V'ënen Taut: Grammatical Topics in The Big Nambas Language of Malekula

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Abstract

V'ënen Taut: Grammatical Topics in The Big Nambas Language of Malekula presents a synchronic description of five different areas of the grammar of V'ënen Taut, a language spoken in Northwest Malekula in the Pacific nation of Vanuatu. The data used in this project comes from roughly three and a half hours of recorded speech collected during two field trips to the village of Tenmaru in 2013. The areas of interest for this publication are nouns and the noun phrase, verbal prefixes, verbal suffixes, post-verbal modification, and clause structure. V'ënen Taut is often mentioned in phonology publications due to its use of linguo-labial consonants. V'ënen Taut is noted amongst other Malekula languages as having very rich verbal morphology. This work recognises five distinct prefix positions, three distinct suffix positions, and pronominal enclitics. The first prefix positon is filled by morphemes which code both grammatical person and mood. V'ënen Taut makes four mood distinctions: realis, irrealis, conditional, and imperative. The fifth prefix position is filled by four morphemes which code grammatical number categories: singular, paucal, plural, and impersonal. Rather than using verbal serialisation to indicate complex events and actions, V'ënen Taut uses a well-developed echo-subject system. A wide variety of semantic modifier suffixes indicates that verbal serialisation may have been a more productive grammatical feature of V'ënen Taut in the past. In addition to the many bound verbal modifiers, there are numerous free post-verbal modifiers, some of which can be inflected by pronominal enclitics. The basic word order of V'ënen Taut is predominantly SVO; although, post-verbal arguments can be moved to a clause initial position through constituent fronting. V'ënen Taut has intransitive and transitive verbs and both of these verb classes can have their valence increased through the use of the extended participant preposition *a/an*. Grammatical relations are marked using the nominative-accusative case marking system encoded though constituent order and nominal agreement morphology on the verb.

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Abbreviations and Conventions

-	Separate morpheme
.	Separates multi-word gloss
:	Separates meanings in gloss
=	Clitic
[nmb…Ref…]	Data reference
1	First person
2	Second person
3	Third person
ABLT	Capacity ability
ANA.DEM	Anaphoric demonstrative
ASV	Associative particle
BEN	Benefactor
BGL	Bungling
BRK	Breaking
C.NUM	Century number auxiliary
CLS.DRINK	Drink classifier
CLS.FOOD	Food classifier
CLS.GEN	General classifier
CLS.RAW.FOOD	Raw food classifier
COMP	Completive
COND	Conditional
CONT	Continuative
COP	Copular
CO-REF	Relativized argument
CVR	Covering
DEM	Demonstrative
DUP	Reduplication
ES	Echo-subject
EXCL	Exclusive
EXT.P	Extended participant
FAR.DIST	Far distance
FGT	Forgetting/incorrectly
FLT	Fatal
HEADN	Head noun
HLD	Holding
IMM	Immediate
IMP	Imperative
IMPRS	Impersonal
INCL	Inclusive
INCH	Inchoative
INTS	Intensifier
IRR	Irrealis
KN	Knowledge ability
LOC	Locative
MED.DIST	Medium distance
MULT	Multiplicative
NEG	Negative
NES	Necessity
NMLP	Nominalisation prefix
NMLS	Nominalisation suffix
NSG	Non-singular
NSPC	Non-specific
NUM	Number auxiliary
OBJ	Object clitic
OBS	Obstructive
ORD.NUM	Ordinal number
PAU	Paucal
PERS	Personal article
PFV	Perfective
PL	Plural
POSS	Possessive
POSS.PT	Possessive particle
PROX	Proximity
PUNCTUAL	Punctual aspect
QUANT	Quantificational Aspect
RC	Relative clause
REAL	Realis
REL.NV1	Non-prototypical relativizer 1
REL.NV2	Non-prototypical relativizer 2
RMV	Removal
SG	Singular
SUB	Subordinator
SVR	Severance

Chapter One

Introduction

This thesis presents a synchronic description of five different grammatical topics in the V'ënen Taut language, which is spoken by the Big Nambas people of Northwest Malekula in the Republic of Vanuatu. The five areas of investigation are: nouns and nominal morphology, morphology primarily associated with intransitive verbs, morphology primarily associated with transitive verbs, verbal modification, and lastly morphosyntactic alignment in clauses.

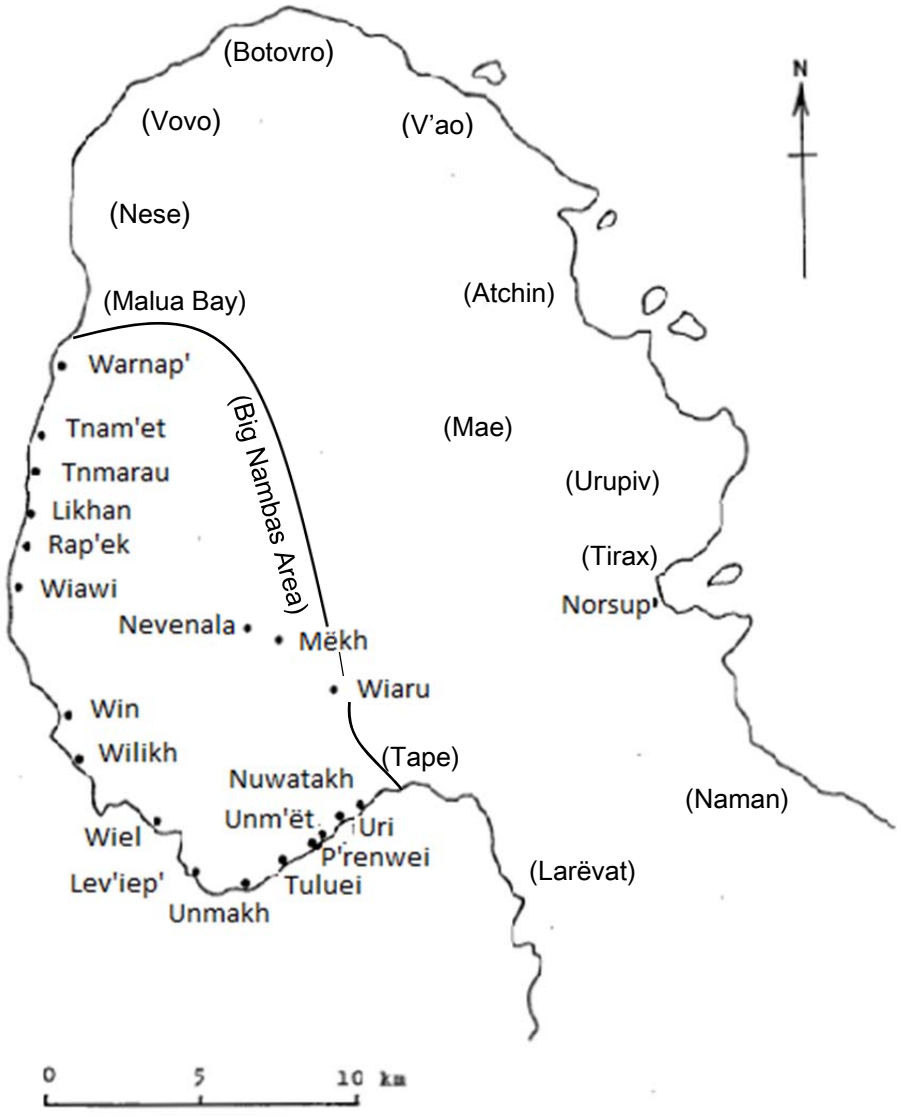
This chapter provides the linguistic background of V'ënen Taut, lincluding the location where it is spoken, its genetic relationship to both Proto Austronesian and Proto Oceanic, a discussion of previous linguistic investigation, and an overview of the phonology. This chapter also provides a personal account of my experience of undertaking field work in Vanuatu, including my methods of data collection and analysis.

1.1 Location

V'ënen Taut is an Oceanic language spoken in the Republic of Vanuatu, which is a Pacific nation located on a volcanic archipelago in the South Pacific. It is situated northeast of New Caledonia and south-east of the Solomon Islands. The Republic of Vanuatu is made of 82 islands and has a population of roughly 234,000 inhabiting 65 of these islands (Vanuatu National Statistics Office, 2009, p. 1). The capital and most populated city, Port Vila, is located on the island of Efate in the centre of the archipelago. Inhabitation of Vanuatu began some three thousand years ago by groups of Melanesian people, with the island being home to the Lapita people, who are believed to be the first inhabitants of many Pacific islands (Lynch, Ross, & Crowley, 2002). Vanuatu is both culturally and linguistically diverse and is believed to have the highest number of distinct indigenous languages per capita of any nation (Lynch & Crowley, 2001, p. xii).

V'ënen Taut is spoken on Malekula which, after Espiritu Santo, is the second largest island in Vanuatu. Malekula has a recorded population of 22,934 (Vanuatu National Statistics Office, 2009, p. 3). On Malekula, there are 24 actively spoken languages in addition to a number of languages which are either moribund or extinct (Lynch & Crowley, 2001, p. 68).

After Northeast Malekula/Uripiv, V'ënen Taut is the second most spoken language on Malekula with approximately 3,500 speakers (Lynch & Crowley, 2001, p. 63). The traditional area where V'ënen Taut is spoken is on the southern part of northwest Malekula, just above the Malekula isthmus. It is spoken along the coast from the village of *Warnap'* in the north to *Nuwatakh* in the south (Lynch & Crowley, 2001). There are also several inland villages where V'ënen Taut is spoken. This can be seen on the map below (the names of the villages have been changed to reflect the orthography used in this work and areas of other languages have been included in parenthesis).



Map 1.1.: Big Nambas Villages (adapted from Fox, 1979, p. xiii; Naito, 2006)

It is important to note that throughout this work, but specifically in this section, there will be a distinction made between the terms *Big Nambas* and *V'ënen Taut*. This distinction is made

on a linguistic and cultural basis. On Malekula, a distinction is often made between Big Nambas and Small Nambas. The Big Nambas inhabit the part of the island shown in the map above and the Small Nambas inhabit the rest of the island. The term Big Nambas will be used to talk about people who live in the Big Nambas area and the term V'ënen Taut will be used to refer to the language spoken by many Big Nambas people. V'ënen Taut is the name given to the language by the Big Nambas people and can be translated as "language of the Bush/Big Nambas". The term Big Nambas is an accepted label used by speakers of V'ënen Taut as well as *m'ertu taut* "Big Nambas person/people" or *m'ertu a nav'ai lil* "person/people of the big nambas". While the Big Nambas appear to be relatively uniform in terms of culture and language, the term Small Nambas is a less useful label because it is used to refer to many different groups of people who are culturally and linguistically diverse.

A nambas, or *nav'ai* in V'ënen Taut, is the traditional men's clothing of the Big Nambas. The nambas is often called a "penis sheath" in English. The Big Nambas wear a large style of nambas made of pandanus which, when wrapped around a man's penis, looks like a long tassel. After the nambas is wrapped around the penis, all of the strands are pulled upwards towards the waist then are bent back down so that the strands completely cover the man's genitals. The nambas is then held in place with a dark belt made of pandanus or coconut straw. The small nambas is worn by the other inhabitants of Malekula. Their nambas are made of other naturally occurring materials and do not have the long tassel like strands which means that men's testicles are often left exposed. Now days, nambas are not worn in day to day life but are only used for special occasions.

Image 1.1: *Nav'ai* or Big Nambas

1.2 Genetic Affiliation

V'ënen Taut, like all Malekula languages, is one of the roughly 450 Oceanic languages belonging to the Austronesian language family, which is believed to be the second largest language family in the world, coming after the Benue-Congo language family of the African Continent, with some 1200 member languages (Lynch, Ross, & Crowley, 2002, p. 1). Oceanic languages all stem from Proto Oceanic, which is a member of the Austronesian language family. The relationship between Proto Oceanic and Proto Austronesian is presented in figure 1.1.

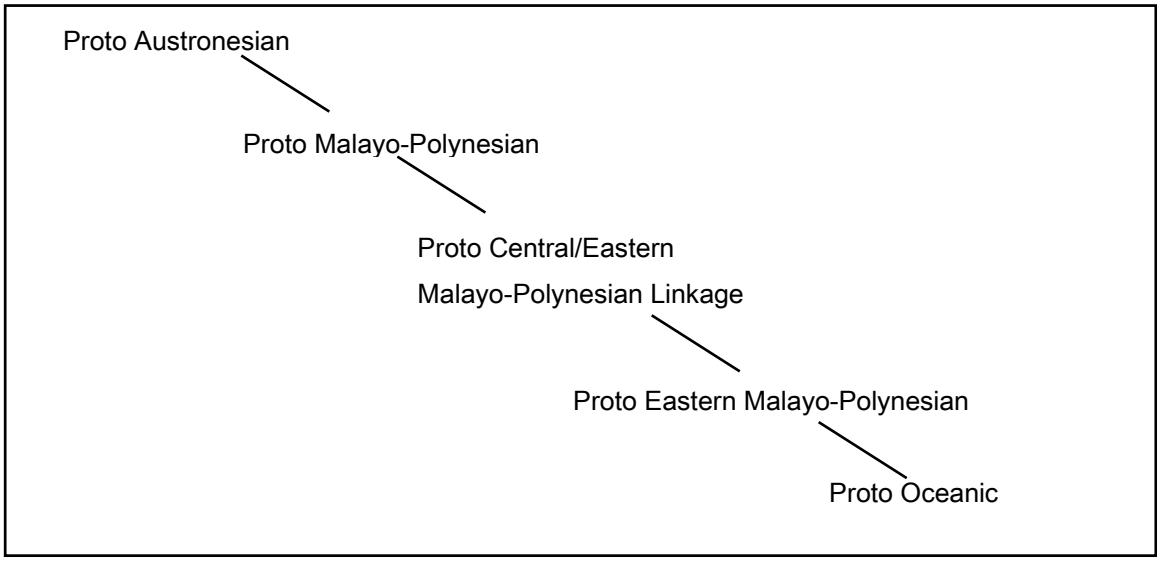


Figure 1.1: Genetic Relationship from Proto Austronesian to Proto Oceanic (adapted from Lynch, Ross, & Crowley, 2002).

Oceanic languages are spoken throughout the Pacific and three groups are identified based on shared features of culture, location, and language. These are Micronesian, spoken on the eastern Micronesian islands; Melanesian, spoken in the Solomon Islands, New Caledonia, some parts of eastern Papua, and Vanuatu; and Polynesian, spoken throughout the Polynesian triangle. Although most languages spoken with in the region of a particular sub-group are members of that sub-group, some outliers occur (Lynch, Ross, & Crowley, 2002, p. 4-6). V'ënen Taut, spoken in Vanuatu, is a Melanesian language.

The genetic relationship of Proto Oceanic to V'ënen Taut is presented below.

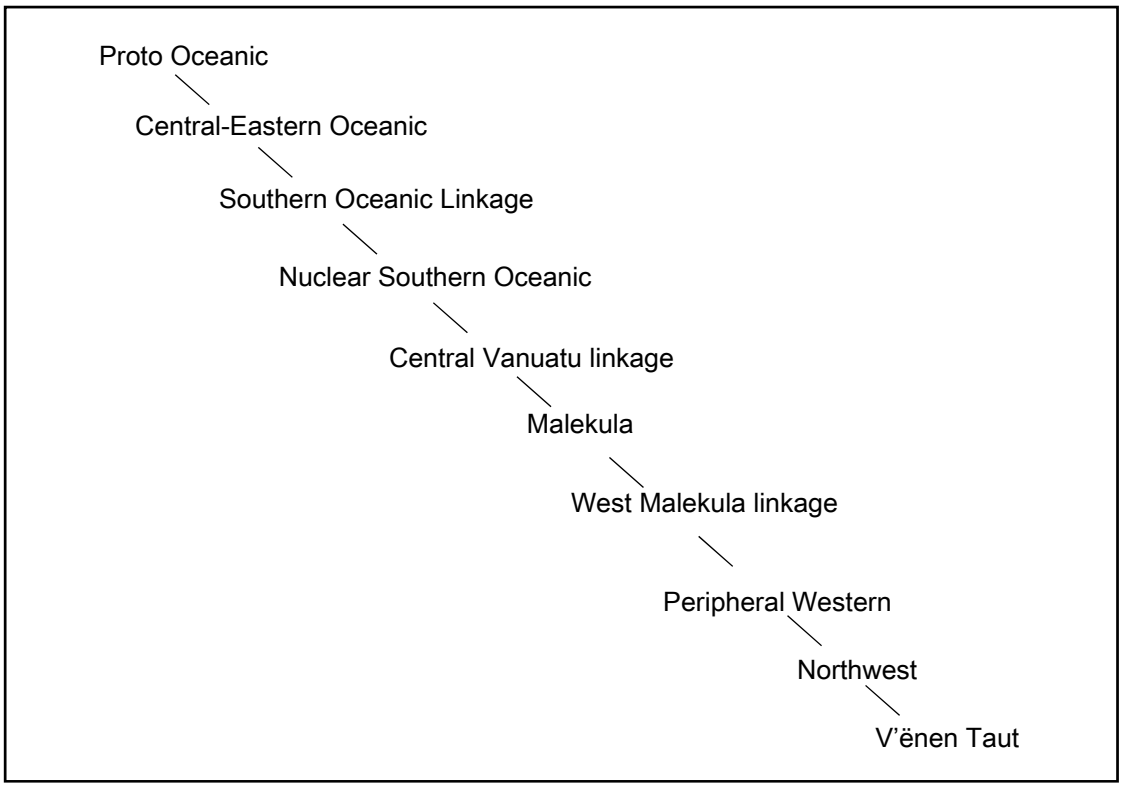


Figure 1.2: Genetic Relationship from Proto Oceanic to V'ënen Taut (adapted from Lynch, Ross, & Crowley, 2002; Ross, Pawley, & Osmond, 2011, p.466; Lynch, 2014, p. 13)

The figure above shows that V'ënen Taut belongs to the central-eastern Oceanic language group which is the largest group of Oceanic languages, the others being the Admiralties language group and the western Oceanic language group (Lynch, Ross, & Crowley, 2002). The Southern Oceanic linkage languages includes most of the languages from the north of Vanuatu continuing south to New Caledonia. The languages in the central Vanuatu group are spoken on the islands in the center of the Vanuatu archipelago this incudes Malekula, Ambrym, the southern part of Pentecost, and northern Efate (Lynch, Ross, & Crowley, 2002).

1.3 Previous Research

Prior to this project, there existed one quite detailed description of V'ënen Taut. This work is called *Big Nambas Grammar* and was published by Pacific Linguistics in 1979. The author of

this study is a Christian missionary called Gregory Fox who lived with the Big Nambas community in P'renwei for many years starting in 1969. During the time that Fox lived with the Big Nambas he translated the New Testament which was titled 'Turanien M'dah' in V'ënen Taut (Lynch & Crowley, 2001, p. 83). The bibles are prized possessions for those who have them, however few people say they can read them. Gregory Fox left quite an impression on the Big Nambas community and while I was in the field, I was often told about a Caucasian missionary who lived in P'renwei who could speak V'ënen Taut so well that they thought it was his language. Some people went on to say he could speak the language better than any Big Nambas person.

Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979) contains detailed accounts of the phonology and morphology of V'ënen Taut as well as an account of the syntax of the language. The phonological description of V'ënen Taut in the grammar occupies a substantial portion of Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 1-22). The analysis of the morphology associated with nouns and verbs of V'ënen Taut in the grammar is also very comprehensive but the syntax section is limited. Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979) also contains information about where the Big Nambas live and it provides several glossed and translated texts at the end.

Unfortunately, the layout of Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979) makes the information presented in it difficult to understand. Much of the data is presented in large lists. Little annotation is provided making it difficult to know what one is looking at. There is also very little explanation of how the semantics of phrases can be changed with the use of the verbal morphology, such as aspect prefixes, semantic manner suffixes, and post-verbal modifiers. As Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979) was written at a time when language typology was a relatively new linguistic discipline, the frames of reference for the analysis of the language are now out of date. This means that there is a need for the whole grammar to be revisited and reanalysed using current typological understandings of language. This will be of benefit to future researchers of Oceanic linguistics and language typologists in general.

There are two main objectives for this research project. The first is to update the analysis of V'ënen Taut so that it fits with in the current frameworks of linguistic analysis. This will help to create some uniformity within the descriptions of Malekula languages for comparative purposes. The second objective is to confim the analysis against a recorded corpus of V'ënen Taut. Such material is important to provide evidence for claims made in the

description as well as creating a record of how V'ënen Taut is spoken at this particular point in time.

Besides Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979), there has been little other linguistic investigation into V'ënen Taut. Most of the other literature concerning V'ënen Taut uses the data contained in *Big Nambas Grammar* (Fox, 1979) to investigate the development of Vanuatu languages from the reconstructed Proto Oceanic language or to compare V'ënen Taut with other Vanuatu languages, see (Lynch, 2003; 2005; 2011; Lynch & Brotchie, 2010; Verkerk & Frostad, 2013). V'ënen Taut is often mentioned in phonology texts due to the presence of linguo-labial or apico-labial consonants, which are uncommon in the languages of the world but are found in languages such as Nese (Crowley 2006b), V'ao, and several other languages on Malekula and Espiritu Santo (Naito, 2006, p. 220). One of these studies theorises that the Big Nambas people were one of the more dominant cultures in the region. It is believed that the lingo-labial consonants that are found in some neighbouring languages may have spread from V'ënen Taut, signifying that it was a prestige language in the past (Lynch & Brotchie, 2010). One other paper examines the use of manner predications and resultatives in Oceanic languages and mentions how V'ënen Taut has a system of semantic manner modifier morphemes related to verbs (Verkerk & Frostad, 2013).

The Big Nambas have featured in some anthropological writings too; however, these works focus on limited aspects of Big Nambas culture. Cannibalism, which was widely practiced among the Big Nambas until sometime in the early to mid twentieth century, is often referenced. Much of these writings are based on observations presented in *Malekula: a Vanishing People of the New Hebrides* (Deacon, 1934), a work based on field notes written by novice anthropologist A. Bernard Deacon who unfortunately died before he could publish his work.

In *Malekula* (Deacon, 1934), the term Big Nambas is used to describe all of the people who inhabit the western area above the Malekula isthmus. In fact, Deacon gives word lists for kin terms in what he thought were two dialects of the Big Nambas language, one spoken in Malua Bay and one spoken in Tenmaru, these are now known to be two distinct cultural groups with two distinct languages.

The Big Nambas are both patrilineal and patrilocal. In the past a man lived in a longhouse with his wife and children. Men would sleep on one side opposite their wife and children. Male children would sleep on the woman's side until about the time of puberty at which time

they would move to the men's side of the long house. *Nakamal* culture was important among the Big Nambas. This is where men would drink kava; men and older boys would often sleep in the *nakamal*[1] (*nam'el*).

Polygyny was practiced by chiefs, with some reportedly having as many as fifty wives. Common men were permitted to have one wife. When women are married they leave the homes of their fathers to be with their husbands. Bride price is still paid to the family of the bride to enable most marriages to take place. In the past, married women had their top central incisors removed after marriage, however this is no longer practiced.

Ceremonial pig killings, *m'aki* in V'ënen Taut or *namanggi* in Bislama, were an important part of Big Nambas culture and were a method for men to gain prestige in their communities (Deacon, 1934). Men are reported to have been ranked in one of four categories depending on how many *namanggi* they participated in. The highest rank was reserved for chiefs and their sons. I was told a story by a Tenmaru elder about a local chief who held a *namanggi* in which he killed 800 pigs.

On cannibalism among the Big Nambas, Deacon (1934) said that the practice was highly developed and Big Nambas ate not only people of other cultural groups but also people from other Big Nambas villages. This was also confirmed by conversations which I had with Big Nambas people. There were many taboos around the consumption of human flesh, such as its location of cooking, who could eat it, and where it should be eaten (Deacon, 1934). Men were permitted to eat both men and women; however women were forbidden from eating men. People who were not involved in the capture and killing of a person for cannibalising were discouraged from eating the person least they face retribution from other people or the angry spirit of the cannibalised person.

[1] A nakamal is a men's meeting house. In the past, men would often spend extended periods of time in the nakamal. The position where one could sit in the nakamal was dependant on the grade that they had achieved through namanggi. Sometimes the skulls and bones of deceased chiefs were kept in the nakamal. They were, and are currently, the place where men meet to drink kava. In Big Nambas culture, women are forbidden from entering or looking into a nakamal.

Malekula: a Vanishing People of the New Hebrides (Deacon, 1934) also contains some description of other Big Nambas cultural practices; however, I will not go into detail on them out of respect for their highly taboo nature.

Besides works based on information provided in *Malekula* (Deacon, 1934), there appears to be few other anthropological works on the Big Nambas culture apart from a paper presented by Helen Fox in which she discusses name avoidance strategies used by Big Nambas women (Fox, 1996). In the past a woman was forbidden from uttering the name of a chief, her eldest son, her father in-law, elder brothers in-law, husband's paternal uncles and their sons. Women were not only prohibited from saying the names of such taboo relations but also any words which contained similar sounds. As many traditional names contain noun or verb roots, women are often required to use synonyms of commonly occurring words in order to avoid breaking the taboo. After marriage, the mother in-law of a new wife would identify all the family relations who are taboo to her and would tell her the names used by others to talk about them. Some examples of word avoidance are shown below.

Name	Word class	Words to Avoid	Alternative
Sënari (trickster)	verb	*sënar* "trick"	*palëv* "trick"
Lei (one who looks)	verb	*ilei* "3SG-see=3SG:OBJ	*ip'ei* "3SG-watch=3SG:OBJ"
Pëtën (head)	noun	*pëtn* "head-POSS:3SG"	*nut eia* "place up top"
Tavi (crusher)	verb	*itavi* "3SG-crush=3SG:OBJ"	*imëni* "3SG-press.down.on=3SG:OBJ

Table 1.1: Name Alternatives for Women (adapted from (H. Fox, 1996, p. 378-379)).

H. Fox (1996) also describes how Big Nambas women are expected to avoid being in the same physical environment of their father in-laws and the paternal uncles of their husbands. For example, if a woman sees her father in-law approaching on a path, she must leave the path and stand in the bush out of sight until her father in-law has passed. This form of avadance is still practiced by many women.

1.4 Field Work Experience

The linguistic analysis presented in this thesis is the outcome of twelve weeks of field work spread over two field trips to Tenmaru (*Tnmarau*[2]), Northwest Malekula. My first field trip took place from late June to early August 2013 and the second field trip took place from late October to early December 2013. The following sections will focus on different aspects of my field experience. The claims made in this section are based on my own experiences, observations, and conversations which I had with local people.

1.4.1 Access to the Field

It was during my last year of undergraduate study at the University of Waikato that I came to know Mrs Gayleen Tarosa, a teacher from Vanuatu. Gayleen grew up on the Vanuatu island of Malekula and is a first language speaker of the Espiegle's Bay language of Northwest Malekula. My research supervisor, Dr Julie Barbour, had met Gayleen at the university and asked her if she would consider being a language consultant for a graduate class which she was considering running. In this course, students would work closely with Gayleen with the aim of producing a preliminary phonological description of her language. I had expressed to Dr Barbour that I was very interested in pursuing further study in linguistics with a particular focus on language documentation and description. It was because of this that I was invited to join the graduate students working with Gayleen. I worked with Gayleen for two years producing preliminary sketches of both the phonology and nominal and verbal morphology of the Espiegle's Bay language. With Gayleen's help, I also created several language resources for the Espiegle's Bay community.

In 2012, Dr Barbour was awarded a Marsden research grant to conduct a comparative project on the mood systems of several languages from Malekula. At the end of 2012, Dr Barbour went on a short field trip to Vanuatu where she made contact with Gayleen. Together they met with Mr Charlie Silas of the Shefa Education Office, a colleague of Gayleen and a member of the Big Nambas community. Mr Silas arranged permission for me

[2] *Tnmarau* is the V'ënen Taut name for Tenmaru.

to go and conduct research on V'ënen Taut. Mr Silas was interested in a linguist coming to investigate his language so he contacted Mr Smith Zumzum, who is currently the principal of Pinapow Primary School in Tenmaru, one of the Big Nambas villages in Northwest Malekula. Smith, with the support of the school committee, agreed to host me throughout my stay in Malekula. As the principal of the local government school, Smith was a well-known and respected member of the local community.

1.4.2 Field Location

During my field trips, I lived in Tenmaru, which is a series of small hamlets spread out along the coast line of northwestern Malekula. The land in Tenmaru rises steeply from the sea to the bush-covered hills in the east. In the past, the inhabitants of Tenmaru lived in small villages up in the bush; however, they have now relocated to the coastal region. Tenmaru is about four and a half hours truck drive from Lakatoro, the main urban cenre on Malekula. The northwestern side of Malekula is divided in two by a small range of hills which is impassable by vehicles. The northern side, where Tenmaru is located, is called Northwest A and the southern side is called Northwest B. Tenmaru is quite isolated because it is situated near the end of the road which services the Northwest A side of the island. There are only a handful of villages continuing on the road to the south of Tenmaru, all of which are Big Nambas communities. The road ends at Wilak, or *Wilikh* in V'ënen Taut, which is about forty-five minutes south of Tenmaru (see Map 1.1.).

In Tenmaru, I noticed that many of the families grew their own food in gardens which are located up on the hill side. It was my observation that many people did not have paid employment. Families have plantations in which they grow cash crops such as coconuts and cacao. Coconuts are used to make copra, from which coconut oil is derived, and people harvest and dry cacao beans to sell to traders. I was told by local people that cacao plantations are able to generate more income than coconut plantations of the same size, though cacao production is a lot more labour intensive. Some people also sell the vegetables that they grow in their gardens at local village markets or at the market place in Lakatoro. Some people also have small herds of beef cattle.

I spent both of my field trips at Pinapow Primary School (hereafter referred to as Pinapow), which is a state funded school in Tenmaru. Pinapow is the only state funded English medium

school in the area and it has students coming from as far as Malua Bay, to the north, and Wilak, to the south, to attend. The school caters to students from years one to eight, meaning the age range of students was from around five to around fifteen, depending on when students started school. During my visits in 2013, Pinapow had five full time teachers and one part time French teacher. Pinapow is located in the northern most part of Tenmaru and stands separately from all of the small hamlets in the Tenmaru area. There are five classrooms in two large concrete buildings. The school also has one large local-style bamboo house for boarding students, three houses, and three kitchens for staff.

The school committee was kind enough to allow me to use one of the staff houses during my stay. As can be seen in the image, the house in which I was staying is a local-style house made of woven bamboo walls and a thatched roof. The floor is made of concrete and was covered with mats of woven pandanus. The house was split into two small rooms. I used the back room for sleeping and I used the front room for working on transcriptions and translations with field assistants. When students were not at the school, I worked with fiel assistants outside under a large tree near the sea so that we could be cooled by the onshore breezes.

Image 1.2: Pinapow Primary School Crest

Image 1.3: The House in Which I Stayed

Image 1.4: Pinapow Primary School (showing the class rooms and students' accommodation)

1.4.3 People

As this project involved field work in a V'ënen Taut speaking community, I was in contact with many different people and I was known to many people in the community as well. Here, I will talk about the different groups of people with whom I was in contact. These groups are the people at the school with whom I stayed, research participants, and acquaintances from other villages.

1.4.3.1 People at Pinapow Primary School

While I was staying at Pinapow, I was hosted by Mr Smith Zumzum, the principal of the school at the time, his wife Sembu, and their daughter and son. Smith is from Tenmaru and his parents and youngest sister live about thirty minutes walking distance from the school. Sembu is originally from Unua, on the eastern side of Malekula. During my time in the field, Smith and Sembu were both teachers at the school. At the time of this project, their daughter was in her final year of primary school and their son was in his final year of kindergarten. Sembu and Smith's son is their biological child while their daughter is the biological child of one of Sembu's sisters who has lived with Sembu since she was little. Sembu's young nephew, who was in his second year at the school, was also living at Pinapow, having come from Unua. Delphine, one of Sembu's family members, was living at Pinapow School and was working as a housekeeper and nanny for the young children. One of Smith's younger cousins, who is good friends with his daughter, often spent periods of time staying at the school while I was there. The large number of extended family members living at Pinapow caused some confusion to me in the beginning of my stay, and I was the butt of a private joke when Smith's daughter and cousin discovered that I was under the belief that they were all Smith and Sembu's children.

Along with Sembu and Smith's family, there were also other people living at the school. Between eight and ten of the students who attended Pinapow chose to board at the school. These students were from Win and Wilak, south of Tenmaru. They lived at the school because their villages were several hours walk from Tenmaru. The boarding students lived in a large local-style house on the school grounds. The boarding students went home on Friday afternoons and returned on Monday mornings. During my second field trip, there were also four male youths, aged between sixteen and nineteen, living at the school. Three of

these young men came from Unua and the oldest came from the island of Espiritu Santo, located north of Malekula. These young men were relatives of Smith and Sembu and they came to live in Tenmaru because they were studying building and mechanics at the rural training centre in Benenaveth, or *Tnam'et* in V'ënen Taut, a village located to the north of Tenmaru.

I spent a lot of time during both of my field trips with the people who lived at Pinapow. I ate breakfast and dinner with Smith and Sembu and their family every day and I greatly enjoyed talking with them about things that were going on in their lives and about how my project was progressing. The boarding students would often come and talk to me in the mornings and evenings while I was outside. They especially seemed to enjoy testing me on my knowledge of V'ënen Taut by asking me if I knew the names of different things or by saying phrases to me to see if I understood them.

I also had some contact with the day students of Pinapow. For the most part, the day students at the school had little interaction with me because I was often working on text transcriptions and translations with language assistants. Sometimes I would have short interactions with students during their lunch breaks. Many of the young students would come and talk with me simply because it was a novelty to have a Caucasian person staying in the village.

In regard to interactions with teachers at Pinapow, I rarely interacted with three of them because they would come and go from the school quickly and did not appear interested in my project. The other three teachers were Sembu and Smith, with whom I stayed, and Mr Moïse Zumzum, the school French teacher. I spent a lot of time with Smith and Moïse. They became key participants due to their interest in the project, their good knowledge of V'ënen Taut, and because I developed friendships with both of them.

1.4.3.2 Research Participants

Research participants are the key to this project. Many members of the Tenmaru community, and some people from more distant villages, were in some way participants in the project. Some research participants spent extended periods of time with me working on transcription and translation and others simply told me the names for things in V'ënen Taut which were in

the immediate environment, such as in the village, on the road, or in the bush, or things that came up in the context of conversations.

Often, research participants took part in the project because they were interested in the documentation and preservation of their language. Many of the older Big Nambas people were particularly concerned that Bislama is encroaching on V'ënen Taut and affecting the way in which it is spoken, particularly by the younger generations. Some participants took part in the project simply because they were interested in helping me on a personal basis.

Central to my research methodology was recording natural speech data. It is from these recordings that my linguistic analysis is derived. Therefore, it is the people who were able to spend time talking with me who are the foundation of this project. Finding people who were willing to be recorded was sometimes a challenge, as many community members were indifferent about my project; however, a good number a people consented to be recorded while they spoke about a topic of their choice. Often these people were middle-aged or elderly because many of the young community members doubted their ability to speak V'ënen Taut well, and were therefore hesitant to provide a recordings.

Smith and his uncle Moïse were also key to the collection of language recordings because they would regularly help me by arranging times for me to make recordings with community members. This was because many community members responded more positively to approaches from them than to approaches from me. They could assure potential participants how simple the recording process was by talking about their own experiences of working on the project.

Once recorded, texts needed to be transcribed and translated. Sometimes I would work with the person who provided the recording but sometimes research participants were only comfortable being recorded while they spoke. This meant that I would transcribe and translate texts with other people who were perhaps more confident in their language ability. During the project I had a small group of people with whom I regularly worked on transcription and translation. They were Smith Zumzum, Kelly Arnihapath, Moïse Zumzum, Wilson Zumzum, and Smith's nephew Sammy.

1.4.3.3 Other Community Members

While staying at Pinapow, I met many members of the Tenmaru community as well as people from Malua Bay, Lehan, Benenaveth (*Tnam'et*), Rampek (*Rap'ek*), Win, and Wilak (*Wilikh*). Some local people were hesitant to talk to me at first. This was mostly due to apprehension that their English language skills would not be good enough; however, once they discovered that I could speak Bislama[3], people would be more comfortable speaking.

Some community members were interested in my project and would regularly ask me how it was progressing when they were around. There were some people in the community who were indifferent to my presence and would react distantly when I approached them.

During both field trips, I attended a Seventh Day Adventist church which was located in Smith's home village of Pur, around thirty minutes walk south of Pinapow. There I would have conversations with many people about my project and about how I was finding life in Tenmaru. Sometimes the church members would participate in lexical elicitation during conversations or some people would give me names of particular community members who may be able to work with me based on their knowledge of a topic of interest. The children who attended the church would come and invite me to play games with them on the beach in-between church services. They found it entertaining to watch a Caucasian man doing the things that they do.

While in Tenmaru I would accompany my hosts to community events such as birthdays, school fundraisers, and school closing ceremonies. At closing/graduation ceremonies of the Rural Training Centre, in Benenaveth, and the Seventh Day Adventist Kindergarten, in Lehan, I was invited to sit with local chiefs, school officials, and local officials as a guest of honour. During these events I would meet people from all over Northwest Malekula.

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[3] The year before I went to Vanuatu I had spent some time learning Bislama with Gayleen in New Zealand. This meant that when I arrived in Tenmaru I was already able to engage in basic conversations and after a few weeks I seldom had issues in communication, whether it be in day to day interactions or while working with field assistants.

1.5 Research Methodology

This section will describe the methodologies used to collect and analyse data.

1.5.1 Data Collection

There are two main sources of data for this project. Firstly, there is data contained in the grammar sketch *Big Nambas Grammar* (Fox, 1979). Secondly, there are the new recorded texts and a large amount of lexical data which comes from lexicography in the field.

The main body of data used for the analysis of V'ënen Taut was obtained through text collection with speakers of V'ënen Taut from Tenmaru and the surrounding villages. Data was collected by recording people speaking in extended monologues. Participants were encouraged to speak on a topic of their choice though sometimes I would give suggestions from a list of topics provided by Dr Barbour. Where possible, research participants were asked to speak about things which are culturally relevant to them such as their own daily activities, cultural histories, and traditional stories.

I often made arrangements for text recording when particular topics of interest arose in natural conversation. I would ask the person with whom I was speaking if they were happy to speak on the subject again while being recorded. Other times arrangements for text recordings were made by Smith or Moïse. They were invaluable with helping me to find people who were happy to be recorded. A time and date would be organised for me to visit the person at their house or for them to come to Pinapow where the recording could be made. However, some recordings were made on the spot because I normally carried a digital recorder with me.

Recordings were made by sitting with research participants while they spoke about their chosen topic. To help the speaker feel more comfortable friends or family were invited to come to the recording session. This would also help the research participant speak more naturally because they would have an audience who could understand them and who would hopefully remove the focus on the recording equipment. After the recording was made, I would ask the speaker if they wanted it played back to them so they could listen to it. This was to ensure that they were happy with the content of the recording. For some of the older participants, hearing themselves speak was quite a novelty.

Once the recording was made, I would ask the speaker if they wanted to work with me to transcribe and translate it. If the speaker wanted to process their text with me, I would organise an appropriate time and place for us to work together. If they were not interested, I would make arrangements with one of the key participants of the project. Text transcription and translation was often undertaken at the house of the person with whom I was working. However, if I had been regularly working with a person I would sometimes suggest that we work at Pinapow. This was because there were tables and chairs available to use and we could sit outside under the shade of a large tree.

Transcription was done by playing a text in full to a research participant and then by playing small portions of the recording and transcribing them. Participants who were used to using technology took control of the playback of the text. After listening to a section of the recording, participants would repeat exactly what was said and I would write it down. Once transcribed, I would ask the field assistant to repeat the segment to verify that I had transcribed it correctly. During the first field trip, texts were transcribed phonetically, while in the second field trip, texts were transcribed phonemically.

Texts were translated after they had been transcribed. This process involved me reading out small pieces of the text which a field assistant would translate into Bislama. Texts were not translated into English, because although many people in Tenmaru had good English proficiency, I felt that asking people to translate from V'ënen Taut into English may cause people to feel uncomfortable and therefore unwilling to participate in my project. However, English was occasionally used if I did not understand the Bislama translation.

Other data were collected by speaking with community members outside of text collection, transcription, and translation, during conversations. When I heard words of interest I would ask people what they meant and then write the word in note books which I carried at all times. At other times I would ask the names of particular items, such as plants, food, animals, and tools that were in sight. When there were several people around, it would often lead to the collection of many lexical items as people bounced ideas off each other.

1.5.2 Data Processing

Once back in New Zealand, the recordings of the raw data were uploaded to my computer where I used two open source programs to help with the analysis. This part of the process

was quite time consuming because I had a total of 46 transcribed and translated texts which equated to roughly three and a half hours of recorded speech.

I used the free open source program “Transcriber” to segment each of the recordings into workable sized sections. Each segment then had the appropriate section of the transcription and translation assigned to it.

Once the primary data had been processed through Transcriber, it was then imported into “Toolbox”, an open source program used to help linguists with data analysis. The imported texts occur with the same segments and associated transcriptions that the linguist entered in Transcriber. Toolbox helps linguistic analysis by identifying strings of characters in the text which match with items that the linguist has entered into the Toolbox dictionary. Toolbox can recognise words that are made from a singular lexeme or words with a lexical root and multiple bound morphemes. This was particularly useful for the analysis of V’ënen Taut which has a lot of inflectional verbal morphology. Lexemes and morphemes which are not in the dictionary can be easily added when they occur in the texts. The more items which are entered into the dictionary, the faster the data processing can become.

Texts in Toolbox are analysed on four levels. The first level is the \tx or text level which is where the original text is located. The second level is \mb which shows all the morphemes which make up the words on the \tx level. The third level is \ge which contains the gloss of all the morphemes and the last level is \ps which shows the part of speech of each morpheme. Image 1.5 shows an example of a text analysed with Toolbox.

Toolbox is also used for organising all of the lexemes and morphemes which occur in the data, in the dictionary file. One selects an item which has occurred in the text and adds it to the dictionary. Items can also be added to the dictionary directly. A new dictionary entry occurs automatically in the \lx or lexeme field. Toolbox prompts the linguist to enter other information about the lexeme. Items in the Toolbox dictionary of this project have the following information given about them: \lx lexeme, \ps part of speech, \sd semantic domain, \ge English gloss, and \gn Bislama meaning.

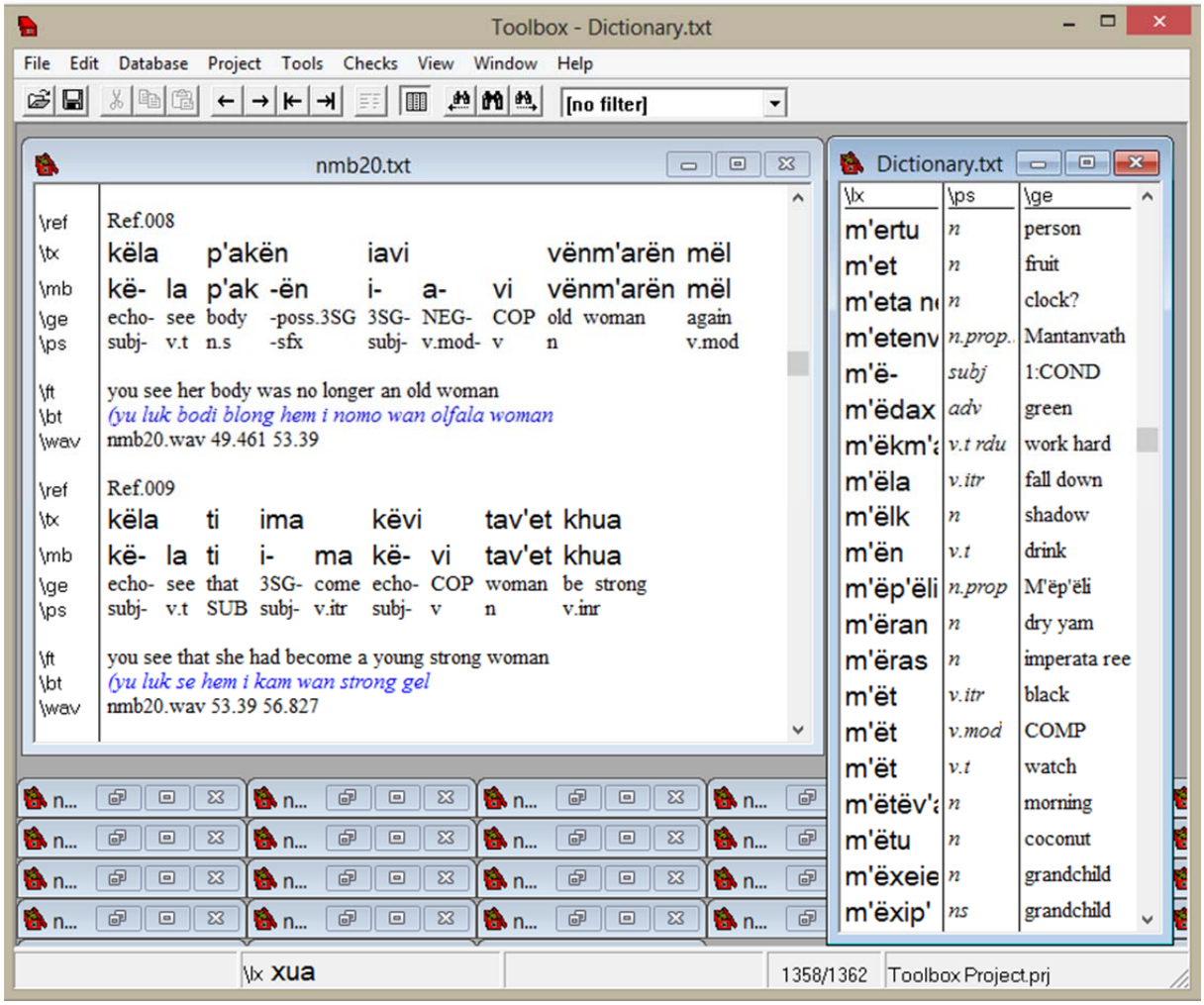


Image 1.5: Toolbox (showing an interlinearized text and the dictionary)

1.5.3 Data Analysis

Frameworks from general and typological linguistics such as Andrews (2007), Dryer (2007a; 2007b; 2007c), Payne (1997), and Lynch, Ross and Crowley (2002) were used in the analysis of the V'ënen Taut language data. Where there were gaps in the data collected for this project, Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979) was used as a data source. Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979) was consulted regularly during analysis. The purpose of this was not simply to guide my analysis but rather to check for consistencies and inconsistences between hypotheses in Fox's analysis and evidence from my own corpus. Where inconstancies were found they are noted in the thesis.

Works of other Vanuatu languages such as Tape (Crowley, 2006c), Neverver (Barbour, 2012), Lolovoli (Hyslop, 2001), Malua Bay (Wessels, 2013), and the Espiegle's Bay

language (Holmes, 2014) were also consulted to see how V'ënen Taut is similar or dissimilar from them.

1.6 Overview of Phonology

This section will provide an overview of the phonology of V'ënen Taut. The phonology is located in the introduction section of this work because a detailed description of V'ënen Taut phonology is provided in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 1-22). The analysis presented here confirms that which is presented in Fox (1979). Where there are points of difference between my and Fox's analysis, they will be noted.

1.6.1 Consonant Inventory

		LINGUO-LABIAL	BILABIAL	ALVEOLAR	VELAR	LABIO-VELAR
Nasal		m̪	m	n		
Plosive	Plain	p̪	p	t	k	
	Prenasalised			d		
Fricative		β̪	β	s	ɣ	
Trill				r		
Approximant				l		w

Table 1.2: The V'ënen Taut consonant inventory

V'ënen Taut has fifteen consonant segments. Interestingly, prenasalisation is not a prominent feature of V'ënen Taut although it is found in many other Malekula languages such as Malua Bay (Wessels, 2013) Tape (Crowley, 2006c), Nese (Crowley, 2006b) and Neverver (Barbour, 2012).

V'ënen Taut makes use of a contrast between bilabial and linguo-labial consonants. Linguo-labials, sometimes called apico-labials, are consonants which are articulated by allowing the tip of the tongue to come forward in the mouth to a point that it covers the bottom teeth and makes contact with the bottom lip. The top lip is then pulled tight across the top teeth while it moves down to meet the top side of the tip of the tongue. Further description and images of the production of these sounds are provided in Ladefoged and Maddieson (1996, p. 18-19)

and Ashby (2011, p. 45). Linguo-labial consonants are found in some of the neighbouring languages such as Nese (Crowley, 2006b), Tirax (Lynch & Brotchie, 2010), Vao, Botovro, and languages in the southern regions of Espiritu Santo (Naito, 2006).

V'ënen Taut makes no contrast between labio-velar and plain consonants, of the kind which is found in other related Malekula languages such as Tape (Crowley, 2006c), Avava (Crowley, 2006d), and Neve'ei (Musgrave, 2007). However, it was suggested in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 2) that the bilabial consonants /p/ and /m/ have labio-velar[4] allophones which occur before the vowels /i/ and /e/ but this variation was not observed in the new data.

There are three nasal segments in V'ënen Taut, /m̟/, /m/, and /n/. Table 1.3 presents a series of minimal and sub-minimal pairs which illustrates that they are in contrast.

Contrasting Segments	Minimal or Sub-Minimal Pairs		Meaning
/m̟/	/m̟iɣ/	[m̟ʊ̟x]	tomorrow
	/i-m̟a/	[i.m̟a]	3SG:REAL-die
	/i-ləm̟/	[i.ləm̟]	3SG:REAL-five
/m/	/mi-n/	[mɪn]	sent-POSS:3SG
	/i-ma/	[i.ma]	3SG:REAL-come
	/nakəm/	[na.kəm]	you
/n/	/niɣ/	[nʊ̟x]	meat/flesh
	/i-na/	[i.na]	3SG:REAL-fill.in.bamboo
	/i-m̟arən/	[i.m̟a.rən]	3SG:REAL-dry

Table 1.3: V'ënen Taut Nasals

There are five plosives in V'ënen Taut /p̟/, /p/, /t/, /ⁿd/, and /k/. Plosives only contrast in voicing at the alveolar place of articulation. The voiced alveolar stop is also prenasalised which, is a common phonemic characteristic of Malekula languages.

[4] Fox described this variation as "rounding".

Contrasting Segments	Minimal or Sub-Minimal Pairs		Meaning
/p̪/	/p̪arei/	[p̪a.rei]	long
	/p̪i/	[p̪i]	last laplap leaf
	/tup̪/	[tʊp̪]	fire pit
/p/	/parei/	[pa.rei]	work
	/pi/	[pi]	place
/t/	/taral/	[ta.ral]	white person
	/ti/	[ti]	SUB
	/nut/	[nʊt]	place
	/i-ut/	[i.ʲut]	3SG:REAL-make
/ⁿd/	/ⁿdiⁿdi/	[ⁿdi.ⁿdi]	palm tree
	/i-uⁿd/	[iˈˑuⁿd]	3SG:REAL-eat
/k/	/karliu/	[kar.liu]	door
	/ki/	[ki]	NSPC
	/nuk/	[nʊk]	island cabbage

Table 1.4: V'ënen Taut Plosives

The phoneme /t/ is glottalized when it occurs immediately before a syllabic /n/. In the articulation of this consonant cluster, the tongue moves to make the closure for the alveolar nasal at the same time as the glottal stop is released making the air flow for the stop pass through the nasal passage.

[t] → [tˀ]/ __n

For example:	/tnmarau/	[tˀn̩.ma.rau]	Tenmaru
	/nat-n/	[na.tˀn̩]	child-poss:3SG
	/kə-tnvan=i/	[kə.tˀn̩.va.ni]	ES-prepare.for.weaving=3SG:OBJ

Big Nambas Grammar (Fox, 1979, p. 2-3) describes allophony in the voiceless plosives /p/, /t/, and /k/ in which they are articulated with aspiration when they occur in word final position. This allophony was not attested in the data. It is possible that what Fox believed to be aspiration on word final voiceless consonants was simply the release of the plosive in careful speech.

V'ënen Taut has four contrasting fricatives. Minimal and sub-minimal pairs of these phonemes are presented in table 1.4.

Contrasting Segments	Minimal or Sub-Minimal Pairs		Meaning
β̪	/β̪at-n/	[ɸ̪a.tˀn̪]	stomach-POSS:3SG
	/i-βa/	[i.β̪a]	3SG-go
	/i-təβ̪/	[i.təɸ̪]	3SG-flap
β	/βaβei/	[ɸa.βei]	paternal aunt
	/i-βa/	[i.βa]	3SG-wipe
	/i-təβ/	[.itəɸ]	3SG-cover
s	/i-sara/	[i.sa.ra]	3SG-cut.up
	/i-ɣəs/	[i.ɣəs]	3SG-up.root
ɣ	/i-ɣa/	[i.ɣa]	3SG-bite/chew
	/i-təɣ/	[i.təx]	3SG-beat

Table 1.5: V'ënen Taut Fricatives

As reported in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979), voiced fricatives are all articulated as voiceless fricatives when they occur in the word initial or word final position. However, in rapid connected speech, voiced fricatives are sometimes not devoiced when they occur contiguously with voiced phonemes.

[voiced fricative] → [voiceless fricative]/ $_{word}[\_\_$
$\_\_]_{word}$

For example:

/β̪at-n/	[ɸ̪a.tˀn̪]	stomach-POSS.3SG
/i-leβ/	[i.leɸ]	3SG-take
/ɣin/	[xɪn]	3SG
/m̪aləɣ/	[m̪a.ləx]	kava

There are two liquids in contrast in V'ënen Taut. These are /r/ and /l/.

Contrasting Segments	Minimal or Sub-Minimal Pairs		Meaning
r	/raɣəm/	[ra.ɣəm]	crab
	/i-ru/	[i.ru]	3SG:REAL-two
	/war/	[war]	roots
l	/laɣa/	[la.ɣa]	this
	/i-lu/	[i.lu]	3SG:REAL-vomit
	/wal/	[wal]	top (of tree)

Table 1.6: V'ënen Taut Liquids

The phoneme /l/ has two allophones: the voiceless alveolar lateral fricative [ɬ] and the voiced alveolar lateral fricative [ɮ]. The lateral approximant changes to the voiceless lateral fricative when it is contiguous with this /t/ and when it occurs word finally. The lateral approximant is articulated as the voiced alveolar lateral fricative when it occurs medially continuous with /n/.

[l] → [ɬ] / t__
__t
__]word

[l] → [ɮ] / __n
n__

For example:

/atlaɣa/	[at.ɬa.ɣa]	here
/pəltin/	[pəɬ.ten]	pool of water
/məl/	[məɬ]	again
/i-uln/	[iʲ.uɮ.n̩]	3SG:REAL-throw
/n-lək/	[n̩.ɮək]	1:real-sit

The table below shows the contrasting approximants that occur in V'ënen Taut.

Contrasting Segments	Minimal or Sub-Minimal Pairs		Meaning
l	/nala/	[na.la]	cup
	/i-la/	[i.la]	3SG:REAL-see
w	/nawa/	[na.wa]	day before yesterday
	/i-wa/	[i.wa]	3SG:REAL-carry/hold

Table 1.7: V'ënen Taut Approximants

Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979) did not include the labio-velar approximant as a phoneme. Instead occurrences if this sound were considered to be a sequence of vowels

containing the vowel /u/. For example the lexeme *nawa* “day after tomorrow” would have been considered to be /naua/ and the word *nawei* “water” was analysed as /nauei/. Some of the vowel sequences in Fox’s *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979), particularly those that were morpheme initial, have been reanalysed as containing the approximant /w/ instead of the vowel /u/.

1.6.1.1 Syllabic Consonants

The alveolar nasal and alveolar trill are able to act as syllabic consonants. This happens when they fill the peak of a syllable. This can be seen in the following examples.

For Example:	/n-ln/	[n̩.ɮn̩]	1SG:REAL-leave
	/naɣandrln/	[na.ɣa.ⁿdr̩.ɮn̩]	egg
	/i-t-rɣapən=i/	[i.tr̩.ɣa.pən.i]	3SG:REAL-PFV-die.unnaturally=3SG:OBJ
	/kə-tr/	[kə.tr̩]	ES-cut

Further phonological analysis is required on the complex consonant sequence /ⁿdr/. In this work, as well as Fox’s *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979), this sequence is considered to be two distinct consonants /ⁿd/ and /r/. However, it is possible that they form a single consonant: a prenasalised alveolar trill [ⁿdr], like that found in Neverver (Barbour, 2012, p. 37) and Avava (Crowley, 2006d).

1.6.2 Vowel Inventory

V’ënen Taut has five contrasting vowel segments. All vowels are attested as occurring in word initial position and medially. All vowels, except for /ə/ are attested as occurring in word final position. Noticeably absent from the vowel inventory is a mid-rounded back vowel [o] which occurs in neighbouring languages such as Malua Bay (Wessels, 2013), Tape (Crowley, 2006c) and Nese (Crowley 2006b).

	Front	Central	Back
High	i		u
Mid	e	ə	
Low		a	

Table 1.8: V'ënen Taut Vowel Inventory

Contrasting Segments	Minimal or Sub-Minimal Pairs					
	n_n		n_l		n_ɣ	
/i/	/nina/	grass	/nil/	skin/hair	/niɣ/	flesh
/e/	/β̪ənen/	speech	/nelnal/	many		
/a/	/nana/	pawpaw	/nal/	moon	/naɣau/	rope
/ə/	/i-nən/	3SG:REAL-fill.basket			/nəɣau/	laplap
/u/	/nun/	sand	/n-ul/	1SG:REAL-pay		

Table 1.9: V'ënen Taut Vowels

There is some allophony which is present in the vowel inventory. The allophony mostly concerns the lowering of the vowels /i/ and /u/ when they occur in closed syllables

For example: /pi/ place /spɪl/ small stake
/nisu/ sugar cane /nʊn/ sand

The high front vowel /i/ is also slightly palatalised when it occurs a closed syllable whose coda is the velar fricative.

