

# A grammar of Komnzo

Christian Döhler

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Christian Döhler



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For Nakre and Tayafe



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# Preface

This book provides a description of Komnzo, a Papuan language of Southern New Guinea. Komnzo is spoken by around 200 people in the village of Rouku and a couple of adjacent hamlets. Komnzo belongs to the Tonda subgroup of the Yam language family, which is also known as the Morehead Upper-Maró group. This grammar provides the first comprehensive description of a Yam language. It is based on 16 months of fieldwork. The primary source of data is a text corpus which the author recorded and transcribed between 2010 and 2015. The corpus adds up to ten hours of text including narratives, procedurals and naturally occurring social interaction.

The sequence of chapters follows the well-established order: phonology (§2), word classes (§3), nominal morphology (§4), verb morphology (§5) and TAM marking (§6), noun phrase syntax (§7), clausal syntax (§8), interclausal syntax (§9) and information structure (§10). These chapters are supplemented by an anthropological, historical and sociolinguistic introduction (§1), and they are rounded off by a chapter on lexicology (§11). The appendix includes three sample texts which are fully glossed. The entire text corpus as well as the dictionary is accessible online ([ADD LINK TO DOBES](#)).

Komnzo provides many fields of future research, but the most interesting aspect of its structure lies in the verb morphology, to which the two largest chapters of the grammar are dedicated. Komnzo verbs may index up to two arguments showing agreement in person, number and gender. Verbs encode 18 TAM categories, valency, directionality and deictic status. Morphological complexity lies not only in the amount of categories that verbs may express, but also in the way these are encoded. Komnzo verbs exhibit what may be called ‘distributed exponence’, i.e. single morphemes are underspecified for a particular grammatical category. Therefore, morphological material from different sites has to be integrated first, and only after this integration can one arrive at a particular grammatical category.

The descriptive approach in this grammar is theory-informed rather than theory-driven. Comparison to other Yam languages and diachronic developments are taken into account whenever it seems helpful.





# Abbreviations

∅	zero form
\.../	verbstem, e.g. y\fath/wr (§5.2, §5.3)
(.)	speech pause
.	multi-item gloss, e.g. old.man, be.standing, 3SG.MASC
	used in cases of syncretism, e.g. 2 3 is second or third person
1	first person (§5.5.1)
2	second person (§5.5.1)
3	third person (§5.5.1)
$\alpha$	alpha prefix series (§5.5.1.2, §6.2.1)
$\beta$	beta prefix series (§5.5.1.2, §6.2.1)
$\gamma$	gamma prefix series (§5.5.1.2, §6.2.1)
$\beta_1$	beta 1 prefix series (§5.5.1.2, §6.2.1)
$\beta_2$	beta 2 prefix series (§5.5.1.2, §6.2.1)
ABL	ablative case (§4.8.3)
ABS	absolutive case (§4.4)
ADJZR	adjectivaliser (§3.1)
A	most agent-like argument (§5.4)
ALL	allative case (§4.8.2)
AND	andative (§5.6.1)
ANIM	animate (§4.3, §4.18)
APPR	apprehensive (§3.5.2, §5.6.2, §6.3.2)
ASSOC	associative case (§4.15, §7.6)
BG	backgrounded (§6.2.4)
CHAR	characteristic case (§4.12)
COP	copula (§8.3.2)
DAT	dative case (§4.6)
FUTIMP	future imperative (§6.2, §6.2.4)
DEM	demonstrative (§3.1.12)
DIM	diminutive (§4.17.5)
DIST	distal demonstrative (§3.1.12)
DISTR	distributive (§4.17.4)
DU	dual (§5.5.3)
DUR	durative (§6.2.4)

## *Abbreviations*

ETC	et cetera ('and all'), (§4.17.3)
ERG	ergative case (§4.5)
EMPH	emphatic (§4.17.1)
EXT	extended verb stem (§5.2, §5.3)
FEM	feminine (§3.1.3, §5.5.2)
FUT	future (§6.3.4, §6.4.1)
HAB	habitual (§6.3.6)
ALR	iamitive ('already'), (§3.4.1, §6.3.5)
IMP	imperative (§5.5.1.1, §6.2.5, §6.4.3)
IPST	immediate past (§3.5.2, §6.2, §6.3.1, §6.4.1)
IMM	immediate demonstrative (§3.1.12.5)
IMN	imminent (§3.5.2, §6.3.1)
INDF	indefinite (§3.1.11)
INS	instrumental case (§4.10)
IO	indirect object (§5.4)
IPFV	imperfective (§6.2, §6.4.2)
IRR	irrealis (§6.2.2, §6.4.3, §10.5)
ITER	iterative (§6.2)
LPL	large plural (§5.5.3.2)
LK	linking consonant (§5.5.1.1)
LOC	locative case (§4.8.1)
MASC	masculine (§3.1.3, §5.5.2)
MED	medial demonstrative (§3.1.12)
M	middle (§5.4, §5.4.5)
NEG	negator (§3.4, §8.5)
NMLZ	nominaliser (§3.2, §5.4.3, §9.1)
ND	non-dual (§5.5.3)
NPST	non-past (§6.2, §6.4.1)
NPL	non-plural (§5.5.3)
NSG	non-singular (§5.5.3)
OBJ	object (§5.4)
ONLY	exclusive marker ('only', 'just'), (§4.17.2)
P	most patient-like argument (§5.4)
PFV	perfective (§6.2, §6.4.2)
PL	plural (§5.5.3)
POSS	possessive (§4.7)
POS	positional verb stem (§5.4.4.2)
POT	potential (§3.5.2, §6.3.3)
PRIV	privative case (§4.14)
PROP	propriative case (§4.13)
PROX	proximal demonstrative (§3.1.12)
PST	past (§6.2, §6.2.3, §6.4.1)
PURP	purposive case (§4.11)

QUOT	quotative (§3.1.12.7, §9.7)
RECOG	recognitional pronoun (§3.1.12.6)
REDUP	reduplication (§3.1.2)
RPST	recent past (§6.2, §6.4.1)
RS	restricted verb stem (§5.2, §5.3, §5.5.3.4)
SIMIL	similative (§4.16)
SBJ	subject (§5.4)
S	single argument of an intransitive verb
SG	singular (§5.5.3)
STAT	stative (§5.4.4.2)
TEMP	temporal case (§4.9)
VC	valency change (§5.4.2, §5.4.3, §5.5.3.3)
VENT	ventive (§5.6.1)
U	undergoer (§5.4)



# 1 Preliminaries

## 1.1 Introduction

This grammar describes Komnzo, the language of the Farem people, who live in the Southern New Guinea area. The word *farem* is an autonym derived from an origin place called *farem kar* ‘Farem place’. The concept of a shared place of origin overlaps with speech variety. The speakers of Komnzo sometimes refer to themselves as the “Farem tribe” when they speak English.

The proper name *Komnzo* must have had its origin in a mistranslation in the context of a visit by a patrol officer. Early sources are difficult to interpret, because they only mention places along the Morehead River. The listed names for the Rouku area include *bangu* (Ray 1907: 292) and *perem/peremka* (Ray 1923: 334). The former is a section or clan name found throughout the region, while the latter looks like *farem kar*, because the grapheme <p> in early sources corresponds to the bilabial fricative  $\phi$  in Komnzo. From the 1950s onwards, the label *komnzo zokwasi* ‘Komnzo language’ was used. It is unclear when and how this was introduced as the official language name. The word *komnzo* means ‘just, only, still’ in the sense of *komnzo käms!* ‘just sit down!’ or *komnzo ymarwé* ‘I can still see him’. Thus, the compound *komnzo zokwasi* literally means ‘only language’ or ‘just speech’. It can be imagined as the reply to an outsider’s question: ‘What language do you speak?’ > ‘We speak only language.’

This naming pattern is pervasive in the area. With the exception of Ránmo, Wartha and Aramma, all varieties of the Tonda subgroup on the Papua New Guinean side of the border derive their name from the word for ‘just, only’. These are Anta, Ara, Wára, Wèré, Blafe, Kémä and Kánchá. The map in Figure 1.1 provides a linguistic overview of the Morehead district. Members of the Yam family (Morehead-Maró group) are portrayed in different shades of grey according to their subgroup. We find Komnzo at the eastern edge of the Tonda subgroup.



## 1.2 Typological overview

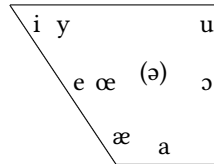
### 1.2.1 Introduction

Komnzo is a Papuan language. The term Papuan is a negative category comprising those languages of the area near New Guinea which are neither Austronesian nor Australian. It was originally introduced by Sidney Ray (1926: 24). The number of distinct language families that have been proposed ranges from ten (Wurm 1975) to 23 (Ross 2005) up to 60 (Foley 1986: 3). Although authors acknowledge the incredible diversity within New Guinea, there have been some attempts at defining grammatical properties which are characteristic for Papuan languages (Foley 1986 and Foley 2000). Komnzo, the languages of the Yam family, and possibly the whole Southern New Guinea area deviate from this Papuan type. Other authors have shown that the languages of New Guinea do not share a set of typological features that set them apart from the languages of the world (Comrie & Cysouw 2012).

In the following sections, I introduce the typologically most striking features of the language. Detailed information on each topic can be found in later chapters.

### 1.2.2 Phonology

The Komnzo phoneme inventory consists of eight vowels and 18 consonants. The vowels are the five cardinal vowels [i], [e], [a], [ɔ], [u] plus a low front unrounded vowel [æ] and, unusual for Papuan languages, two front rounded vowels [y] and [œ].<sup>1</sup> The most frequent vowel is the epenthetic vowel, which is schwa.



The consonants follow a set of pairs of voiceless and prenasalised plosives at the alveolar and velar point of articulation: [t], [ʰd], [k], [ʰg]. There are labialised velars: [kʷ], [ʰgʷ]. At the bilabial point of articulation there is only a prenasalised plosive [ʰmb], while its oral counterpart [b] only occurs in loanwords. There are three nasals [m], [n], [ŋ], one trill/tap [r], two semivowels [j], [w] and, again unusual for Papuan languages, three fricatives [ɸ], [ð], [s] and two affricates [ts], [ʰdz]. It follows that we can identify three main points of articulation: bilabial, alveolar and velar. Further points of articulation are: dental [ð], palato-alveolar [ts] and [ʰdz], as well as palatal [j].

<sup>1</sup>Outside of the Yam family front rounded vowels are also found in Awyu-Dumut languages (van Enk & de Vries 1997: 60).

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		t	ts	k	k <sup>w</sup>
m <sub>b</sub>		<sup>n</sup> d	<sup>n</sup> dz	ŋ <sub>g</sub>	ŋ <sub>g</sub> <sup>w</sup>
m		n		ŋ	
ɸ	ð	s			
		r			
			j		w

Like in many Papuan languages, for example Kalam (Blevins & Pawley 2010), many syllables lack phonemically specified vowels. In this case, an epenthetic vowel may be inserted, usually a short central vowel [ə]. Many words lack phonemically specified vowels altogether, like *yngthkwrnth* [jəmə<sup>ŋ</sup>gəθk<sup>w</sup>ərəməθ] ‘they were feeding him’.

The syllable structure allows for complex onsets, of the type CRV as in *gru* ‘shooting star’ or *srak* ‘boy’. Otherwise onsets are simply CV. Even though, vowel initial words exist, they are always produced with a glottal stop as in *ane* [ʔane] ‘that’ or *ebar* [ʔe<sup>m</sup>bar] ‘head’. Syllable codas are optional, but they consist of maximally one consonant.

### 1.2.3 Morphology

Komnzo morphology can be used to easily distinguish nominals from verbs. As in other Yam languages, for example Nama (Siegel 2014) and Nen (Evans 2015a), Komnzo verb morphology exhibits a high degree of complexity. Verbal morphology is highly synthetic, while nominal morphology is almost entirely suffixing.

Komnzo nouns are inflected for number if their referent is animate. Otherwise number marking only takes place in the verb. Furthermore, nouns are marked for case by enclitics, which attach to the last element of the noun phrase. Below I show the case markers for the inanimate noun *efoth* ‘sun, day’ and the animate noun *kabe* ‘man, people’.

	inanimate	animate singular	animate non-singular
Absolutive	<i>efoth</i> =∅	<i>kabe</i> =∅	<i>kabe</i> =é
Ergative	<i>efoth</i> =f	<i>kabe</i> =f	<i>kabe</i> =é
Dative	<i>efoth</i> =n	<i>kabe</i> =n	<i>kabe</i> =nm
Possessive	<i>efoth</i> =ane	<i>kabe</i> =ane	<i>kabe</i> =aneme
Instrumental	<i>efoth</i> =me	<i>kabe</i> =me	n/a
Locative	<i>efoth</i> =en	<i>kabe</i> =dben	<i>kabe</i> =medben
Allative	<i>efoth</i> =fo	<i>kabe</i> =dbo	<i>kabe</i> =medbo
Ablative	<i>efoth</i> =fa	<i>kabe</i> =dba	<i>kabe</i> =medba
Associative	<i>efoth</i> =ä	<i>kabe</i> =r	<i>kabe</i> =ä
Characteristic	<i>efoth</i> =ma	<i>kabe</i> =anema	<i>kabe</i> =anemema
Proprietary	<i>efoth</i> =karä	<i>kabe</i> =karä	n/a
Privative	<i>efoth</i> =mär	<i>kabe</i> =mär	n/a
Similitative	<i>efoth</i> =thatha	<i>kabe</i> =thatha	n/a
Purposive	<i>efoth</i> =r	n/a	n/a



Nominal morphology in Komnzo is comparatively simple, with case marking shown by enclitics which attach to the rightmost element of a noun phrase, which is usually the head noun (1a), but sometimes it may be a modifier (1b).

- (1) a. *kafar kabe=f=nzo*  
       big man=ERG=ONLY  
       ‘only the big man (did sth.)’
- b. *kabe kafar=f=nzo*  
       man big=ERG=ONLY  
       ‘only the big man (did sth.)’

In contrast to nominals, verb morphology is highly synthetic. Verbs may index up to two arguments showing agreement in person, number and gender. Verbs encode 18 TAM categories, valency, directionality and deictic status. Complexity lies not only in the amount of categories verbs expressed, but also in the way how these are encoded.

#### 1.2.4 Distributed exponence

Komnzo verbs exhibit what can be called “distributed exponence”. Distributed exponence is characterised by the fact that morphemes are underspecified for a particular grammatical category. Therefore, morphological material from different sites has to be taken into account. This phenomenon is different from multiple exponence (e.g. circumfixes) in that each morphological site can be manipulated independently. This is shown below in the expression of a few selected TAM categories for the verb *thoraksi* ‘arrive, appear’ in a third singular masculine frame.

non-past imperfective	<i>y-thorak-wr</i>
recent-past imperfective	<i>su-thorak-wr</i>
recent-past durative	<i>y-thorak-wr-m</i>
recent-past perfective	<i>sa-thor</i>
past imperfective	<i>y-thorak-wr-a</i>
past durative	<i>su-thorak-wr-m</i>
past perfective	<i>sa-thor-a</i>
iterative	<i>su-thor</i>

Distributed exponence means that we cannot gloss the prefix *y-* for a tense value, because it is used for the inflections of non-past, recent past and past. Furthermore, glossing the suffix *-m* as a durative is only half of its function as it backshifts tense as well from non-past to recent past and again from recent past to past tense. In fact, the only morpheme in the above example that serves only one function is the past suffix *-a*. As we can see in the example, exponents of TAM include the verb stem (*thorak* versus *thor*). Indeed, most Komnzo verbs possess two stems which are sensitive to aspect. Again, the stem alone is not sufficient to express the aspectual values (imperfective, perfective, iterative, durative), but it is the combination of stem type, prefix and suffix.

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Distributed exponence is best explained with the way Komnzo marks number on verbs. The four possible values are singular, dual, plural, and large plural. Note that only a small subset of verbs can form large plurals. The exponents of number are distributed over two morphological slots. There is a binary distinction in the prefix (*y-* vs. *e-*) and the suffix (*-thgr* vs. *-thgn*). The four possible combinations of these exponents encode the four number values. This is shown with the intransitive verb *migsi* ‘hang’ in a third person frame below:

singular	<i>y-mi-thgr</i>
dual	<i>e-mi-thgn</i>
plural	<i>e-mi-thgr</i>
large plural	<i>y-mi-thgn</i>

### 1.2.5 Syntax

Komnzo is a double-marking language. The case marking is organised in an ergative/absolutive system. In addition to three core cases (absolutive, ergative and dative), there are 14 semantic cases. Verbs index up to two arguments. The undergoer argument is indexed by a prefix and the actor argument is indexed by a suffix. One-place predicates split along the lines of stative versus dynamic event types. The latter employ the suffix for indexing, while the former make use of the prefix. Valency changing morphology enables the indexing of a goal, beneficiary or possessor in the prefix. This is shown below with the verbs ‘stand’, ‘return’, ‘see’ and ‘give’. I use the term “template” to describe the different inflectional patterns in which verb stems are found.

- (2) a. *fi y-rugr.*  
3.ABS 3SG.MASC-sleep  
‘He sleeps.’
- b. *fi ηabrigwr-th.*  
3.ABS return-3PL  
‘They return.’
- c. *nafa fi y-mar-th.*  
3PL.ERG 3.ABS 3SG.MASC-see-3PL  
‘They see him.’
- d. *nafa yare kabe=n y-a-rithr-th.*  
3PL.ERG bag(ABS) man=DAT 3SG.MASC-VC-give-3PL  
‘They give the man the bag.’

The most frequent word order in Komnzo is SOV, more accurately AUV<sup>2</sup>, since there

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<sup>2</sup>AUV: actor undergoer verb.

is only weak evidence for a subject category. At the same time, the flagging of noun phrases with case allows for considerable freedom in the word order patterns. Nominal compounds and noun phrases are typically head final, although modifying elements in the noun phrase, for example adjectives or quantifiers, may occur after the head. Relative clauses follow their head.

Subordinate clauses in Komnzo are usually non-finite employing nominalised verbs with appropriate case markers. Verb chaining and the distinction between medial and final verb forms, which are typical for Papuan languages, are not found in Komnzo. The examples below show a phasal complement (3) and a complement of desire (4).

- (3) *nafa with rku-si the-thkäfa-th.*  
 3NSG.ERG banana(ABS) knock.down-NMLZ 2|3PL-start-2|3SG  
 ‘They started knocking down the bananas.’

- (4) *fi miyo yé nge fatha-si=r.*  
 3.ABS desirous 3SG.MASC.be child hold-NMLZ=PURP  
 ‘He wants to hold the child.’

In addition to nominalised verbs, clauses may be connected with conjunctions (5), relative pronouns (6) or demonstratives flagged for case (7).

