **mogopmu).

d) The noun 'tongue' shows apparent morphological conditioning of the root. The forms are:

(102)	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
1 inc.		neluament
1 exc.	neluapmuḡ	neluapmam
2nd	neluapmu	neluapmi
3rd	neluamen	neluamed

The third singular, first inclusive, and third plural forms suggest a root *neluam-*. The two second person forms and the first inclusive form would be consistent with roots of the form *neluap-*, *neluapm-*, or *neluav-*. The first singular form suggests a root *neluapm-*.

Full paradigms are not available for a great number of nouns. The number of irregular forms may indeed be greater than given here, and other morpho-phonemic processes may also be operating. Again, further research is necessary in this area of Sie grammar.

3.7. Noun phrase structure

A number of statements regarding the structure of the noun phrase have already been made in connection with the various word classes discussed above, and quite a few examples of noun phrases of various types have already been given. This section discusses in more detail the structure of the noun phrase in Sie.

As was mentioned in connection with the discussion on demonstratives above (section 3.3.), Capell's and my data disagree on the position of the demonstratives within the noun phrase: Capell states that the demonstratives usually precede the noun they qualify, whereas my data show demonstratives following the noun. Thus Capell has phrases like *imo neteme* (*this man*) *this man*, *ima nei* (*that tree*) *that tree*, whereas I have phrases like *neteme imo* (*man that*) *that man*, *nei mah* (*tree that*) *that tree*. Since I am using examples largely from my own data in this sketch, I will follow the analysis I have proposed; the reader should, however, be aware of the conflict involved.

Generally, the head noun of the noun phrase is the first element in the phrase, with demonstratives, adjectives, numerals, quantifiers, and possessives following the noun. There are, however, a few cases of such items preceding the head noun of a noun phrase. These are:

(a) *hai*, the numeral *one*, which is also used to mark indefiniteness, as in:

(103) *hai neteme go-velam*
one man 3SG:A-come
A man came

(b) *deve* (or *dve*), the interrogative quantifier *how much?*, *how many?* may optionally precede the noun:

(104) *deve lou k-am-aḡkil-i n-ogh-i?*
how:many canoe 2SG:A-PRES-IRR:know-TR NOM-see-TR
How many canoes can you (sg.) see?

lou deve k-am-aḡkil-i n-ogh-i?
canoe how:many 2SG:A-PRES-IRR:know-TR NOM-see-TR
How many canoes can you (sg.) see?

4. OTHER PHRASES

This section examines other kinds of phrases which may appear in Sie clauses — locative phrases, temporal phrases, and so on. Since many of these phrases are noun phrases introduced by prepositions, we begin this section with an examination of the morphology of the Sie prepositions.

4.1. Prepositions

On the basis of their behaviour with a following pronoun, Sie prepositions fall into three morphological classes: those which take a possessive suffix, those which take an objective pronominal suffix, and those which take no suffix.

4.1.1. Prepositions taking possessive suffixes

A number of Sie prepositions take pronominal possessive suffixes when the noun phrase which follows consists of a pronoun. These prepositions are listed below:

(109)	ra, ira-	locative, causative
	nisgo-	benefactive
	nimsi-	benefactive
	netriho-	<i>behind (a long way)</i>
	nogori-	<i>near, between</i>

The last four forms take the appropriate possessive suffix when the goal is a pronoun, and take a third person possessive suffix of the appropriate number when the goal is a noun phrase. Examples:

(110)	ompi nisgo-nt	armai nimsi-n n-eni
	do BENF-our:INC	good BENF-its NOM-eat
	Do it for us (inc.)	Good for eating
	netriho-n nimo	nogori-n iyi
	far:behind-its house	near-his he
	A long way behind the house	Near him

The remaining preposition in this group occurs as ra (rai with some speakers) before non-pronouns:

(111)	go-vai ra nimo	yag-ampe rai stoa
	3SG:A-take LOC house	1SG:A-IRR:go LOC store
	He took it from the house	I'll go to the store

With a following pronoun, however, the form of the preposition to which possessive suffixes are attached is ira-:

(112)	mampung ira-ŋ	yag-ampe ira-n
	front LOC-my	1SG:A-IRR:go LOC-his/its
	In front of me	I'll go to it/him

4.1.2. Prepositions taking object suffixes

Three prepositions take objective pronominal suffixes when their goal is a pronoun:

- (113)
- | | |
|---------|---------------------|
| qi, oqi | instrumental |
| towoni | privative (animate) |
| poqi | dative |

The forms used with noun phrase goals are qi, towoni, and poq or poqi respectively:

- (114)
- yag-am-adv-i nei qi nake
1SG:A-PRES-IRR:cut-TR tree INS axe
I am cutting the tree with an axe
- go-vai towoni etm-en
3SG:A-take PRIV father-his
He took it from his father
- yag-am-n-am poq(i) av-uq
1SG:A-PRES-IRR-talk DAT friend-my
I am talking to my friend

When the goal of these prepositions is a pronoun, however, they take object suffixes. The actual forms are:

- (115)
- | | Instrumental | Privative | Dative |
|-----------|--------------|-----------|--------|
| 1 sg. | wogoyau | towoniyau | poyau |
| 2 sg. | woqkik | tomnog | ponog |
| 3 sg. | oqi | towoni | poqi |
| 1 inc.pl. | woqkoh | towonogoh | poqkoh |
| 1 exc.pl. | woqkam | towonogam | poqkam |
| 2 pl. | woqkum | towonogum | poqkum |
| 3 pl. | wonor | tomnor | ponor |

Examples:

- (116)
- y-em-tai-yau qi teligomti mori y-em-tai av-en-hai oqi
3SG:B-FP-hit-me INS club REL 3SG:B-FP-hit his:brother INS:it
He hit me with the club he hit his brother with
- g-ampai tomnog enwi poqkam
3SG:A-IRR:take PRIV:you:SG tell DAT:us:EXC
He will take it from you (sg.) Tell us

Capell also gives maroqi *from*, but this is probably a verb.

4.1.3. Prepositions without suffixes

Other prepositions apparently either cannot govern a pronominal goal or, if they do, do not take a pronominal suffix. These are:¹⁶

- (117)
- | | |
|---------|-------------------|
| ilat | <i>outside</i> |
| unisoq | <i>inside</i> |
| du, dal | <i>comitative</i> |
| potpot | <i>near</i> |
| isut | <i>far from</i> |
| hogkuse | <i>like, as</i> |
| taqkau | <i>opposite</i> |

Examples:

(118)	potpot nimo <i>near house</i> <i>Near the house</i>	unisoꝋ nimo <i>inside house</i> <i>Inside the house</i>
	potpot kik <i>near you:SG</i> <i>Near you (sg.)</i>	du yau COM I <i>With me</i>
	hoꝋkuse veven <i>like sister:his</i> <i>Like his sister</i>	

4.2. Locative phrases

Locative phrases are of two basic structural types: those which are introduced by a preposition, and those which are unmarked. We will examine the latter type first.

4.2.1. Locational noun phrases

Locative phrases which occur without an introductory preposition are noun phrases of a special type: they contain as the head noun either the name of a place or a locational noun such as iꝋko *here*. Examples:

(119)	yi-velam iꝋko 3SG:B-come <i>here</i> <i>He came here</i>	yi-ve empag 3SG:B-go <i>south</i> <i>He went south</i>
	yag-ampe vila 1SG:A-IRR:go <i>Vila</i> <i>I will go to Vila</i>	

Locational nouns may be divided for convenience into a number of groups. First, there are the demonstrative locatives:

(120)	iꝋko, iyihi	<i>here</i>
	nimpe	<i>just there</i>
	iyuwi	<i>there (nearby)</i>
	ilampe	<i>over there</i>
	iyempe	<i>there (away)</i>
	mayu, mayuwi	<i>there</i>
	empelamp	<i>there</i>
	iya	<i>where?</i>

Names for compass points also function as locational nouns:

(121)	empatap	<i>north(wards)</i>
	empag	<i>south(wards)</i>
	unelogompne	<i>west(wards)</i>
	unug	<i>east(wards)</i>

There are a number of locationals with an apparent prefix u-:

(122)	uneai	<i>in the sky</i>
	untompoi	<i>in the bush</i>
	unavonavo	<i>in the garden</i>
	unmap	<i>below</i>
	untopavo	<i>in the bush</i>
	unisoŋ	<i>inside</i>

and others with an apparent prefix *ra-* or *rat-*, which may be the locative preposition:

(123)	rategompe	<i>beyond</i>
	ratelvo	<i>outwards</i>
	rategomeyep	<i>to the bottom</i>
	ratilat	<i>to the outside</i>
	ratunisoŋ	<i>inside</i>
	rategomesag	<i>upwards</i>

Other locational nouns, which do not fit into any of the groups given above, include:

(124)	potpot	<i>near, nearby</i>
	potgon	<i>near, nearby</i>
	isut	<i>far</i>
	pelag	<i>out, away</i>
	ilat	<i>outside</i>
	imeluo	<i>above</i>
	kitan	<i>behind, backwards</i>
	iluvau	<i>in the desert</i>

We could also note here a place-name prefix *pot-*. A number of these names are listed in Tryon and Gély (1979); we might instance here Potnarvin (cf. narvin *sand*), Potlusi, Potnuma, and Potnumla.