For Example: /miɣ/ [m̪ɪʲx] tomorrow
/tiɣnaβ̪/ [tɪʲɣᵊ.naβ̪] ash
/niɣ/ [nɪʲx] meat/flesh
/liɣat/ [li.ɣat] night

The following diphthongs are possible in V'ënen Taut: /ai/, /ei/ and /au/. The /a/ in the diphthong /au/ is slightly raised so the articulation is closer to /əu/.

/nai/ wood/tree
/pai/ yam
/iɣei/ no
/nawei/ water
/i-ɣau/ 3sg:real-go.back
/tilau/ fish

The vowel sequence /au/ is not always articulated as a diphthong. This pronounciation occurs word dedially.

[u.ra.ur]	*[ur.aur]	different
[na.ur]	*[naur]	war

1.6.3 Phonological Processes

The following section briefly covers some of the phonological processes which occur in the data. This section is intended to help the reader understand the data presented in the thesis. For a more detailed discussion see Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 13- 20).

1.6.3.1 Vowel changes

In V'ënen Taut, there are a variety of vowel changes which occur in word roots and affixes. These are triggered by suffixation or juxtaposition of independent nominal and verbal modifiers. For the most part, these vowel changes are predictable but there are some exceptions to the rules. The most common phonological vowel changes are triggered by the addition of bound morphemes beginning with /i/.

In the corpus, this mostly affects /a/ which is in the syllable preceding the added bound morpheme beginning with /i/. There are two bound morphemes which begin with /i/, these are *=i* the third person singular pronominal enclitic and *-ien* the nominaliser suffix. When these suffixes are added to a lexical root, the root /a/ regularly raises to /e/, in a process which appears to be similar to vowel harmony.

For example: /i-sapa navanel/ 3SG:REAL-follow road /i-sape=i/ 3SG:REAL-follow=3SG.OBJ
/i-p̪a nut/ 3SG:REAL-watch place /i-p̪e=i/ 3SG:REAL-watch=3SG.OBJ
/i-m̪at/ 3SG:REAL-be.sick /m̪et-ien/ sickness
/i-m̪atr/ 3SG:REAL.sleep /m̪etr-ien/ sleep/dream
/udrlan/ all /udrlan=i/ */udrlen=i/

The addition of *=i* to verbs ending in /i/ also makes a change in the vowel in the verb root. In this case the vowel in the verb root lowers to /a/. This appears to be a process of vowel dissimilation to help differentiate between the verb and suffix.

For example: /n-ⁿdi nəɣau/ 1SG:REAL-dip laplap / n-ⁿda=i/ 1SG:REAL-dip=3OBJ:OBJ

Some verb roots which have /ə/ in their last syllable also undergo a change in vowel when the pronominal object clitic *=i* is attached to them. In these verbs, the /ə/ lowers to /a/.

For example: /i-sərən / 3SG:REAL-throw /i-səran=i/ 3SG:REAL-throw=3SG.OBJ
/i-ən/ 3SG:REAL-make /i-an=i/ 3SG:REAL-make=3SG.OBJ
/i-ɣən/ 3SG:REAL-eat /i-ɣan=i/ 3SG:REAL-eat=3SG.OBJ

The previous rule appears not to be triggered by the nominaliser suffix.

For example: /i-raɣəβ/ 3SG:REAL-clear.garden /raɣəβ-ien/ bush clearing

A similar process occurs with some verbs which have /e/ as the peak of their final syllable. When the pronominal object clitic *–i* is attached to them, the vowel /e/ lowers to /a/.

For example: /n-vet / 1:REAL-weave /n-vat=i/ 1:REAL-weave=3SG:OBJ
/i-lev/ 3SG:REAL-take /i-lav=i/ 3SG:REAL-take=3SG:OBJ
/kə-tup̪en/ 3SG:REAL-eat / kə-tup̪an=i / ES-cook.in.laplap=3SG.OBJ

1.6.3.2 Epenthesiss

Epenthesis is a phonological process in which sounds are inserted systematically between two specific phonemes. This often occurs to aid in pronunciation by separating similar sounds. Hayes (2009, p.86) notes a similarity between epenthesis and allophony where the absence of a sound alternates with a sound in particular phonological environments: Ø → X.

V'ënen Taut has an epenthetic [d] which occurs in two different environments. The first occurs when /n/ is followed directly by /r/ and the second is when /l/ is followed by /r/.

For example:	/n-rn/	[n-^{d}rn]	1:REAL-want
	/i-ul=r/	[i-ul-^{d}r] (Fox, 1979, p. 21)	3SG:REAL-buy=3NSG:OBJ
	/ɣin ra/	[xin ^{d} ra]	that now

Fox (1979) notes that V'ënen Taut also has an epenthetic [r] which can occur when /d/ is followed directly by either /l/ or /n/. This process was attested in the recoded data, as seen in the example below.

For example:	/ni^{n}d nen/	[ni^{n}d ^{r} nen]	it's coconut threads

In rapid connected speech the velar fricative /ɣ/ is sometimes followed by an epenthetic [ə] when it occurs before /n/.

For example:	/nəmaɣ na tamat/	[nəmax^{ə} na tamat]	church
	/tər-m̪ə^{n}daɣ nen/	[tər-m̪ə^{n}dax^{ə} nen]	the dry ones of them
	/tiɣnaᵽ/	[tɪ̟ɣ^{ə}naᵽ]	ashes

1.6.4 Orthography

The table below illustrates the orthography which will be used in the subsequent sections of this thesis. This orthography is based on Fox's in *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979); however, there are several changes that have been made. The first change is the addition of "w" which was not considered to be a phoneme in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979). Fox (1979), represented schwa with "ə" and /ɣ/ with "h"; however they have been updated to "ë" and "kh" respectively in this grammar sketch. The character "ë" was chosen because this is the character which is often used to represent schwa in the neighbouring languages Malua Bay (Wessels, 2013), Espiegle's Bay (Holmes, 2014), Nese (Crowley, 2006b), and Tape (Crowley, 2006c). Another reason I have chosen to use "ë" is because it is easier to enter using a computer, should the local community decide to adopt it. The character "kh" was chosen to represent the velar fricative so that it is distinguished from "h" in English, French, and Bislama, which all use "h" for separate phonemes. The velar fricative is also represented by "kh" in the previously listed languages. This should hopefully alleviate potential confusion

for people wishing to gain literacy skills in V'ënen Taut, if the local community adopts the orthography.

Phoneme	Orthographic Representation	Example	Meaning
a	A a	Nakhau	Vine/Rope
ⁿd	D d	Dui	Man
e	E e	Nalen	Wind/Fly (insect)
ə	Ë ë	Nëkhau	Laplap
i	I i	Nina	Grass
k	K k	Krei	Flying fox
ɣ	Kh kh	Khëmau	Slit drum/bell
l	L l	Lip'akh	Dog
m	M m	Mësi	Star
m̰	M' m'	M'alëkh	Kava
n	N n	Nilau	Spider
p	P p	Pai	Yam
p̰	P' p'	P'atei	Breadfruit
r	R r	Rakhm	Crab
s	S s	Si	Shoot (of plant)
t	T t	Tilau	Fish
u	U u	Urakh	Yam post
β	V v	Vënapup	Butterfly
β̰	V' v'	V'irm'ët	Purple swamphen
w	W w	Wal	Top of tree

Table 1.10: V'ënen Taut Orthography

Chapter 2

Nouns and Nominal Morphology

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on the constitution of nouns and noun phrases in V'ënen Taut. It will begin by discussing pronouns which are used in place of nouns as arguments of verbs. It will then move on to a description of nouns in general. Like many Vanuatu languages, V'ënen Taut has three noun classes: common nouns, personal nouns, and locative nouns. The different methods of marking possession will be described. V'ënen Taut also has three different processes of nominal derivation which will be described. Throughout the chapter, different methods of nominal modification will be described. Finally the grammatical makeup of the noun phrase will be summarised.

2.2 Pronouns

2.2.1 Independent Pronouns

The following table shows the independent personal pronouns in V'ënen Taut. Pronouns represent a closed set of lexemes which make a distinction between first, second, and third person. For each person category there is a distinction between singular and non-singular number. A distinction between inclusivity and exclusivity is made with the first person non-singular pronouns. All of the pronouns in the table below are able to act as subject pronouns while only some of them can act as objects of transitive or reflexive verbs.

	Singular	Non-Singular
1:INCL		*nakëd/nakër*
1:EXCL	*kana*	*kam'em'*
2	*nakëm*	*kam'i*
3	*khin*	*khir*

Table 2.1: Independent Pronouns

When the independent pronouns act as subjects, they precede the verb. The following examples show independent pronouns being used as subjects.

2.1 ***Kana*** *n-Ø-lulua* *nalim'ëlakhas* *da-v'a…*
1SG 1:REAL-SG-shoot small.green.lizard CONT-go
"I was shooting small green lizards…" [nmb07.Ref.015]

2.2 ***Khin*** *i-v'a* *al* *nawei* *lakhara.*
3SG 3SG:REAL-go in water DEM
"She went to the water hole." [nmb20.Ref.006]

The independent pronouns *nakëd* and *nakër* 1NSG:INCL appear to mark the same person and number categories, although *nakëd* occurs slightly more often than *nakër* in the corpus. It appears that the distinction in clusivity may be being lost in the first person non-singular independent pronouns. It can be observed throughout the data that the exclusive independent pronoun sometimes occurs where one would expect to find the inclusive pronoun. In fact, *nakëd* 1NSG:INCL only occurs seven times in the corpus and *nakër* only occurs four times. It may simply be that *nakëd* or *nakër* 1NSG:INCL are only used when a speaker wants to stress the inclusion of the listener. It is also possible that the inclusive and exclusive distinction may be collapsing which is resulting in one pronoun, *kam'em'* 1NSG:EXCL, occurring more regularly than the others.

2.3 ***Nakëd*** *m'ë-a-v-khën* *ki.*
1NSG:INCL 1:COND-NEG-PL-eat NSPC
"You and I must not eat any." [nmb38.Ref.030]

2.4 ***Nakër*** *n-a-v-wosip* *mël.*
1NSG:INCL 1:REAL-NEG-PL-go.to.church again
"We did not go to church" [nmb31.Ref.072]

2.5 ***Kam'em'*** *në-vra-v'a* *kë-v-lëk* *wëki…*
1NSG:EXCL 1:REAL-PL-go ES-PL-sit only
"We just went and sat…" [nmb10.Ref.010]

2.6 ***Kam'i*** *kë-v-tamamu…*
2NSG 2:REAL-PL-go.first
“you all went first…” [nmb31.Ref.114]

2.7 *Afta* ***khir*** *a-vra-khau-m'alet.*
then 3NSG 3NSG:REAL-PL-go.back-return
“They went back.” [nmb23.Ref.170]

Where a speaker wants to emphasise that the subject of a verb is both the speaker and the listener, they can juxtapose the numeral *ru* “two” after *nakëd* 1NSG:INCL. This can be seen in the example below.

2.8 ***Nakëd*** ***ru*** *m'ë-d-a-r-khën* *namëp* *wëm.*
1NSG:INCL two 1:COND-CONT-NEG-PAU-eat tahitian.chestnut still
“You and I still must not eat the chestnut.” [nmb25.Ref.021]

Many of the independent pronouns presented in table 2.2 are also able to act as object pronouns of prototypical transitive verbs when they are positioned post-verbally. These pronouns are presented in the table below.

	Singular	Non-Singular
1:INCL		*nakëd/nakër*
1:EXCL	*kana*	*kam'em'*
2	*(nakëm)*	*kam'i*
3	--	--

Table 2.2: Independent Object Pronouns

2.9 *Nëm* *tav'et* *i-amëk* *ipë-khën* ***kana*** *ra.*
spirit woman 3SG:REAL-one 3SG:IRR-eat 1SG now
“An evil spirit of a woman is going to eat me.” [nmb09.Ref.031]

There are no occurrences of the first person non-singular inclusive pronouns acting as objects of prototypical transitive verbs in the corpus. Fox (1979, p. 30) says that they are able to function as such but does not give any examples. Based on the sematic features and grammatical distribution of the other independent pronouns which are attested as acting as

objects, I would also hypothesise that the first person non-singular inclusive pronouns are able to act as object pronouns of prototypical transitive verbs.

2.10 *Maral pa pa a-r-tl a-v-sapa **kam'em'.***
child small small 3NSG-PAU-three 3NSG-PL-follow 1NSG:EXCL
"Three small children followed us." [nmb31.Ref.094]

2.11 *A mëlin eia i-tap'a **kam'i.***
PERS God 3SG:REAL-send 2NSG
"God sent you." [nmb23.Ref.147]

The second person singular independent pronoun is optionally used in the object position because there is also an object clitic which encodes this meaning. It appears that the full pronoun form and the clitic form of the second person singular object can be used interchangeably but are not attested as co-occurring to mark the same function.

2.12 *Kana n-Ø-rukh kë-Ø-ln **nakëm.***
1SG 1:REAL-SG-go.away ES-SG-leave 2SG
"I went away, I left you." [nmb31.Ref.029]

There are three person categories which are represented by pronominal enclitics when they occur with certain functions in the clause. These are the third person singular and plural and the second person singular categories. The pronominal enclitics are presented below.

	Singular	Non-Singular
2	*=ëkh*	
3	*=i*	*=r*

Table 2.3: Pronominal Enclitics

2.13 *N-Ø-ln**=ëkh** arana tlv'a.*
1:REAL-SG-leave=2SG:OBJ on truck
"I left you on the truck." [nmb31.Ref.014]

2.14 *Të-v-khan**=i.***
1:IRR-PL-eat=3SG:OBJ
"We will eat him." [nmb23.Ref.087]

2.15 *Au* *lakhara* *i-sapa=**r**.*
man DEM 3SG:REAL-follow=3NSG:OBJ
“The man followed them.” [nmb24.Ref.040]

There is a functional reason behind the use of pronominal enclitics to mark objects of prototypical transitive verbs. The independent pronouns *khin* 3SG and *khir* 3NSG are used as reflexive or reciprocal pronouns when they occur after reflexive structures or verbs which have reflexive meaning. Thus, it seems that the person clitics *=i* 3SG:OBJ and *=r* 3NSG:OBJ are used when the subject and object of a verb refer to different referential entities and the pronouns *khin* 3SG and *khir* 3NSG occur post-verbally when the subject and object of a verb are the same referential entity.

2.16 *Dui* *lakhara* *i-rara* ***khin*** *eiëm* *lara.*
man DEM 3SG:REAL-push 3SG inside that
“The man pushed himself inside.” [nmb09.Ref.034]

2.17 *A-vra-v'a* *kë-v-p'ëltën* ***khir.***
3NSG:REAL-pl-go ES-PL-group.together 3NSG
“They went and grouped together.” [nmb03.Ref.007]

2.18 *A-v-p'e-p'a* ***khir.***
3NSG:REAL-PL-DUP-watch 3NSG
“They were looking at each other.” [nmb38.Ref.043]

All the other pronouns presented in table 2.2 besides the second person singular pronoun are able to act as both reflexive and non-reflexive object pronouns. The reflexive use of the pronouns is shown below.

2.19 *N-Ø-tkhi* ***kana.***
1:REAL-SG-cough 1SG
“I coughed.” (Fox, 1979, p. 31)

2.20 *P'e-v-m'asra* ***nakëd.***
1:IRR-PL-immerse 1NSG.INC
"Let's go under water." (Fox, 1979, p. 31)

2.21 *Në-v-sinsin* ***nakër*** *arana trak.*
1:REAL-PL-squash 1NSG.INC on truck
"We were all squashed in on the truck." [nmb31.Ref.056]

2.22 *Kë-v-utër* ***kam'em'*** *sara=i.*
ES-PL-change 1NSG:EXCL COMP=3SG:OBJ
"We got changed." [nmb10.Ref.007]

The second person singular clitic is the only clitic which appears to be able to be used reflexively. When it takes the object position in a clause which has the second person singular as the subject, the subject and object can only refer to the same referential entity.

2.23 *Nakëm* *kë-Ø-kasmën=****ëkh*** *ia.*
2SG 2:REAL-SG-make.mistake=2SG:OBJ DEM
"You made a mistake." [nmb30.Ref.074]

2.2.2 Possessive Particle

Possessive particles take the place of a possessed entity in a clause. They are used to help with reference and occur when the possessed entity has already been mentioned in the text. Possessive particles are formed with the root *nka* to which inalienable possession suffixes are attached.

	Singular	Non-Singular
1:INCL		*nka-d*
1:EXCL	*nka-k*	*nka-m'em'*
2	*nka-m*	*nka-m'i*
3	*nka-n*	*nka-r*

Table 2.4: Possessive Particles

The possessive particles are able to act as both subject and objects of a clause. They indicate that a particular entity belongs to the person referred to by the possessive suffix.

2.24 *Kana* *p'e-Ø-lau* ***nka-k*** *përki.*
1SG 1:IRR-SG-plant POSS:PT-POSS:1SG only
"I will just plant mine." [nmb01.Ref.161]

2.25 ***Nka-m'em'*** *përki* *i-vi* *war* *nai* *wëki.*
POSS:PT-POSS:1NSG:EXCL only 3SG:REAL-COP root tree only
"Ours (dye) was just plant roots." [nmb01.Ref.065]

2.26 *Të-Ø-vet* ***nka-m'i.***
1:IRR-SG-weave POSS:PT-POSS:2NSG
"I will weave yours." [nmb01.Ref.140]

A possessive phrase is often made using the possessive pronoun. This phrase is a subordinate clause which follows a noun and indicates to whom it belongs. In this phrase the possessive determiner is acting as the object in a subordinate clause containing the copular verb.

2.27 *Au* *lakhara* *i-ma* *kë-Ø-lev* *napulakët* [*ti* *i-vi*
man DEM 3SG:REAL-come ES-SG-take club SUB 3SG:REAL-COP
nka-ri].
POSS:PT-POSS:3NSG
"The man came and took their clubs." [nmb24.Ref.044]
Lit: "The man came and took the club that was theirs."

The possessive particle is able to be juxtaposed with a noun to represent an item that belongs to a particular class of entities.

2.28 *Dui* *a-v-wa* *kilakha,* *i-a-vi* ***nka*** ***tav'et.***
man 3NSG:REAL-PL-wear this 3SG-NEG-COP POSS:PT women
"Men wear this, it is not women's" [nmb01.Ref.028]

Possession is described in more detail in §2.5.

2.2.3 Subject Prefixes

Not all clauses begin with an independent pronoun or a nominal structure. Clauses may simply begin with a verb inflected with subject and number prefixes. There are several paradigms of subject prefixes which can be used to fill the subject prefix position on the verb as well as a structural position which holds grammatical number morphemes. For a description of the subject prefixes see §3.2 and for number prefixes see §3.6. There is also an echo-subject prefix used to inflect verbs when the grammatical person of the subject can be retrieved through context, see §3.7.

2.3 Nouns

Nouns are an open word class which refer to things, people, locations, and times. New items are easily added to the word class of nouns in V'ënen Taut through borrowings from other languages such as Bislama, the national language of Vanuatu, and English, an official language in Vanuatu and language of instruction in many schools of the region. As with many Oceanic languages (Lynch, Ross, & Crowley, 2002, p. 37), there are three main classes of noun: common nouns (§2.3.1), personal nouns (§2.3.2), and local nouns (§2.3.3). Personal nouns and local nouns each have sub-classes of nouns in them. Nouns and pronouns form the head of a noun phrase. Noun phrases can act as both the subject argument and object argument of verbs as well as obliques.

2.3.1 Common Nouns

The class of common nouns is the largest noun class in V'ënen Taut. Common nouns denote most things that occur in the environment and include such entities as plants, animals, buildings, and tools. Many new common nouns have been introduced to the V'ënen Taut lexicon through contact with other groups of people and as a result of the introduction of non-traditional technologies and economical changes occurring in Vanuatu in recent decades due to globalisation.

Like some other Malekula languages, such as Neverver (Barbour, 2012) and Espiegle's Bay Language (Holmes, 2013), many common nouns begin with the sequence *n(V)-* which is

likely a remnant of the common noun article, **na* or **a,* which is postulated to have existed in the older eastern Proto Oceanic language from which V'ënen Taut descends (Lynch, Ross, & Crowley, 2002). The *n(V)-* sequence at the beginning of most common nouns in V'ënen Taut appears to have become fused with the noun itself while with others it appears to have been lost completely. This is evident by the relatively large minority of V'ënen Taut common nouns which begin with a phoneme sequence other than *n(V)-.*

Some examples of common nouns beginning with *n(V)-* are:

Noun	Meaning
nata	sea/ocean
nav'ai	nambas
neiel	sun
nëmakh	house
nilau	spider
ntu	chicken
nur	freshwater prawn

2.5: Common Nouns Beginning With n(V)-

There are also many V'ënen Taut words which begin with phoneme sequences other than *n(V)-.*

Noun	Meaning
dui	man
krei	flying fox
lamu	bamboo
m'ëtu	coconut
malakël	young person
pai	yam
rakhëm	crab
tav'et	woman

2.6: Common Nouns Not Beginning With n(V)-

There is also a large number of lexical items borrowed from Bislama and English in V'ënen Taut. Borrowed lexemes are used for non-traditional entities.

Noun	Meaning
ama	hammer
haosgel	housekeeper/nanny
jej	church
kaliko	fabric
pasta	pastor
trak	truck

Table 2.7: Bislama Borrow Words

Semantic extension of nouns is used in V'ënen Taut to create names for new items. Some examples are *tikhnap'* "ash" which can also mean "bread" or *nakhadrln nasëkh* "ant eggs" used mean to mean "rice".

Although it was mentioned previously that the *n(V)-* at the beginning of common nouns is inseparable from the noun itself, there is still some evidence that the addition of *n(V)-* to some stems can create common nouns in a derivational process. This appears to be an unproductive process and only occurs with a small number of items. Some of these are attested in the data while others are reported in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 32-33).

Word	Meaning	Word class		Noun	Meaning
am'el	in the nakamal	local noun	→	*nam'el*	nakamal
ki	non-specific particle	nominal particle	→	*nki*	some (noun)
wi	fluid (of something)	possessed noun	→	*nawi/nawei*	water
lu/lua	shoot	verb	→	*nalu*	arrow/bullet
mi	quake	verb	→	*nami*	earthquake
rëp	hit	verb	→	*narëp*	club
u	rain	verb	→	*nu*	rain (noun)

Table 2.8: n(V)- Derived Nouns

2.3.2 Personal Nouns

The class of Personal Nouns comprises nouns which refer to specific people. These include proper names of individual people, kin terms, and titles. V'ënen Taut, like many other Oceanic languages (Lynch, Ross, & Crowley, 2002), signals personal nouns with a personal article which is represented by *a* PERS. Articles are morphemes which occur with a high

frequency and which normally encode whether a nominal is indefinite or definite, although they are also associated with other grammatical functions (Dyer, 2007b, p. 158). In the case of V'ënen Taut they indicate noun class and reference type.

2.3.2.1 Personal Proper Names

Personal proper names are introduced by the personal article when a person is being spoken about.

2.29 ***A*** *R.* *i-khën* *tilau* *i-amëk.*
PERS R. 3SG:REAL-eat fish 3SG:REAL-one
"R. ate a fish." [nmb31.Ref.167]

When a person is being addressed directly, *a* PERS does not occur. The following contrasts the referential and vocative use of personal nouns. The first name, *W.,* is not preceded by the personal article because it is being used to address the hearer directly. The second name, however, is preceded by the personal article because *D.* is being spoken about rather than being addressed.

2.30 *W.* *nakëm* *k-a-Ø-le=i* ***a*** *D.?*
W. 2SG 2:REAL-NEG-SG-see=3SG:OBJ PERS D.
"W., you haven't seen D.?" [nmb11.Ref.029]

The title mëlin "chief" is also introduced by the personal article.

2.31 ***A*** *mëlin* *a* *Mëkh* *i-ma* *kë-Ø-ën* *p'ëlakh.*
PERS chief LOC Amok 3SG:REAL-come ES-SG-make banded.rail
"The chief of Amok came and danced the banded rail dance." [nmb03.Ref.001]

2.3.2.2 Kin Terms

Kin terms form a substantial portion of the personal nouns seen in the data. This is because they are typically used to refer to specific people. The structure of family groups in Big Nambas is not centred on the nuclear family. Instead, core family titles are spread out among family members following particular rules based on gender. There is a distinction

made between paternal and maternal aunts and uncles and between cross cousins[5] and parallel cousins[6] (Peoples & Baily, 2006, p. 177) which have effects that can extend over generations. Presented below is a table of kin terms. In the left column of the table are the basic forms of the kin terms which are used vocatively. The middle column shows the roots used when possessive suffixes modify a kin term. The kin terms which occur only in the second column do not have a vocative form attested in the data. Possessive suffixes help speakers to understand how people relate to each other. For example, the forms *tetiëk* "my father", *tetiëm* "your father", and *tetiën* "her/his father" occur more often in the corpus than simply *tatei* "father".

As with personal proper names, kin terms are introduced with the personal article *a* PERS when they refer to specific people, rather than addressing those people.

2.32 ***A*** ***teti-ën*** *i-vërvër* *mau.*
PERS father-POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL-run well
"His father ran fast." [nmb27.Ref.053]

2.33 *Kana* *të-Ø-trakh* ***a*** ***tap'-ëk.***
1SG 1:IRR-SG-wait.for PERS grandmother-POSS:1SG
"I will wait for my grandmother." [nmb20.Ref.014]

When used vocatively, the personal article does not introduce kin terms.

2.34 ***Tatei,*** *dakh-ma!*
father IMP-come
"Father, come here!" [nmb38.Ref.028]

[5] Children of parents' same sex siblings i.e.: maternal aunt's children.

[6] Children of parents' opposite sex siblings i.e.: paternal aunt's children

Basic Noun	Possessed	Translation
tatei	*teti-*	father/paternal uncle
unei	*uni-*	mother/maternal aunt
	nat-	child/man's brother's children/woman's sister's children
	vën pa-	daughter
	au pa-	son
amu		older brother
	tëval-	brother of a man/male parallel cousin of man
	m'an-	brother of woman/ male parallel cousin of woman
	vën-	sister of a man/female parallel cousin of a man
	tkha-	older sister of woman/female older parallel cousin of woman
vavei	*vavi-*	paternal aunt
p'ënei	*p'ëni-*	maternal uncle
mërirei	*mëriri-*	children of a man's sister
natkusvei	*natkusvi-*	children of maternal uncle
vavei pa		female cross cousin
tatlanau		children of paternal aunt
	tap'-	grandmother/father's maternal aunt
pupu dui	*dui-*	grandfather
m'ëkheiëp'	*m'ëkhip'-*	grandchild
	nau-	spouse
lalei	*leli-*	son in law
vëlei	*vëli-*	daughter in law
	ein-	father in law
	vin-	mother in law
tkhak	*tkhi-*	brother or sister in law
mama	*mama-*	mother/maternal aunt (Bislama)
papa	*papa-*	father/paternal uncle (Bislama)

Table 2.9: Kin Terms

There are strict taboos which surround the use of particular kin terms, especially in regard to the use of the names of in-laws. Brothers and sisters in-law cannot be addressed by name and must be referred to as *tkhak* or the Bislama borrow word "tawi". As all parallel cousins are considered brothers and sisters, a person may end up referring to many people as *tkhak* or "tawi". The names of parent in-laws and children in-laws cannot be uttered, though name avoidance can be used. For example, Sembu called her Smith's paternal uncle *Pupu Kaisa* "grandfather Kaisa" after the village in which he lived. Because he is considered one of

Smith's fathers, she was not permitted to utter his name. Sembu and Smith's son, who is named after a maternal uncle, was given a nickname by his grandparents because they are unable to utter his names due to name taboo. I also noted that most people appeared to avoid using the names of elders Instead they would relate the person to someone closer to or younger than their own age. For example, a child may call out "Jack's grandmother" rather than address her by name.

2.3.3 Local Nouns

Local nouns can be divided into two groups: local nouns with spatial meaning and local nouns with temporal meaning. Spatial nouns include proper place names, nouns denoting familiar places, and names of places in the physical environment. Temporal nouns include parts of the day and time counters.

2.3.3.1 Proper Place Names

Proper place names are names of fixed locations such as villages, cities, islands, and countries. Members of this group are introduced by the locative proposition *a* regardless of their structural position or function in the clause. Some members of this groups appear to be simple nouns while others appear to be complex and formed by processes such as compounding.

Some examples of proper places names attested in the data are presented in the table below.

Tnmarau	Tenmaru Village
Tnam'et	Benenaveth Village
Mëkh	Amok Village
Pur	Pur Station
Nawi M'alet	Nawi M'alet Station
V'ao	V'ao Island
Santo	Espiritu Santo Island
Vila	Port Vila

Table 2.10: Proper Place Names

2.35 *N-r-vel* *kë-r-v'a* ***a*** ***Lakatoro.***
1:REAL-PAU-move ES-PAU-go LOC Lakatoro
“We went to Lakatoro” [nmb31.Ref.007]

2.36 *Dui* *lakhara* *i-lëk* ***a*** ***Tnmarau.***
man DEM 3SG:REAL-live LOC Tenmaru
“The man lived in Tenmaru.” [nmb09.Ref.006]

If an entity, particularly a human entity, is from a particular place, speakers can indicate this by juxtaposing a proper place name after the noun. This works in the HEAD + MODIFIER pattern found throughout V’ënen Taut.

2.37 ***Dui*** ***a*** ***Mëkh*** *i-ma* *kë-Ø-luwa* ***dui*** ***a*** ***Tnmarau*** *ka.*
man LOC Amok 3SG:REAL-come ES-SG-shoot man LOC Tenmaru here
“A man from Amok came and shot a man from Tenmaru.” [nmb04.Ref.005]

2.38 ***A*** ***mëlin*** ***a*** ***Mëkh*** *i-ma* *kë-Ø-ën* *p'ëlakh.*
PERS chief LOC Amok 3SG:REAL-come ES-SG-make banded.rail
“The chief of Amok came and danced the banded rail dance.” [nmb03.Ref.001]

When a speaker uses the name of the place where they are located, the particle *ka* normally follows the place name.

2.39 *Apë-Ø-khan=i* ***a*** ***Tnmarau*** ***ka.***
3NSG:IRR-IMPS-eat=3SG:OBJ LOC Tenmaru here
“People would eat him in Tenmaru.” [nmb04.Ref.013]

2.40 *Tav'et* ***a*** ***Tnmarau*** ***ka*** *i-khitëv* *nëkhau* *pai.*
woman LOC Tenmaru here 3SG:REAL-grate laplap yam
“A woman from Tenmaru grated the yam for the laplap.” [nmb04.Ref.076]

Proper local nouns appear to be able to be modified by demonstrative determiners which indicate how far away the place is from the speaker.

2.41 *Afta a-v-m'atr a mël na prapër* ***a Unuwei lakha-dei.***
then 3NSG:REAL-PL-sleep LOC place ASV sow LOC Unuwei this-MED.DIST
"Then they slept in the sow pen there in Unuwei." [nmb05.Ref.002]

2.42 *Kë-vra-v'a da-v'a* ***a Tanam'iel lakha-tu.***
ES-PL-go CONT-go LOC Tanam'iel this-FAR.DIST
"We went to Tanam'iel over there" [nmb30.Ref.039]

2.3.3.2 Local Nouns Denoting Familiar Places

There are a small number of local nouns which refer to familiar places. These local nouns are categorised by the fact that they can be used as obliques in clauses without an introductory preposition. We can observe that the local nouns that occur without the locative preposition *a* are all vowel-initial.

eiëm	inside (building)
avarën	outside
avetlim	home
av'tlam'el	on the nasara (dancing ground)
aut	one's place or village
am'el	in the nakamal

Table 2.11: Familiar Places

2.43 *Tam'a lakara a-vra-v'a* ***eiëm.***
monster DEM 3NSG:REAL-PL-go inside
"The monsters went inside." [nmb25.Ref.036

2.44 *A-vra-khau* ***aut-ar.***
3NSG-PL-go.back place-POSS:3SG
"They go back to their village" [nmb21.Ref.046]

2.45 *Kë-v-tup'an=i* ***am'el.***
ES-PL-make.laplap=3SG:OBJ in.nakamal
"They cooked it (bird) in a laplap in the nakamal." [nmb07.Ref.006]

2.3.3.3 Absolute Local Nouns

There is a set of local nouns in V'ënen Taut which act as absolute and deictic local nouns. Absolute local nouns relate events in the physical environment to gravity or a fixed geographical position (Levinson, 2003, p. 47-50). Deictic local nouns locate events in a position relative to the speaker's point of view. This absolute/deictic distinction is found in other Malekula languages like Neverver (Barbour, 2012), the Espiegle's Bay language (Holmes, 2013). In V'ënen Taut we find an absolute frame of reference based on gravity and on the inherent hilly properties of the Big Nambas territories.

eia	up/inland
awei[7]	down/seaward

Table 2.12: Absolute Local Nouns

Attested in the data are two absolute local nouns. These are *eia* "up" and *awei* "down". They can refer to locations on two different frames of reference. The first is a horizontal frame of reference which places things inland or towards the sea. The second is a vertical frame of reference which places things in reference to gravity: up towards the sky or down towards the ground. Interestingly, we find that some Vanuatu languages such as Lolovoli (Hyslop, 2001), Neverver (Barbour, 2012), and the Espiegle's Bay language (Holmes, 2013) have two distinct sets of local nouns for the horizontal and vertical frame of reference distinction while V'ënen Taut uses the same nouns. A likely explanation for this is that the further inland or seaward that something is located on the horizontal frame the further up or down that entity is likely to be located in terms of the vertical frame.

The following two examples show *eia* "up" and *awei* "down" being used to represent the horizontal frame of reference.

2.46 *Tituei, në-v-lëk a lili **eia** a pi nëmakh **eia.***
before 1:REAL-PL-live LOC bush up LOC place house up
"Before, we lived up in the bush, up in the old village." [nmb19.Ref.001]

[7] *Awei* is regularly pronounced *awi* due to diphthong reduction.

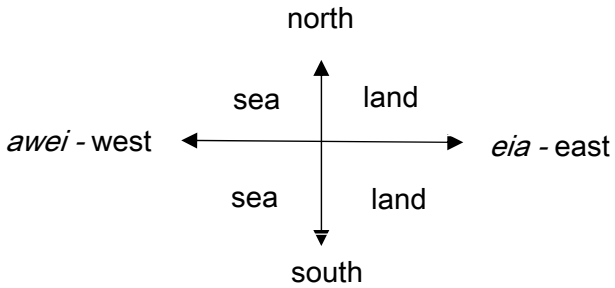
2.47 *Në-vra-ma* *kë-v-siris* *kë-vra-ma* ***awei.***
1:REAL-PL-come ES-PL-descend ES-PL-come down
"We came down (the hill towards the sea)" [nmb31.Ref.110]

In these two examples *eia* "up" is being used to represent the vertical locative frame of reference.

2.48 *Kë-Ø-lëk* *arana* *rena* *nav'ëkh* ***eia.***
ES-SG-sit on branch malay.apple up
"He sat up on a Malay apple branch." [nmb11.Ref.005]

2.49 *Kë-Ø-rëv* *tilau* *lara* *i-ma* ***eia.***
2:REAL-SG-pull fish that 3SG:REAL-come up
"You pull the fish up (to the surface)." [nmb36.Ref.011]

It appears that the local nouns *eia* "up" and *awi* "down" can also have their meaning extended over larger distances; however more data is needed to confirm this. In the data, we find that the local noun *eia* "up" is used when speakers are talking about going to Lakatoro, located on the eastern side of Malekula, and *awei* "down" is used to mean that they are returning to Tenmaru, which is located in northwest Malekula. The coastline of Tenmaru roughly follows a north-south direction with mountains inland to the east. It is possible that the meaning of the local noun *eia* "up" could be extended over larger distances to mean east because if someone were to travel inland and up the mountains from Tenmaru they would be traveling in an eastward direction. Logically traveling to the west would mean that the movement would be considered as *awi* "down".



2.50 *Kë-v-iar* ***eia.***
ES-PL-reach up
“We arrived in Lakatoro.” [nmb31.Ref.012]
Lit. (We reached up.)

2.51 *Kë-v-iar=i* ***awei.***
ES-PL-reach=3SG:OBJ down
“We arrived at Tenmaru.” [nmb31.Ref.057]
Lit. (We reached it down.)

2.3.3.4 Relative Local Nouns

Relative local nouns place objects and events in space relative to the point of view of the speaker. The relative local nouns are morphologically complex and are formed using nominalised demonstrative determiners (§2.6.3) which then receive further modification depending on the relative distance between the speaker and the location. Four of the relative local pronouns have two forms, one with /l/ and one with /v/ but the distribution for the variation has not yet been established. The relative local nouns are presented in the table below.

Demonstrative	Relative Local Noun	Meaning
ka	*atka*	here (village)
laka / vakha	*atlakha / atvakha*	here
lara / vara	*atlara / atvara*	there
lakadei / vakhadei	*altlakhadei / atvakhadei*	over there
lakhatu / vakhatu	*atlakhatu / atvakhatu*	far away

Table 2.13: Relative Local Nouns

2.52 *N-Ø-rn* *të-Ø-lëk* *ësn* *m'ertu* *ip-amëk* ***atka.***
1:REAL-SG-want 1:IRR-SG-live neat person 3SG:IRR-one here
“I want to live with a man here (in Tenmaru).” [nmb23.Ref.155]

2.53 *N-k-a-lëk* *mima* ***atlakha,*** *ta-v'a* *viv'a.*
1:REAL-NES-NEG-stay close here 1SG:IRR-go far
“I will not be close to here, I am going far away.” [nmb23.Ref.008]

2.54 *N-Ø-an=i* *trak* *i-pëtir* ***atlara.***
1:REAL-SG-make=3SG:OBJ truck 3SG:REAL-stand there
"I made the truck stop there." [nmb31.Ref.042]

2.55 *l-wa-de=i* ***atlakha-tu.***
3SG:REAL-carry-HLD=3SG:OBJ here-FAR.DST
"He held it over there." [nmb27.Ref.055]

2.3.3.5 Temporal Local Nouns

Temporal local nouns help speakers understand when an event occurred or will occur. There are two types of temporal nouns: parts of the day, such as morning and night, and time counters, such as tomorrow or next year. Temporal local nouns can have absolute time reference or relative time reference.

2.3.3.5.1 Parts of the Day

In V'ënen Taut the day is split into four distinct parts: morning, middle of the day, afternoon, and night. Temporal local nouns may have absolute reference which means that they use the present moment as their reference time. They can also have relative reference which means take their temporal reference from another day. Understanding whether the parts of the day have absolute or relative time reference is dependent on context. The V'ënen Taut names for the parts of the day are presented in table 2.14.

Noun	Part of Day
m'ëtëv'aren	morning
likhalm'au	middle of the day
kënarev	afternoon
likhat	night

Table 2.14: Parts of the Day

In the example below, the speaker is talking about things that he did that particular day. This example has absolute time reference.

2.56 *Në-v-tkhal* ***m'ëtëv'aren*** *kë-v-trakh* *ar* *maral* *a-vra-ma.*
1:REAL-PL-wake morning ES-PL-wait all child 3NSG:REAL-PL-come
"We woke up this morning and waited for all the children to come." [nmb31.Ref.147]

In the example below, the speaker is talking about what he did after he had a dream. This example has relative time reference.

2.57 *Kë-Ø-tkhal* ***m'ëtëv'aren*** *kë-Ø-titine=i* *an=r* *m'ertu.*
ES-SG-wake morning ES-SG-tell.story=3SG:OBJ EXT.P=3NSG:OBJ person
"I woke up in the morning and I told it to some people." [nmb40.Ref.012]

Parts of the day often occur positioned at the beginning of a clause.

2.58 ***Likhat****,* *në-v-lëk* *udrlan=i* *a* *Tnmarau...*
night 1:REAL-PL-stay all=3SG:OBJ LOC Tenmaru
"At night, we were all in Tenmaru…" [nmb30.Ref.117]

The names of the day may also occur with parts of the day.

2.59 ***Fraedei*** ***m'ëtëv'aren*** *kam'em'* *n-r-tkhal…*
Friday morning 1NSG.INC 1:REAL-PAU-wake
"On Friday morning, we woke up…" [nmb31.Ref.005]

Parts of the day can also act as common nouns. For example, 2.60 shows *kënarev* "afternoon" acting as the predicate in an equational clause.

2.60 *Nut* *i-vi* ***kënarev****…*
place 3SG:REAL-COP afternoon
"It was the afternoon…" [nmb30.Ref.115]

2.3.3.5.2 Time Counters

Time counters are a sub-class of temporal local nouns and are also used to locate propositions in time. They can have absolute or relative time reference. Table 2.15 shows the time counters attested in the data.

Noun	Meaning
tituei	before (long ago)
nawa	day before yesterday
nanëv	yesterday
dika	today
khatuei	before (sometime today)
m'ikh	tomorrow
pawa	the day after tomorrow
atëkh	next year

Table 2.15: Time Counters

2.61 *Nki* *a-v-tr* *nisëkh* *pua* *i-nal* *dëman* *i-ru*
some 3NSG:REAL-PL-cut piece meat 3SG:REAL-ten NUM 3SG:REAL-two
n-Ø-lav=i ***nanëv*** *a* *Lakatoro.*
1:REAL-SG-take=3SG:OBJ yesterday at Lakatoro
"Some of them are cutting the twelve pieces of meat that I brought yesterday at Lakatoro." [nmb32.Ref.008]

2.62 *Kana* *të-Ø-vrur* *lëkheien* *ipë-tu* *khin* ***atëkh.***
1SG 1:IRR-SG-talk.about marriage 3SG:IRR-put 3SG next.year
"I am going to talk about the marriage that will happen next year." [nmb21.Ref.001]

The time counter *m'ikh* "tomorrow" occurs with both absolute and relative time reference. Where it occurs with relative meaning it means "the next day". This is often signalled by modifying *m'ikh* with the general possessive postmodifier *nën/nen*.

2.63 ***M'ikh*** *i-vi* *napën* *ar* *marëdel.*
tomorrow 3SG:REAL-COP day all child
"Tomorrow is children's day." [nmb12.Ref.001]

2.64 ***M'ikh*** *ne-n,* *kë-Ø-ma* *kë-Ø-la* *nut-ëm* *lakhara…*
tomorrow CLS.GEN-POSS:3SG 2:REAL-SG-come ES-SG-see place-POSS:2SG DEM
"The next day, you come and see your place…" [nmb13.Ref.005]

We find in V'ënen Taut that the names for the days of the week have been borrowed from Bislama. As Bislama is an English lexified creole language, they sound very similar to the

English names of the week. The one exception is Saturday which was called *Sabat* "Sabbath" rather than *Sarede* because I undertook field work in a predominantly Seventh Day Adventist community.

2.65 *Nawa* *i-vi* ***Sabat.***
day.before.y.day 3SG:REAL-COP Saturday
"The day before yesterday was Saturday (the Sabbath)" [nmb31.Ref.173]

2.4 Nominal Derivation

In V'ënen Taut, nouns can be created through three different methods. The first nominalisation process uses the suffix *–ien* and creates abstract nouns and nouns that describe processes from verbs. The second type of nominalisation uses the prefix *tër-* which is used with state and adjectival verbs to create a noun denoting a subgroup of a previously mentioned noun. The last kind of nominal derivation that will be discussed is nominal compounding, where nouns and other roots are compounded together to make new nouns.

2.4.1 Nominalisation Using *-ien*

Some verbs can be nominalised with the addition of the nominalising suffix *–ien*. The suffixed verb root may be simple or reduplicated. In the case of reduplicated verb roots, this nominalisation process only appears to create abstract nouns and nouns that denote processes. This is consistent with what has been described in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 32). As discussed in Chapter One, the addition of the nominalisation affix may cause changes to the vowel in the verb root. Interestingly, not all the verbs which have /a/ in their final syllable undergo vowel change. Compare the verbs *dadar* "prepare" and *m'akar* "work" with *m'at* "be sick" and *m'atr* "sleep". The following table shows the verbs and their nominalised forms which occur in the data.

Verb Root	Meaning	Nominalised Noun	Meaning
dadar	prepare	*dadarien*	preparation
lalau	follow taboo	*laluien*	taboo
m'akar	work	*m'akarien*	work/school report
mul	moult (skin)	*mulien*	moulting
për	reply	*përien*	reply
rakhëv	clear garden site	*rakhëvien*	garden clearing
silëv	live	*silëvien*	life
talu	go to the bush	*taluien*	going to the bush
takh-takh	burn garden rubbish	*takhtakhien*	garden rubbish burning
v'akh-v'akh	think about	*v'akhv'akhien*	thought/idea
ul	pay/buy	*ulien*	payment
m'at	be sick	*m'etien*	sickness
m'atr	sleep	*m'etrien*	sleep/dream

Table 2.16: Verb Roots Nominalised with *-ien*

The following two examples involve the verb root *m'at* "be sick". The first example shows *m'at* acting as a verb and taking verbal morphology. The second examples show *m'at* "be sick" occurring as a noun. Here it is acting as the subject of a verb and is modified by possessive morphology associated with nouns.

2.66 *A* *nau-n* *tav'et* ***i-m'at.***
PERS spouse-POSS:3SG woman 3SG:REAL-be.sick
"His wife was sick." [nmb23.Ref.115]

2.67 ***M'et-ien-ën*** *ipë-kharis.*
be.sick-NMLS-POSS:3SG 3SG:IRR-finish
"His sickness will be over." [nmb22.Ref.061]

The next two examples concern the verb root *rakhëv* "clear bush to make a garden". Example 2.68 shows *rakhëv* acting as a verb and example 2.69 shows the nominalised from of *rakhëv* which is acting as the subject of an equational clause.

2.68 *Në-v-**rakhëv**…*
1:REAL-PL-clear.garden
"We cleared a garden plot" [nmb10.Ref.011]

2.69 ***Rakhëv-ien*** *i-vi* *nka-n* *a* *S.*
clear.garden-NMLS 3SG:REAL-COP POSS.PT-POSS:3SG PERS S.
"The garden clearing was for S." [nmb10.Ref.011]
Lit: "The garden clearing was S.'s."

The two examples below contain the reduplicated verb *v'akh-v'akh* "think (about)". The first example shows *v'akh-v'akh* acting as a compliment-taking verb and the second example shows *v'akh-v'akh* being modified with the nominalising suffix and with the nominal modifying adjective *pa* "small".

2.70 *Kana* ***n-Ø-v'akh-v'akh*** *ti* *të-Ø-ën* *nëkhau* *ip-amëk.*
1SG 1:REAL-SG-DUP-think SUB 1:IRR-SG-make laplap 3SG:IRR-one
"I think that I will make a laplap." [nmb12.Ref.002]

2.71 ***V'akh-v'akh-ien*** *pa* *we* *n-Ø-rn* *ti* *të-Ø-vër* *a* *nakëd.*
DUP-think-NMLS small SUB 1:REAL-SG-want SUB 1:IRR-SG-say EXT.P 1NSG.INC
"The small thought that I wanted to say to us." [nmb08.Ref.016]

2.4.2 Nominalisation Using *tër-*

The prefix *tër-* is used to nominalise stative and adjectival verbs. It is used to create a sub-class of a particular noun established through context. What is meant by this is that a noun will be mentioned then later a state or adjectival verb nominalised with *tër-* will occur. The nominalised verb will refer to one or a number of the previously mentioned noun with the defining characteristic expressed by the verb stem. The meaning is similar to the following structure in English: "the __ one".

Verb Root	Meaning	Nominalised	Meaning
lil	big	*tërlil*	"the big one
m'arën	dry	*tërm'arën*	"the dry one"
m'ëndakh	green	*tërm'ëdakh*	"the green one"
pa	small	*tërpa*	"the small one"
p'as	good	*tërp'as*	"the good one"
tëv-tëva	white	*tërtëvtëva*	"the very white one"
uraur	other	*tëruraur*	"another/the other one"

Table 2.17: Verb Roots Nominalised with *tër-*

2.72 *Kë-Ø-lau* ***tër-pa*** *wëki.*
ES-SG-plant NMLP-small only
"You only plant the small ones (yams)." [nmb15.ref.015]

2.73 *Pë-Ø-tu* ***tër-uraur*** *mël…*
2:IRR-SG-put NMLP-different again
"You will put another one..." [nmb01.Ref.079]

Often, the general possessive post-modifier occurs with verbs modified with this nominalisation prefix. This help speakers be more specific about which group of entities they are referring to.

2.74 ***Tër-m'arën*** *në-n,* *kë-Ø-khan=i.*
NMLP-dry CLS.GEN-POSS:3SG ES-SG-eat=3SG:OBJ
"The dry ones of them (coconuts), we eat them." [nmb18.Ref.002]

2.4.3 Nominalisation Using *at-*

Relative local nouns are derived from demonstratives by adding the nominalisation prefix *at-*. For further description see §2.3.3.4.

Demonstrative		Relative Local Noun	
ka	here	*atka*	here (general area)
lakha/vakha	this	*altlakha/atvakha*	here
lara/vara	that	*atlara/atvara*	there

2.18: Relative Local Nouns

The demonstrative *atlakha/atvakha* "here" can be modified to indicate how far from the speaker something is located. To indicate a medium distance *–dei* is affixed to the end of the noun and to indicate a far distance *–tu* is affixed to the end.

altlakhadei/atvakhadei	over there
atlakhatu/atvakhatu	far away

2.18: Relative Local Nouns Showing Distance

2.4.4 Nominal Compounds

Compounding is a process through which lexical roots are joined make new lexical items. Nouns are able to form compounds with other nouns, verbs, and adjectives. Nominal compounds are formed with the basic HEAD + MODIFIER pattern that is present through many constructions in V'ënen Taut. Compounds in V'ënen Taut can either be endocentric or exocentric. Endocentric compounds are those whose meaning can be considered as the sum of their parts; they denote a sub-class of their heads (Haspelmath, 2002, p. 87-88). Exocentric compounds have their semantic head outside of the compound, making their meaning harder to derive from their constituent parts (Haspelmath, 2002, p.88). There appears to be an even number of endocentric and exocentric compounds occurring in the data.

In Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 34) compounding is reported as a non-productive process. Fox (1979) says that compounds can only be formed with a noun as the head and an uninflected verb as the modifier. This is only one of the methods used for creating compounds seen in the data for this project. It is possible that the analysis used in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979) had a narrower scope and did not consider endocentric compounds as a type of compound.

The following examples show compounds made of two nouns. They have been ordered from what can be considered the most endocentric to the most exocentric. Some of the head nouns have can be inflected with morphology indicating possession; however, they can still be considered compounds because of the close HEAD + MODIFIER relationship between the two nouns.

Head	Meaning		Modifier	Meaning	Compound Meaning
tav'et	woman	+	*malakël*	youth	"young woman"
dui	man	+	*malakël*	youth	"young man"
nau-n	spouse	+	*tav'et*	woman	"wife"
nau-n	spouse	+	*dui*	man	"husband"
ntu	chicken	+	*tav'et*	woman	"hen"
wi	fluid	+	*ka-*	*nose-*	"snot"
aut	place	+	*taut*	big nambas person	"the big nambas land"
p'ët	navel	+	*likhat*	night	"middle of the night"
p'ët	navel	+	*lili*	bush	"middle of the bush"
mëlin	chief	+	*eia*	up	"god"
plakh	base of tree trunk	+	*tl-*	leg-	"ankle"
m'eta	eye	+	*pua-*	pig-	"ceremonial pig exchange"
m'eta	eye	+	*neiel*	sun	"time/hour"
nëkhadrln	egg	+	*nasëkh*	black ant	"rice"

Table 2.20: Noun + Noun Compounds

The following table shows compounds consisting of a nominal head and adjectival modifier. As with the previous table, the compounds have been ordered from the most endocentric to the most exocentric. The last two entries in this table are taken from Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 34).

Head	Meaning		Modifier	Meaning	Compound Meaning
dui	man	+	*pa*	small	"boy"
tav'et	woman	+	*pa*	small	"girl"
krei	flying fox	+	*m'ët*	black	"brown flying fox"
m'ertu	person	+	*lil*	big	"important person"
p'eknarën	sky	+	*m'ët*	black	"rain cloud"
nawei	water	+	*pa*	small	"semen"
pët	head	+	*khua*	strong	"stubborn person"
pët	head	+	*m'iel*	red	"red head (bird)" "policeman"
dëkh	tail	+	*was*	yellow	"yellow tail (fish)"

Table 2.21: Noun + Adjective Compounds

Table 2.22 shows nominal compounds consisting of a nominal head and a verbal modifier. The verbs occur as uninflected roots in compounds. As can be seen in the table, all of the NOUN + VERB compounds are exocentric because their meaning is not easily understood

from the meanings of their individual parts. The last example is taken from Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 34).

Head	Meaning		Modifier	Meaning	Compound Meaning
nalen	wind	+	*rëp*	hit	"cyclone"
anl-	stomach	+	*sasër*	descend	"diarrhoea"
nëm'	tongue	+	*nal*	ten	"birds species (with lots of calls)"
tl	leg	+	*v'a*	four	"truck"
nap'	fire	+	*kris*	scrape	"match"

Table 2.22: Noun + Verb Compounds

2.5 Possession

In many Oceanic languages, there is a semantic distinction made between alienable and inalienable possession (Lynch, Ross, & Crowley, 2002). Inalienable possession is where possession is an inherent property of an entity and the possessor has no control over the fact that they possess the entity in question, which is often a constituent part of the possessor, like body parts (Crowley, Lynch, Siegel, Piau, 1995, p. 205). In other cases, the possessum may not be a part of the possessor but the possessor and possessum have a very close relationship with each other, such as family members. Alienable possession involves the possessor having control over possession with no inherent link between the possessor and possessum (Crowley et al, 1995). Entities that are often possessed through alienable possession are foods, animals, and other objects that occur naturally in the environment

In many Oceanic languages, including some Malekula languages, such as the Malua Bay Language (Wessels, 2013), and the Espiegle's Bay Language (Holmes, 2014), and Neve'ei (Musgrave, 2007), the alienable/inalienable possession distinction is encoded grammatically. Inalienable possession is marked with affixes which reflect the close relationship between possessor and possessum while alienable possession is often marked with post-nominal modifiers, consisting of a classifier and possessive morpheme, which reflects the more distant relationship between the possessor and possessum.

2.5.1 Indirect Possession

V'ënen Taut also has possessive postmodifiers. Like the neighbouring languages Tape (Crowley 2006c), the Malua Bay language (Wessels, 2013), and Espiegle's Bay Language (Holmes, 2014), these possessive postmodifiers consist of a classifier and a possessive morpheme. Although V'ënen Taut has possessive postmodifiers, their use is restricted almost entirely to marking possession of items for consumption.

Possessive postmodifiers are a group of morphologically complex items made of a classifier and one of the obligatory possession suffixes presented in table 2.23. This method of marking alienable possession is common in Melanesian languages (Lynch, Ross, & Crowley, 2002, p. 41). The classifiers, which are shown below, indicate the intended use of the possessum.

Classifier	Meaning
na-	item that can be eaten
wada-	item that can be eaten raw
m'am'-	item for drinking
në-/ne-	non-human possessor

Table 2.23: Possessive Classifiers

The following examples show nouns being modified with possessive postmodifiers made from the classifiers *na-*, *wada-*, and *m'am'-*.

2.75 *P'a-Ø-v'a* *kë-Ø-rëp* *sara* *m'anëkh* ***na-m...***
1:IRR-SG-go ES-SG-kill COMP bird CLS.FOOD-POSS:2SG
"I will go and kill your bird (for you to eat)…" [nmb11.Ref.019]

2.76 *Pë-Ø-wir-ma* *m'ëtu* ***wada-k.***
2:IRR-SG-carry-come coconut CLS.RAW.FOOD-POSS:1SG
"Bring me a coconut (for eating)." [nmb26.Ref.006]

2.77 *Kë-v-lev* *nawei* ***m'am'-ër.***
ES-PL-take water CLS.DRINK-POSS:3NSG
"They took their water." [nmb15.Ref.002]

Where the noun that the possessive postmodifier is marking can be retrieved through context, a speaker may choose to omit the noun and only say the possessive postmodifier. When used in this manner, the possessive postmodifier functions in a similar way to a noun. The two examples below contrast this usage.

2.78 *Apë-v-wir-ma* *pai* ***na-k.***
3NSG:IRR-PL-carry-come yam CLS.FOOD-POSS:1SG
"They will bring my yams." [nmb01.Ref.185]

2.79 *Të-Ø-wa* *pët-n* *lakha* *ipë-vi* ***na-k.***
1:IRR-SG-carry head-POSS:3SG DEM 3SG:REAL-COP CLS.FOOD-POSS:1SG
"I will take the head, it will be my food." [nmb27.Ref.009]

The last classifier to be discussed is *në-/ne-* which, unlike the other classifiers, does not give any information about the intended use of possessum. Instead, it is used with optionally possessed nouns and indicates that its possessor, which was previously mentioned or clear through context, is a non-human entity. This can be shown by 2.80.

2.80 *Kë-Ø-tr* *viu* ***ne-n*** *arana* *tra-n.*
ES-SG-cut pandanus CLS.GEN-POSS:3SG on trunk-POSS:3SG
"You cut its pandanus from its plant." [nmb01.Ref.003]

The example above is discussing how to make a nambas. The speaker is saying that people need to go and cut the pandanus, from which it is made, from the plant. The possessive postmodifier *ne-n* is referring to the pandanus for the nambas. The nambas, which is not mentioned but understood through context, is the possessor of the pandanus. The word *tra-n* "its plant" is modified with a possessive suffix because *tra* "plant/trunk" is an inalienable part of the pandanus plant.