- (5) *fi z zebnaf-Ø o komnzo y-rugr?*  
 3.ABS ALR wake.up-3SG or still 3SG.MASC-sleep  
 ‘Did he wake up already or is he still sleeping?’

- (6) *kabe sa-thor kayé mane sf-marwrm-e.*  
 man(ABS) 3SG.MASC-arrive yesterday which 3SG.MASC-see-1PL  
 ‘The man who we saw yesterday arrived.’

- (7) *ñare z ze-far bãne=ma nafane kkauna zwa-rithr-th.*  
 woman(ABS) ALR 3SG.F-set.off DEM:MED=CHAR 3SG.POSS things 3SG.F-give-3PL  
 ‘The woman has left already, because they gave back her belongings to her.’

## 1.3 The Farem people and their language

### 1.3.1 Location

The area considered in this study is the southwestern corner of the Western Province of Papua New Guinea. This area used to be called “Trans-Fly” in the past, for example in Williams’ ethnography of the Keraki people entitled “Papuans of the Trans-Fly” (1936). Mary Ayres rightly criticises this term for its geo-centrism (1983: 1). I use the administrative term “Morehead district” which encompasses the area between the Indonesian border to the west, the Fly River to the north, the boundary of the Yam language family in the east (See Figure 1.1 above), and the coastline in the south.<sup>3</sup> The area is named after

<sup>3</sup>The Morehead-Rural census division encompasses the same area, but the eastern border is further to the east including some of the Pahoturi River languages, for example Idi.

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Morehead station, the administrative center, and the Morehead River, which in turn was named after Boyd Dunlop Morehead, the premier of Queensland between 1888 and 1890. I use the term “Southern New Guinea” which encompasses a much wider region roughly from the Digul River in the west to the Fly River in the north and east.

Komnzo is spoken in the village of Rouku, which is located about 7km west of Morehead and about a kilometer north of the Morehead River. It is situated on the road that connects Morehead with Weam in the west. Traditional lands expand about 20km east-west and 25km north-south. There are four clans in Rouku village: *Mrzar Mayawa*, *Bani-bani Mayawa*, *Muthrata Sangara*, *Wazu Sangara*.<sup>4</sup> Further settlements include Morehead, Gunana, Firra, Kanathr, Ŋazäthe and Masu. Only Morehead and Gunana are settled permanently, while the others are garden places in some years. The map in Figure 1.2 shows Rouku and the surrounding places.



Figure 1.2: Rouku and surrounds

Gunana, the second largest settlement, is situated about 2km west of Rouku along the road. The present-day village was established around 10 years ago. Gunana is situated closer to the Morehead River. The name Rouku, from the Komnzo word *rokuroku* ‘river-bank’, was given to this place when the first missionaries arrived in the 1950’s. Thus, Gunana is the original Rouku, and it is often referred to as Rouku-Gunana. The word *gunana* is a loanword from Motu which means ‘old’. Two clans live at Gunana today: *Farem Sangara* and *Nümgar Bagu*. They speak mostly Wára and Anta for reasons which

<sup>4</sup>Mary Ayres avoids using the word ‘clan’ (1983: 142), instead she draws a distinction between “non-local sections” (*Bagu, Mayawa, Sangara*), which are found throughout the region, and “local-sections” (*Nümgar Bagu, Mrzar Mayawa, Muthrata Sangara*), which are found in one group only, for example the Farem. I will use ‘clan’ for the latter and ‘section’ for the former. This is discussed in §1.3.8.

I address in §1.3.11. Morehead station includes the government administration, the aid-post, the primary school and the airstrip. A number of small settlements are built around Morehead station, and these virtually merge into one another. The largest of these is Garaita, a Nama speaking village. Since Morehead station was built on land belonging to the Mayawa section from Rouku, some families from Rouku have settled in Morehead permanently. One small hamlet of this kind is Fsan. Moreover, some families from Rouku live in Morehead because they are employed in the local administration as teachers or public servants. With respect to clans, this population is mixed. The hamlet Firra is situated about 7km south of Morehead. Only a few families of the *Banibani Mayawa* clan live there. Most of the people have shifted their residence to Morehead, but keep garden places at Firra. Kanathr is a small hamlet located 2km west of Morehead on the northern side of the river. Kanathr marks the point where the road crosses the river. As there is no bridge, people cross the river by canoe, and cars or motorcycles use a rusty old pontoon. Kanathr serves as a place where children from Rouku and Yokwa, the next village along the road to the west, stay overnight while they attend Morehead primary school. Kanathr was settled in the 1980's, deserted in the 90's, and re-established over the last three years. Its population is mixed with respect to clans, but since the land belongs to the two Mayawa sections, they make up the majority.

There are many places around Rouku which used to be settled, but have now been abandoned or are used only as garden places. These include Ytkum, Dmädr, Faremkar, ʔazäthe, Masu and Akrimogo. Two examples are ʔazäthe and Masu. The map in Figure 1.2 shows ʔazäthe, Rouku and Masu. Both used to be settled until about 10 years ago by clans of the *Sagara* and *Mayawa* section respectively. Today both are used as garden places, but they still play an important role as origin places. Both places are very close to Rouku, about a 15-minute walk. Note that named places are densely clustered in the Morehead district, especially in the vicinity of settlements. More importantly, places are perceived as different regardless how close they are geographically. This topic is discussed in §11.3.2.

### 1.3.2 Geography and environment

In its biota, the Morehead district is more similar to northern Australia than to the rest of New Guinea. We find eucalypts, melaleuca, acacias and banksias combined with wallabies, bandicoots, goannas, taipans and termite mounds. The area consists of lowland which a Papuan highlander or a European would describe as almost featureless. Williams describes it as having a “mild, almost dainty, attractiveness in detail, but [...] on the whole the extreme of monotony” (1936: 1).

I have measured differences in elevation between 12m and 41m above sea level.<sup>5</sup> However small these differences in elevation, they are significant over the monsoon cycle with a long dry season (June - November) and an intense wet season (January - May). Areas very close to settlements or gardens are inundated during the wet season, while

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<sup>5</sup>This was done with a GPS device: the 12m point was the water-level of the Morehead River close to Rouku; the 41m point was measured in Rouku village.

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Figure 1.3: Rouku: the area to the right is inundated during wet season

the larger villages are situated on higher ground. In fact all villages along the road are built on what is called the “Morehead ridge” (Paijmans et al. 1971: 15), thus keeping houses and gardens safe from the annual flooding. The photo in Figure 1.3 was taken in Rouku. During previous wet season, the paperbark trees to the right were inundated to about 1m, while the bamboo groves on the left stayed dry.

The Morehead ridge is intersected by many small creeks, which carry little or no water during dry season. The Morehead River always carries water as it slowly meanders towards the coast. The Morehead forms a narrow, deep channel whose riverbanks drop off sharply 2-3m down to the water level. Close to Rouku village, I have measured 40m width and 15-20m depth during dry season. The Morehead is a tidal river which means that during dry season, when it has virtually no flow, salt water pushes back many kilometers upriver. During rainy season, the river overflows and turns the surrounding land into a wide swamp with many inlets and lagoons. The image below (Fig. 1.4) shows the Morehead River and a tributary. The Morehead district is a highly diverse area of ecological zones (Paijmans 1970 and Paijmans et al. 1971). For the description of native land use, Ayres distinguishes four landscape types: “big bush”, “open bush country”, “clear places”, and “seasonal swamps” (1983: 5). In the following, I employ the respective Komnzo terms: (i) *kafar fz* ‘big forest’ is a type of monsoon rainforest, (ii) *fz* ‘forest’ is a much thinner forest type which is covered by a grass floor and dotted with red anthills, (iii) *ksi kar* ‘bushy place’ is a type of savannah which lacks trees, but is covered with high grass, and (iv) *zra* ‘swamp’ is a place entirely inundated during the wet season timbered by paperbark trees and a ground cover of dead leaves. Figures 1.5-1.8 show images of these types in the vicinity of Rouku village. As one would expect, these landscape types differ strongly in the kinds of plants that grow there. The collection of specimens and their identification was greatly facilitated by Kipiro Damas, who visited Rouku in 2011 and 2015.

The Morehead district is rich in wildlife. The main game species are pigs, cassowaries and wallabies. There are many other marsupial species including bandicoots, phalangers (cuscus) and gliders. The Morehead district is also abundant in birdlife. Attested species

### 1.3 The Farem people and their language



Figure 1.4: The Morehead River near Rouku during dry season

include birds of paradise, parrots, lorekeets, pigeons, eagles, hawks, bush fowls, jaberoots, storks and broilgas. Thanks to the help of Chris Healey, who visited Rouku in 2012 and 2013, we were able to match around 100 Komnzo bird names to the corresponding scientific names of these species. The rivers and swamps are rich in fish and amphibious species, for example barramundis, mullets, catfish, eelfish, rainbowfishes, glassfishes, stingrays, river crayfish, prawns, crocodiles, water snakes and turtles. Other reptiles include various goanna species, frogs and snakes. Examples for the latter are the Papuan taipan, the New Guinea death adder, the New Guinea brown snake, the Papuan black-snake as well as various python types.



Figure 1.5: *Kafar fz*: road cut through the monsoon rainforest

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Figure 1.6: *Fz*: thin forest



Figure 1.7: *Ksi kar*: small patch of savannah





Figure 1.8: *Zra*: seasonal swamp during dry season

### 1.3.3 Agriculture and subsistence

The Farem people are agriculturalists. Their main crops are round and long yams, bananas, sweet potatoes, cassava, taro, coconut, sago, breadfruit and sugar cane. Additionally, there are many fruits and nuts available during the dry season. Although the Farem are skilled in hunting, trapping and fishing, they rely on their garden products. In this section, I focus on their staple food, which is yam.

Without doubt yams are the most important crop for the Farem, and the role of this bland tasting tuber can hardly be overstated. FE Williams concludes his chapter on food production by stating that “the social significance of food among these people derives largely from the pride which individuals and groups feel in having plenty of it.” (1936: 235). Large quantities of yams are exchanged at feasts, and sizeable tubers are often given as personal gifts. During the celebration of Independence Day in Morehead, there is a competition where individuals measure and weigh their biggest yams. On many occasions, people have shown off the content of their yam houses to me, and during harvest time some of my friends have peeked through the wall of someone’s yam house to examine the yield and compare it to their own, which often became the talk of the day. In short, yams indicate a person’s wealth and social status.

Yam cultivation involves hard labour. The cultivation cycle can be divided into three phases: (i) preparing and planting, (ii) tending, and (iii) harvesting. The preparations begin by clearing the land (between August and October). Good, well-drained soil is found on the high ground; either virgin forest or a piece of land that has lain fallow for some years. The gardener has to cut the overgrowth and clear the grass. Large trees are usually only ring-barked and one would wait for the tree to die and eventually to fall.

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Figure 1.9: Yam garden two months after planting

The cleared area has to be burned. Depending on the quality of the soil, one may bring grass from elsewhere and burn it as fertiliser. The ground has to be ploughed thoroughly, and small roots and weeds are pulled out. Next, the garden plot has to be enclosed by a fence to keep out wallabies, deer and wild pigs. The most important material for fences is bamboo which is grown in small bamboo groves. During preparation, people are busy in their gardens every day. Planting may start as early as October, but it can last until January. Yams for planting are selected carefully, but the tiny yam suckers are usually planted in heaps in an old garden plot. Figure 1.9 shows a yam garden about two months after planting. Between January and June, there are many small jobs to be done. These include weeding or erecting and replacing yamsticks on which the vines climb up. The change of the season in June is also signalled by the changing colour of the yam leaves. Around this time, the harvest season begins, and it may stretch until August, when the cycle begins again. Harvested yams are counted, sorted and stored in yam houses. This involves shaving the shoots off each tuber; a time-consuming task that is usually done in the afternoon hours while sitting in conversation in front of the yam house. Because garden plots are subdivided into rows, one for each member of the family, the yams are sorted accordingly in the yam house. Figure 1.10 shows the inside of a yam house after the harvest.

There are many special customs around yam cultivation. Some men possess yam planting magic which helps them to compete with others. This usually involves particular spells and magic stones passed down from the father's generation. Others "steal the soil" from their competitors. Knowledge of this kind is usually kept secret and never admitted in public. Furthermore, there are a number of rules about handling yams, which everyone follows. One example is the belief in "female pollution", which is widespread



Figure 1.10: Inside a yamhouse

in Southern New Guinea (Knauff 1993: 104). During a woman's monthly period, but also after having sexual intercourse, it is strictly forbidden to go to the garden plot for it will "spoil" the yams. This rule applies not only to the woman, but to anyone who sleeps in the same house, sometimes even the neighbouring house.

Yams play the most important role in exchange feasts. For example, an exchange marriage is consummated through a feast, sometimes called "pig dance". The two men who have exchanged sisters henceforth *fāms* 'exchange fellow', will raise a pig and invite their respective *fāms* and his associates for a dance. The host side will feed the guests, and in return the guests will entertain the hosts by singing and dancing through the night. The next day, the hosts will give the guests large quantities of yam tubers to take back to their village. The amount has to be recorded with great detail, because after a year has passed, the roles will be reversed. Nothing would be more embarrassing than falling short in the repayment. Often two villages have particularly strong marriage links. In the past this has led to competitive yam cultivation between those two groups.

Yams also play a role in the regulation of conduct. I have been told about a ritual called *mefa*. The culprit, usually someone who has treated his wife badly, is confronted by his *fāms* and other brothers of his wife (*ngom*). These will put lime on the culprit's forehead and then strike him over the head with a small yam tuber. This is, however painful, only an immediate punishment. The bigger punishment comes in the form of a gift. The culprit is given a large quantity of yams, and it is expected that he repays the same amount and quality the next year. An individual can never achieve this, and thus the culprit is forced to ask people in and maybe even beyond his clan for help. If he fails to repay the expected amount, he will lose all respect and social status. Disputes about an individual's gardening abilities may become violent. The only time I had to witness a

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violent outbreak by one of my brothers, who is a calm and peaceful person, was when his aunt insulted him by accusing him of “being lazy” and a “bad gardener”. After a tirade of insults, this was the last straw. In conclusion, it is difficult to find any aspect of life in which yam cultivation does not play some role.

### 1.3.3.1 Yam counting

For many of the customs described above, it is important to record the exact quantity of tubers. For the counting ritual a special base-six numeral system is used, which is unique to the Yam languages. This senary system has received some attention in the literature (Donohue 2008, Hammarström 2009 and Evans 2009). Williams was the first to describe the counting procedure, but he points out that it “is apparently a more or less recent fashion among the Keraki, having been imported from beyond the Morehead” (1936: 225). This area includes the Farem territory. In the following section, I describe the procedure as I have witnessed it many times in Rouku and surrounds.<sup>6</sup>



Figure 1.11: Ritual yam counting (left); counting tally *tiftif* (right)

The counting procedure involves two men who move the yam tubers from a prepared pile. They take up three yams each, move a few meters and deposit them together in a new pile. One of the two is the designated counter and he shouts out *nābi nābi nābi* ‘one one one’. This means that they have moved the first unit of six. Without pause they take up again three yams each and move them over, while the counter shouts out *yda yda yda* ‘two two two’. Now two lots of six or 12 tubers have been counted. Again they pick up three yams each shouting *ytho ytho ytho* ‘three three three’. The two men

<sup>6</sup>I have published two videos of the counting procedure. The interested reader can view them at the following URLs: <https://zenodo.org/record/1404789> and <https://zenodo.org/record/1208073>

### 1.3 The Farem people and their language

continue with this process until they reach *nibo* 'six'. Now 36 yams have been counted and the bystanders and observers cheer up in agreement. This amount corresponds to one *fta* or  $6^2$ . Each *fta* is marked by putting a single yam on the side of the new pile. The two men continue until all yams have been counted, and the little pile on the side which indicates the amount of *fta* slowly grows. Next, this pile is counted in the same fashion, only that each counting yam, that is put to the side, now marks one *taruba*, which corresponds to 216 or  $6^3$ . One may continue in the same fashion. Six *taruba* make up one *damno* corresponding to 1,296 or  $6^4$ . For example, one *damno* is amount of yams that a man should store in order to bring his family through the year. Six *damno* make up one *wärämäkä* corresponding to 7,776 or  $6^5$ . Finally, six *wärämäkä* make up one *wi* corresponding to 44,656 or  $6^6$ . I should add that nobody in Rouku remembered the last time this number was actually reached. The recursive counting procedure gives rise to the senary system. I describe the numeral system in §3.1.6.2.

Figure 1.11 shows two men during the counting the procedure. The counting is always a public event accompanied by the loud, monotonous beat of the drum. I was told that neighbouring villages or travellers should be made aware of the ongoing counting procedure. In order to record and keep the amount for later proof, the Farem produce a counting tally made from a coconut frond. This is shown on the right side of Figure 1.11. The stalks indicate the amount of different senary values, which are separated by small notches. The red arrows in the image point to the two notches. Figure 1.11 was taken during a yam counting ritual in Morehead in September 2010. The amount counted was 3 *damno*, 2 *taruba*, 3 *fta* or 4,428 tubers in total. This was the contribution of several clans to a pig dance that took place two weeks later in Garaita. The counting had to be repeated two times because older men who observed the procedure closely said that mistakes had been made.

The largest amount of yams that I have seen was in the village of Yokwa in September 2013. Following the death of an older men, the relatives decided to built a *sirä mnz*, a communal yamhouse.<sup>7</sup> All the relatives of the deceased man, including my brother from Rouku, stored several *fta* up to one *taruba* of yams inside this house. The content was to be shared and exchanged during a feast in honour of the deceased at the height of the rainy season. Mary Ayres describes this practice in her chapter on mourning customs (1983: 289). The yamhouse in Yokwa can be seen in Figure 1.12 below. It measured 2,50m width, 1,60m height and an incredible 60m length. The floor was separated into compartments of equal size where each contributor stored his share. For some of the contributors there was a display shelf (*sirä*) for very large yams. I did not witness the whole counting procedure as it took more than a day, but I estimate that the *sirä mnz* held more than 10,000 yams.

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<sup>7</sup>Mary Ayres uses the word *kwitenz* for this, but my informants from Rouku and Yokwa did not know the word. They suggested *sirä mnz* 'sirä house'. The word *sirä* refers to the shelves that are found in these yam houses to hold especially large tubers.