4.2.2. Preposition + noun phrase

Other locative phrases are introduced by prepositions, as some of the examples in section 4.1. above showed. The most common of these prepositions is *ra/rai/ira-*, which has both locative and directional force (depending on the semantics of the verb of the clause):

- (125) neteme yi-ve ra lou du yau
man 3SG:B-go LOC canoe COM I
The man went in a canoe with me
- nate g-am-ade ra denug
my:father 3SG:A-PRES-IRR:stay LOC garden
My father is (staying) in the garden
- yag-am-ampe ra nimo
1SG:A-PRES-IRR:go LOC house
I am going home
- yi-vai ra nimo
3SG:B-take LOC house
He took it from the house

In addition, *ra* is used with a wide range of nouns to form what have been called in other Oceanic languages 'compound prepositions' — forms translating such English prepositions as 'under', 'above', 'beside', and so on. Morphologically, such compounds are of two types: *ra* + noun, and noun + *ra*. The former type is exemplified by the following:

- | | | |
|-------|------------------|---------------------|
| (126) | <i>ra nta-</i> | <i>behind</i> |
| | <i>ra noŋu-</i> | <i>in front of</i> |
| | <i>ra nompu-</i> | <i>on top of</i> |
| | <i>ra netgo-</i> | <i>under(neath)</i> |
| | <i>ra mompo-</i> | <i>under(neath)</i> |

For example:

- | | | |
|-------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| (127) | <i>g-ote ra nta-ŋ</i> | <i>iyi ra nompu-n nimo</i> |
| | 3SG:A-stand LOC back-my | he LOC top-its house |
| | <i>He stood behind me</i> | <i>He is on top of the house</i> |

The other type, noun + *ra*, includes a number of unaffixable prepositions which optionally take a following *ra*, as well as some other nouns:

- | | | |
|-------|--------------------|--------------------|
| (128) | <i>potpot (ra)</i> | <i>near</i> |
| | <i>isut (ra)</i> | <i>far from</i> |
| | <i>mampum (ra)</i> | <i>in front of</i> |

For example:

- | | | |
|-------|---|--|
| (129) | <i>tog isut (ra) nimo</i> | |
| | <i>sea far (LOC) house</i> | |
| | <i>The sea is a long way from the house</i> | |
| | <i>iyi potpot iau or iyi potpot ira-ŋ</i> | |
| | <i>he near me he near LOC-my</i> | |
| | <i>He is near me</i> | |

Other prepositions with a locative function are *netriho-* (+ possessive) *a long way behind*, *ilat outside*, *unisoŋ inside*, *nogori-* (+ possessive) *near between*, and *taŋkau opposite*.

4.3. Temporal phrases

Temporal phrases are not marked by prepositions — at least, this seems true from the available data. A temporal phrase consists either of a temporal noun, or of a noun (with time reference) + modifiers. Examples of temporal nouns are:

- | | | | | |
|-------|------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| (130) | <i>ninŋoi</i> | <i>when</i> | <i>tawi-tantop</i> | <i>soon</i> |
| | <i>marima</i> | <i>now</i> | <i>mitnoŋ</i> | <i>early</i> |
| | <i>marima-ŋo</i> | <i>immediately</i> | <i>ratunemis</i> | <i>early</i> |
| | <i>ire</i> | <i>today</i> | <i>penuri</i> | <i>late, after</i> |
| | <i>mran</i> | <i>tomorrow</i> | <i>yetunemis</i> | <i>at midnight</i> |
| | <i>ninu</i> | <i>yesterday</i> | <i>ratemran</i> | <i>on the next day</i> |
| | <i>etuai</i> | <i>a short time ago</i> | <i>idowi</i> | <i>always</i> |
| | <i>itetuai</i> | <i>long ago</i> | | |

Days beyond tomorrow and yesterday are expressed by identical roots but different prefixes, *we-* or *wi-* for the future and *no-* for the past:

- (131)
- | | |
|--------|-----------------------------|
| we-meh | <i>day after tomorrow</i> |
| no-meh | <i>day before yesterday</i> |
| wi-na | <i>in three days' time</i> |
| no-na | <i>three days ago</i> |
| wi-mpe | <i>in four days' time</i> |
| no-mpe | <i>four days ago</i> |
| wi-sas | <i>in five days' time</i> |
| no-sas | <i>five days ago</i> |

The same form, *nementoŋ*, is used with both past and future reference: *six days ago* or *in six days' time*. The days of the week are also temporal nouns. The first two are direct borrowings from Bislama, but the others are native compounds:

- (132)
- | | |
|------------|------------------------------|
| mode | <i>Monday</i> |
| tuste | <i>Tuesday</i> |
| sensimah | <i>Wednesday</i> |
| dan dvat | <i>Thursday (= day four)</i> |
| dan sukrim | <i>Friday (= day five)</i> |
| dan eworum | <i>Saturday</i> |
| dan mido | <i>Sunday</i> |

Examples of temporal phrases of both types are given in the following sentences:

- (133)
- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| kak-l-ampelam tawi-tantop | <i>niŋoi ɡ-aŋh-oŋ?</i> |
| LEXC:A-PL-IRR:come not-long | <i>when 3SG:A-IRR:see-you:SG</i> |
| <i>We (exc.pl.) will come soon</i> | <i>When will he see you (sg.)?</i> |
| ɡ-ogh-i nate pumrog | <i>ɡ-ampelam nevi hai</i> |
| 3SG:A-see-TR my:father night | <i>3SG:A-IRR:come year one</i> |
| <i>He saw my father at night</i> | <i>He will come next year</i> |

4.4. Other phrases

The structure and marking of a number of other phrase types will be briefly examined here.

4.4.1. Dative phrases

Dative phrases are normally marked by the preposition *poŋi*:

- (134)
- | |
|-----------------------------------|
| yag-am-n-am poŋ av-uŋ |
| 1SG:A-PRES-IRR-talk DAT friend-my |
| <i>I am talking to my friend</i> |
| owi poyau |
| leave DAT:me |
| <i>Leave it for me</i> |

The verb *ovoŋi* *give*, however, which appears morphologically related to the preposition *poŋi*, does not use a preposition to mark the dative:

- (135) g-ovoŋ-kum nompŋahi duru yag-ampoŋ-i simeon nup
 3SG:A-give-you:PL pig two 1SG:A-IRR:give-TR Simeon yam
 He gave you (pl.) two pigs I will give Simeon yam(s)

The preposition towoni introduces a privative phrase, which may be considered as a kind of dative phrase. Examples:

- (136) go-vai tomnog yag-ampai towoni dinme
 3SG:A-take PRIV:you:SG 1SG:A-IRR:take PRIV mother:his
 He took it from you (sg.) I will take it from his mother

4.4.2. Instrumental phrases

Instrumental phrases are introduced by the preposition ŋi (oŋi with third singular pronoun object):

- (137) yog-orvi-su nei ŋi nake enoŋkik
 1SG:A-cut-PF tree INS axe POSS:your:SG
 I cut down the tree with your (sg.) axe

 yog-oruw-oŋi noru-ŋ oŋi
 1SG:A-wash-TR hand-my INS:it
 I washed my hands with it

4.4.3. Causative phrases

Causative phrases are introduced by the preposition ra:

- (138) g-am-n-amarat ra nomu
 3SG:A-PRES-IRR-sick CAUS fish
 He is sick because of the fish (which he ate)

4.4.4. Benefactive phrases

Benefactive phrases are introduced by one of two prepositions, nisgo- or nimsi-, both of which take possessive pronominal suffixes. The difference between the two forms is not clear. Both may be used with a human goal, as in (139):

- (139) yi-tai lou nisgo-m y-ompi nisgo-n neteme
 3SG:B-make canoe BENF-your:SG 3SG:B-do BENF-his man
 He made a canoe for you (sg.) He did it for the man

 armai nimsi-m
 good BENF-your:SG
 It's good for you (sg.)