2.5.2 Direct Possession

In V'ënen Taut, the distinction between alienable and inalienable possession is made in the possessive marking of nouns; however, instead of the distinction being represented entirely through morphological marking for inalienable possession and analytic marking for alienable

possession, it is made on an obligatory/optional marking basis. This is because both alienable and inalienable possession are marked with suffixes. Some nouns are obligatorily marked with possessive suffixes or occur in other possessive constructions whenever they occur in speech. These nouns appear to hold an inalienable relationship with their possessors. Other nouns are only optionally marked with possessive suffixes. These nouns are in an alienable relationship with their optional possessors. Although very similar, there are separate possessive suffix paradigms used for inalienably possessed nouns and alienably possessed nouns.

2.5.2.1 Obligatory/Inalienable Possession

The table below shows the possessive suffixes used with obligatorily possessed nouns. The schwa occurs when the possessed noun ends in a consonant which has a different place of articulation to that of the possessive suffix. If the possessed noun ends in a vowel or a homorganic consonant the schwa does not occur. These suffixes are consistent with those presented in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979).

	Singular	Non-Singular
1:INCL		*-(ë)d*
1:EXCL	*-(ë)k*	*-m'em'*
2	*-(ë)m*	*-m'i*
3	*-(ë)n*	*-(ë)r*

Table 2.24: Obligatory Possession Suffixes

The following nouns are some of the obligatorily possessed nouns in the data. Each of these entities can be seen to be in an inalienable relationship with another entity.

Body Parts		Family Members	
pët-	head	*nat-*	child
lu-	teeth, claw	*tap'-*	grandmother
p'ët-	belly/navel	*vën-*	sister
nil-	skin/hair/fur/feather	*tëval-*	brother
su-	bone	Part Whole	
wa-	penis	*rau-*	leaf
(su)ka-	nose	*wal-*	top
lëm'-	arm/hand	*pla-*	base of trunk
nëm'-	tongue	*tra-*	trunk
nap-	buttocks	*nava-*	fruit
nakh-	name/face	*mi-*	odour
anl-	inside/stomach	*murak-*	old shell
nalasav-	foreskin	*ns-*	excrement
lë-	testicles	*nëm-*	spirit
du-	back		
mr-	chest		
p'ak-	body		
v'at-	belly		

2.25: Obligatorily Possessed Nouns

2.81 *A* ***nau-k*** *i-t-rkhapën=i.*
PERS spouse-POSS:1SG 3SG:REAL-die.unnaturally=3SG:OBJ
"My husband has died." [nmb23.Ref.149]

2.82 *Kë-Ø-lav=i* *kë-Ø-ve=i* *a* ***lëm'-ëm.***
ES-SG-take=3SG:OBJ ES-SG-wipe=3SG:OBJ EXT.P hand-POSS:3SG
"You take it and wipe your hands" [nmb18.Ref.002]

2.83 ***P'ak-ën*** *i-m'ët* *udrlan=i.*
body-POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL-black all=3SG:OBJ
"Its body was completely black." [nmb25.Ref.031]

2.84 *Kë-v-nan=i* *kë-v-tau=i* *arana* ***pët-r*** *atlakha.*
ES-PL-fill=3SG:OBJ ES-PL-put=3SG:OBJ on head-POSS:3NSG here
"They fill it (basket) and they put it on their heads here." [nmb45.Ref.025]

Human possessors of obligatorily possessed nouns can occur after the noun. When this occurs, the possessed noun is modified by the appropriate possessive suffix and the name of the possessor follows, introduced with the personal article.

2.85 *Kë-r-lua-ulul* ***mr-n*** ***a*** ***tatei*** *atlakha.*
ES-PAU-shoot-CVR chest-POSS:3SG PERS father here
"They shot all over the father's chest here." [nmb05.Ref.004]

Where the human possessor does not require the personal article, the possessor noun is simply juxtaposed after the possessed noun which is affixed with the appropriate possessive suffix.

2.86 *Kë-Ø-wa* ***pët-n*** ***au*** *lakara.*
ES-SG-carry head-POSS:3SG man DEM
"They carried the man's head." [nmb27.Ref.010]

The non-human possessor of an obligatorily possessed object can be juxtaposed after an inalienable noun in a compound like manner. This contrast is seen in the examples below, which contain the word *rau-* leaf.

2.87 *Kë-v-lev* ***ru***[8] ***m'ëtu*** *wëki.*
ES-PL-take leaf coconut only
"They just bring coconut leaves." [nmb45.Ref.005]

2.88 ***Rau-n,*** *tër-m'ëdakh* *në-n,* *a-Ø-vat=i*
leaf-POSS:3SG NMLP-green CLS.GEN-POSS:3SG 3NSG:REAL-IMPRS-weave=3SG:OBJ
i-vi *pias.*
3SG:REAL-COP mat
"Its (coconut) leaves, the green ones, people weave them into mats." [nmb18.Ref.002]

Inalienable nominals always occur in a possessive structure in the data.

[8] The word *rau-* becomes *ru* when it is possessed using juxtaposition thus: *raun* "leaf (of a known tree)", *ru nai* "leaf (of unspecified tree)", and *ru m'ëtu* "coconut leaf".

2.5.2.2 Optional/Alienable Possession

Most nouns in the corpus are optionally possessed. These nouns are alienable from their possessor, meaning that they are things that occur naturally in the environment and can be possessed by people; items such as tools, some locations, and plants can be possessed in this manner.

	Suffixes Reported in Fox (1979)		Suffixes Observed in the Data	
	Singular	Non-Singular	Singular	Non-Singular
1:INCL		*-ad* (Fox, 1979)		*-ad*
1:EXCL	*-ak*	*-am'em'*	*-ëk*	*-am'em'*
2	*-am*	*-am'i* (Fox, 1979)	*-ëm*	*-am'i*
3	*-an*	*-ar*	*-ën*	*-ar*

Table 2.26: Optional Possession Suffixes

Presented in the table above are the optional possession suffixes that were reported in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar,* along with the suffixes seen in the data for this project. There has been a shift from /a/ to /ə/ in the singular suffixes. This shift is attested throughout the new recordings. This creates some ambiguity in possessive system because both inalienably and alienably possessed nominal can appear to be marked with the same suffixes. Alienably nouns possessed by singular entities can be distinguished audibly by the occurrence of the schwa regardless of the final phoneme in the possessed nominal. This contrasts obligatorily possessed nouns whose schwa is phonologically conditioned. The non-singular suffixes all have /a/ at the beginning of them making them easier to distinguish.

The second way that optionally possessed nominals can be distinguished from obligatorily possessed nominals is that optionally possessed nominals can occur in speech outside of possessive constructions, while obligatorily possessed nominals must occur in some kind of possessive construction.

Some examples of optionally possessed nouns are presented in table 2.27.

namel	garden	*m'ëtu*	coconut (plantation)
pitvët	cultivated garden	*m'ertu*	people (of chief)
nëmakh	house	*v'ënen*	language/speech
tav'et	woman/wife	*tan*	gun
naten	bag/basket	*nav'ëkh*	Malay apple (tree)

Table 2.27: Optionally Possessed Nouns

The examples below show optionally possessed nominals occurring in constructions where they are not coded for possession and examples where they are coded for possession.

2.89 *N-të-Ø-pësle=i al **pitvët.***
1:REAL-PFV-SG-find=3SG:OBJ in cultivated.garden
"I have found him in the garden." [nmb46.Ref.062]

2.90 *Të-r-m'atr al **pitvët-ëm**.*
1:IRR-PAU-sleep in cultivated.garden-POSS:2SG
"You and I will sleep in your garden." [nmb09.Ref.011]

2.91 ***V'ënen** pa n-Ø-rn të-Ø-vër=i i-kharis atlara.*
language small 1:REAL-SG-want 1:IRR-SG-say=3SG:OBJ 3SG:REAL-finish here
"The story I wanted to tell finishes here." [nmb09.Ref.034]

2.92 *Khir a-v-v'ana **v'ënen-ar.***
3SG 3SG:REAL-PL-speak language-POSS:3SG
"They were speaking their language." [nmb23.Ref.063]

2.93 *Në-v-vër a **v'ënen-am'em'** lara, në-v-vër ti*
1:REAL-PL-say in language-POSS:1NSG:EXCL that 1:REAL-PL-say SUB
i-vi kinkin.
3SG:REAL-COP kinkin
"We say in our language, we call them kinkin." [nmb13.Ref.002]

As mentioned previously, there appears to be some ambiguity in the marking of possession of both obligatorily and optionally possessed nouns. Examples of where the two systems are similar and distinct are provided below.

These two example show nominals marked for possession by a third person singular entity. Example 2.94 shows an obligatorily possessed nominal and 2.95 shows an optionally possessed nominal. Both nominals end in the vowel /u/. Here there is an audible difference between the two types of possession.

2.94 *Pulet* *i-sërkha-p'r* ***su*** ***du-n*** *lakha.*
bullet 3SG:REAL-sever–BRK bone back-POSS:3SG.OBLG this
"The bullet broke his spine." [nmb06.Ref.001]

2.95 *A* *mëlin* *i-vër* *an=r* *ar* ***m'ertu-ën****…*
PERS chief 3SG:REAL-say EXT.P=3NSG:OBJ all person-POSS:3SG.OPT
"The chief said to his people…" [nmb38.Ref.013]

The following four examples show nominals marked for possession by a first person singular entity. Example 2.96 shows an obligatorily possess noun and 2.97 shows an optionally possessed noun. The contrast between optional and obligatory possession is clear in the different suffix forms. However, this contrast is lost in example 2.98 and 2.99. In example 2.98 *m'at* "eye", an obligatorily possessed noun, is modified with the *-ëk* allophone of the first person singular possessive suffix (because /t/ is not homorganic with /k/). In example 2.99 *tav'et* "woman" is also marked with *-ëk* because this noun is optionally possessed.

2.96 *Kana* *në-Ø-v'a* *m'e=i* *a* ***nau-k.***
1SG 1:REAL-SG-go with=3SG:OBJ PERS spouse-POSS:1SG.OBLG
"I went with my husband" [nmb23.Ref.188]

2.97 *Kë-Ø-v'akh* *të-Ø-ën* *p'ari-ëk.*
ES-SG-think 1:IRR-SG-make work-POSS:1SG.OPT
"I thought I would do my work." [nmb31.Ref.161]

2.98 *Si* *vara* *n-Ø-le=i* *a* *m'at-ëk.*
thing that 1:REAL-SG-see=3SG:OBJ EXT.P eye-POSS:1SG.OBLG
"I saw it with my own eyes." [nmb06.Ref.010]

2.99 *Kë-Ø-lev tav'et-ëk.*
ES-SG-take woman-POSS:1SG.OPT
"I chose a wife." [nmb19.Ref.012]

Grammatical possession in V'ënen Taut appears to be rather complicated and further data collection and analysis is required before it can be described in more detail.

2.6 Nominal Modification

There is a variety of ways in which nouns can be modified in V'ënen Taut. Nouns are modified when speakers want to give more information about a particular entity. Nouns can be modified to indicate number, physical and other characteristics, definiteness and location.

2.6.1 Numerals and Quantifiers

These modifiers are used to indicate the quantity of a particular entity. Numerals indicate the specific number of entities while quantifiers indicate the quantity of entities more generally.

2.6.1.1 Numerals

Numerals are used to indicate a specific quantity of a particular noun being spoken about (Dryer, 2007b, p. 164). In V'ënen Taut numerals are a class of intransitive verb that occur in a special type of subordinate clause. Numerals are inflected by many of the verbal prefixes available for inflection of verbs, such as realis and irrealis moods. As numerals are a class of intransitive verbs they will be discussed in the next chapter (§3.8.2). A further intransitive verb *studau* "be many" can also be used to quantify nouns.

2.6.1.2 Quantifiers

Quantifiers are a small set of nominal modifiers in V'ënen Taut. One is prenominal and the others are post-nominal. They serve to indicate the number of a particular noun that is being spoken about. Unlike numerals they do not specify the exact number of the noun.

Prenominal		Post-nominal	
ar	plural/all (humans)	*kinkin*	some
		nelnal	many
		wëki	only

Table 2.28: Nominal Quantifiers

The plural word *ar* is the only prenominal modifier. In the data, this modifier is only attested as occurring with nouns which refer to humans and human like creatures. However, Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 29) reports that it can also occur with the nouns *pua* "pig" and *lip'akh* "dog". Fox (1979, p. 29) analyses *ar* as a nominal prefix; however, in this work it is considered to be a free morpheme. The reason for this is because *ar* appears to fill the same structural position as the personal article *a* PERS*.* However, *ar* is not considered to be a non-singular personal article because it does not modify personal nouns.

2.100 *Tituei,* ***ar*** *tav'et* *a-kha-v-wa* *talei.*
before all woman 3NSG:REAL-NEG-PL-carry knife
"Before, women did not carry knives." [nmb09.Ref.013]

Noun *dui* "man" is shortened to *du* when it is modified by *ar*. This appears to be the only noun with which this process is triggered.

2.101 ***Ar*** *du* *a* *Tnam'et* *a-vra-ma…*
all man LOC Benenaveth 3NSG:REAL-PL-come
"The men from Benenaveth are coming…" [nmb23.Ref.171]

The post-nominal quantifier *kinkin* "some" is used to indicate that there are only a few of a particular entity.

2.102 *Kë-v-lev* *ru* *nai* ***kinkin.***
ES-PL-take leaf tree some
"They took some leaves." [nmb22.Ref.060]

Kinkin can modify *narën* “time” to create *narën kinkin* “sometimes”.

2.103 *Narën* ***kinkin*** *a-v-ën* *uran=i* *i-v-amëk.*
time some 3NSG:REAL-PL-make all=3SG:OBJ 3SG:REAL-MULT-one
“Sometimes they do it all at once.” [nmb21.Ref.053]

Example 2.104 contains a noun which is modified by both *ar* and *kinkin*. The modifier *ar* indicates that there was more than one child and *kinkin* indicates that the number of children was small. In the example the speaker is talking about three children.

2.104 *Ar* *maral* *pa* *pa* ***kinkin*** *a-v-sapa* *kam'em'…*
all child small small some 3NSG:REAL-PL-follow 1NSG:EXCL
“Some small children followed us…” [nmb31.Ref.094]

The verb *nelnal* “hundred” is also used as a quantifier with entities. When used in this manner it means “many”. If there is a nominal present nelnal is inflected as a verb. Where the entity which *nelnal* is modifying is clear through context, the modifier can occur without a nominal head or inflection.

2.105 *A* *mëlin* *i-vër* *an=r* ***nelnal****…*
PERS chief 3SG:REAL-say EXT.P=3NSG:OBJ hundred
“The chief said to all of them…” [nmb38.Ref.034]

2.106 *Pë-Ø-lev* *ru* *nai* *ipë-nelnal…*
2:IRR-SG-take leaf tree 3SG:IRR-hundred
“You take many laves…” [nmb01.Ref.081

2.107 *M'ë-Ø-lav=i* *kë-Ø-tu* *a* ***nelnal.***
1:COND-SG-take=3SG:OBJ ES-SG-give EXT.P hundred
“I would take it and give it to many people.” [nmb41.Ref.012]

The limiter *wëki* “only/just” limits either the noun which it follows, or a verb. For a fuller discussion of this modifier see §6.5.

2.108 *Të-Ø-luwe=i* *a* *nalim'ëlakhas* ***wëki.***
1:IRR-SG-shoot=3SG:OBJ EXT.P green.lizard only
“I will shoot only green lizards.” [nmb29.Ref.013]

2.109 *Kam'em'* ***wëki*** *të-r-ru* *kë-r-vel.*
1NSG:EXCL only 1:IRR-PAU-two ES-PAU-go
“Just we two will go.” [nmb38.Ref.004]

2.6.2 Adjectives

Adjectives constitute a small set of post-nominal modifiers in V’ënen Taut. They serve to describe characteristics of common nouns (Dryer, 2007b, p. 168). Many adjectives also function as stative verbs (§6.9.1). The difference between lexemes functioning as nominal modifiers and as verbs is that when they function as verbs they take verbal morphology and function as a predicate. When they act as adjectives they are not inflected nor do they function as full predicates.

The following table shows some lexemes used as adjectives in V’ënen Taut.

Adjective	Meaning
pa	small
lil	big
p’arei	long
p’as	good
stu	bad/ugly
kaka	clear
uraur	different
khua	strong

Table 2.29: Adjectives

2.110 *Kë-r-pësla* *m'ari* ***lil*** *i-amëk.*
ES-PAU-find eel big 3SG:REAL-one
“They found a big eel.” [nmb38.Ref.006]

2.111 *Kë-v-sapa* *navanal* ***p'arei*** *Lakha.*
ES-PL-follow road long DEM
"They followed the long road." [nmb23.Ref.072]

2.112 *Kë-Ø-tau=i* *a* *nut* ***uraur.***
ES-SG-put=3SG:OBJ LOC place different
"You put it in a different place." [nmb15.Ref.003

Reduplication of *pa* or *lil* indicates that the nouns which they are modifying is plural.

2.113 *Kë-Ø-tr-us-us* *nai* ***pa*** ***pa…***
ES-SG-cut-DUP-SVR wood small small
"You cut the small trees…" [nmb14.Ref.003]

When *p'arei* "long" is reduplicated it becomes *p'rp'arei* and can signal plurality or that something is very long.

2.6.3 Demonstratives

V'ënen Taut has several demonstrative determiners that take a post-nominal position. According to Dryer (2007b, p. 162) demonstrative are used to give attention to an entity and involve at least a two way distinction in perceptual space in relation to the speaker or hearer. V'ënen Taut has two basic determiners from which several other demonstratives types such as pronouns (§2.7) or relative local nouns (§2.3.3.4) can be made. These two demonstratives are shown below.

lakha	this (near the speaker)
lara	that (away from the speaker)

Table 2.30: Demonstrative Determiners

2.114 *A-v-ën* *m'akar-ien* *arana* *pai* ***lakha.***
3NSG:REAL-PL-make work-NMLS on year this
"They worked this year." [nmb33.Ref.015]

2.115 *Khilakha, pë-Ø-ln dui **lara**…*
now 2:IRR-SG-leave man that
“Now, you will leave that man…” [nmb09.Ref.004

The demonstrative determiners are able to be used anaphorically. When used in this way, they indicate that the noun has been mentioned previously in discourse. Demonstratives are often used in this manner in many languages (Dryer, 2007b).

2.116 *Kë-Ø-pët-la si pai **lakha.***
ES-SG-pick-RMV sprout yam this
“He was picking off the yam sprouts.” [nmb29.Ref.017]

Both *lakha* and *lara* are used often with the verb *nap’a* “be like” to make the phrases “like this” and “like that”.

2.117 *Tam'a lakara i-v'ana **i-nap'e=i** **lakha**…*
monster that 3SG:REAL-speak 3SG:REAL-be.like=3SG:OBJ this
“The monster spoke like this…” [nmb25.Ref.039]

2.118 *Pë-Ø-lev ru ninu, ru vikh, si **i-nap'e=i** **lara…***
2:IRR-SG-take leaf ninu leaf wild.taro thing 3SG:REAL-be.like=3SG:OBJ that
“You take ninu leaves, wild taro leaves, things like that…” [nmb01.Ref.083]

The two demonstrative determiners can be modified to show relative distance from the speaker by addition of the following morphemes: -*dei* “medium distance” –*tu* “far distance”.

2.119 *Kë-v-tin=i eia a nut **lakha-dei.***
ES-PL-bury=3SG:OBJ up LOC place this-MED.DIST
“They buried him up there at a place not so far away.” [nmb05.Ref.005]

2.120 *Kë-Ø-la m'anëkh i-amëk arana didi **lakha-tu.***
ES-SG-see bird 3SG:REAL-one on palm.tree this-FAR.DIST
“I saw a bird in the palm tree over there.” [nmb11.Ref.023]

V’ënen Taut also has two other forms of demonstrative determiners. These are *lakhara* and *lakara.* Both of these demonstratives can be anaphoric. *Lakhara* and *lakara* have very

similar meanings and it is possible that they are allomorphs, especially if one considers the /k/~/ɣ/ variation present elsewhere in the data. The form with /ɣ/ is more common, occurring more than twice the number of times than the form with /k/. Further work with V'ënen Taut speakers may be required to understand the difference between these two morphemes particularly because they can occur in the same environments and are used by all speakers. The similarity between these two morphemes is shown below.

2.121 *Kë-Ø-pipen sara nakhau* ***lakhara*** *arana nai* ***lakhara****…*
ES-SG-tie COMP rope DEM on tree DEM
"She tied the rope to the tree…" [nmb09.Ref.006]

2.122 *Ale au pa* ***lakara*** *i-p'a m'anëkh* ***lakara*** *wëki.*
so man small DEM 3SG:REAL-watch bird DEM only
"So the boy just watched the bird." [nmb07.Ref.012]

The demonstratives *lakhara* and *lakara* can be used as discourse markers which serve to mark the end of an event and the beginning of another, similar to the word "then" in English.

2.123 ***Lakhara*** *au pa lakara i-p'a m'ari…*
DEM man small DEM 3SG:REAL-watch eel
"Then the boy watched the eel…" [nmb38.Ref.024]

2.124 *l-ut m'ët tanpawi* ***lakara*** *kë-Ø-ut m'ët nalu*
3SG:REAL-make COMP bow DEM ES-SG-make COMP arrow
në-n…
CLS.GEN-POSS:3SG
"He made the bow and then he made the arrows for it…" [nmb29.Ref.013]

All of the demonstratives mentioned in this section also have an alternate form which begins with the phoneme /v/ instead of /l/. It is unclear whether there is any semantic difference between the two forms.

lakha	*vakha*	this
lara	*vara*	that
lakhadei	*vakhadei*	there
lakhatu	*vakhatu*	over there
lakhara	*vakhara*	DEM
lakara	*vakara*	DEM

Table 2.31: Demonstrative Allomorphs

The system of demonstrative determiners in V'ënen Taut appears to be very complex; therefore, further elicitation and collection of conversational data with language speakers is required to fully understand the nuances of the system.

2.6.4 Associative particle

The associative particle *na* is used when a noun is modified by another noun or in some cases by a subordinate clause. This construction follows the HEAD + MODIFIER pattern found throughout V'ënen Taut.

2.125 *Kana ta-v'a kë-Ø-tr ruplet* ***na*** *nas…*
1SG 1SG:IRR-go ES-SG-cut dry.leaf ASV banana
"I will go cut dry banana leaves…" [nmb09.Ref.026]

2.127 *Në-vra-v'a arana nawëk* ***na*** *nadep'.*
1:REAL-PL-go on canoe ASV ground
"We went on the truck." [nmb10.Ref.004]
Lit: "We went on the canoe of the ground."

Example 2.128 shows how a complex noun occurs in the associative construction. It is marked for possession by affixing the modifier noun with a possessive suffix.

2.128 *Naten* ***na*** *talu-ien-ën…*
basket ASV go.to.bush-NMLS-POSS:3SG
"Her going to the bush bag…" [nmb11.Ref.005]

The example below shows a whole phrase used to modify *m'etrien* “dream” which is the nominal head of an associative construction.

2.129 *A* *N.* *i-la* *m'etr-ien* ***na*** *ti* *Khapët lil eia*
PERS N. 3SG:REAL-look sleep-NMLS ASV SUB God
i-ma *kë-Ø-v'ana* *m'e=i.*
3SG:REAL-come ES-SG-speak with=3SG:OBJ
“N. had a dream of God coming and speaking with him.” [nmb22.Ref.002]

2.7 Non-Specific Particle

The non-specific particle *ki* NSPC is often used in verbal or prepositional object noun phrases. *Ki* functions in a similar manner to the personal object clitics which will be described in §4.3. *Ki* NSPC takes the place that a verbal or prepositional object would normally take in the clause. It takes its meaning from the previous context of the clause but only represents part of the whole referent.

2.130 *Afta* *i-v'a* *kë-Ø-sva* *nas* *kë-Ø-sëran* ***ki*** *a* *nadep'.*
then 3SG:REAL-go ES-SG-pick banana ES-SG-throw NSPC LOC ground
“Then he went and picked bananas and he threw some to the ground.” [nmb46.Ref.056]

When there are a group of entities which could make up the referent and a particular number of them are affected by the action expressed by the verb, this is represented by placing a numeral after the nonspecific particle.

2.131 *Kë-v-khën* *sara* ***ki*** *i-amëk…*
ES-PL-eat COMP NSPC 3SG:REAL-one
“We ate one of them…” [nmb31.Ref.109]

2.132 *Khilakha,* *të-Ø-titina* ***ki*** *mël* *i-amëk.*
now 1:IRR-SG-tell.a.story NSPC again 3SG:REAL-one
“Now, I will tell another one (story).” [nmb29.Ref.001]

The following example shows how the non-specific particle is able to act as an extended participant of a three argument construction.

2.133 *Kë-Ø-vel kë-Ø-viva kë-tu nap' an* ***ki.***
ES-SG-move ES-SG-be.far ES-SG-put fire EXT.P NSPC
"He went far and lit some on fire." [nmb28.Ref.035]

The following example shows how *ki* can act as a prepositional object.

2.134 *Kë-Ø-lëk m'a* ***ki*** *ip-amëk wëki.*
ES-SG-live with NSPC 3SG:REAL-one only
"You will live with only one of them." [nmb22.Ref.019]

The following two examples show how the nonspecific particle can modify nouns, although this occurs rarely in the data.

2.135 *Kë-v-v'av'e=i kë-v-vel kë-v-iar=i a vut* ***ki…***
ES-PL-lead=3SG:OBJ ES-PL-move ES-PL-reach=3SG:OBJ LOC some.place NSPC
"They led him and they went and arrived at some place…" [nmb23.Ref.075]

2.136 *Afta narën* ***ki*** *a-v-ën nëkhau kë-v-ne=i al lamu.*
then time NSPC 3NSG:REAL-PL-make laplap ES-PL-fill=3SG:OBJ in bamboo
"Then sometimes they make laplap that they fill in bamboo." [nmb44.Ref.004]

As can be seen in the previous examples of the nonspecific particle, it mostly only occurs in the verbal object or preposition object position of the clause. It is possible for the nonspecific particle *ki* to occur in different positions but it must undergo several different derivational changes. These derivational processes result in *ki* NSPC becoming a noun, a personal noun, or a demonstrative.

Ki NSPC is able to become a noun when it takes the form *nki. Nki* can be used as a verbal subject meaning "some" or "some of them" and can represent human and non-human entities. The *n* which appears attached to the beginning of the particle is likely a remnant of the Proto Oceanic morphemes **na* or **a* which were associated with non-human common nouns (Lynch, Ross, & Crowley, 2002). See §2.3.1. The nonspecific particle *ki* acts more like a nominal clitic when in its basic form and more like a full noun when occurring as *nki.*

6.137 ***Nki*** *i-p'as,* ***nki*** *i-studau-et* *i-stu…*
some 3SG:REAL-good some 3SG:be.many-INTS 3SG:REAL-be.bad
"Some of them are good, many of them are bad…" [nmb13.Ref.004]

6.138 ***Nki*** *a-v-tr* *nisëx* *pua* *i-nal* *dëman*
some 3NSG:REAL-PL-cut piece meat 3SG:REAL-ten NUM
i-ru *n-Ø-lav=i* *nanëv* *a* *Lakatoro*
3SG:REAL-two 1:REAL-SG-take=3SG:OBJ yesterday at Lakatoro
"Some of them cut the twelve pieces of meat the I brought yesterday in Lakatoro."
[nmb32.Ref.008]

In this example, *nki* is referring to a group of chickens.

6.139 ***Nki*** *i-tetëv* *kë-da-Ø-v'a* *a* *lili.*
some 3SG:REAL-fly ES-CONT-SG-go LOC bush
"Some of them flew into the bush." [nmb30.Ref.055]

Like with the basic nonspecific particle, it is possible to single out a particular number of entities from a group of referents to act as a subject of a verb.

2.140 ***Nki*** *i-amëk* *i-rkhapën–i.*
some 3SG:REAL-one 3SG:REAL-die.unnaturally=3SG:OBJ
"One of them died." [nmb07.Ref.028]

When being modified by nominal demonstratives *nki* appears to behave a bit like a demonstrative pronoun.

2.141 ***Nki*** *lara* *i-vi* *nka* *dui.*
some that 3SG:REAL-COP POSS.PT man
"This is for men." [nmb01.Ref.025]

The nonspecific noun *nki* is also able to act as the head of a relative clause.

2.142 *Kë-Ø-lev* *navet* *lil* ***nki*** *lëm* *a* *nadep'* *kha.*
2:REAL-SG-take stone big some REL.NV1 LOC ground REL.NV2
"You bring the big stone, the one that's on the ground there." [nmb01.Ref.069]

The nonspecific particle *ki* is able to be modified by the plural premodifier *ar* which creates the personal noun *ar ki. Ar ki* is used to create a meaning like “the people (of) …” by being used in conjunction with a noun phrase that refers to a place or group of people.

2.143 *Vete* ***ar ki*** *a V'ao a-v-lev trak i-ru kë-vra-ma.*
but all NSPC LOC V’ao 3NSG:REAL-PL-take truck 3SG:REAL-two ES-PL-come
“But the people of V’ao took two trucks and they came.” [nmb30.Ref.076]

2.144 *Sarei kë-Ø-v'ana m'a=r* ***ar ki*** *arana sto a Santo.*
then ES-SG-speak with=3NSG:OBJ all NSPC on store LOC Espiritu.Santo
“Then I spoke with the people at the store on Espiritu Santo.” [nmb31.Ref.034]

Ki NSPC is also able to compound with the demonstratives *lakha* “this” and *lara* “that” resulting in the demonstrative pronouns *kilakha* “this (one)/this kind of thing” and *kilara* “that (one)/that kind of thing”.

2.145 *Dui a-v-wa* ***kilakha.***
man 3NSGEAL-PL-wear this
“Men wear this (kid of nambas)” [nmb01.Ref.026]

2.146 ***Kilara*** *i-vi si në-v-an=i arana Fraedei.*
that 3SG:REAL-COP thing 1:REAL-PL-make=3SG:OBJ on Friday
“That was what we did on Friday” [nmb31.Ref.062]
Lit “that (kind of thing) was the thing that we did on Friday”

The demonstratives appear to be in free variation with *khilakha* “this (one)” or *khilara* “this (one)”.

When not acting as verbal arguments, the demonstrative pronouns mentioned above appear to act as temporal markers meaning “now”.

2.147 ***Khilakha*** *në-v-usum pind a taral.*
now 1:REAL-PL-use paint PERS Caucasian
“Now we use white man’s paint.” [nmb01.Ref.062]

2.8 Nominal Coordination

Nominal coordination can be achieved through three methods. The first is prosodic listing which Barbour (2012, p. 126) says is a method in which nouns are listed with a brief intonation break in between them. The second is the use of the accompanitive preposition *m'a.* The last is with the disjunctive coordinators *sëkha* or *vakha* which both mean "or".

An example of prosodic listing is shown below.

2.148 *Khilakha* ***marëdel,*** ***tav'et,*** ***dui,*** *a-v-vi* *udran* *m'ari* *ra.*
now child woman man 3NSG:REAL-PL-COP all eel now
"Now the children, women, and men all became eels." [nmb38.Ref.044]

The following example shows how the disjunctive coordinator *sëkha* is used.

2.149 *Si* *i-nap'a* *pias,* *pai,* ***sëkha*** *si* *pa* *pa* *mël* *kinkin..*
thing 3SG:REAL-be.like mat yam or thing small small again some
"Things like mats, yams, or other small things…" [nmb21.Ref.022]

The following example shows how disjunctive coordinator *vakha* is used.

2.150 *Kë-Ø-vës* *viu* ***vakha*** *ru* *nara…*
ES-SG-tear pandanus or leaf victory.leaf
"You tear pandanus or victory leaf leaves…" [nmb15.Ref.007]

The accompanitive preposition *m'a* (§6.4.2.3) can function as a nominal co-ordinator linking two nominals together as a single argument. Nominals conjoined using *m'a* can be human or non-human. When they are human, m'a must be modified with the appropriate pronominal enclitic and undergoes vowel raising (§1.6.3.1).

6.151 *A* *uni-ën* ***m'e=i*** *a* *teti-ën* *a-r-vnapën*
PERS mother-POSS:3SG with=3SG:OBJ PERS father-POSS:3SG 3NSG:REAL-PAU-forget
an=i.
EXT.P=3SG:OBJ
"His mother and father forgot about him." [nmb46.ref.032]

6.152 *Kë-vra-v'a* *kë-v-ln* *tav'et* *vakhara* ***m'a*** *pukis-ën* *aut-ën.*
ES-PL-go ES-PL-leave woman DEM with suitcase-POSS:3SG place-POSS:3SG
"They go and leave the woman and her suitcase at his place." [nmb21.Ref.049]

6.153 *Kam'em'* *në-v-khën* *raes* ***m'a*** *kumala.*
1NSG:EXCL 1:REAL-PL-eat rice with sweet potato
"We ate rice and sweet potato." [nmb31.Ref.167]

2.9 Relative Clauses

Relative clauses are sub-type of subordinating structure that delimit a nominal referent by indicating its role in a situation described in a relative clause (Andrews, 2007, p. 206). Like almost all nominal modifiers in V'ënen Taut, relative clauses occur after the noun which they modify. V'ënen Taut relative clauses can be classified as embedded and externally headed (Andrews, 2007). There are two methods in which relative clauses are marked in V'ënen Taut: juxtaposition with no relativizer or the use of a relativizer. The majority of relative clauses receive no marking. There are two relativizers which can be used to signal the beginning of the relative clause. The first is *lëm* … *kha*, which is quite rare in the data. It appears to be mostly used with relative clauses which are non-prototypical clauses. The second is the use of *we,* the general subordinator borrowed from Bislama.

V'ënen Taut functions as expected in regard to the accessibility hierarchy (Andrews, 2007, p. 226); obliques can be relativized and the implicational hierarchy states that indirect objects, direct objects, and subjects should also be able to be relativized, which is indeed the case. It is common for languages to use different methods of marking the relativized nominal the further down the hierarchy the nominals are (Andrews, 2007). This is also the case in V'ënen Taut, although the marking is dependent on the type of construction rather than solely on the grammatical relation being relativized on. The relativized nominal, which is the nominal in the relative clause which is co-referential with the head of the relative clause in the main cause, is either gapped or pronominalized. Gapping or omission is a very common treatment for the relativized nominal (Andrews, 2007, p. 222). Gapping is used when the head of a relative clause is co-referential with the subject of the relative clause, co-referential with the object of a derived three argument clause, or if it is co-referential with a locative oblique introduced with *a* LOC. Reduction of the relativized nominal to a resumptive pronoun is also common

(Andrews, 2007, p. 202). In V'ënen Taut pronominal clitics are used when the head of the relative clause is co-referential with the object of a transitive clause, or co-referential with the extended participant of a derived three argument construction. Possessive suffixes are used when the head of the relative clause is co-referential with the prepositional object of a nominal preposition.

Relative clauses are described in Fox's *Big Nambas* Grammar (1979, p. 104-105). In that work, Fox reports that relative clauses are normally introduced with demonstrative determiners. Fox reported that the demonstratives undergo *tmesis* in which the first syllable of the demonstrative occurs at the beginning of the relative clause and its final syllables occur at the end. This is not seen in the recorded data for this project.

In examples 2.154 to 2.159 the relativized argument are subjects.

2.154	*[Tav'et*	*i-amëk]*$_{HEADN}$	*[[Ø]*$_{CO\text{-}REF}$	*i-lëk*	*eiëm]*$_{RC}$	*i-v'akh*	*ti….*
	woman	3SG:REAL-one		3SG:REAL-sit	inside	3SG:REAL-think	SUB
	"A woman who was sitting inside thought that …" [nmb31.Ref.053]						

We know that the clause *ilëk eiëm* "she sat inside" is a relative clause because if it were part of the main clause, the phrase beginning with *iv'akh ti*… "she thought that…" would be modified with the echo-subject morpheme instead of being modified with the third person singular realis prefix. This would result in a phrase like: *tav'et iamëk ilëk eiëm këv'akh ti …* "a woman sat inside and thought that …".

In the following example, *parei* "work" is the object of the main clause and is functioning as the head of the relative clause. The relative clause contains that adjectival verb *imtëkhua* "it would have been strong" for which *parei* acts as the subject.

2.155	*M'ë-t-Ø-ën*	*[parei]*$_{HEADN}$	*[[Ø]*$_{CO\text{-}REF}$	*im-të-khua]*$_{RC,}$	
	1:COND-PFV-SG-make	work		3SG:COND-PFV-strong	
	n-Ø-sarei	*m'ë-Ø-vi*	*tukta.*		
	1:REAL-SG-believe	1:COND-SG-COP	doctor		
	"If I had done work that was good, I think I would be a doctor." [nmb39.Ref.013				

Below, *m'ertu kinkin* "some people" is filling the object role of the main clause and is co-referential with the subject argument of the relative clause.

2.156 *Ale,* *kë-Ø-v'a* *kë-Ø-tala* *[m'ertu* *kinkin]*$_{HEADN}$ *[[Ø]*$_{CO\text{-}REF}$
so 2:REAL-SG-go ES-SG-look.for person some
apë-vra-ma *kë-v-tr* *urakh]*$_{RC.}$
3NSG:IRR-PL-come ES-PL-cut yam.post
"So, you go and look for some people who will come and cut the yam posts." [nmb14.Ref.004]

In the example below, *tav'et* "woman" is the object in an equational predicate of an agentless main clause. *Tav'et* is also co-referential with the gapped subject of the transitive verb in the relative clause.

2.157 *I-a-vi* *[tav'et*$_{HEADN}$*]* *[[Ø]*$_{CO\text{-}REF}$ *apë-v-tr=i]*$_{RC...}$
3SG:REAL-NEG-COP woman 3NSG:IRR-PL-cut=3SG:OBJ
"It is not women who will cut it (yam post)… " [nmb14.Ref.004]

In the example below we find that the non-specific particle *ki* is acting as the head of the relative clause. What is interesting about this example is that *ki* appears to be co-referential with the subject argument of the relative clause even though *ki* cannot act as a subject of a main clause.

2.158 *Kë-Ø-tr* *[ki]*$_{HEADN}$ *[[Ø]*$_{CO\text{-}REF}$ *i-khapr]*$_{RC...}$
2:REAL-SG-cut NSPC 3SG:REAL-bend
"You cut the ones that bend…" [nmb15.Ref.001]

In the phrase below *lëkheien* "marriage" is the object of the main clause and acts as head of the relative clause in which it is co-referential with the subject. The relative clause contains a reflexive construction. Here the object position of the reflexive verb is filled with the appropriate pronoun.

2.159 *Kana* *të-Ø-vrur* *[lëkheien]*$_{HEADN}$ *[[Ø]*$_{CO\text{-}REF}$ *ipë-tu* *khin* *atëkh]*$_{RC.}$
1SG 1:IRR-SG-talk.about marriage 3SG:IRR-put 3SG next.year
"I am going to talk about a marriage that will happen next year." [nmb21.Ref.001]

In examples 2.160 to 2.162, the relativized nominals are objects.

In the following example, the word *si* "thing" is acting as the object of the main clause and the object of the relative clause. Here it is represented by the co-referential object clitic.

2.160 *Kana* *të-vrur* *[si]*$_{HEADN}$ *[në-v-an=[i]*$_{CO\text{-}REF}$ *arana* *Fraedei]*$_{RC}$
1SG 1:IRR-SG-talk.about thing 1:REAL-PL-make=3SG:OBJ on Friday
ipë-tamamu.
3SG:IRR-go.first
"I will talk about the things that we did on Friday first." [nmb31.Ref.001]

Below, the word *tim'akh* "food" is the relativized constituent and is the object of the relative clause. As objects follow clitic-taking post-verbal modifiers, *sara* COMP is modified by the third person object clitic becoming *sarei*.

2.161 *Kë-v-khën* *[tim'akh]*$_{HEADN}$ *[a-të-v-takhpa* *sare=[i]*$_{CO\text{-}REF}$*]*$_{RC.}$
ES-PL-eat food 3NSG:REAL-PFV-PL-cook COMP=3SG:OBJ
"We ate the food that they had cooked." [nmb31.Ref.060]

Where the head of the relative clause is co-referential with the object argument of a three argument construction in the relative clause, the relativized object can be gapped rather than being represented by a pronominal clitic. It is common for the object of three argument constructions to be gapped when they occur in main clauses as well. In the example below, *si* "thing" is the object of the verb in the main clause and is co-referential with the object argument of the relative clause where it is gapped.

2.162 *N-a-v-rn-du* *[si]*$_{HEADN}$ *[p'e-v-ën* *[Ø]*$_{CO\text{-}REF}$ *an=i]*$_{RC.}$
1:REAL-NEG-PL-feel-KN thing 1:IRR-PL-make EXT.P=3SG:OBJ
"We did not know the thing that we would do with it." [nmb04.Ref.013]

There appear to be no examples of an extended participant argument, such as a recipient or instrument, acting as the relativized argument; however, Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979) says that it is possible to relativize this argument. In example 2.163, *nai* "stick" is the head of the relative clause and is co-referential with the instrument argument in the relative clause where it is represented by the third person singular pronominal clitic.

2.163 *[Nai]*$_{HEADN}$ *[n-Ø-rëp=i* *an=[i]*$_{CO\text{-}REF}$*]*$_{RC}$ *i-p'arei.*
wood 1:REAL-SG-hit=3SG:OBJ EXT.P=3SG:OBJ 3SG:REAL-long
"The stick with which I hit him is long." (Fox, 1979, p. 105)

In example 2.164 the head of the relative clause is the oblique *a nut* “to the place”. It is co-referential with the locative oblique in the relative clause which has been gapped.

2.164 *Kë-Ø-viviln a [nut]HEADN [a-v-ën namël… [Ø]CO-REF]RC.*
ES-SG-straight LOC place 3NSG-PL-make garden
“He went straight to the place where they made a garden.” [nmb27.Ref.045]

V’ënen Taut has a relativizer which can be used to mark the beginning of some relative clauses. This relativizer is *lëm* and it is mostly used when the relative clause a non-prototypical predicate with a spatial meaning. When this relativizer is used, the morpheme *kha* often appears at the end of the relative clause. It is possible that these two morphemes work together and fully enclose the relative clause, though this is not consistent for every occurrence of *lëm.*

In the example below, *drln* “roof” is filling the oblique position of the main clause and is the head of the non-verbal relative clause. If the relative clause were made into a main clause it would likely consist of *drln* “roof” followed by a locative predicate (§6.9.2).

2.165 *kë-v-khau arana [drln]HEADN **[lëm** eia **kha]**RC...*
ES-PL-tie on roof REL.NV1 up REL.NV2
“They tie on the roof which is up there…” [nmb43.Ref.007]

In the example below, *lëm* occurs at the beginning of a locative relative clause which is introduced by the locative preposition *a.*

2.166 *Kë-Ø-lev navet lil, [nki]HEADN **[lëm** a nadep' **kha**…]RC*
2:REAL-SG-take stone big, N.NSPC REL.NV1 LOC ground REL.NV2
“You bring a stone, one that is on the ground now…” [nmb01.Ref.069]

In the example below, *ar du* “the men” is acting as the head of a relative clause containing the non-prototypical verb *nap’a* “be like”.

2.167 *Ar [du]HEADN **[lëm** i-nap'a ti a-vra-p'u*
all man REL.NV1 3SG:REAL-be.like SUB 3NSG:REAL-PL-be.local
***kha]**RC a-vra-v'a kë-v-p'ëlten khir.*
REL.NV2 3NSG:REAL-PL-go ES-PL-gather 3NSG
“All of the men who were from here went and got together.” [nmb03.Ref.006]

In the following two examples, the second morpheme *kha*, which often occurs with *lëm*, is not present.

2.168 *W.* *[suwada-k]*$_{HEADN}$ ***[lëm*** *atlara]*$_{RC,}$ *khini?*
W. food-POSS:1SG REL.NV1 there where
"W., my food, that was there, where is it?" [nmb11.Ref.022]

2.169 *N-Ø-khël* *nëmakh* *pa* *a* *[nut]*$_{HEADN}$ ***[lëm*** *a* *M.*
1:REAL-SG-build house small LOC place REL.NV1 PERS M.
i-khël *nam'el-ën]*$_{RC}$
3SG:REAL-build nakamal-POSS:3SG
"I built a small house in the place where M. built is nakamal." [nmb05.Ref.010]

The morpheme *we,* the general subordinator borrowed from Bislama, regularly occurs at the beginning of relative clauses in V'ënen Taut. As relative clauses are always overtly marked in Bislama, it is possible that this feature is becoming absorbed into V'ënen Taut grammar as a result of Bislama being used more and more in the village context.

In the following example, the relativized nominal is the subject of the relative clause.

2.170 *[Tav'et]*$_{HEADN}$ *[we* *[Ø]*$_{CO\text{-}REF}$ *i-lëk* *m'a* *dui]*$_{RC}$ *i-k-akh-v'a*
woman SUB 3SG:REAL-stay with man 3SG:REAL-NES-NEG-go
al *naměl* …
in garden
"A woman who was with a man must not go to the garden…" [nmb17.Ref.017]

In the following example, the relativized nominal is the object.

2.171 *M'ëtu* *i-vi* *[nai* *i-amëk]*$_{HEADN}$ *[we* *a-Ø-lau=[i]*$_{CO\text{-}REF}$*]*$_{RC.}$
coconut 3SG:REAL-COP tree 3SG:REAL-one SUB 3NSG:REAL-IMPRS-plant=3SG:OBJ
"Coconut trees are a tree that people plant." [nmb18.Ref.001]

In the following example, the relativized nominal is a locative oblique.

2.172 *A-kha-v-pësla* *[nut]*$_{HEADN}$ *[we* *a-tin* *a*
3NSG:REAL-NEG-PL-find place SUB 3NSG:REAL-IMPS-bury PERS
Pasta *[Ø]*$_{CO\text{-}REF}$*]*$_{RC.}$
pastor
"They did not find the place where the pastor was buried." [nmb23.Ref.169]

2.10 The Noun Phrase

The formula below shows the basic structure of the noun phrase in V'ënen Taut. The only constituent that is generally required in the noun phrase is the noun. All of its modifiers are positioned after the noun apart from the personal article or human plural modifier which occur in distinct environments.

(PERSONAL ARTICLE) (PLURAL MORPHEME)	+	NOUN	+	(ADJECTIVE)	+	(QUANTIFIER) (NUMERAL)	+	(DEMONSTRATIVE)	+	(RELATIVE CLAUSE)

Table 2.32: Basic Noun Phrase Structure

Example 2.173 shows a noun phrase which is modified by the personal article.

2.173 *[a* *W.]*$_{NP...}$
PERS W.
"W…." [nmb11.Ref.020]

The following example shows the position of the plural modifier, adjectives, and quantifiers in a noun phrase.

2.174 *[ar* *maral* *pa* *pa* *kinkin]*$_{NP...}$
all child small small some
"some small children…" [nmb31.Ref.094]

The following example shows a noun modified by a numeral and a relative clause.

2.175 *[tav'et i-amëk]$_{NP}$ Ø i-lëk eiëm i-v'akh ti….*
woman 3SG:REAL-one 3SG:REAL-sit inside 3SG:REAL-think SUB
"A woman who was sitting inside thought that …" [nmb31.Ref.053]

The example below shows a noun being modified by an adjective and demonstrative

2.176 *të-Ø-vrur [v'ënen pa lakha]$_{NP...}$*
1:IRR-SG-talk.about speech small this
"I will tell this small talk…" [nmb21.Ref.003]

Example 2.177 shows a noun followed by a numeral and a demonstrative.

2.177 *[m'anëkh a-r-ru lara]$_{NP...}$*
bird 3NSG:REAL-PAU-two that
"Those two birds…" [nmb34.Ref.003]

Chapter Three

Verbal Prefixes

3.1 Introduction

V'ënen Taut has many different affixes which are used to modify verbs. This chapter seeks to describe those which occur before the verb. Although all of the prefixes which are described in this chapter can also be used to modify transitive verbs, for reasons of simplicity, this chapter will focus on intransitive verbs. Verbal suffixes will be discussed in the following chapter.

1	2	3	4	5	
Subject/Mood	Necessity	Aspect	Negation	Number	VERB

Table 3.1: Verbal Prefix Positions

There are five different prefix positions identified in V'ënen Taut corpus, each of which serves to make functional and semantic distinctions. The first prefix position contains the largest number of verbal prefix paradigms, comprising of portmanteaux prefixes which encode both grammatical person and mood. That position alone can be filled by members of five different prefix paradigms. The rest of the prefix positions can be filled by fewer morphemes. Members of all of the prefix positions have allomorphs used with a subset of intransitive verbs (§3.8.1).

Multiple prefixes may occur modifying individual verbs; however, only one prefix from each order may modify any singular verb. There are also limitations as to which types of prefixes can co-occur on a single verb. For example, it is ungrammatical for the negative prefix to occur on any verb which is also modified by an irrealis subject prefix.

3.2 Subject Prefixes

There are five different prefix paradigms which fill the subject prefix position. Most of the subject prefixes are portmanteau morphemes which encode both the personal category of the grammatical subject of the verb in addition to the mood of the verb which they modify. Four of these prefix paradigms make modal distinctions and the remaining one is an echo-subject which reflects the subject properties associated with another verb. The modal distinctions made in V'ënen Taut are realis, irrealis, conditional, and imperative. The generalisations offered in this section predominantly apply to the realis, irrealis, and conditional subject prefix paradigms. This is because the imperative and echo-subject paradigms have limited inventories and behave differently due to their specific functions.

In regard to the verb moods realis, irrealis, and conditional, which are the three most commonly occurring moods, the realis mood serves to identify real events, which are situations that have occurred or that are happening. The irrealis and conditional moods identify events that have not happened or are yet to happen. In other words, the realis mood marks real events and the irrealis and conditional moods mark unreal events. This basic observations of the mood system of V'ënen Taut is consistent with the description of mood systems presented in Bhat (1999, p. 65-70).

When compared with other Malekula languages such as Tape (Crowley, 2006c), Malua Bay (Wessels, 2013), Nese (Crowley, 2006b), Naman (Crowley, 2006a), Avava (Crowley, 2006d), Neve'ei (Musgrave, 2007), and Neverver (Barbour, 2012), V'ënen Taut has richer modal morphology. Of these languages, only V'ënen Taut makes more than a binary distinction between realis and irrealis moods with the presence of both a distinct conditional mood and an imperative mood in the same structural position.

V'ënen Taut subject prefixes are mostly invariant in regard for number. Only the third person has distinct singular and non-singular subject prefixes. This results in the realis, irrealis, and conditional prefix paradigms each having four individual prefixes. These are first person, second person, third person singular, and third person non-singular. The third person non-singular also acts as an impersonal subject prefix. The imperative mood and the echo-subject each have one prefix.

The subject prefixes do not make the distinction in clusivity in the first person plural that the independent pronouns do. Clusivity is taken from the context of conversation or is indicated by the presence of one of the independent first person non-singular pronouns.

Number, although mostly not represented in the subject prefix paradigms, is strongly related to the subject. This is because both the subject and number marking is obligatory on verbs, with the exception of nuclear serial verbs and some verbs used with an imperative function. As such, it deserves a brief mention here. There are four different subject numbers in V'ënen Taut: singular, paucal, plural, and impersonal. They are each indicated by number morphemes which fill the fifth prefix position. The singular, paucal, and plural subject number morphemes can co-occur on verbs modified by the first and second person subject prefixes. Only the singular morpheme can occur with the third person singular subject prefix. The third person non-singular prefix can occur with the impersonal, paucal, and plural subject number prefixes. The number prefixes are described in full in §3.6.

Table 3.2 shows the three main subject prefix paradigms. Considerable uniformity can be observed when examining the inventories of each paradigm.

Person	Realis	Irrealis	Conditional
1	*n(ë)-*	*të-/p'e-*	*m'(ë)-*
2	*k(ë)-*	*p(ë)-*	*m(ë)-*
3SG	*i-*	*ip(ë)-*	*im-*
3NSG	*a-*	*ap(ë)-*	*am-*

Table 3.2: Subject Prefixes

The irrealis prefixes all contain a labial plosive, except for the first person allomorph, *të-*. All of the conditional prefixes contain a labial nasal. The first and second person irrealis and conditional prefixes are distinguished with linguo-labial consonants for the first person, and bilabial consonants for the second person. The third person prefixes for the irrealis and conditional moods appear to be made of the third person singular or non-singular realis morpheme and the addition of the expected consonant (+ vowel).

The apparent uniformity in regard to the form of the majority of the subject prefixes could be used as grounds to constitute different morphemes for person and mood. This can be seen in table 3.3 below.

Person		Mood
3SG	*i-*	*Ø-* realis
3NSG	*a-*	*p-* irrealis
		m- conditional

Table 3.3: Proposed Mood Prefixes

However, the analysis presented in this work proposes that portmanteaux morphemes are used to encode both person and mood. This is because an analysis that separates person and mood into different morphemes would not address the fact that some of the prefixes do not follow the pattern. There is also no common phonological feature that defines the realis mood; and there is unpredictable allomorphy in the first person irrealis morphology.

3.2.1 Realis Mood

The realis mood subject prefixes repeated from table 3.2 are the most commonly used of the first order prefixes in the corpus. The realis mood is used to indicate that the events have happened, are in progress, or that they occur on a habitual basis; events that can be conceived as in the realm of the real.

Person	Morpheme
1	*n(ë)-*
2	*k(ë)-*
3SG	*i-*
3NSG	*a-*

Table 3.4: Realis Prefixes

As can be seen in the table above, the first and second person prefixes are sometimes articulated with schwa. This articulation is phonologically conditioned. The first person realis prefix, *n(ë)*, is pronounced as [nə] when it precedes the labial consonants m, m', v, or v' and it is pronounced as [n] before all other consonants and before vowels. The second person subject pronoun *k(ë)-,* is pronounced as [kə] before consonants and as [k] before vowels.

All realis subject prefixes can co-occur with one of the four possible number morphemes, which are presented below. Although this section and the following subsections of §3.2 aim

to describe the subject prefixes, this cannot be done without reference to these fifth order number prefixes.

Number	Morpheme
Singular	*Ø-*
Impersonal	*Ø-*
Paucal	*r-*
Plural	*v-*

Table 3.5: Number Prefixes

Example 3.1 shows a past durative situation with a first person singular subject.

3.1 *Kana* ***në-Ø-m'atr*** *da-v'a* *da-v'a…*
1SG 1:REAL-SG-sleep CONT-go CONT-go
"I slept on and on…" [nmb31.Ref.163]

The examples below show past events. Example 3.2 shows a first person paucal subject, representing two people, and example 3.3 has a first person plural subject which represents six people.

3.2 *Kam'em'* ***n-r-tkhal.***
1NSG:EXCL 1:REAL-PAU-wake.up
"We woke up." [nmb31.Ref.005]

3.3 *Kam'em'* ***në-v-tawatakh…***
1NSG:EXCL 1:REAL-PL-go.after
"We went after…" [nmb10.Ref.009]

The following example shows a past progressive situation with a second person singular subject.

3.4 *Nakëm* ***kë-Ø-lëk*** *al* *trak.*
2SG 2:REAL-SG-sit LOC truck
"You were sitting in the truck." [nmb31.Ref.039]

3.5. *Kam'i* ***kë-r-v'a****…*
2NSG 2:REAL-PAU-go
"You two went…" [nmb27.Ref.057]

Example 3.6 has a second person plural subject which represents a small group of around four people.

3.6 *Kam'i* ***kë-v-tamamu.***
2NSG 2:REAL-PAU-go.first
"You went first." [nmb31.Ref.130]

The example below is describing something that was happening at the present moment.

3.7 *Khin* ***i-lëk.***
3SG 3SG:REAL-sit
"She is sitting." [nmb32.Ref.020]

Example 2.8 describes a habitual situation with an impersonal subject.

3.8 ***A-Ø-lëk*** *ësn-n.*
3NSG:REAL-IMPRS-sit beside-POSS:3SG
"People sit near it." [nmb02.Ref.023]

The example below shows a verb inflected with a third person paucal subject which represents two people.

3.9 *Khin m'e=i a V.* ***a-r-lëk****.*
3SG with=3SG:OBJ PERS V. 3SG:REAL-PAU-stay
"He and V. stayed." [nmb31.Ref.159]

The example below shows a habitual action carried out by many people.

3.10 *Khir* ***a-v-m'atr****…*
3NSG 3NSG:REAL-PL-sleep
"They all slept…" [nmb45.Ref.008]

3.2.2 Irrealis Mood

The irrealis mood is the most commonly used of the two unreal moods. It is used to mark events that have not happened yet. However, like Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979), this work does not consider these prefixes to mark future tense. The irrealis prefixes are not solely limited to marking future time reference and are often used in complex clauses

following desiderative verbs. The use of the irrealis mood in the compliments of desiderative verbs is commonly found in Malekula languages and is seen in Neve'ei (Musgrave, 2007) and Malua Bay (Wessels, 2013). Irrealis mood is analysed in other documented Malekula languages and appears to be a common unifying feature of these languages, seen in Neverver (Barbour, 2012), Tape (Crowley, 2006c), Naman (Crowley, 2006a), Neve'ei (Musgrave, 2007), and Malua Bay (Wessels, 2013).

The irrealis pronoun paradigm is presented below. The unifying feature of this paradigm is the presence of voiceless labial plosives. The first person allomorph *të-* is the only morpheme in this paradigm which does not have the labial plosive, though it appears to occur in free variation with *p'e-*. Like the other pronoun paradigms, the third person singular morpheme begins with /i/ and the third person non-singular morpheme begins with /a/.

Person	Morpheme
1	*të-/p'e-*
2	*pë-*
3SG	*ip(ë)-*
3NSG	*ap(ë)-*

Table 3.6: Irrealis Prefixes

Table 3.7 below shows the basic irrealis paradigm for the verb *lëk* "sit/live/stay". It is basic because verbs are only inflected for person/mood and number.

		Singular *Ø-*	Paucal *r-*	Plural *v-*
First person	*të-*	*të-Ø-lëk*	*të-r-lëk*	*të-v-lëk*
	p'e	*p'e-Ø-lëk*	*p'e-r-lëk*	*p'e-v-lëk*
Second person	*pë-*	*pë-Ø-lëk*	*pë-r-lëk*	*pë-v-lëk*
Third person	*ip(ë)-*	*ipë-Ø-lëk*[9]		
Third person	*ap(ë)-*	*apë-Ø-lëk*	*apë-r-lëk*	*apë-v-lëk*

Table 3.7: Irrealis Verb Paradigm

[9] Throughout the rest of this work, the zero singular number prefix will not be written with verbs inflected with third person singular prefixes because they can only occur inflected with singular number.