Figure 1.12: Communal yamhouse in Yokwa: inside (left) / outside (right)

### 1.3.4 Demography and vitality

It proves difficult to determine the exact number of Komnzo speakers. I give a rough estimate here between 150 and 250. For the most part, this inexactness is caused by particular social factors. For example, the system of exchange marriage fosters a high degree of multilingualism. A Farem child typically grows up speaking at least the varieties of her father and mother. Since the system of residence is virilocal only the father's language is Komnzo. Of course there are two sides to this, and there are many speakers of Komnzo in other villages, namely women who have married out and their children. What complicates matters further in the case of Rouku is that not all Farem men speak Komnzo as their daily language, and not all families have a Komnzo speaking parent. I provide an explanation for this in §1.3.5.2. Furthermore, there is a small group of speakers who have moved further away to Daru, Kiunga, Port Moresby or other parts of Papua New Guinea.

Komnzo is vital in the sense that the language is being transmitted to children. At the same time, Komnzo is an endangered language because of its small number of speakers and its relatively low prestige compared to the lingua franca, which is English. Komnzo is not taught in the school system, there is no writing tradition, and it is not used at the administrative level. For these reasons, it should be regarded as an endangered language from an academic point of view.

Komnzo speakers perceive their language to be under threat from what they call "mother's language". Mary Ayres notes that there are strong marriage links between particular villages because it is desirable for a daughter to marry back to her mother's village (1983: 226). In the case of Rouku, there are strong links to Yokwa, and what is meant by "mother's language" is almost always Wára. One line of reasoning about the

perceived threat is that women from Yokwa fail to pass Komnzo on to their children. Note that women are expected to shift speech variety as they shift location to their husband's village. In reality this hardly ever occurs, because there are enough women from Yokwa to form small exclaves of Wára speakers. Moreover, all Komnzo speakers are fluent in Wára. Hence, there is little pressure on a woman to actually shift her speech variety. This is different with women who come from more distant places. I discuss the topic of multilingualism and language ideology in §1.3.11.

### 1.3.5 History

#### 1.3.5.1 Pre-contact history

Until the rise of the sea level during the Late Pleistocene, the island of New Guinea and the Australian continent were joined in a single landmass called Sahul (White & O'Connell 1982). Recent studies have highlighted that there is still a lack of research from the Southern New Guinea region (Pawley et al. 2005, Ballard 2010, and Evans 2012a). The geomorphological past of this lowland region has been turbulent over the last 20,000 years. A chronology of the changing coastlines is given by Chappell (2005).<sup>8</sup> Figure 1.13 shows the northern coastline of Sahul at the Last Glacial Maximum at 21,000 BP. Figure 1.14 shows the coastline at 8,000 BP shortly after the sea breached the Torres Strait, thus disconnecting New Guinea and Australia. The thin black line shows the present coastline.



Figure 1.13: Coastline at 21,000 BP; adopted from (Chappell 2005: 527)

We can see from the figures that the separation of Sahul occurred only shortly before 8,000 BP. Keeping in mind that human presence on the Sahul continent goes back to at

<sup>8</sup>His methodology is as follows: “the procedure for reconstructing the coastlines at a given epoch is to compute the relative sea level field for a given region [...] by combining the ice-equivalent sea level with the regional departures that arise from the isostatic and gravitational factors. The results are then superimposed on the present topography in detail...” (2005: 529).

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Figure 1.14: Coastline at 8,000 BP; adopted from (Chappell 2005: 528)

least 40,000 BP (Golson 2005), we can safely assume that what was later to become the Southern New Guinea region was already settled well before the separation. Chappell shows that large parts of the Fly-Digul platform, to which the Morehead ridge belongs, was submerged at the maximum height of the sea level at 6,000 BP. Figure 1.15 shows that this has affected the western part of the Southern New Guinea region.<sup>9</sup> This part of the region was slowly rebuilt by the sediments carried by the Fly River and Digul River. Note that the Morehead ridge as one of the highest points of elevation on the Fly-Digul platform was not submerged during this period.



Figure 1.15: Coastline at 6,000 BP; adopted from (Chappell 2005: 528)

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<sup>9</sup>With regard to Figure 1.15, which is the result of a computer model, Chappell argues for a more conservative estimate, in which the coastline at 6,000 BP does not extend all the way up to the Fly River (2005: 531).



The geological scenario outlined by Chappell is reflected to some extent in the linguistic landscape of the region. For example, concerning the Trans-New-Guinea languages spoken in west of the Fly-Digul platform, Pawley points out that the “homogeneity of the Asmat-Kamoro group is clear evidence that their expansion was comparatively recent” (2005: 10). Usher and Suter (2015) have recently shown evidence for the existence of the Anim language family which stretches from Ipiko in the east to Marind and Yaqayic in the west, thus encircling the area concerned with in this study. Evans argues that it is “unlikely that all language differences currently found in Southern New Guinea developed in situ. What seems more likely is that they represent the interaction of a number of unrelated groups entering the region from different regions” (2012a: 111). While this is evident for some of the linguistic units, for example the Trans-New-Guinea languages, we do not know how other linguistic units, for example the Yam languages or the Pahoturi River languages, fit into the chronology of events. I suggest that we should accept the possibility that the Yam languages represent a much older population, and – as Evans rightly point out – we can only speculate from where this population has entered the region.

Some suggestions come from recorded mythology, namely the myth of two brothers and the origin of people at a place called *Kwafar*. This myth was recorded by FE Williams (1936: 306) as well as Mary Ayres (1983: 50). I have recorded a version of this myth told in Komnzo, which is given in the Appendix 11.3.4. What is noteworthy about the story is that the place *Kwafar* is located off the coast in an area that was last exposed well before 8,000 BP. Events told in the story led to a flood and the ancestor escaped northwards. Eventually, he picked up the branches of *dödö* ‘Melaleuca sp’, beat the water with it, and the flood came to a halt. The myth suggests that the people have retreated northwards from the rising sea level, i.e. the myth “reports” events which date back at least 8,000 years. Although I am not claiming linguistic continuity from the time of the sea level rise to present-day Komnzo – after all we know that populations may shift languages – one cannot deny the fact that this myth is found in the area where the Yam languages are spoken, more precisely the languages of the Tonda subgroup.<sup>10</sup>

### 1.3.5.2 Modern history

The Southern New Guinea region was contacted relatively late, which led Knauff to claim that it has “remained effectively outside the purview of state political economies for longer than any other major non-arctic coastal population” (1993: 26). In 1890, Sir William MacGregor, the Administrator of Papua, discovered the Morehead River on an expedition. It took another six years for a second visit by MacGregor during which he collected a vocabulary list, which can be found in the Annual Reports (MacGregor 1890: 106).<sup>11</sup> Both expeditions travelled by ship. The first known white man to walk through the region

<sup>10</sup>Both Williams and Ayres have recorded these myths with speakers of Tonda languages. Among the origin myths of the Morehead district, this particular myth is only found in Tonda speaking territory.

<sup>11</sup>Based on the verb forms in the list, I identify the variety as either Kánchá or Kémä. Nominalised verbs in these two varieties end in a bilabial fricative, and many verbs in the list have a final grapheme <p>. In Komnzo, Wára, Anta and Wéré nominalised verbs end in a vowel: [i] or [e].

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was William Dammköhler in 1898 on an adventurous escape from Marind headhunters (Hitchcock 2009). Until 1921, sporadic patrols were conducted by AP Lyons, Resident Magistrate of the Western Division. Lyons recorded native customs, but his journals held at the National Cultural Council at Port Moresby were inaccessible to me. In 1926, FE Williams started to pay regular visits to the Morehead district in his role as “official government anthropologist”. Until 1932, he visited the area almost every year, and his fieldwork culminated in the book *Papuans of the Trans-Fly* (Williams 1936), which is still the most comprehensive ethnographic description of a group in the Morehead district.

At the time of contact, Southern New Guinea was home to groups of very different sizes and political organisation. On the one end of the spectrum, there were small groups like the Farem, probably with no more than 100 people at that time. On the other end, we find large groups like the Kiwai (9,700), Marind (7,000) and Suki (3,500). Note that these three groups surround the area concerned with in this study. Although headhunting was practised by all groups, it was only those larger groups which could muster war parties and attack places far away from their home territory. This was especially true of the Marind (also known as Tugeri or Tugere). In his introduction to Williams’ book, AC Haddon, who had led the British expedition in the Torres Strait in 1888, writes that he had “heard lurid stories about these head-hunting, cannibal marauders” (1936: xxiv). The Marind were militaristic expansionists, who went on headhunting expeditions raiding villages along the south coast as far as Boigu Island. Since the Marind’s home territory was in Dutch New Guinea, the British colonial administration was unable to act against them. The Marind’s activity led to a joint Dutch-British expedition, which established the border at the mouth of the Bensbach River. Eventually, in 1902, the Dutch administration set up a police post in Merauke.

The impact of the Marind is somewhat inconclusive. For example, Mary Ayres argues that their immediate role has been overstated by many Europeans who have visited the area in this early period (1983: 19). She points to two confusing inferences that had been made. The first was the erroneous belief that a great number of settlement names given to MacGregor and various patrol officers must also mean that the population of the Morehead district must be very large. As I explain below, the traditional settlement pattern was to live in small hamlets often comprising a single patriline. Secondly, the fact that the population density was actually very low was attributed to massive depopulation by the Marind. An example comes from MacGregor who describes that he met a group of people on the Morehead River: “Of this tribe we saw altogether about thirty to forty men, boys and women. They are probably the remains of a tribe that has been decimated by the Tugere” (1896: 74). Ayres criticises that MacGregor and others jump to conclusions here. The low population density in the Morehead district, especially along the coast west of the Wassi Kussa River, can be explained by geographical factors alone. She notes that “the acute scarcity of fresh water during the dry season was not readily observed” (1983: 22), because early visits always occurred during the rainy season, which is the best time to navigate the coast. Ayres concludes that there is no definite evidence for or against depopulation by the Marind. Nonetheless, if we consider the discrepancies in group sizes in Southern New Guinea over a longer period, it is easy to imagine that these

larger groups would have assimilated the smaller ones sooner or later. Evans concludes that “we may not be exaggerating to say that without the arrival of colonial governments (and missionary endeavours eliminating headhunting and overt warfare) many of the small languages of the Trans-Fly may not have survived in the way they have.” (2012a: 117).

In the remainder of this section, I will focus more on the local level. In 1951, the administration established a government station at Rouku. The name Rouku comes from Komnzo *rokuroku* ‘riverbank’. This name was given to a place a few kilometers to the west of present-day Rouku, where a group of Farem people had lived in the 1920’s (Ayres 1983: 14). This older Rouku is now settled again by Farem people who call it Gunana – a Motu word meaning ‘old’ – and sometimes it is called Rouku Gunana ‘old Rouku’. The government station included a school, which was run by the London Missionary Society. Its successor, the United Church, is still the most influential denomination in the area west of Morehead, including Rouku. During the 1950’s, the Australian Petroleum Company explored the Morehead district for oil. Many older Farem still remember their parents being employed as labourers with the company. A more tangible legacy of the company’s operation is a network of roads in the Morehead district, although these have often reverted back to narrow tracks. In 1959, the station was shifted to Morehead, where an airstrip was constructed. In the early 1960’s, a government school was opened there, which has been operational until today. Since that time, Morehead has been the administrative centre of the district.

Large bureaucracies like nation-states tend to organise their population by dividing and subdividing them into organisational units. The nation-state Papua New Guinea consists of 22 provinces, which consist of districts, which in turn consist of local level government areas, which are divided into wards. Rouku belongs to Ward 16 of the Morehead-Rural local level government area of the South Fly District of Western Province. Such organisational schemes are useful, but they fail to adapt to cultural peculiarities, an issue which seems of particular importance in a country as diverse as Papua New Guinea. During the 1950’s and 1960’s, the government began a policy of village consolidation. Small hamlets and related villages were asked to form combined larger villages. The concurrent establishment of churches, schools and roads provided some incentives for this policy to show some effect. I agree with Ayres when she writes that this “is antithetical to traditional settlement patterns of widely scattered very small villages where residence is not continuous” (1983: 17). It is no surprise that people returned to their traditional settlement patterns during the 1970’s when the government patrols ceased. Thus, on a very local level we find a pulsating movement from dispersion to consolidation and back to dispersion. Ayres supports this observation by pointing out that – although Rouku was consolidated as ‘one village’ during the 1950’s – the Farem people lived scattered over several hamlets when she did fieldwork in 1980. The official census for Rouku in 1980 was 108, but only 30 people lived at Rouku then (1983: 17). The others lived at Ŋazäthe, Faremkar, Kafthéfr, Masu, Firra, Kanathr and Morehead.

30 years later, I can add my own observations to this. When I first visited Rouku in 2010, my main informant Abia Bai told me that he had lived in Kanathr in the 80’s and

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later at Masu together with his Mayawa clan (*Mrzar Mayawa*). In the mid-1990's, this clan moved from Masu to Rouku, thus Masu and Kanathr were not settled in 2010. Two Sagara clans (*Muthrata Sagara* and *Wazu Sagara*) had lived in Rouku more or less continuously with short intervals at ʔjazäthe and Faremkar. In 2010, the Bagu clan (*Nümgar Bagu*) was transitioning to Gunana from a place called Dmädr, about 5km to northwest of Rouku. Gunana itself was established around the year 2000 by the third Sagara clan (*Farem Sagara*). Lastly, the second Mayawa clan (*Banibani Mayawa*) was split between one patriline living in Rouku and another patriline living in Morehead. The latter had moved to Morehead from Firra during the late 1990's. Hence, we could say that in 2010 the Farem people were "consolidated" in the two settlements of Rouku and Gunana. Over the last five years, some of the Mayawa people have established a new settlement at Kanathr. What started out with two families in 2012, has now grown to about four families which belong to both Mayawa and Sagara. Other people have built houses in Masu and ʔjazäthe. Yet others have moved to Morehead. The point I am trying to make is that settlement is not continuous and an individual may choose to move several times during his lifetime. During the annual cycle, movement is even more pronounced as one may stay for several weeks at a garden place during the planting and harvesting time, or at a sago, fishing or hunting camp. As a consequence, I have often arrived in Rouku wondering where all the people had gone.

An interesting epiphenomenon to oscillation between fragmentation and consolidation is that it did not always follow linguistic or cultural lines. For example, the closest village to Rouku is Yokwa (also called Safs) situated about 12km west along the road. During the first consolidation in the 1950's, people from the south who spoke Kánchezá and Ara consolidated with the Wára speakers of Yokwa. Naturally, this may lead to problems in the documentation of a particular speech variety. While it is easy to find Kánchezá speakers for comparison further to the south in other villages, Wára and Ara speakers are only found in Yokwa. I should add that I have not had the opportunity to study this in detail in Yokwa.

For the linguistic history of Rouku, this meant that some men of the father generation of the Bagu clan as well as two of the Sagara clans had shifted to Yokwa and lived there for almost a decade. Nowadays, their children live in Rouku and Gunana, and despite being bilingual in Komnzo and Wára they speak mostly Wára. This is not only a problem for the documenter, but it results in real political problems. As I point out in §1.3.11, the linguistic ideology in the Morehead district connects identity with land and language. Consequently, there is a strong feeling that one should speak the variety that in some sense belongs to the land. In other words, a Farem individual should speak Komnzo. It follows that for some individuals village consolidation has led to a disconnect between the daily language and the language of social identity.

### 1.3.6 Mythology and the origin of people

Ayres (1983: 146) uses the term "starting-place" to describe the place from which the apical ancestor of each group has spread. I will label these "origin places" henceforth.

There are multiple origin places because there were multiple splitting events. The notion of spreading from a prior unity is pervasive in the Morehead district, and Ayres offers a spatial analysis of the foundational myths in her thesis.

Initially, all people lived at a mythical origin place called *Kwafar*. This place is said to be somewhere in the Arafura sea. There are several origin myths connected to *Kwafar*. In one version all people lived in a huge tree. They spread out after the tree burned down. In another version people lived inside a tree and the ancestor released them one after the other by chopping down the tree. Common to the different narratives is a movement of people – sometimes represented as a single character – from *Kwafar* towards the north. Some people went to *Zwäri* and some to *Komo*, both are located on the coast. From these places, some groups came directly towards the north, while others went to *Kuramogo*, a place close to Bebdbn in the east (Williams 1936: 292). The apical ancestor of the Mayawa section in Rouku was a man called *Mathkwi*. He came from *Komo* and wandered north. He was accompanied by the ancestor of the Sangara section of the village Mifne. After various stops, *Mathkwi* arrived at *Faremkar*, where he found the ancestor of the Sagara section of Rouku, who had settled there already. From *Faremkar*, he went to *Masu*, a few kilometers to the east. The ancestor of the Sagara section in Rouku also came from *Komo*, but he travelled to *Kuramogo* first and then came to *Faremkar*. Thus, people who claim one origin place need not trace their ancestry to the same person. It is sufficient to jointly identify with the most recent in a series of origin places. In this sense, all Komnzo speaker associate themselves with *Faremkar*.

Specific episodes in these narratives provide explanations of various natural phenomena. For example, the Morehead River and the web of smaller creeks are connected to the burning of the tree at *Kwafar*. In some versions, the burning roots of the tree formed canals, while other versions tell that the tree fell towards the north, and its trunk and branches shaped the Morehead River and the creeks. Likewise, the occurrence of red, coarse-grained sedimentary rock in certain spots is connected to the ancestor's path and his dropping of leftovers along the way. The existence of all crops is explained in a similar fashion.

In addition to these founding myths, there are many smaller stories, which make reference to a particular place. An example is a small rock layer along the Morehead River close to Morehead. This is explained by a story in which two 'story men' were fighting. After their quarrel, they agreed to cut down a stone passage across the river. Such places of mythological significance are called *menz kar* 'story places'. The word *menz* can refer to some mythological event as well as to some supernatural being that lives at and guards these places. In its latter meaning, I translate *menz* as 'story man'. Again, I refer the reader to Mary Ayres' excellent description and analysis of locality in the Morehead District (Ayres 1983).

### 1.3.7 Social organisation

Mary Ayres draws a distinction between the first and second order of segmentation of people (1983: 126). The first order of segmentation is one which aligns people with a

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specific origin place and, as I mentioned earlier, with a specific speech variety. Hence, all Komnzo speakers share the origin place *Faremkar* and, thus belong to the same group. The second order of segmentation are local groups. Ayres divides these groups into non-local and local sections. She avoids the word ‘clan’ (1983: 142). There are three non-local sections, namely Bagu, Sagara and Mayawa, which are replicated in many villages in the Morehead District. I will refer to these simply as ‘sections’.<sup>12</sup> Local sections, on the other hand, can be seen as local subsets of the three sections. I will use the term ‘clan’ for these. For example, there is one Bagu clan, three Sagara clans and two Mayawa clans among the Farem. These have proper names, for example *Mrzar Mayawa* or *Farem Sagara*.<sup>13</sup> Finally, there are patriline within the clans. An overview of the segmentation of the Farem is given in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Sections, clans and patriline

section	clan name	gloss	number of patriline
Bagu	<i>nümgar</i>	‘crocodile’	1
Sagara	<i>farem</i>	place name	2
Sagara	<i>wazu</i>	place name	2
Sagara	<i>muthrata</i>	place name	1
Mayawa	<i>banibani</i>	‘Brahminy Kite’	2
Mayawa	<i>mrzar</i>	proper name	1

In addition to self-attribution, there is a web of more or less visible markers that distinguish a member of one group from that of another group regardless at which level. Markers include certain designs printed on grass skirts, particular patterns carved on arrows, special songs and dance styles. Furthermore, there are totemic animals which one may not hunt or eat. For example, the Brahminy Kite (*banibani*) is a totemic bird for the *Mrzar Mayawa* clan and the *Banibani Mayawa* clan. The latter derives its name from it. Likewise, the Swamp Eel (*dobakwr*) is a totem for both Mayawa clans, but also for the three Sagara clans. It follows that some of these markers overlap between different clans. The web of similarities and differences is commonly employed in reasoning about group identity.