Only nimsi-, however, seems to be used with a non-human goal:

- (140) armai nimsi-n n-eni *armai nisgo-n n-eni
 good BENF-its NOM-eat good BENF-its NOM-eat
 It's good for eating

Further investigation is needed to establish the nature of the semantic difference between these two forms.

4.4.5. Comitative phrases

Comitative phrases are introduced by the preposition *du*:

- (141) *yi-ve ra lou du yau*
 3SG:B-go LOC canoe COM me
 He went in a canoe with me

Capell's MS states that *du* occurs only with singular goals, and that *dal* is used with non-singular goals, and may also be used with singular goals as well:

- (142) *d-u-m-ve dal iyi potnarvin*
 3PL:B-PL-FP-go COM him Potnarvin
 They went with him to Potnarvin

However, the form *du* was the only one which I elicited, and this area requires further checking.

4.4.6. Similative phrases

Similative phrases are introduced by *hogkuse as, like*:

- (143) *naŋku k-em-ampe iyuwi k-aŋh-i nvat ɣ-am-antur hogkuse neteme*
 if 2SG:A-PRES-IRR:go there 2SG:A-IRR:see-TR stone 3SG:A-PRES-IRR:
 stand like person
 If you (sg.) go there, you will see a stone standing like a person.

4.5. Intensive enclitics

Brief mention should be made here of a number of intensive enclitics, which may be added to any kind of phrase (although they usually occur on noun or verb phrases). The enclitics identified are:

- (144) *-wi* general intensive
 -veh meliorative intensive
 -sag meliorative intensive, augmentative
 -idi pejorative intensive
 -sat pejorative intensive

Some examples:

- | | | | | |
|-------|------------------|-----------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| (145) | <i>n-omurep</i> | <i>life</i> | <i>n-omurep-wi</i> | <i>true life</i> |
| | <i>oroŋ</i> | <i>power</i> | <i>oroŋ-veh</i> | <i>majesty</i> |
| | <i>asor</i> | <i>call out</i> | <i>asor-sag</i> | <i>shout aloud</i> |
| | <i>neteme</i> | <i>man</i> | <i>netem-idi</i> | <i>bad man</i> |
| | <i>elasivian</i> | <i>to want</i> | <i>elasivian-sat</i> | <i>to lust</i> |

5. CLAUSES

With the exception of serial verbs as briefly discussed in section 2.1.7., clauses in Sie contain no more than one verb. Two general types of clauses are discussed in this section: verbless clauses are examined in section 5.1., and verbal clauses in 5.2.

5.1. Verbless clauses

Verbless clauses usually contain two phrases. Most commonly, the first of these is a noun phrase acting as topic, and the second is a phrase acting as comment. The comment phrase may be an adjective, a possessive, a locative phrase, a temporal phrase, or another noun phrase; other kinds of phrases occur rarely in this position. Some examples are given below, with phrase-boundaries marked by slashes:

- | | | |
|-------|--|--|
| (146) | <p>nimo imo / virog
 <i>house this / small</i>
 <i>This house is small</i></p> <p>yomug / potpot telno-n
 <i>mosquito / near ear-his</i>
 <i>There is a mosquito near</i>
 <i>his ear</i></p> <p>lui / ra denug
 <i>Lui / LOC garden</i>
 <i>Lui is in the garden</i></p> <p>se / mah?
 <i>what / that</i>
 <i>What is that?</i></p> | <p>nimo / en mei?
 <i>house / POSS who</i>
 <i>Whose house is it?</i></p> <p>iyi / inko
 <i>he / here</i>
 <i>He is here</i></p> <p>n-evip / ninu
 <i>NOM-rain / yesterday</i>
 <i>It rained yesterday,</i>
 <i>There was rain yesterday</i></p> |
|-------|--|--|

When the comment is a temporal phrase, the order comment + topic is at least as common as topic + comment:

- (147) ninu / tawi n-evip
 yesterday / no NOM-rain
 Yesterday there was no rain

Similarly, when the locative phrase is an interrogative locative, this generally precedes rather than follows the topic NP:

- (148) iya / iyi?
 where / he
 Where is he?

5.2. Verbal clauses

Verbal clauses are, however, much more common in Sie. In this section we first examine the basic intransitive and transitive clause types, and then discuss expanded clauses.

5.2.1. Basic intransitive clauses

The basic intransitive clause has the structure Subject + Verb. Where the subject is a pronoun, or a noun phrase which has appeared in an earlier part of the discourse, it may be omitted, since the person and number of the subject are marked by prefixes to the verb. Indeed, in this context, a subject is normally present only when the speaker wishes to place strong emphasis on it, as in

- (149) yau yogo-velam
 I 1SG:A-come
 I came; It was me who came

Some examples of basic intransitive clauses are given in (150) below:

- | | | |
|-------|--|---|
| (150) | narai y-agan
<i>Narai 3SG:B-angry</i>
<i>Narai was angry</i>

yogo-tu-ampe
<i>1SG:A-NEG-IRR:go</i>
<i>I won't go</i> | etm-en yi-velam
<i>father-his 3SG:B-come</i>
<i>His father came</i>

d-u-m-n-am
<i>3PL:B-PL-PRES-IRR-talk</i>
<i>They are talking</i> |
|-------|--|---|

5.2.2. Basic transitive clauses

The basic transitive clause has the structure Subject + Verb + Object. As we saw in 5.2.1., when the subject is a pronoun or a noun phrase which has already been mentioned, it may be deleted, and usually is. Similarly, when the object is a pronoun, it appears as a suffix to the verb and not as a free noun phrase; and when the object is a noun phrase which has already been mentioned, it may be omitted, though the transitive suffix remains. Thus the simplest form of the basic transitive clause is, simply, a verb.

Some examples of basic transitive clauses are given below in (151):

- | | |
|-------|---|
| (151) | etm-en yi-tai lou
<i>father-his 3SG:B-make canoe</i>
<i>His father made a canoe</i>

narai y-etni retpo-n
<i>Narai 3SG:B-burn wife-his</i>
<i>Narai burned his wife</i>

yag-am-n-eni nup
<i>1SG:A-PRES-IRR-eat yam</i>
<i>I am eating yam</i>

go-vai naif eniau
<i>3SG:A-take knife POSS:my</i>
<i>He took my knife</i>

neteme mah g-am-aŋkil-og
<i>man that 3SG:A-PRES-IRR:know-you:SG</i>
<i>That man knows you</i>

g-ogh-or
<i>3SG:A-see-them</i>
<i>He saw them</i> |
|-------|---|

5.2.3. Expansions

Basic intransitive and transitive clauses are expanded by the addition of other types of phrases (cf. section 4). The most general statement that can be made is that other phrases follow the verb in an intransitive clause and the overt object in a transitive clause. Exceptions to this general statement will be discussed later. The data we have available are insufficient to decide whether there is any rigid ordering of the phrases which follow the verb or

object; my experience with other Southern Vanuatu languages suggests that the ordering of these phrases is probably not all that significant. Some examples of expanded clauses are given below:

- (152) yag-am-n-eni nup marima
 1SG:A-PRES-IRR-eat *yam now*
 I am eating yam now
- nahiven go-tu-ve vila
 woman 3SG:A-NEG-go *Vila*
 The woman didn't go to Vila
- d-u-m-n-am poŋ av-uŋ
 3PL:B-PL-PRES-IRR-talk DAT *friend-my*
 They are talking to my friend
- go-ve ra stoa ninu
 3SG:A-go LOC *store yesterday*
 He went to the store yesterday
- nalau g-am-aduw-oŋi noru-n ŋi sop
 child 3SG:A-PRES-IRR:wash-TR *hand-his* INS *soap*
 The child washes his hands with soap
- neteme mah yi-tai sau nisgo-n av-uŋ-hai
 man PREF 3SG:B-make *spear* BENF-*his brother:my*
 That man made a spear for my brother

The unmarked dative with verbs like ovoŋi *give* was discussed above in section 4.4.1. The question of the order of phrases is irrelevant if the dative phrase is a pronoun, since the dative is marked by object suffixes to the verb and the direct object occurs as a separate noun phrase:

- (153) g-ovo-yau naif ninu
 3SG:A-give-me *knife yesterday*
 He gave me a knife yesterday

When the dative phrase is a noun phrase, however, both direct object + dative and dative + direct object orders are possible:

- | | | |
|-------|-----------------------------------|---|
| (154) | g-ovo-ŋi nvaŋ hai neteme | yag-ampo-ŋi simeon nompgahi dehel |
| | 3SG:A-give-TR <i>food one man</i> | 1SG:A-IRR:give-TR <i>Simeon pig three</i> |
| | <i>He gave a man food</i> | <i>I will give Simeon three pigs</i> |

Presumably, it is the animacy hierarchy, and not the position in the clause, which determines which of two unmarked postverbal noun phrases is the direct object and which is the indirect object.

In general, then, the structure of a Sie verbal clause is (Subject) + Verb + (Object) + (other phrases). Apart from the variations discussed above, there are two other exceptions to this general rule. One involves the fronting of certain interrogative elements, and is best left to the discussion on questions in section 6.2.3. below. The other involves temporal phrases which in Sie, as in perhaps most of the world's languages, are highly mobile. In particular, although other phrases are generally restricted to post-verbal position, temporal phrases may often occur sentence-initially as well:

- (155) dan hai neteme mah g-ampelam
day one man that 3SG:A-IRR:come
One day that man will come
- mran yag-ampe vila pruvgom g-am-n-eni nomu
tomorrow 1SG:A-IRR:go Vila *morning* 3SG:A-PRES-IRR:eats fish
Tomorrow I will go to Vila *In the morning, he eats fish*

6. SENTENCES

Sie sentences consist of one or more clauses. In this section, we first examine expanded noun phrases, some of which contain an overt embedded clause, and others of which consist of conjoined noun phrases. We then move in section 6.2. to an examination of sentence-types, using simple (one-clause) sentences as basic illustrative data. Section 6.3. looks at complex multi-clause sentences of various kinds, while the final section briefly examines sentence-introducers and other, mainly discourse-level, phenomena.

6.1. Noun phrase expansions

6.1.1. Conjoined noun phrases

Conjunction of noun phrases is of two types: coordination and alternation. Coordinate noun phrases are joined by *and*:

- (156) narai m numpwat d-u-sau unwo
 Narai and Numpwat 3PL:B-PL-come:out Unwo
 Narai and Numpwat come out (of the ground) at Unwo
- yog-oni nup m tal
 1SG:A-eat yam and taro
 I ate yam and taro

Alternative noun phrases are joined by ku:

- (157) k-ogh-i tom ku lui? neteme mah g-oni nup ku tal?
 2SG:A-see-TR Tom or Lui man that 3SG:A-eat yam or taro
 Did you see Tom or Lui? Did that man eat yam or taro?

6.1.2. Relativisation

The relative clause introducer in Sie is *mori*. As far as our data show, *mori* occurs initially in the relative clause immediately following the antecedent, and the position remains constant whether *mori* is the subject or the object of the verb in the relative clause:

- (158) k-em-aŋkil-i neteme mori g-am-n-amarat?
 2SG:A-PRES-IRR:know-TR man REL 3SG:A-PRES-IRR-sick
Do you (sg.) know that man who is sick?
- yogo-sevasi talnevie mori yau-m-owi
 1SG:A-sell taro REL 1SG:B-MP-plant
I sold the taro which I planted

6.2. Sentence-types

In this section we briefly examine the various sentence-types in Sie: statements, commands, questions, and what for want of a better term we might call subjunctive sentences. Wherever possible we have restricted the examples of each sentence-type to single-clause sentences, to allow for ease in interpretation; however, essentially the same remarks apply to multi-clause sentences.

6.2.1. Statements

Statements in Sie (as in most languages) form the unmarked class of sentences: there are no distinguishing features which mark a sentence as a statement, and most of the sentences used so far in this sketch as examples are statements. A few more examples:

- | | | |
|-------|--|---|
| (159) | <p>yag-ampe unisoŋ nimo
 1SG:A-IRR:go inside house
 <i>I'll go inside the house</i></p> <p>namou go-velam-su
 my:mother 3SG:A-come-PF
 <i>My mother has come</i></p> | <p>go-tai nompgahi eniau
 3SG:A-kill pig POSS:my
 <i>He killed my pig</i></p> <p>yau-m-tai neteme ŋi nei
 1SG:B-MP-hit man INS stick
 <i>I hit the man with a stick</i></p> |
|-------|--|---|

6.2.2. Commands

Imperative sentences differ little from statements. The major differences are (a) absence of overt subject (although a vocative introduction to the sentences is possible), and (b) the absence of person or tense/aspect prefixes to the verb. The verb in a command may, however, take negative and number prefixes and, as far as we can tell, may also take the full range of suffixes. Some examples:

- | | | |
|-------|---|---|
| (160) | <p>velam
 <i>come</i>
 <i>Come (sg.)!</i></p> <p>etu-am ponor
 NEG-talk DAT:them
 <i>Don't (sg.) talk to them!</i></p> <p>u-tu-ovoŋ-i ovateme mah nompgahi enoŋkoh
 PL-NEG-give-TR PL:man that pig POSS:our:INC
 <i>Don't (pl.) give those people our pigs!</i></p> | <p>u-ogh-or (becoming ughor by
 morpho-phonemic rules)
 PL-see-them
 <i>Look (pl.) at them!</i></p> |
|-------|---|---|

6.2.3. Questions

Two general types of questions can be identified in Sie: those which use interrogative words, and ask for specific information, and those which ask for confirmation or denial.

Information questions use one of a number of interrogative morphemes, the most common of which are listed below:

(161)	mei	who?
	se	what? ¹⁷
	niŋoi	when?
	iya, -ya	where?
	itogo	which?
	ra se (mah)	why?
	deve	how much?, how many?
	nimsi-n se	why?
	nogowo	how?

Certain of these forms show a tendency to violate the regular word order of clauses and phrases found, for example, in statements. Thus normal word order in a clause is Subject + Verb + Object + other phrases, and normal word order in a noun phrase is Noun + modifiers. However, *se what?*, *niŋoi when?*, *iya where?*, *ra se* or *ra se mah why?*, and *nimsi-n se why?* show a preference for sentence-initial position (though this is by no means a hard-and-fast rule), while *deve how much/many?* has also been shown to occur either before or after the noun (section 3.7. above).

Leaving aside for the moment the two forms *iya* and *-ya where?*, the examples in (162) illustrate some of the other Sie interrogatives:

(162)	mei go-velam?	k-ogh-i mei?
	who 3SG:A-come	2SG:A-see-TR who
	Who came?	Whom did you (sg.) see?
	se k-oni?	niŋoi g-ampe eromanga?
	what 2SG:A-eat	when 3SG:A-IRR:go Erromango
	What did you (sg.) eat?	When will he go to Erromango?
	niŋoi ko-velam?	neteme itogo g-ompi mah?
	when 2SG:A-come	man which 3SG:A-do that
	When did you (sg.) come?	Which man did that?
	ra se mah g-am-n-ompi?	
	CAUS what that 3SG:A-PRES-IRR:do	
	Why is he doing it?	
	d-u-tai nompagahi deve? (or deve nompagahi)	
	3PL:B-PL-kill pig how:many	
	How many pigs did they kill?	
	nimsi-n se k-oni nup eniau?	
	BENF-its what 2SG-eat yam POSS:my	
	Why did you (sg.) eat my yam?	