Some examples of other verbs being inflected by the irrealis prefixes are presented below. In 3.11 both of the verbs marked with irrealis mood are part of the compliment for the desiderative verb *rn* “want”.

3.11	*N-Ø-rn*	***të-Ø-lëk***	*ësn*	*m'ertu*	***ip-amëk***	*atka.*
	1:REAL-SG-want	1:IRR-SG-live	near	man	3SG:IRR-one	here

“I want to live with a man here.” [nmb23.Ref.155]

3.12	***Të-r-m'atr***	*al*	*pitvët-ëm.*
	1:IRR-PAU-sleep	in	garden-POSS:2SG

“You and I will sleep in your garden.” [nmb09.Ref.011]

3.13	*Kam'i*	***pë-v-tawatakh***	*an=r.*
	2NSG	2:IRR-PL-go.after	EXT.P=3NSG:OBJ

“You will come after them.” [nmb30.Ref.091]

3.14	***Apë-r-m'atr***	*aranë-n.*
	3NSG:IRR-PAU-sleep	on-POSS:3SG

“They will sleep on top (of the leaves).” [nmb09.Ref.023]

3.15	*Marëdel*	***apë-v-kharis.***
	child	3NSG:IRR-PL-finish

“The children will finish (school).” [nmb33.Ref.002]

3.2.3 Conditional Mood

The conditional subject prefixes also fall into the unreal class of verbal moods. These morphemes are used to indicate that a particular situation did not occur in reality but could have occurred in the past or present. Often these occur in condition-consequence constructions but other times the conditional is used to show a past event that did not occur and so cannot be marked with realis mood. It may be possible to reanalyse this prefix paradigm as marking hypothetical mood rather than conditional mood; however, more data is need before this can be established.

As with the other subject prefixes, some of the conditional prefixes have allomorphic variation between prefixes pronounced with [ə] and those without. This variation is phonologically conditioned with [ə] present before consonants and absent before vowels.

Person	Morpheme
1	*m'(ë)-*
2	*m(ë)-*
3SG	*im-*
3NSG	*am-*

Table 3.8: Conditional Prefixes

The following examples show the use of the conditional subject morphemes. As the majority of the evidential data used to support grammatical claims in this work are taken from recordings of natural speech, not all of the possible person and number combinations are present in the examples. The reason for this is because conditional constructions are rare in natural speech. This is also the reason that some of the verbs used as examples here are transitive verbs.

3.16 ***M'ë-Ø-lëk*** *ësn-n* *atka.*
1:COND-SG-stay near-POSS:3SG here
"I would stay here with him." [nmb23.Ref.155]

3.17 ***Më-Ø-tëkh*** *an=i.*
2:COND-SG-beat EXT.P=3SG:OBJ
"You could beat it" [nmb01.Ref.067]

3.18 ***Im-iëk…***
3SG:COND-exist
"It would be…" [nmb01.Ref.067]

3.19 *Tam'a* ***am-v-ud=i.***
monster 3NSG:COND-PL-eat.small.item=3SG:OBJ
"The monsters almost ate him" [nmb25.Ref.045]

The conditional subject morphemes often modify verbs which are also modified by the negative prefix. This is because they often occur in counterfactual clauses or in other clauses beginning with *vër* "say" which is used to mean "if". The second person conditional prefix is also used in prohibitive constructions which helps avoid the second person realis subject prefix and the necessity prefix co-occurring together because they sound the same. See §3.5 for examples.

3.2.4 Imperative Mood *da-*

The Imperative prefix *da-* is only used with second person subjects, though they can be singular, paucal, or plural in number. *Da-* is very rare in the corpus with only six occurrences. There are two potential explanations for this. The first is because imperatives are relatively rare in narrative texts, which are the main source of data for this project. The second reason is because there are several ways of expressing commands in V'ënen Taut, including the use of verbs inflected with the irrealis subject prefixes accompanied with stronger intonation, or the use of some uninflected verb roots.

3. 20 ***Da-Ø-v'ara*** *an=i.*
IMP-SG-call.out EXT.P=3SG:OBJ
"Call out to her." [nmb11.Ref.030]

3.21 ***Da-r-p'ëtir.***
IMP-PAU-stand
"You two will stand up." (Fox, 1979, p. 60)

3.22 ***Da-v-p'ëtir.***
IMP-PL-stand
"You all will stand up." (Fox, 1979, p. 60)

When analysing the occurrences of the imperative subject prefix, it appears that it is used to make requests more polite. It occurs when children are making requests to adults and when adults are giving instructions to each other. This is supported in the translations of texts where *da-* is translated to the Bislama preverbal modifier "traem" which has been described as making instructions more polite in Bislama (Crowley, 2003, p. 279).

Example 3.23 shows the irrealis subject prefixes having imperative function.

3.23 ***Pë-Ø-lëk*** *atvakh.*
2:IRR-SG-sit here
“You sit here.” [nmb28.Ref.033]

Some verbs may also occur as plain roots when they are used as imperatives. These are not attested in the corpus but were observed during field work. This is also attested in Fox’s *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 60).

3.24 ***Ma!***
come
“Come here!” (field observation)

3.25 ***Vërvër!***
run
“Run!” (Fox. 1979, p. 60)

Also attested in Fox’s *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 60) is the unusual optional use of the first person realis prefix in the formation of a command using the verb *ma* “come”. This was attested in the data and also observed in the field.

3.26 ***Në-Ø-ma*** *a* *nadep'.*
1:REAL-SG-come LOC ground
“Come here to the ground.” [nmb25.Ref.013]

There is also one example of a post-verbal modifier appearing to have imperative function (§5.4.3).

5.27 *Tatei,* *nakëm* ***sër!***
father 2SG PUNCTUAL
“Dad, hurry up!” [nmb04.Ref.059]

3.2.5 Echo-Subject Morpheme *kë-*

In addition to the prefix paradigms presented in the previous sections, V'ënen Taut has an echo-subject morpheme which occurs regularly in connected speech. The echo-subject morpheme almost always takes its person and mood values from a previously mentioned participant encoded as the grammatical subject. The echo-subject is a first order prefix and as such is mentioned here. More detail will be presented later in §3.7 after the other prefixes have been described because some of them function differently when the echo-subject is present.

3.3 Necessity Morpheme *k(ë)-*

The necessity morpheme *k(ë)-* fills the second verbal prefix position. The name of the morpheme follows Fox (1979, p. 61). Fox (1979) shows that the necessity morpheme, when occurring with verbs with positive polarity, is used to indicate that the agent of a verb must undertake the action which it denotes. When used in this manner, the particle *pr* [pr̩] often occurs at the end of the clause (Fox, 1979).

3.28 ***N-kë-Ø-vel*** ***pr.***
1:REAL-NES-SG-go must
"I must go for a walk." (Fox, 1979, p. 61)

3.29 ***A-kë-v-p'ëlt*** *udrlan=i* *atlakha* ***pr.***
3NSG:REAL-NES-PL-gather all-POSS:3SG here must
"They must assemble here." (Fox, 1979, p. 62)

When the necessity morpheme is used with second person subjects, the second person conditional morpheme, *më-*, is used as the subject morpheme instead of the second person realis morpheme, *kë-*. This may be because *kë-* 2:REAL and *kë-* NES are homophones and the language does not allow this.

3.30 ***Më-kë-Ø-lu*** *m'ëtu-ëm* ***pr.***
2:COND-NES-SG-plant coconut-POSS:2SG must
"You must plant your coconuts." (Fox, 1979, p. 61)

The reason that the previous examples of the necessity morphemes were taken from Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* is because there are no instances of the necessity morpheme occurring with verbs marked with positive polarity in the corpus. However, there are many examples of the necessity morpheme occurring in the data with verbs that are also inflected by the negative morpheme. When this occurs it can create two different meanings. The first is a prohibitive. The second is an event with future time reference and negative polarity. Section 3.5 on negation presents examples and more detailed description.

3.4 Aspect Prefixes

The aspect prefixes can fill the third position before the verb. These prefixes serve to make aspectual distinctions. Two of the three aspects make opposing aspectual distinctions, with the perfective prefix placing emphasis on the end of an action and the continuative aspect placing emphasis on the ongoing nature of an action. The last morpheme, the proximity morpheme, simply tells us that the temporal location of an event is very close to a particular time referenced in the discourse. It indicates that an event occurred just before or just after another event.

Perfective	Continuative	Proximity
t(ë)-	*d(ë)-*	*p'ëkh-*

Table 3.9: Aspect Morphemes

The perfective morpheme *t(ë)-* is used to mark an event as having been undertaken at some point in the past. This morpheme was labelled as the completive morpheme in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979). It has been reanalysed in this work as marking the perfective aspect in order to distinguish it from the completive post-verbal modifiers which occur regularly in texts (§5.2).

The perfective morpheme is attested as occurring with verbs which are marked with realis and conditional subject prefixes. When used with realis subject mood prefixes, they indicate that the verb was undertaken in a confined space of time at some point in the past.

3.31 ***l-t-rukh.***

3SG:REAL-PFV-run.away

"He had ran away." [nmb09.Ref.029]

3.32 ***A-të-v-vërvër.***

3NSG:REAL-PFV-PL-run

“They had ran (away).” [nmb04.Ref.055]

The perfective prefix can also be preceded by conditional subject prefixes in hypothetical situations in which the speaker is speculating about an event that could have occurred in the past, although it did not.

3.33 ***M'ë-të-Ø-m'akër*** *mamëkh.*

1:COND-PFV-SG-work well

“I would have worked well” [nmb39.Ref.013]

3.34 ***Im-të-Ø-khua****…*

3SG:COND-PFV-SG-stong

“It (work) would have been good.”[10] [nmb39.Ref.013]

The perfective morpheme is not attested as occurring with verbs which are also inflected with the irrealis or imperative subject prefixes. It is possible that those two combinations are ungrammatical. This is likely to do with semantic incompatibility because it would be strange to talk about events that **have not** happened in a manner that would indicate that they **have** happened.

The continuative morpheme *d(ë)-* is used to mark an action that started at some point before the reference time of the discourse and that is ongoing up until and potentially continuing after that particular reference time. It places emphasis on the ongoing nature of an action. In English, we would use the adverb “still” or “yet” to portray this notion. Although continuative aspect can be considered to fall under the umbrella of types of imperfective aspect, *d(ë)-* does not mark imperfective aspect. Events that simply have imperfective aspect are not overtly marked in V’ënen Taut and must be understood from context and the inherent

[10] In V’ënen Taut, working well or doing good work is described using the adjectival verb *khua* “strong”.

temporal properties of verbs. The continuative prefix serves to emphasise the notion of the ongoing nature of states and actions through time.

The continuative morpheme *d(ë)-* occurs rarely with prototypical intransitive verbs, though it is obligatorily used with non-prototypical intransitive verbs which are modified by the echo-subject morpheme. In fact, the continuative is only attested once on an intransitive verb with positive polarity in the corpus, although Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979) gives several more examples.

3.35 *M'ertu* ***a-dë-v-lëk****…*
person 3NSG:REAL-CONT-PL-stay
"They were still being…" [nmb08.Ref.012]

3.36 ***A-d-r-vel…***
3NSG:REAL-CONT-PAU-walk
"They are both still walking…" (Fox, 1979, p. 64)

Although there is only one example of the continuative morpheme occurring with positive polarity in the corpus, there are many examples of the continuative morpheme modifying verbs which have negative polarity. It was from these examples that the function of this morpheme was observed. For examples of this, see §3.5 on negation.

The proximity morpheme *p'ëkh-* is used to indicate that an event took place shortly before or will take place shortly after a previously mentioned event. The proximity prefix is able to co-occur with both the realis and irrealis subject prefixes. In terms of time, the event sequences denoted by this prefix can have either past or future time reference.

In the following example, *p'ëkh-* is used to indicate that an event took place in the recent past.

3.37 ***l-p'ëkh-Ø-m'arit*** *arana misin lakha.*
3SG:REAL-PROX-SG-get.married on mission this
"He just got married at the mission." [nmb06.Ref.008]

Example 3.38 shows *p'ëkh-* indicating the near future in regard to the events of the conversation. Future time reference is indicated through the use of the irrealis subject prefix.

3.38 *Nakëm* *pë-Ø-khën* *ti* *kana* ***të-p'ëkh-Ø-khën.***
2SG 2:IRR-SG-eat SUB 1SG 1:IRR-PROX-SG-eat
"You will eat then I will just eat." [nmb25.Ref.017]

In some instances, the proximity morpheme occurs in a different position in the verbal complex. This only appears to happen when the verb is also inflected with the plural morpheme. In two of the occurrences the plural morpheme precedes the proximity morpheme. It is not clear whether these occurrences are production errors or simply another way of using this morpheme. As both of the preceding plural morpheme occurrences were uttered by the same person, it could also be a case of idiolectal variation. It is also possible that this ordering of verbal prefixes helps to separate the two fricative sounds in the plural and proximity morphemes. An example of this is shown below.

3.39 ***Kë-v-p'ëkh-tëwatakh.***
ES-PL-PROX-go.after
"You will just come behind." [nmb31.Ref.126]

The order in which we would expect to see the proximity and plural prefixes occur is shown in the following example, also attested in natural speech.

3.40 ***Kë-p'ëkh-v-tau=i*** *arana* *huspitel.*
ES-PROX-PL-put=3SG:OBJ on hospital
"They just put him in the hospital." [nmb46.Ref.123]

3.5 Negation *(kh)a-*

The prefix *a-* marks negation and fills the fourth prefix position. It has an allomorph which occurs when it is directly preceded by the third person non-singular realis prefix. The addition of the velar fricative at the beginning of the negative prefix serves to separate the third person non-singular realis and negative prefix which would otherwise create a sequence of *a-a-*.

The negative prefix can be used in conjunction with the realis and conditional subject morphemes. It is not attested occurring with verbs which have either irrealis or imperative subject morphemes.

V'ënen Taut is different from many other Malekula languages because it marks negation with a prefix only. Many other neighbouring languages, such as Malua Bay (Wessels, 2013), Nese (Crowley, 2006b), Naman (Crowley, 2006a), and Neve'ei (Musgrave, 2007) mark negation discontinuously. However, Tape (Crowley, 2006c), like V'ënen Taut, also marks negation with a simple prefix.

When used with verbs that are inflected by a realis subject prefix, it negates the verb and indicates that the situation expressed by the verb is not the case or did not occur.

3.41 *Nikh m'ertu **i-a-Ø-khua**…*
meat people 3SG:REAL-NEG-SG-strong
"Human meat is not tough…" [nmb04.Ref.090]

3.42 ***A-kha-Ø-v'ana** mël…*
3NSG:REAL-NEG-IMPRS-speak again
"The people did not speak again…" [nmb07.Ref.027]

3.43 ***N-a-v-m'atr**:*
1:REAL-NEG-PL-sleep
"We did not sleep." [nmb31.Ref.066]

As mentioned in §3.2.2, the irrealis subject prefixes cannot occur with verbs which are also marked with the negative prefix. In order to express a situation which has negative polarity and future time reference, one of the realis subject prefixes, in combination with the necessity prefix, is used with the negative prefix.

3.44 ***I-k-a-m'arën…***
3SG:REAL-NES-NEG-dry
"It (the wood) will not dry…" [nmb14.Ref.002]

3.45 ***N-k-a-Ø-lëk** mima…*
1:REAL-NES-NEG-SG-stay close
"I will not be close by…" [nmb23.Ref.008]

This can also create a general prohibitive clause which is applicable to everyone when the subject is impersonal. In the example below the negative morpheme is not preceded by the

velar fricative because there is another morpheme which separates the third person non-singular prefix and the negative prefix.

3.46 ***A-k-a-Ø-m'atr*** *m'a* *m'ertu* *ki…*
3NSG:REAL-NES-NEG-IMPRS-sleep with man NSPC
"People cannot sleep with others (before going to the garden)…" [nmb17.Ref.009]

The negative prefix also occurs in conjunction with the continuative prefix, which indicates that the situation expressed by the verb did not hold true in the period of time preceding a particular reference point.

3.47 ***Kë-d-a-Ø-tkhal***…
2:REAL-CONT-NEG-SG-wake.up
"You had not woken up yet…" [nmb31.Ref.122]

3.48 *Neiel* ***i-d-a-tëpël****…*
sun 3SG:REAL-CONT-NEG-set
"The sun had not set yet…" [nmb31.Ref.058]

The negative prefix regularly occurs with verbs which are modified with a conditional subject prefix. This can create prohibitive or counterfactual clauses.

Prohibitive clauses, or negative imperatives, use the second person conditional prefix, which takes the place of the imperative prefix *da-* or the combination of a realis morpheme and the necessity morpheme, and the negative prefix. This is likely due to the similar sounds of the negative prefix and the imperative prefix or the second person realis and necessity prefixes which would create sequences of *da-a-* and *kë-k-a-* respectively.

3.49 ***M-a-Ø-dedrn!***
2:COND-NEG-SG-be.afraid
"Don't be afraid!" [nmb38.Ref.019]

3.50 *Kam'i* ***m-a-v-khën*** *ki.*
2NSG 2:COND-NEG-PL-eat NSPC
"You must not eat any." [nmb38.Ref.023]

The continuative prefix can also be used in negative imperatives.

3.51 ***Më-d-a-Ø-valau*** *wëm…*
2:COND-CONT-NEG-SG-cry still
“Don’t eat yet…” [nmb27.Ref.035]

Negative future events with second person participants can be indicated using the conditional prefix, the necessity morpheme, and the negative prefix.

3.52 ***Më-k-a-v-m'alet*** *mël…*
2:COND-NES-NEG-PL-return again
“You will not come back” [nmb30.Ref.080]

It should be noted that other prohibitive clauses or negative future events are made using the conditional prefixes too, though it appears that it is only obligatory for the conditional prefixes to be used with the second person.

3.53 *Nakëd ru* ***m'ë-d-a-r-khën*** *namëp wëm.*
1NSG.INC two 1:COND-CONT-NEG-PAU-eat Tahitian.chestnut still
“You and I must not eat the chestnuts yet” [nmb25.Ref.021]

3.54 ***Am-a-Ø-khën*** *m'ari.*
3NSG:COND-NEG-IMPRS-eat eel
“People must not eat eel.” [nmb22.Ref.047]

Counterfactual clauses generally begin with either the verb *vër* “say”, which can also have the meaning “if”, or *khei* which means “no”. These verbs are generally modified by one of the conditional subject morphemes. The counterfactual verb, which is the verb that if it had occurred would have led to the outcome which is being explained in the sentence, is modified by a conditional prefix and the negative prefix. This can be seen in the following two examples.

3.55 *Narën vara,* ***am-Ø-vër*** *ti* ***m'-a-Ø-dedrn*** *a*
time that 3NSG:COND-IMPRS-say SUB 1:COND-NEG-SG-be.afraid LOC
nëmat, ***m'ë-Ø-lev*** *nëmat vara.*
snake 1:COND-SG-take snake that
“That time, if I had not been afraid of the snake, I would have taken the snake.” [nmb40.Ref.013]

3.56 ***Im-a-khei,*** ***im-a-lua-p'ën*** *a* *Pasta* *G.*
3SG:COND-NEG-no 3SG:COND-NEG-shoot-FTL PERS pastor G.
"If not, he would have shot pastor G. dead." [nmb30.Ref.069]

3.6 Number

The last position of verbal prefixes is reserved for morphemes which represent the grammatical number of the subject of the verb. The number prefix position along with the subject prefix position are the two prefix positions which must be filled on all verbs (apart from those verb stems which can occur uninflected when they function as imperatives). As can be seen in the tables below, there are four different grammatical number categories in V'ënen Taut. The names that have been chosen to represent some of them are different to those seen in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979). In Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar*, *r-,* which is used to represent a small group of participants (two to around five or more), is called "the restricted plural". Typologically, we would now identify *r-* as representing paucal number. The name of what Fox (1979) identified as the "general plural" has also been changed to impersonal to reflect that the verbs which are marked with this prefix have indefinite participants as subjects. The names of the singular and plural have remained the same as in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979).

Number	Morpheme
Singular	*Ø-*
Impersonal	*Ø-*
Paucal	*r-*
Plural	*v-*

Table 3.10: Subject Number Prefixes

3.57 *Kana* ***n-Ø-lëk****…*
1SG 1:REAL-SG-stay
"I stayed" [nmb31.Ref.131]

3.58 *Aut* *taut,* ***a-Ø-vër*** *didi.*
place big.nambas 3NSG:REAL-IMPRS-say palm.tree
"In the Big Nambas area they are called palm trees." [nmb46.Ref.012]

3.59 ***N-r-lëk*** *atlakha…*
1:REAL-PAU-stay here
“We (two) live here…” [nmb23.Ref.120]

3.60 *Kam'em'* ***në-v-lëk****…*
1NSG:EXCL 1REAL-PL-sit
“Then we (small group) sat…” [nmb31.Ref.115]

Although *r-* is mostly used to inflect verbs which have two entities as the agent, we know that the morpheme does not represent dual number because it can be used to modify verbs which have more than two agents. This is most clearly indicated by the verbal prefixes inflecting the intransitive number verbs. If *r-* was only used to represent dual numbers, the following example would be ungrammatical.

3.61 *P'e-Ø-spën* *udrlan=i* *ti* ***a-r-nal*** *vakha* ***a-r-lëm'…***
1:IRR-SG-count all=3SG:OBJ SUB 3NSG:REAL-PAU-ten or 3NSG:REAL-PAU-five
“I will count all of them (speaker’s children), ten or five …” [nmb01.Ref.184]

3.7 Echo-Subject *kë-/khë-*

The echo-subject morpheme is by far the most used of all the subject prefixes in extended monologues. The echo-subject is homophonous with the second person realis subject morpheme, but through context they can be distinguished. For a learner of V’ënen Taut, distinguishing these morphemes is difficult because they occur in similar environments.

The echo-subject prefix was documented by Fox as *ka-* not *kë-* and was described as the “co-ordinating” morpheme (Fox, 1979, p. 51). In Fox’s *Big Nambas Grammar* it was not included with the other first order prefixes but was placed in its own order preceding the subject morphemes and described as occurring on “dependant verbs”. These verbs are described as verbs which predominantly occur sentence-medially following independent verbs which were modified with one of the standard subject morphemes. According to Fox (1979, p. 82), the “co-ordinating” morpheme, glossed as “and”, can also occur sentence initially in connected discourse and shows the linkage between two verbs. It is possible that Fox documented this morpheme as “co-ordinating” because he noted that there are no overt

markers of phrasal co-ordination in clauses that would require some kind of overt marker of co-ordination in English. This is because English generally does not allow sentences to have multiple verb phrases without overt markers of co-ordination.

In this work, the prefix is analysed as an echo-subject morpheme, which occurs in the same prefix position as the other subject morphemes. Like the other first order prefixes, the echo-subject co-occurs with the fifth order number prefixes.

When verbs are used in speech, they must be inflected by a subject prefix and a number morpheme. In Erromangan, a southern Vanuatu language, when a non-initial verb occurs with the same referential subject as a fully inflected initial verb that the echo-subject morpheme will instead inflect the verb (Crowley, 2002, p. 181). This is similar to V'ënen Taut. Semantically, the echo-subject has the same person and mood value as the preceding inflected verb. For example, if a verb is modified with the first person irrealis prefix, the following verbs, marked with the echo-subject, can be understood as having a first person and irrealis subject. The echo-subject will continue to be used until a new subject is brought into the text. This is indicated by a verb which is modified by a standard subject prefix. There is an exception to this rule regarding subordinate clauses. Where subordinate clauses occur, the pattern begins again inside the subordinate clause with verbs modified with standard prefixes. However, when the subordinate clause ends, the verbs which follow may be modified with the echo-subject. In this case, the echo-subject does not take its person and mood value from the closest previously fully inflected verb, which would be the one in the subordinate clause; instead, it takes it from the closest verb in the main clause.

Fox says that discourse cannot begin with the echo-subject morpheme (Fox, 1979, p. 82). In the corpus for this project, this appears to be accurate. Extended periods of speech can occur with the echo-subject used to inflect the verbs in that text. This means that as long as the referential subject of all the verbs remains constant, the echo-subject morpheme can be used repeatedly. Some speakers do begin new sentences with standard subject prefixes. This may serve as a discourse feature to remind interlocutors of the subject participant through the discourse.

Echo-subject marking is not an uncommon feature of Vanuatu languages. Echo-subject marking is found in the neighbouring languages Larëvat (Barbour, personal communication) and Tape where it takes the form *dë-* (Crowley, 2006c, p. 145-148). Echo-subject morphemes are also found in some languages of southern Vanuatu, like Erromangan

(Crowley 2002). In southern Vanuatu languages, the echo subjects are used, in combination with markers of coordination, in situations where other Vanuatu languages would use serial verbs (Lynch, Ross, & Crowley, 2002, p. 48-49). V'ënen Taut uses echo-subject marking without overt marking of co-ordination as a method of indicating sequential events. Echo-subject marking, in V'ënen Taut, appears to function in a similar manner to core serial verbs found in other Vanuatu languages such as Paamese (Crowley, 2002) and Neverver (Barbour, 2012).

Verbs which all have the same referential subject and can be conceived of occurring in a linked manner will be marked as such with the echo-subject morpheme. These events can form a series of steps in a larger event such as going somewhere, sitting down, and waiting. The breaking of these linked events through the introduction of a new subject, or the speaker deciding that the subject of the verb needs to be re-established, triggers the use of the standard subject prefixes. The use of an independent pronoun referring back to the original participant will often cause the following verb to be marked with a standard subject prefix, though this is not a consistent pattern, and a more thorough examination of echo-subjects is needed.

The following example shows a series of related events: waking up, moving, and waiting. Note that the embedded after thought, in parenthesises, does not trigger the use of the standard subject morpheme *n(ë)-* on *vel* "go" because the referential subject has not changed.

3.62 *Fraedei m'ëtëv'aren,* [*kam'em'* ***n-r-tkhal***]$_1$ [*(kam'em'* *m'e=i*
Friday morning 1NSG:EXCL 1:REAL-PAU-wake.up, 1PL:EXCL with=3SG:OBJ
a R.)], [***kë-r-vel***]$_2$ [***kë-r-trakh*** *tlv'a a navanal*]$_3$.
PERS R. ES-PAU-go ES-PAU-wait.for truck LOC road
"On Friday morning we got up, Royce and I, we went and waited for the truck on the road."
[nmb31.Ref.005]

An interesting feature of the echo-subject morpheme, with regard to verb class, is that non-prototypical intransitive verbs with singular subjects require the aspect prefix position to be filled. The default prefix used in this position with many verbs is *da-* the continuative prefix, although other prefixes can be used when the semantics of the proposition require them. The used of *da-* does not have an effect on the semantics of the verb (see §3.8.1). Example 3.63 shows the echo-subject being used in a clause with irrealis modality.

3.63 *Khin* [*ipa-v'a*]$_1$ [***kë-Ø-irën*** *lamu*]$_2$ [***kë-da-Ø-v'a***]$_3$ [***kë-Ø-tr*** *ruplet*
3SG 3SG:IRR-go ES-SG-light bamboo ES-CONT-SG-go ES-SG-cut dry.leaf
na *nas*]$_4$ *apë-r-m'atr* *aranë-n.*
ASV banana 3NSG:IRR-PAU-sleep on-POSS.3SG
"He will go and light some bamboo and he will go and cut dry banana leaves which they will sleep on." [nmb09.Ref.023]

The next example contains two larger events and each of these events is made up of two smaller events. In both cases, the second verb is inflected with the echo-subject prefix. The two verbs which make up each event are conceptually linked. The truck comes to pick people up, and the truck goes and turns.

3.64 [*Tlv'a* ***i-ma***]$_1$ [***kë-Ø-lev*** *kam'em'*]$_2$,
truck 3SG:REAL-come ES-SG-take 1PL:EXCL
[***n-vra-v'a***]$_1$ [***kë-v-vëv=i*** *a* *Wilikh*]$_2$.
1:REAL-PL-go ES-PL-turn=3SG:OBJ LOC Wilak
"The truck came and took us, we went and turned around at Wilak." [nmb31.Ref.008]

In the following excerpt, the change from echo-subject morpheme to standard subject morpheme is used to indicate the change between the two different participants in the text. The first group is indicated with 1 and the second with 2.

3.65 [***Kë-v-lëk*** ***kë-v-trakh*** *famli* *a* *tav'et*]$_1$
ES-PL-stay ES-PL-wait.for family PERS woman
[***apë-vra-ma*** *kë-v-ln* *tav'et*]$_2$.
3NSG:IRR-PL-come ES-PL-leave woman
"(The man's family) they wait for the woman's family who will come and leave the woman." [nmb21.Ref.047]

3.66 ***[Kë-Ø-ln=i]***$_1$ ***[i-rukh]***$_2$…
ES-SG-let.go=3SG:OBJ 3SG:REAL-run.away
"He let it (pig) go and it ran way…" [nmb03.Ref.026]

Verbs inflected with the echo-subject prefix do not have to have concordance in aspect or polarity, as they do in number, with the verb from which they take their person and mood

value. In example 3.67, the first verb, which is inflected with the third person singular realis prefix, has negative polarity but the verb marked with the echo-subject has positive polarity.

3.67 *Nikh m'ertu* ***i-a-khua*** ***kë-Ø-nap'a*** *nikh puluk.*
meat person 3SG:REAL-NEG-stong ES-SG-like meat cow
"Human meat is not strong like beef." [nmb04.Ref.090]

In the following example, perfective morphology is added to the verb modified with the echo-subject which is not present on the verb marked with the third-person singular prefix.

3.68 ***I-ma*** *kë-Ø-tup'an=i* ***kë-t-Ø-khën*** *sare=i.*
3SG:REAL-come ES-SG-cook.in.laplap=3SG:OBJ ES-PFV-SG-eat COMP=3SG:OBJ
"She came and cooked him and she has eaten him." [nmb11.Re.030]

The following example contains five verbs. The first three are intransitive, the fourth is transitive, and the fifth occurs in a subordinate clause. All of the verbs following *v'a* "go" have the same subject, the purple swamphen, and are marked with the echo subject verb. Each of these verbs occur in iconic order and form part of one series of events. The final verb *m'ët* "black" also has the purple swamphen as its subject; however this verb is not considered as part of the main verb sequence because it is located in a subordinate clause and as such it is inflected with a standard subject prefix.

6.69 *V'irm'ët* ***i-v'a*** ***kë-Ø-pëtir*** *a p'ek nawei* ***kë-Ø-këlau***
purple.swamphen 3SG:REAL-go ES-SG-stand LOC side water ES-SG-spot
muki ***kë-Ø-la*** *ti khin i-m'ët udrlan=i.*
only ES-SG-see SUB 3SG 3SG:REAL-black all=3SG:OBJ
"The purple swamphen went and stood by the river and looked and it saw that it was all black." [nmb34.Ref.012]

The following sentence contains three verbs occurring in sequence. The first verb *v'a* "go" is fully indexed while the following verbs are modified with the echo-subject prefix. Also present, is an object noun phrase occurring between the second and third verbs.

6.70 *Afta* ***i-v'a*** ***kë-Ø-sva*** *nas* ***kë-Ø-sëran*** *ki a nadep'.*
then 3SG:REAL-go ES-SG-pick banana ES-SG-throw NSPC LOC ground
"Then he went and picked bananas and he threw some to the ground." [nmb46.Ref.056]

The following example shows a switch function echo-subject construction. Here the verbs occurring in sequence have different subjects. The object of the first verb is the agent of the second verb. It is clear that the verbs have different subjects because the echo-subject was not used on the second verb

6.71 ***Kë-Ø-sëran*** *nakhau* ***i-v'a*** *a* *nadep'.*
ES-SG-throw rope 3SG:REAL-go LOC ground
"You throw the rope and it goes to the ground." [nmb36.Ref.014]

On occasion, some verbs are marked with the echo-subject prefix even if they are preceded by an independent subject morpheme. It is possible that the pronoun does not trigger the standard prefixes because it appears to be being used emphatically.

3.72 *N-r-ma,* *kam'em'* ***kë-r-ma*** *kë-r-m'atr.*
1:REAL-PAU-come 1NSG:EXCL ES-PAU-come ES-PAU-sleep
"We came, we came and went to sleep." [nmb31.Ref.142

3.73 *Khir* ***kë-v-m'atr.***
3NSG ES-PL-sleep
"They slept." [nmb45.Ref.006]

There is a tendency for older speakers to use the alternate form of the echo-subject morpheme *khë-*. There appears to be no discernible difference between the two morphemes and older speakers seem to use them in free variation although they use *khë-* more frequently.

3.74 *I-ma* ***khë-Ø-pëtir*** *ësn-n.*
3SG:REAL-come ES-SG-stand beside-POSS:3SG
"She came and stood beside her." [nmb37.Ref.031]

3.8 Non-Prototypical Intransitive Verbs

There are two kinds of non-prototypical intransitive verbs in V'ënen Taut. These are Type Two intransitive verbs and intransitive verbs denoting numbers. Type Two intransitive verbs are non-prototypical because they have special allomorphy which occurs on the prefix closest to the Type Two verb root. Intransitive verbs denoting number are non-prototypical

because they have different rules in regards to how grammatical number is marked on them by inflectional verbal morphology.

3.8.1 Type Two Intransitive Verbs

Type Two intransitive verbs are a small subset of intransitive verbs which have their own set of verbal prefixes. Type Two prefixes are characterised by the presence of the phoneme /a/ in the prefixes used for verbs with singular subjects. Verbs with plural subjects are indicated by the plural morpheme *vra-*. Type two verbs with paucal subjects appear to have no audible difference to prototypical verbs.

In terms of the verb roots themselves, there is no systematic way to determine which verbs belong to each type; however, it can be noted that Type One is an open class of verbs and contains most of the verbs in the V'ënen Taut lexicon while Type Two appears to have restricted membership. It can also be observed that all of the Type Two verbs are monosyllabic. Being intransitive and monosyllabic does not trigger membership as a Type Two verb because there are many Type One verbs which also have these characteristics. All of these observations are consistent with characteristics of Type Two intransitive verbs presented in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar,* where they were called Class Two[11] verbs (1979, p. 48).

Table 3.11 shows the inventory of Type Two intransitive verbs. It is a combination of verbs observed in the corpus collected during this project and Type Two verbs listed in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p.49-50). Underlined verbs occurred in the corpus and in Fox's work and the verbs written in bold are additional verbs observed in the corpus but not in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979). The verb *iak* "be born", seen in parenthesises, was attested in the data but was not modified by Type Two prefixes and so appears not to be a member of this set any longer.

[11] The name was changed to Type Two so the term "verb class" is reserved for transitivity categories.

an	“depart”	***m’akh***	**“be cooked”**	*sëp*	“curve”
dëv	“be heavy”	*m’ët*	“be black”	*sëp’*	“be awake”
(*iak*	“be born”)	*nëv’*	“have asthma”	***si***	**“grow”**
kal	“be wedged”	*pëd*	“be satisfied”	*tar*	“be located”
khau	“go home”	*pët*	“be silent”	*tër*	“cohabitate”
lis	“be lazy”	*pu*	“be putrid”	*tl*	“be tree”
lëm	“leak”	*p’ël*	“choke”	*tëp’*	“be infected”
lëm’	“five”	*p’ës*	“fly away”	*u*	“rain”
lu	“vomit”	*rën*	“be light”	*un*	“make a pool”
ma	“come”	*rër*	“be sore”	*uv*	“lay/incubate eggs”
mi	“quake”	*rës*	“fall down”	*vën*	“bear fruit”
mës	“break”	*ru*	“two”	*v’a*	“go”
mu	“cool down”	*sel*	“be lost”	*v’a*	“be four”
m’a	“die”	*sëm*	“drip”	*was*	“be yellow”

Table 3.11: Type Two Verbs

Presented below is a table which shows all of the observed Type Two verb prefixes. Prefixes which do not have allomorphs used with Type Two verbs are the singular number prefix, paucal number prefix, proximity aspect prefix, and all of the realis subject prefixes.

Subject		Necessity		Aspect		Negative		Number	
p’a/ta-	1SG:IRR	*ka-*	NES-	*da-*	CONT-	*(kh)akh-*	NEG-	*r-*	paucal
pa-	2SG:IRR			*ta-*	PREF-			*vra-*	plural
ipa-	3SG:IRR								
m’a-	1SG:COND								
ma-	2SG:COND								
ima-	3SG:COND								
dakh-	2SG:IMP								

Table 3.12: Type Two Verb Prefixes

An interesting feature of Type Two verbs is the way in which they are inflected with both the standard verbal prefixes and the Type Two verbal prefixes. It appears that only one Type Two morpheme may occur on any singular verb. The prefix position which receives the Type Two verbal prefix is the one that occurs closest to the verb root. This explains why Type Two verbs with plural subjects, which are indicated with the prefix *vra-*, are not inflected with any

of the other Type Two verbal prefixes. This can be seen in the examples below which display a variety of different verbs being modified by a variety of different prefixes in order to illustrate the use of the Type Two prefixes.

3.75 *A R.* ***ipa-rës.***
PERS R. 3SG:IRR-fall
"R. will fall down." [nmb31.Ref.097]

3. 76 ***Dakh-ma!***
IMP-come
"Come here!" [nmb11.Ref.031]

3.77 ***N-ka-Ø-v'a*** *a Tuluei i-k-lakhmël pr.*
1:REAL-NES-SG-go LOC Tuluei 3SG:REAL-NES-be.immediate must
"I must go to Tuluei immediately." (Fox, 1979, p. 61)

3.78 *Në-Ø-vër sturi na kastun* ***i-ta-ru*** *ra.*
1:REAL-SG-tell story ASV tradition 3SG:REAL-PFV-two now
"I have told two traditional stories now." [nmb04.Ref.099]

3.79 ***I-da-ma.***
3SG:REAL-CONT-come
"He is still coming." (Fox, 1979, p. 64)

3.80 *Dui i-m'atr m'a tav'et* ***i-k-akh-v'a*** *al namël.*
man 3SG:REAL-sleep with woman 3SG:REAL-NES-NEG-go in garden
"A man who slept with a woman must not go to the garden." [nmb17.Ref.028]

3.81 *Am-Ø-vër v'akh-v'akh-ien lara* ***im-d-akh-ma*** *aranë-n.*
3NSG:COND-IMPRS-say DUP-think-NMLS that 3SG:COND-CONT-NEG-come on-POSS:3SG
"If that thought did not come to him." [nmb25.Ref.045]

3.82 *Arana Fraedei, kam'em'* ***të-vra-v'a****…*
on Friday 1NSG:EXCL 1:IRR-PL-go
"On Friday, we will go…"[nmb10.Ref.015]

3.83 ***A-kë-vra-khau*** *m'a* *pua-r* *pr.*
3NSG:REAL-NES-PL-go.back with pig-POSS:3NSG must
"They must go away with their pigs." (Fox, 1979, p. 61)

3.84 *Afta* ***a-të-vra-khau-m'alet.***
then 3NSG:REAL-PFV-PL-go.back-return
"Then they went back." [nmb30.Ref.104]

3.85 ***A-kha-vra-ma*** *m'a* *sru* *na* *suwada-r.*
3NSG:REAL-NEG-PL-come with bowl ASV food-POSS:3SG
"They did not come with their bowl." [nmb32.Ref.025]

Verbs which have subjects which are paucal in number or that are impersonal appear not to receive any Type Two verb prefixes.

The verb *khau* "go back/home" is modified by the Type Two plural prefix *vra-* but its reduplicated form *khukhau* is modified by the Type One plural prefix *v-*. There is only one verb displaying this property in the text corpus; therefore, more examples are needed to record this as a definite grammatical rule of V'ënen Taut.

3.86 ***Kë-vra-khau*** *aut-ar.*
ES-PL-go.back place-POSS:3NSG
"They went back to their place." [nmb37.Ref.050]

3.87 *Kë-v-tu* *sara* *tamët* *kë-v-kharis* ***kë-v-khu-khau.***
ES-PL-put COMP prayer ES-PL-finish ES-PL-DUP-go.back
"We finished worshiping and we went home." [nmb10.Ref009]

There is some further explanation required of the Type Two continuative prefix *da-* which occurs regularly in the data, both inflecting verbs, and as an aspectual particle in its own right.

The Type Two continuative morpheme obligatorily inflects Type Two verbs when they have the echo subject morpheme filling the subject prefix position and are singular in number.

Many of the most commonly occurring intransitive verbs in the corpus are Type Two verbs. It is possible that *da-* functions to help distinguish the echo-subject morpheme from the second person morpheme which are homophones. Echo-subject constructions used with verbs of motion can be used to indicate the direction of movement (Crowley, 2002, p. 183).

3.88 *Kë-Ø-v'a al pitvët.*
2:REAL-SG-go in garden
"You go to the garden." [nmb17.Ref.023]

3.89 *I-v-amëk, i-v'a* ***kë-da-Ø-v'a*** *aut lalau.*
3SG:REAL-MULT-one 3SG:REAL-go ES-CONT-SG-go place taboo
"Once, he went to the taboo place." [nmb24.Ref.018]

In the above example, the verb *v'a* "go" is repeated for emphatic effect and to add directional information. In the text, it is clear that the event is seen as complete meaning that the continuative meaning of *da-* is lost.

3.90 *Në-Ø-vër pë-Ø-rukh* ***kë-da-Ø-khau*** *al nata a Winm'a.*
1:REAL-SG-say 2:IRR-SG-run.away ES-CONT-SG-go.back in sea LOC Winm'a
"I said, you will run home to Winm'a." [nmb04.Ref.011]

One could also take the view that many Type Two verbs have continuative aspect when they occur in echo-subject constructions. For example, the phrase above could be read as "I said, you will run away and keep going home to Winm'a". However, this would not account for the lack of the continuative prefix inflecting verbs with non-singular subjects. Consider these two examples from Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 84) where both phrases can be seen as having inherent continuative aspect.

3.91 *Në-Ø-m'at* ***kë-da-Ø-lu.***
1:REAL-SG-sick ES-CONT-SG-vomit
"I am sick and vomiting."

3.92 *A-r-m'at* ***kë-r-lu.***
3NSG:REAL-PAU-sick ES-PAU-vomit
"They are sick and vomiting."

The Type Two continuative morpheme *da-* can also be used as a post-verbal modifier indicating durative aspect in two different ways. When a situation is marked with durative aspect, it indicates that the situation took place over an extended period of time. The morpheme *da-* can either be used on its own or occur modifying a verb of movement such as *v'a* "go" or *ma* "come". When used in this manner, *da-* is often repeated several times.

The following two examples show the continuative particle being used on its own as the durative particle.

3.93 *I-lëk* ***da*** ***da,*** *khin* *kë-da-Ø-khau-m'alet.*
3SG:REAL-stay CONT CONT 3SG ES-CONT-SG-go.back-return
"She stayed for a while, then she went home again." [nmb23.Ref.158]

3.94 *Kë-v-khil=i* ***da*** ***da*** ***da,*** *kë-v-kharis* *i-v-amëk*
ES-PL-dig=3SG:OBJ CONT CONT CONT ES-PL-finish 3SG:REAL-MULT-one
an=i.
EXT.P=3SG:OBJ
"They dig it (the garden) on and on, they harvest all of the yams at one time."[nmb13.Ref.013]

When *da-* is affixed to *v'a* "go" it can also be used as a durative modifier. It often follows a fully inflected form of *v'a* indicating that the movement took place over an extended period of time. It can give durative aspect to many types of verbs. The modifier *dav'a* can be repeated several times. The more *dav'a* is repeated the longer that action has continued.

3.95 *Në-vra-v'a* ***da-v'a*** *kë-vra-v'a* *ësn-n* *nawei* *në-n* *lara.*
1:REAL-PL-go CONT-go ES-PL-go close-POSS:3SG water GEN-POSS:3SG that
"We went for a while, we went up to that (body of) water." [nmb.31.Ref.089]

3.96 *Kë-v-rëp=i* ***da-v'a*** ***da-v'a*** *ti* *i-rkhapën=i.*
ES-PL-hit=3SG:OBJ CONT-go CONT-go SUB 3SG-die.unnaturally=3SG:OBJ
"They hit him on and on until he died." [nmb46.Ref.097]

The continuative prefix can be affixed to the verb *ma* "come" and used as a post-verbal modifier for some verbs of movement, such as *ma* "come" and *vërvër* "run". It is used to indicate that the movement took place over an extended period of time and that the

movement was coming from a far distance towards a place of reference, such as the location of the speaker or person in a narrative.

3.97 *Kë-vra-ma* ***da-ma*** ***da-ma,*** *kë-vra-ma* *ësn-n* *a* *mëlin*
ES-PL-come CONT-come CONT-come ES-PL-come close-POSS:3SG PERS chief
a *G.*
PERS G.
"They were coming, they came up to chief G." [nmb30.Ref.077]

3.98 *Kë-v-vërvër* ***da-ma*** ***da-ma*** ***da-ma*** ***da-ma***
ES-PL-run CONT-come CONT-come CONT-come CONT-come
kë-v-iar=i *awei.*
ES-PL-reach=3SG:OBJ down
"We came running and running and reached it (the school) down here." [nmb31.Ref.057]

Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979) gives no explanation for the allomorphy that occurs with the Type Two intransitive verbs; instead, analysing Type Two verbs as requiring Type Two prefixes. However, I postulate that the source of this allophony is not the prefixes themselves but the verb roots. It is possible that older forms of Type Two verbs began with the phoneme /a/. Overtime the /a/ at the beginning of these verbs became fossilised onto some of the verbal prefixes, explaining the distribution of Type Two immediately before the verb root. This the location of the Type Two prefix preserves the location of the verb initial /a/. This could also explain why the Type Two negative prefix takes the form *akh-*; the velar fricative would have served to separate the /a/ of the negative prefix and the /a/ at the beginning of the verb in a similar manner to which the velar fricative separates the third-person non-singular realis prefix and the negative prefix when they occur contiguously. This same process would explain the velar fricative which occurs with the Type Two imperative prefix *dakh-*.

There is some counter evidence for this explanation, in the apparent lack of Type Two realis subject prefixes. If the initial /a/ on the verb became fossilised to the prefixes, we would expect to find it on the realis prefixes. Likewise, the paucal prefix does not become *ra-* before Type Two Verbs but is simply *r-* and blocks the rest of the Type Two verbal prefixes. The proximity aspect prefix does not have a Type Two allomorph either, though this may be explained by the fact that it is a closed syllable and the /a/ had no position to which it could

attach. The last piece of counter evidence is the manner in which reduplicated Type Two roots appear not to be inflected by Type Two prefixes.

As there are only a limited number of examples of Type Two intransitive verbs in the corpus and there is a considerable degree of difference between the analysis presented in this work and the analysis presented in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979), this particular feature of V'ënen Taut grammar needs more investigation. I believe this would require careful elicitation of each of the Type Two verbs in a combination of different modal and aspectual environments with positive and negative polarity, along with further sampling of natural speech.

3.8.2 Intransitive Verbs Denoting Number

Numerals are represented by intransitive verbs. Numerals are classified as intransitive verbs in V'ënen Taut because they are able to be modified by most of the verbal prefixes. Numerals have been observed being inflected by the realis, irrealis, and conditional subject prefix paradigms. In the following section, where numerals are not used in specific text examples, they will be modified by the first-person singular realis morpheme because that is the subject prefix by which numerals are most commonly inflected.

3.8.2.1 Cardinal Numbers

Cardinal numbers indicate the specific numerical value of a referent (Dryer, 2007b, p.164). V'ënen Taut has a decimal number system. Numerals are grouped into decades which behave in a predictable pattern. When simply counting, all numerals, apart from *snal* "ten", are modified by *i-*, the third person singular realis morpheme. There are two specific cardinal number verbs which cannot be used as nominal modifiers but which are used when a person is counting. These can be seen in table 3.13. Although there are no examples of those two cardinal numbers occurring in the recorded corpus, they were collected through elicitation. The numbers in table 3.14 are used as cardinal numbers for counting and as nominal modifiers for indicating the quantity of a specific entity. Numbers one to ten, and decades above are formed with a single inflected verb. Numbers eleven to nineteen and numbers between decades are formed phrasally.

Number	Meaning	Number	Meaning
i-sët	one	*snal*	ten

Table 3.13: Cardinal Numbers

Number	Meaning	Number	Meaning
i-amëk	one	*i-lëm'sei*	six
i-ru	two	*i-saru*	seven
i-tl	three	*i-satl*	eight
i-v'a	four	*i-sav'et*	nine
i-lëm'	five	*i-nal*	ten

Table 3.14: Basic Numerals

On closer inspection, the numerals in table 3.14 appear to be based on a quinary numeral system. The numeral six appears to be formed using the numeral for five with the addition of *sei* at the end, and numerals seven to nine all begin with *sa-* attached to the numerals two to four respectively, although the form of *v'a* "four" changes to *v'et* for nine. It is also interesting to note that the numeral five *lëm'* is homophonous with the word used for hand, which has five digits.

Forming numerals between eleven and nineteen follows a predictable pattern using the verb *i-nal* followed by the morpheme *dëmën*[12] NUM and then one of the basic numbers from one to nine. The verbs which work together to make numbers eleven to nineteen display internal concordance in mood.

Number	Meaning	Number	Meaning
i-nal dëmën i-amëk	eleven	*i-nal dëmën i-lëm'sei*	sixteen
i-nal dëmën i-ru	twelve	*i-nal dëmën i-saru*	seventeen
i-nal dëmën i-tl	thirteen	*i-nal dëmën i-satl*	eighteen
i-nal dëmën i-v'a	fourteen	*i-nal dëmën i-sav'et*	nineteen
i-nal dëmën i-lëm'	fifteen		

Table 3.15: Numerals 11-19

[12] This word, though it has no independent use in V'ënen Taut, is likely to be a cognate of the Neve'ei word *nedremwen* "her/his body". Cognates of this word are found in the number systems of Tape (Crowley, 2006c, p. 131) and Naman (Crowley, 2006a, p. 82) where it takes the forms *dëmon* and *daman* respectively.

3.99 *M'eta neiel* ***i-nal*** ***dëmën*** ***i-ru*** *lara.*
time 3SG:REAL-ten NUM 3SG:REAL-two that
"It was twelve o'clock." [nmb30.Ref.127]

3.100 *Tan* ***ipë-nal*** ***dëmën*** ***ipa-lëm'*** *apë-v-lëk* *a* *Warnap'.*
gun 3SG:IRR-ten NUM 3SG:IRR-five 3NSG:IRR-PL-stay LOC Warnap
"Fifteen people with guns will stay at Warnap." [nmb30.Ref.034]

The verbs used for decades twenty to one hundred are formed by compounding *nel*, which appears to be a form of *nal* "ten", and one of the numbers seen in table 3.14. This can be seen in the table below.

Number	Meaning	Number	Meaning
i-nal	ten	*i-nellëm'sei*	sixty
i-nelru	twenty	*i-nelsaru*	seventy
i-neltl	thirty	*i-nelsatl*	eighty
i-nelv'a	forty	*i-nelsav'et*	ninety
i-nellëm'	fifty	*i-nelnal*	hundred

Table 3.16: Numeral Decades

3.101 *Tan* ***i-neltl.***
gun 3SG:REAL-thirty
"There are thirty guns." [nmb30.Ref.026]

3.102 *A* *nau-ën* *tav'et* ***a-v-nellëm'.***
PERS spouse-POSS:3SG woman 3NSG:REAL-PL-fifty
"He has fifty wives" [nmb22.Ref.016]
Lit: "His wives are fifty""

Numerals between decades are formed in the same manner as the numbers eleven to nineteen. Firstly, the decade numeral occurs followed by the morpheme *dëmën* and lastly one of the numerals between one and nine.

3.103 *Afta* ***i-neltl*** ***dëman*** ***i-amëk*** *lara* *ti* *kana* *ra*
then 3SG:REAL-thirty NUM 3SG:REAL-one that SUB 1SG now
n-Ø-sapa=r.
1:REAL-SG-follow=3NSG:OBJ
"Then the thirty one people with guns, I followed them." [nmb30.Ref.027]

There is a difference between the description of numbers in this work and how they are described in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 90). In the latter, the process described for forming numerals between decades is more complicated. This involves the use of two different decade numerals. The first decade is the one in which the speaker wants the numeral to be, it is followed by the uninflected root of the decade which is ten more than the previous one, lastly one of the numbers from one to nine occurs depending on how high above the decade the number needs to represent. This complicated method of forming numerals is not seen in the corpus for this project but is shown in example 3.104 below.

3.104 *Pai-ën* ***i-nelv'a*** ***nellëm'*** ***i-lëm'sei.***
year-POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL-forty fifty 3SG:REAL-six
"He is forty-six years old." (Fox, 1979, p. 90)

The morpheme *nelnal* "hundred" is often used as a quantifier which means "many" or "a lot". This can be seen in the following examples.

3.105 *A* *nau-m* ***i-nelnal*** *i-studau-et.*
PERS spouse-POSS:2SG 3SG:REAL-hundred 3SG:REAL-be.many-INST
"You have to many wives." [nmb22.Ref.014]

3.106 *A-kha-v-ën* *nëmakh* ***ipë-nelnal.***
3NSG-NEG-PL-make house 3SG:IRR-hundred
"They did not make many houses." [nmb43.Ref.028]

Numerals one hundred to nine hundred are formed using *nelnal* "hundred" followed by a number from one to nine which has been modified by *va-*, the multiplicative morpheme. For example, the number "two hundred" would literally translate as "hundred two times".

Number	Meaning	Number	Meaning
i-nelnal i-v-amëk	one hundred	*i-nelnal i-va-lëm'sei*	six hundred
i-nelnal i-va-ru	two hundred	*i-nelnal i-va-saru*	seven hundred
i-nelnal i-va-tl	three hundred	*i-nelnal i-va-satl*	eight hundred
i-nelnal i-va-v'a	four hundred	*i-nelnal i-va-savet*	nine hundred
i-nelnal i-va-lëm'	five hundred		

Table 3.17: 100 to 900

Creating numbers between centuries follows a pattern similar to making numbers between eleven and nineteen and the numbers between decades. Firstly the century numeral occurs, followed by the century number morpheme *pën* C.NUM which is then followed by a number from one to 99.

3.107 ***I-nelnal*** ***i-v-amëk*** ***pën*** ***i-amëk.***
3SG:REAL-hundred 3SG:REAL-MULT-one C.NUM 3SG:REAL-one
"One hundred and one." [field note]

When using numerals in the hundreds, it appears that the prefixes inflecting *nelnal* "hundred" are optional. This can be seen in the example below, although, it is possible that the number in this example does not receive subject marking because it is acting in a noun-like manner.

3.108 ***Nelnal*** ***i-va-tl*** *i-la-dau=i.*
hundred 3SG:REAL-MULT-three 3SG:REAL-see-KN=3SG:OBJ
"He saw three hundred (pigs)" [nmb03.Ref.002]
Lit: "Three hundred, he saw and knew it"

3.8.2.2 Multiplicative Prefix *va-*

The prefix *va-* is a verbal prefix which only appears with intransitive verbs denoting numbers. It is used on verbs to indicate that a particular event happened the number of times indicated by numerals. This morpheme is not mentioned in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979).

3.109 *N-Ø-ën* ***i-va-ru*** *ësn-n.*
1:REAL-SG-make 3SG:REAL-MULT-two beside-POSS:3SG
"I did it twice near him." [nmb07.Ref.014]

When *amëk* is inflected by *va-* it can create several different meanings. The first is the standard meaning of something happening “once”, the second indicates that several events happened “at the same time”, and the last indicates that an event happened “immediately”.

3.110 *Kë-uln* *an=i* ***i-v-amëk…***
ES-SG-fire EXT.P=3SG:OBJ 3SG:REAL-MULT-one
“He shot him once…” [nmb04.Ref.060]

3.111 *Kam'em'* *kë-r-ma* *kë-r-m'atr* ***i-v-amëk.***
1NSG:EXCL ES-PAU-come ES-PAU-sleep 3SG:REAL-MULT-one
“We came and we slept at once.” [nmb31.Ref142]

Narratives can also begin with *ivamëk* “once” in a manner similar to how English speakers may say “once upon a time”.

3.112 ***I-v-amëk*** *vënm'arën* *tav'et* *i-amëk* *khir* *m'e=i*
3SG:REAL-MULT-one elder.woman woman 3SG:REAL-one 3NSG with=3SG:OBJ
a *m'ëkhip'-ën…*
PERS grandchild-POSS:3SG
“Once upon a time (one time), an old woman and her grandson…” [nmb20Ref.001]

Besides the multiplicative prefix, the necessity, perfective, and negative morphemes have also been observed inflecting numerals.

3.113 *Sturi* ***i-ta-tl*** *ra.*
story 3SG:REAL-PFV-three now
“There are three stories now” [nmb05.Ref.011]

3.114 *Kë-Ø-lau* *tër-pa* *wëki* *ipë-nal* *wëki* ***i-k-a-nelru****…*
ES-SG-plant NMLP-small only 3SG:IRR-ten only 3SG:REAL-NES-NEG-twenty
“You only plant small ones, ten only not twenty…” [nmb15.Ref.005]

3.8.2.3 Inflecting Numerals for Grammatical Number

The use of subject prefixes and number prefixes with numerals requires some further explanation than that provided in the preceding sections of this chapter. This is because the

number prefixes used to inflect numerals, and to some extent the subject prefixes do not reflect the grammatical number of the real world number of a group of entities. This phenomenon is called facultative number (Corbett, 2000, p. 42). In V'ënen Taut, this occurs when the plurality of a nominal is not represented in the inflectional morphology occurring on numerals. This number discord occurs when intransitive number verbs are modified with third person singular morphology regardless of whether the entity is singular or plural in number. The occurrence of facultative number marking appears to depend on the semantic characteristics of the entity which acts as the head of the numeral and whether the verb is acting as a predicate or as a nominal modifier.