The most important fact about clans and sections lies in land ownership. While the land ownership within the same section is less important, it plays a big role between sections. For example, a man will not hunt, make a garden or collect building materials on territory that does not belong to his section. In this case, he will consult the rightful owners first. Land boundaries are often marked by creeks or other landmarks, and they

<sup>12</sup>These are different from the term ‘section’ or ‘skingroup’ as it is used in Aboriginal ethnographic descriptions.

<sup>13</sup>Note that I spell section names in upright font (e.g. Mayawa), because they are in some sense a hypernym, while I spell clan names in italic (e.g. *Mrzar Mayawa*). Another reason is that sections names are found in languages other than Komnzo, while clan names are proper nouns found only in Komnzo.

are very much public knowledge. Finally, the system of segmentation plays an important role in exogamy, which I address in the next section.

### 1.3.8 Exogamy

Within the Morehead district, a system of symmetrical sister-exchange is practised. This has been described by Mary Ayres for the Farem and surrounding groups (1983) and by FE Williams for the Keraki (1936). Ayres' work is most relevant for the following description. Note that the following description reflects an ideal to which people generally aspire, even though it is at odds with reality in many instances.

The system of exogamy is shaped by the segmentation of people described above, and all levels of segmentation form exogamous groups. Thus, people who share an origin place may not intermarry. We may call this 'place exogamy'. An interesting fact about place exogamy is that it practically results in linguistic exogamy. Ayres notes that "Marriage between people who claim prior unity at a 'starting place' [CD: origin place], i.e. the dialect group, is prohibited. In the native model this rule is sometimes explained as a rule of dialect exogamy: "We should not intermarry because we talk the same language" is a phrase sometimes stated by informants" (1983: 186). The three sections also form exogamous groups. It follows that one may not marry a person of the same section, even if that person is from another place. We may call this 'section exogamy'. Lastly, the clan forms an exogamous group, and one may not marry a person from the same clan. We may call this 'clan exogamy'. As pointed out by Ayres, the rules of exogamy are an ideal. In her description, Ayres finds many attested marriages which violate place or section exogamy. I can confirm this from my own observations. Ayres concludes that place exogamy is ranked higher than section exogamy, i.e. there used to be more cases of same-section marriages than of same-place marriages. In my own data, these violations of rules of exogamy occur with the same frequency. There are no cases of same-clan or same-patriline marriages.

The ideal marriage is one of direct sister-exchange. In other words, two men of different place, section and clan exchange their respective sisters. The preferred option is to exchange a true sister, that is a woman of same age in the clan or patriline. In many cases, this is not possible for demographic reasons, and there are indeed some unmarried older men. An alternative option is to 'borrow a sister' from another group, preferably one's own section in another place, but this is not a precondition. One would not ask another group for a wife, but for a woman to exchange. This shows that it is the actual exchange which counts. The exchange initiates a link to another group of people and to another place, and this is corroborated by mutual invitations to feasts and the giving and taking of yam tubers. The least preferred, but often practised, option is to pay for a wife with a raised pig and a certain amount of yams. However, this payment does not cover the cost of a person. The exchange is only deferred to the next generation. In such a one-sided marriage, the man is expected to give back his first daughter to the family of his wife. Again, the daughter is given back not as a wife, but to be exchanged to yet another group. In the past, neither husband nor wife had much of a say in this arrange-

ment between clans. Women were often sent as young girls to the family of their future husbands (Williams 1936: 145). Polygamy used to be practised in the past, but it is virtually absent today. There is one man in Rouku, who is married to two wives, and this invites much laughter and gossip.

### 1.3.9 Kinship terminology

Although I have not much to add to Ayres' formidable analysis of kinship, I disagree with her on a few specific terms. Below, I use only Komnzo terms in the kinship diagrams, but I point out when there are coexisting terms from another language. The knowledge about one's relatives has been described by Ayres as "extremely shallow" (1983: 217) and I much agree with her. The mythological time of the first ancestor is often placed immediately before the generation of one's grandparents. Contact with the western world, biblical traditions and especially the education system has brought a change to this world view. Younger speakers often point out a few names along the patriline up to the apical ancestor.

The system of kinship terminology in Komnzo is a five generational system, which calculates from ego to the generation of grandparents and grandchildren respectively. Interestingly, grandparents and grandchildren are equated by using the same kin term, *aki* or *zath*, reciprocally. Otherwise the system is characterised by special kin terms which are used only after the consummation of a sister exchange. It follows that kin terms can and often do change as result of affinal relations.

Figure 1.16 shows the consanguineal kin terms. The shaded individuals live in a different village. The asterisk indicates that the respective term is used reciprocally. Many kin terms can be used for co-residents of a different section or clan. A result of place exogamy is that all Farem men or women of the generation above ego can be called *ɲafe* 'father' or *ɲame* 'mother', and all coresidents in the same generation can use the appropriate sibling term. The terms for mother and father co-exist with the Nama loanwords *afa* and *ama*. An optional age distinction for the brothers of ego's father and their wives is *ɲafe katan* 'small father' and *ɲame katan* 'small mother'. Sibling terms only encode relative age, not sex: *nane* 'older sibling' and *ngth* 'younger sibling'. Children are referred to by *nge* 'child'. Mother's sisters are commonly called *ɲame* 'mother'. Mother's brothers are called *ɲäwi* '(maternal) uncle'. The word *babai* coexists with *ɲäwi*, but its origin is unclear. Both are used reciprocally. The relation between ego and mother's brother used to be of special importance for certain initiation ceremonies.

The spouses of ego's children are called *enat* 'son in-law' and *zath ɲare* 'daughter in-law'. Both words are used reciprocally, i.e. they mean 'parents in-law' from the opposite perspective. The sex of the referent can be specified by adding *ɲare*. Ayres points out that grandparents and grandchildren are equated by the same word *zath*, which also means 'moon' and 'month', and as we have just seen 'daughter in-law'. However, *zath* is somewhat archaic, and the Nama loan *aki* with the same set of meanings is used in its place. Ayres explains this grouping of three meanings – grandparents, grandchildren and daughter in-law – by a "structural incompleteness that is felt to be generated by



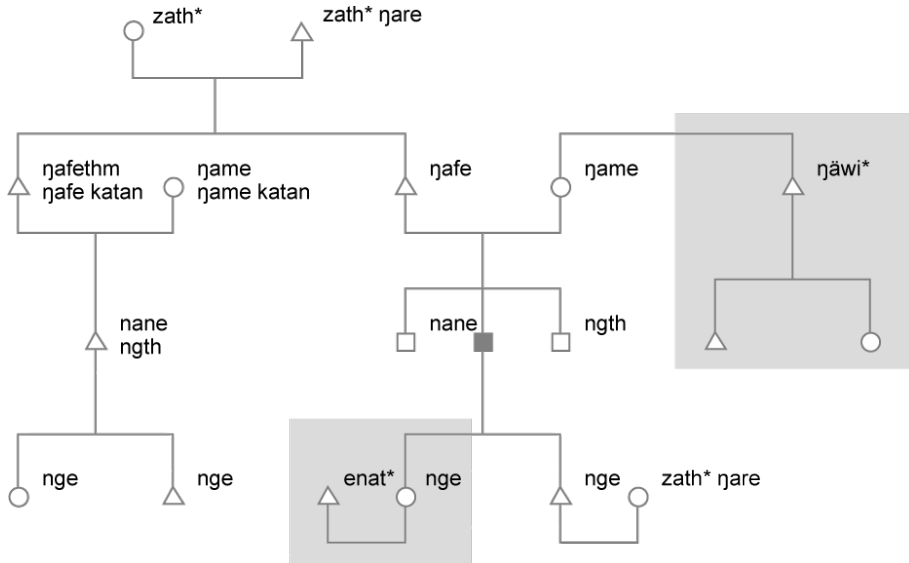


Figure 1.16: Consanguineal or co-resident kin terms

the original exchange” (1983: 226). She points out that the preferred arrangement for the daughter of an exchanged woman is to marry back to her mother’s place. She concludes that the grouping of the three meanings in the same kin term encodes a cultural practise which “assures the continuity of a man’s patriline not simply through his own children, but through their children” (1983: 227).

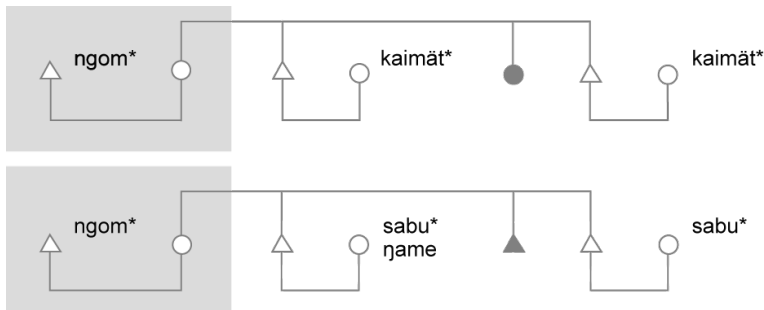


Figure 1.17: Same-generation, affinal kin terms for female and male ego

Figure 1.17 shows the affinal kin terms in the same generation. The word *ngom* ‘brother in-law’ is used by both women and men, and for men it is used reciprocally. In (Ayres 1983: 214), the words *ntjufaré* and *nakimi* [her spelling] appear in a kinship diagram for ‘brother in-law’. The former is a Káncchá word and the latter is from Motu (Turner-Lister & Clark 1935: 107). While *nakimi* coexists with *ngom*, *ntjufare* is not used by Komnzo

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speakers. I suspect that this word was given to Ayres by Wára speaking women from Yokwa. There are strong marriage ties between Rouku and Yokwa, and the process of village consolidation (§1.3.5.2) has led to an influx of Káncá speakers in Yokwa in the past. The term *kaimät* is used between a woman and her brother's wife, and both are in a joking relationship. The term *sabu* is used between a man and his brother's wife, and both are in a taboo relationship. The taboo is much stricter for the wife of the younger brother, who is always called *sabu*. As for the wife of the older brother, one may also use *ɲame* 'mother' if she is sufficiently older, and the taboo relation is somewhat lax.

After a consummated exchange marriage, a special set of terms is used. These are shown in Figure 1.18. The word *fäms* 'exchange fellow' is used between the two men who have exchanged sisters, and the exchanged woman is called *fäms ɲare* 'exchange woman'. The children of the exchange couple are called *fäɲame* or *fäɲafe* depending on their sex. These two words are archaic in Komnzo and instead *bäiɲame* or *bäiɲafe* are used. The last vowel of both is sometimes dropped resulting in *bäiɲam* or *bäiɲaf*. These words are used reciprocally, but the last part (*-ɲaf* and *-ɲam*) encodes the sex of the referent. It is unclear when and how the first part changed from *fä-* to *bäi-*, but the consonants /f/ and /b/ stand in a paradigmatic relationship, because there is no voiceless counterpart of the prenasalised /b/. For this reason, I suspect that the first part is a contraction of *fäms*, and *fäɲame* or *fäɲafe* used to be *fäms ɲame* 'exchange mother' and *fäms ɲafe* 'exchange father'. Note that the same figure can be drawn for a female ego. We would only have to change the words for wife and husband, which are *fzenz* and *fis* respectively.

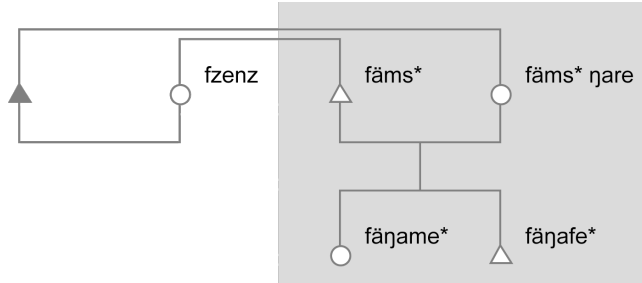


Figure 1.18: Sister-exchange kin terms: *fäms*

An exchange marriage also affects the children's generation. Ayres points out that cross-cousins are preferred marriage partners (1983: 217), but this excludes the children of an exchange. Cross-cousins from an exchange marriage refer to each other with the term *yamit*. The relationship between them is more like that between siblings, which is corroborated by the fact that ego employs the same kin term *ngom* for the husband of the *yamit*. The wife of ego's *yamit* is called *yumad*. This is shown in Figure 1.19.

There is another special relation that holds between the affines and children of two sisters. Two men who are married to sisters refer to each other with the term *nakum*. The parallel-cousins in such an arrangement refer to each other as *naku*, and what holds for the *yamit* relation is also true for the *naku* relation. This is shown in Figure 1.20.

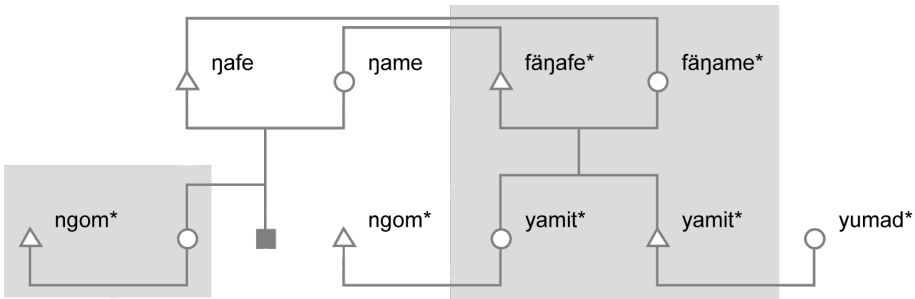


Figure 1.19: Sister-exchange kin terms: *yamit*

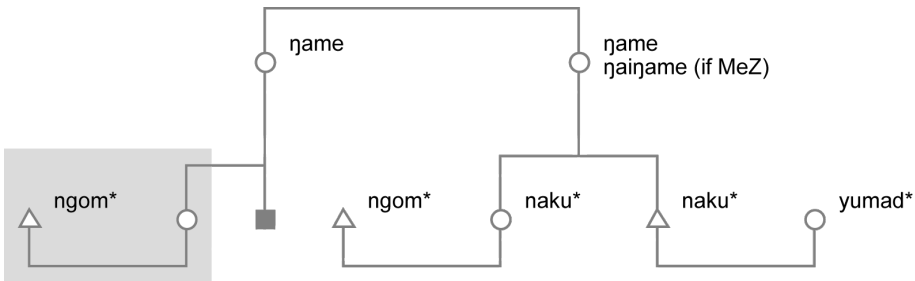


Figure 1.20: The *naku* relationship

The rules and regulations are often explained in terms of space and Mary Ayres focusses on this aspect in her thesis. For example, informants would often explain that two individuals cannot marry because “they come from the same place”, meaning that their mothers come from the same place in the case of a *naku* relationship. But it can also mean that they result from a direct exchange between places in the case of a *yamit* relationship.

There are other terms which function similar to kin terms. One such example is the word *ngath*, which I translate as ‘mate’. Two children who where born around the same time are considered to be like close relatives, even if they belong to different clans and/or sections. They will grow up as close mates and they will help each other out. It is up to the parents to decide who will become *ngath*, but it is always children of the same sex. I know of two cases where the *ngath* relationship was inherited from the fathers who were also *ngath* to each other. Another example is the word *ngemäku*, which is used between the true parents of a child and the ones who have adopted the child. Adoption is very common and it occurs shortly after the weaning period. The word *ngemäku* contains the word *nge* ‘child’, but the second part *mäku* has no meaning by itself. A third example is the word *nzäthe* ‘namesake’. Children are given many names when they are born. As a consequence an individual has multiple namesake relationships.

This section is closed with a comprehensive list of kin terms in Table 1.2. Alternative terms and applications as well as comments are given in the rightmost column.

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Table 1.2: Summary of kin terms and other relation terms

komnzo	gloss	relation <sup>a</sup>	COMMENT
<i>ɲafe</i>	father	F, FB	also <i>afa</i> (Nama loan)
<i>ɲame</i>	mother	M, MZ, FBW	also <i>ama</i> (Nama loan)
<i>nane</i>	brother, sister	eB, eZ	FBS and FBD (if older)
<i>ngth</i>	brother, sister	yB, yZ	FBS and FBD (if younger)
<i>zath</i>	grandparent, grandchild, parent in-law, daughter in-law	FF, FM, MF, MM, SS, SD, DS, DD, HF, HM, SW, BSW, SSW	also <i>aki</i> (Nama loan), used reciprocally (rcpl.), can be specified for sex by adding <i>ɲare</i>
<i>kaimät</i>	sister in-law	BW, HZ	female perspective, used rcpl.
<i>sabu</i>	sister in-law	BW, HB	male perspective, used rcpl.
<i>ngom</i>	brother in-law <sup>b</sup>	ZH, WB	also for husbands of cross-cousins <sup>b</sup> , i.e. <i>yamit</i> 's husband, used rcpl.
<i>yumad</i>	n/a	n/a	wife of parallel-cousin <sup>b</sup> ( <i>yamit</i> 's wife), used rcpl.
<i>enat</i>	parent in-law son in-law	DS, WF, WM	used rcpl.
<i>ɲäwi</i>	uncle, niece, nephew	MB, ZS, ZD	also <i>babai</i> , used rcpl.
<i>fäms</i>	exchange <sup>b</sup>	ZH, BW	can be specified for sex by adding <i>ɲare</i> , used rcpl.
<i>fäɲame</i>	aunt, niece <sup>b</sup>	FZ, BD	also <i>bäiɲam</i> , used rcpl.
<i>fäɲafe</i>	uncle, nephew <sup>b</sup>	MB, ZS	also <i>bäiɲaf</i> , used rcpl.
<i>yamit</i>	cross-cousin <sup>b</sup>	MBS, MBD, FZS, FZD	used rcpl.
<i>naku</i>	parallel-cousin	MZS, MZD	used rcpl.
<i>nakum</i>	n/a	WZH	used rcpl.
<i>thuft</i>	in-law	n/a	also <i>nakimi</i> (Motu loan), used rcpl.
<i>ngath</i>	mate	n/a	between two (predetermined) mates of the same sex, used rcpl.
<i>ngemäku</i>	n/a	n/a	between true parent and adopted parent, used rcpl.
<i>nzäthe</i>	namesake	n/a	between two people with the same name, used rcpl.