The forms *iya* and *-ya* are both used in locative questions, the former as a locational noun and the latter as a verbal suffix. The locational noun *iya* has a preference for sentence-initial position. A locative interrogative sentence may contain either or both of *iya* and *-ya*, as the following illustrate:

(163)	iya k-aŋh-or	k-aŋh-or-ya?
	where 2SG:A-IRR:see-them	2SG:A-IRR:see-them-where
	Where will you (sg.) see them?	Where will you (sg.) see them?
	iya k-aŋh-or-ya?	
	where 2SG:A-IRR:see-them-where	
	Where will you (sg.) see them?	

The second type of question, yes-no questions, generally either ask for confirmation or denial (as in English "Did he go?") or, in a slightly expanded version, present a limited range of possible answers (as in English "Will you come on Monday or Tuesday?"). This type of question may be marked in a number of different ways in Sie:

1. No change in sentence structure at all, but with rising rather than falling intonation at the end of the sentence:

(164) g-ampelam mran?
 3SG:A-IRR:come tomorrow
 Will he come tomorrow?

2. Using sentence-initial se (probably identical with se *what?*) before the statement:

(165) se neteme g-ampelam? se k-ogh-i lou duru?
 Q man 3SG:A-IRR:come Q 2SG:A-see-TR canoe two
 Will the man come? Did you (sg.) see two canoes?

3. Placing the phrase ku tawi *or not* after the statement:

(166) tom go-ve vila ku tawi?
 Tom 3SG:A-go Vila or not
 Did Tom go to Vila (or not)?

In normal speech, this question-tag is generally shortened simply to ku:

(167) k-am-amtit-oyau ku? simeon m lui d-u-velam ku?
 2SG:A-PRES-fear-me or Simeon and Lui 3PL:B-PL-come or
 Are you (sg.) frightened of me? Did Simeon and Lui come?

4. Some questions have been recorded which use features (2) and (3) together: i.e. sentence-initial se along with sentence-final ku:

(168) se g-am-ampelam ku? se k-ogh-i lou duru ku?
 Q 3SG:A-PRES-IRR:come or Q 2SG:A-see-TR canoe two or
 Is he coming? Did you (sg.) see two canoes?

The semantic difference between se, ku, and se...ku, if any, is not known to us.

5. As we saw above in section 6.1.1., a question may also be encoded by using ku *or* between two noun phrases; see the examples in (157).
6. Similarly, a question may be encoded by using ku between two clauses — essentially the kind of structure of which type (3) above is a reduction. Example:

(169) etom go-ve vila ku go-tedowi eromaga?
 your:father 3SG:A-go Vila or 3SG:A-stay Erromango
 Did your (sg.) father go to Vila or did he stay on Erromango?

6.2.4. Subjunctive sentences

Subjunctive sentences generally use one of the conditional tenses and are often introduced by an adverb indicating that there is some doubt in the speaker's mind. Some examples:

- (170) yau-p-ogh-i lui potpot yau-pe-velam
 1SG:B-COND-see-TR Lui near 1SG:B-COND-come
 I nearly saw Lui I was just about to come (but I
 didn't)

A similar sense is conveyed by *nigoi* with non-conditional verbs. Although we have seen *nigoi* as the temporal interrogative *when?*, in this sense it has a dubitative meaning (often translating Bislama *mait perhaps*):

- (171) niŋoi yag-ampelam mran niŋoi go-ve vila ninu
 perhaps 1SG:A-IRR:come tomorrow perhaps 3SG:A-go Vila yesterday
 I might come tomorrow He might have gone to Vila yesterday

6.3. Complex sentences

Complex sentences consist of more than one clause. The relationships between the clauses are varied, and in this section we examine as many types of complex sentences for which we have a reasonable amount of data.

6.3.1. Coordination

The coordinate conjunction linking clauses is *im and*. However, *im* is rarely used. The most common conjunctive mechanisms in Sie are (i) juxtaposition of clauses with no conjunction, and (ii) the use of the echo-prefix *m-*. In many coordinate sentences, both features are used simultaneously.

Echo-subject. The prefix m- marks a verb as having the same subject as the previous verb.¹⁸ This form of coordination is not quite totally obligatory, but is used in almost all cases when the subjects of two (or more) clauses are identical. When the echo-subject prefix is used, it replaces the expected person-of-subject prefix; tense/aspect markers are usually deleted under identity, but number and negative prefixes are not deleted. Some examples are given below:

- (172) yag-ampe vila m-aḡh-i av-uḡ-hai
 1SG:A-IRR:go Vila ES-IRR:see-TR my:brother
 I will go to Vila and see my brother
- g-amtit-oyau m-alou
 3SG:A-fear-me ES-run:away
 He got frightened of me and ran away
- narai m numpwat d-u-sau unwo m-u-velam m-u-ve empatap
 Narai and Numpwat 3PL:B-PL-come:out Unwo ES-PL-come ES-PL-go north
 Narai and Numpwat came out (of the ground) at Unwo and came and
 went north

When the subject of a clause is different from that of the previous clause, however, the echo-subject prefix cannot be used. Examine the following sentences which show some verbs marked with m- and others marked with a person prefix:

- (173) hai neteme go-velam m-omprog-ŋi route eniror d-u-agan
 one man 3SG:A-come ES-steal-TR thing POSS:their 3PL:B-PL-angry
 Someone came and stole their things and they got angry

yogo-tu pruvvgum lui go-velam m-etipe hai sesai
 1SG:A-get:up morning Lui 3SG:A-come ES-leave one something
*I got up in the morning and (found that) Lui had come and
 left something*

narai y-agan m-tai retpo-n m-etn-i y-au
 Narai 3SG:B-angry ES-kill:TR wife-his ES-cook-TR 3SG-burn

m-onkoko m-am-antur nvat
 ES-harden ES-PRES-IRR:stand stone

*Narai was angry and killed his wife and burned her, and she
 burned and hardened and now stands there as a stone*

This last example is particularly interesting for a number of reasons. Note firstly that the switch of subjects requires the use of the person prefix (thus y-au and not m-au), but that once the subject switch has been made, the succeeding clauses now have the same subject as the subject of the clause of which y-au is the verb, and the echo-subject prefix can again be used. The last clause is also of interest since it shows the use of the echo-subject prefix with a change of tense (m-am-antur present tense, following a string of general past tense verbs).

Other coordination. The examples given in (172) and, especially, (173) point up another feature of coordinate sentences in Sie: that conjunctions linking coordinate clauses do not normally appear. Capell's biblical examples show a few occurrences of the conjunction im, as the following example from the "Prodigal Son" story shows:

- (174) y-etur m-velam poŋ etm-en, im etm-en y-ogh-i ...
 3SG:B-stand ES-come DAT father-his, and father-his 3SG:B-see-TR ...
He arose and came to his father, and his father saw him ...

However, im is found far more frequently, both in Capell's textual data and my own, as a sentence introducer, somewhat equivalent to the English 'and then...'.

Coordinate sentences therefore rely heavily on juxtaposition of clauses without formal connectors, but with the echo-subject prefix being used to mark identity of subjects across clauses. (It should be noted here that the echo-subject prefix is used only across clause-boundaries when the clauses are of equal status; it is not used if one clause is dependent on another.)

6.3.2. Disjunction and alternation

Clauses which are disjunctive are joined by the connector kou *but*.

Examples:

- (175) yog-oni nup kou yogo-tu-agai-ŋi-veh
 1SG:A-eat yam but 1SG:A-NEG-like-TR-INT
I ate yam but I didn't like it much
 simeon go-ve vila kou lui go-tedowi eromaga
 Simeon 3SG:A-go Vila but Lui 3SG:A-stay Erromango
Simeon went to Vila but Lui stayed in Erromango

Clauses in an alternative relationship are linked by the connector ku *or*. Some examples of this type of complex sentence were given in 6.2.3. above.