When used to describe humans, numerals are generally inflected by the subject and number morphemes which agree with the semantic properties of the head noun. This can be seen in the following examples.

3.115 *Kana wëki* ***n-Ø-amëk*** *n-Ø-rn-du si lakha.*
1SG only 1:REAL-SG-one 1:REAL-SG-feel-KN thing this
"I am the only one who knows this thing." [nmb02.Ref.034]

In example 3.116, the numeral is functioning more like a pronoun.

3.116 ***P'a-r-ru*** *lakha…*
1:IRR-PAU-two this
"There will be two of us…" [nmb01.Ref.097]

The numerals in the following three examples are acting more like nominal modifiers. All three of these numerals have human head nouns.

3.117 *Maral pa pa* ***a-r-tl*** *a-v-sapa kam'em'…*
child small small 3NSG:REAL-PAU-three 3NSG:REAL-PL-follow 1NSG:EXCL
"Three children came with us…" [nmb31.Ref.094]

3.118 *l-kat m'ertarëp'* ***a-r-ru****…*
3SG:REAL-has elder.man 3NSG:REAL-PAU-two
"There are two men…" [nmb08.Ref.002]

3.119 *Kana* *n-Ø-kat* *dui* ***a-r-v'a.***
1SG 1:REAL-SG-have man 3NSG:REAL-PAU-four
“I have four sons.” [nmb01.Ref.136]

The following example typifies the difference between numerals being used to modify human entities and non-human entities. In example 3.120, the numeral *neltl* “thirty” first modifies a human entity and as such it is inflected with the first-person realis subject prefix and the plural prefix to match the personal category and plurality of its human noun head. The second occurrence of *neltl* “thirty” receives facultative number marking, carrying only the third-person singular realis prefix. This shows the discord between the number of real world entities and the grammatical number used to represent these entities in the language.

3.120 ***në-v-neltl*** *lara* *ti* *tan* ***i-neltl*** *ra.*
1:REAL-PL-thirty that SUB gun 3SG:REAL-thirty now
“There were thirty of us so there were thirty guns now.” [nmb30.Ref.025]

The following examples show how numerals which function as intransitive verbs are inflected when they are used as nominal modifiers of non-human entities. Note that regardless of the number of real world entities, there is a facultative number discord between the real world number of entities, represented by the numeral, and the grammatical number values of the prefixes used to modify that numeral.

3.121 *Nava-n* ***i-ru*** *i-m'am'ënr.*
fruit-POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL-two 3SG:REAL-ripe
“The two fruit were ripe.” [nmb31.Ref.107]

3.122 *Sturi* ***i-ta-tl*** *ra.*
story 3SG:REAL-PFV-three now
“That’s three stories now.” [nmb05.Ref.011]

3.123 *I-lev* *navet* ***i-lëm'.***
3SG:REAL-take money 3SG:REAL-five
“He took five vatu.” [nmb23.Ref.012]

3.124 *Kë-v-iar* *ësn* *tan* ***i-nal*** ***dëman*** ***i-lëm'.***
ES-PL-reach near gun 3SG:REAL-ten NUM 3SG:REAL-five
"You arrive near to the fifteen (people with) guns." [nmb30.Ref.094]

Although there tends to be a concord between the prefixes inflecting numerals which modify humans and the semantic properties of the human subject, this is not always the case. Consider the two following examples. In example 3.125, *nellëm' "*fifty*"* is inflected by the third-person non-singular realis prefix and plural prefix. In example 3.126, *nellëm' "*fifty*"* is only inflected by the third-person singular realis prefix. This difference could be based on one of two distinctions. The first is based on the type of predicate in which the numeral verb is located. In sentence 3.125, the numeral is functioning as the predicate of the sentence and is modified differently to numerals which simply act as noun phrase modifiers such as in example 3.126. The second is based on the humanness of the subject of the numeral. In example 3.125, *a naun tav'et* "wife" could be considered to be more human than *tav'et* in example 3.126 because *tav'et,* in example 3.126, is being possessed which is indicated by the verb *wa* "hold/carry". This lower humanness is also indicated by the lack of the personal article before *tav'et* "woman" in example 3.126.

3.125 *A* *nau-n* *tav'et* ***a-v-nellëm'.***
PERS spouse-POSS:3SG woman 3NSG:REAL-PL-fifty
"His wives were fifty in number." [nmb22.Ref.016]

3.126 *A* *N.* *i-wa* *tav'et* ***i-nellëm'.***
PERS N. 3SG:REAL-carry woman 3SG:REAL-fifty
"N. had fifty wives." [nmb22.Ref.015]

In the following examples, the verb *ru* "two" appears to act as a pronoun. This is possibly because the referential subject is clear from context. As such, it is modified by the subject and number morphemes which agree with the semantic properties of the omitted subject referents. When used as pronoun-like arguments, both human and non-human entities are not marked with facultative number morphology.

3.127 ***A-r-ru*** *kë-r-pëpi* *tav'et* *lakhara.*
3NSG-PAU-two ES-PAU-carry woman DEM
"Those two (men) carried the woman." [nmb08.Ref010]

3.128 ***A-r-ru*** *si* *na* *wa-n.*
3NSG:REAL-PAU-two thing ASV penis-POSS:3SG
"These two things (taro) taste really bad." [nmb24.Ref.034]
Lit: "These two things of his penis."

3.129 *P'e-Ø-spën* *udrlan=i* *ti* ***a-r-nal*** *vakha* ***a-r-lëm'…***
1:IRR-SG-count all=3SG:OBJ SUB 3NSG:REAL-PAU-ten or 3NSG:REAL-PAU-five
"I will count all of them (my children), ten or five …" [nmb01.Ref.184]

It was mentioned at the beginning of this section that the morphology which is used to modify numerals for person and number follows the general pattern of number concord for human entities and facultative number marking for the marking of non-human entities. A small number of numerals which have non-human entities as subjects are attested as being inflected by morphology which agrees with the real world number of their subjects.

3.130 *Navek* ***a-r-ru*** *a-r-lal* *arana* *napulakët* *lara.*
seed.rattle 3NSG:REAL-PAU-two 3NSG:REAL-PAU-hang on waking.stick that
"Two rattles hang on the walking sticks." [nmb24.Ref.026]

3.8.2.4 Ordinal Numbers

Ordinal numbers appear to be made by adding the prefix *ni-* directly to the numeral verb. As there are only three occurrences of this morpheme modifying the same numeral in the corpus, it is not possible to describe this grammatical feature with certainty; particularly because ordinal numerals were described differently in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979). The example below shows an ordinal number from the corpus.

3.131 *Pën* ***ni-tl*** *i-vi* *Fraedei…*
day ORD.NUM-three 3SG:REAL-COP Friday
"The third day was Friday…" [nmb31.Ref.145]

The ordinal number morpheme is attested as a simulfix *ni*-V.NUM-*a* in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (Fox, 1979, p. 33). This is similar to the morpheme seen in my corpus, although there were no instances of a suffixed –*a*.

3.132 *Ni-tl-a.*
ORD.NUM-three-ORD.NUM
"The third." (Fox, 1979, p. 33)

Chapter Four

Verbal Suffixes

4.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to explore the verbal suffixes of V'ënen Taut. Although transitive verbs can be modified by all of the prototypical verbal prefixes, as presented in Chapter Three, the majority of verbal suffixes are only used with transitive verbs; as such they are being presented in this separate chapter. Where verbal suffixes are attested as inflecting intransitive verbs, examples and descriptions will be given.

Like the verbal prefixes, there are multiple affix positions following the verb which can be filled with suffixes. Unlike the subject and number prefix positions, none of the suffix positions are obligatorily filled. In V'ënen Taut, there are three suffix positions and one bound enclitic. When added to the prefix positions, this means there are a total of eight different affix positions which can potentially be filled on a transitive verb. The number of affix positions is eight rather than nine because the benefactor suffix and object clitic cannot occur on the same verb.

Of the three verbal suffix positions, semantic modifiers fill the first position following the verb. These modifiers are used to provide additional semantic information pertaining to the manner in which an action is undertaken or the state which has occurred as a result of a particular action. Historically, the semantic modifier suffixes were most likely verb stems which over time lost their ability to act as fully functional verbs. They are likely to have become integrated into the verbal morphology through nuclear serialisation. This theory is supported by Crowley (2002, p. 176) who mentions V'ënen Taut specifically when describing the morphological grammaticalization of serial verbs in Oceanic languages. The second suffix position has two suffixes which encode different notions of ability. The first encodes ability through knowledge or permission and the second encodes ability through physical capacity such as personal strength or environmental features. The last verbal suffix position is filled by morphemes which indicate the benefactor of a verb. These benefactor morphemes appear to have the same form as the optional nominal possessive suffixes

(§2.5.2.2). The final item that may inflect transitive verbs are the pronominal object clitics. The three suffix positions and the clitic position can be seen in table 4.1 below.

	1	2	3	Clitic
VERB	Semantic Modifiers	Ability	(Benefactor)	Object

Table 4.1: Verbal Suffix Positions

Semantically, transitive propositions are situations where one participant has some kind of effect on a second participant. Transitive verbs require two participants: an argument encoded as the subject and an argument encoded as the object. Prototypically, the subject is the entity that is carrying out the action expressed by the verb and the object is the participant that is acted upon and as the result of the verb, undergoes a change of state, position, or another kind of change that is the result of some external action or force. Some examples of prototypical transitive verbs in V'ënen Taut are *khën* "eat", *rëp* "hit", *tëkh* "beat/pound", and *tr* "cut". Some less prototypical transitive verbs are *la* "see", *trakh* "wait for", *tu* "put/give" and *v'akh* "think". All of these verbs have different effects on the entities that are being acted upon. There is also a small class of intransitive verbs which are semantically transitive but whose objects are not expressed such as *khatat* "eat" and *nivel* "beat (a slit-drum)".

Grammatically, transitive verbs take compliments as their objects. In V'ënen Taut these compliments can take the form of full noun phrases, pronouns, pronominal clitics, and compliment clauses, which are full sentences acting as verbal compliments. Compliments follow the verb and position one and two suffixes. Nominal compliments can be modified by any appropriate nominal morphology or modifiers; such as possessive morphology, adjectives and adjectival verbs, demonstrative determiners, or relative clauses (see Chapter two). Some noun phrase compliments are able to precede the verb through a process of grammatical fronting but these must still be indexed on the verb by verbal morphology (§6.6). Compliment clauses are generally introduced by the subordinator *ti* and are full sentences with a noun phrase subject, verb, and sometimes an object too.

In this chapter, §4.2 will show how the verbal prefixes discussed in chapter three are invariant in regards to transitivity. §4.3 will describe the use of pronominal object clitics, §4.4 will describe the semantic modifier suffixes, §4.5 will describe the ability marker suffixes, and the benefactor suffixes will be described in §4.6. The description of the verbal morphology

occurs in a different sequence in regards to the order that it actually occurs on the verb, as presented in table 4.1. The pronominal object clitics, which are the final element of an inflected verb, are described first because they inflect verbs more often than the other verbal suffixes. They are used to represent objects when they are not expressed as full noun phrases and can also represent compliment clauses. Unlike constituents that function as objects, the three verbal suffixes are not verbal compliments and as such are not necessary in order for a verb to be considered grammatical.

4.2 Verbal Prefixes and Transitive Verbs.

This section gives examples of transitive verbs being modified by prototypical verbal prefixes to show that the prefixes are invariant in regard to transitivity. The examples below show how subject/mood, necessity, aspect, negation, and fifth order number prefixes all precede transitive verbs with nominal or pronominal objects.

4.1 *Kana* ***n-Ø-lu-luwa*** *nalim'ëlakhas…*
1SG 1:REAL-SG-DUP-shoot small.blue.tail.lizard
"I was shooting small lizards with blue tails…" [nmb07.Ref.015]

4.2 *Tarep',* *nakëm* ***kë-t-Ø-ën*** *tim'akh…*
elder.man 2SG 2:REAL-PFV-SG-make food
"Old man, you have made the food…" [nmb28.Ref.019]

4.3 *Nakëd* *ru* ***m'ë-d-a-r-khën*** *namëp* *wëm.*
1NSG.INC two 1:COND-CONT-NEG-PAU-eat Tahitian.chestnut still
"You and I must not eat the Tahitian chestnuts yet." [nmb25.Ref.021]

4.4 ***N-k-a-khën*** *nur.*
1:REAL-NES-NEG-eat fresh.water.prawn
"I will not eat fresh water prawns." [nmb22.Ref.046]

4.5 ***Pë-Ø-lev*** *ru* *nai* *ipë-nelnal.*
2:IRR-SG-take leaf tree 3SG:REAL-hundred
"You will take many leaves." [nmb01.Ref.081]

4.6 ***Da-v-uln*** *kana!*
IMP-PL-let.go 1SG
“Let me go!” [nmb23.Ref.090]

4.3 Pronominal Object Clitics

The pronominal object clitics, introduced earlier (§2.2.1), involve a three-way distinction. Unlike the first order verbal prefixes which represent person, the object clitics indicate both person and number. These morphemes have been classified as clitics because they display freedom of host selection (Haspelmath & Sims, 2010, p. 198); they can attach to verbs, verbal modifiers, and to prepositions while all other verbal morphology is only seen inflecting verbs. Although the clitics occur on members of different word classes, they cannot occur independently from their host. The object clitics can be seen in the table below where they are paired with the independent pronouns.

	Independent Pronouns		Object Clitics	
	Singular	Non-Singular	Singular	Non-Singular
1.INC		*nakëd/nakër*		
1:excl	*kana*	*kam’em’*		
2	*nakëm*	*kam’i*	*=ëkh*	
3	*khin*	*khir*	*=i*	*=r*

Table 4.2: Independent Pronouns and Pronominal Object Clitics

There are only pronominal clitics for the second person and third person. The third person category makes a distinction between singular and non-singular participants. Any other personal category not shown as a clitic in table 4.2 must be articulated as an independent pronoun, as seen in the example below.

4.7 *Kana* *të-Ø-ln* ***kam'i*** *ra.*
1SG 1:IRR-SG-leave 2NSG now
“I will leave you now.” [nmb23.Ref.007]

It should be noted that the object clitics in V’ënen Taut are not only used to represent object arguments. They are also used to encode extended patients in derived two and three

argument constructions (§6.2.3) and in addition to attaching to independent clitic-taking post-verbal modifiers (§5.2), they are also used as the prepositional object with verbal prepositions (§6.4.2).

4.3.1 Second Person Singular Object Clitic *=ëkh*

In the corpus the second person singular object suffix is not often attested occurring as an object argument, though it does occur regularly as an affix on the valence increasing morpheme (§6.2.3). The following two examples come for one section in a recorded text and are said consecutively. They repeat the same information in two different ways. In the first example, the object is expressed as the second person singular pronoun with the emphatic use of the name of the participant. In the second example, the second person singular object clitic is used instead of the second person singular pronoun.

4.8 ***Kë-Ø-ln***[13] *nakëm, R.*
ES-SG-leave 2SG R.
"I left you, R." [nmb31.Ref.014]

4.9 ***N-Ø-ln=ëkh***[1] *arana tlv'a.*
1:REAL-SG-leave=2SG:OBJ on truck
"I left you on the truck." [nmb31.Ref.014]

In this example, the second person object clitic occurs on the verb. It is also co-referenced with the second person singular pronoun which occurs at the beginning of the sentence due to argument fronting (§6.6).

4.10 *Nakëm, kana* ***p'e-Ø-pël=ëkh.***
2SG 1SG 1:IRR-SG-paint=2SG:OBJ
"You, I will paint you." [nmb34.Ref.011]

[13] For clarity in regard to the font, the verb *këln* is pronounced with the lateral approximant [kəɬɳ] and the verb nlnëkh as [ɳɬɜnəx].

The second person singular object clitic is the only object clitic which can be used as both a regular object, as seen in the examples above, and a true reflexive object. For this to occur, the subject of the verb must also be in the second person singular (4.11).

4.11 *Nakëm* ***kë-Ø-kasmën=ëkh*** *ia.*
2SG 2:REAL-SG-make.mistake=2SG:OBJ DEM
"You made a mistake." [nmb30.Ref.074]

The other object clitics are unable to act as true reflexive object pronouns. If the third person singular object clitic were to occur on a verb which has a third person singular subject, the subject and object need not be co-referential. This is also the case for the third person non-singular pronominal object clitic when it inflects verbs with third person non-singular subjects.

4.3.2 Third Person Singular Object Clitic *=i*

The third person singular pronominal object clitic is the most commonly used in the corpus because verbal object arguments tend to be singular in number and involve neither the speaker nor the listener. In the case of V'ënen Taut, it may also be due to the wide variety of verbal compliments that can be represented by this clitic. It is observed being used to represent any kind of non-reflexive object argument including: humans, animals, traditional monsters, inanimate objects, and compliment clauses.

In the following two examples, the third person singular object clitic is used to represent humans. In example 4.12, both the subject and object are human, while in example 4.13 the subject is an inanimate entity and the object is a human.

4.12 ***A-v-khan=i*** *kë-v-rn* *ti* *i-p'es-et.*
3NSG:REAL-PL-eat=3SG:OBJ ES-PL-feel SUB 3SG:REAL-good-INTS
"They ate him and felt he tasted very good." [nmb04.Ref.092]

4.13 *Taral* *kë-da-Ø-ma* *lakhara* *nawëk* ***i-sëran=i***.
caucasian ES-CONT-SG-come DEM ship 3SG:REAL-throw=3SG:OBJ
"The white man came and the ship cast him (ashore)." [nmb23.Ref.049]

In the following example the object clitic is referring to a creature called a *Taiman* which gives money to people who are brave enough to catch them when they take the form of something that they are afraid of.

4.14 ***Kë-Ø-le=i*** *kë-Ø-v'akh* *ti* *i-vi* *nmat.*
ES-SG-see=3SG:OBJ ES-SG-think SUB 3SG:REAL-COP snake
"I saw it (the taiman), I thought it was a snake." [nmb40.Ref.006]

In the following two examples, the objects represented by *–i* are both animals. In example, 4.15 a human is acting on an animal, while in example 4.16 an animal is acting on another animal.

4.15 ***Kë-Ø-ninar=i.***
ES-SG-scale=3SG:OBJ
"You scale it (the fish)." [nmb36.Ref.003]

4.16 *Narën* *i-v'a* ***kë-Ø-pël=i…***
when 3SG:REAL-go ES-SG-paint=3SG:OBJ
"When it (the purple swamphen) went and painted it" (the banded rail bird)… [nmb34.Ref.012]

In the following examples the third person singular object clitic is being used to represent inanimate entities acting as object arguments. This is the most common usage of this clitic and is used in discourse to help with reference. Firstly an entity is established in the text as a full noun phrase. Subsequently, the object clitic is used to refer back to that entity so that the full noun phrase is not repeated again and again.

In the examples below, all of the referential entities to which the third person singular object suffixes are referring occur previously in the texts as full noun phrases.

4.17 *Kë-Ø-khitëv* *nëkhau* *pai*
ES-SG-grate laplap yam
kë-Ø-ne=i *al* *lamu.*
ES-SG-fill.inside.bamboo=3SG:OBJ in bamboo
"She grated the yam laplap and she stuffed it in the bamboo." [nmb04.Ref.077]

4.18 *Kë-Ø-lev* *ru* *nai*
ES-SG-take leaf tree
kë-da-Ø-ma ***kë-Ø-tau=i*** *arana* *p'ekm'a-ën.*
ES-CONT-SG-come ES-SG-put=3SG:OBJ on sore-POSS.3SG
"He took leaves and came and put them on his sore." [nmb23.Ref.093]

In example 4.19, the object noun phrase is fronted before the verb. When object fronting occurs, the object position of the verb must be filled with an object clitic.

4.19 *M'ëtu,* *pla-n,* ***a-Ø-tr=i.***
coconut trunk-POSS:3SG 3NSG:REAL-IMPS-cut=3SG:OBJ
"Coconuts, their trunks, people cut them." [nmb18.Ref.001]

In the following examples, the third person singular object clitic is used to take the place of different sentential verbal compliment clauses. In cases where compliment-taking verbs are repeated several times in close sequence, they are able to be inflected by an object clitic to avoid repetition of the whole compliment clause. Some compliment-taking verbs which have been attested as being inflected by the third person singular object clitic are *vër* "say", *v'akh* "think", and *rn* "feel/hear/want", which are utterance and cognition verbs.

4.20 *Ve* *v'akh-v'akh-ien-ëk* *i-akh-ma* *ipë-nap'a*
but DUP-think-NMLS-POSS:1SG 3SG:REAL-NEG-come 3SG:IRR-be.like
n-Ø-v'akh=i.
1:REAL-SG-think=3SG:OBG
"But my idea did not happen the way that I thought (it would happen)." [nmb39.Ref.031]

4.21 *A* *W.* ***i-rn=i.***
PERS W. 3SG:REAL-hear=3SG:OBJ
"W. heard it (what was said)." [nmb11.Ref.020]

4.22 *Narën* ***i-vër=i*** *i-nap'e=i* *lakha…*
time 3SG:REAL-say=3SG:OBJ 3SG:REAL-be.like=3SG:OBJ this
"When he said it like this…" [nmb23.Ref.089]

The verb *vër* "say" is regularly affixed with the third person singular object clitic when being used with reported speech. This pattern is as follows: first the verb *vër* occurs with the

subject and number prefixes which agree with its subject; it will also be modified by the third person object clitic. Then the verb *vër* occurs again modified by the echo-subject and followed by the valence increase morpheme and a gapped recipient participant. The second occurrence of *vër* is followed by the actual reported speech. The third person object clitic is co-referential with the reported speech. Example 4.23 shows this process. A similar construction is seen in Erromangan, an echo-subject language from south Vanuatu (Crowley, 2002, p. 187).

4.23 *Taral* *lakhara* ***i-vër=i*** *kë-Ø-vër* *a* *'i-p'as.'*
caucasian DEM 3SG:REAL-say=3SG:OBJ ES-SG-say EXT.P 3SG:REAL-be.good
"The white man said 'it's alright.'" [nmb23.Ref.044]

The following example is interesting because it has two consecutive verbs which are both affixed with the third person singular object clitic. Each pronominal object clitic has a different referent. The first object clitic is being used to refer back into the text to a point where a password, "taro", is established as a method of identifying who is part of a particular group. The object clitic modifying the verb *ver* "say" is referring to "taro". The next third person singular clitic is referring back to the agent of the verb *vër,* who is anyone who comes to the area. If written with full arguments the examples would translate as "If he does not say "taro", you will shoot that man".

4.24 *lpë-vër* *ti* ***i-a-vër=i*** ***pë-Ø-luwe=i.***
3SG:IRR-if SUB 3SG:REAL-NEG-say=3SG:OBJ 2:IRR-SG-shoot=3SG:OBJ
"If he does not say it (the password), you will shoot him." [nmb30.Ref.123]

Although the third person singular independent pronoun is normally used to create reflexive constructions, there are several verbs which appear to use the third person singular object clitic in a reflexive like-manner. In the following two examples, the first shows the verb *vër* "say" being used in a transitive manner. In the following sentence, the verb *rkhapën* "die unnaturally" is marked in the same manner, with an object clitic.

4.25 ***I-vër=i…***
3SG:REAL-say=3SG:OBJ
"He said it…" [nmb23.ref.070]

4.26 *Pasta lara* ***i-të-rkhapën=i.***
pastor that 3SG:REAL-PFV-die.unnaturally=3SG:OBJ
"The pastor has died" [nmb23.Ref.162]

The verb *rkhapën* "die unnaturally" is interesting because it appears to be obligatorily marked with *–i*, the third person singular clitic, although it is inherently intransitive and cannot have a referential object. The *–i* suffix is not a part of the verb because it can be separated from the verb by the completive post-verbal modifier *sara/sare* (§5.2.1). This can be seen in the following example.

4.27 *Pasta lara* ***i-të-rkhapën*** *sare=i.*
pastor that 3SG:REAL-PFV-die.unnaturally COMP=3SG:OBJ
"The pastor had already died." [nmb23.Ref.162]

A similar process occurs with the verb *lin* "fill". It can be used as a transitive verb "to fill something" or as a stative verb "be full". Interestingly, when the verb functions statively it is inflected with the third person singular object clitic, but when it is behaving as a dynamic verb it can take a clitic or a full noun phrase object.

4.28 *Trak* ***i-lin=i.***
truck 3SG:REAL-fill=3SG:OBJ
"The truck was full." [nmb31.Ref.055]

4.29 ***I-lin*** *naten-ën.*
3SG:REAL-fill bag-POSS:3SG
"He filled his bag." [nmb25.Ref.005]

Not all inherently intransitive verbs use object clitics in a reflexive manner. This can be seen in the example below, where the intransitive meaning of the verb is encoded with the third person singular independent object pronoun. This is how most reflexives are formed.

4.30 *Dui i-amëk* ***i-tkhi*** ***khin.***
man 3SG:REAL-one 3SG:REAL-cough 3SG
"A man coughed." [nmb04.Ref.033]

4.3.3 Third Person Non-Singular Object Clitic *=r*

The pronominal object clitic *=r* [ɽ] is used to represent entities that are non-singular in grammatical number. No distinction is made between paucal and plural. In the text corpus, the third person non-singular object clitic can refer to both human and non-human animate entities. It is possible that it can also be used to refer to inanimate entities, but this is not attested in the data.

The following two examples come from the same text and both examples have the same referential object. In the first example, the object is expressed as a full noun phrase and in the second example the object is represented by the object clitic *=r*.

4.31 *Kë-Ø-ln a M. m'e=i a uni-ën.*
ES-SG-leave PERS M. with=3SG:OBJ PERS mother-POSS:3SG
"I left M. and his mother." [nmb31.Ref.132]

4.32 *Në-Ø-ma* ***kë-Ø-ln=r*** *a Pinapow.*
1:REAL-SG-come ES-SG-leave=3NSG:OBJ LOC Pinapow
"I left them at Pinapow." [nmb31.Ref.133]

In the following example, the object clitic is being used to refer to many entities called *Kinkin* which are mischievous monsters that live in the bush. This example shows us that the third person non-singular object clitic can refer to non-human entities.

4.33 *Khilakha të-vra-v'a* ***kë-v-rëp=r*** *atlara.*
now 1:IRR-PL-go ES-PL-kill=3NSG:OBJ there
"Now we will go and kill them (the monsters) there." [nmb13.Ref.014]

When the third person non-singular object clitic occurs in the corpus, an interesting sentence structure is seen in around one third of the examples. The verb modified with the third person non-singular clitic occurs at the beginning of the sentence. It is then followed by the human entities to which the clitic refers in the regular object position. It appears that this could be a method of indexing used to indicate the plurality of the human patients of the verb. This can be seen on the following examples.

4.34 ***Kë-Ø-spën=r*** *a* *nat-ëk.*
ES-SG-count=3NSG:OBJ PERS child-POSS:1SG
“I count my children.” [nmb01.Ref.185]

4.35 ***Kë-Ø-mësnan=r*** *m'ertu* *apë-vra-ma.*
ES-SG-feed=3NSG:OBJ people 3NSG:IRR-PL-come
“He will feed the people who come.” [nmb21.Ref.022]

4.4 Semantic Modifier Suffixes

There are two structural positions available between the verb root and the object clitic, if present. The first is filled by semantic modifier suffixes which are used to add extra meaning to verbs. The extra meanings encoded are manner predicates, which indicate how an action is preformed and resultatives, which express a state occurring as the result of the event (Verkerk & Frostad, 2013, p. 2). For example, the state of being severed or broken can be linked to the action of cutting. In V’ënen Taut semantic modifier suffixes can be used to modify the verb *tr* “cut”, like *tr-us* “cut something apart (sever)” and *tr-p’r* “cut something and break it”.

The linking of subsequent events or resultative states through grammatical means is common in Malekula languages. Often, this is achieved through verb serialisation, where verbs are placed in succession without the use of conjunctions or other markers of coordination or subordination (Aikhenvald, 2006, p. 1). Verkerk and Frostad (2013, p. 2) say that serial verbs constructions are the most common method of encoding manners and resultatives in Oceanic languages. V’ënen Taut does make some use of verb serialisation (§6.7), however some types of meanings which could be expressed through verbal serialisation in other languages are made using the semantic modifier suffixes instead. The semantic modifier suffixes of V’ënen Taut are potentially a sign that historically nuclear verb serialisation may have been more productive. Verbs which may have been used readily in nuclear serial verb constructions have become grammaticalized and lost their ability to function as fully independent verbs (Crowley, 2002; Verkerk & Frostad, 2013). This would have changed them from verbs into verbal suffixes. One aspect which may indicate the past verbal status of the semantic modifier suffixes is the manner in which some semantic

modifier suffixes can be reduplicated to indicate repetitive actions. The semantic modifier suffixes are not attested as independent verbs in the corpus.

Suffix	Meaning	Gloss
-et	very/excessive	INTS
-da	hold	HLD
-dina	inchoative	INCH
-kar	obstruct	OBS
-la/-lua	remove	RMV
-p'ela	forget/incorrectly	FGT
-p'ën	fatal	FTL
-p'r	break	BRK
-smën	bungle	BGL
-ulul	cover	CVR
-us	sever	SVR

Table 4.3: Semantic Modifier Suffixes

As discussed in §1.6.3.1 there are a variety of changes which can occur with the vowels in word stems and morphemes when they are modified by affixes. Vowel changes can occur on verbs and verbal suffixes. Most of the semantic modifier suffixes begin with consonants and can therefore not trigger vowel change in the verb stem; however, many suffixes end with /a/ which will change to /e/ if the third person singular object suffix *–i* is added. Fox (1979) also says that the suffixes which end in /a/ have a vowel change to /e/ when they are modified by the third person plural suffix, *=r*, although this has not been attested with the semantic modifier suffixes in the data, as seen in example 4.36.

4.36 ***N-Ø-ln-p'ela=r*** *kë-Ø-v'akh* *të-Ø-m'alet.*
1:REAL-SG-leave-FGT=3NSG:OBJ ES-SG-think 1:IRR-SG-return
"I left them (the people in the office) I thought I will go back later." [nmb31.Ref.023]

It should be mentioned here that although the semantic modifier suffixes are normally used with transitive verbs, they are not limited to them. In fact, the benefactor morphemes are only recorded inflecting intransitive verbs (§4.6). The following examples show some semantic modifier suffixes inflecting intransitive verbs.

4.37 ***Të-r-v'a-p'r*** *al p'ët lili.*
1:IRR-PAU-go-BRK in middle bush
"We will go through to the middle of the bush." [nmb26.Ref.018]

4.38 *Ar du lakhara* ***a-të-v-lëk-us-us*** *sara nut m'a tan.*
all man DEM 3NSG:REAL-PFV-PL-sit-DUP-SVR COMP place with gun
"The men had sat on both sides of the place with guns." [nmb30.Ref.046]

4.4.1 Intensifier *-et*

The suffix –et is an intensifier which is used to modify stative verbs. It has the meaning of "very".

4.39 ***I-p'ari-et,*** *i-tar arana kenu.*
3SG:REAL-long-INTS 3SG:REAL-be.located in canoe
"It was very long, it was in the canoe." [nmn03.Ref.130]

Note that in the example below, the addition of the intensifier morpheme causes the vowel in *p'as* "good" to raise to /e/.

4.40 *Nikh m'ertu* ***i-p'es-et.***
meat person 3GS:REAL-good-INTS
"People meat is very good." [nmb4.Ref.093]

The verb *studau* "be many" can be modified by the intensifier morpheme. It can have a positive meaning "very many/a lot" and in some contexts it can be interpreted as having a negative meaning "too many".

4.41 *A-v-tr nap'* ***i-studau-et.***
3NSG:REAL-PL-cut fire.wood 3SG:REAL-be.many-INTS
"They cut a lot of fire wood." [nmb43.Ref.010]

4.42 *A nau-m i-nelnal* ***i-studau-et.***
PERS spouse-POSS:2SG 3SG:REAL-hundred 3SG:REAL-be.many-INTS
"You have too many wives." [nmb22.Ref.014]

4.4.2 Holding -*da*

The verbal suffix –*da* represents holding in different senses. It can mean that the holding is undertaken by a human or another kind of non-human entity. Sometimes it just means that an entity is being restrained from moving in some way.

4.43 ***Kë-v-wa-da*** *dui pa* *lakhara* *ti* *i-kha-kha* *mau.*
ES-PL-hold-HLD boy DEM SUB 3SG:REAL-DUP-bite well
"They held down the boy who was very vicious (because he was a lisepsep)." [nmb46.Ref.089]

4.44 *Nki* ***i-iar-de=i.***
some 3SG:REAL-reach-HLD=3SG:OBJ
"Some of them reached out and touched him" [nmb23.Ref.007]

The following example uses –*da* to represent that something is held tightly by a rope.

4.45 ***Kë-Ø-li-de=i*** *arana* *khëmau.*
ES-IMPRS-tie-HLD=3SG:OBJ on slit.drum
"He was tied to the tamtam." [nmb04.Ref.085]

In example 4.46, the holding morpheme is used to mean that the agent does not intend to move. In example 4.47, the holding suffix is being used in an imperative.

4.46 *Të-Ø-lëk* ***kë-Ø-trakh-de=i*** *atlakha.*
1:IRR-SG-sit ES-SG-wait.for-HLD=3SG:OBJ here
"I will sit and wait for her right here." [nmb20.Ref.013]

4.47 ***Pë-Ø-lëk-dei*** *atvakha,*
2:IRR-SG-sit-HDL here
"You wait right here." [nmb28.Ref.031]

In the example above, the intransitive verb *lëk* "sit/stay" is modified with the holding suffix -*da*. Interestingly, it appears that the vowel /a/ in the suffix changes to /ei/ as a transition phenomenon. This process was also documented in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 17-18), but different examples are given for where this phenomenon can occur.

4.4.3 Inchoative -*dina*

The suffix –*dina* indicates the inception of an action. It marks inchoative aspect meaning that the temporal focus of the action is placed on its beginning.

4.48 ***N-a-v-la-dina*** *si* *mël…*
1:REAL-NEG-PL-see-INCH thing again
"We were starting to not see things…" (because of the dark) [nmb30.Ref.115]

4.49 ***M'ë-d-a-r-khën-dine=i*** *wëm.*
1:COND-CONT-NEG-PAU-eat-INCH=3SG:OBJ still
"We must not start to eat them yet." [nmb25.Ref.020]

4.4.4 Obstructive -*kar*

The semantic modifier -*kar* gives the meaning that something is blocked or obstructed as a result of an action described by a verb. This obstruction may be of physical movement or sight, or it may represent the notion of being closed off. In the corpus, this suffix only occurs modifying transitive verbs. However, Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 73) reports that it can modify intransitive verbs and when doing so it produces a transitive structure. Using the terminology of today, we would identify this process as valence increase.

The following example indicates the obstruction of movement.

4.50 *Kë-da-Ø-v'a* *al* *naten* *ti* ***pë-Ø-khu-kar*** *kana* *mël.*
ES-CONT-SG-go in bag SUB 2:IRR-SG-tie-OBS 1SG again
"I will go in the bag and you will tie me in again." [nmb11.Ref.019]

The following example shows covering and blocking from sight.

4.51 ***Kë-Ø-khu-kar=i.***
ES-SG-tie-OBS=3SG:OBJ
"He bandaged it (the sore)." [nmb23.Ref.095]

The following example shows complete covering of an object.

4.52 *Kë-v-ën* *mamëkh* *sara=i,* ***kë-v-tin-kar=i.***
ES-PL-make well COMP=3SG:OBJ ES-PL-bury-OBS=3SG:OBJ
"They got him ready, then they buried him." [nmb23.Ref.153]

The obstructive morpheme appears to be one of the verbal suffixes which can be reduplicated. As this only occurs once in the data, several more examples would be needed to make sure this is a productive process. In this case, the reduplication is used to represent that the beings legs are completely covered from view.

4.53 ***l-npa-kar-kar*** *udrlan* *tl-n* *lakha.*[14]
3SG:REAL-cover-DUP-OBS all leg-POSS:3SG this
"It (hair) covers its legs from view." [nmb46.Ref.021]

The following example shows the obstructive morpheme modifying an intransitive verb. When this occurs the valence of the verb *lëk* "sit" is increased. Normally a locative participant of the verb *lëk* "sit/stay/live" is introduced with the preposition *a*, because *navanel* "road" is not introduced by that particle it is functioning as an object argument. This indicates that the valence of *lëk* has been increased.

4.54 ***Kë-Ø-lëk-kar*** *navanel.*
2:REAL-SG-sit-OBS road
"You are sitting in the road." (Fox, 1979, p. 73)

4.4.5 Removal *–la* or *-lua*

The suffixes *–la* and *-lua* are used to represent the removal of an entity from another larger entity or location. The removal may be from inside, outside, or of a part of a larger whole. It appears that *–la* and *-lua* can only be used with transitive verbs.

[14] This example is talking about a Lisepsep, or *Tam'a Raransi* in V'ënen Taut. These are dangerous monsters that can kill people. Sometimes they are described as women with long hair, long nails, and sagging ears and breasts (Grindley, 2010, p. 72).

4.55 *P'a-v'a* ***kë-Ø-tr-la*** *rau-n.*
1SG:IRR-go ES-SG-cut-RMV leaf-POSS:3SG
"I will go cut the leaves for it from the plant." [nmb11.Ref.017]

The vowel /a/ raises to /e/ when the clitic *–i* is added to the verb.

4.56 ***Kë-Ø-ru-le=i*** *ra.*
ES-SG-pull.from.pile-RMV=3SG:OBJ now
"You pull it (kindling) out from the pile now." [nmb01.Ref.121]

The removal suffix *-la* is also able to be used with verbs which are used reflexively. This can be seen in the example below.

4.57 *Lë-n* *a* *teti-ën* ***i-rëv-la*** ***khin.***
testicles-POSS:3SG PERS father-POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL-pull-RMV 3SG
"His father's testicles pulled themselves out (of his clothing)." [nmb20.Ref.20]

The *–la* suffix has an allomorphy, *-lua*. It is unclear whether there is any semantic difference between the two forms. The *-lua* allomorph occurs rarely in the corpus. Fox (1979) does not give any explanation for the variation either. The one grammatical difference between the removal suffixes appears to be that *–lua* may be reduplicated becoming *–lulua.* This occurs when the semantics of a situation involves repetitive removal of objects from the same source.

4.58 ***Kë-Ø-rmëm-lue=i*** *al* *pias* *lakhara* *kë-Ø-we=i.*
ES-SG-carry-RMV=3SG:OBJ in mat DEM ES-SG-carry=3SG:OBJ
"It (the lesepsep) carried him out on that mat and took him." [nmb46.Ref.025]

4.59 ***kë-Ø-tr-lu-lua*** *pulet* *sut* *arana* *mr-n.*
ES-SG-cut-DUP-RMV bullet shot on chest-POSS:3SG
"He cut out the bullets from his chest." [nmb05.Ref.007]

4.60 *Kë-Ø-tëkh* *nakhatu* ***kë-Ø-lev-lu-lua*** *udrlan* *lu-n.*
ES-SG-pound hermit.crab ES-SG-take-DUP-RMV every tooth-POSS:3SG
"You bash the hermit crab and you remove all its claws." [nmb36.Ref.005]

4.4.6 Forgetting *–p'ela*

The meaning of *–p'ela* is difficult to define in English. Fox (1979, p. 73) calls this morpheme the accidental morpheme. However, this description of the morpheme is inadequate because the morpheme appears not to mean that something is accidental. The meaning given to the verb by this morpheme appears to be more closely aligned to an action that is completed and moved on from quickly without a second thought. In some cases it can appear to mean something is done thoughtlessly or by instinct. The morpheme can inflect both intransitive and transitive verbs.

The following examples show *-p'ela* inflecting transitive verbs.

4.61 ***Kë-r-ln-p'ela*** *napulakët* *ti* *i-vi* *nka-r.*
ES-PAU-leave-FGT club SUB 3SG:REAL-COP POSS.PT-POSS:3NSG
"They left their clubs behind." (having just run out of the house quickly) [nmb24.Ref.041]

4.62 ***Kë-Ø-ln-p'ele=i*** *a* *nat-n.*
ES-SG-leave-FGT=3SG:OBJ PERS child-POSS:3SG
"She left her child." [nmb28.Ref.039]

In the following example, the suffix *–p'ela* does not signify that something was forgotten. Instead it signifies that an action was taken at once.

4.63 *Narën* *i-vër=i,* ***kë-Ø-vëv-p'ela*** *khin.*
time 3SG:REAL-say=3SG:OBJ ES-SG-turn.around-FGT 3SG
"When he said that, he turned around at once." [nmb08.Ref.008]

In the example below the speaker is talking about how he went to an office but it was very full so he decided that he would do other errands and then go back later.

4.64 ***N-Ø-ln-p'ela=r*** *kë-Ø-v'akh* *të-Ø-m'alet.*
1:REAL-SG-leave-FGT=3NSG:OBJ ES-SG-think 1:IRR-SG-return
"I just left them and I thought I will come back." [nmb31.Ref.023]

This suffix appears to be different from the other semantic modifier suffixes described so far because it requires the third person singular object clitic to be affixed to it when it inflects intransitive verbs.

4.65 ***N-Ø-tkhal-p'ele=i*** *kë-da-Ø-v'a* *a* *Pur.*
1:REAL-SG-wake-FGT=3SG:OBJ ES-CONT-SG-go LOC Pur
"I woke up and just quickly went to Pur" [nmb31.Ref.164]

4.66 *A* *teti-ën* ***i-tëkhapa-p'ele=i*** *kë-Ø-valau* *tarep'*
PERS father-POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL-get.up-FGT=3SG:OBJ ES-SG-cry big
kë-Ø-vërvër.
ES-SG-run
"His father just jumped up, screamed, and ran." (on seeing the laplap made from a man's head with its face all shrunken) [nmb27.Ref.043]

4.4.7 Fatal *–p'ën*

The suffix *–p'ën* is used to indicate that the end result of an action is death. In the corpus, it only occurs with transitive and reflexive verbs. Fox (1979, p. 78) also gives an example of the fatal suffix inflecting an intransitive verb. It is often used with verbs of violent actions to show that the intended victim was killed.

4.67 ***lpë-kha-p'ën*** *m'ertu.*
3SG:IRR-bite-FTL people
"He will bite people to death." [nmb46.Ref.090]

4.68 *Kë-v-vër* *ti* *'uau* ***të-v-rëp-p'ën=i*** *taral* *lakha*
ES-PL-say SUB wow 1:IRR-PL-hit-FTL=3SG:OBJ caucasian this
kë-v-khan=i *ra.'*
ES-PL-eat=3SG:OBJ now
"They said 'wow let's kill him, this white man, and eat him.'"[nmb23.Ref.081]

The following example shows the fatality morpheme modifying a verb used reflexively.

4.69 ***Kë-Ø-sër-p'ën*** ***khin.***
ES-SG-hang-FTL 3SG
"She hung herself." [nmb09.Ref.006]

The following example shows the fatality suffix inflecting an intransitive verb. Here it has a hyperbolic sense because no-one has actually died. Note that absence of a reflexive pronoun in this construction.

4.70 ***Në-Ø-m'akar-p'ën.***
1:REAL-SG-wrok-FTL
"I am working myself to death." (Fox, 1979, p. 78)

4.4.8 Breaking *–p'r*

The breaking morpheme *–p'r* [p̪r̪] is used to indicate that, as a result of the action expressed by the verb, the patient participant of the proposition is broken. The morpheme is not used to represent that the patient has broken completely. Instead, it indicates that the patient has opened up or cracked. It is also used to represent one entity passing through another.

4.71 *Kë-r-lëk ësn tikhtup' **kë-r-ia-p'r** ruplet.*
ES-PAU-sit near cooking.pit ES-PAU-open-BRK dry.leaf
"They sat by the laplap hole, they broke open the dry leaves." [nmb24.Ref.029]

The following example could be understood in two ways: the first is that the arrow may pass through the eye and the second is that the eye is shot and split open.

4.72 *Pë-Ø-v'akh **pë-Ø-luwa-p'r** a m'at-ëk.*
2:IRR-SG-think 2:IRR-SG-shoot-BRK EXT.P eye-POSS:1SG
"Careful you don't shoot my eye." [nmb07.Ref.008]

In example 4.73, *-p'r* is used to represent a door being opened.

4.73 *Kë-Ø-vër ti a rakhët lil **pë-Ø-ia-p'r** liu!*
ES-SG-say SUB LOC elder.woman 2:IRR-SG-open-BRK door
"He said "old woman, open the door!" [nmb28.Ref.043]

In the following example, *-p'r* is used to represent air passing through an object.

4.74 *Afta **kë-v-iv-p'r** natëv.*
then ES-PL-blow-BRK conch.shell
"Then they blew the conch shell." [nmb46.Ref.082]

4.4.9 Bungling -*smën*

The morpheme –*smën* appears to be used to indicate the verb was not completed properly. There are few occurrences of this morpheme in the corpus.

4.75 *Narën* *i-sisi* *lilai* *lakha,* ***kë-Ø-wa-smën*** *nut*
when 3SG:REAL-climb.down up.side.down this ES-SG-hold-BGL place
kë-da-Ø-rës.
ES-CONT-SG-fall
"When he was climbing down (the tree) upside down, he lost his grip and fell." [nmb11.Ref.016]

4.76 *Kë-v-v'akh* *pëtkha* *të-v-m'alet* *kë-v-siris* *aranë-n*
ES-PL-think hill 1:IRR-PL-return ES-PL-descend on-POSS:3SG
i-marara *par* ***të-v-wa-smën=i.***
3SG:REAL-loose very 1:IRR-PL-hold-BGL=3SG:OBJ
"We thought that the hill that we will go back down on was very loose and we would slip on it." [nmb31.Ref.097]

4.4.10 Covering -*ulul*

The suffix –*ulul* has a similar meaning to the obstructive morpheme –*kar*. It represents something being covered by something else. Fox (1979, p. 78) says that this suffix is only used with skin conditions but this meaning has not been attested in the corpus. Rather, the meaning of an entity covering a person or something having an effect on a body is seen in the data.

4.77 ***Kë-r-sisar-ulul*** *an=i.*
ES-PAU-cover-CVR EXT.P=3SG:OBJ
"They covered him completely." (with grated yams to make a laplap) [nmb04.Ref.083]

The covering morpheme can also mean that something has occurred which is spread in patches over the body of a participant.

4.78 ***Kë-r-luwa-ulul*** *mr-n* *a* *tatei* *atlakha.*
ES-PAU-shoot-CVR chest-POSS:3SG PERS father here
"They shot all over his chest here." [nmb05.Ref.004]

Another meaning which appears to be indicated by a verb modified by this morpheme is that of an action done until completion.

4.79 *Ns* *puluk* *lakhara* *i-ma* ***kë-Ø-vi-ulul*** *nawei.*
excrement cow DEM 3SG:REAL-come ES-SG-COP-CVR water
"The cow excrement became completely like water." [nmb31.Ref.156]

4.4.11 Severing *–us*

The suffix *-us* indicates that the action described by the verb results in the patient participant of the proposition being broken completely into separate parts.

4.80 ***N-Ø-tr-us*** *nai* *i-amëk.*
1:REAL-SG-cut-SVR tree 3SG:REAL-one
"I cut and broke one piece (of bamboo)." [nmb30.Ref.043]

4.81 *A-v-rëp* *tra* *nas* *lakhara* *da-v'a* ***kë-v-rëp-us=i.***
3NSG:REAL-PL-hit trunk banana DEM CONT-go ES-PL-hit-SVR=3SG:OBJ
"They were hitting the banana tree until they hit it and snapped it." [nmb46.Ref.86]

The semantic modifier suffix *–us* can be reduplicated. The reduplication is iconic and it represents the object of the verb being broken several times into different pieces or that several objects are broken as part of one event.

4.82 *Narën* *kë-Ø-rakhëv,* ***kë-Ø-tr-us-us*** *nai* *pa* *pa.*
when ES-SG-clear.bush ES-SG-cut-DUP-SVR tree small small
"When you clear the bush, you cut up all the small trees." [nmb14.Ref.003]

The morpheme can also be used in a figurative sense. In the example below, nothing is broken but the severance morpheme is used to indicate that the story was told in the wrong sequence.

4.83 *Pe* ***në-Ø-vër-us-us=i.***
but 1REAL-SG-say-DUP-SVR=3SG:OBJ
"But I have told the story wrongly." [nmb31.Ref.045]

In the following example, the severing suffix is used to indicate that a large group of men have split up in to smaller groups and are sitting in ambusg on either side of a road.

4.84 *Ar du lakhara* ***a-t-v-lëk-us-us*** *sara nut m'a tan.*
all men DEM 3NSG-PFV-PL-sit-DUP-SVR COMP place with gun
"The men had sat on both sides of the place with guns." [nmb30.Ref.046]

4.4.12 Additional Semantic Modifier Suffixes

There are some additional semantic modifiers which are described in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (Fox, 1979) which were not encountered in the data collected for this project. They can be seen in the table below. For structural examples see Fox (1979, p. 72- 79).

Suffix	Meaning
-ër	down
-urur	repeat
-p'i	surround
-sp'	ineffective
-srakh	wait

Table 4.4: Unattested Semantic Modifiers

4.5 Ability Suffixes

Following the semantic modifier suffixes, there is a structural position in which two morphemes are used to indicate that the subject of a verb has the ability to undertake the action denoted by the verb. Baht (1999) calls this deontic mood. These two ability morphemes make a distinction between two different kinds of ability. The first ability suffix *-du*, pronounced [dau] when modified by the third person object clitic, is used to indicate that the subject of the verb has the knowledge of how to carry out a particular action. It also marks other kinds of ability, such as permission. The second ability morpheme *-dr* indicates that the subject has the physical capacity to undertake the action indicated by the verb. The suffix *-dr* occurs rarely in the corpus.

Suffix	Meaning	Gloss
-du/-dau	ability	KN
-dr	ability through physical capacity	ABLT

Table 4.5: Ability Morphemes

There appears to be no verb in V'ënen Taut which simply means "know" in the sense of an actor as being partial to some kind of information, such as knowing a person or a fact. This meaning is attained by modifying the verb *rn* "feel/hear/want" with the *–du* suffix. This marks the actor as knowing (or not knowing, if the negative morpheme is present) about a particular fact that can be understood from context.

4.85 ***Kë-Ø-rn-dau=i*** *ti* *napën* *i-saru* *dika* *vakhara.*
2:REAL-SG-feel-KN=3SG:OBJ SUB day 3SG:REAL-seven today DEM
"You know that it is seven days today (since my death)." [nmb26.Ref.040]

4.86 *Nki* *a-v-krisi* ***a-kha-v-rn-dau=i.***
some 3NSG:REAL-PL-go.to.school 3NSG:REAL-NEG-PL-say-KN=3SG:OBJ
"Some of them go to school and they don't know it." (how to weave baskets) [nmb02.Ref.029]

Using *–du* to modify the verb *la* "see" creates the meaning of recognise.

4.87 *Kë-Ø-pësla* *dui* *i-amëk* *we* *k-a-Ø-rn-dau=i* *vakha*
2:REAL-SG-find man 3SG:REAL-one REL 2:REAL-NEG-SG-feel-KN=3SG:OBJ or
k-a-Ø-la-dau=i…
2:REAL-NEG-SG-see-KN=3SG:OBJ
"(If) you find a man that you do not know or you do not recognise…" [nmb30.Ref.119]

In addition to marking different kinds of knowledge, the *-du* morpheme appears to be used as a marker of permission.

4.88 *Ipë-vër* *ti* *i-a-vër=i,* *pë-Ø-luwe=i*
3SG:IRR-say SUB 3SG:REAL-NEG-say=3SG:OBJ 2:IRR-SG-shoot=3SG:OBJ
pë-Ø-rëp-p'ën-dau=i.
2:IRR-SG-hit-FTL-KN=3SG:OBJ
"If he does not say it, you will shoot him, and you can kill him." [nmb30.Ref.123]

4.89 *Am-Ø-vër* ***në-v-khën-dau=i.***
3NSG:COND-IMPRS-if 1:REAL-PL-eat-KN=3SG:OBJ
"If only we could eat him." [nmb23.Ref.074]

When the verb *vër* "say" is modified by the knowledge marker, it can have a meaning of "tell the truth". This can be seen in the following example.

4.90 *N-Ø-rn=i* *lakhara* *kë-Ø-v'akh* *ti* *ki* *ti*
1:REAL-SG-hear=3SG:OBJ that ES-SG-think SUB NSPC SUB
i-vër-dau=i.
3SG:REAL-say-KN=3SG:OBJ
"I heard that, I thought he was telling the truth." [nmb11.Ref.023]

Sometimes the knowledge-ability morpheme is used to indicate a meaning similar to that of the physical capacity morpheme.

4.91 *Kë-Ø-rn* *ti* ***më-k-a-Ø-tëp'ir-du*** *kë-Ø-iar* *a* *Lakatoro.*
2:REAL-SG-feel SUB 2:COND-NES-NEG-SG-stand-KN ES-SG-reach LOC Lakatoro
"You felt that you would not be able to stand up (on the truck) all the way to Lakatoro."
[nmb31.Ref.049]

The example below is explaining how straight branches cannot be used to help in the burn off of a new garden plot.

4.92 *Nki* *lara* ***i-k-a-rëv-du*** *nap'.*
some that 3S:REAL-NES-NEG-pull-KN fire
"Those ones cannot pull the fire." (across the ground) [nmb15.Ref.001]

The second ability morpheme *–dr* [ⁿdɽ] indicates that the subject of a verb has the physical ability to undertake the action which it denotes. There is a point of difference between the description of this suffix in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979) and what was observed in the corpus. In Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 80-81) the physical capacity morpheme is recorded as *–dri*; however, it was observed as simply *–dr* in this project. This difference can be seen below.

4.93 ***Kë-Ø-p'ëtir-dri?***
2:REAL-SG-stand-ABLT
"Can you stand up?" (Fox, 1979, p. 80)

4.94 *A* *R.* ***i-a-m'i-dr*** *pëtkha.*
PERS R. 3SG:REAL-NEG-climb-ABLT hill
"R. was unable to climb the hill." [nmb31.Ref.104]

Physical capacity is not limited to strength. This can be seen in example 4.95 which explains that people are able to build a house because the bush has been cleared out of the way instead of being able to build the house because they are strong enough to do so.

4.95 ***A-v-ën-dr*** *nëmakh-ar.*
3NSG:REAL-PL-make-ABLT house-POSS:3NSG
"They can build their house." (after clearing the bush) [nmb23.Ref127]

The relatively rare use of the suffix *–dr* compared to the more frequent use of *–du,* in addition to the leakage of *–du* into contexts where we would expect *–dr,* leads me to surmise that these two suffixes may be undergoing a process of syncretism in which the meaning of *–dr* is collapsing into *–du*. It is possible that *–du* may eventually become the only ability suffix in the language.

4.6 Benefactor Suffixes

According to Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 82) the benefactor of an intransitive verb denoting an action, such as *lulau* "plant", can be encoded using suffixes which take the same form as the optional indirect possession suffixes presented in §2.5.2.2. This process is not attested in the data; however, due to the fact that it likely occurs quite rarely I am including it in this work. Any future project on V'ënen Taut will need to investigate this further.

	Singular	Non-Singular
1:INCL		*-ad* (Fox, 1979)
1:EXCL	*-ëk*	*-am'em'*
2	*-ëm*	*-am'i* (Fox, 1979)
3	*-ën*	*-ar*

Table 4.6: Benefactor Suffixes

Some of the examples of this process, which have been adapted[15] from Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 82), are presented below.

4.96 ***A-v-lu-lu-ar*** *a* *mëlin* *dika.*
3NSG:REAL-PL-DUP-plant-BEN:3SG PERS chief today
"They are planting the garden for the chief today."

4.97 ***I-m'akar-ëk.***
3SG:REAL-work-BEN:1SG
"He works for me."

4.98 ***Në-v-takh-takh-ar.***
1:REAL-PL-DUP-burn.garden-BEN:3NSG
"We burnt off their garden for them."

[15] The forms of the benefactor suffixes have been modified from those presented in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* so that they are consistent with those presented in §2.5.2.2.

Chapter Five

Post-Verbal Modification

5.1 Introduction

Verbal affixation is not the only type of verbal modification available in V'ënen Taut. There are also a variety of post-verbal modifiers available. These modifiers are used to add to the semantics of an event, encoding aspectual information about the situation or indicating the manner in which an event took place.

The verbal modifiers serve a similar function to the aspect prefixes (§3.4) and the semantic modifier suffixes (§4.4); however, the verbal modifiers are not affixes. They have a different distribution and usage compared to the verbal affixes described in the previous two chapters. Some of the verbal modifiers have specific positions which they must take in the clause while others have the ability to occur in a variety of locations, including the beginning of sentences.

Functionally, these modifiers can be divided into two groups. These are: verbal modifiers which can be inflected by the pronominal object enclitics (§5.2) and verbal modifiers which cannot be inflected (§5.3 and §5.4). The uninflected verbal modifiers are further divided into semantic categories: emphatic modifiers, which indicate how an event took place, and temporal modifiers, which give information on the aspectual or temporal makeup of a situation. Some manner postmodifiers also cause grammatical valence change.

5.2 Clitic-Taking Post-Verbal Modifiers

There are six verbal modifiers in the corpus which can be modified by pronominal object clitics. The modifier *mamëkh* was not recorded in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 86). The clitic-taking modifiers are presented below in the table 5.1.

Modifier	Meaning
sara	completive
m'ët	completive
tap'a	completive
la	immediate
udrlan	all
mamëkh	well

Table 5.1: Clitic-Taking Post-Verbal Modifiers

Interestingly, there are three post-verbal modifiers which encode completive aspect. To me, a linguistic outsider, there appears to be no semantic difference between them. It may be that they can be used interchangeably or that the difference in their meaning is so nuanced that in-depth or native-like understanding of V'ënen Taut is required to perceive the difference. Another possible explanation for why there are three modifiers which appear to represent the same aspectual category is that these three modifiers are undergoing a process of syncretism, like the suffixes *–du* and *–dr* (§4.5), and are all collapsing into *sara*, which is the most common completive modifier.