<sup>a</sup>F=father, M=mother, B=brother, Z=sister, S=son, D=daughter, H=husband, W=wife

<sup>b</sup>only after a consummated sister exchange marriage

### 1.3.10 Person reference and name avoidance

There is some diversity in person referring expressions in Komnzo. In the case of name avoidance, these may be restricted to only a subset. The common expressions are: full names (given name + family name), personal names, nicknames, kin terms, other relation terms, reference via circumspection, and the recognitional demonstrative.

The kinship system as presented above lays out a number of rules of behaviour. Amongst these is a practise of name avoidance which holds between all affines. When recording genealogies informants would often hesitate or refuse to utter the name of a particular person and instead ask some bystander or a child to pronounce the personal name for me. Name avoidance is seen as a way of showing respect. This was explained to me by my sister while transcribing a text in which she used the personal name of her sister-in-law. When I asked her, why she had not used the appropriate kin term *kaimät*, she replied that she was very angry with her at the time and showed her anger by using the personal name. Name avoidance impacts on the reference to other persons with the same personal name, to whom the speaker may not be in a name-avoidance relationship. In other words, name avoidance is independent of the referent in a particular situation. Instead name avoidance targets the personal name. This does not result in any practical problems because people have multiple names.

There are different solutions to ensure that the hearer understands who is meant. In addition to the appropriate kin term, one may use circumspection or a recognitional demonstrative. For example, the name of one of my brothers-in-law is *Kurai*. I should not utter his name, but use the kin term *ngom* instead. In many situations, this term is sufficient to establish the correct reference. Alternatively, I can use circumspection strategy like *tokoafis* ‘Toko’s husband’ or a teknonym *weweaŋafe* ‘Wewe’s father’. For teknonyms, it is usually the name of first-born child that is used, regardless of sex. A third solution, is to use the recognitional demonstrative. The recognitional demonstrative can be roughly translated to English as ‘the one that we both know about’ (see §3.1.12.6).

The different strategies of person reference can be ranked according to how much knowledge is presupposed on the part of the hearer. For example, a personal name requires very little contextual knowledge, whereas a recognitional demonstrative requires much more. We may rank these strategies like this: full name (*Kurai Tawth*) > personal name (*Kurai*) > circumspection/tekononym (*tokoafis* ‘Toko’s husband’) > kin term (*ngom* ‘brother-in-law’) > recognitional (*baf* ‘that one’). Note that using a full name is a recent adaptation to western culture, which is only employed in the context of a census or some other administrative matter. It is a common practise in PNG to use the name of the father as family name. Hence, *Kurai*’s father was *Tawth* and therefore his full name is *Kurai Tawth*. In daily interaction, this strategy is absent.

A person has a multitude of personal names or nicknames. Almost everyone has a set of five to ten names and the frequency of use of any one of these may come and go like a fashion. Shortly after birth, or sometimes even before birth, different relatives will propose names for the new-born. These may be their own names, which establishes a namesake relationship. In fact, the word *nzäthe* ‘namesake’ is the most frequent term of address. There is a special ceremony a couple of months after birth, where the name-

giver presents gifts to his namesake and holds the baby for the first time. Names may also be created on the spot, as nicknames or as self-attributions. For example, the three elders of the *Mrzar Mayawa* clan in Rouku are *Marua*, *Kaumb* and *Abia*. Their respective nicknames are *oroman loŋ* ‘old man long’ because he prefers wearing long trousers, *afa kwanz* ‘father bald head’ because he is bald and *afa thwä* ‘father catfish’ because he has a big belly. The first of them, *Marua*, decided one day that he should be called *oroman zulai* ‘old man jul’’. To my bewilderment, I found that everyone had accepted this name within a few weeks. Interestingly, a namesake relationship may transfer all of these names to the namesake. For example, a small baby boy was given the name *Marua*, thus establishing a namesake relationship. Today, the toddler is sometimes called *Marua*, *loŋ* or *zulai*.

### 1.3.11 Language ideology and multilingualism

Language ideology is characterised by a set of beliefs on the part of speakers about the role which language plays in constructing their social world (Silverstein 1979, Rumsey 1990 and Makihara & Schieffelin 2007). In the Morehead Region, people draw a strong connection between land and speech variety. This native linguistic ideology is similar to Aboriginal cultures, especially in Arnhem Land (Merlan 1981) and Cape York (Sutton 1978). As for the Farem people, this ideology surfaces through open statements and explanations, the expected behaviour of in-marrying women, ancestor stories, but it is also entailed in metaphors. I will briefly note some of my own observations on language ideology here.

In Rouku, there is strong social pressure on all members of the community to speak Komnzo. This is openly expressed during public speeches, but also by individuals in conversation or during interviews. One often hears that women should not talk in ‘their language’ to the children, but in Komnzo. In practice, this is often violated and virtually everybody grows up in a multilingual context. We can take an example which is the result of the process of village consolidation described in §1.3.5.2. A number of older men originally from Rouku have stayed for a long time in Anta or Wára speaking villages, and consequently their children grew up with those varieties as their main language. The children, now in their late 40’s, have moved back to Rouku. Some of them have married a woman from their natal villages and hence the dominant language of some Farem households is Anta or Wára. However, when I administered a socio-linguistic questionnaire, they would deny speaking anything but Komnzo.

In an attempt to understand the situation, I conducted sociolinguistic interviews with about 40 people. Amongst the questions were some which targeted language ideology (“What is your language?”, “What do think about language mixing in the village?”, “What language do you want your children to learn?”). The conclusion from these interviews is that language and land form an inseparable bond. I defer the statistical analysis of the interviews to another point in time. The bond between language and land is identical to the bond between a group of people and their origin place. This bond is transmitted through the father’s line. An example taken from the interviews is that of an older woman who lives in Rouku. She explained to me that she grew up in Yokwa, and consequently she

speaks Wára most of the time. Although she speaks mostly Wára, she knows that this is not the language of the place. She wishes for her children to speak Komnzo. When asked about 'her language' she answered Káncchá instead of Wára. She explained that her father had moved as a teenager from a Káncchá speaking village to Yokwa. It follows that regardless of whether an individual uses predominantly mother's language or the language of the village, he or she will identify with the language of his or her father's place.

Mixing or shifting languages, although very common, is almost universally looked down upon. The answers as to why this behaviour is thought of as inappropriate often follow along the lines of matching language to place ("They should not speak Wára here because this is the language of Yokwa", "We should not mix languages because the children will not be able to name the places and animals that belong to our land").

Women who marry in are expected to shift to the local language, but this is often not followed because there are enough women from any one village to form small exclaves, for example of Wára speaking women in Komnzo speaking territory. It is hard to corroborate, but informants say this was enforced more in the past. For example, there are spells and rituals to enhance the language learning process on the side of the woman. One ritual involves splitting a thin bamboo behind a woman's head and whispering a spell. This procedure is said to facilitate the learning process. I asked many times to have this procedure performed on me, but people refused to do it because I would forget my native German. There are other customs and rules which connect land and language. For example, it is forbidden to talk another language at story places and men would introduce their new bride to a *menz* 'story man' at a particular place in order to avoid sickness. The policy of language shift expected from women is hardly ever enforced these days and one might wonder whether it ever was. Ayres (1983: 226) describes the preference for a daughter to marry back into her mother's village, which she calls a short marriage cycle. This pattern establishes strong ties between particular villages. In the case of the Rouku it is the village of Yokwa and the language is Wára. As mentioned above, groups of women from Yokwa would often speak Wára between themselves or to their children and there is no reason why this should have been different in the past. But when asked about this, they would look down on 'language mixing' and stress the importance of the correct language at the right place.

Ancestor stories almost always involve comments on language. For example, the Kuramongo myth which is found across the Morehead Region involves an ancestor who heard voices coming from a tree. Different versions are found in (Williams 1936: 299) and (Ayres 1983: 102). In the myth, the ancestor starts to chop the tree into segments from the top to the bottom. With each little bit that he chopped, people speaking different languages came out and started running towards their respective places. The further he worked his way to the bottom of the tree, the more intelligible the words became to him. When he reached the base of the tree, he heard his own language and thus his own people emerged from the tree. A common metaphor that explains the language situation from a local perspective builds on this story. One often hears the local language being described as *zfh* 'the base of a tree' and all the surrounding languages as *tuti* 'the

branches'. The tree metaphor is important in the local perspective. For example, women are jokingly described as *bidr* 'flying foxes' because they fly from tree to tree, and sometimes they are described as *fätü* 'a wild yam' or *saka* 'mustard vine' because the vines of these plants grow on trees.

## 1.4 Komnzo within the Yam languages

This section situates Komnzo within the Yam languages. This language family was formerly referred to as the "Morehead and Upper Maro Rivers languages", or "Morehead-Maró languages" (Wurm 1971). This name is misleading because its geographical boundary in the east, the Morehead River, excludes all the languages of the Nambu subgroup. I follow Evans in using the more precise term "Yam languages" (2012a: 124). Not only are yams the staple food, and of high cultural importance in exchange feasts, they also gave rise to the senary numeral system, which is unique to the languages of the family. In addition to the English word yam [jæm], the word *yam* [jam] carries high cultural significance in many Yam languages. For example, in Komnzo it means 'footprint, custom, tradition' and in Nen it means 'law, tradition, culture'.

The Yam languages comprise three subgroups: Nambu in the east, Tonda in the west, and Yei, which has only a single member. A first attempt to reconstruct various aspects of the proto language can be found in (Evans et al. 2017). While it is relatively easy to place Komnzo in the Tonda subgroup, it is much harder to classify the units within Tonda; in other words to draw a boundary between language and dialect. Are Komnzo, Anta and Wèrè dialects of Wára as Ethnologue<sup>14</sup> portrays it or are they languages in their own right? Peter Mühlhäusler (2006) points out the difficulty and futility in answering such questions in Papua New Guinea and the contradictions that different researchers have produced in the past. As the preceding description of language ideology has highlighted, these are considered to be different languages from a local perspective. I remain agnostic throughout this section and offer a short conclusion at the end.

I discuss sound correspondences and sound changes first. Next, I show some lexicostatistic data from (Wurm 1971) and (Clifton et al. 1991). Last, I discuss case markers, pronouns and verb morphology. I include here the following Tonda varieties: Komnzo, Anta, Wára, Wèré, Ránmo, Blafe, Wartha Thuntai and Kánchá. I refer the reader to Figure 1.1 for an overview where these varieties are spoken. I do not include Aramma, which I take to be sufficiently different to be considered a separate language (Boevé & Boevé 2003). I have no data for the Tonda varieties spoken on the Indonesian side of the border (Baedi, Ngkolmpu, Smerky, Bakari, Taemer and Sota), and only very little data on Kémä.

With the exception of Komnzo, the spelling of the names of these varieties is adopted from Ethnologue, which in turn goes back to an orthography workshop held by SIL missionaries in Morehead in 2000. Note that the orthographies were developed for each variety with the result that the graphemes in the language names have different phonetic values: Komnzo [kēm<sup>n</sup>dʒo], Anta [a<sup>n</sup>da], Wára [wæra], Wèré [wëre], Ránmo [rænmo],

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<sup>14</sup><http://www.ethnologue.com/language/tci>



Blafe [ᵐblæfɛ], Wartha Thuntai [warða ðuⁿdái], Kánchá [kǎⁿdza]. To ensure comparability in this section, I will employ IPA for all language examples, including Komnzo.

### 1.4.1 Phonology

First, I turn to phonological correspondences. In this section, the languages in the tables are sorted geographically: west (left) to east (right). We find that only Blafe and Ránmo have an /l/ phoneme in their respective inventories. Table 1.3 shows that this phoneme corresponds to an interdental fricative in Komnzo, Anta, Wára, Wèré, Wartha Thuntai and Kánchá. Note that final devoicing produces [θ] in coda position.

Table 1.3: Correspondence set: [l] versus [ð]

item	Blafe, Ránmo	Wartha Thuntai	Kánchá	Wèré	Anta	Komnzo, Wára
1 tongue	læmin	ðæmin	ðæmin	ðæmin	ðæmin	ðæmin
2 excretes	wəl	wəθ	wəθ	wəθ	wəθ	wəθ
3 wet	kilkil	kiθkiθ	tʃiθtʃiθ	tiθtiθ	tiθtiθ	tʃiθtʃiθ
4 armpit	ᵑgəlki	ᵑgəθki	kəθtʃi	ᵑgəθki	ᵑgəθtʃi	ᵑgəθtʃi

A second set shows the correspondence of bilabial stops, [ᵐb] and [b], in Blafe, Ránmo and Wartha Thuntai to labio-velar stops, [ᵑgʷ] and [kʷ], in Komnzo, Anta, Wára, Wèré and Kánchá in Table 1.4. We find that the labial part is sometimes realised as a rounded back vowel, [ᵑgo] and [ko], in Kánchá, Wèré and Wartha Thuntai, for example in lines 3 (‘butterfly’) and 4 (‘crow’). One possible explanation is a process of develarisation that has occurred in Blafe, Ránmo and Wartha Thuntai.

Table 1.4: Correspondence set: [ᵐb/b] versus [ᵑgʷ/kʷ]

item	Blafe, Ránmo	Wartha Thuntai	Kánchá	Wèré	Komnzo, Wára, Anta
1 nest	ᵐbəl	ᵐbəθ	ᵑgʷəθ	ᵑgʷəθ	ᵑgʷəθ
2 mosquito	ᵐbæ	ᵐbæ	ᵑgʷæ	ᵑgʷæ	ᵑgʷæ
3 butterfly	taᵐbam	taᵐburam	ᵐbæᵑgoram		ᵐbæᵑgʷərəm
4 crow	ᵐbaθ	kot	koθ	koθ	kʷaθ
5 light	praja	bæjan	kʷajan	kʷajan	kʷajan
6 sick	bik	bik	kʷik	kʷik	kʷik

There is a small set of words in which the bilabial fricative corresponds to a prenasalised bilabial stop. The set in Table 1.5 groups again Blafe, Ránmo and Wartha Thuntai against Komnzo, Anta, Wára, Wèré and Kánchá. Interestingly, the form of the 2SG.ABS ‘you’ groups Blafe, Ránmo, Wartha Thuntai, Kánchá and Komnzo together.

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Table 1.5: Correspondence set: [ᵐb] versus [ɸ]

item	Blafe, Ránmo	Wartha Thuntai	Kánchez, Komnzo	Wára, Anta, Wèré
1 wife	ᵐbǝᵋgeᵐt	ᵐbǝᵋgeᵐts	ɸǝtʃeᵐts	ɸǝtʃeᵐts
2 husband	ᵐbi	ᵐbi	ɸis	ɸis
3 2SG.ABS ‘you’	ᵐbǝ	ᵐbǝ	ᵐbǝ	ɸe

A clear directional change is palatalisation before front vowels. In Table 1.6, I show only a subset of the varieties. Komnzo represents those in which palatalisation has occurred. This holds also true of Anta and Wára, but the forms are slightly different. Wartha Thuntai represents those in which palatalisation has not occurred. This is also the case in Blafe and Ránmo. The table shows that Wèré and Kánchez are somewhat irregular. In lines 4 and 5 (‘house’ and ‘one’) palatalisation occurs in Wèré, but not in Kánchez. Line 6 (‘armpit’) shows the opposite. In lines 1-3 (‘woman’, ‘I’, ‘people’) palatalisation has occurred in both and in line 7 (‘tree’) in neither. I have included Nama, a Nambu language, to show that Nambu languages preserve the original velar quality, for example in lines 1, 3, and 4 (‘woman’, ‘people’, ‘house’). Note that in line 5 (‘one’), Nambu has dropped the first consonant. The deletion of initial velar nasals is a regular change in Nambu languages, for example ‘mother’ is [ɲame] in Komnzo, but [ama] in Nama and Nen. Note that the conditioning context for palatalisation has been lost in line 4 (‘house’), because the examples end in a consonant. Nama attests a vowel in this position.

Table 1.6: Palatalisation before front vowels

item	Wartha Thuntai	Kánchez	Wèré	Komnzo	Nama
1 woman <sup>a</sup>	ᵐbroki	ᵐbrotʃi	ᵐbrasi	ᵐbratʃi	ᵐbrake
2 1SG.ABS	ᵋga	ᵐdʒǝ	se	ᵐdʒǝ	(jǝᵐd)
3 people <sup>b</sup>	ᵋgyᵐtǝm	tʃǝᵐtǝm	sǝᵐtmǝ	tʃǝᵐtmǝ	ᵋgyᵐtmǝ
4 house	mǝᵐk	mǝᵋk	mǝᵐts	mǝᵐts	mǝᵋgo
5 1 (one)	ᵋǝᵐbi	ᵋǝᵐbi	nǝᵐbi	nǝᵐbi	ǝᵐbiro
6 armpit	ᵋgǝθki	kǝθtʃi	ᵋgǝθki	ᵋgǝθtʃi	-
7 tree type	ᵋgǝᵐt	ᵋgǝᵐt	ᵋgoᵐt	ᵐdʒǝᵐts	-

<sup>a</sup>a woman in the time after giving birth

<sup>b</sup>people who live to the west of one’s own group

The last set shows the correspondence between stops and affricates. In Table 1.7, Blafe, Ránmo, Wèré and Anta are grouped against Komnzo, Wára, Wartha Thuntai and Kánchez.

Concluding the comparison of phonological correspondences, we find that Komnzo and Wára are almost always grouped together, and we may include Anta as well. Kánchez and Wèré share a number of correspondences with Komnzo, Wára and Anta, but they

Table 1.7: Correspondence set: stop versus affricate

item	Blafe, Ránmo	Wartha Thuntai	Káncchá	Wèré	Anta	Komnzo, Wára
1 pain	ti	<sup>n</sup> dʒi	tʃi	ti	ti	tʃi
2 right	tawe	tsowe	tsowe	tawe	tawe	tsawe
3 bowerbird	<sup>n</sup> dojar	<sup>n</sup> dʒojar	<sup>n</sup> dʒojar	<sup>n</sup> dʒojar	<sup>n</sup> dojar	<sup>n</sup> dʒojar

differ in some sets. Blafe, Ránmo and Wartha Thuntai are different in almost all sets. While Blafe and Ránmo are always grouped together, Wartha Thuntai can be grouped with the other varieties in some sets.

### 1.4.2 Lexicon

In this section, I present data from (Wurm 1971) and (Clifton et al. 1991). I defer the statistical analysis of my own wordlists to a latter point in time.