6.3.3. Temporal clauses

The most common introducer of temporal clauses is *nempqon when*, as illustrated in the following examples:

- (176) *nempqon yau-m-velam, yau-m-ogh-i*
when 1SG:B-MP-come, 1SG:B-MP-see-TR
When I came, I saw him
- nempqon yag-am-ampelam, yag-aqh-i*
when 1SG:A-PRES-IRR:come, 1SG:A-IRR:see-TR
When I come, I'll see him

The connector *penuri after* implies a sequence of events which is not necessarily implied by the use of *nempqon*:

- (177) *yi-velam penuri yau-m-enwi poqi*
3SG:B-come after 1SG:B-MP-say DAT:him
He came after I told him to

In Capell's MS, a number of other temporal connectors are listed: *polku while*, *maveli until*, and *kuntawi or kutawi lest*. (For the last, cf. *ku or*, *tawi not*).

6.3.4. Locative clauses

The few examples of locative clauses elicited are introduced by *ra nur mori* (LOC place REL) *where*:

- (178) *yi-velam ra nur mori yau-m-enwi poqi m-ogu g-ampelam-wi*
3SG:B-come LOC place REL 1SG:B-MP-say DAT:him ES-say 3SG:A-IRR:come-
LOCREL
He came to the place where I told him to come to

6.3.5. Causal clauses

In Capell's MS, three conjunctions are translated as *for*, *because*: *it*, *popowo*, and *itepopowo* (possible *it-popowo*). Unfortunately, we have no data on the use of any of these. My data show the use of the form *ra* — already illustrated as locative, instrumental, and causative preposition — being used to introduce causal clauses; e.g.:

- (179) *yi-velam ra yau-m-enwi poqi*
3SG:B-come because 1SG:B-MP-tell DAT:him
He came because I told him to

Even more common, however, is the simple juxtaposition of two clauses, the second of which stands in a causal relationship with the first:

- (180) *neteme-tavu go-velam m-ogh-iyau yag-am-n-amarat*
doctor 3SG:A-come ES-see-me 1SG:A-PRES-IRR-sick
The doctor came to see me (because) I am sick
- g-alou yogo-tai*
3SG:A-run:away 1SG:A-hit:TR
He ran away (because) I hit him

6.3.6. Purpose clauses

Clauses of purpose are, according to Capell's MS, introduced by *ma* or *ma soṅku*:

- (181) *yag-ampelam ma soṅku yogo-ntaloṅ-kik*
 1SG:A-IRR:come PURP PURP 1SG:A-IRR:kill-you:SG
 I shall come in order to kill you (sg.)

6.3.7. Conditional clauses

Conditional clauses are introduced by *naṅku if*. A distinction must be made between future or real conditions and past or unreal conditions. Real conditional clauses use *naṅku* + present or future of the verb in the condition, and the future in the result:

- (182) *naṅku yag-am-ampelam, yogo-tu-aṅh-i nate*
 if 1SG:A-PRES-IRR:come, 1SG:A-NEG-IRR:see-TR my:father
 If I come, I won't see my father

 naṅku yogo-tu-m-ampelam, yogo-tu-aṅh-i nate
 if 1SG:A-NEG-PRES-IRR:come, 1SG:A-NEG-IRR:see-TR my:father
 If I don't come, I won't see my father

 naṅku yag-am-ampelam, kok-l-entai nompgahi
 if 1SG:A-PRES-IRR:come, 1INC:A-PL-IRR:kill:TR pig
 If I come, we (inc.) will kill (the) pig(s)

Unreal conditions, on the other hand, require the use of the conditional tense/aspect prefix *pe-*. As far as we can work out on the basis of data presently available, the condition, introduced by *naṅku*, takes *pe-* + present tense, while the result takes *pe-* and the oral form of the verb. Examples:

- (183) *naṅku yau-pe-m-ampelam, yau-p-ogh-i nate*
 if 1SG:B-COND-PRES-IRR:come, 1SG:B-COND-see-TR my:father
 If I had come, I would have seen my father

 naṅku yau-pe-tu-m-ampelam, yau-pe-tu-ogh-i nate
 if 1SG:B-COND-NEG-PRES-IRR:come, 1SG:B-COND-NEG-see-TR my:father
 If I hadn't come, I wouldn't have seen my father

6.3.8. Complementation

Sentential complements are extremely common in Sie textual data, especially in object position. There are a number of different ways of encoding clauses as objects of other clauses, and these will be briefly examined in this section.

Nominalisation. A clause may function as a sentential object of another clause when the verb of the object clause is nominalised by the prefix *n-*. In these cases, no other structural changes are apparent – the nominalised clause may contain objects, datives, locatives, etc. – apart from the deletion of the subject of the clause:

- (184) *yag-am-aṅkil-i n-ogh-i ovateme o-virog yempe*
 1SG:B-PRES-IRR:know-TR NOM-see-TR PL:man PL-small that
 I can see those small people

yag-am-n-agay-oni n-alou marima
 1SG:A-PRES-IRR-want-TR NOM-run:away now
I want to run away now

yau-m-anteŋ-i n-ogh-i
 1SG:B-MP-keep:on-TR NOM-see-TR
I kept on looking at it

It will be clear from these examples, however, that the option of nominalisation is available only if the subject of the embedded clause is identical with the subject of the matrix clause.

Juxtaposition. When the subjects of the two clauses are different, nominalisation is ungrammatical. Instead, the two clauses are simply juxtaposed:

- (185) yag-am-aŋkil-i lui go-ve vila
 1SG:A-PRES-IRR:know-TR Lui 3SG:A-go Vila
I know that Lui went to Vila
- yogo-tu-m-aŋkil-i lui ku simeon go-tipe hai sesai
 1SG:A-NEG-PRES-IRR:know-TR Lui or Simeon 3SG:A-leave one something
I don't know whether Lui or Simeon left something

This kind of juxtaposition of clauses may also occur when the subjects are identical. For example:

- (186) yag-am-n-agay-oni yag-ampe vila
 1SG:A-PRES-IRR-want-TR 1SG:A-IRR:go Vila
I want to go to Vila
- yag-am-n-agai-ŋi yag-ampe
 1SG:A-PRES-IRR-must-TR 1SG:A-IRR:go
I must go
- yag-am-n-agay-oni yag-aduh
 1SG:A-PRES-IRR-want-TR 1SG:A-IRR:swim
I want to swim

It is clear that juxtaposition is the most common option when the subjects of the clauses are different. When the subjects are identical, however, there are two options: juxtaposition and nominalisation. From the data available, it seems that juxtaposition expresses a certain amount of urgency, whereas nominalisation is more matter-of-fact. Informants suggested to me, for example, that the last sentence in (186) above implied that I want to swim right now; the nominalised version, yag-am-n-agay-oni n-oruh (1SG:A-PRES-IRR-want-TR NOM-swim), is a rather more general statement, possibly better expressed in English as 'I like swimming' or 'I like to swim'.

Quotation. The quotative verb in Sie is *ogu* (irrealis form *aŋku*). Its primary use is to introduce direct or indirect quotations. In this regard, it is almost always preceded by a verb of saying, and thus appears with the echo-subject prefix *m-*. Examples:

- (187) yi-velam ra nur mori yau-m-enwi poŋi m-ogu g-ampelam-wi
 3SG:B-come LOC place REL 1SG:B-MP-say DAT:him ES-say 3SG:A-IRR:come-
 LOCREL
He came to the place where I told him to come to
- nur mah iyuwi g-u-m-ampr-oni m-aŋku 'y-etn-i-wi retpo-n'
 place PREF there 3PL:A-PL-PRES-IRR:call-TR ES-IRR:say '3SG:A-burn-
 TR-LOCREL wife-his'
And they call that place 'He-burnt-his-wife-there'

Quotative as conjunction. As in a number of other languages of Melanesia (including Bislama), the quotative verb may be used not only after verbs of saying, but also after other verbs which have a clausal object (verbs like know, think, and so on). Although the distribution and limits of this usage in Sie have not yet been fully worked out, it is clear that this function of *ogu* is present in the language:

- (188) *nompunowai y-em-agay-oni m-ogu go-ntaloŋ-i netemaghi*
Nompunowai 3SG:B-FP-want-TR ES-say 3SG:A-IRR:kill-TR *brother:in:law*
Nompunowai wanted to kill his brother-in-law
- y-okil-i m-ogu netemaghi go-mah*
 3SG:B-know-TR ES-say *brother:in:law* 3SG:A-die
 He knew that his brother-in-law was dead

6.4. Sentence introducers

Since neither of us have collected a great deal of textual material, there is not much that we can say at this stage on the matter of sentence introducers. In previous sections, we have noted the use of *niŋoi* to introduce subjunctive sentences (6.2.4.), and we have referred to the use of *im* and (6.3.1.) in introducing connected action sentences in texts. Other sentence introducers are:

- (189) *ima* *then, and then*
 kou *but, but then*
 penuri *afterwards*
 maveli *later*

7. TEXTS

In this section, two Sie texts are given. The first was told to me by John Naupa, and the second by Tom Kiri. In each case, the text is given first morpheme-by-morpheme in Sie with interlinear English morpheme glosses. The text is followed by a fairly free English translation.