The post-verbal modifiers presented in table 5.1 all share the common characteristic that they are inflected by a pronominal object clitic when they occur in particular environments. This is what distinguishes them from the rest of the free verbal modifiers. The modifiers *sara*, *mët*, *tap'a*, *la*, and *udrlan* all function similarly while *mamëkh* functions slightly differently.

In the corpus, all of the modifiers presented in table 5.1 are observed being inflected by the singular third person object clitic. In some places this creates a number discord, suggesting that the object suffix is being reanalysed, possibly as part of the modifier itself. In addition to this, the modifier *udrlan* is also observed being inflected by the non-singular clitic. Although it is not seen in the data, Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 86) claims that all of the modifiers presented in table 5.1, except for *mamëkh* which is not reported in his work, can be modified by all three pronominal object clitics. The one exception is *udrlan* which Fox (1979, p. 86) claims can only be modified by the third person singular and non-singular object clitics.

5.2.1 The Completive Aspect modifier *sara*

The completive post-verbal modifier *sara* is one of the most commonly occurring verbal modifiers in the corpus. Verbs modified by this morpheme occur in the realis or irrealis mood.

Sara is able to be inflected by pronominal object clitics depending on the transitivity of the verb being modified, and the presence of a nominal object. When being used as a verbal modifier, the position that *sara* takes in the clause is fixed; it occurs directly after the verb and its suffixes and before any noun phrase objects or oblique constituents. When there are other verbal modifiers of this type modifying the same verb, *sara* is the one which occurs last, either directly before the nominal object or affixed with a pronominal object enclitic.

The two examples below show how *sara* functions when modifying transitive verbs. Example 5.1 shows *sara* occurring between a transitive verb and its nominal object. Example 5.2 shows how *sara* is affixed with the third person singular object clitic when the object of a verb is not expressed as a full noun phrase. Here the object clitic is representing what was eaten, which has already been established through context.

5.1 *Në-v-khën* ***sara*** *tim'akh.*
1:REAL-PL-eat COMP food
"We finished eating food." [nmb10.Ref.006]

5.2 *Në-v-khën* ***sare=i.***
1:REAL-PL-eat COMP=3SG:OBJ
"We finished eating." [nmb31.Ref.118]

To show that the modifier *sara* COMP is not easily analysed as yet another verbal suffix, the following two examples are given. In these examples, it can be seen that *sara* does not occur in either the first or second suffix positions, indicated by the presence of one of these suffixes in the examples.

5.3 *Kë-r-rëp-p'ën* ***sare=i.***
ES-PAU-hit-FTL COMP=3SG:OBJ
"They killed it." [nmb38.Ref.009]

5.4 *N-të-Ø-rn-du* ***sare=i.***
1:REAL-PFV-SG-feel-KN COMP=3SG:OBJ
"I knew his name." (before but I've forgotten it now) [nmb46.Ref.003]

When modifying intransitive verbs, *sara* is affixed with the third person singular object clitic. This does not change the meaning of the suffix, nor does the presence of the object clitic increase the valence of the intransitive verbs. Regardless of the grammatical number of the subject, the third person singular object clitic is always used when *sara* is functioning in this manner.

5.5 *Tav'et lakha i-ta-m'a* ***sare=i.***
woman this 3SG:REAL-PFV-die COMP=3SG:OBJ
"This woman is already dead." [nmb09.Ref.024]

5.6 *Narën i-m'arën* ***sare=i…***
time 3SG:REAL-dry COMP=3SG:OBJ
"When it has dried…" [nmb16.Ref.002]

Sara (or *sarei*) occurs before any additional, such as obliques or extended participants. Example 5.7 shows a locative oblique and example 5.8 shows a derived two argument construction.

5.7 *k-Ø-ilakh* ***sare=i*** *a tikhnap'.*
ES-SG-burn.on.fire COMP=3SG:OBJ LOC ash
"You burn it on the embers." [nmb01.Ref.004]

5.8 *Khë-v-riri* ***sare=i*** *an=i…*
ES-PL-search COMP=3SG:OBJ EXT.P=3SG:OBJ
"They looked for her…" [nmb37.Ref.062]

As this morpheme focuses on the completion of events, it is often used independently as a discourse marker indicating the transition from one event to another. When used in this manner, *sara* is always modified by the third person singular object clitic: becoming *sarei* through the raising process described in §1.6.3.1. It can occur at the beginning or in the

middle of a sentence between two separate but linked clauses and has a meaning similar to "then" or "after that" in English.

5.9 *Në-v-kharis* ***sare=i*** *kë-v-khu-khau* *aut-am'em'.*
1:REAL-PL-finish COMP=3SG:OBJ ES-PL-DUP-go.back place-POSS:1PL:EXCL
"We finish and then we go home to our place." [nmb10.Ref.015]

In example 5.10, *sarei* can be seen as modifying the clause, because it is occurring after its oblique locative constituent.

5.10 *Ta-Ø-v'a* *le=i* *a* *Lakatoro* ***sare=i*** *kë-p'ëkh-Ø-m'alet.*
1:IRR-SG-go IMM=3SG:OBJ LOC Lakatoro COMP=3SG:OBJ ES-PROX-SG-return
"I will go to Lakatoro now then I will come back." [nmb31.Ref.024]

This example starts with the completive marker.

5.11 ***Sare=i*** *kë-v-lëk* *atlara.*
COMP=3SG:OBJ ES-PL-stay there
"Then we stayed there." [nmb10.Ref.005]

5.2.2 The Completive Aspect modifier *m'ët*

The completive modifier *m'ët* functions in an identical fashion to *sara,* the completive modifier described in the preceding section; it is somewhat rarer. There is no clear semantic difference between these two completive verbal modifiers.

The following example shows *m'ët* modifying a transitive verb with a nominal object.

5.12 *K-Ø-iviv* ***m'ët*** *nap'.*
ES-SG-light COMP fire
"He lit the fire." [nmb24.Ref.020]

In the same manner as *sara*, if the object argument is expressed using an object clitic, it will join to the end of the modifier, not to the verb.

5.13 *Kë-r-akh* ***m'ët=i.***
ES-PAU-stand.in.hole COMP=3SG:OBJ
"They stood it up in a hole." [nmb29.Ref.006]

The modifier *m'ët* can be used in conjunction with the perfective morpheme. When this occurs, it can indicate that an event had already occurred before a particular point in time. This same meaning can be created using the verbal modifier *sara* in conjunction with the perfective prefix (see example 5.5).

5.14 *Prapr* *i-t-khën* ***m'ët=i.***
sow 3SG:REAL-PFV-EAT COMP=3SG:OBJ
"The sow already ate it." [nmb24.Ref.012]

Also like the modifier *sara*, *m'ët* can act as a discourse marker signalling the end of one event and the beginning of another. When behaving in this manner it is modified by the third person singular object clitic.

5.15 *Nut* *i-vi* *kënarev* *lakha* ***m'ët=i*** *n-Ø-la* *ti…*
place 3SG:REAL-COP afternoon this COMP=3SG:OBJ 1:REAL-SG-see SUB
"It became the afternoon then I saw that…" [nmb30.Ref.111]

5.2.3 The Completive Aspect modifier *tapa*

This post-verbal modifier occurs once in the corpus and can be seen in the example below.

5.16 ***Tape=i*** *nakëm* *pë-Ø-khën* *ti* *kana* *të-p'ëkh-Ø-khën.*
COMP=3SG:OBJ 2SG 2:IRR-SG-eat SUB 1SG 1:IRR-PROX-SG-eat
"Then you will eat and then I will just eat." [nmb25.Ref.017]

Although this one example from the corpus is not sufficient to classify this morpheme as a clitic-taking post-verbal modifier, its classification as such in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 86-87), along with the examples given in that work, provide enough evidence for it to be recorded here.

In all the examples below, the perfective prefix and the completive post-verbal modifier are modifying the same verb. As with examples 5.5 and 5.14, this often marks an event as having occurred to completion at some point in the past, relative to the reference time.

The following two examples show *tapa* modifying transitive verbs.

5.17 *Kë-të-Ø-khsrasr* ***tapa*** *nut* *eiëm?*
2:REAL-PFV-SG-sweep COMP place inside
"Have you swept inside the house?" (Fox, 1979, p. 87)

5.18 *I-të-lua* ***tapa=r.***
3SG:REAL-PFV-shoot COMP=3SG:OBJ
"He has already shot them." (Fox, 1979, p. 86)

In the following example *tapa* is modifying an intransitive verb.

5.19 *A-të-v-sisil* ***tape=i.***
3NSG:REAL-PFV-PL-wash COMP=3SG:OBJ
"They have already had a wash." (Fox, 1979, p. 86)

5.2.4 Immediate Aspect *la*

The post-verbal modifier *la* indicates that something will happen immediately after the moment of speech or at the point of temporal reference as taken from the context of the text. It can also be used to indicate that something will happen quickly. *La* does not appear to mark inchoative aspect.

Like the post-verbal modifiers described previously, when modifying transitive verbs with full nominal objects, *la* takes the position between the verb and its object. Pronominal enclitics can join to *la*. When *la* modifies intransitive verbs, it is obligatorily modified with the third person singular object clitic.

Example 5.20 shows how the immediate post-verbal modifier occurs after transitive verbs and before their noun phrase objects.

5.20 *P'e-r-v'a* *kë-r-takhpa* ***la*** *namëp.*
1:IRR-PAU-go ES-PAU-cook IMM Tahitian.chestnut
"We will go and roast the chestnuts now." [nmb25.Ref.016]

In the next example, the third person singular pronominal object clitic is acting as the object of the verb *rëp* "hit". Here, it is affixed to the post-verbal modifier *la* instead of the verb.

5.21 *Khinak* *ipë-rëp* ***le=i?***
who 3SG:IRR-kill IMM=3SG:OBJ
"Who will kill it (the bird) now?" [nmb11.Ref.023]

As mentioned above, Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 86) says that the clitic-taking post-verbal modifiers can be modified by all of the object clitics. Fox gives an example of the immediate post-verbal modifier *la* inflected with the second person singular object clitic modifying the transitive verb *rëp* "hit/kill".

5.22 *P'e-Ø-rëp* ***la=kh.***
1:IRR-SG-hit IMM=2SG:OBJ
"I will hit you now." (Fox, 1979, p. 86)

The following examples illustrate how the immediate post-verbal modifier *la* is affixed with the third person singular object clitic when it modifies intransitive verbs.

5.23 *Të-Ø-valu* ***le=i.***
1:IRR-SG-cry IMM=3SG:OBJ
"I am going to cry now." [nmb27.Ref.037]

5.24 *I-k-a-m'arën* ***le=i.***
3SG:REAL-NES-NEG-dry IMM=3SG:OBJ
"It will not dry quickly." [nmb14.Ref.002]

As with the completive verbal modifiers *sara, m'ët, and tapa, la* is affixed with the third person singular object clitic when it occurs in positions in the sentence which do not directly follow the verb. Consider the example below where *la* occurs after the noun phrase object of the verb *titina.*

5.25 *Khilakha* *të-Ø-titina* *pëtkhërkharu* *ipë-su-supa* ***le=i.***
now 1:IRR-SG-talk traditional.story 3SG:IRR-DUP-small IMM=3SG:OBJ
"Now I will tell a small story." [nmb24.Ref.001]

5.2.5 All *udrlan*

Unlike the verbal modifiers described previously which encoded temporal meanings, the post-verbal modifier *udrlan* is a quantifier. Semantically, it is more concerned with describing the participants of verbs rather than the situation expressed by the verbs. We could be mistaken into thinking that this modifier is used to modify nouns, and indeed it can be, when occurring preverbally; however, when we look at the distribution of *udrlan* and the manner in which it is inflected by pronominal object clitics, we can see that it functions similarly to the three previously described post-verbal modifiers.

This morpheme has two other allomorphs *udran* and *uran*. It is possible there is a semantic distinction between the allophones or that these two allophones come as a result of consonant cluster reduction in rapid speech, especially when one considerers that /d/, /r/, and /l/ are all alveolar consonants.

As with the previous modifiers, *udrlan* is affixed with the third person singular object enclitic when it occurs modifying an intransitive verb, regardless of the plurality of the subject, as seen in example 5.26.

When modifying intransitive verbs, *urdlan* can refer to the quantity of the subject.

5.26 *Khilakha* *pë-vra-ma* ***udrlan=i.***
now 2:IRR-PL-come all=3SG:OBJ
“You will all come.” [nmb22.Ref.036]

When modifying adjectival verbs, *udrlan* can mean “completely” rather than “all”.

5.27 *Khilakha* *p'ak-ën* *i-m'ët* ***udrlan–i.***
now body-POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL-black all=3SG:OBJ
“Now, its body was completely black.” [nmb25.Ref.031]

When modifying transitive verbs which have noun phrase objects, the quantifier verbal modifier appears in the position following the verb and preceding the object noun phrase.

5.28 *A-v-tr-us-us* ***udrlan*** *tër-lil.*
3NSG:REAL-PL-cut-DUP-SVR all NMLP-be.big
“They cut all the big ones.” [nmb14.Ref.004]

5.29 *Kë-Ø-m'ët-m'ët* ***udrlan*** *nap'.*
ES-SG-DUP-black all fire
“He put out the fire.” [nmb26.Ref.050]

5.30 *Ipë-ln* ***udran*** *tav'et* *lara.*
3SG:IRR-leave all woman that
“He will leave all his wives.” [nmb22.Ref.017]

5.31 *A-v-mikën* ***uran*** *si* *na* *pukis…*
3NSG-PL-heap.up all thing ASV suitcase
“They heaped up all her marriage items…” [nmb21.Ref.048]
(items are given in a suitcase)

As expected, when modifying transitive verbs which have their objects expressed using a pronominal object clitic, the enclitic attaches to the verbal modifier rather than the verb. The third person singular object suffix is used regardless of the plurality of the object if the entity represented by the object clitic is inanimate.

5.32 *Kë-Ø-sëran* ***udrlan=i*** *i-v'a* *a* *lili.*
ES-SG-throw all=3SG:OBJ 3SG:REAL-go LOC bush
“You throw it all away into the bush.” [nmb36.Ref.023]

5.33 *Kë-Ø-ln* ***udran=i.***
ES-SG-leave all-POSS:SG
“You leave them all.” [nmb22.Ref.019]

5.34 *A-v-ën* ***uran=i*** *i-v-amëk.*
3NSG:REAL-PL-do all=3SG:OBJ 3SG:REAL-MULT-one
“They do it all at one time.” [nmb21.Ref.053]

If the object is animate and is non-singular in grammatical number, the third person non-singular object clitic will be used. This is the only post-verbal modifier observed in the corpus which is seen to take any object clitic other than the third person singular clitic.

5.35 *Apë-v-rëp* ***udrlan–r.***
3SG:IRR-PL-kill all=3NSG:OBJ
"They will kill them all." (the kinkin) [nmb13.Ref.012]

In the example below, the third person non-singular object clitic is affixed to the modifier *udrlan* as a method of indexing the plurality of the noun that follows.

5.36 *P'e-Ø-spën* ***udrlan–r*** *a* *nat-ëk.*
1:IRR-SG-count all=3NSG:OBJ PERS child-POSS:SG
"I will count all of my children." [nmb01.Ref.177]

When *udrlan* occurs outside of its normal post-verbal position, as a nominal modifier, it is obligatorily marked with the third person singular object clitic. In example 5.37 is occurs before the verb and in 5.38 is occurs after nominal object.

5.37 *Ar* *mama* ***udrlan=i*** *a-vra-v'a…*
all mother all=3SG:OBJ 3NSG:REAL-PL-go
"All of the mothers go…" [nmb15.Ref.002]

5.38 *M'ëtu* *i-a-nap'a* *nai* ***udrlan=i*** *we* *i-kat*
coconut 3SG:REAL-NEG-be.like tree all=3SG:OBJ REL 3SG:REAL-have
rana-n…
branch-POSS:3SG
"Coconuts are not like all other trees which have branches…" [nmb18.Ref.001]

5.2.6 Well *mamëkh*

The post-verbal modifier *mamëkh* is used to indicate that the action described by the verb was done well. It occurs directly after the verb and its suffixes. As expected, *mamëkh* does not receive any affixation when transitive verbs occur with nominal objects. *Mamëkh* is affixed with the third person singular object clitic when the object is expressed using a pronominal enclitic. However, *mamëkh* follows a different pattern to that of the previously mentioned post-verbal modifiers because when being used with intransitive verbs, *mamëkh* is not modified by the third person singular object clitic.

5.39 *N-a-v-m'atr* ***mamëkh.***
1:REAL-NEG-PL-sleep well
"We did not sleep well." [nmb31.Ref.066]

With adjectival verbs, *mamëkh* acts more like an intensifier.

5.40 *Kë-Ø-tëkh=i* *da-v'a* … *ti* *i-mëlmalëv* ***mamëkh.***
ES-SG-pound=3SG:OBJ CONT-go SUB 3SG:REAL-soft well
"You hit it until it is very soft." [nmb01.Ref.072]

The following two examples show how *mamëkh* functions when modifying transitive verbs. The first example shows that *mamëkh* occurs between transitive verbs and their noun phrase objects. The second example shows that *mamëkh* is the constituent to which the object clitic attaches should the speaker choose to express it this way.

5.41 *Kë-v-tu* ***mamëkh*** *naten-am'em'.*
ES-PL-put well bag-POSS:1PL:EXCL
"We got our bags ready." [nmb10.Ref.003]

5.42 *Nëkhau,* *au* *pa* *lakara* *i-tu* ***mamëkh=i.***
laplap man small DEM 3SG:REAL-put well=3SG:OBJ
"The laplap, the boy put it down well." [nmb07.Ref.027]

Mamëkh occurs after the verb and any semantic modifier suffixes. This shows us that *mamëkh* cannot be considered to be one of the semantic modifier suffixes.

5.43 *Kë-Ø-khu-kar=i.*
ES-SG-tie-OBS=3SG:OBJ
"He bandaged it." [nmb23.Ref.095]

5.44 *Kë-Ø-khu-kar* ***mamëkh=i.***
ES-SG-tie-OBS well=3SG:OBJ
"He bandaged it well." [nmb23.Ref.098]

Mamëkh can be seen modifying the same verb as some of the other clitic-taking post-verbal modifiers. When this occurs, *mamëkh* is articulated between the verb and the other verbal modifier. The second clitic-taking post-verbal modifier is the one which takes the enclitic.

The example below contains an intransitive verb. Note that *mamëkh* is not modified by the third person object clitic but the post-verbal modifier *sara* is.

5.45 *Kë-r-av* ***mamëkh*** *sare=i.*
ES-PAU-bathe well COMP=3SG:OBJ
"We bathed well." [nmb31.Ref.111]

The modification of the following transitive verbs functions in the expected manner.

5.46 *Kë-vra-v'a* *kë-v-tu* ***mamëkh*** *sare=i.*
ES-PL-go ES-PL-put well COMP=3SG:OBJ
"We went and put it away well." [nmb31.Ref.111]

5.47 *Kë-v-khësr* ***mamëkh*** *udrlan* *tikhnap'.*
ES-PL-sweep well all ash
"They swept all the ashes well." [nmb43.Ref.018]

5.48 *Khilakha* *kë-Ø-ën* ***mamëkh*** *udrlan=i.*
now ES-SG-make well all=3SG:OBJ
"Now he did it all well." [nmb23.Ref.094]

The variant behaviour of this clitic-taking post-verbal modifier when compared to the others suggests that it falls functionally somewhere between the previously described post-verbal modifiers and those which will be described in §5.3. However, it has been described in this section because it can be modified by pronominal object clitics. There may be a case, once more data is collected, to place it in its own category.

5.3 Emphatic Verbal Modifiers

Emphatic verbal modifiers give more information about how the actions denoted by verbs are undertaken. They perform a similar function to the semantic modifier suffixes presented

in §4.4; however, these modifiers are free morphemes. They are different to the modifiers described in §5.2 because they cannot take any verbal morphology.

5.3.1 Exclamatory/Intensity *mau*

The verbal modifier *mau* marks intransitive verbs with a kind of intensification or exclamatory meaning. *Mau* gives transitive verbs a different but related meaning. The partially exclamatory meaning, which occurs with intransitive verbs, appears to be lost with transitive verbs but the intensity meaning remains. This means that when used with transitive verbs *mau* has a meaning similar to “well” or “intently”. In a basic sense, any verb modified by *mau* can be seen as having its meaning strengthened.

In Fox’s *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 91), *mau* is translated as “how!”. This does not capture the full meaning of the morpheme. Firstly when we consider the most basic meaning of the word “how” in English, one thinks of an interrogative morpheme which is used when people are enquiring about the method of doing an action. It is also used in the explanations of methods. Neither of these two meanings appear to be encoded by *mau* in V’ënen Taut. What Fox was really trying to capture was the meaning generated when using “how” as part of an exclamatory phrase, like in the example *a-v-lil mau* “how big they are!” given in his grammar sketch (Fox, 1979, p. 92). The translation for *mau* to “how” would work for some instances of this morpheme in the corpus, but not all. As such Fox’s translation was not used.

In the example below, the meaning of the verb appears to be intensified. This is the case with most adjectival verbs. As can be seen in example 5.49 which follows.

5.49 *Kë-Ø-dedrn* ***mau.***
ES-SG-be.afraid well
“He was very frightened.” [nmb38.Ref.019]

5.50 *A* *rakhët lil* *i-p'ëles-kar* *liu* *i-khua* ***mau.***
PERS elder.woman 3SG:REAL-close-OBS door 3SG:REAL-strong well
“The old woman closed the door very tightly.” [nmb28.Ref.050]

In the examples below, *mau* gives the impression that the action was sustained and intense. This appears to be the meaning given to dynamic intransitive verbs.

5.51 *Kë-Ø-rap'a* ***mau.***
ES-SG-kick well
"He was kicking and kicking." [nmb27.Ref.052]

5.52 *A* *nat-n* *i-valau* ***mau.***
PERS child-POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL-cry well
"Her child was crying and crying." [nmb28.Ref.024]

When used to modify transitive verbs, *mau* follows object arguments whether they are expressed using a full noun phrase or a pronominal object clitic. The post-verbal modifier *mau* indicates that the actions described by transitive verbs are completed well. This is quite different to the meaning given in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979).

5.53 *l-vës* *lu-n* ***mau.***
3SG:REAL-show teeth-POSS:3SG well
"(The cooked man's head) was showing all its teeth clearly." [nmb27.Ref.041]

5.54 *l-uma* *pët-n* ***mau.***
3SG:REAL-rub head-POSS:3SG well
"He rubbed his head well/hard." [nmb07.Ref.024]

5.55 *l-p'e=i* ***mau.***
3SG:REAL-watch=3SG:OBJ well
"He watched it well/intently." [nmb07.Ref.011]

The following examples show how *mau* is positioned after the verb and either before or after oblique constituents.

5.56 *Kë-v-lalau* ***mau*** *a* *p'ek* *nam'el.*
ES-PL-cry well LOC side nakamal
"They (the pigs) cried and cried at the side of the men's house." [nmb24.Ref.014]

5.57 *Su-r* *i-vral* *vëlkin* ***mau*** *am'el* ***mau.***
bone-POSS:3NSG 3SG:REAL-lie scatter well in.nakamal well
"Their bones lay scattered all about in the nakamal.l" [nmb07.Ref.027]

5.3.2 Excessive *par*

The excessive morpheme *par* is used mostly with adjectival verbs and it indicates that the quality expressed by the verb is so strong that it is detrimental.

5.58 *Pari-ar* *i-studau* ***par.***
work-POSS:3NSG 3SG:REAL-be.many excessive
"They had too much work." [nmb31.Ref.020]

5.59 *Pëtkha* *në-n* *i-marara* ***par.***
hill CLS.GEN-POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL-be.soft excessive
"The ground on the hill is too soft." [nmb31.Ref.084]

The excessive modifier can also co-occur with the modifier *dau* (§5.3.3). When this occurs *par* takes the position following the verb and *dau* occurs after.

5.60 *I-k-a-p'as* ***par*** *dau.*
3SG:REAL-NES-NEG-be.good excessive very
"Things will not be good at all." [nmb19.Ref.027]

5.3.3 Very *dau*

The modifier *dau* enhances the meaning of the verbs that they modify and has a meaning similar to "very" in English.

5.61 *Kë-Ø-lil* ***dau.***
2:REAL-SG-be.big very
"You are huge." (Fox, 1979, p. 92)

The morpheme *dau* does not always directly follow the verb which it is modifying. In the example below, *dau* occurs after the locative noun *eia* "up" which is acting as the object

argument. It is possible, however, that *dau* is actually modifying the noun *eia* instead of the verb. More data is needed to fully explore the function of this morpheme.

5.62 *K-Ø-iar* *eia* ***dau*** *arana* *drln* *nëmakh.*
ES-SG-reach up very on roof house
"It reaches way up to the roof of the house." [nmb43.Ref.008]

In the example below repeated from 5.60, *dau* follows the verbal modifier *par*.

5.63 *l-k-a-p'as* *par* ***dau.***
3SG:REAL-NES-NEG-be.good excessive very
"Things will not be good at all." [nmb19.Ref.027]

When being used to modify the verb *kharis/khiris* "finish", *dau* indicates that the entity being finished has been completely exhausted. In the example below, a boy is telling a woman that all the fruit on her tree has been picked.

5.64 *l-khiris* ***dau*** *ra.*
3SG:REAL-finish very now
"It is all finished now." [nmb11.Ref.014]

In the corpus, there is one instance of this verbal modifier being reduplicated. This appears to have an iconic effect and indicates that all the people died one by one until there were none left alive.

5.65 *Khir* *kë-r-kharis* ***du-du-du-dau*** *lakha.*
3NSG ES-PAU-finish DUP-DUP-DUP-very this
"They all died one by one." [nmb07.Ref.029]

5.3.4 Pointlessly *vnvn*

The modifier *vnvn* [βn̪βn̪] appears to indicate that the subject of the verb carried out an action for no reason. There are only two examples of this modifier in the corpus, both with the verb *dedrn* "be afraid". More data is required so that this morpheme can be described more fully.

5.66 *Kam'i* *kë-v-dedrn* ***vnvn*** *wëki* *sena* *ti* *ar* *du*
2NSG 2:REAL-PL-be.afraid no.reason only because SUB all man
lakha *a-kha-vra-ma.*
this 3NSG-NEG-PL-come
"You all were afraid for no reason because those men are not coming." [nmb30.Ref.075]

5.67 *Kam'i* *kë-v-dedrn* ***vnvn*** *wëki.*
2NSG 2:REAL-PL-be.afraid no.reason only
"You were afraid for no reason." [nmb30.Ref.104]

5.3.5 Modifiers Which Trigger Valence Change

The following verbal modifiers are a sub-class of the emphatic verbal modifiers. These morphemes cause a change in grammatical valence when used with transitive verbs. The object argument is demoted to the position of an extended participant (§6.3). They do not trigger a change in semantic valence because both the agent and patient arguments are still expressed in the clause.

5.3.5.1 One by One *siaur*

The modifier *siaur* indicates that the subjects undertake the action denoted by a verb individually. Due to the meaning of this verbal modifier, it is only seen modifying verbs which have non-singular subjects.

In the example below, *siaur* is modifying an intransitive verb and indicates that the entities which make up the subject verb carried out the action one by one.

5.68 *Kë-v-we=i* *kë-vra-khau* ***siaur****.*
ES-PL-take=3SG:OBJ ES-PL-go.back one.by.one
"They took it and went home one by one." [nmb03.Ref.024]

When this morpheme is used with transitive verbs, it causes the verbal object to be expressed like an extended participant of a derived two or three argument construction (§6.3). Extended participants are introduced by the preposition *a/an*[16], as seen when comparing example 5.70 with 5.73. When occurring with transitive verbs, it can often be understood that there are several actors which each act upon different objects.

5.69 *A* *mëlin* *udrlan=i* *a-v-ul* *pua* *na-r.*
PERS chief all=3SG:OBJ 3NSG:REAL-PL-untie pig CLS.FOOD-POSS:3NSG
"All the chiefs untied their pigs." [nmb03.Ref.024]

5.70 *Ale* *a-v-ul* ***siaur*** *a* *pua* *na-r.*
so 3NSG:REAL-PL-untie one.by.one EXT.P pig CLS.FOOD-POSS:3NSG
"So they untied their pigs one by one." [nmb03.Ref.024]

5.71 *Kë-v-wa* *natëv.*
ES-PL-take conch.shell
"They took conch shells." [nmb46.Ref.072]

5.72 *A-v-wa* ***siaur*** *a* *natëv.*
3NSG:REAL-PL-take one.by.one EXT.P conch.shell
"They each carried a conch shell." [nmb46.Ref.077]

In the examples above, it can be understood that there are a multiple agents acting upon multiple patients. In the following example, there are several agents acting upon a single patient. In the example below the patient is expressed as the third person object clitic which is attached to the valence increasing morpheme.

5.73 *Kë-v-khën* ***siaur*** *an=i* *atlara* *ra.*
ES-PL-eat one.by.one EXT.P=3SG:OBJ here now
"They all ate him one by one here." [nmb04.Ref.095]

[16] The allomorph *a* is used with noun phrases, *an* is used when objects are expressed using an object clitic or if they are personal nouns. See section §6.3.

5.3.5.2 Individually *psëv'*

The morpheme *psëv'* has a similar meaning to the modifier *siaur* and functions similarly too. When occurring with intransitive verbs, *psëv'* follows the verb directly and indicates that the agents of the verb undertook the action individually.

5.74 *Kë-v-khapu* ***psëv'.***
ES-PL-burn individually
"They burnt one by one." [nmb13.Ref.015]

Unlike the modifier, *siaur* described above, this modifier appears to be related more to the patient participant of a situation rather than the agent, when occurring in a transitive structure. When modifying transitive verbs, the verbal modifier causes the verbal object to be expressed like an extended participant in a derived two or three argument construction. This can be seen in the following examples. In example 5.75 the third person singular object clitic is modifying the verb while in example 5.76 it is attached to the valence increasing device *an* which is following the modifier *psëv'.*

5.75 *Apë-v-nën* *al* *pukis* *kë-v-we=i.*
3NSG:IRR-PL-fill in suitcase ES-PL-take=3SG:OBJ
"They will fill it in the suitcase and they will take it." [nmb21.Ref.022]

5.76 *Si* *uran=i* *kë-v-wa* ***psëv'*** *an=i.*
thing all=3sg:obj ES-PL-take individually EXT.P=3sg:obj
"All the things, they take them all individually." [nmb21.Ref.048]

5.3.5.3 Upside-down *lilai*

This modifier indicates that a particular action was done upside-down. Fox (1979, p. 92) says that the modifier *lilai* causes object noun phrases to be introduced with the valence increasing device *a/an* as can be seen in example 5.77.

5.77 *Tav'et* *lara* *i-wa* ***lilai*** *a* *naten-en.*
woman that 3SG:REAL-wear upside.down EXT.P bag-POSS:3SG
"That woman is wearing her bra upside-down." (Fox, 1979, p. 92)

However, the use of the valence increasing device to introduce verbal objects when following *lilai* is not attested in the data. This can be seen in the examples below where object nouns directly follow the modifier.

5.78 *Pë-Ø-sisi* ***lilai*** *nav'ëkh-ëk* *lara.*
2:IRR-SG-descend upside-down Malay.apple-POSS:1SG that
"You will climb down my Malay apple tree upside-down." [nmb11.Ref.015]

5.79 *Nav'ëkh-ëk* *lara* *a-Ø-sisi* ***lilai***
Malay.apple-POSS:1SG that 3NSG-IMPRS-decend upside-down
aranë-n *ia.*
on-POSS:3SG ANA.DEM
"My Malay Apple tree, people have to climb down upside-down on it." [nmb11.Ref.015]

5.4 Temporal Verbal Modifiers

Temporal verbal modifiers are used to make aspectual and other temporal distinctions with verbs. They do not appear to co-occur with the emphatic modifiers, thus I hypothesise that they fill the same structural positon.

5.4.1 Again *mël*

The post-verbal modifier *mël* is the most commonly used of all of the temporal modifiers described in this section. It marks an action described by a verb as occurring again when it has positive polarity or that it will not occur anymore when it has negative polarity. *Mël* is able to modify verbs that are inflected by realis, irrealis, and conditional subject prefixes.

When modifying intransitive verbs *mël* generally follows the verb and precedes any oblique clauses.

5.80 *Khin* *i-m'alet* ***mël*** *al* *nawei* *lakhara.*
3SG 3SG:REAL-return again in water DEM
"She went back to the spring." [nmb20.Ref.015]

With transitive verbs, *mël* follows the verb and its object noun phrase. *Mël* cannot be affixed with object clitics and generally precedes any oblique constituents.

5.81 *I-të-tau=i* ***mël*** *a* *tikhtup'.*
3SG:REAL-PFV-put=3SG:OBJ again LOC cooking.pit
"He put it back on the embers." [nmb24.Ref.021]

The following example shows how *mël* is able to modify verbs which have negative polarity.

5.82 *P'ak-ën* *i-a-vi* *vënm'arën* ***mël.***
body-POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL-NEG-COP old.woman again
"Her body was not an old woman anymore." [nmb20.Ref.008]

In the following example, the verb has both negative polarity and future time reference.

5.83 *N-k-a-Ø-rëp* *prapr* *lara* ***mël.***
1:REAL-NES-NEG-SG-kill sow that again
"I will not do namangi (pig killing ceremonies) anymore." [nmb22.Ref.045]

As mentioned previously, *mël* generally precedes oblique participants; however, in some cases, it can follow them. It appears that oblique constituents that are semantically more central to the meaning of an event are followed by *mël* while semantically more peripheral events follow the modifier. This can also occur with extended participants.

5.84 *I-vër* *an=i* ***mël…***
3SG:REAL-say EXT.P=3SG:OBJ again
"He said to him again…" [nmb29.Ref.025]

5.85 *Kë-v-iar* *arana* *Edukesen* *Ofis* ***mël.***
ES-PL-reach on Education Office again
"We arrived back at the Education Office." [nmb31.Ref.041]

Mël is also seen occurring in non-verbal clauses.

5.86 *Si* *pa* *pa* ***mël*** *kinkin…*
thing small small again some
"Some small things of that nature…" [nmb21.Ref.022]

5.87 *M'ikh* *në-n* ***mël…***
tomorrow CLS:GEN-POSS:3SG again
"The next day…" [nmb24.Ref.015]

5.4.2 Continuative Aspect *wëm*

Wëm marks events with continuative aspect. Continuative aspect indicates that an event began in the past and continued on until the reference point. It can also indicate that an event began before or at the time of the reference point and carries on indefinitely into the future. The difference in temporal focus depends on the mood of the verb which *wëm* is modifying; realis mood extends the focus into the past and irrealis extends it into the future.

Wëm marks the same aspect as the verbal prefix *d(a)-* (§3.4) and both the prefix and the verbal modifier can be used individually or together modifying the same verb, although the continuative prefix is not attested occurring with irrealis modality like the free post-verbal modifier *wëm*. In English, the adverbs "still" or "yet" would be used to convey the meaning given by *wëm*.

When *wëm* modifies a verb with realis mood, it indicates that the situation described by the verb began at some point in the past and continued to hold true up until the reference moment.

5.88 *A* *nau-n* *a* *Pasta* *N.* *i-lëk* ***wëm.***
PERS spouse-POSS:3SG PERS pastor N. 3SG:REAL-live still
"Pastor N.'s wife was still alive." [nmb23.Ref.180]

The following two examples show *wëm* being used to modify verbs which are marked with irrealis mood. In both of these examples, it can be understood that the actions hold true at the reference time and that they will continue to hold true into the future. These two examples also show that the modifier *wëm* takes the position after the verbal object.

5.89 *Ipë-trakh* *a* *tap'-ën* ***wëm.***
3SG:IRR-wait.for PERS grand.mother-POSS:3SG still
"He will still wait for his grandmother." [nmb20.Ref.015]

5.90 *Khir* *apë-r-rëp* *m'ertu* ***wëm.***
3NSG 3NSG:IRR-PAU-kill people still
"They would still kill people." [nmb08.Ref.013]

The following two examples have negative polarity. Example 5.91 shows *wëm* working with a declarative clause with negative polarity, while example 5.92 shows *wëm* working with a prohibitive clause.

5.91 *N-d-a-Ø-kharis* *an=i* ***wëm.***
1:REAL-CONT-NEG-SG-finish EXP.T=3SG:OBJ still
"I still have not finished it yet." [nmb39.Ref.026]

The example below comes from a traditional story about a man and his son who make a laplap out of the head of a man. When the laplap is cooked but before they open it the boy tells his father that he is going to cry and his father tells him not to cry.

5.92 *Më-d-a-Ø-valau* ***wëm!***
2:COND-CONT-NEG-SG-cry still
"Don't cry yet!" [nmb27.Ref.035]

Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 93) reports that *wëm* is used as a temporal adverb meaning "soon" and so it is grouped with other lexemes which were identified as adverbs such as *dika* "today", *mikh* "tomorrow", and *tituei* "before". In this work, I do not analyse *wëm* as a temporal adverb. In fact, there are no instances of *wëm* occurring in the corpus where "soon" could be considered as its meaning.

5.4.3 Punctual Aspect *sër*

The verbal modifier *sër* marks punctual aspect which places temporal emphasis on the point a situation becomes real. When a verb is modified by *sër*, it indicates that the verb was realised quickly and in some cases instantaneously.

The example below shows *sër* modifying an intransitive verb. Here it acts like an inchoative marker, focusing on the transition from sitting to standing.

5.93 *A* *mëlin* *lakara* *i-pëtir* ***sër.***
PERS chief DEM 3SG:REAL-stand PUNCTUAL
"The chief stood up." [nmb03.Ref.021]

In example 5.94, *sër* is used to mark the termination of an event. This still falls within the scope of punctual aspect because the focus of the event is on one point of the event; in this case, the termination of the action of coming.

5.94 *Narën* *a-vra-ma* ***sër…***
when 3NSG:REAL-PL-come PUNCTUAL
"When they just arrived..." [nmb38.Ref.028]

With transitive verbs, *sër* follows the object noun phrase and does not take object morphology.

5.95 *K-Ø-ia-p'r* *liu* ***sër!***
2:REAL-SG-open-BRK door PUNCTUAL
"You open the door now!" [nmb27.Ref.054]

5.96 *Da-v-uln=i* ***sër!***
IMP-PL-let.go=3SG:OBJ PUNCTUAL
"Let him go now!" [nmb23.Ref.091]

However, it appears that if the object noun phrase is a personal noun introduced by the personal article *a*, *sër* occurs between the verb and the object as can be seen in the example below. There is only one example of this kind in the corpus so more data is needed to better establish whether the position of *sër* is dependent on whether the object is a general noun or personal noun.

5.97 *Kë-Ø-luwa* ***sër*** *a* *makau* *i-m'ëla.*
ES-SG-shoot PUNCTUAL PERS warrior 3SG:REAL-fall.down
"He shot the warrior." [nmb04.Ref.060]

This modifier appears to be able to be used as a command in its own right, as can be seen in the following example. This appears to be similar to the uninflected verb root method of creating imperatives (§3.2.4). Although I do not analyse the morpheme *sër* as a verb, this

use does indicate that it possibly functioned as a verb in the past like the semantic modifier suffixes described in §4.4.

5.98 *Tatei,* *nakëm* ***sër!***
father 2SG PUNCTUAL
"Dad, hurry up!" [nmb04.Ref.059]

5.4.4 Quantificational Aspect *nakël*

The verbal postmodifier *nakël* is used to mark quantificational aspect. Like *wëm*, this morpheme was described as an adverb of time in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 93). Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979) says that *nakël*, written "*nakl"* in his work, means "always". In many cases this is how it can be translated into English. In the corpus, *nakël* appears to mark an event as occurring repeatedly over a certain space in time. Often, this space in time is quite long, perhaps even indefinite, and in some cases this space in time is quite short (see examples 5.105 and 5.106).

Bhat (1999, p. 53) groups several different aspects such as habitual, frequentative, and iterative into one class of aspect called quantificational aspects. *Nakël* is seen marking both habitual and frequentative aspect so perhaps it is more appropriate to identify *nakël* as a modifier which marks quantificational rather than simply habitual aspect.

When used with stative verbs *nakël* can also be used to mark the state as being durative.

5.99 *l-wir* ***nakël****…*
3SG:REAL-wet QUANT
"It was always wet" [nmb16.Ref.001]

5.100 *l-lëk* ***nakël*** *m'e=i* *ësn-n.*
3SG:REAL-stay QUANT with=3SG:OBJ near-POSS:3SG
"He was always with him." [nmb07.Ref.002]

This example shows how the habitual aspect modifier is able to work in conjunction with the limiter *wëki.* When this occurs, *nakël* follows *wëki*. It also shows how oblique locative expressions follow the habitual marker.

5.101 *Namël i-tar mima wëki* ***nakël*** *a nakh nëmakh.*
garden 3SG:REAL-be.located close only QUANT LOC front house
"Gardens were always just close to the village." [nmb09.Ref.028]

When being ussed to modify transitive verbs *nakël* takes the position following the object and any of its modifiers such as adjectival verbs and demonstrative determiners (example 5.103).

5.102 *K-akh-Ø-ma narën në-Ø-vet tër-tëv-tëva* ***nakël*** *atlakha.*
2:REAL-NEG-SG-come when 1:REAL-SG-weave NMLP-DUP-white QUANT here
"You don't come when I am weaving the white ones here." [nmb02.Ref.015]

5.103 *A-v-lev m'anëkh i-lil-lil lakha* ***nakël.***
3NSG:REAL-PL-take bird 3SG:REAL-DUP-big this QUANT
"They always took the big birds." [nmb07.Ref.004]

Nakël is not modified by the object clitics like some of the other aspect morphemes described earlier in the chapter.

5.104 *Ale kilara kë-Ø-lau=i* ***nakël*** *arana pla nai.*
so that 2:REAL-SG-plant=3SG:OBJ QUANT on trunk wood
"So that kind (of yam), you plant it at the bottom of the stake." [nmb15.Ref.006]

Nakël is also used to mark an event as occurring repeatedly in a small space of time. This type of aspect is called frequentative aspect (Bhat, 1999, p. 53). This indicates that *nakël* cannot mark habitual aspect because something that happens "always" cannot have its occurrence limited to a small space in time. However, the habitual and frequentative aspects are related because they are both quantificational aspects.

In the following example, the space of time in which the event occurred was very limited; perhaps only ten or fifteen minutes. It is definitely an event that could be considered to have frequentative aspect within that limited time frame.

5.105 *Kë-Ø-lev m'ëlk nawei* ***nakël.***
ES-SG-take shadow water QUANT
"He was taking photos of the water." [nmb31.Ref.088]
Lit. "He was taking water shadow."

Nakël is not limited to occurring post-verbally. Here it occurs before the verb and it is signifying that in the particular point of time indicated by *khilakha* "now" something is occurring with frequentative aspect.

5.106 *Khilara* ***nakël*** *ra* *ns-n* *i-rës-rës* *ra.*
now QUANT now excrement-POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL-DUP-fall now
"Now the chicken excrement keeps falling down." [nmb26.Ref.022]

5.5 Verb Phrase Structure

The formulas below shows the basic structure of the Verb Phrase in V'ënen Taut. Chapter three introduced verbs and their prefixes. The only constituent that is required in the verb phrase is the verb which is normally inflected with a subject/mood and number prefix.

1	2	3	4	5	
Subject/Mood	Necessity	Aspect	Negation	Number	VERB

Table 5.2: Verbal Prefixes

Chapter five presented transitive verbs and verbal suffixes. The object noun phrase and any other constituents are positioned after the verb. All of these positions are optionally filled; a prefixed verb is sufficient as a predicate in clauses which have intransitive verbs.

		1	2	3	Clitic
PREFIXES	VERB	Semantic Modifiers	Ability	(Benefactor)	Object

Table 5.3: Verbal Suffix

Chapter six has introduced post verbal modification. There are two main structural positions that these can take in the clause; preceding or following the object noun phrase.

PREFIXES	VERB	SUFFIXES	V.MOD 1	OBJECT (=CLITIC)	V.MOD 2	OBLIQUE
			§5.2	§4.3	§5.3 and §5.4	§6.4

Table 5.4: Basic Verb Phrase

Chapter Six

Clause Structure

6.1 Introduction

The first section of this chapter will discuss the methods used to encode morphosyntactic alignment and aims to prove the classification of V'ënen Taut as a nominative-accusative language. The chapter will then move on to discuss how V'ënen Taut could be considered as a direct object/indirect object language.

The chapter will then continue on to discuss non-core arguments, or obliques, and how they are used in clauses. This will include a description of the three different kinds of prepositions used to introduce obliques. The use of the limiter *wëki*, constituent fronting, serial verb constructions, interrogatives, and non-prototypical predicates will also be summarised.

6.2 Basic Word Order and Argument Structure

The basic word order of V'ënen Taut is SVO, or subject-verb-object. This word order is the second most common basic word order in languages typologically (Dryer, 2007c, p. 68). SVO word order is common among Vanuatu languages (Lynch, Ross & Crowley, 2002, p.49) and can be seen in other Malekula languages like the closely related Tape language (Crowley, 2006c), Malua Bay language (Wessels, 2013), Neverver (Barbour, 2012), and Neve'ei (Musgrave, 2007) to name a few in the surrounding area. A clause showing the basic argument structure of a prototypical transitive verb is shown below.

6.1 *Subject* *Verb* *Object*
[*Tilau*] [*i-khën*] [*nilapir* *lakhara*].
fish 3SG:REAL-eat hook DEM
"A fish eats the hook." [nmb36.Ref.016]

V'ënen Taut is a typical VO language because it has prepositions, its adjectives follow the noun, possessum precedes the possessor, and subordinators precede the subordinate clause (Dryer, 2007c, p. 64-73).

The word order of V'ënen Taut is fairly fixed; however, like many Oceanic languages, some constituents are able to be fronted to a clause initial position in order to aid in topicalisation (Lynch, Ross & Crowley, 2002, p.50). When this occurs, the noun phrase which represents the object can take a position in the sentence before the subject. The fronted constituent is then indexed using a pronominal clitic in the appropriate position in the clause (see §6.6).

When describing the argument structure of a language, it is important to begin with making the distinction between the grammatical functions S, A and P. The S function is that which is carried out by the single participant in a situation expressed with an intransitive verb, the A function is that carried out by the most agent-like participant of a prototypical transitive verb and lastly the P function is carried out by the most patient-like participant of a prototypical transitive verb (Payne, 1997, p. 133-134; Dryer, 2007a, Song, 2001). These different grammatical functions are distinguished in languages in order to help speakers understand who is doing what to whom. To distinguish the three grammatical functions, languages primarily use the following methods: constituent order, nominal case marking, or verbal agreement (Payne, 1997, p. 129). In V'ënen Taut, we see that both word order and verbal agreement are used equally to help distinguish between the grammatical functions A, S, and P.

6.2.1 Single Argument Constructions: Intransitive Clauses

Clauses which have intransitive verbs have one single core argument. This argument has the S grammatical function and is mapped on to the subject grammatical relation. Subjects in V'ënen Taut are preverbal and they are indexed on the verb using person and number prefixes.

In example 6.2, the full noun phrase *a mëlin a Mëkh* "the chief of Amok" is the subject of the verb and it occurs before the verb. It is also indexed on the verb *ma* "come" with the person prefix *i-* which represents subjects that are third person and singular in number. In example 6.3, *nu* "rain" is the subject.

6.2 *[A mëlin a Mëkh]S iS-ma.*
PERS chief LOC Amok 3SG:REAL-come
"The chief of Amok came." [nmb03.Ref.001]

6.3 *[Nu]S iS-u.*
rain 3SG:REAL-rain
"It was raining." [nmb38.Ref.042]

In the example below, the verb *av* "swim/bathe" has the noun phrase subject *ar maral ar malakël* "the kids and youths". This subject is third person and plural in number. Note that like the example above, the subject occurs in the preverbal position. In this case, the third person non-singular person prefix and the plural number prefix inflect the verb and index the person and plurality of the subject.

6.4 *[Ar maral ar malakël]S aS-vS-av.*
all child all youth 3NSG:REAL-PL-swim
"The kids and the youths swam." [nmb31.Ref.091]

This word order is also used when verbs have pronouns as subjects. The pronoun takes the preverbal position and the verb is inflected with the subject and number prefixes which agree with the personal category and grammatical number of the subject pronoun. This can be seen in the following two examples.

6.5 *[Kam'i]S këS-vS-tamamu.*
2NSG 2:REAL-PL-go.first
"You all went first." [nmb31.Ref.130]

6.6 *[Kam'em']S nS-rS-ma ra.*
1NSG:EXCL 1:REAL-PAU-come now
"We came now." [nmb23.Ref.112]

Often verbs occur with their nominal subject supressed. This is because the subject referent can be retrieved from prior context. When this occurs, the verb is inflected with the subject and number prefixes which agree with the personal category and grammatical number of the aforementioned subject.

6.7 *l_S-vel.*
3SG:REAL-walk
“He (the boy) walked.” [nmb07.Ref.005]

6.8 *Në$_S$-v$_S$-m'alet.*
1:REAL-PL-return
“We returned.” [nmb10.Ref.006]

A prominent feature of V’ënen Taut is the use of the echo-subject prefix in situations where the agent of a verb is sustained through a sequence of events. In this case, there is no subject agreement between the verb and its subject because the echo-subject can be used to represent any personal category. However, there is agreement between the grammatical number of the agent and the number prefix used to modify the verb.

6.9 *[Kana]$_S$ n$_S$-Ø$_S$-lëk kë-Ø$_S$-tawatakh.*
1SG 1:REAL-SG-stay ES-SG-go.after
“I stayed and went after.” [nmb31.Ref.131]

6.10 *[Kam'em']$_S$ nës-vra$_S$-v'a kë-v$_S$-lëk wëki.*
1NSG:EXCL 1:REAL-PL-go ES-PL-sit only
“We went and just sat.” [nmb10.Ref.010]

Intransitive constructions are able to take non-core arguments or obliques. Obliques most commonly occur post-verbally and are introduced using prepositions, or, in the case of some local nouns, are juxtaposed post-verbally.

6.11 *Në$_S$-vra$_S$-v'a [al nëmakh na tamët].$_{OBLIQUE}$*
1:REAL-PL-go in house ASV prayer
“We went to church.” (Lit. house of prayer)” [nmb10.Ref.016]

When the preposition *arana* “LOC” is used with expressions of time, it regularly occurs in a position before the verb.

6.12 *[Arana Sabat]$_{OBLIQUE}$ nës-v$_S$-m'atr…*
on Sabbath 1:REAL-PL-sleep
“On the Sabbath (Saturday), we slept” [nmb31.Ref.063]

Local nouns are also able to fill the oblique post-verbal position. Many local nouns do not need to be introduced by prepositions.

6.13 *A$_S$-v$_S$-m'atr* *[am'el].* OBLIQUE
3NSG:REAL-PL-sleep nakamal
"They slept in the nakamal." [nmb24.Ref.010]

6.2.2 Two Argument Constructions: Transitive Clauses

Transitive constructions have two core arguments. Prototypically, they have an agent/actor and a patient/undergoer as their participants. The agent/actor acts as the A grammatical function and is mapped onto the subject grammatical relation. The subject is preverbal and is marked on the verb using subject and number agreement. The patient/undergoer serves as the P grammatical function and is mapped onto the object grammatical relation and occurs post-verbally. Full noun phrases and independent pronouns acting as objects are not typically indexed on the verb; however object indexing can occur in specific grammatical environments.

The semantics of prototypical transitive verbs generally require that the agent, out of its own volition, causes some kind of physical change on the patient. This can be seen in the example below where a fully volitional person causes a physical change in the patient: the fish changed from being not eaten to eaten. We know that *R.* is the subject because it occurs before the verb and because the grammatical person and number of the subject is indexed in the verb using the third person singular realis subject prefix. We know that *tilau iamëk* "a fish" is the object because it occurs after the verb and is not indexed on the verb.

6.14 *[A R.]$_A$* *i$_A$-khën* *[tilau i-amëk].$_P$*
PERS R. 3SG:REAL-eat fish 3SG:REAL-one
"R. ate a fish." [nmb31.Ref.167]

The following example also shows a transitive construction. In this case, the agent of the verb, *ar ki a V'ao* "the people from V'ao", is plural in grammatical number and is in the third person. This is indexed on the verb with the third person non-singular realis subject prefix and the plural number prefix. The patient of verb *lev* "take" occurs in the post-verbal position

and is a noun phrase which is non-singular in number. This example shows us that non-singular noun phrase objects are also not typically indexed on the verb.

6.15 *[Ar ki a V'ao]$_A$ a$_A$-v$_A$-lev [trak i-ru].$_P$*
all NSPC LOC V'ao 3NSG:REAL-PL-take truck 3SG:REAL-two
"All the people in V'ao took two trucks." [nmb30.Ref.076]

Like intransitive constructions, transitive constructions are able to have their subject expressed using pronouns. The same grammatical person and number expressed by the pronominal subject is also indexed on the verb as shown in the example below.

6.16 *[Kana]$_A$ n$_A$-Ø-$_A$lu-luwa [nalim'ëlakhas].$_P$*
1SG 1:REAL-SG-DUP-shoot lizard
"I was shooting lizards." [nmb07.Ref.015]

Pronouns are also able to fill the object position of transitive clauses, acting as the P grammatical function. This can be seen in example 6.17 and 6.18. As with transitive constructions which have full noun phrase objects, pronominal objects do not normally require indexing on the verb.

6.17 *[Tam'a raransi]$_A$ a$_A$-v$_A$-lev [kana].$_P$*
lisepsep 3NSG:REAL-PL-take 1SG
"The lisepseps took me." [nmb46.Ref.103]

6.18 *[Kana]$_A$ të$_A$-Ø$_A$-ln [kam'i]$_P$ ra.*
1SG 1SG:IRR-SG-leave 2NSG now
"I will leave you all now." [nmb23.Ref.007]

This is also the case with reflexive clauses. These are syntactically transitive constructions in which both the A and P grammatical functions have the same real world referent. Transitive clauses generally have pronouns filling the post-verbal object position.

6.19 *[Tav'et lakhara]$_A$ i$_A$-sër-p'ën [khin].$_P$*
woman DEM 3SG:REAL-hang-FTL 3SG
"The woman hung herself." [nmb09.Ref.007]

Three of the grammatical person and number categories can be expressed using a pronominal enclitic in V'ënen Taut. These personal categories are second person singular, third person singular, and third person non-singular

6.20 *N_A-$Ø_A$-ln=[ëkh]$_P$* *arana* *tlv'a.*
1SG:REAL-SG-leave=2SG:OBJ on truck
"I left you on the truck." [nmb31.Ref.014]

6.21 *[Tav'et lakara]$_A$* *i_A-khan=[i].$_P$*
woman DEM 3SG:REAL-eat=3SG:OBJ
"The woman ate it (the laplap)." [nmb28.Ref.025]

6.22 *Pë$_A$-v$_A$-luwa=[r]$_P$* *atlara.*
2:IRR-PL-shoot=3NSG:OBJ there
"You will shoot them there." [nmb30.Ref.096]

Generally the full object noun phrase is not expressed when an object clitic is used; its referent is taken from previous context. However, there are cases in which the object noun phrase can be expressed. These are situations in which fronting is used or situations in which the pronominal is used to index the plurality of a human object. Using the third person pronominal clitic to index the plurality of an object is optional.

6.23 *Kë$_A$-$Ø_A$-tau=[r]$_P$* *[maral* *pa* *pa-k]$_P$* *udrlan=i* *ësn…*
ES-SG-put=3NSG:OBJ child small small-POSS:1SG all=3SG:OBJ near
"I will put all my small children near…" [nmb12.Ref.013]

To further discuss the structure of transitive constructions, it is necessary to also look at clauses which have clitic-taking post-verbal modifiers. This is because these verbal modifiers are able to be inflected with pronominal clitics in certain grammatical environments.

The use of the clitic-taking post-verbal modifiers can be seen in the examples below. In example 6.24, the object noun phrase, or the argument acting as the P grammatical function, occurs after the verbal modifier *sara* "COMP". In example 6.25, the P argument is expressed using an object clitic which is affixed to *sara* "COMP". This same process occurs for all of the clitic-taking post-verbal modifiers described in §5.2.

6.24 *Në$_{A}$-v$_{A}$-khën sara [tim'akh].$_{P}$*
1:REAL-PL-eat COMP food
"We finished eating food." [nmb10.Ref.006]

6.25 *Në$_{A}$-v$_{A}$-khën sare=[i].$_{P}$*
1:REAL-PL-eat COMP=3SG:OBJ
"We finished eating it." [nmb31.Ref.118]

Evidence from intransitive and transitive constructions demonstrates that V'ënen Taut uses a nominative/accusative system to distinguish between the grammatical functions S, A, and P. In this case system S and A are marked the same and P has unique marking (Dryer, 2007a; Payne, 1997). Both noun phrase and pronominal S arguments occur in the preverbal position, and are indexed on the verb with prefixes for grammatical person and number. The A argument of transitive constructions is also marked in this fashion. It occurs before the verb and is indexed on the verb using prefixes which agree in person and number. Both S and A arguments can be suppressed when their referent is clear through context; however, the subject referent must still be indexed on the verb using the relevant subject and number prefix.

In contrast with the S and A arguments, the P argument occurs in the post-verbal position. Nominals acting as the P argument are not obligatorily indexed on the verb itself, unlike S and A arguments. The clitics are bound morphemes and attach either directly to the verb or its last modifier suffix. There are six free post-verbal modifiers which the clitics can affix to as well (§5.2). Though both the object clitic and noun phrase P argument can co-occur following the verb, in this situation, the noun phrase argument appears to be emphatic. If verb-object agreement were a feature of V'ënen Taut grammar we would expect to see verbs consistently modified with object morphology in the same manner as subjects regardless of how the P argument is expressed.