A first calculation of cognate rates was offered by Wurm. His dataset comprised Tonda and Nambu languages as well as and Yei and Marori. In Table 1.8 only the Tonda varieties have been extracted. Wurm's language labels refer to different Tonda varieties: Upper Morehead (Komnzo, Wára, Anta, Aramma), Lower Morehead (Káncchá), Tonda (Blafe, Ránmo, Wartha Thuntai, Wèré) and Kanum (Baedi, Ngkolmpu, Smerky, Bakari, Taemer, Sota).

Table 1.8: Cognate rates (adopted from Wurm 1971: 159)

Upper Mhd			
71%	Lower Mhd		
60%	55%	Tonda	
39%	39%	40%	Kanum

A more fine-grained dataset comes from a SIL survey conducted by Clifton, Dyal and O'Rear (1991), who collected wordlists in 18 villages of both Tonda and Nambu languages. In Table 1.9, I show only the Tonda varieties, but I exclude Aramma, Rema and Kémä, and I choose Bondobol as the village representative of Káncchá. Moreover, I have rearranged their data in order to present the varieties geographically from west to east.

My own wordlists confirm the data in Table 1.9. We can draw some conclusions: (i) Blafe and Ránmo can be grouped together, (ii) Wartha Thuntai is different from all other varieties, (iii) Komnzo, Wára and Anta can be grouped together, (iv) Wèré and Káncchá, though different from each other, are close to Komnzo, Wára and Anta. If we compare these statements to the map in Figure 1.1, we find that the rates of shared vocabulary between Komnzo, Wára, Anta, Wèré and Káncchá roughly reflect geography. As for Blafe/Ránmo and Wartha Thuntai, this cannot be said. In other words, if we try to understand the relation of these varieties as a dialect chain, we would have to make two

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Table 1.9: Rates of shared vocabulary (extracted from Clifton et al. 1991)

Blafe								
80%	Ránmo							
63%	59%	Wartha						
32%	40%	52%	Kánchezá					
49%	55%	55%	59%	Wèré				
43%	51%	50%	70%	84%	Wára			
44%	51%	50%	61%	72%	82%	Anta		
41%	49%	46%	70%	72%	87%	88%	Komnzo	

cuts. The first cut splits off Blafe and Ránmo. The second cut singles out Wartha Thuntai, while the remaining varieties belong to a single dialect chain.

### 1.4.3 Morphosyntax

As an intermediate summary, we can conclude that Komnzo, Anta, Wára, Wèré and Kánchezá are somewhat closer together as opposed to Blafe, Ránmo and Wartha Thuntai. Therefore, I will focus on the first group in this section.

Table 1.10 shows a comparison of case markers. We find that Komnzo deviates from the other varieties in the ergative singular and non-singular, and in the allative. Kánchezá deviates from the others in the ablative and the locative for consonant final words.

Table 1.10: Comparison of case markers

	Kánchezá	Wèré	Wára	Anta	Komnzo
ERG.SG	-o	-o	-o	-o	-ϕ
ERG.NSG	-oi	-ai	-əɪ	-əɪ	-jə
ALL	-ϕ	-ϕ	-ϕ	-ϕ	-ϕo
ABL	-ϕo	-ϕa	-ϕa	-ϕa	-ϕa
LOC V_	-n	-n	-n	-n	-n
LOC C_	-i	-en	-en	-en	-en

Table 1.11 shows a comparison of free pronouns. We find that Komnzo and Kánchezá share an number of forms or some element of a form. For example the first consonant of the first and second person in both absolutive and ergative case. In the possessive non-singular pronouns, only Komnzo and Kánchezá attest a separate element which signals non-singular *-me* in addition to the vowel change found in all varieties. However, the first consonant of the third person ergative and possessive pronouns differs only in Kánchezá.

As the last topic in this section, I briefly address the marking of dual number. In Komnzo as in most Yam languages, dual number is marked on the verb. The affix encodes dual versus non-dual number, and its value has to be integrated with information from other morphological sites to yield the three number values singular, dual and plural. I address this topic in §5.3.2 and §5.5.3. For now, it is sufficient to compare the site of dual marking on the verb. In some varieties this depends on the type of verb stem which is employed. Most verbs have two stems which are sensitive to aspect. While multiple verb stems are attested in all Tonda varieties, the encoding of duality differs. In Komnzo, Anta, Wára and Kánchá, there are two options: duality is encoded in a suffix if the ‘extended stem’ is used, but in a prefix if the ‘restricted stem’ is used. The meaning of these labels in Komnzo is explained in §5.3. Only in Wèré, duality is always encoded in a suffix regardless of the type of stem. Blafe, Ránmo and Wartha Thuntai have lost dual marking on both stem types. In these three varieties, dual marking occurs only in high frequency verbs such as the copula or the verb ‘walk’, where it is usually suppletive. I sketch out a tentative historical explanation of this in §5.3.4.

Table 1.11: Comparison of free pronouns

		Kánchá	Wèré	Wára	Anta	Komnzo
ABS	1SG	<sup>n</sup> dʒæ	se	tʃe	tʃe	<sup>n</sup> dʒæ
	1NSG	ni	ni	ni	ni	ni
	2	<sup>m</sup> bæ	ʃe	ʃe	ʃø	<sup>m</sup> bæ
	3	ʃi	ʃi	ʃi	ʃi	ʃi
ERG	1SG	<sup>n</sup> dʒən	sən	tsən	tsən	<sup>n</sup> dʒe
	1NSG	nin	ni	ni	ni	ni
	2SG	<sup>m</sup> bən	ʃən	ʃən	ʃən	<sup>m</sup> be
	2NSG	<sup>m</sup> bən	ʃe	ʃən	ʃən	<sup>m</sup> bənə
	3SG	tʃaʃ	naʃo	naʃo	naʃo	naʃ
	3NSG	tʃaʃ	naʃ	naʃ	naʃ	naʃa
POSS	1SG	<sup>n</sup> dzuni	<sup>n</sup> done	<sup>n</sup> dzone	<sup>n</sup> done	<sup>n</sup> dzon
	1NSG	<sup>n</sup> dʒenme	<sup>n</sup> dane	<sup>n</sup> dzane	<sup>n</sup> dane	<sup>n</sup> dʒenme
	2SG	<sup>m</sup> buni	<sup>m</sup> bone	<sup>m</sup> bone	<sup>m</sup> bone	<sup>m</sup> bone
	2NSG	<sup>m</sup> benme	<sup>m</sup> bane	<sup>m</sup> bane	<sup>m</sup> bane	<sup>m</sup> benme
	3SG	tʃaʃani	naʃəne	naʃəne	naʃəne	naʃane
	3NSG	tʃaʃanme	naʃane	naʃane	naʃane	naʃanme

### 1.4.4 Summary

In conclusion, we may say that the different levels of comparison converge. Sound correspondences, lexicostatistics as well as morphological differences single out at least three separate units: Blafe/Ránmo, Wartha Thuntai and a chain of dialects, which we may call 'Eastern Tonda'. The latter comprises Wèré, Wára, Kánchá, Anta, Komnzo and probably Kémä. Eastern Tonda shows characteristics which are typical of dialect chains: geographically distant varieties, for example Komnzo and Wèré or Anta and Kánchá, show the biggest differences. Close neighbours, on the other hand, like Komnzo and Wára or Anta and Wèré are very similar. That being said, I will remain cautious until more data has been gathered, and I will continue to refer to all of them as varieties. In this way, I pay respect to the native linguistic ideology which picks up on the slightest differences as being highly emblematic markers of socio-linguistic identity.

## 1.5 Previous work and methodology

### 1.5.1 Previous work

There has been no previous research on Komnzo that goes beyond the collection of wordlists. One example is the SIL survey discussed in the preceding section (Clifton et al. 1991). The activity of SIL missionaries in the area has led to a number of orthography worksheets, unpublished manuscripts, surveys or theses. Examples of work on the surrounding varieties are: a grammatical sketch of Aramma (Boevé & Boevé 2003), a thesis on Wára verb morphology (Sarsa 2001) and a socio-linguistic survey of the Tonda subgroup (Grummit & Masters 2012).<sup>15</sup>

The ethnographic perspective is much better covered in the case of Komnzo. Mary Ayres has conducted research in Rouku around 1980, which has culminated in her thesis on locality and exogamous group definition (Ayres 1983). While she states that she has not acquired Komnzo during her time in the field, she has recorded a number of stories in Komnzo and other Yam languages. On top of that she provides a valuable description and analysis of specific terms and concepts. The ethnography of the Keraki people, the speakers of Nambu, written by FE Williams remains the most comprehensive description of any culture in Southern New Guinea (Williams 1936).

Recent years have brought a revived academic interest in the region, and the present study is part of this. Nick Evans has gathered a team of scholars who work on various languages of the wider region, but also on different Yam languages. Matthew Carroll has written a PhD thesis on Ngkolmpu, a related language of the Tonda subgroup, with a special focus on distributed exponence (Carroll 2017). Bruno Olsson has published a descriptive PhD grammar of Marind (Olsson 2017). Jeff Siegel has published on the morphology of tense and aspect in Nama (Siegel 2014), the eastern neighbour of Komnzo. Wayan Arka has written on tense and agreement in Marori, an endangered isolate spo-

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<sup>15</sup>I have written a review of the survey, which can be found under the following URL: <https://zenodo.org/record/1404752>

ken on the Indonesian side of the border (Arka 2012). Nick Evans has published on many topics in Nen, such as positional verbs (Evans 2014), valency (Evans 2015b), inflection (Evans 2015a) and quantification (Evans 2017). An overview of linguistic situation of the Southern New Guinea Region has been published in (Evans et al. 2017).

### 1.5.2 This project

This project began with a pilot fieldtrip to the Morehead district in September of 2010. At the time, my goal was to establish contact to a community which speaks one of the Tonda languages. I did not know which village or variety I was going to work on. When I arrived in Daru, I met three members of the local level government from the Morehead district who had come for administrative work to the regional capital. The three were Augustin Bikaninis from Wando (Blafe), Bongai Njyar from Wämnefr (Kémä) and Abia Bai from Rouku (Komnzo). It was Abia Bai who invited me to accompany him to Rouku. I received a warm and friendly welcome to the community and I stayed for eight weeks. I explained my intentions and people agreed that I return regularly over the years to come. Abia Bai adopted me into his clan (*Mrzar Mayawa*) and I was given the local name *Bäi* after Abia's father.

My perspective of the culture and language of the Farem has been dominated by people of the Mayawa section. This is visible in the text corpus as most texts are from speakers who belong to this section. However, I took care that my presence and impact in the village was not limited to this group, and – more important for this work – that my description of the language is confirmed by all Farem people.

I have spent a total of 16 months in Rouku: two months in 2010, six months in 2011, three months in 2012, three months in 2013, and two months in 2015. During this time, I have visited villages along the Morehead highway from Wereaver in the west as far as Bimadbn in the east. I have visited Mari in the south and Uparua in the north. I was not able to visit villages on the Indonesian side of the border, and I did not travel to the extreme southwest (Bula, Wando and Korombo) and the north (Setavi, Kiriwo) of the area.

In Rouku, I lived in the house of Abia Bai and his wife Lucy together with their children Nakre, Janet, Sukawi, Nema and Alan. The oldest children Elise and Riley had already moved out of the house. Elise married a man from Wando, far in the west. Riley lives with his wife in Rouku. In the beginning, I concentrated my work on Abia Bai who possesses a great deal of knowledge about history, mythology and the natural world. For elicitation and structural analysis I worked together with my brothers Riley Abia and Daure Kaumb. It was only during my second fieldtrip in 2011 that I discovered the interest and talent of my sister Nakre in linguistic work. She became my main informant together with her father Abia. Their complementary talents have contributed greatly to this project. Abia is not only a great story-teller, but he proved to be an unlimited resource of knowledge. Nakre is a diligent worker in the transcription and translation of recordings, and she patiently answered long lists of questions and worked through complex verb paradigms in elicitation with me.



Figure 1.21: Abia and Nakre

From 2011 onwards, the documentation of Komnzo was funded and supported by the DOBES project of the Volkswagen Foundation.<sup>16</sup> The funding covered the basic documentation of two languages, namely Komnzo and Nen, the language of Bimadbn village, on which Nick Evans has been working since 2008. The funding allowed us to buy a solar setup and ship it to both villages providing electricity for a computer, recording equipment and lights during the evening hours. Additionally, the DOBES project supported to bring in academics who work in the field of biology. Kipiro Damas spent one week in Rouku in 2011 and again in 2015. He collected and later identified numerous plant specimens. Chris Healey identified and photographed over 100 bird species, thereby eliciting many fascinating narratives about cultural significance of birds. Julia Colleen Miller visited Rouku on two fieldtrips conducting socio-linguistic interviews as well as creating high-quality recordings suited for phonetic analysis.

### 1.5.3 The text corpus

The last decade has seen an exceptional increase in creating and archiving digital language material. Despite this positive development, linguists have pointed out that this is “unlikely to be paralleled by a significant acceleration in how long it takes field linguists to produce the sorts of careful translations and cross-questioning of semantic issues that are the hallmark of a well curated text collection” (Evans & Dench 2006: 25). The authors employ the metaphor of a Russian Matryoshka doll to propose a structure of several subcorpora nested within each other, each one with increasing depth of analysis. The Komnzo corpus follows this proposal. In fact, what I call the Komnzo corpus here is only one-sixth of the material collected and archived within the project. At present, the archive contains around 60 hours of audio-visual material. I estimate the total amount of

<sup>16</sup>DOBES stands for German ‘Dokumentation bedrohter Sprachen’.



text at around 40 hours.<sup>17</sup> The material that has been segmented, transcribed and translated amounts to 12 hours, and this is the Komnzo text corpus. These 12 hours constitute the data on which the description and analysis in this grammar rests. Hence, although around 60 hours have been archived, only 12 hours can be used for linguistic analysis. I hope that future speakers of Komnzo as well as researchers will benefit from the raw material.

The 12-hour corpus contains narratives, procedurals, conversations, public speeches, interviews as well as recordings from various stimulus tasks. Most recording sessions took place in somewhat artificial settings, whether it be a staged narration or a sociolinguistic interview. All conversational texts and public speeches are purely observational. At the present time, the Komnzo corpus consists of 65 texts with a total of 11hrs and 42min of transcribed material, and around 54,000 words. 34 speakers are featured in the age range from 20 to 68. The representation of speakers is skewed towards male speakers, 25 male versus 9 female. Furthermore, they are skewed towards speakers belonging to the Mayawa section. I acknowledge this as an artefact caused by the circumstances under which I was introduced to and later lived in Rouku.

The material has been placed in two locations. The complete material is archived at The Language Archive (TLA) which is a unit of the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen concerned with digital language resources and tools. The subset of files which make up the Komnzo text corpus are also archived at Zenodo.<sup>18</sup> At both locations, the materials are stored under an open-access policy. In order to access, browse and download the files, the reader can follow the links below: <https://zenodo.org/communities/komnzo> [https://archive.mpi.nl/islandora/object/lat%3A1839\\_00\\_0000\\_0000\\_0017\\_B0AC\\_C](https://archive.mpi.nl/islandora/object/lat%3A1839_00_0000_0000_0017_B0AC_C).

There are over 500 examples in this grammar, and around 90% of these are text examples. Text examples can be distinguished from elicited or overheard examples by an archive ID printed in [angled brackets] underneath the example sentence. Elicited examples are not marked, while overheard examples are marked with [overheard]. The archive ID allows the reader to find the example sentence in the text corpus and thereby view the example in its context. Archive IDs follow a fixed structure. A example is: [tci20110810-02 MAB #34]. The first three letters represent the ISO 639-3 code for Komnzo.<sup>19</sup> The next eight digits and the number after the hyphen refer to the date on which the recording was made. For example, tci20110810-02 refers to the second recording session on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August 2011. Hence, this information identifies the particular transcription file within the corpus. The last two elements of the archive ID help to find a particular example in the transcription file. First, there is a three letter code which identifies the speaker, for example MAB for Marua Bai. If there are several speakers, each one is coded by a set of annotation tiers, all of which include the respective three letter code. The speaker code

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<sup>17</sup>This applies a wide notion of what constitutes a text, for example songs or wordlists would be included.

<sup>18</sup>Zenodo is an open access repository for research related data which belongs to the European Council's OpenAIRE initiative.

<sup>19</sup>Note that Komnzo is listed, for example in Ethnologue, as a dialect of Wára. Hence, the code 'tci' includes more varieties than the one described in this grammar. More recent systems of language identification are more accurate in my opinion. For example, Glottolog lists Komnzo under the code: komn1238, which refers only to Komnzo.

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is followed by the annotation number, which refers to the sequence of intonation units on a tier.

This information is needed to find a particular line of text in the archive. The reader of the electronic version of this grammar may simply click on the archive ID, which is printed below each text example. This will take her directly to the list of recordings in the appendix. The list of recordings in the appendix provides general information about each text (title, text genre, length, number of annotation units, number of tokens) as well as about each speaker (name, age, sex, section/clan). Moreover, the list of recordings contains a digital object identifier (DOI) that establishes a permanent link to the respective dataset on the Zenodo website. Practically, it should be no more than three mouseclicks to get from an example sentence to downloading the relevant transcription file. In this way, I enable the reader to access the original text without much effort.

## 2 Phonology

In this chapter I describe the phonological system of Komnzo. The chapter begins with the segmental phonology of consonants in §2.1 and vowels in §2.2. Each section contains a list of minimal pairs which establish the phonemic status of the segments. As Komnzo phonology is characterised by widespread epenthesis, a discussion of the non-phonemic status of schwa is given in §2.2.2. Regular phonological processes are described in §2.3. I address Komnzo phonotactics in §2.4. This section consists of a description of the syllable structure (§2.4.1), consonant clusters (§2.4.2), syllabification (§2.4.3), minimal word constraints (§2.4.4) and stress (§2.4.5). Morphophonology is addressed in §2.5. The chapter closes with a discussion of loanwords in §2.6 and an account of the development of the orthography in §2.7.

### 2.1 Consonant phonemes

Table 2.1 gives an overview of the consonant phonemes in Komnzo.

Table 2.1: Consonant phoneme inventory

	bilabial	dental	alveolar	palato-alveolar	palatal	velar	labio-velar
stop/affricate	t̪~t <t>			ts <z>		k <k>	k <sup>w</sup> <kw>
prenasalized stop/affricate	<sup>m</sup> b <b>		<sup>n</sup> d <d>	<sup>n</sup> dz <nz>		ŋg <g>	ŋg <sup>w</sup> <gw>
fricative	ɸ <f>	ð <th>	s <s>				
nasal	m <m>		n <n>			ŋ <ŋ>	
lateral			r~r <r>				
semivowel					j <y>		w <w>

### 2.1.1 Obstruents

Obstruents in Komnzo are divided into stops, affricates and fricatives. The stops and affricates belong to a chain of pairings of oral and prenasalised phonemes at four places of articulation: alveolar, palato-alveolar, velar and labio-velar. The symmetry is broken at the bilabial place of articulation. The bilabial oral stop is lacking from the phoneme inventory. Since it occurs only in English loanwords and a handful of ideophones, I consider it a loan phoneme. As I will show below, the bilabial fricative /f/ can be regarded as the structural counterpart of the prenasalised bilabial stop.