7.1. Narai and Numpwat

- narai m numpwat d-u-sau unwo m-u-velam m-u-ve empatap.*
Narai and Numpwat 3PL:B-PL-come:out *Unwo* ES-PL-come ES-PL-go north.
- nemlap m nedoŋ d-u-ve empag d-u-alagaŋlau m-u-ti nedu, nemi.*
Nemlap and Nendong 3PL:B-PL-go south 3PL:B-PL-beget ES-PL-produce *Nendu, Nemi.*
- nempŋon narai y-em-ne m-em-ve ralifati y-ompoglag navwolu m-tor-i*
when Narai 3SG:B-FP-leave ES-FP-go *Ralifati* 3SG:B-marry *Navwolu* ES-lead-TR
- nahiven eni m-em-ve ralifati. retpo-n y-em-tar-oni idowi nur*
woman POSS:his ES-FP-go Ralifati. wife-his 3SG:B-FP-think-TR *always place*
- eni navwolu m-ete-ŋi n-alanŋkau. narai y-agan m-tai*
POSS:her Navwolu ES-keep-TR NOM-look:around. *Narai* 3SG:B-angry ES-kill:TR
- retpo-n m-etn-i y-au m-onŋkoŋko m-am-antur nvat. naŋku*
wife-his ES-cook-TR 3SG:B-burn ES-harden ES-PRES-IRR:stand *stone. if*

k-em-ampe iyuwi k-aŋh-i nvat g-am-antur hogkuse
 2SG:A-PRES-IRR:go there 2SG:A-IRR:see-TR stone 3SG:A-PRES-IRR:stand like
 neteme. im nur mah iyuwi g-u-m-ampr-oŋi m-aŋku
 person. and place PREF there 3SG:A-PL-PRES-IRR:call-TR ES-IRR:say
 'y-etn-i-wi retpo-n'. yi-tai-wi retpo-n m-etn-i
 '3SG:B-cook-TR-LOCREL wife-his'. 3SG:B-kill:TR-LOCREL wife-his ES-cook-TR
 m-owun m-em-ve ralifati.
 ES-leave ES-MP-go Ralifati.

Free translation

Narai and Numpwat came out of the ground at Unwo and came and went north. Nemlap and Nendong went south and produced two children, Nendu and Nemi. When Narai left and went to Ralifati he got married at Navwolu and brought his wife and went to Ralifati. His wife was always thinking about her place, Navwolu, and kept looking round. Narai got angry and killed his wife and burned her, and she burned and hardened and stands as a stone. If you go there you will see a stone standing like a person. And that place there they call 'Yetniwi Retpon' (the place where he burned his wife). He killed his wife there and burned her and left and went back to Ralifati.

7.2. John Williams

yag-am-n-agay-oŋi uvuvu-ŋi ioane williams. williams i-mah
 1SG:A-PRES-IRR-want-TR tell:story-TR John Williams. Williams 3SG:B-die
 itetuai. nempŋon iyi yi-velam d-u-tu-agan poŋi ko-ra hai
 long:ago. when he 3SG:B-come 3PL:B-PL-NEG-angry DAT:him because:of one
 neteme i-velam mampum m-amprog-ŋi ov-noute eniror pai m-alou
 man 3SG:B-come first ES-steal-TR PL-thing POSS:their then ES-run:away
 y-etr-or ŋi torani talogod. nempŋon iror d-u-m-ute m-ogh-i
 3SG:B-shoot-them INS gun kill:them. when they 3PL:B-PL-FP-stay ES-see-TR
 d-u-agan poŋi d-u-m-ugu go-velam m-amprog-ŋi noute eniror.
 3PL:B-PL-angry DAT:him 3PL:B-PL-FP-say 3SG:A-come ES-steal-TR thing POSS:their.
 maveli d-u-te nevi oroŋ-tou. maveli d-u-te m-ogh-i hai tavsoŋi
 later 3PL:B-PL-stay year many. later 3PL:B-PL-stay ES-see-TR one teacher
 oroŋ i-velam. d-u-m-ugh-i d-u-m-ugu neteme mori i-velam
 big 3SG:B-come. 3PL:B-PL-FP-see-TR 3PL:B-PL-FP-say man REL 3SG:B-come
 g-u-antai m-ogh-i iror virog d-u-tamoli nam louitnantman
 3PL:A-PL-IRR:kill:TR ES-see-TR they few 3PL:B-PL-send word Louitnantman
 m-ugu ovateme g-u-ampelam m-antai.
 ES-PL:say PL:man 3PL:A-PL-IRR:come ES-IRR:kill:TR.
 hai netemeni-n uven yi-vai ovateme eni pai m-velam
 one man name-his Uven 3SG:B-take:TR PL:man POSS:his then ES-come
 m-ogh-i dou yi-velam tanti ra novahap. dan nempŋon
 ES-see-TR ship 3SG:B-come anchored LOC bay. day when
 d-u-semsimogod ikri dan tavsoŋi y-em-yep ikri
 3PL:B-PL-gather:together:them shore day teacher 3SG:B-FP-climb:down shore

d-u-vai hai nei m-ugronji m-ugu nagku g-am-n-atkisa
3PL:B-PL-take:TR one stick ES-PL:block:TR ES-PL:say if 3SG:A-PRES-IRR-keep:
going

m-anteluogi nei m-andu-ugrogi g-u-antalogi. nempgon
ES-IRR:pass:TR *stick* ES-IRR:*stay-block* 3PL:A-PL-IRR:*kill*:TR. *when*

y-em-ogovsep	rampu	nvat	d-unwi	poŋi	m-ugu	'naŋku
3SG:B-FP-come:ashore	on:top	stone	3PL:B-PL:say	DAT:him	ES-PL:say	'if

k-em-n-atkisa m-enteluŋi nei ka-l-entalog-kik'. maveli
2SG:A-PRES-IRR-keep:going ES-IRR:pass stick 1EXC:A-PL-IRR:kill-you:SG'. later

y-atkisa seluŋi d-u-m-ugu g-u-antr-i; i-vai-sag
3SG:B-keep:going pass:TR 3PL:B-PL-FP-say 3PL:A-PL-shoot-TR; 3SG:B-take:TR-up

netai m-ovuaki-su tampli m-ogu-oseluongi nei d-utr-i gi torani
book ES-pray-PF already ES-say-pass:TR stick 3PL:B-PL:shoot-TR INS gun

y-omwol ra urva mah. de y-enompe ra urva.
3SG:B-fall LOC river dead. blood 3SG:B-run LOC river.

dan nempgon i-mah-su d-urioki pelag ra urva m-u-tari wogod,
day when 3SG:B-die-PF 3PL:B-PL:carry out LOC river ES-PL-cut INS:them,

m-u-vai m-u-ve eniror-wi. ovateme ra louitnatman d-u-vai
ES-PL-*take*:TR ES-PL-*go* POSS:*their*-LOCREL. PL:*man* LOC *Louitnatman* 3PL:B-PL-*take*:TR

nisgod m-u-vai eniror-wi. nempon d-u-m-ue g-u-elgavi
BENF:*their* ES-PL-*take*:TR POSS:*their*-LOCREL. *when* 3PL:B-PL-FP-PL:*go* 3PL:A-PL-
arrive

hai nur go-m-an̄ku 'net̄ŋo-n de it-alam g-am-n-enom-wi'.
one place 3SG:A-PRES-IRR:call 'inside-its blood ID-adult 3SG:A-PRES-IRR-flow-
LOCREL'.