The table below shows the distinguishing features that typically apply to each of the three grammatical functions, S, A, and P. The features are divided into three categories: argument position, indexing, and method of argument suppression. As can be seen in the table, the distinguishing features are identical for both S and A arguments in all three categories while the features of P arguments are different, thus producing a nominative/accusative pattern.

		S	A	P
Argument Position	Preverbal	✓	✓	✗
	Post-verbal	✗	✗	✓
Verbal Indexing	Person	✓	✓	✗
	Number	✓	✓	(✓)
Argument Suppression	Through Gapping	✓	✓	✗
	Through Clitics	✗	✗	✓

Table 6.1: S, A, and P Argument Features

6.3 Valence Increase

It is possible, in V'ënen Taut, to have propositions which have three participants. In many languages three-argument constructions are formed using ditransitive verbs; however, V'ënen Taut does not have any true ditransitive verbs. Instead, a valence increasing device simply adds an additional participant to either intransitive or transitive clauses.

The valence increasing device *a,* is a preposition. It takes the form *a* when it is used to introduce full noun phrase arguments, and its allomorph *an* is used when the additional argument is expressed using a clitic or when the noun is a personal noun, introduced by the personal article.

A similar process is described in the Espiegle's Bay Language (Holmes, 2014, p. 140-149) where the preposition *ngen* [ŋen] is used to add an "extended patient" to clauses which involve either inherently intransitive or transitive verbs. In this work, I use the label "extended participant" rather than "extended patient" in order to add clarity to this process because not all participants introduced through valence increase can be considered semantic patients.

6.3.1 Derived Two Argument Constructions

As described in §6.2.1 intransitive constructions express propositions which involve one participant. The single participant of an intransitive proposition is the grammatical subject of that clause. Generally, that argument has the semantic role of agent, though sometimes it plays other semantic roles, such as an experiencer, force, or patient.

Most intransitive verbs in V'ënen Taut are semantically intransitive. This means that they conceptually have one participant; the entity doing the action denoted by the verb. However, some intransitive verbs can be conceived as being semantically transitive or can be semantically transitive or intransitive depending on the situation. This means that they can be conceived as having two participants: the entity doing the action and the entity being acted upon. These semantically transitive actions encoded as intransitive verbs often have some kind of inherent semantic patient or in some cases the patient is retrievable through the context of the situation.

The V'ënen Taut verb *kharis*[17] "finish" is an in intransitive verb and has a valence of one. Semantically, *kharis* "finish" can mean that something is finished, in which case, the subject of the verb takes the semantic role of the patient. When used in this manner, it can mean that a number of entities which once existed are now depleted or it can mean that an action is finished.

6.26 *[Nav'ëkh]$_p$* ***i$_p$-kharis.***
Malay.apple 3SG:REAL-finish
"The Malay apples are finished/all gone." [nmb11.Ref.014]

Kharis "finish" can also mean that is situation is finished.

6.27 *Narën* *a$_A$-v$_A$-nën* *[pukis]* ***i-kharis…***
when 3NSG:REAL-PL-fill suitcase 3SG:REAL-finish
"When they finish filling the suitcase…" [nmb21.Ref.031]

It is possible for the structure and meaning of the verb to be changed with the use of the valence increasing device. Syntactically, the valence of the verb is increased from a valence of one to a valence of two: it now has a subject and an introduced object. Semantically, there is also a change between the intransitive use of *kharis* "finish" and its derived transitive use. With the derived transitive form of the verb, the agent that is doing the finishing is overtly encoded as the subject of the verb while the patient, thing that is finished, is encoded as the introduced object and follows the extended participant morpheme.

[17] *Kharis* is sometimes pronounced *khiris*.

6.28 *Kë$_A$-r$_A$-kharis* ***a*** *[tim'akh].$_P$*
ES-PAU-finish EXT.P food
"We finished eating" [nmb31.Ref.170]
Lit. "We finished the food"

6.29 *Apë$_A$-v$_A$-kharis* ***an=[r]*** *.$_P$*
3NSG:IRR-PL-finish EXT.P=3NSG:OBJ
"We will kill them." (the monsters) [nmb13.Ref.012]
Lit. "We will finish them."

Not all the extended participants introduced in clauses that have intransitive verbs as heads are patients. When we consider the semantic properties of the intransitive verb *rukh* "go/run away", it is understood that there is an inherent agent involved, which is the thing volitionally running or going away from some other object or source. As *rukh* "go/run away" is an intransitive verb, it only requires a subject to be expressed in order to be grammatical. The other potential semantic participant is the source, or location which is the point of initiation of the movement. The source does generally not need to be expressed because it is evident from the context as the reference location in the narrative.

6.30 *[Tam'a raransi]$_A$* *i$_A$-rukh.*
lisepsep 3SG:REAL-run.away
"The lisepsep ran away." [nmb46.Ref.084]

However, in some cases this source needs to be more specific than a particular area. This can be seen in the example below in which the speaker is running away from a snake disguised as a pole of money. Here, the source is encoded as the extended participant using the third person singular enclitic which attaches to the valence increasing device.

6.31 *N$_A$-Ø-rukh* ***an=[i]*** *.SOURCE*
1:REAL-SG-run.away EXT.P=3SG:OBJ
"I ran away from it." [nmb40.Ref.011]

The following example involves the verb *sisil* "have a wash". When the valence increasing device is used to add an extended participant to the verb, the additional participant can play the role of instrument. In the majority of occurrences of this verb, the inherent instrument is

water; however, it appears that other things can be used instead. This changes the meaning of the verb, giving it a meaning similar to “cover the body/face with”.

6.32 *l-lev* *nëmër* *në-n* *lakara* *kë$_A$-Ø-sisil* ***an=[i]***. INSTRUMENT
3SG:REAL-take ash CLS.GEN-POSS:3SG DEM ES-SG-wash EXT.P=3SG:OBJ
“He took the ashes then he washed with them.” [nmb25.Ref.030]

Other additional semantic roles which can be grammatically added as an extended participant of intransitive verbs are goals, as with the examples containing the verbs *v’ara* “call out”, stimulus as with *vëtëma* “laugh”, and instrument, as seen with *duduva* “play”. These are shown in the examples below. For comparison, each verb is shown firstly as an intransitive, and then as a derived transitive.

6.33 ***l$_A$-v'ara*** *kë-Ø-vër* *ti* *a* *‘rakhët* *lil’…*
3SG:REAL-call.out ES-SG-say SUB EXT.P elder.woman big
“He called out and said ‘lady …’” [nmb28.Ref.054]

6.34 ***l$_A$-v'ara*** ***an*** *[a* *teti-ën…]$_{GOAL}$*
3SG:REAL-call.out EXT.P PERS father-POSS:3SG
“He called out to his father…” [nmb38.Ref.028]

6.35 ***Në$_A$-Ø-v'ara*** ***an=[ëkh]…***$_{GOAL}$
1:REAL-SG-call.out EXT.P=2SG:OBJ
“I called out to you…” [nmb31.Ref.054]

6.36 *[Marëdel]$_A$* ***a$_A$-v$_A$-vëtëma.***
child 3NSG:REAL-PL-laugh
“The children were laughing.” [nmb30.Ref.134]

6.37 *[P'ëlakh]$_A$* ***i$_A$-vëtëma*** ***an=[i]***. STIMULUS
banded.rail 3SG:REAL-laugh EXT.P=3SG:OBJ
“The banded rail laughed at it (the purple swamphen).” [nmb34.Ref.014]

6.38 ***A$_A$-v$_A$-duduva*** *al* *nata.*
3NSG:REAL-PL-play LOC sea
“They are playing in the sea.” [nmb32.Ref.018]

6.39 *Nki* *a-v-wa* *navamëli* *kë-vra-va* *al* *nata* ***kë$_A$-v$_A$-duduva***
some 3NSG:REAL-PL-carry ball ES-PL-go in sea ES-PL-play
an=[i].$_{INSTRUMENT}$
EXT.P=3SG:OBJ
“Some of them (children) took the ball and went to the beach and played with it.” [nmb32.Ref.019]

6.3.2 Derived Three Argument Constructions

Two argument constructions involving transitive verbs can also have an additional argument added to them with the use of the valence increasing device, *a/an,* thereby becoming three argument constructions. In many languages three argument constructions are formed using ditransitive verbs which inherently require three arguments in order to be grammatical. Depending on the type of grammatical marking used in a language, these arguments form the grammatical relations of either; subject, direct object, and indirect object; or subject, object, and second object (Dryer, 2007a, p. 254). Examples of verbs which are often ditransitive are “give”, “say” and “send”.

Prototypically, the arguments in three argument constructions play the semantic roles of agent, theme, and recipient. The functional labels used here are taken from Dryer (2007a, p. 254) and are A, for the agent-like participant of transitive constructions; T, for the theme-like participant of three argument constructions; and R, for the recipient-like participant of three argument constructions. The theme-like argument is the entity being moved or transferred and the recipient is the entity which receives the theme.

There is in fact some variance in the way in which three argument constructions are formed in V’ënen Taut; however, the A argument, or the most agent-like participant of the verb, takes the preverbal position and is indexed on the verb using both subject and number agreement prefixes. The T argument, or theme-like participant, typically takes the position directly following the verb and is not indexed on the verb, and lastly the R argument follows the T argument and is introduced using the valence increase device *a/an.*

Below are four examples of what could be considered typical ditransitive verbs by Dryer (2007a). In each of these examples, it can be seen that there is a subject which is agentive in its semantic role and is indexed on the verb using agreement morphology; there is a theme-like participant which takes the object position after the verb as a full noun phrase or post-verbal pronominal clitic; and there is a recipient-like participant which is introduced by the valence increasing device *a/an*.

Where the extended participant is a noun phrase and non-singular in number, the non-singularity of the participant is regularly indicated by using the *an* form of the valence increasing device which is inflected by the third-person non-singular clitic. This can be seen in example 6.42 below. This may be due to the fact that V'ënen Taut nouns are not coded morphologically in regard to grammatical number. If the basic *a* form of the valence increasing device was used instead of *an=r* to introduce the additional participant that was not marked with any other quantifiers or numerals, the non-singularity of the introduced participant would not be encoded.

6.40 *I_A-tu* *[nëmakh* *i-amëk]$_T$* ***an=[r]***$_R$
3SG:REAL-give house 3SG:REAL-one EXT.P=3NSG:OBJ
"He gave a house to them." [nmb23.Ref.113]

6.41 *Të$_A$-Ø$_A$-vër* *[v'akh-v'akh-ien* *i-amëk]$_T$* ***an=[ëkh]***$_R$
1:IRR-SG-say DUP-think-NMLS 3SG:REAL-one EXT.P=2SG:OBJ
"I will tell a plan (thought) to you." [nmb13.Ref.001]

6.42 *Kë$_A$-v$_A$-viven* *[krisi]$_T$* ***an=r*** ***[marëdel]***$_R$
ES-PL-show writing EXT.P=3NSG:OBJ child
"They teach the children." [nmb10.Ref.015]
Lit. "They show writing to the children."

6.43 *I_A-ëran* *sare=[i]$_T$* ***a*** *[pua]*$_R$
3SG:REAL-throw COMP=3SG:OBJ EXT.P pig
"He threw it (food) to the pig." [nmb11.Ref.005]

Comparing the four examples above with the examples in §6.2.2 we can see that the grammatical marking of the A and T functions of three argument constructions is the same

as the marking of the A and P functions in transitive constructions. When we compare the marking of the P function of transitive constructions with the R function of three argument constructions we see that the R argument is separated from the T argument using the valence increasing device *a/an*. This corresponds to the argument structure which Dryer (2007a, p. 257) calls the direct object/indirect object ditransitive verb structure. V'ënen Taut is also typical of direct object/indirect object marking languages because it, like other non-case marking accusative languages, uses a preposition to introduce the R argument in three argument constructions (Dyera, 2007).

Although the section above has explained three argument constructions in reference to the typological notion of ditransitivity and even suggested that the marking pattern which three argument constructions follow in V'ënen Taut is the direct object/indirect object marking pattern, I maintain that there is no inherently ditransitive verb class in V'ënen Taut. The reasoning behind this assertion is not because three argument constructions are ungrammatical, they are clearly possible in the examples above. Rather, it is because the same method is used for encoding arguments which go beyond the typical range of what can be encoded by prototypical ditransitive verbs. These arguments can play semantic roles like goals, benefactors, and regularly instruments. In fact these types of non-prototypical ditransitive three argument constructions occur more often in the data than those types of constructions which fit snugly within the realm of prototypical ditransitive constructions.

6.44 *[I.]*$_{A}$ *i*$_{A}$*-uln* *[tan]*$_{P}$ ***an=[i].***$_{GOAL}$
I. 3SG:REAL-let.go gun EXT.P=3SG:OBJ
"I. fired the gun at him." [nmb04.Ref.048]

6.45 *[M'ertu lara]$_A$ i$_A$-ën [khëpai]$_P$*[18] ***a*** *[kana].* *BENEFACTOR*
person that 3SG:REAL-make sleep.over EXT.P 1SG
"That person stayed at my house." [nmb17.Ref.012]

6.46 *kë$_A$-v$_A$-ën [nëkhau]$_P$* ***an=[i]*** *MATERIAL*
ES-PL-make laplap EXT.P=3SG:OBJ
"They made laplap with it (eel)." [nmb38.Ref.036]

6.47 *a$_A$-v$_A$-al-p'ën=[i]$_P$* ***a*** *[nap']. INSTRUMENT*
3NSG:REAL-PL-burn-FTL=3SG:OBJ EXT.P fire
"They burn them (evil spirits) to death with fire." [nmb43.Ref.015]

6.48 *N$_A$-Ø$_A$-le=[i]$_P$* ***a*** *[m'at-ëk]. INSTRUMENT*
1:REAL-SG-see=3SG:OBJ EXT.P eye-POSS:1SG
"I saw it with my own eyes" [nmb06.Ref.010]

6.49 *[Tarëp']$_A$ a$_A$-v$_A$-ruv=[i]$_P$* ***a*** *[ru nai na kastun]. INSTRUMENT*
elder.man 3NSG:REAL-PL-treat=3SG:OBJ EXT.P leaf tree ASV tradition
"The elders treated him with traditional leaf medicine." [nmb06.Ref.006]

The second reason supporting the analysis that there are no true ditransitive constructions in V'ënen Taut is because the same method is used for adding arguments to intransitive constructions in order to create derived transitive constructions. In derived transitive constructions, the extended participant added by the valence increasing device can play the patient semantic role of prototypical transitive constructions or it can play several other

[18] *Khëpai* occurs when people change their sleeping dwelling. Big Nambas believe that you must sleep in your own house the night before you go to your garden. If you sleep in someone else's house or they stay with you, it is forbidden to go to the garden. Some Big Nambas people also believe that the day after *khëpai* is committed that people are lethargic. *Khëpai* also occurs when you return to your own dwelling after sleeping in a different location the night before. For example, if you sleep at a relative's house one night and then return to your own house, you will be unproductive for two days and the people in each village will be unproductive for one day. "*Nrn khëpai nër irëp kana, nëm'atr dav'a dav'a nut ivi kënarëv*" "I felt their *khëpai* affect me, I slept on and on into the afternoon"

semantic roles which are not prototypical of transitive constructions. This is similar to what can be observed in the derived three argument constructions that some derived three argument constructions have participants representing semantic roles not typically associated with ditransitive verbs such as instrument or benefactor. This is particularly telling and indicates that the valence increasing device is simply used to bring a participant which cannot normally be a grammatical argument of a particular verb closer into the core meaning of the verb when a speaker deems it to be of high enough importance. In this way the same device can be used to add arguments to intransitive verbs, as shown in §6.3.1, and transitive verbs in §6.3.2. Those instances above which could be considered as evidence of ditransitive verbs in V'ënen Taut simply appear to be transitive verbs which have had an additional argument added to them using the valence increasing device and which happen to fit neatly into the typological notion of ditransitive constructions.

The verb *tu* "put/give" is a good example to show how a transitive verb can have an additional argument added to its core propositional meaning by using the valence increasing device. This results in a structure that appears semantically and syntactically ditransitive. First we should begin with the semantics of the basic transitive use of the verb *tu* "put". When used as a transitive, we find that *tu* appears to have a meaning similar to "put down" or "put on the ground".

6.50 *Narën* *kë$_A$-Ø$_A$-tu* *sara* *[pai]$_P$…*
when ES-SG-put COMP yam
"When you have put the yam (on the ground)…" [nmb15.Ref.004]

6.51 *Nëkhau,* *[au* *pa* *lakara]$_A$* *i$_A$-tu* *mamëkh=[i]$_P$,* *i-tar.*
laplap man small DEM 3SG:REAL-put well=3SG:OBJ 3SG-be.located
"Laplap, the boy put it down well, it stayed there." [nmb07.Ref.027]

Often, when used in transitive constructions, the location where the object of *tu* "put" comes to rest can be expressed using obliques.

6.52 *Kë$_A$-Ø$_A$-tu* *[mersin]$_P$* ***aranë-n.***
ES-SG-put medicine on-POSS:3SG
"He put medicine on it (sore)." [nmb23.Ref.094]

A third participant can be added to a proposition which involves the verb *tu* "put" using the valence increasing device. Often, this results in a proposition which appears to be a ditransitive construction both grammatically, three arguments, and semantically, with an agent, theme, and recipient.

6.53 *I_A-tu* *[nëmakh* *i-amëk]$_T$* ***an=[r]***.$_R$
3SG:REAL-put house 3SG:REAL-one EXT.P=3NSG:OBJ
"He gave a house to them" [nmb23.Ref.113]

6.54 *[Tav'et* *lakhara]$_R$,* *narën* *i_A-tu* *[pai]$_T$* ***an=[i]***.$_R$
woman DEM when 3SG:REAL-put yam EXT.P=3SG:OBJ
"The woman, when he gave the yam to her." [nmb09.Ref.019]

However, like with many of the examples above the valence increasing device is also able to add participants to clauses involving the verb *tu* "put" and, in terms of their semantic properties, have them not resemble ditransitive constructions. This can be seen in the following example.

6.55 *Kë-Ø-tu* *[nap']$_T$* ***a*** ***[ruplet*** ***na*** ***nas]***. GOAL
ES-SG-put fire EXT.P dry.leaf ASV banana
"He lit the dry banana leaves on fire." [nmb09.Ref.027]
Lit. "He put fire on the dry banana leaves."

6.3.2.1 Object Omission in Derived Three Argument Constructions

Although object omission does not appear to be a regularly occurring feature of transitive constructions, it does however appear to occur regularly in three argument constructions. Generally this affects the object argument acting as the theme participant, when it has been established through the context of the text. In some cases, particularly involving the verb *vër* "say", the extended participant argument, acting as the recipient, can also be omitted. Object fronting, which will be described in §6.6, also affects the overt expression of arguments in stu.

6.56 *Kë$_A$-Ø-tu* *[Ø]$_T$* *a* *[tav'et]*.$_R$
ES-SG-give Ø EXT.P woman
"He gave it (yam) to the woman." [nmb09.Ref.018]

6.57 *Kë-Ø-lena* *puk lil* *kë$_A$-Ø-viven* *[Ø]$_T$* *an=[r].$_R$*
ES-SG-open bible ES-SG-show EXT.P=3NSG:OBJ
"He opened the bible and showed it to them." [nmb23.Ref.105]

The example below shows how the objects of the verbs *tr* "cut" and *vës* "tear" have been omitted. In this case the object is a man who has been shot and is having the bullets removed from his chest. The object can be omitted because it is established previously. Here, the speaker is focusing on the instruments used for cutting.

6.58 *l$_A$-a-tr* *[Ø]$_P$* *a* *[risa],$_{INSTRUMENT}$* *i$_A$-a-tr* *[Ø]$_P$* *a*
3SG:REAL-NEG-cut EXT.P razor 3SG:REAL-NEG-cut EXT.P
[talei],$_{INSTRUMENT}$ *i$_A$-vës* *[Ø]$_P$* *a* *[lamu pira].$_{INSTRUMENT}$*
knife 3SG:REAL-tear EXT.P soft.bamboo
"He did not cut him with a razor, he did not cut him with a knife, he cut him with soft bamboo." [nmb05.Ref.006]

6.4 Non-Core Arguments

Non-core arguments, or obliques, are optional in clauses. They can occur with intransitive and transitive constructions. Obliques can be bare local nouns, or they can be introduced by prepositions. There are three classes of prepositions in V'ënen Taut: free prepositions, verbal prepositions, and nominal prepositions.

6.4.1 Local Nouns

Table 6.2 below shows a list of the local nouns attested in the data. Local nouns act as non-core arguments by simply being positioned after the verb. This is seen in the examples below. The local nouns *aut* "someone's place" and *am'el* "in the nakamal" are attested being be modified by possessive suffixes.

Local Noun	Meaning
am'el	in the nakamal
avarën	outside
avetlim	home
eiëm	inside (house)
eia	up
awei	down
aut	(s.one's) place

Table 6.2: Local Nouns

The following examples show how *am'el* "in the nakamal" is used in both intransitive and transitive constructions.

6.59 *A-v-m'atr* ***am'el.***
3NSG:REAL-PL-sleep in.nakamal
"They slept in the nakamal." [nmb24.Ref.010]

6.60 *Khir* *a-v-ën* *nëkhau* ***am'el.***
3NSG 3NSG-PL-make laplap in.nakamal
"They made the laplap in the nakamal." [nmb07.Ref.019]

If a person is talking about a nakamal that belongs to a particular person, this can be indicated through the use of possessive suffixes.

6.61 *Kë-v-lëk* ***am'el-ën*** *a* *mëlin* *lakhara.*
ES-PL-stay in.nakamal-POSS:3SG PERS chief DEM
"They were in the chief's nakamal." [nmb38.Ref.038]

This example shows *avarën* "outside" occurring as the non-core argument of an intransitive construction.

6.62 *Kë-r-ma* ***avarën*** *lakha.*
ES-PAU-come out.side this
"They came out side now." [nmb24.Ref.039]

This example shows *avetlim* "home" is used as a non-core argument.

6.63 *I-vërvër-m'alet* *kë-da-Ø-khau* ***avetlim.***
3SG:REAL-run-return ES-CONT-SG-go.back home
"He ran back home." [nmb46.Ref.061]

The following examples show how the local noun *eiëm* "inside a building" is used as a non-core argument in intransitive and transitive constructions.

6.64 *Tam'a* *lakara* *a-vra-v'a* ***eiëm.***
monster DEM 3NSG:REAL-PL-go inside
"The monsters went inside." [nmb25.Ref.036]

6.65 *Sena* *tituei* *a-Ø-titen* *pua* ***eiëm.***
because before, 3NSG:REAL-IMPS-tie.up pig inside
"Because before, people tied pigs up inside." [nmb17.Ref.030]

The following examples show how the local noun *aut* "at someone's place" can be used as a non-core locative argument in transitive and intransitive clauses. This local noun is often inflected with possessive morphology (§2.5.2.2). This is because it refers to a place which to belongs a particular person.

6.66 *Kë-vra-khau* ***aut-ar.***
ES-PL-go.back place-POSS:3NSG
"They went back to their place." [nmb21.Ref.046]

6.67 *Pë-Ø-lav=i* *kë-Ø-wir-ma* ***aut-ëk,*** *a* *nut* *we*
2:IRR-SG-take=3SG:OBJ ES-SG-carry-come place-POSS:1SG LOC place REL
a-Ø-khën-khën *m'ertu.*
3NSG:REAL-IMPS-DUP-eat person
"You will take it and come to my place, the place where people eat people." [nmb23.Ref.042]

As with possessed nouns, it is possible simply to juxtapose a non-personal noun possessor following the possessum in a compound-like structure. In the data, the local noun *aut* "at someone's place" is often followed by *taut* "Big Nambas person" to create a meaning similar to "in the place of the Big Nambas people" or "land of the Big Nambas".

6.68 *Kam'em'* *në-v-lëk* ***aut*** *taut.*
1NSG:EXCL 1:REAL-PL-LIVE place big.nambas
"We lived in the place of the Big Nambas people." [nmb14.Ref.001]

The following examples show how the local nouns *eia* "up" and *awei* "down" can be used as non-core arguments in clauses. Both *eia* "up" and *awei* "down" can be used as locations or as directions. In the examples below, the first example is locative while the second is directional.

6.69 *A* *D.* *i-lëk* ***eia.***
PERS D. 3SG:REAL-sit up
"D. sat up high." [nmb11.Ref.022]

6.70 *Kë-Ø-rëv* *tilau* *lara* *i-ma* ***eia.***
ES-SG-pull fish that 3SG:REAL-come up
"you pull the fish, it comes up." [nmb36.Ref.011]

6.71 *Tap'-ëk* *khin* *i-v'a* *kë-Ø-av* ***awei*** *lakha.*
grandmother-POSS:1SG 3SG 3SG:REAL-go ES-SG-bathe down this
"My grandmother, she went and bathed down there." [nmb20.Ref.011]

6.72 *Në-vra-ma* *kë-v-siris* *kë-vra-ma* ***awei.***
1:REAL-PL-come ES-PL-descend ES-PL-come down
"We came and descended, we came down." [nmb31.Ref.110]

6.4.2 Prepositional Non-Core Arguments

The following table shows the prepositions which can be used in V'ënen Taut in order to introduce non-core arguments. There are three types of prepositions in V'ënen Taut: free prepositions, verbal prepositions, and nominal prepositions. These preposition types are adapted from Erromangan which has prepositions which function in a similar manner to those of V'ënen Taut (Crowley, 2002, 199-200). Free prepositions are invariant; like verbs, verbal prepositions can be inflected with pronominal enclitics; and like nouns, nominal prepositions can be modified by possessive suffixes.

Preposition Type		Meaning
Free Prepositions	*a*	to
	al	to/in (something that can be entered)
Verbal Prepositions	*m'a*	with
	a/an	valence increasing device
Nominal Prepositions	*ësn*	near/beside
	arana	on
	anl	inside (closed entity)
	anëv	under

Table 6.3: Prepositions

		a	*al*	*anl*	*ësn*	*anëv*	*arana* *aranë-*	*m'a*
Spatial	at	✓	✓					
	in	✓	✓	✓				
	goal (to)	✓	✓		✓			
	near, by				✓			
	towards				✓			
	under					✓		
	on						✓	
Temporal	in, on, at						✓	
Accompanitive	with (non-human)							✓
Personal	with (volitional)							✓

Table 6.4: Functions of Prepositions

6.4.2.1 *a* "LOC"

The preposition *a* is a general locative and it is used to mark that an event took place at a certain location or an entity will be at a certain location that at the end of an action. For the most part, the noun phrase which acts as the prepositional object of *a* "LOC" is not something that can be entered. It is something that an entity can be on, by, or attached to. This preposition is a homophone of the personal article *a* and is obligatorily used to introduce proper place names.

The following examples show proper place names being introduced using the locative *a* "LOC".

6.73 *Pë-Ø-m'ën* *nata* ***a*** *Winm'a.*
2:IRR-SG-drink sea LOC Winm'a
"Go drink sea water at Winm'a." [nmb04.Ref.009]

6.74 *N-r-vel* *kë-r-v'a* ***a*** *Lakatoro.*
1:REAL-PAU-move ES-PAU-go LOC Lakatoro
"We went to Lakatoro." [nmb31.Ref.007]

These examples show how *a* "LOC" encodes general locations.

6.75 *Ale* *a* *mëlin* *lakara* *kë-v-lës* ***a*** *navet.*
then PERS chief DEM ES-PL-tie.animal LOC stone
"Then the chiefs tied the pigs to the stones." [nmb03.Ref.015]

6.76 *P'e-v-ën* *nëmakh* *ipë-amëk* ***a*** *navanal.*
1:IRR-PL-make house 3SG:IRR-one LOC road
"We will build a house by the road." [nmb04.Ref.016]

The following examples all show *a* "LOC" indicating the goal of movement.

6.77 *Khin* *i-vel* *kë-da-Ø-v'a* ***a*** *lili.*
3SG 3SG:REAL-walk ES-CONT-SG-go LOC bush
"He walked and went to the bush." [nmb07.Ref.004]

In this example we find that the movement is encoded by the verb *tu/tau* "put".

6.78 *Kë-Ø-tau=i* ***a*** *nut* *uraur.*
ES-SG-put=3SG:OBJ LOC place different
"You put it (yam) in a different place." [nmb15.Ref.003]

This example shows the goal of the verb *sikhavës* "jump". It is also interesting because it indicates how prepositional noun phrases can have additional prepositional noun phrases imbedded in them.

6.79 *Kana n-Ø-sikhavës **a** nadep' arana Edukesen Ofis.*
1SG 1:REAL-SG-jump LOC ground on Education Office
“I jumped down to the ground at the Education Office.” [nmb31.Ref.013]

6.4.2.2 *al* “in”

The preposition *al* “in” functions in a similar manner to the proposition *a* “LOC” described in the previous section. It can be used to introduce locations and goals of movement. The difference between the prepositions *a* and *al* is that the prepositional compliment of *al* must be able to be entered or have another object placed inside of it. These locations can be manmade, such as buildings, or they can be naturally occurring, such as caves. The spaces introduced by *al* do not need to be enclosed by physical boundaries but they do need to have some kind of border. For example the noun *nun* “beach” and *pitvët* “garden” are introduced by *al*.

The following examples show *al* being used to introduce a noun which can be entered.

6.80 *Ar du vakhara a-v-lëk **al** tëvtëv pa lakhara.*
all man DEM 3NSG:REAL-PL-stay in shelter small DEM
“The men stayed in the small shelter.” [nmb04.Ref.034]

6.81 *A-r-v'a **al** pëlkunavet i-amëk.*
3NSG:REAL-PAU-go in cave 3SG:REAL-one
“They went to a cave.” [nmb25.Ref.018]

6.82 *Kë-Ø-av **al** nawei.*
ES-SG-bathe in water
“She bathed in the water.” [nmb20.Ref.006]

Al is also used when the subject puts an entity into something, such as a bag, basket, or piece of bamboo, as in the example below. It can also be used when something is put on a leaf as a method of containment.

6.83 *Kë-v-ne=i **al** lamu.*
ES-PL-fill=3SG:OBJ in bamboo
“They fill it (laplap) in bamboo.” [nmb44.Ref.004]

In some cases, the location that is introduced by *al* refers to a particular space with confined limits such as the garden, example 6.84, or beach, example 6.85. These areas have defined boundaries but are not physical objects that can be entered, like a building. When *al* introduces the noun *nata* “sea” it can mean that an entity is located near the sea, at the sea shore, or is physically on or in the sea.

6.84 *Të-r-m'atr* ***al*** *pitvët-ëm.*
1:IRR-PAU-sleep in cultivated.garden-POSS:3SG
“You and I will sleep in your garden.” [nmb09.Ref.011]

6.85 *Ar maral dui, ar malakël dui, khilakha a-v-duduva a navamëli* ***al*** *nun.*
all child man all young man now 3NSG:REAL-PL-play EXT.P ball in beach
“All the boys and all the young guys are playing with the ball on the beach.” [nmb32.Ref.028]

6.86 *Ipa-ma* ***al*** *nata.*
3SG:IRR-come in sea
“He will come to the sea” [nmb23.Ref.142]

6.4.2.3 *m’a* “with”

M'a introduces an entity that is accompanying another entity that is a core argument of a verb. The introduced entity can be either human or non-human. *M'a* is also used to conjoin two nominals together as a singular argument of a verb (§2.8).

M’a is considered to be a verbal preposition because in some grammatical contexts it can be modified with the pronominal object clitics which are primarily associated with verbs.

The following examples show the basic use of *m'a.* In the following examples a core argument is accompanied by a non-core argument.

6.87 *Dui i-m'atr* ***m'a*** *tav'et i-k-akh-v'a al namël.*
man 3SG:REAL-sleep with woman 3SG:REAL-NES-NEG-go in garden
“A man who slept with a woman must not go to the garden.” [nmb17.Ref.028]

When *m'a* introduces non-human nouns, it generally indicates that someone is holding a particular entity or has it in their care. This can be seen in the following two examples.

6.88 *Dui pa i-lëk* ***m'a*** *m'ari da-v'a da-v'a…*
man small 3SG:REAL-sit with eel CONT-go CONT-go
"The boy sat with the eel for quite a while…" [nmb38.Ref.018]

6.89 *A-kha-vra-ma* ***m'a*** *sru na suwada-r.*
3NSG:REAL-NEG-PL-come with bowl ASV food-POSS:3NSG
"They didn't come with their bowls." [nmb32.Ref.025]

M'a can be inflected by object clitics for several reasons. The first is because its prepositional compliment is clear through context and does not need to be repeated. The second is because the prepositional compliment is a personal noun introduced by the personal article *a*. The last reason is to indicate the non-singularity of a noun phrase prepositional compliment.

The example below shows a passage from a traditional story. When *m'a* first occurs, it occurs in its basic form because it is followed by a full noun phrase compliment. In its second occurrence, it is modified by the third person singular object clitic because its complement is clear through context and can be expressed using a pronominal clitic.

6.90 *Malakël i-amëk a Tnmarau tituei, a-r-liliak* ***m'a***
youth 3SG:REAL-one LOC Tenmaru before 3NSG:REAL-PAU-date with
tav'et m'ereiak i-amëk. A-r-liliak ***m'e=i***
woman small.nambas 3SG:REAL-one 3SNG:REAL-PAU-date with=3SG:OBJ
lakhara i-v'a da-v'a…
DEM 3SG:REAL-go CONT-go
"Before, a young Tenmaru man dated a Small Nambas woman. He dated her for a while…" [nmb09.Ref.002]

In the example below, *m'a* is inflected with the third person non-singular enclitic because its compliment is non-singular in grammatical number and because its referent can be retrieved through context.

6.91 *Afta a mëlin lara i-v'ana* ***m'a=r****…*
then PERS chief that 3SG:REAL-speak with=3NSG:OBJ
"Then the chief spoke with them…" (the people from V'ao) [nmb30.Ref.105]

The example below shows how *m'a* is modified with an object clitic when the prepositional object is a personal noun introduced with the personal article.

6.92 *Khin i-m'atr* ***m'e=i*** *a S. a Winm'a.*
3SG 3SG:REAL-sleep with=3SG:OBJ PERS S. LOC Winm'a
"He slept with S. at Winm'a." [nmb31.Ref.141]

The following example shows how *m'a* can be inflected by the third-person non-singular object clitic in order to indicate that the nominal that follows is non-singular.

6.93 *Kë-v-lëk kë-v-v'ana wëki* ***m'a=r*** *m'ertarep'.*
ES-PL-sit ES-PL-speak only with=3NSG:OBJ elder.men
"We sat and talked with the men." [nmb10.Ref.008]

In the data, there are also several examples of *m'a* introducing non-core arguments which play the semantic role of instrument. However, this is less common than instruments being encoded as an additional argument in clauses through valence increase (§6.3). This can be seen in the two examples below.

6.94 *Taral khin i-v'ana* ***m'a*** *lëm'-ën wëki.*
caucasian 3SG 3SG:REAL-speak with hand-POSS:3SG only
"The white man spoke only with his hands." [nmb23.Ref.067]

6.95 *Kë-Ø-iaul* ***m'a*** *niu në-n.*
ES-SG-bend.down with dew CLS.GEN-POSS:3SG
"It (branch) bends down with dew." [nmb42.Ref.013]

The valence increasing device used in derived two and three argument clauses (§6.3) could also be considered a verbal preposition because it shares many characteristics with the accompanitive preposition *m'a*.

6.4.2.4 *ësn* “near” “beside”

The preposition *ësn* is used to indicate that one entity is near or beside another entity that is a core argument of a verb.

6.96 *Pë-Ø-lëk* ***ësn*** *m'ari* *na-d* *kë-Ø-p'eur=i.*
2:IRR-SG-sit beside eel CLS.FOOD-POSS:1NSG.INC ES-SG-look.after=3SG:OBJ
“you will sit beside our eel, that we will eat, and you will look after it” [nmb38.Ref.016]

6.97 *Narën* *të-r-lëk* *mima* ***ësn*** *nata…*
when 1:IRR-PAU-live close beside sea
“When we will be living close by the sea…” [nmb23.Ref.119]

This preposition does not act in the same manner as the previously described prepositions. *Ësn*, along with the following prepositions, is a nominal preposition. *Ësn* behaves in a similar manner to directly possessed nouns; however, instead of representing a noun, which can be a referential object or an abstract concept, it is used to indicate how objects relate to each other in physical space. *Ësn* takes possessive marking at all times unless its possessor is juxtaposed after it. This possessive marking functions in a similar manner to the clitics used with the preposition *m’a* “with”, described above. *Ësn* takes possessive morphology when the prepositional object is clear through context and does not need to be stated. In the corpus, *ësn* is seen being modified by six of the seven available possessive suffixes in V’ënen Taut. In the examples below, the prepositional compliments are humans.

6.98 *Pë-Ø-khapr* *kë-da-Ø-ma* *da-ma* ***ësn-ëk*** *atlakha.*
2:IRR-SG-bend ES-CONT-SG-come CONT-come towards-POSS:1SG here
“You will bend and come down towards me here.” [nmb11.Ref.024]

6.99 *Ipa-ma* *kë-Ø-lëk* ***ësn-ëm*** *atlakha.*
3SG:IRR-come ES-SG-live near-POSS:2SG here
“He will come and live with you here.” [nmb23.Ref.107]

6.100 *Kë-v-iar* ***ësn-m'i*** *a* *Alpalak* *arana* *pëtkha* *lara.*
ES-PL-reach near-POSS:2NSG LOC Alpalak on hill that
"They will reach you all in Alpalak on that hill." [nmb30.Ref.098]

It is possible to have a personal noun follow *ësn*. When this occurs, it appears that *ësn* is modified by either the third person singular or non-singular possessive suffix which is then followed by the personal noun which is introduced by the personal article. This is the same method for juxtaposing a possessor after an inalienably possessed noun.

6.101 *Kë-Ø-vel* *kë-da-Ø-ma* ***ësn-n*** *a* *m'ëkhip'-ën* *pa*
ES-SG-walk ES- CONT-SG-come near-POSS:3SG PERS grad.child-POSS:3SG small
lakhara.
DEM
"She walked and came to her small grandson." [nmb20.Ref.010]

6.4.2.5 *arana* "on"

Of the three nominal prepositions, *arana* occurs most often in the data. This preposition indicates that one entity is on another.

6.102 *Kë-da-Ø-ma* *al* *nata* *kë-da-Ø-v'a* ***arana*** *nawëk.*
ES-CONT-SG-come in sea ES-CONT-SG-go on ship
He came to the sea and went onto the ship" [nmb23.Ref.013]

6.103 *Kë-Ø-lev* *ru* *nai* *kë-da-Ø-ma* *kë-Ø-tau=i* ***arana*** *p'ekm'a-n.*
ES-SG-take leaf tree ES-CONT-SG-come ES-SG-put=3SG:OBJ on sore-POSS:3SG
"He took the leaf and came and put it on his sore." [nmb23.Ref.093]

Like *ësn, arana* is able to be modified with the possessive suffixes. When this occurs, there is a slight change in its pronunciation, becoming *aranë-*.

6.104 *kë-Ø-tr* *ruplet* *na* *nas* *apë-r-m'atr* ***aranë-n.***
ES-SG-cut dry.leaf ASV banana 3NSG:IRR-PAU-sleep on-POSS:3SG
"He cut dry banana leaf and they will sleep on top of it." [nmb09.Ref.023]

6.105 *Kë-Ø-tu* *lëpai* ***aranë-n*** *da-v'a* *da-v'a* *ipë-kharis.*
ES-SG-put dye on-POSS:3SG CONT-go CONT-go 3SG:IRR-finish
"You keep putting traditional dye on it (nambas) until its finished." [nmb01.Ref.080]

6.106 *V'akh-v'akh-ien* *i-amëk* *i-ma* ***aranë-r…***
DUP-think-NMLS 3SG:REAL-one 3SG:REAL-come on-POSS:3NSG
"A thought came to them…" [nmb04.Ref.015]
Lit: "A thought came onto them…"

Arana can also be used to indicate a particular manner in which things are done.

6.107 *I-el* ***arana*** *p'ëkël* *taut,* *a*
3SG:REAL-be.habitual on tradition big.nambas PERS
mëlin *ipë-iar-la* *navet* *na* *tav'et* *ipë-tamamu.*
chief 3SG:IRR-reach-RMV money ASV woman 3SG:IRR-first
"Normally in Big Nambas tradition, the chief will take out some money from the bride price first" [nmb21.Ref.037]

Arana is also used to indicate the time in which an event took place. It can be used to specify the hour, day, date, or year. Segments of the day, such as morning or afternoon, do not appear to be introduced by *arana*.

6.108 *Kë-v-kharis* ***arana*** *m'eta* *neiel* *i-v'a…*
ES-PL-finish on eye sun 3SG:REAL-four
"We finished at four o'clock…" [nmb10.Ref.011]

6.109 *I-ma* *kha* ***arana*** *1980…*
3SG:REAL-come here on 1980
"(Independence) it came here in 1980…" [nmb30.Ref.002]

6.4.2.6 *anëv* "under"

The preposition *anëv* is used to indicate that one entity is located under another. It appears to be a nominal preposition like *ësn* "near/beside" and *arana* "on" because it can take possessive suffixes instead of a noun phrase as its prepositional compliment.

6.110 *Kë-da-Ø-ma* *kë-Ø-pëtir* ***anëv*** *namëp.*
ES-CONT-SG-come ES-SG-stand under Tahitian.chestnut
“He went and stood under the Tahitian chestnut.” [nmb25.Ref.007]

6.111 *Kë-Ø-tu* *nap'* ***anëv-n*** *mël.*
ES-SG-put fire under-POSS:3SG again
“You put fire under it again.” [nmb01.Ref.113]

6.5 The Limiter *wëki*

The limiter *wëki* can be used to modify intransitive and transitive verbs, as well as nouns. Its most basic meaning is “only” or “just”, though it appears that it plays an important role in discourse and narrative as well.

Wëki can take several different positions in the clause. The most common position which *wëki* takes is directly after the verb with intransitive verbs and directly after the verbal object noun phrase with transitive verbs. If a transitive verb has its object expressed using a pronominal object clitic, *wëki* takes the position after the verb inflected with the enclitic. If the sentence has an oblique constituent, *wëki* generally occurs between the object noun phrase and the oblique; however it can also occur following the oblique. The best method of understanding where the limiter is positioned in the clause is that it directly follows the constituent that it is intending to limit. In most cases, this is generally the verb or the object but it can also be used to modify obliques and subjects.

In the following examples, *wëki* is modifying intransitive verbs. When doing this, it follows directly after the verb.

6.112 *Kë-v-v'ana* ***wëki*** *m'a=r* *m'ertarep'.*
ES-PL-talk only with=3NSG:OBJ elder.man
“We just talked with the old men.” [nmb10.Ref.008]

6.113 *Të-r-m'atr* ***wëki.***
1:IRR-PAU-sleep only
“Let’s just sleep” [nmb28.Ref.021]

When modifying transitive verbs, *wëki* follows the verbal object and its modifiers.

6.114 *Kë-Ø-lev* *kaliko* ***wëki.***
ES-SG-take fabric only
"he just took a piece of fabric." [nmb23.Ref.035]

6.115 *A-v-khil* *pai* ***wëki.***
3NSG:REAL-PL-harvest.roots.crops yam only
"They will just harvest yams" [nmb44.Ref.011]

In the next example *wëki* is occurring with the completive aspect marker *sara* which precedes the limiter *wëki*.

6.116 *Nakëm* *kë-Ø-la* *sara=i* ***wëki.***
2SG 2:REAL-SG-see COMP=3SG:OBJ only
"You just saw him." [nmb11.Ref.032]

In the following four examples the modifier *wëki* is occurring with numerals. This limits the quantity of a particular group of entities to the number expressed by the numeral. It can be interpreted that the group of possible entities is larger than that which is expressed by the numeral but that the options have been narrowed down to a specific number. For example, the people in example 6.117 have many places in the bush where they could throw their garden rubbish but instead they chose one location. In example 6.118, the man shooting his bow is likely to be carrying more than two arrows but chooses only two to shoot.

6.117 *I-kat* *nut* *i-amëk* ***wëki…***
3SG:REAL-have place 3SG:REAL-one only
"There is only one place…" [nmb14.Ref.002]

6.118 *I-wa* *nalu* *i-ru* ***wëki…***
3SG:REAL-take arrow 3SG:REAL-two only
"He took only two arrows…" [nmb26.Ref.032]

Wëki can also be used to limit the number of entities acting as verbal subjects. When this occurs the verbal modifier appears directly after the subject instead of the verb. This is followed by a numeral which indicates the number of entities that make the subject. Like the examples above, it can be interpreted that there are more entities that could make up the

subject but these have been limited by the numeral. In example 6.119 it can be understood that there are many people in the village but the speaker is singling herself out as the only person able to carry out an action.

6.119 *Kana* ***wëki*** *n-Ø-amëk…*
1SG only 1:REAL-SG-one
"I am the only one…" [nmb02.Ref.034]

6.120 *Kam'em'* ***wëki*** *të-r-ru* *kë-r-vel.*
1NSG:EXCL only 1:IRR-PAU-two ES-PAU-go
"Just we two will go." [nmb38.Ref.004]

The following examples show how *wëki* acts when it occurs in sentences which have oblique constituents. In the example below, *wëki* is occurring after the oblique phrase *m'a lem'ën* "with her/his hands". This indicates that this was the only way that the man could communicate instead of speaking or writing. Had *wëki* followed the verb instead, it would indicate that the only action he did with his hands was speak.

6.121 *Taral* *khin* *i-v'ana* *m'a* *lëm'-ën* ***wëki.***
caucasian 3SG 3SG:REAL-talk with hand-POSS:3SG only
"The white man spoke with his hands only." [nmb23.Ref.067]

The example below is very similar to the one above except the limiter is positioned directly after the verb. The limiter is indicating that the only action undertaken was talking. Had *wëki* occurred after the oblique phrase, it would indicate that the only people being spoken with would be men.

6.122 *Kë-v-v'ana* ***wëki*** *m'a=r* *m'ertarep'.*
ES-PL-talk only with=3NSG:OBJ elder.man
"We just talked with the old men." [nmb10.Ref.008]

The following example shows the locative clause *arana nëmakhëk* "at my house" being modified by the limiter *wëki*. This singles out the house of the speaker from the other houses in the hamlet *Pur*.

6.123 *Kë-v-ën parei pa i-amëk arana nëmakh-ëk* ***wëki*** *a Pur.*
ES-PL-make work small 3SG:REAL-one on house-POSS:1SG only LOC Pur
"I did a little work just at my house at Pur" [nmb10.Ref.008]

The following example shows a common expression in V'ënen Taut.

6.124 *I-p'as* ***wëki.***
3SG:REAL-good only
"It's ok"/"it's all good".

The morpheme *wëki* "only" has two allomorphs: *muki* and *luki.* It is unclear whether there is any semantic or grammatical difference between *wëki* and its allomorphs because *luki* and *muki* appear rarely in the corpus. More data is required before this can be examined fully.

6.125 *Khir kë-v-lëk* ***muki*** *ra.*
3NSG ES-PL-stay only now
"They just stayed now." [nmb07.Ref.028]

6.126 *A-Ø-viven si* ***luki*** *nakël.*
3NSG-IMPRS-show thing only QUANT
"People just show the thing." [nmb01.Ref.150]

6.6 Constituent Fronting

Constituent fronting occurs regularly in the V'ënen Taut corpus and is a common feature in many other Malekula languages such as the closely related Tape language (Crowley, 2006b), neighbouring Espiegle's Bay language (Holmes, 2014, p. 115), and Neverver in central Malekula (Barbour, 2012, p. 294-297). In fact, Crowley (2006b, p. 204) notes that many Vanuatu languages have a highly productive pattern of moving noun phrases to the clausal head position as a way of increasing their pragmatic salience. Looking at the data of V'ënen Taut, it also appears that fronting is used to increase the salience of the fronted constituent.

In regard to articulation, when an argument is fronted, it is articulated with falling intonation followed by a slight pause before the subject of the verb.

6.127 ***Nakëm**, kana p'e-Ø-pël=**ëkh**.*
2SG 1SG 1:IRR-SG-paint=2SG:OBJ
"You, I will paint you." [nmb34.Ref.011]

6.128 ***M'ëtu, pla-n,** a-Ø-tr=**i**.*
coconut trunk-POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL-IMPS-cut=3SG:OBJ
"Coconuts, their trunks, people cut them." [nmb18.Ref.001]

The following example shows that constituents added to clauses using the valence increasing device can be fronted using the same process. In the example below *tav'et lakhara* "the woman" occurs at the beginning of the clause and is then followed by a complete clause. The fronted constituent is indexed in the main clause using *–i*, the third person singular object clitic.

6.129 ***Tav'et lakhara,** narën i-tu pai an=i*
woman DEM when 3SG:REAL-give yam EXT.P=3SG:OBJ
ipë-khan=i.
3SG:IRR-eat=3SG:OBJ
"The woman, when he gave the yam to her for her to eat." [nmb09.Ref.019]

6.7 Serial Verbs

Serial verb constructions are relatively uncommon in V'ënen Taut. This is because echo-subject constructions fulfil many functions which Crowley (2002, p. 39-45) says are often associated with serial verb constructions in other Oceanic languages. It is possible that the echo-subject construction replaced serial verbs in an older form of the language. Although serial verb constructions appear to be an uncommon feature of V'ënen Taut, it appears nuclear serial verb constructions are present to a small degree. A full description of complex nuclei and cores is beyond the scope of this project and will need to be fully explored in future work on the V'ënen Taut language.

We find some examples of what have been analysed as nuclear serial verb constructions in the corpus. These constructions bare a resemblance to constructions which Barbour (2012, p. 316) identifies as nuclear serial verb constructions in Neverver. The constructions have the following qualities: verbs form a single complex nucleus, each part is contiguous, there is

only one subject, there is no marking of a syntactic juncture, and they express a single-scene proposition. In V'ënen Taut, these qualities are very much present and nuclear serial verbs appear to function as one singular verb. Syntactically, they have subject marking on the left-most verb and post-verbal elements follow the right-most verb.

In the following two examples show nuclear serial verb constructions which involve the adjectival verb *pa* "small". In both of these examples, *pa* "small" serves to inform the hearer of how the action signified by the first verb took place.

6.130 *Të-Ø-**valau-pa*** *le=i.*
1:IRR-SG-cry-small IMM=3SG:OBJ
"I am going to cry a little now" [nmb27.Ref.034]

The example below is a good example of how closely related the two verbs in nuclear serial constructions are. The intransitive adjectival verb pa "*small*" occurs in a verbal compound with the transitive verb *ti* "tear using a piece of cane". The two verbs in the serial construction have been enclosed in verbal morphology: the subject prefix *kë-* "echo subject" occurs at the beginning, *p'r-* the fractural manner suffix, and *=i* the object enclitic follows the verbs.

6.131 *Kë-Ø-**ti-pa**-p'r=i.*
ES-IMPRS-tear.using.cane-small-BRK=3SG:OBJ
"People tear it a little using cane." [nmb01.Ref.008]

The verb *m'alet* "return" is regularly used in nuclear serial verb constructions. When used in these constructions, the meaning of *m'alet* generally becomes something similar to "again" or "back". This can be seen in the following examples.

6.132 *Kë-Ø-**selëv-m'alet*** *mël.*
ES-SG-be.alive-return again
"He came back to life again." [nmb46.Ref.120]

6.133 *Afta khir a-vra-**khau-m'alet.***
then 3NSG 3NSG:REAL-PL-go.back-return
"Then they went back home." [nmb23.Ref.170]

The next set of nuclear serial verbs involve what appears to be a verb *wir* meaning “carry” being serialized with one of the movement verbs *v’a* “go”, *ma* “come”, or “*khau*” go back/home”. It is possible that *wir* is not able to function as an independent verb. Verbs created using *wir* “carry” are transitive, but unlike many transitive verbs their object can be gapped if it is clear through context instead of being represented by a pronoun or object clitic.

Verb	Meaning
wir-v’a	“take”
wir-ma	“bring”
wir-khau	“bring back”

Table 6.5: *wir* Serial Verbs

6.134 *Kë-v-wa* *tëvaln* ***kë-v-wir-ma*** ***kë-v-wir-khau*** ***kë-v-wir-ma***
ES-PL-carry other ES-PL-carry-come ES-PL-carry-go.back ES-PL-carry-come
a *nakh* *nëmakh.*
LOC front house
“We took the other one and we carried it back to the house.” [nmb31.Ref.109]

Some other verbs occurring in nuclear serial constructions seen in the data are:

Verb	Meaning		Verb	Meaning		Meaning
wa	”carry”	+	*pëlten*	“gather”	=	“bring together” [nmb12.Ref.003]
ën	“make”	+	*v’ana*	“talk”	=	“chat” [nmb30.Ref.111]

Table 6.6: Other Serial Verbs

6.8 Interrogatives

There are two types of interrogatives observed in V’ënen Taut. These are constituent interrogatives and polar interrogatives. Constituent interrogatives involve the use of an interrogative lexeme which enquires about a particular type of information. Polar interrogatives are questions which simply enquire about the truth of a proposition, requiring “yes” or “no” as an answer. These two types of interrogatives are consistent with those described in Konig and Siemund (2007, p. 291).

6.8.1 Constituent Interrogatives

Constituent interrogatives are formed like declarative clauses but are distinguished with the use of an interrogative lexeme which occurs *in situ*. The interrogative lexemes attested in the corpus are presented in the table below. The last two interrogative lexemes, *khirak* "who" and *v'arën* "when", are not attested in the data but are recorded in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 100). It is likely that there are more interrogative lexemes in the language which will need to be documented in a future project.

Interrogative	Meaning
v'ata	what
ip'i	where (location)
khini	where (entity)
khin-ak	who (singular)
khir-ak	who (plural)
v'arën	when

Table 6.7: Interrogative Lexemes

V'ata "what" takes the place of a common noun in the clause and is used to enquire about particular objects or actions. It is regularly followed by the demonstrative *lakha*. It is attested as acting as the object of a verb and as the predicate phrase in non-prototypical predicate clauses.

6.135 *I-vër a 'tatei të-r-tup'an **v'ata** lakha?'*
3SG:REAL-say EXT.P father 1:IRR-PAU-cook.in.laplap what this
"He said 'father, what kind of laplap are we going to make?'" [nmb27.Ref.015]
Lit: "Father, we are going to cook-in-laplap what?"

6.136 *Kë-Ø-vër ti a 'pë-Ø-luwe=i a **v'ata** lakha?'*
ES-SG-say SUB EXT.P 2:IRR-SG-shoot=3SG:OBJ EXT.P what this
"He said 'what are you going to shoot?'" [nmb29.Ref.013]
Lit: "You are going to shoot what?"

V'ënen Taut speakers use the interrogative lexeme *v'ata* "what" in the case of miss-hearing. For example, if someone shouts something to another person who cannot understand what was said, "*v'ata*!" is given as a response.

6.137 *I-ma* *lakhara* *i-vër* *a* ***"v'ata?"***
3SG:REAL-come DEM 3SG:REAL-say EXT.P what
"He came and said "what?" (to him)" [nmb38.Ref.029]

V'ata is also used regularly in a phrase which functions as a disfluency pause. The clause varies slightly in terms of its construction but it is based on the example presented below.

6.138 *I-ën* ***v'ata*** *kilakha?*
3SG:REAL-do what now
"What did s/he do now?" [nmb09.Ref.009]

The interrogative lexeme *v'ata* "what" can co-occur with a noun. Instead of acting as an interrogative, it appears to mark a kind of indecision in the area of the noun for which *v'ata* appears to act as a modifier. In English we would use the word "which". This can be seen in the example below.

6.139 *N-a-Ø-rn-du* *viviln* *a* *parei* ***v'ata*** *në-Ø-v'akh* *ti*
1:REAL-SG-feel-KN correct EXT.P job what 1:REAL-SG-think SUB
i-p'as *a* *t-Ø-an=i.*
3SG:REAL-good EXT.P 1:IRR-SG-do=3SG:OBJ
"I did not really know what job I thought would be good to do." [nmb39.Ref.005]

Ip'i "where" is an interrogative lexeme used to enquire about specific locations of situations. It is most commonly used as a locative oblique in intransitive constructions and is able to act as a general location or a goal of movement.

6.140 *Pa-Ø-v'a* ***ip'i?***
2:REAL-SG-go where
"Where are you going?" [nmb23.Ref.061]

6.141 *Khilakha* *i-lëk* ***ip'i?***
now 3SG:REAL-sit where
"Where is he now?" [nmb03.Ref.010]

In the following example, *khini* "where" appears not to ask for a specific location, like the interrogative *ip'i,* instead it enquires about the existence of the food. The situation from which the example is taken involves a boy picking fruit for an evil witch-like woman. Every time he picks some fruit, the woman says it is for someone else and then says "where is my food?" or "where is mine?".

6.142 *Wad-ëk* ***khini?***
CLS.RAW.FOOD-POSS:1SG where
"Where is my food (that does not need to be cooked)?" [nmb11.Ref.013]

The following example shows *khin-ak* "who" acting as the subject of the verb. Here, the speaker is trying to learn who will carry out the action of killing.

6.143 ***Khin-ak*** *ipë-rëp* *le=i?*
who 3SG:IRR-kill IMM=3SG:OBJ
"Who will kill it (bird) now?" [nmb11.Ref.023]

The following example shows the use of *khir-ak* "who (non-singular)". This interrogative is not attested in the data; however, it does occur in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (Fox, 1979, p. 31).

6.144 *A-v-vi* ***khir-ak?***
3NSG:REAL-PL-COP who
"Who are they?" (Fox, 1979, p. 31)

Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (1979, p. 31) also reports that *ak,* as seen on *khinak* and *khirak,* can be used as an interrogative lexeme in its own right; however, this was not observed in the data. An example of *ak* "who" is shown below.

6.145 ***Ak*** *i-tu* *navet* *an=r?*
who 3SG:REAL-give money EXT.P=3SG:OBJ
"Who gave money to them?" (Fox, 1979, p. 101)

V'arën "when" is an interrogative lexeme which enquires about time. It is not attested in the data but is recorded in Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* where it is suggested that its distribution is similar to that of other adverbials of time (Fox, 1979, p. 100).