In the following section, I describe the oral and prenasalised stops, labialised velar stops, affricates and fricatives.

#### 2.1.1.1 Stops

There are two voiceless stops (/t/ and /k/) and three prenasalised stops (/b/, /d/, and /g/). The voiceless stops are slightly aspirated, but aspiration is not phonemic in Komnzo. The two labialised velar stops and the two affricates follow the same pairing of voiceless and prenasalised manner of articulation, but these will be discussed in separate sections below.

All stops occur in word-initial, medial, and final position. In only a small number of lexical items, the bilabial /b/ occurs word-finally. This phoneme is also deviant because it lacks a voiceless counterpart. There is evidence from loanword phonology (§2.6) and from surrounding Tonda languages that the bilabial fricative /f/ occupies the same structural slot in the opposition of voiceless and prenasalised stops.

There is almost no allophonic variation with the stop series, but the prenasalised stops are affected by final devoicing (§2.3.2). The /t/ phoneme varies between dental and alveolar points of articulation. In onset clusters where  $C_2$  is /r/, /t/ is always alveolar. Elsewhere, it varies more or less freely.

/t/ →	{	[t] / $\sigma[-r]$	<i>traksi</i>	[trakǽsi]	‘fall’
			<i>tüf</i>	[tʏϕ] ~ [tʏϕ̥]	‘soft ground’
		[t]~[t̥] / elsewhere	<i>rata</i>	[rata] ~ [raʔa]	‘ladder’
			<i>kwot</i>	[kʷɔ̥t] ~ [kʷɔ̥t̥]	‘properly’
/k/ →	{		<i>kata</i>	[kata]	‘bamboo knife’
		[k]	<i>fokam</i>	[fokam]	‘grave’
			<i>safak</i>	[saβak]	‘saratoga’

/b/ →	{	[ <sup>m</sup> p] / <sub>σ</sub>	<i>gb</i>	[ <sup>ɓ</sup> gə <sup>m</sup> p]	‘black palm’
		[ <sup>m</sup> b] / elsewhere	<i>bone</i> <i>gaba</i>	[ <sup>m</sup> bone] [ <sup>ɓ</sup> ga <sup>m</sup> ba]	2SG.POSS ‘storage yam’
/d/ →	{	[ <sup>n</sup> t] / <sub>σ</sub>	<i>kd</i>	[kə <sup>n</sup> t]	‘star’
		[ <sup>n</sup> d] / elsewhere	<i>deya</i> <i>rdiknsi</i>	[ <sup>n</sup> deja] [rə <sup>n</sup> dikə <sup>n</sup> si]	‘tree wallaby’ ‘tie around’
/g/ →	{	<sup>ɓ</sup> k] / <sub>σ</sub>	<i>nag</i>	[na <sup>ɓ</sup> k]	‘grass skirt’
		[ <sup>ɓ</sup> g] / elsewhere	<i>gau</i> <i>sagara</i>	[ <sup>ɓ</sup> gäu] [sa <sup>ɓ</sup> gara]	‘night heron’ proper name

### 2.1.1.2 Labialised velar stops

The labialised velar stops /kw/ and /gw/ show no allophonic variation due to their restricted distribution. Both occur only in syllable onsets, not in the coda. Consequently, we do not find these phonemes in word final position.<sup>1</sup>

/kw/ →	{	[k <sup>w</sup> ] / <sub>σ</sub> [-	<i>kwan</i>	[k <sup>w</sup> an]	‘shout, voice’
			<i>ysokwr</i>	[jə <sup>s</sup> ok <sup>w</sup> ə <sup>r</sup> ]	‘rainy season’
/gw/ →	{	[ <sup>ɓ</sup> g <sup>w</sup> ] / <sub>σ</sub> [-	<i>gwä</i>	[ <sup>ɓ</sup> g <sup>w</sup> æ]	‘mosquito’
			<i>fagwa</i>	[fə <sup>ɓ</sup> g <sup>w</sup> a]	‘width’

I will argue in favour of an analysis whereby the labialised velar stops are complex phonemes rather than a sequence of two phonemes (velar stop + high back vowel /u/ or velar stop + /w/). This argument is based on two lines of evidence: onset consonant clusters and reduplication patterns.

Onset clusters are restricted to two consonants (C<sub>1</sub>C<sub>2</sub>V). If clusters occur, C<sub>2</sub> may only be /r/ or /w/ (§2.4.3). For this argument, only the /r/ is relevant. We do find words in Komnzo which have an initial labialised velar stop (voiceless or prenasalised) in such a cluster, for example: *kwras* ‘Brolga’ or *gwra* ‘MacCulloch’s Rainbowfish’. If /kw/ and /gw/ were to be analysed as clusters of two phonemes, a separate syllable template (CCCV) would be required.

<sup>1</sup>In the neighbouring language Nama which belongs to the Nambu subgroup, labialised velar stops may occur in coda position, as in [auk<sup>w</sup>] ‘morning’.

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We find full and partial reduplication in Komnzo (§4.2). Full reduplication involves repeating the whole word: *yam* ‘footprint, custom, event’ → *yamyam* ‘little feast’. More commonly found is partial reduplication where only the first consonant of the initial syllable is copied: *zbar* ‘night’ → *zzbar* [tsätsä<sup>m</sup>bær] ‘dusk, twilight’. Note that the domain of partial reduplication does not extend further than the first consonant. Thus, we get *frasi* ‘hunger’ → *ffrasi* [fḥḥfɾasi] ‘appetite, hunger’, but not \**frfrasi* [fɾḥḥfɾasi]. If the labialised velar stops comprise two separate phonemes, we would expect that in partial reduplication only the velar stop is copied without the semivowel. On the contrary, we find that the whole phoneme is copied as in *kwayan* ‘light’ → *kwkwayan* [k<sup>w</sup>äk<sup>w</sup>ajan] ~ [kuk<sup>w</sup>ajan] ‘flickering light, dimmed light’, but not \**kkwayan* [käk<sup>w</sup>ajan].

### 2.1.1.3 Affricates

The two consonant phonemes with the highest frequency are the affricates (/z/ and /nz/) which seem to give Komnzo its characteristic fricative sound. Both affricates occur initially, medially and finally showing some allophonic variation. They are palatalised before front vowels as in *zi* [tʃi:] ‘pain’ and *nzikaka* [n<sup>n</sup>dʒikaka] ‘Whistling Kite’. In all other environments they are alveolar. There is some degree of variation between speakers. Some speakers always palatalise, while most speakers follow the allophonic rules as formalised below. The prenasalised affricate is affected by final devoicing (§2.3.2).

/z/ →	{	[tʃ] / <sub>+FRONT</sub> V	<i>zena</i>	[tʃena]	‘now’
			<i>ezi</i>	[ʔetʃi]	‘morning’
		[ts] / elsewhere	<i>zane</i>	[tsane]	DEM:PROX
			<i>mazo</i>	[matso]	‘ocean’
			<i>müz</i>	[my.ts]	‘phallocrypt’

/nz/ →	{	[n <sup>n</sup> dʒ] / <sub>+FRONT</sub> V	<i>nzigfu</i>	[n <sup>n</sup> dʒi <sup>n</sup> gʃu]	‘rain stone’
			<i>snzä</i>	[s <sup>n</sup> dʒæ]	‘crayfish’
		[n <sup>n</sup> ts] / <sub>σ</sub>	<i>mnz</i>	[m <sup>n</sup> ts]	‘house’
		[n <sup>n</sup> dʒ] / elsewhere	<i>nzun</i>	[n <sup>n</sup> dʒun]	1SG.DAT
		<i>rnzam</i>	[r <sup>n</sup> dʒam]	‘how many’	

### 2.1.1.4 Fricatives

There are three fricatives at the bilabial, dental and alveolar places of articulation. The dental fricative is voiced while the other two are voiceless. Consequently, only the dental fricative is affected by final devoicing. The bilabial fricative has a voiced allophone which occurs intervocally. Although voiced in most environments, the dental frica-

tive is affected by final devoicing (§2.3.2). The alveolar fricative is always voiceless in all environments. These rules are formalised below.

$/f/ \rightarrow$	{	$[\beta] / V\_V$	<i>zafazafa</i>	[tsaβatsaβa]	‘vine stick’
		$[\phi] / \text{elsewhere}$	<i>fid</i>	[ɸi <sup>n</sup> t]	‘bushrope’
			<i>zarfa</i>	[tsarɸa]	‘ear’
		<i>karaf</i>	[karaɸ]	‘paddle’	

$/th/ \rightarrow$	{	$[\theta] / \_ \sigma$	<i>süsübäth</i>	[sʏsʏ <sup>m</sup> bæθ]	‘darkness’
		$[\ð] / \text{elsewhere}$	<i>thamin</i>	[ðamin]	‘tongue’
		<i>ηatha</i>	[ηaða]	‘dog’	

$/s/ \rightarrow$	{	$[s]$	<i>saisai</i>	[sâisâi]	‘drizzle (n)’
			<i>fisor</i>	[ɸisor]	‘turtle’
			<i>fis</i>	[ɸi.s]	‘husband’

### 2.1.2 Nasals

There are nasal stops at three places of articulation: bilabial, alveolar, and velar. These three show differences in their frequency and distribution. The velar nasal /ŋ/ occurs only word initially, while bilabial /m/ and alveolar /n/ are found initially, medially and finally. There is no allophonic variation with the nasals.

$/m/ \rightarrow$	{	$[m]$	<i>mifum</i>	[miβum]	‘nose ornament’
			<i>zimu</i>	[tʃimu]	‘snot’
			<i>thm</i>	[ðəm]	‘nose’

$/n/ \rightarrow$	{	$[n]$	<i>no</i>	[no:]	‘water, rain’
			<i>mane</i>	[mane]	‘who’ (ABS)
			<i>minmin</i>	[minmin]	‘Emerald Dove’

$/\eta/ \rightarrow$	{	$[\eta] / \text{WORD} \_$	<i>ηazi</i>	[ηatʃi]	‘coconut’
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### 2.1.3 Trill, tap - /r/

The alveolar trill /r/ is often realised as a single tap [ɾ] depending on speech rate and speaker. In onset consonant clusters where /r/ is occupying C<sub>2</sub> position, it is always

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tapped. Elsewhere the trill and the tap are in free variation. Word finally /r/ may also become voiceless. This variation between [r] and [ɾ] seems to be conditioned by age. Older speakers use the voiceless variant more frequently.

/r/ →	{	[r]~[ɾ] / <sub>WORD</sub>	<i>msar</i>	[m̩sar] ~ [m̩saɾ]	‘green ant’
		[r] / <sub>σ</sub> [C <sub>-</sub>	<i>frasi</i>	[ɸrasi]	‘hunger’
		[r]~[ɾ] / elsewhere	<i>rnz</i> <i>ɲare</i>	[r̩ <sup>n</sup> ts] ~ [ɾ̩ <sup>n</sup> ts] [ɲare] ~ [ɲare]	‘ember’ ‘woman’

### 2.1.4 Approximants

The two approximants /w/ and /y/ occur in initial, medial and final position. In final position, they may be realised as a short offglide or become part of a diphthong. For both approximants, but especially for the palatal /y/, we find only a handful of lexical items where they do occur word finally.

/w/ →	{	[ <sub>U</sub> ]~[ <sub>W</sub> ] / V <sub>-</sub> σ	<i>daw</i>	[ <sup>n</sup> da <sub>U</sub> ] ~ [ <sup>n</sup> da <sub>W</sub> ]	‘garden’
		[w] / elsewhere	<i>wm</i> <i>fewa</i>	[wäm] [ɸewa]	‘stone, gravel’ ‘odour, stench’

/y/ →	{	[ <sub>I</sub> ]~[ <sub>J</sub> ] / V <sub>-</sub> σ	<i>fäy</i>	[ɸæi̯] ~ [ɸæj̯]	‘payment’
		[j] / elsewhere	<i>yusi</i> <i>nzöyar</i>	[jusi] [ <sup>n</sup> dʒœjar]	‘grass’ ‘bowerbird’

There are a number of reasons why the two approximants are analysed as consonants rather than high vowels which alternate according to their environment. Evidence comes from case allomorphy and phonotactics. In stem final position /w/ and /y/ select the same allomorph of the locative case as other consonants. This can be seen in the word *daw* [<sup>n</sup>da<sub>U</sub>] ~ [<sup>n</sup>da<sub>W</sub>] ‘garden’ which selects =*en* as its locative case marker, thus forming *dawen* [<sup>n</sup>dawen] ‘in the garden’. Words which end in a vowel select the =*n* allomorph of the locative case. Furthermore, the rules of syllabification (§2.4.3) treat these two phonemes like consonants. Thus, we find examples like *ys* [j̩s] ‘thorn’ and *ky* [k̩j̯] ‘yam type’ where epenthesis occurs after or before /w/ and /y/ respectively.

### 2.1.5 Minimal pairs for Komnzo consonants

The following minimal pairs and near minimal pairs in Table 2.2 illustrate the phonemic contrast between consonants in initial, medial and final position.



Table 2.2: Minimal pairs of consonant phonemes

SEGMENTS	word	phonemic	phonetic	gloss
/kw/ - /k/	<i>kwafar</i>	/kwa.far/	[k <sup>w</sup> aβar]	place name
	<i>kafar</i>	/ka.far/	[kaβar]	‘big’
	<i>sakwr</i>	/sa.kwr/	[sak <sup>w</sup> ǎr]	‘he hit him’
	<i>sakr</i>	/sa.kr/	[sakǎr]	‘mustard vine’
	<i>kwath</i>	/kwath/	[k <sup>w</sup> aθ]	‘crow’
	<i>kath</i>	/kath/	[kaθ]	‘ankle’
/gw/ - /g/	<i>gwra</i>	/gwra/	[ <sup>ɰ</sup> g <sup>w</sup> ra:]	‘rainbowfish’
	<i>gra</i>	/gra/	[ <sup>ɰ</sup> gra:]	‘tree type’
/kw/ - /w/	<i>kwath</i>	/kwath/	[k <sup>w</sup> aθ]	‘crow’
	<i>wath</i>	/wath/	[waθ]	‘dance (n)’
	<i>kwf</i>	/kwf/	[k <sup>w</sup> ǎφ]	‘stone club’
	<i>wf</i>	/wf/	[wǎφ]	‘shirt, blouse’
/gw/ - /w/	<i>gwth</i>	/gwth/	[ <sup>ɰ</sup> gwǎθ]	‘nest’
	<i>wth</i>	/wth/	[wǎθ]	‘faeces’
/k/ - /w/	<i>kath</i>	/kath/	[kaθ]	‘ankle’
	<i>wath</i>	/wath/	[waθ]	‘dance (n)’
/f/ - /w/	<i>far</i>	/far/	[φar]	‘housepost’
	<i>war</i>	/war/	[war]	‘top layer’
	<i>kafar</i>	/ka.far/	[kaβar]	‘big’
	<i>kawar</i>	/ka.war/	[kawar]	pers. name
	<i>zafe</i>	/za.fe/	[tsaβe]	‘old’
	<i>zawe</i>	/za.we/	[tsawe]	‘right (side)’
	<i>tfitfi</i>	/t.fi.t.fi/	[tǎβitǎβi]	‘whirlwind’
	<i>twitwi</i>	/t.wi.t.wi/	[tǎwitǎwi]	‘bird type’
/s/ - /t/	<i>süfr</i>	/sü.fr/	[sɪφǎr]	‘tree type’
	<i>tüfr</i>	/tü.fr/	[tɪφǎr]	‘many’
	<i>kisr</i>	/ki.sr/	[kitǎr]	‘lizard type’

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SEGMENTS	word	phonemic	phonetic	gloss
	<i>kitr</i>	/ki.tr/	[kisǝr]	‘pandanus’
	<i>wsws</i>	/ws.ws/	[wǝswǝs]	‘grass type’
	<i>wtwt</i>	/wt.wt/	[wǝtwǝt]	‘itchy’
/s/ - /th/	<i>sirsir</i>	/sir.sir/	[sirsir]	‘glider’
	<i>thirthir</i>	/thir.thir/	[ðirðir]	‘pig tusk’
	<i>bis</i>	/bis/	[ <sup>m</sup> bi:s]	‘bird type’
	<i>bith</i>	/bith/	[ <sup>m</sup> bi:θ]	‘honey bee’
	<i>mus</i>	/mus/	[mu:s]	‘leech’
	<i>muth</i>	/muth/	[mu:θ]	‘(sago) grub’
/s/ - /z/	<i>si</i>	/si/	[si:]	‘eye’
	<i>zi</i>	/zi/	[tʃi:]	‘pain’
	<i>srminz</i>	/sr.minz/	[sǝrmints]	‘rainbow’
	<i>zrminz</i>	/zr.minz/	[tsǝrmints]	‘roots’
	<i>ksi kar</i>	/k.si kar/	[kǝsi kar]	‘savannah’
	<i>kzi</i>	/k.zi/	[kǝtʃi]	‘barktray’
	<i>fs</i>	/fs/	[fǝs]	‘fish type’
	<i>fz</i>	/fz/	[fǝts]	‘forest’
/th/ - /t/	<i>thru</i>	/thru.thru/	[ðruðru]	‘bamboo type’
	<i>tru</i>	/tru.tru/	[trtru]	‘stream’
	<i>füth</i>	/füth/	[fʏθ]	‘rotten tuber’
	<i>füt</i>	/füt/	[fʏt]	‘pouch’
/th/ - /r/	<i>thusi</i>	/thu.si/	[ðusi]	‘fold (v.t.)’
	<i>rusi</i>	/ru.si/	[rusi]	‘shoot (v.t.)’
	<i>bthan</i>	/b.than/	[ <sup>m</sup> bǝðan]	‘magic’
	<i>bran</i>	/b.ran/	[ <sup>m</sup> bǝran]	‘line-up’
	<i>yathizsi</i>	/ya.thi.z.si/	[jaðitsǝsi]	‘die’
	<i>yarizsi</i>	/ya.ri.z.si/	[jaritsǝsi]	‘hear, listen’