dan nempgon g-u-m-elgavi nur eniror-wi, nogkon ovateme d-u-ve
day when 3PL:A-PL-FP-arrive *place* POSS:their-LOCREL, *some* PL:man 3PL:B-PL-go

m-utn-i	nelat	eniror	unampo-d.	hai	neteme	n-omgai
ES-PL:cook-TR	<i>meat</i>	POSS: <i>their</i>	LOC: <i>place-their</i> .	<i>one</i>	<i>man</i>	NOM?- <i>foolish</i>

y-em-ogh-i wor-avan en ioane williams i-vai pai m-ve nampo-n
3SG:B-FP-see-TR INS-walk POSS John Williams 3SG:B-take:TR then ES-go place-his

m-etn-i tapmi m-eni m-ogh-i domo yi-vai m-elki unisoŋ
ES-cook-TR *trying* ES-eat ES-see-TR *hard* 3SG:B-take:TR ES-tie:and:hang *inside*

m-ogu nangku g-am-n-empu go-n-eni. i suma wogon.
 ES-say if 3SG:A-PRES-IRR-stink 3SG:A-IRR-eat. finished very.

Free translation

I want to tell a story about John Williams (Presbyterian missionary, killed on Erromango in 1839). Williams died long ago. When he came the people were angry at him because one man had come before him and stole their things and ran away, and shot them with his gun and killed them. When they were there, they saw that they were angry with him, and said that he had come to steal their things. Later they stayed a long time, they stayed and saw a teacher come. They said that the man had come to steal their things. They said they would kill him, but they saw that there were few of them, and they sent word to Louitnatman saying that the people should come and kill him.

One man, named Uven, brought his people and came and saw the ship anchored in the bay. When they gathered together on the shore, and when the teacher climbed down on to the shore, they took a stick and blocked his path, and said that if he kept going and passed the stick which was blocking his way they would kill him. When he came ashore and stood on a rock, they said to him, "If you keep going and pass the stick we will kill you". But he kept going and passed the stick, and they said they would shoot him; he took up the Bible and when he had prayed he passed the stick, and they shot him with a gun, and he fell dead into the river. His blood flowed into the river.

When he had died they carried him out of the river and cut him up and divided him amongst them, and they took him and went to their own places. The Louitnatman people took their share and went home. When they went they arrived at a place called 'Where the big man's blood from his inside flowed'. When they arrived at their place, some men went and cooked their meat in their own places. One stupid man saw John Williams' shoes and took them and went to his place and tried to cook and eat them, and saw that they were hard, so he took them and tied them and hung them up inside, so that when they stank they would be ready to eat. The end.

NOTES

- ¹ This decision finds reinforcement in the fact that all other known members of the Southern Vanuatu subgroup also show contrast between simple and velarised bilabial stops and nasals.
- ² The southern communalects of Sie tend to show a greater frequency of /h/, and have /h/ in a number of words where the western dialect still retains /s/. A similar shift of /s/ to /h/ seems to be beginning in Tanna as well; Lenakel, for example, allows final /s/ to be pronounced as [s] or [h], and other Tanna languages also seem to be adopting the rule (cf. Lynch 1978b).
- ³ I recorded one case of /ao/, in /naoleh/ *coconut-grater*, but I suspect that this may be a transcription error; note Capell's transcription /noete/ *things, goods, possessions* was recorded by me as /noute/.
- ⁴ Fifty-one percent of verbs are vowel-initial: 17% begin with /e/, 15% with /o/, and 14.5% with /a/. The most frequent verb-initial phoneme, however, is /t/; almost 25% of verbs in the accompanying vocabulary begin with /t/.
- ⁵ These changes were examined in some detail in Lynch 1975, where some historical explanation was attempted. The fact that the function of this oral/nasal alternation in Sie differs from its function in other Oceanic languages is not relevant to the present discussion.
- ⁶ Capell (MSa:57) suggests that there is a singular imperative prefix e- which alternates, in some unspecified way, with a zero prefix. If correct, this would suggest that the form etu- in the negative imperative singular is in fact e- (imperative singular) + tu- (negative).
- ⁷ It should be further noted that there appears to be considerable variation in Sie verbal forms: both Capell and I have recorded not only variation in certain forms between different individuals, but also variation in the same

individual's speech — particularly in the first person non-singular forms, and particularly in tenses (like the far past) which are not used very frequently.

- ⁸ It is possible, however, that -i is the 'close' transitive suffix (<POC *-i) and -ŋi is the 'remote' transitive suffix (<POC *aki[ni]) (Pawley 1973). The formal similarity between transitive suffix -ŋi and instrumental preposition ŋi suggests that this interpretation may well be correct; however, lack of adequate data — or language change? — makes it impossible to make a decision at present.
- ⁹ Capell lists a locative prefix u- in forms such as neai *sky*, u-neai *in the sky*. Whether this prefix is still productive is a matter for further investigation; however, numerous locative nouns are u-initial: Capell lists, for example, untimne *fortified place*, and uneveyegom *birthplace*, but also notes a number of other words which have an apparent u- prefix but which are not locative: ulaŋ *a fly*, umitar *rainbow*, urivine *moth*, and a number of others. Similarly, initial i- or y- occurs frequently, and in circumstances which suggest that it may have been a prefix, but again with no clearly discernible meaning or function (Capell MSA:14-15).
- ¹⁰ The dual and trial pronouns in Tanna, for example, show a pronoun root, which may never occur alone, followed by a numeral suffix which, though *historically* related to the numerals 'two' and 'three', can not be considered even as a shortened form of the numeral; in Lenakel, for example, the numerals are kiu *two* and kʰisil *three*, while the dual and trial suffixes are respectively -lau and -hel.

As we saw above (section 2.1.2.), there is a distinction between dual and plural in the first person forms of the verbal subject-marking prefixes. This suggests that Sie may well have once had at least a singular/dual/plural distinction in the pronouns, but that this has subsequently been lost.
- ¹¹ Sie thus shares with the Tanna languages a numeral prefix which is homophonous with the third person non-singular verbal prefix, the form in all the Tanna languages being k-.
- ¹² Note, for example, Lenakel nien nɪkok *my coconut (as food)*, nien nɪmwok *my coconut (as drink)*, and nien tahak *my coconut (general)* as examples of this distinction.
- ¹³ Capell gives this form as eni, which is identical to the third person singular form of the possessive. His MS grammar also gives eniror as a plural form: nimo eniror ovateme *the men's houses*. I did not record either of these two usages.
- ¹⁴ Compare this with similar developments in the other Southern Vanuatu languages. In Lenakel, for example, the regular epenthetic vowel inserted between unacceptable consonant clusters is /ɨ/ (phonetically a mid or high central vowel, depending on the previous consonant). However, in possessive constructions, -k *my* requires that a preceding epenthetic vowel be /o/, while -m *your* (sg.) requires the epenthetic vowel to be /a/.
- ¹⁵ The form av-...hai *brother* is a compound of av- *friend* + hai *one*, with the possessive pronoun being suffixed to av-.
- ¹⁶ Capell states that the comitative preposition du occurs with singular noun phrases, with dal being used with both singular and non-singular noun phrases. I have not recorded dal.

- ¹⁷ Capell gives *tie*, which is probably an older form. One of my informants used *sie* rather than *se*, suggesting a probable historical sequence *tie* > *sie* > *se* which is not yet complete.
- ¹⁸ The most complete treatment of the idea of the echo-subject prefix in the Southern Vanuatu languages may be found in Lynch in press. There it is shown that, in Lenakel at least, a kind of switch-reference similar to that encountered in Papuan languages also operates in at least some of the languages of Southern Vanuatu, though, since these languages have SVO order rather than the SOV order common in Papuan languages, the superficial resemblances between the two systems are slight. All of the Southern Vanuatu languages for which some kind of echo-subject marking has been recorded use the prefix *m-*, which is obviously historically related to POC **ma* and. Whether *m-* results from the contraction of conjunctions such as *Sie im*, however, is another question.