6.146 *Pë-luwe=i* ***v'arën?***
2:IRR-SG-shoot=3SG:OBJ when
"When will you shoot it?" (Fox, 1979, p. 113)

6.8.2 Polar Interrogatives

Fox's *Big Nambas Grammar* (Fox, 1979, p. 100) indicates that polar interrogatives are formed in the same manner as declarative clauses but are distinguished by the use of a particular intonation. Declarative clauses have falling pitch while polar interrogatives have falling pitch which sharply rises and then falls again at the end of the clause in order to signal an interrogative. Rising intonation is common with polar interrogatives (Konig & Siemund, 2007, p. 292).

6.147 *Ntu-ëm* *i-nelnal*
chicken-POSS:2SG 3SG:REAL-hundred
"You have many chickens" (Fox, 1979, p. 100)

6.148 *Ntu-ëm* *i-nelnal?*
chicken-POSS:2SG 3SG:REAL-hundred
"Do you have many chickens?" (Fox, 1979, p. 100)

I do recall one polar interrogative which I observed in the field following the intonation pattern described by Fox. It was uttered while some women unwrapped a laplap.

6.149 *Nëkhau* *i-ta-m'akh?*
laplap 3SG:REAL-PFV-be.cooked
"Is the laplap cooked?" (field observation)

6.9 Non-Prototypical Predicates

The predicate types in this section follow those identified in Dryer's (2007a, p. 224-250) typological study of non-verbal predicates. The predicate types are adjectival (my dog *is black*), locative (my dog *is in the house*), and nominal (my dog *is a cocker spaniel*) (Dryer, 2007a, p. 225). The label non-verbal predicate is not used in this work because all of the predicates which are described in this section are verbal in V'ënen Taut. However, their

function and form appear to be consistent with the frameworks provided in Dryer's typology. V'ënen Taut has a group of adjectival verbs used in adjectival predicates, several verbs used in locative predicates depending on the characteristics of the subject, a variety of existential verbs, and an equational copular verb.

6.9.1 Adjectival Predicates

Adjectival predicates are formed using adjectival verbs which are a sub-set of stative verbs. Adjectival verbs mostly describe the physical characteristics of a noun such as size or colour. Many of these adjectival verbs are able to function as adjectives in their own right by occurring juxtaposed after a noun with no verbal indexation (§2.6.2). When used in that manner they function as modifiers, rather than predicates. When adjectival verbs function as predicates they receive full verbal indexation like other verbal predicates.

6.150 *Kana* ***n-Ø-su-supa…***
1SG 1:REAL-SG-DUP-small
"I was small…I" [nmb19.Ref.004]

The following example shows how adjectival predicates can be marked with different mood prefixes depending on the reality of the situation. In the example below, the place will soon be dark so the adjectival predicate *m'ët* "dark" is modified with the irrealis mood.

6.151 *Kë-Ø-lëk da-v'a, nut* ***ipa-m'ët*** *ra.*
ES-SG-sit CONT-GO place 3SG:IRR-dark now
"He was there for a while, the place was becoming dark now." [nmb28.Ref.013]

6.152 *M'ë-t-Ø-ën parei* ***im-të-khua…***
1:COND-PFV-SG-make work 3SG:COND-PFV-strong
"If I had done good work…" [nmb39.Ref.013]
Lit: if I had done work that had been strong…

The following example shows a switch function serial verb. The second verb is an adjectival predicate whose referential subject is the same referent as the object of the first verb in the serial construction. This use of adjectival verbs is common in the data.

6.153 *A-r-ën* *nap'* ***i-lil*** *mau.*
3NSG:REAL-PAU-make fire 3SG:REAL-big well
"They made the fire really big." [nmb07.Ref.026]

6.9.2 Locative Predicates

Locative predicates are used to locate nominals in space. In V'ënen Taut, locative predicates are verbal and involve either the verb *lëk* "sit/stay/live", generally used with human participants, or *tar* "be.located", normally used with non-human participants. Dryer (2007a, p. 239) says that it is common for locative predicates to be encoded with verbs which have some kind of inherent association with space and location to be used as a copular verb in locative predicates. This is the case with the use of the verb *lëk* in these predicates.

6.154 *Nakëm* ***pë-Ø-lëk*** *a* *nakh* *nëmakh.*
2SG 2:IRR-SG-stay LOC front house
"You will stay in the village." [nmb38.Ref.004]

6.155 *Tav'et-ën* ***i-lëk*** *wëki* *avetlim.*
woman-POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL-stay only home
"His wife was just at home." [nmb28.Ref.009]

The following examples show the use of the locative predicate verb *tar* "be located" which is generally used to locate non-human entities.

6.156 *Nilapir* ***i-tar*** *aranë-n.*
hook 3SG:REAL-be.located on-POSS:3SG
"The hook is on it." (the line) [nmb36.Ref.008]

6.157 *Ruplet* *i-vrur=i,* ***i-tar*** *ësn* *Khapët* *eia.*
book 3SG:REAL-talk.about=3SG:OBJ 3SG:REAL-be.located beside God up
"The bible tells about it (heaven), it is up by God." [nmb42.Ref.002]

It is also possible for *tar* "be located" to occur as a predicate with no location noun phrase. When this occurs it just means that the subject of the verb stayed in place.

6.158 *Nëkhau, au pa lakara i-tu mamëkh=i* ***i-tar.***
laplap, man small DEM 3SG:REAL-put well=3SG:OBJ 3SG:REAL-be.located
"The laplap, the boy put it down well, it stayed." [nmb07.Ref.027]

6.9.3 Existential and Equational Predicates

Existential predicates mark the existence or non-existence of a particular entity, while equational predicates indicate that entity denoted by the predicate is the same entity denoted by the subject (Dryer, 2007, p. 229-249). In V'ënen Taut, both existential and equational predicates are verbal.

6.9.3.1 Existential Predicates

Existential predicates mark the existence, or non-existence of a particular entity. In V'ënen Taut, existential predicates are verbal and involve the use of one of the following three verbs: *iëk* "exist", *khei* "no/does not exist", or *kat* "have/exist", which is a borrow word from Bislama.

The noun phrase which *iëk* "exist" marks as existing acts as its subject. *Iëk* "exist" is inflected with subject and number prefixes which index the person, and number value of the subject. *Iëk* "exist" is seen occurring in several different moods depending on the perceived reality of the noun phrase head of *iëk*.

6.159 *Si pai* ***i-iëk*** *al tratr-ar lakara.*
shoot yam 3SG:REAL-exist in yam.rack-POSS:3NSG DEM
"There were yam shoots on the yam rack." [nmb29.Ref.011]
Lit: "Yam shoot existed in the yam rack."

6.160 *Nawëk na nata* ***ip-iëk.***
canoe ASV sea 3SG:IRR-exist
"There will be ships." [nmb23.Ref.016]
Lit: "Canoe of the sea will exist."

6.161 *M'ertu pa pa* ***a-v-iëk.***
person small small 3NSG:REAL-PL-exist
"There were little men."[19] [nmb13.Ref.002]
Lit: "Small people existed."

The following two examples show how the Bislama verb *kat* "have/exist" has been absorbed into the V'ënen Taut lexicon. We know that it has become part of the lexicon because it behaves like indigenous V'ënen Taut verbs in regard to its indexation. This verb precedes the nominal that it is marking as existing, most likely because this is how it is used in Bislama. The noun phrase which *kat* "have/exist" marks as existing functions as the object of *kat.* The subject of *kat*, which is marked by verbal morphology, is simply a dummy subject which fulfils the grammatical requirement of V'ënen Taut that verbs receive overt subject and number indexation.

6.162 ***l-kat*** *m'ertarep' a-r-ru…*
3SG:REAL-have elder.man 3NSG:REAL-PAU-two
"There were two men…" [nmb08.Ref.002]

6.163 ***lpë-kat*** *tim'akh kinkin të-v-lav=i* *apë-v-khan=i.*
3SG:IRR-have food some 1:IRR-PL-take=3SG:OBJ 3NSG-PL-eat=3SG:OBJ
"There will be some food that we will bring and they will eat it." [nmb33.Ref.008]

The existential verb *iëk* is only attested as occurring with positive polarity. When someone is denying the existence of a particular nominal, they use the verb *khei* "no/does not exist" instead. Like with the examples above, a variety of verbal morphology can occur with *khei* "no/does not exist". Like the verb *iëk* "exist", the constituent that the verb refers to is the subject.

[19] This example refers to Kinkin which are mythical small black skinned men who cause mischief in the bush. They live in stones, clumps of grass, or cane. In the past, men went and apparently killed many of them for stealing all of their yams.

In the examples below *khei* is indicating that the noun phrase acting as its subject does not exist. The subject noun phrase may be simple, like the one in 6.164, or complex like example 6.165 in which the noun phrase head is modified by a relative clause.

6.164 *Plakit* ***i-khei…***
blanket 3SG:REAL-not.exist
"There were no blankets…" [nmb45.Ref.007]
Lit: "Blanket did not exist…"

6.165 *M'ertu* *ipë-lev* *E.* ***i-khei.***
person 3SG:IRR-take E. 3SG:REAL-not.exist
"There was not a man who would marry E." [nmb23.Ref.157]
Lit: "A person who would take E. did not exist."

Khei "no/does not exist" is able to be modified with the negative prefix *a-*. When modified in this manner, it does not result in positive polarity, with *a-khei* having a meaning similar to *iëk* "exist". Instead, it appears to mark a nominal as no longer existing where it once did. This can be seen in the following two examples.

6.166 *Nalen* ***i-a-khei*** *mël.*
fly 3SG:REAL-NEG-not.exist again
"There were no more flies." [nmb23.Ref.099]

6.167 *Nalen rëp* ***i-k-a-khei*** *aranë-n.*
cyclone 3SG:REAL-NES-NEG-not.exist on-POSS:3SG
"There will be no cyclones in it" (heaven) [nmb42.Ref.008]

The Bislama borrow verb *kat* is simply negated to show that a particular entity does not exist. As with its positive use, the negated *kat* occurs before the noun rather than after.

6.168 *Wau* ***i-a-kat*** *m'ertu* *në-n.*
oh 3SG:REAL-NEG-exist person CLS.GEN-POSS:3SG
"Oh, there is no man for her." [nmb23.Ref.156]

6.9.3.2 Equational Predicates

In its most basic sense, equational predicates indicate that the entity expressed as the subject and the entity expressed as the predicate are the same, having characteristics of both the subject and object. Dryer (2007a) gives an example of this in English: “my dog is a cocker spaniel”, where the dog and the cocker spaniel are the same entity. There are a variety of different functions which are marked using equational predicates in V’ënen Taut. These are classificatory, identificational, and ownership predicates, following Barbour (2012, p. 301).

Classificatory predicates mark a noun phrase as belonging to a general class or category. They tell us that the subject noun fits into the category described by the object noun. In V’ënen Taut, classificatory predicates are verbal and use the copular verb *vi* “be”.

6.169 *Dika* ***i-vi*** *narën ar marëdel a-vra-ma-p'ëltan=i.*
today 3SG:REAL-COP time all child 3NSG-PL-come-gather=3SG:OBJ
“Today is a time when all children come together.” [nmb32.Ref.001]

6.170 *Nanëv* ***i-vi*** *Sandei.*
yesterday 3SG:REAL-COP Sunday
“Yesterday was Sunday.” [nmb31.Ref.174]

6.171 *Nat-n* *lakhara* ***i-vi*** *dui.*
child-POSS:3SG DEM 3SG:REAL-COP man
“His child was a boy.” [nmb11.Ref.002]

Identificational predicates are used to name the subject whether it be a person or a thing. In V’ënen Taut identificational predicates are verbal and involve either the copular verb *vi* “be” or utterance verb *vër* “say”.

6.172 *Nakh-ën* ***i-vi*** *a Pasta S.*
name-POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL-COP PERS pastor S.
“His name was Pastor S.” [nmb23.Ref.187]

6.173 *A* *nat-n* *i-amëk* ***i-vi*** *a* *D.*
PERS child-POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL-one 3SG:REAL-COP PERS D.
"His child was D." [nmb11.Ref.002]

The following example shows how the verb *vër* can be used as part of an identificational predicate.

6.174 *Aut* *taut,* ***a-Ø-vër*** *didi.*
place big.nambas 3NSG:REAL-IMPS-say palm.tree
"In the place of the Big Nambas it is called Palm Tree." [nmb46.Ref.012]

There are a variety of methods for encoding ownership or possession in V'ënen Taut (see §2.5). Non-verbal predicates of ownership predicates are rare in the data particularly because there appears to be no verb meaning "have" in V'ënen Taut.

The example below shows possession of a Malay apple tree. It is formed like an equational predicate.

6.175 *Nav'ëkh* *i-vi* *nav'ëkh-ëk.*
Malay.apple 3SG:REAL-COP Malay.apple-POSS:1SG
"The Malay apple tree is my Malay apple tree." [nmb11.Ref.007]

The following example also shows an ownership predicate being formed using subordination.

6.176 *Marëdel*[20] *ti* ***i-vi*** *nëk-am'em'.*
child SUB 3SG:REAL-COP POSS.PT-POSS:1NSG:EXCL
"Our children." [nmb33.Ref.015]
Lit "The children that are ours."

Some ownership predicates are formed using the borrow verb *kat* "have" from Bislama. This can be seen in the example below.

[20] The noun *marëdel* "child" has two alternate forms. These are *marëdal* and the shortened form *maral*.

6.177 *kë-r-kat* *maral…*
ES-PAU-have child
“We had children…” [nmb19.Ref.013]

The absence of true non-verbal predicates in V’ënen Taut is unusual for Malekula languages more generally. A larger corpus is likely to provide further constructions to contribute to this description.

Image 6.1: Sunset at Pinapow

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Appendix A: Ethical Approval

Philosophy Programme
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THE UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Royce Dodd
Dr Julie Barbour

Applied Linguistics Programme
School of Arts

16 May 2013

Dear Royce

Re: **FS2013-18 Grammatical Topics of V'Enen Taut, the Big Nambas Language of Malakula.**

Thank you for submitting your revised Information Sheets. They are excellent and I am happy to provide you with formal ethical approval.

I wish you well with your research.

Kind regards,

Ruth Walker
Chair
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee.

Colin McLeay
on behalf

Appendix B: Community Invitation Letter

04 January 2013

Project Supervisor

DR. Julie Barbour

New Zealand

Dear Dr.

Confirmation for Student Royce Dodd June – July 2013

Greetings from the king of the cannibalism in the south west Pacific, Vanuatu.

We kindly and very please to confirm our decision for Student Royce Dodd to come and be part of our family for that solid two months.

We were very pleased to learn that he will be coming over especially to our community to learn our Dialect, which would be a great bonus to our kids as well. We pretty sure that our kids will be benefited from his staying with us within that two months in one way or the other.

We also confirm to you that we will take a very good care of your student whatever we do or eat he will also enjoy it with us, we wish if he will be with us for more than two months. We will provide all assistance he would need within that two months as well as accommodation and local food fresh from the garden.

We will do all our best for your student to feel at home while in our village and he will be given privileges to see any custom ceremonies in our villages as well.

We believe he will be very fluent in our big nampas dialect as well as national language.

Again we count this as a great opportunity for our kids to exchange and share their experts with someone from different culture and ways of living.

Thank you

Yours Sincerely

Chief Gorden John Arnhabath
Tenmaru village

North West Malekula.

HeadMaster Smith Zumzum
Jerethy Memorial School

School Chairman
Jimfred Jimmy

Appendix C: Letter to Vanuatu Cultural Council

Linguistics, School of Arts
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Ex. 8144
Dr Julie Barbour
jbarbour@waikato.ac.nz
Royce Dodd
rrd4@waikato.ac.nz

THE UNIVERSITY OF WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

14th March, 2013

To whom it may concern,

I am a student from the University of Waikato, in New Zealand. I would like to ask permission to undertake a one-year Master of Arts research project from June 2013 to May 2014. In this project, I will stay in Tenmaru village, Makelula, and research the Big Nambas language (*V'ënen Taut).* My project is being supervised by Dr Julie Barbour, and it is fully funded through a Masters Research Scholarship from my university, and from Dr Barbour's Marsden research grant from her larger project on Vanuatu languages.

I am hoping to come to Vanuatu in June, with my supervisor, and my fellow MA student (Kanauhea Wessels, who worked in Malua Bay, Malekula, last year). My project will involve two field trips to Tenmaru village:

- Field trip 1 June-July 2013
- Field trip 2 October-November 2013

Mr. Charlie Silas, of the Shefa Education Office, has arranged permission from the Tenmaru community to carry out this language project. Please see the community letter attached.

For my project, I will record speakers of *V'ënen Taut* talking about topics of their choice. I am particularly interested in every-day ethno-botanical topics (although I will not be recording any kastom information, unless I am specifically asked to). I will work with community members to transcribe and translate the recordings and then I will use the data for linguistic analysis. The data from this project will be permanently archived by my project supervisor, so that community members can access the material in the future. As well as being used for my MA project, Dr Barbour will also include the data in her larger study of Vanuatu languages.

Under the supervision of Dr Barbour, I have been preparing for this project for the last 2 years. I have completed papers in general research methods, and in linguistic field methods, working with a speaker of another Malekula language. I have also started learning Bislama so that I can communicate more easily in Vanuatu.

In accordance with the policy of the Research Agreement, I will give a copy of my thesis to the Vanuatu Cultural Centre, and I will archive my sound files and any photos that I may take in the community in the National Archive. I will use the data that I collect to prepare community literacy materials. I will develop these with the local school teachers in Tenmaru.

I am in the process of applying for ethical approval from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Ethics committee at the University of Waikato. My project will only begin when it is approved both by the Vanuatu National Cultural Council, and my own institution.

Please contact me or my supervisor by email or phone if you have any questions.

Regards,

Royce Dodd: rrd4@waikato.ac.nz.

Dr Julie Barbour: jbarbour@waikato.ac.nz
+64 7 838 4466 x. 8144

Appendix D: Research Permit

VANUATU NASONAL KALJORAL KAONSEL
Vanuatu National Cultural Council
Conseil National Culturel du Vanuatu

VANUATU KALJORAL SENTA
Vanuatu Cultural Centre
Centre Culturel du Vanuatu

P.O. Box 184, Port Vila, Vanuatu, South Pacific Phone / Fax: (678) 26590 Email: vks@vanuatu.com.

27 May, 2013.

Royce Dodd,
Lingustics School of Arts and Social Science,
University of Waikato,
New Zealand.

Re : Research Application in Vanuatu –

Dear Royce,

I am happy to inform you that your application to carry out your research in Vanuatu as requested from June 1 to July and again from October 2 to November 2013 has been approved.

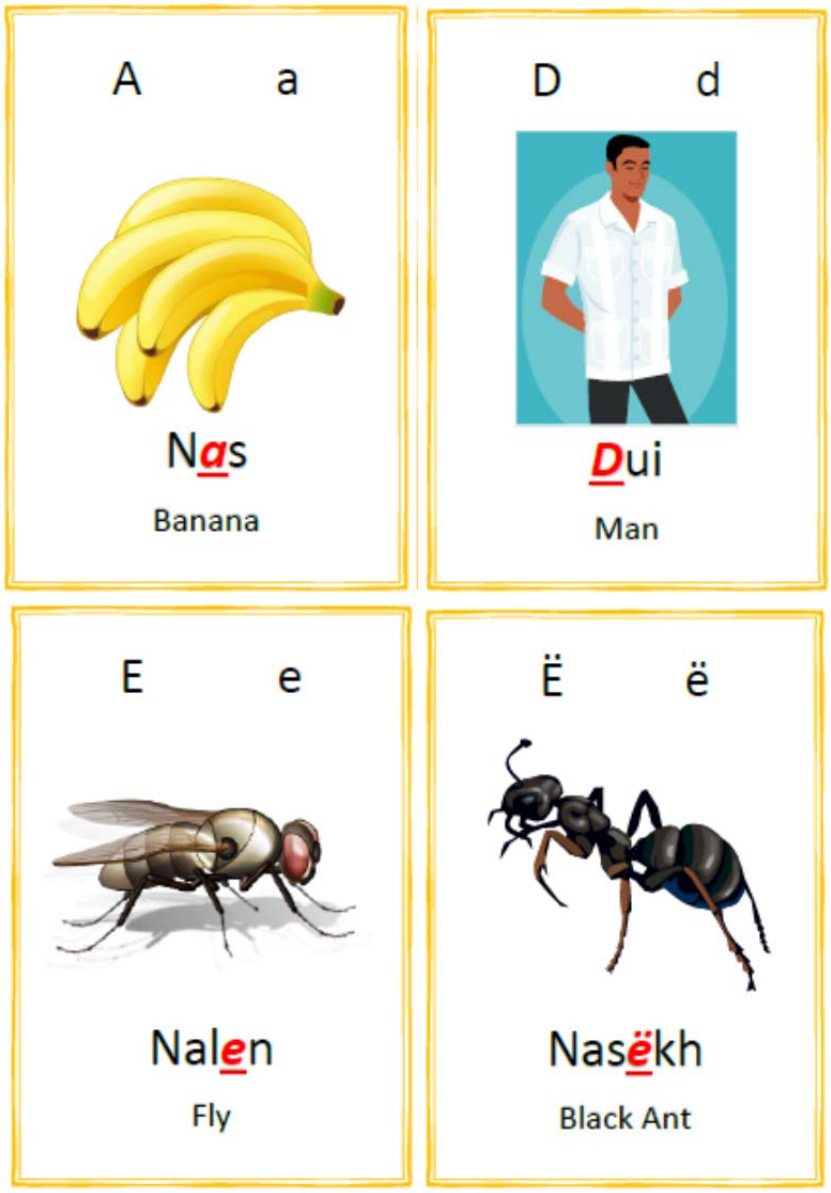
As from now on you will be working closely with Mrs. Henline Mala our Secretary Administrator to have your documents processed before your arrival in Vanuatu. As stated in our research Policy your agreement along with the research fee of VT25. 000 will be made upon your arrival in Port Vila before going to the island of Malekula.

We thank you for considering Vanuatu for this research and hope you will enjoy your research with our friendly people in the island.

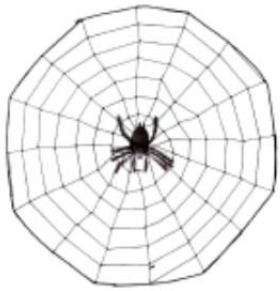
Yours sincerely,

Ambong Thompson
Vice Chairman, Vanuatu National Cultural Council.

Appendix E: Alphabet Booklet



I i



Nilau

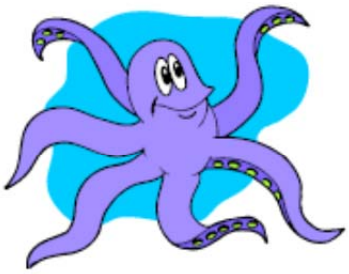
Spider

K k

Krei

Flying Fox

Kh kh



Khut

Octopus

L l

Lip’akh

Dog

M m

Mësi

Star

M’ m’

M’anëkh

Bird

N n

Ntu

Chicken

P p

Pai

Yam

P’ p’

P’atei

Breadfruit

R r

Rahkëm

Crab

S s

Si

Plant Shoot

T t

Tilau

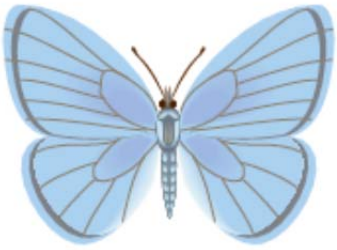
Fish

U u

Unei

Mother

V v



Vënapup

Butterfly

V’ v’

V’irm’ët

Purple Swamphen

W w

War nai

Tree Roots

Appendix F: Number Booklet

1 ~ isët

1 ~ iamëk

M'anëkh iamëk

2 ~ iru

Lip'akh iru

3 ~ itl

Mësi itl

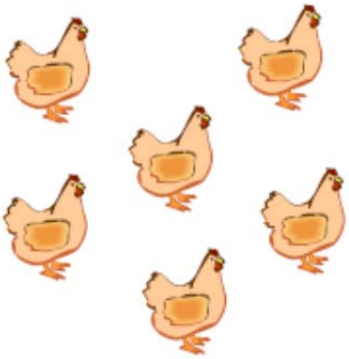
4 ~ iv'a

Ru nai iv'a

5 ~ ilëm'

Nas ilëm'

6 ~ ilëm'sei



Ntu ilëm'sei

7 ~ isaru

Ninëkh m'anëkh isaru

8 ~ isatl

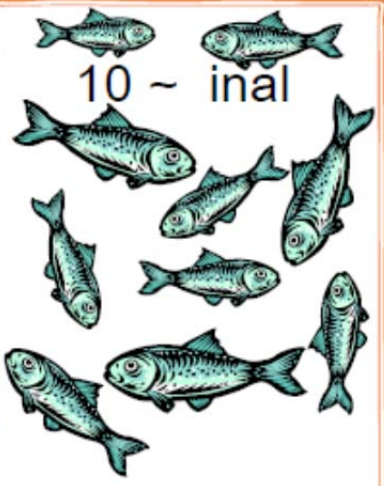
Rakhëm isatl

9 ~ isavet

Neiel isavet

10 ~ snal

10 ~ inal



Tilau inal

11 ~ inal dëmën iamëk

Nur inal

dëmën iamëk

12 ~ inal dëmën iru

Nakhatu inal

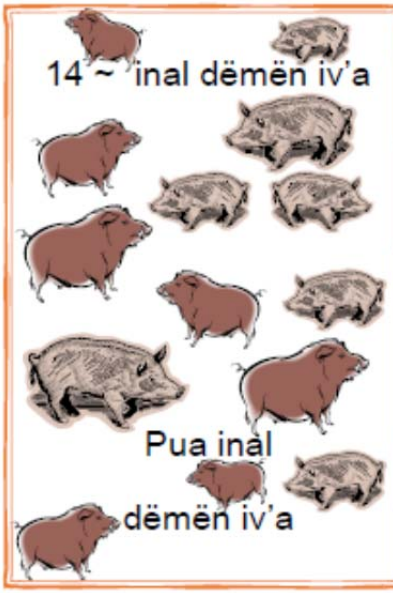
dëmën iru

13 ~ inal dëmën itl

Ntupel inal

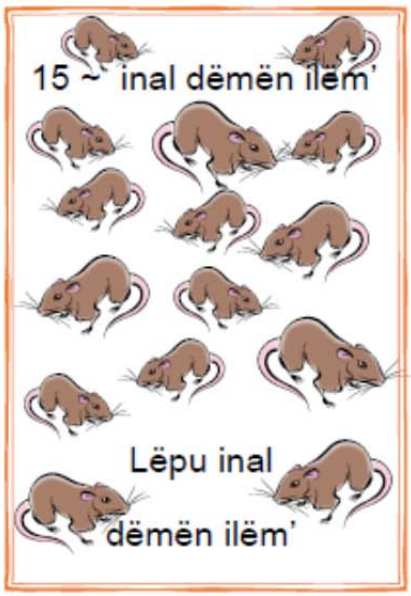
dëmën itl

14 ~ inal dëmën iv'a



Pua inal

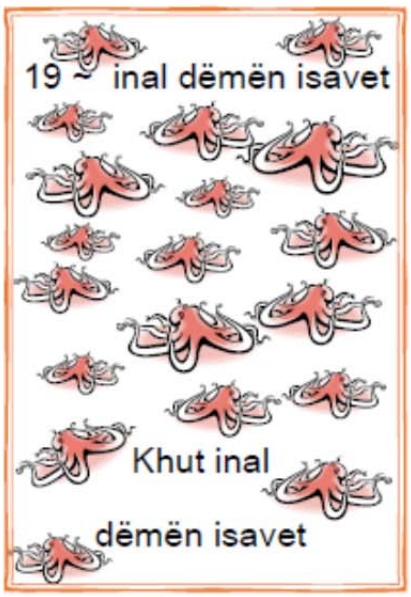
dëmën iv'a


15 ~ inal dëmën ilëm'
Lëpu inal
dëmën ilëm'


16 ~ inal dëmën
ilëm'sei
Nal inal
dëmën ilëm'sei


17 ~ inal dëmën isaru
Vënapup inal
dëmën isaru


18 ~ inal dëmën isatl
Nëpakh inal
dëmën isatl


19 ~ inal dëmën isavet
Khut inal
dëmën isavet


20 ~ inelru
Nasëkh inelru

Appendix G: List of Recodings

File Name	Recoding Name	Speakers	Transcribed with	Glosses & Translated With	Length (M:S)
nmb01	Making kastom dress	Abu Rupi	Moise Zumzum	Kelly Arnihapath	14:36
nmb02	Weaving baskets	Abu Rupi	Moise Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	3:12
nmb03	800 pig namangi	Abu Sairos	Smith Zumzum	Smith Zumzum	7:30
nmb04	A cannibalism story	Abu Sairos	Sammy, Smith	Smith Zumzum	8:36
nmb05	A man gets shot 1	Abu Sairos	Sammy	Smith Zumzum	2:41
nmb06	A man gets shot 2	Abu Sairos	Sammy	Wallis Zumzum	2:25
nmb07	Stone nakamal	Marita	Sammy, Wallis	Wallis Zumzum	5:54
nmb08	Fight in the garden	Wallis Zumzum	Sammy	Wallis Zumzum	2:50
nmb09	Ghost of a lover	Elena Zumzum	Sammy, Wallis	Wallis Zumzum	7:00
nmb10	This weekend and next weekend	Smith Zumzum	Smith Zumzum	Smith Zumzum	4:48
nmb11	Wikarara	Jonlin	Jonlin	Jonlin	10:34
nmb12	Children's day	Elena Zumzum	Elena Zumzum	Elena Zumzum	1:37
nmb13	Kinkin story	Jemson Sairos	Jemson Sairos	Jemson	2:47
nmb14	Making gardens before	Gladys	Kelly Arnihapath	Kelly Arnihapath	3:49
nmb15	Making gardens before p2	Gladys	Kelly Arnihapath	Kelly Arnihapath	4:22
nmb16	Making gardens today	Kelly Arnihapath	Kelly Arnihapath	Kelly Arnihapath	4:55
nmb17	Making gardens - taboos	Kelly and Gladys	Kelly Arnihapath	Kelly Arnihapath	2:44
nmb18	Uses for coconuts	Moise Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	1:55
nmb19	Wilson's story	Wilson Zumzum	Wilson Zumzum	Wilson Zumzum	3:04
nmb20	The woman who changed her skin	Lino	Moise Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	2:27
nmb21	Bride price payment	Smith Zumzum	Smith Zumzum	Smith Zumzum	4:47
nmb22	Chief nihapat's dream	Kelly Arnihapat	Kelly Arnihapath	Kelly Arnihapat	6:02

nmb23	Good school comes to Tenmaru	Kelly and Gladis	Kelly Arnihapath	Kelly Arnihapat	13:20
nmb24	Thieving monsters	Harrison	Moise Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	2:34
nmb25	Roasted chestnuts	Harrison	Moise Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	2:57
nmb26	Looking for a chicken	Harrison	Moise Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	3:20
nmb27	Head laplap	Harrison	Moise Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	3:26
nmb28	Devil woman	Harrison	Moise Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	3:16
nmb29	I see a rat	Harrison	Moise Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	1:58
nmb30	Independence	Jimmany	Moise Zumzum	Kelly Arnihapath	11:49
nmb31	What I did in the last few days	Smith Zumzum	Smith Zumzum	Smith Zumzum	17:35
nmb32	School picnic	Smith Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	3:16
nmb33	School closing	Amos Sairos	Amos Sairos	Amos Sairos	3:01
nmb34	The Nambilak and the Napiru	George	Kelly Arnihapath	Kelly Arnihapath	1:18
nmb35	Waving mats	Elena Zumzum	Elena Zumzum	Kelly Arnihapath	0:58
nmb36	Going fishing	Elena Zumzum	Elena Zumzum	Kelly Arnihapath	1:50
nmb37	Big Nambas marriages	Marita	Kelly Arnihapath	Kelly Arnihapath	3:42
nmb38	Eel laplap	Moise Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	2:51
nmb39	If I became a doctor	Smith Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	4:21
nmb40	If I took the Taeman	Smith Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	2:25
nmb41	If I became an MP	Smith Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	2:11
nmb42	Nrn vanu iamëk	Smith Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	2:03
nmb43	Building houses	Raymonde Jocken	Moise Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	2:13
nmb44	Making food	Raymonde Jocken	Moise Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	1:26
nmb45	Women's days	Raymonde Jocken	Moise Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	2:11
nmb46	The boy raised by the *Lisepsep*	Raymonde Jocken	Moise Zumzum	Moise Zumzum	7:44
nmb47	Raymonde's story	Raymonde Jocken	Moise Zumzum	not translated	2:49

Appendix H: Sample Texts

Sample Text One: The woman who changed her skin [nmb20].

This excerpt is of a story told by Lino of Winm'a. It is a traditional story about an old woman who swims in a special water hole after working in the garden and comes out as a young woman. When she comes to find her grandchild, who is waiting for her, he does not recognise his grandmother and will not go home with her. This makes her go back to the water hole and put her old skin back on.

(1) *I-v-amëk,* *vënm'arën* *tav'et* *i-amëk* *khir* *m'e=i*
3SG:REAL-MULT-one old.woman woman 3SG:REAL-one 3NSG with=3SG:OBJ
a *m'ëkhip'-ën…*
PERS grandchild-POSS:3SG
"One time, an old woman and her grandchild…"

(2) *a-r-lëk* *da-v'a* *kë-r-vër* *ti* *apë-r-v'a* *a* *namël*
3:REAL-PAU-stay CONT-go ES-PAU-say SUB 3:IRR-PAU-go LOC garden
kë-r-ën *parei.* *A-r-v'a* *kë-r-ën* *parei* *da.*
ES-PAU-make work 3:REAL-PAU-go ES-PAU-make work CONT
"They were there and they said, they will go to the garden and work. They went and worked for a while."

(3) *Vënm'arën* *tav'et* *lakhara* *i-vër* *an* *a*
old.woman woman DEM 3SG:REAL-say EXT.P PERS
m'ëkhip'-ën *kë-Ø-vër=i* *kë-Ø-vër* *a* *'të-r-v'a*
grandchild-POSS:3SG ES-SG-say=3SG:OBJ ES-SG-say EXT.P 1:IRR-PAU-go
kë-r-av.'
ES-PAU-bathe
"The old woman said to her grandchild, 'we will go and swim.'"

(4) *Kë-r-v'a lakhara, vënm'arën tav'et, a tap'-ën,*
ES-PAU-go DEM old.woman woman PERS grandmother-POSS:3SG
i-v'a al nawei, al nawei i-amëk, kë-da-Ø-v'a kë-Ø-vër
3SG:REAL-go in water in water 3SG:REAL-one ES-CONT-SG-go ES-SG-say
ti ip-av.
SUB 3SG:IRR-bathe
"They went now, the old woman, his grandmother, went in the water, in a water hole, she went and said she will swim."

(5) *Kë-da-Ø-v'a lakhara, a m'ëkhip'-ën pa i-lëk*
ES-CONT-SG-go DEM PERS grandchild-POSS:3SG small 3SG:REAL-sit
kë-Ø-trakh=i.
ES-SG-wait.for=3SG:OBJ
"She went now, her small grandchild sat and waited for her."

(6) *Khin i-v'a al nawei lakhara, kë-da-Ø-v'a ve k-Ø-av al*
3SG 3SG:REAL-go in water DEM ES-CONT-SG-go but ES-SG-bathe in
nawei lakhara
water DEM
"She went in the water, she went but she bathed in the water."

(7) *Kë-Ø-ln murak-ën i-lëk atlakha ra, khilakha*
ES-SG-leave shell-POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL-stay here now now
i-ma eia khilakha i-vi tav'et mëdakh.
3SG:REAL-come up now 3SG:REAL-COP woman new
"She left her old skin there now, now she came up she was a young woman."

(8) *Kë-Ø-la p'ak-ën i-a-vi vënm'arën mël.*
ES-SG-see body-POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL-NEG-COP old.woman again
"She saw her body was not an old woman anymore."

(9) *Kë-Ø-la ti i-ma kë-Ø-vi tav'et khua.*
ES-SG-see SUB 3SG:REAL-come ES-SG-COP woman strong
"She saw that she had become a strong woman."

(10) *Kë-Ø-vel* *kë-da-Ø-ma* *ësn-n* *a* *m'ëkhip'-ën*
ES-SG-move ES-CONT-SG-come near-POSS:3SG PERS grandchild-POSS:3SG
pa *lakhara* *kë-Ø-vër=i,* *kë-Ø-vër* *a,* *'p'e-r-khau.'*
small DEM ES-SG-say=3SG:OBJ ES-SG-say EXT.P 1.IRR-PAU-go.back
"She went and came to her small grandchild and she said to him, 'let's go home.'"

(11) *A* *m'ëkhip'-ën* *i-vër=i,* *kë-Ø-vër* *a,* *'kana*
PERS grandchild-POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL-say=3SG:OBJ ES-SG-say EXT.P 1SG
n-Ø-trakh *a* *tap'-ëk,* *khin* *i-v'a* *k-Ø-av*
1:REAL-SG-wait.for PERS grandmother-POSS:1SG 3SG 3SG:REAL-go ES-SG-bathe
awei *lakha'.*
down this
"Her grandchild said to her, 'I am waiting for my grandmother, she went to bathe down there.'"

(12) *I-vër* *a,* *'wau* *kana* *ra.* *Kana* *khilakha* *të-r-khau'.*
3SG:REAL-say EXT.P oh 1SG now 1SG that 1:REAL-PAU-go.back
"She said to him, 'oh it was me. It is me, let's go home.'"

(13) *I-vër* *a* *'i-khei.* *A* *tap'-ëk*
3SG:REAL-say EXT.P 3SG:REAL-no PERS grandmother-POSS:1SG
i-dakh-ma *të-Ø-lëk* *kë-Ø-trakh-de=i* *atlakha.'*
3SG:REAL-NEG-come 1SG:IRR-SG-sit 1:IRR-SG-wait.for-HLD=3SG:OBJ here
"He said to her 'No. My grandmother has not come back. I will sit and wait for her right here.'"

(14) *A* *m'ëkhip'-ën* *pa* *i-khua* *kë-Ø-vër* *ti*
PERS grandchild-POSS:3SG small 3SG:REAL-strong ES-SG-say SUB
a, *i-vër* *a,* *'i-khei,* *kana* *të-Ø-trakh*
EXT.P 3SG:REAL-say EXT.P 3SG:REAL-no 1SG 1:IRR-SG-wait.for
a *tap'-ëk* *ipa-ma* *le=i.'*
PERS grandmother-POSS:1SG 3SG:IRR-come IMM=3SG:OBJ
"Her small grandchild was stubborn; he said to her, "no, I will wait for my grandmother, she will come soon.'"…

Sample Text Two: School Picnic [nmb32].

This is an excerpt of a monologue provided by Smith during a picnic at Pinapow Primary School. The picnic was being held to celebrate the end of exams for the year eight students who were moving on to secondary school and Smith is describing the scene.

(7) *Kë-v-kharis kë-v-m'alet khilakha ar maral a-v-ulka tim'akh.*
ES-PL-finish ES-PL-return now all child 3NSG:REAL-PL-work.together food
… "We finished and came back now and the children are working together on the food."

(8) *Nki a-v-tr nisëkh pua i-nal dëmën i-ru*
some 3NGS:REAL-PL-cut piece meat 3SG:REAL-ten NUM 3SG:REAL-two
n-Ø-lav=i nanëv a Lakatoro.
1:REAL-SG-take=3SG:OBJ yesterday LOC Lakatoro
"Some of them are cutting the twelve pieces of meat that I got yesterday in Lakatoro."

(9) *Nki a-v-tr si pa pa mël kinkin, tim'akh*
some 3NSG:REAL-PL-cut thing small small again some food
pa pa në-v-lav=i i-nap'a anian, galik, …
small small 1:REAL-PL-take=3SG:OBJ 3SG:REAL-be.like onion garlic
m'a salad, nuk a-v-tr=i.
with spring.onion island.cabbage 3NSG:REAL-PL-cut=3SG:OBJ
"Some of them are cutting some other small things, small items of food that we got like onion, garlic,… and spring onion and island cabbage, they are cutting them"

(10) *Mama i-amëk, khin i-kuk nakhadrln (nasëkh),*
mother 3SG:REAL-one 3SG 3SG:REAL-cook egg black.ant
kë-Ø-nikhasër an=i i-lin dis i-amëk atlakha.
ES-SG-tip.out EXT.P=3SG:OBJ 3SG:REAL-fill dish 3SG:REAL-one here
"one mother, she is cooking rice and she is tipping it out and filling a dish (with it)

(11) *Pua në-n, ar papa a-v-takhpe=i eia vakha.*
meat CLS.GEN-POSS:3SG all father 3SG:REAL-PL-cook=3SG:OBJ up this
"The meat for the food, the fathers are cooking it up there."

(12) *Khir a-v-takhpe=i, a-v-takhpa pua në-n*
3NSG 3NSG:REAL-PL-cook=3SG:OBJ 3NSG:REAL-PL-cook meat CLS.GEN-POSS:3SG
m'a nuk në-v-lav=i nanëv a Lakatoro.
with island.cabbage 1:REAL-PL-take=3SG:OBJ yesterday LOC Lakatoro
"They are cooking it, they are cooking the meat for the food with the island cabbage that we got yesterday in Lakatoro"

(13) *Marëdel kinkin a-v-duduva kë-v-kil al nata…*
child some 3NSG:REAL-PL-play ES-PL-make.noise in sea
"Some children are playing and making noise in the sea…"

(14) *kë-v-av o kë-v-swim al nata.*
ES-PL-bathe or ES-PL-swim in sea
"they are bathing or swimming in the sea"

(15) *Kë-v-susual, nki a-v-vëtëma.*
ES-PL-call.out some 3NSG:REAL-PL-laugh
"They are calling out, some of them are laughing."

(16) *Nki a-v-vërvër kë-v-siris kë-vra-v'a al nata, nki*
some 3NSG:REAL-PL-run ES-PL-descend ES-PL-go in sea some
a-v-m'i-m'alet al nun kë-vra-ma kë-v-lëk
3NSG:REAL-PL-ascend-return in sand ES-PL-come ES-PL-sit
al nun, kë-v-tal a neiel.
in sand ES-PL-heat EXT.P sun
"Some of them are running down and going to the sea, some of them are climbing back up on the beach and they are coming and sitting on the sand, they are heating up in the sun."

(17) *Nata i-khëpën khin i-khua, nata dika i-khua*
sea 3SG:REAL-break 3SG 3SG:REAL-stong sea today 3SG:REAL-strong
i-su-supa. l-an=i i-khëpën khin al nun.
3SG:REAL-DUP-small 3SG:REAL-make=3SG:OBJ 3SG:REAL-break 3SG in sand
"The waves are breaking hard, the sea today is a little rough. It is making the waves crash on the beach."

(18) *Maral a-kha-v-rn apë-v-rn-dau=i a-v-duduva al nata.*
child 3NSG:REAL-PL-want 3NSG:IRR-PL-feel-KN=3SG:OBJ 3NSG:REAL-PL-play in sea
"The children do not want to know about it, they are playing in the sea."

(19) *Nki a-v-wa navamëli kë-vra-v'a al nata kë-v-duduva*
some 3NSG:REAL-PL-bring ball ES-PL-go in sea ES-PL-play
an=i.
EXT.P=3SG:OBJ
"Some of them brought a ball and they went to the sea and are playing with it."

(20) *Mama i-amëk khilakha-dei, khin i-lëk kë-Ø-vslakh*
mother 3SG:REAL-on this-MED.DIST 3SG 3SG:REAL-sit ES-SG-peel
p'atei. l-takhpa p'atei kë-Ø-vslakh=i khilakha,
breadfruit 3SG:REAL-cook breadfruit ES-SG-peel=3SG:OBJ now
sare=i apë-Ø-khan=i.
COMP=3SG:OBJ 3NSG:IRR-IMPRS-eat=3SG:OBJ
"One mother over there, she is sitting and peeling breadfruit. She is cooking breadfruit and peeling it, now it is finished and people will eat it."

(21) *Duan-ar ar marëdel a-v-duduva, duan-ar*
friend-POSS:3NSG all child 3NSG:REAL-PL-play friend-POSS:3NSG
a-v-ulka ti a-v-ka tim'akh. Kë-v-ën
3NSG:REAL-PL-work.together SUB 3NSG:REAL-PL-break food ES-PL-make
mamëkh tim'akh ti ipë-trakh ti ip-iar likhalm'au…
well food SUB 3SG:IRR-wait.for SUB 3SG:IRR-reach midday
"Some of the children are playing, others are helping to serve the food. They are making the food well so that it is ready for lunch"…

Sample Text Three: Going Fishing [nmb36]

This is part of a monologue provided by Elena of Pur who is explaining how she goes fishing.

(1) *P'a-Ø-v'a* *kë-Ø-uk.*
1:IRR-SG-go ES-SG-fishing
"I will go fishing."

(2) *P'a-Ø-v'a* *kë-Ø-tala* *nakhatu.*
1:IRR-SG-go ES-SG-look.for hermit.crab
"I will go and look for hermit crabs."

(3) *Kë-Ø-tëkh=i.*
ES-SG-pound=3SG:OBJ
"I will smash it."

(4) *Të-Ø-tëkh* sare=i.
1:IRR-SG-pound COMP=3SG:OBJ
"I will completely smash it."

(5) *Kë-Ø-tëkh* *nakhatu* *kë-Ø-lev-lu-lua* *udrlan* *lu-n.*
ES-SG-pound hermit.crab ES-SG-take-DUP-RMV all tooth-POSS:3SG
"I will smash the hermit crab and take off all its claws."

(6) *Kë-Ø-kharis* *an=i* *kë-da-Ø-v'a* *kë-Ø-uk* *an=i.*
ES-SG-finish EXT.P=3SG:OBJ es-cont-SG-go ES-SG-fish EXT.P=3SG:OBJ
"I will finish it and go to go fishing with it."

(7) *Kë-Ø-v'a* *kë-Ø-pëtir* *al* *nata.*
2:REAL-SG-go ES-SG-stand in sea
"You go and stand in the sea."

(8) *Kë-Ø-sërën nakhau i-vel al nata, nilapir i-tar*
ES-SG-throw rope 3SG:REAL-move in sea hook 3SG:REAL-be.located
aranë-n.
on-POSS:3SG
"You throw the line into the sea, the hook is on it."

(9) *Kë-Ø-sëran=i al nata.*
ES-SG-throw=3SG:OBJ in sea
"You throw it in the sea."

(10) *Al nata lakhara tilau i-lëk. i-khën nakhatu lakara*
in sea DEM fish 3SG:REAL-live 3SG:REAL-eat hermit.crab DEM
arana nilapir lakha kë-Ø-rëv=i, i-ma eia.
on hook this 2:REAL-SG-pull=3SG:OBJ 3SG:REAL-come up
"In the water, the fish live. It eats the hermit crab on the hook and you pull it and it comes up."

(11) *Kë-Ø-rëv tilau lara, i-ma eia.*
2:REAL-SG-pull fish that 3SG:REAL-come up
"You pull the fish, it comes up."

(12) *Narën ki kilara kë-Ø-tëp'ir al nata, narën ki kë-Ø-v'a*
Time NSPC that 2:REAL-SG-stand in sea time NSPC 2:REAL-SG-go
arana nawëk na nata.
on canoe ASV sea
"Sometimes you stand in the sea, sometimes you go in a canoe."

(13) *Tër-pa-pa lara kë-da-Ø-v'a al nata…*
NMLP-DUP-small that ES-CONT-SG-go in water
"(In) the small ones you go in the sea…"

(14) *kë-Ø-sërën nakhau i-v'a a nadep'*
ES-SG-throw rope 3SG:REAL-go to ground
"you throw the line to the ground."

(15) *Kë-Ø-rëv* *tilau*
2:REAL-SG-pull fish
"You pull up the fish."

(16) *Tilau* *i-khën* *nilapir* *lakhara* *nakhatu* *arana* *nilapir,*
fish 3SG:REAL-eat hook DEM hermit.crab on hook
kë-rëv=i.
2:REAL-SG-pull=3SG:OBJ
"The fish eats the hook, the crab on the hook and you pull it up."

(17) *kë-Ø-rëv=i,* *i-ma* *Eia.*
2:REAL-SG-pull=3SG:OBJ 3SG:REAL-come up
"You pull it and it comes up."

(18) *I-kharis,* *kë-da-Ø-khau* *kë-da-Ø-ma* *aut.* *Si p'as*
3SG:REAL-finish 2:REAL-CONT-SG-go.back ES-CONT-SG-come out thanks
i-lil. *I-kharis* *atlara* *…*
3SG:REAL-big 3SG:REAL-fish there
"It is finished, you come back and come out. Thank you very much. It finishes there." …

Sample Text Four: Eel Laplap [nmb38]

This is the beginning of a traditional story told by Moïse of Pur. The story is about an entire village of people who are turned into eels after they ignore the warning of a young boy who told them not to eat an eel that they had caught. The eel told the boy to tell everyone not to eat it but no-one listened. In the end, only the boy remains human.

(1) *Khilakha n-Ø-rn të-Ø-vrur nut a vanu*
now 1:REAL-SG-want 1:IRR-SG-talk.about place LOC village
i-amëk ar m'ertu në-n a-v-ukh
3SG:REAL-one all person CLS.GEN-POSS:3SG 3NSG:REAL-PL-change
udrlan=i kë-vra-ma kë-v-vi m'ari i-nap'e=i.
all=3SG:OBJ ES-PL-come ES-PL-COP eel 3SG:REAL-be.like=3SG:OBJ
"Now I want to talk about a place in a village and how all its people changed and became eels."

(2) *I-v-amëk dui i-amëk m'a tav'et-ën a*
3SG:REAL-MULT-one man 3SG:REAL-one with woman-POSS:3SG PERS
nat-r i-vi dui,
child-POSS:3NSG 3SG:REAL-COP man
"Once, a man with his wife and their child, who was a boy,"

(3) *a-v-lëk da-v'a da-v'a, a nau-n dui*
3NSG:REAL-PL-live CONT-GO CONT-GO PERS spouse-POSS:3SG man
i-vër an a nau-n tav'et, kë-Ø-vër
3SG:REAL-say EXT.P PERS spouse-POSS:3SG woman ES-SG-say
a, 'të-r-v'a kë-r-sapa la nawei.'
EXT.P 1:IRR-PAU-go ES-PAU-follow IMM water
"they lived there and the husband said to his wife, 'you and I will go and follow the river now.'"

(4) *Lakhara kë-r-vër an a nat-r pa,*
DEM ES-PAU-say EXT.P PERS child-POSS:3NSG small
kë-r-vër a, 'nakëm pë-Ø-lëk a nakh nëmakh
ES-PAU-say EXT.P 2SG 2SG:IRR-SG-stay LOC front house
kam'em' wëki të-r-ru kë-r-vel'
1NSG:EXCL only 1:IRR-PAU-two ES-PAU-move
"Then they said to their small child, 'you will stay at the village, only we two will go.'"

(5) *Kë-r-vel kë-r-v'a kë-r-sapa nawei kë-r-rëp nur.*
ES-PAU-move ES-PAU-go ES-PAU-follow water ES-PAU-kill freshwater.prawn
"They went and followed the river and were killing freshwater prawns."

(6) *Kë-r-vel kë-r-v'a da-v'a kë-r-pësla m'ari lil i-amëk.*
ES-PAU-move ES-PAU-go CONT-go ES-PAU-find EEL big 3SG:REAL-one
"They were walking and they found a big eel"

(7) *A nau-n tav'et i-këlau kë-Ø-la m'ari lil*
PERS spouse-POSS:3SG woman 3SG:REAL-spot ES-SG-see eel big
lakhara kë-Ø-vër an a nau-n, kë-Ø-vër a,
DEM ES-SG-say EXT.P PERS spouse-POSS:3SG ES-SG-say EXT.P
'uau pë-Ø-la m'ari lil i-amëk lakha ki
oh 2:IRR-SG-see eel big 3SG:REAL-one this NSPC
i-lëk kha.'
3SG:REAL-stay here
"His wife spotted it, she saw the big eel and she said to her husband, 'oh you look at this big eel that is here".'

(8) *Lakhara kë-r-kap'ërkha m'ari lil lakhara da-v'a kë-r-rëp-p'ën=i.*
DEM ES-PAU-try.to.kill eel big DEM CONT-go ES-PAU-kill-FTL=3SG:OBJ
"Then they were trying to kill the eel and they killed the eel."

(9) *Kë-r-rëp-p'ën sare=i.*
ES-PAU-kill-FTL COMP=3SG:OBJ
"They killed it dead."

(10) *Kë-r-ru kë-r-we=i da-v'a kë-r-wir-ma a nakh nëmakh.*
ES-PAU-two ES-PAU-carry=3SG:OBJ CONT-go ES-PAU-carry-come LOC front house
"Those two carried it all the way back home."

(11) *Lakhara kë-r-wir-v'a am'el.*
DEM ES-PAU-carry-go in.nakamal
"Then they took it to the nakamal."

(12) *Kë-r-v'ara an a mëlin i-ma a mëlin*
ES-PAU-call EXT.P PERS chief 3SG:REAL-came PERS chief
i-ma kë-Ø-le=i, lakhara kë-Ø-v'ara a m'ertu
3SG:REAL-come ES-SG-see=3SG:OBJ DEM ES-SG-call ECT.P person
udrlan=i a-vra-ma kë-v-le=i.
all=3SG:OBJ 3nsg:REAL-PL-come ES-PL-see=3SG:OBJ
"They called out to the chief who came, the chief came and saw it, then he called all the people who came and looked."

(13) *Lakhara a mëlin i-vër an=r ar m'ertu-ën ra…*
DEM PERS chief 3SG:REAL-say EXT.P=3NSG:OBJ all person-POSS:3SG now
"Then the chief said to his people now…"

(14) *kë-Ø-vër a, 'khilakha pë-vra-v'a kë-v-trakh a tim'akh na*
ES-SG-say EXT.P now 2:IRR-PL-go ES-PL-harvest EXT.P food ASV
m'ari lakha…'
eel this
"he said to them 'now you will go and harvest food for this eel…"

(15) *kë-vra-ma kë-v-an=i të-v-khan=i …*
ES-PL-come ES-PL-make=3SG:OBJ 1:IRR-PL-eat=3SG:OBJ
you will come and make it and we will eat it.'"…

Sample Text Five: Nrn Vanu Iamëk [nmb42]

This is a church hymn sung by Smith of Pur. The hymn talks about heaven.

(1) *N-Ø-rn vanu i-amëk,*
1:REAL-SG-hear village 3SG:REAL-one
"I hear of a place,"

(2) *Ruplet i-vrur=i, I-tar ësn Khapët eia.*
bible 3SG:REAL-talk.about=3SG:OBJ 3SG:REAL-be.located near God up
"The bible talks about it, it is up with God."

(3) *Si i-stu i-k-a-khei mël,*
thing 3SG:REAL-bad 3SG:REAL-NES-NEG-no again
"There will be nothing bad anymore,"

(4) *Nut likhat i-k-a-khei mël,*
place dark 3SG:REAL-NES-NEG-no again
"There will be no more nights,"

(5) *Si i-k-a-tërtarep' aranë-n.*
thing 3SG:REAL-NES-NEG-grow.old on-POSS:3SG
"Nothing will grow old up there."

(6) *Arana vanu në-n,*
on village CLS.GEN-POSS:3SG
"In the village,"

(7) *i-tar eia,*
3SG:REAL-be.located up
"It is up there,"

(8) *Nalen rëp i-k-a-khei aranë-n,*
wind hit 3SG:REAL-NES-NEG-no on-POSS:3SG
"There will be no cyclones up there,"

(9) *Aranë-n, arana navanal në-n,*
on-POSS:3SG on road CLS.GEN-POSS:3SG
“Up there, on its road,”

(10) *I-ar i-nap'a neiel,*
3SG:REAL-shine 3SG:REAL-be.like sun
“It shines like the sun,”

(11) *Neiel i-k-a-tëpël mël aranë-n.*
sun 3SG:REAL-NES-NEG-set again on-POSS:3SG
“The sun will not set any more up there.”

(12) *Nai udran=i i-lpëpul,*
tree all=3SG:OBJ 3SG:REAL-grow
“All the trees are growing,”

(13) *Kë-Ø-iaul m'a niu në-n,*
ES-SG-bend.down with dew CLS.GEN-POSS:3SG
“They bend down with dew,”

(14) *Kë-Ø-tu nava-n i-iar mamëkh.*
ES-SG-put fruit-POSS:3SG 3SG:REAL-reach well
“They fruit very well.”

(15) *Pë-v-wa si uraur a tan rëp rëp, Kë-v-khiris a nut,*
2:IRR-PL-cary thing different EXT.P gun hit hit ES-PL-finish EXT.P place
“You will carry something different to guns for killing people, they will finish there,”

(16) *Si i-k-a-tërtarep' aranë-n.*
thing 3SG:REAL-NES-NEG-grow.old on-POSS:3SG
“Nothing will grow old up there.”

(17) *Arana vanu në-n,*
on village CLS.GEN-POSS:3SG
“In the village,

(18) *I-tar eia,*
3SG:REAL-be.located up
“It is up there,”

(19) *Nalen rëp i-k-a-khei aranë-n,*
wind hit 3SG:REAL-NES-NEG-no on-POSS:3SG
“There will be no cyclones up there,”

(20) *Aranë-n, arana navanal në-n,*
on-POSS:3SG on road CLS.GEN-POSS:3SG
“Up there, on its road,”

(21) *I-ar i-nap'a neiel,*
3SG:REAL-shine 3SG:REAL-be.like sun
“It shines like the sun,”

(22) *Neiel i-k-a-khpën mël aranë-n.*
sun 3SG:REAL-NES-NEG-be.blocked.by.clouds again on-POSS:3SG
“The sun will not be blocked by clouds any more up there.”