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SEGMENTS	word	phonemic	phonetic	gloss
	<i>zithzith</i>	/zith.zith/	[tʃiθtʃiθ]	‘slickness’
	<i>zirzir</i>	/zir.zir/	[tʃirtʃir]	‘wetness’
	<i>wath</i>	/wath/	[waθ]	‘dance (n)’
	<i>war</i>	/war/	[war]	‘top layer’
/r/ - /t/	<i>rar</i>	/rar/	[rar]	‘for what’
	<i>tar</i>	/tar/	[tar]	‘friend’
	<i>ɲarr</i>	/ɲa.rr/	[ɲarǽr]	‘bandicoot’
	<i>ɲatr</i>	/ɲa.tr/	[ɲatǽr]	‘rope’
	<i>ft</i>	/ft/	[fǽt]	‘dead tree’
	<i>fr</i>	/fr/	[fǽr]	‘palm stem’
/r/ - /z/	<i>rinaksi</i>	/ri.na.k.si/	[rinakǽsi]	‘pour’
	<i>zinaksi</i>	/zi.na.k.si/	[tʃinakǽsi]	‘put down’
	<i>wari</i>	/wa.ri/	[wari]	‘plant type’
	<i>wazi</i>	/wa.zi/	[watʃi]	‘side’
	<i>mür</i>	/mür/	[myr]	‘grass type’
	<i>müz</i>	/müz/	[myrts]	‘phallicrypt’
/b/ - /m/	<i>bith</i>	/bith/	[ <sup>m</sup> biθ]	‘honey bee’
	<i>mith</i>	/mith/	[miθ]	‘face’
	<i>bä</i>	/bä/	[ <sup>m</sup> bæ:]	2.ABS
	<i>mä</i>	/mä/	[mæ:]	‘where’
	<i>züb</i>	/züb/	[tʃy <sup>m</sup> b]	‘depth’
	<i>züm</i>	/züm/	[tʃym]	‘centipede’
/d/ - /n/	<i>dasi</i>	/da.si/	[ <sup>n</sup> dasi]	‘bulge’
	<i>nasi</i>	/na.si/	[nasi]	‘long yam’
	<i>badabada</i>	/ba.da.ba.da/	[ <sup>m</sup> ba <sup>n</sup> da <sup>m</sup> ba <sup>n</sup> da]	‘ancestor’
	<i>bana</i>	/ba.na/	[ <sup>m</sup> bana]	‘pitiful’
	<i>kd</i>	/kd/	[kǽnt]	‘star’
	<i>kn</i>	/kn/	[kǽn]	‘yam type’

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SEGMENTS	word	phonemic	phonetic	gloss
/g/ - /ŋ/	<i>gathagatha</i>	/ga.tha.ga.tha/	[ŋgaðaŋgaða]	‘bad’
	<i>ŋathanŋatha</i>	/ŋa.tha.ŋa.tha/	[ŋaðaŋaða]	‘quoll’
	<i>game</i>	/ga.me/	[ <sup>ŋ</sup> game]	‘tongs’
	<i>ŋame</i>	/ŋa.me/	[ŋame]	‘mother’
/m/ - /n/	<i>mä</i>	/mä/	[mæ:]	‘where’
	<i>nä</i>	/nä/	[næ:]	‘some’
	<i>mawan</i>	/ma.wan/	[mawan]	‘tree type’
	<i>nawan</i>	/na.wan/	[nawan]	‘waterhole’
/nz/ - /d/	<i>nzga</i>	/nz.ga/	[ <sup>n</sup> dzə <sup>ŋ</sup> ga]	‘vagina’
	<i>dga</i>	/d.ga/	[ <sup>n</sup> də <sup>ŋ</sup> ga]	‘gills’
	<i>ŋanz</i>	/ŋanz/	[ŋa <sup>n</sup> ts]	‘planting row’
	<i>ŋad</i>	/ŋad/	[ŋa <sup>n</sup> t]	‘rope’
	<i>ymnz</i>	/y.mnz/	[jəm <sup>n</sup> ts]	place name
	<i>ymd</i>	/y.md/	[jəm <sup>n</sup> t]	‘bird’
/nz/ - /n/	<i>nzä</i>	/nzä/	[ <sup>n</sup> dʒæ:]	1SG.ABS
	<i>nä</i>	/nä/	[næ:]	‘some’
	<i>gonz</i>	/gonz/	[ <sup>ŋ</sup> gɔnts]	‘place name’
	<i>gon</i>	/gon/	[ <sup>ŋ</sup> gɔn]	‘water lily’
/b/ - /f/	<i>bä</i>	/bä/	[ <sup>m</sup> bæ:]	2.ABS
	<i>fä</i>	/fä/	[ <sup>ɸ</sup> æ:]	DIST
	<i>bira</i>	/bi.ra/	[ <sup>m</sup> bira]	‘axe’
	<i>fira</i>	/fi.ra/	[ <sup>ɸ</sup> ira]	‘betelnut’
	<i>bis</i>	/bis/	[ <sup>m</sup> bi:s]	‘bird type’
	<i>fis</i>	/fis/	[ <sup>ɸ</sup> i:s]	‘husband’
/d/ - /t/	<i>düfr</i>	/dü.fr/	[ <sup>n</sup> dʏ <sup>ɸ</sup> ər]	‘headdress’
	<i>tüfr</i>	/tü.fr/	[ <sup>n</sup> tʏ <sup>ɸ</sup> ər]	‘plenty’
	<i>drari</i>	/dra.ri/	[ <sup>n</sup> drari]	‘container’

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SEGMENTS	word	phonemic	phonetic	gloss
	<i>trari</i>	/tra.ri/	[trari]	‘strong man’
	<i>kadakada</i>	/ka.da.ka.da/	[ka <sup>n</sup> daka <sup>n</sup> da]	‘yamcake’
	<i>katakata</i>	/ka.ta.ka.ta/	[katakata]	‘grass type’
	<i>sd</i>	/sd/	[sə <sup>n</sup> t]	‘yam type’
	<i>st</i>	/st/	[sət]	‘plant type’
/nz/ - /z/	<i>nzä</i>	/nzä/	[ <sup>n</sup> dzæ:]	1SG.ABS
	<i>zä</i>	/zä/	[tʃæ:]	PROX
	<i>nzanza</i>	/nza.nza/	[ <sup>n</sup> dza <sup>n</sup> dza]	‘insect type’
	<i>zaza</i>	/za.za/	[tsatsa]	‘carrying’
	<i>nzr</i>	/nʒr/	[ <sup>n</sup> dzər]	‘leftover’
	<i>zr</i>	/ʒr/	[tsər]	‘tooth’
	<i>rbänzsi</i>	/r.bä.nz.si/	[rə <sup>m</sup> bæ <sup>n</sup> dzəsi]	‘prohibit’
	<i>rbäzsi</i>	/r.bä.z.si/	[rə <sup>m</sup> bætsəsi]	‘untie’
/g/ - /k/	<i>gd</i>	/gd/	[ <sup>ŋ</sup> gə <sup>n</sup> t]	‘mud’
	<i>kd</i>	/kd/	[kə <sup>n</sup> t]	‘star’
	<i>kafar</i>	/ka.far/	[kaβar]	‘big’
	<i>gafar</i>	/ga.far/	[ <sup>ŋ</sup> gaβar]	‘fish type’
	<i>gursi</i>	/gur.si/	[ <sup>ŋ</sup> gursi]	‘break off’
	<i>kursi</i>	/kur.si/	[kursi]	‘split’
	<i>tag</i>	/tag/	[ta <sup>ŋ</sup> k]	‘type of bee’
	<i>tak</i>	/tak/	[tak]	‘pandanus’
	<i>srag</i>	/srag/	[sra <sup>ŋ</sup> k]	pers. name
	<i>srak</i>	/srak/	[srak]	‘boy’
/w/ - /y/	<i>yarsi</i>	/yar.si/	[jarsi]	‘tired’
	<i>warsi</i>	/war.si/	[warsi]	‘chew’
	<i>yf</i>	/yf/	[jəϕ]	‘name’
	<i>wf</i>	/wf/	[wəϕ]	‘shirt’

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SEGMENTS	word	phonemic	phonetic	gloss
	<i>yttünzr</i>	/yt.tü.nzr/	[jöttʏ <sup>n</sup> dzǎɾ]	‘paints him’
	<i>wttünzr</i>	/wt.tü.nzr/	[wöttʏ <sup>n</sup> dzǎɾ]	‘paints her’
	<i>fäw</i>	/fäw/	[fæ̃u]	‘arrow shaft’
	<i>fäy</i>	/fäy/	[fæ̃ɪ]	‘payment’

## 2.2 Vowel phonemes

Table 2.3 and Figure 2.1 below give an overview of the vowel phonemes. Komnzo vowels divide the articulatory space into four levels of height (high, mid, mid-low, and low) and draw a distinction between front and back vowels. Additionally, for front vowels, there is a phonemic distinction between rounded and unrounded vowels. In Figure 2.1 IPA symbols are employed, whereas Table 2.3 lists the corresponding graphemes. Note that I include the epenthetic schwa in parentheses. This is because there is some evidence that schwa constitutes an marginal phoneme word-finally. That being said, in all other occurrences it is created by epenthesis (§2.2.2).

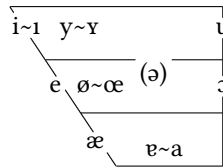


Figure 2.1: Komnzo vowel space

Table 2.3: Vowel phoneme inventory

	front		central	back
	unrounded	rounded		
high	i	ü		u
mid	e	ö	(é)	o
mid-low	ä			
low			a	

Nasal vowels are rather marginal in Komnzo. There are only two words in which we find nasal vowels. These are the conjunction *a* [ã:] ‘and’ and *o* [õ] ‘or’. Both have a second, much rarer variant with an initial velar nasal *ɲa* [ɲã:] and *ɲo* [ɲõ:]. This suggests that

nasalisation of the vowel is caused by the loss of the preceding velar nasal. Nasalisation is not phonemic in Komnzo.

There are no diphthongs in Komnzo. All diphthongs which occur on a phonetic level end in high offglides. These are analysed as allophones of the two approximants /w/ and /y/ in coda position (§2.1.4). In the practical orthography these are sometimes written as diphthongs, e.g. <ai> or <au>.<sup>2</sup> Two words which exemplify this are *saisai* /say.say/ ‘drizzle’ and *kaukau* /kaw.kaw/ ‘Mouth Almighty’.

### 2.2.1 Phonetic description and allophonic distribution of vowels

There is free variation between the following allophones, that is respectively of /i/, /ü/, /u/, /e/, /ö/, /o/, and /a/:

Table 2.4: Vowel allophones

phoneme	description	→ allophones
/i/	high front unrounded vowel	→ [i]~[ɪ]
/ü/	high front rounded vowel	→ [y]~[ʏ]
/u/	high back rounded vowel	→ [u]~[ʊ]
/e/	mid front unrounded vowel	→ [e]~[ɛ]
/ö/	mid front rounded vowel	→ [ø]~[œ]
/o/	mid back rounded vowel	→ [o]~[ɔ]
/a/	low central unrounded vowel	→ [a]~[ɐ]
/ä/	low front unrounded vowel	→ [æ]

There is no phonemic contrast between short and long vowels. However, vowels tend to be longer in monosyllabic roots, especially if the monosyllable is light/open, e.g. *nzä* [ʰndzæ:] ‘Γ’. This process of vowel lengthening is caused by minimal word conditions in combination with syllable weight as will be described in §2.4.1 and §2.4.4.

#### 2.2.1.1 Allophones of /o/

There is further allophonic variation for /o/ which is related to vowel lengthening. In heavy, closed syllables, /o/ is realised as a short, centralised, rounded vowel [ɔ̞], whereas in light, open syllables it is realised as a mid back rounded vowel of normal length [ɔ]. Two words which show this allophonic variation are the language name *Komnzo* /kom.nzo/ [kɔ̞m<sup>n</sup>dzɔ] and *komon* /ko.mon/ [kɔ̞mɔ̞n] ‘maybe’. We find the two allophones [ɔ̞] and [ɔ] conditioned by syllable weight in the syllables of the two words respectively. There are two rules which may override this allophonic distribution. The first is a minimal word constraint which produces [ɔ] even in closed syllables if the root is monosyllabic (see §2.4.4). The second rule overrides syllable weight and the impact of the

<sup>2</sup>This is an individual decision based on the speakers’ preferences.

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minimal word constraint. After the labio-velar approximant (/w/) and the two labialised-velar stops (/kw/ and /gw/) /o/ is always realised as short, centralised, rounded vowel [ɔ̞]. Leaving the influences of the minimal word constraint to §2.4.4, we can formalise these observations in the following rule:

(1)

/o/ →	{	[ɔ̞] / _C]σ	<i>emoth</i>	/e.moth/	[ʔe:məθ]	‘girl’	
			<i>ymorymor</i>	/y.mor.y.mor/	[jəmɔ̞rjəmɔ̞r]	‘desire’	
			<i>thomgsi</i>	/thom.g.si/	[ðəm <sup>h</sup> gəsi]	‘help’	
		}	[ɔ̞] / _]σ	<i>nibo</i>	/ni.bo/	[ni <sup>m</sup> bɔ̞]	‘six’
			<i>dokre</i>	/do.kre/	[ <sup>n</sup> dɔ̞kre]	‘frog’	
		}	[ɔ̞] / C <sub>+</sub> labio-velar_	<i>kwosi</i>	/kwo.si/	[k <sup>w</sup> əsi]	‘dead’
			<i>woku</i>	/wo.ku/	[wɔ̞ku]	‘skin’	

There are some irregularities with these rules when it comes to other bilabial consonants, like /f/. There is *fofot* [fɔ̞fɔ̞t] ‘single child’ which follows the rule, but there are a handful of words which do not follow the rule, like: *fothr* [fɔ̞ððr] ‘eucalyptus type’ or *fokufoku* [fɔ̞kufɔ̞ku] ‘small patch of vegetation’.

### 2.2.1.2 Analytic problems with /ö/

The vowel /ö/ [œ] poses a problem because there are no minimal pairs between /ö/ and some of its immediate neighbours (/e/, /o/, /ä/) in the corpus. There are minimal pairs between /ö/ and /i/, /ü/, /u/, /a/. The lack of minimal pairs with the former group along with the effects of vowel harmony (see §2.5.1) invite an analysis in which /ö/ is a variant of other phonemes, for example: a rounded allophone of /e/ or a fronted allophone of /o/. However, no conditioning environment (e.g. vowel harmony or quality of adjacent consonants) can be established. The main problem lies in the fact, that occurrences of /ö/ are much rarer than all other vowels.<sup>3</sup> For the current description, /ö/ is set up as an independent vowel phoneme. Further research will have to settle this question.

### 2.2.2 The non-phonemic status of schwa

The most frequent vowel in Komnzo is a short schwa [ə]. I will argue here that this is not a phoneme, but that it is inserted through epenthesis in order to create a syllable nucleus where there is none underlyingly. That being said, I will make an argument at the end of this section that schwa can be analysed as a marginal or emerging phoneme in word final context. The rules of epenthesis will be laid out in §2.4.3.

Epenthetic vowels are known from many Papuan languages. The best documented case is certainly Kalam (Biggs 1963; Pawley 1966; Blevins & Pawley 2010), but epenthetic

<sup>3</sup> Amongst the 1700 entries in the dictionary, only 30 contain /ö/. Compare this number with 730 for /a/. This is a conservative count in which singletons and reduplicates as well as simple forms and compounds are only counted once.



vowels have been described for other languages of the Yam family, e.g. Nen (Evans & Miller 2016). In Komnzo, the main arguments for schwa as an epenthetic vowel rather than a phoneme come from syllabicity alternations, the predictability of schwa, and its restricted distribution.

Syllabicity alternations which cause changes in the place of schwa insertion are influenced by affixation. Two examples are the verb *ttüsi* [t̥t̥ɥsi] ‘print, paint’ and the noun *fzenz* [ɸ̥t̥ʃe<sup>n</sup>ts] ‘wife’. In both stems schwa occurs in the first syllable. When we inflect the verb with an undergoer prefix, the first consonant is syllabified as a coda and schwa needs to be inserted in a different position: *yttünzr* [j̥t̥t̥ɥ<sup>n</sup>dz̥r] ‘s/he paints him’. When we add a possessive prefix to *fzenz*, e.g.: *buzfenz* [<sup>m</sup>buɸt̥ʃe<sup>n</sup>ts] ‘your wife’, again the first consonant of the stem becomes a coda. In this case schwa disappears entirely because the possessive prefix ends in a vowel. It follows that schwa cannot be present in the underlying representation of these two lexemes.

Schwa has a very restricted distribution compared to specified vowels. It does not occur word initially and it is very limited word finally. I will show below that word-final schwas should be analysed as a marginal phoneme. Elsewhere schwa is entirely predictable and therefore not represented in the orthography of Komnzo. The rules of schwa insertion are discussed as part of syllabification and possible consonant clusters (§2.4.3). There are many roots in Komnzo which lack specified vowels altogether.<sup>4</sup> A few examples are: *mnz* [m̥<sup>n</sup>ts] ‘house’, *zŋth* [ts̥ɸ̥θ̥] ‘base, reason’, and *ggrb* [<sup>n</sup>g̥<sup>n</sup>g̥r̥<sup>m</sup>p̥] ‘small, unripe coconut’. The quality of the epenthetic vowel shows only little variation. In almost all environments it is realised as a mid central vowel of very short duration [ə̆]. However, there is one exception. If the epenthetic vowel is inserted preceding the two approximants /y/ and /w/ it is realised as a high front or high back vowel respectively, as in: *nyak* [nijak] ‘we go’ and *thwak* [ð̥wak] ‘shoulder’.

There is one caveat to the analysis of schwa as epenthetic. It cannot be predicted in word-final context. Although word-final schwa is very rare in terms of types, it cannot be dismissed as the aberrant behaviour of a few lexical items. This is because it is not rare at all in terms of tokens. For example, word-final schwa shows up in the verb morphology (1SG -*é*), case marking (ERG.NSG =*é*) and in the adjectivaliser -*thé*. The latter could be historically related to the simulative case marker (= *thatha*). For the first singular suffix on verbs, I argue in §5.5.1.1, that this is the result of vowel reduction (a>ə), because neighbouring varieties have a corresponding -*a* suffix. Moreover, the first person suffix -*é* disappears if other suffixal material is added to the verb. This is also found with some of the lexical items. For example, if *kayé* ‘yesterday’ is marked with a temporal possessive case (= *thamane*), word-final schwa disappears: *kaythamane dagon* ‘yesterday’s food’. This does not happen with full vowels, e.g. *ezithamane dagon* ‘food from the morning’ from *ezi* ‘morning’. Thus, I analyse schwa in word-final contexts as a marginal phoneme, which emerged or is emerging from vowel reduction. In these word-final cases schwa is represented orthographically by <é>.

<sup>4</sup> Among 1700 entries in the dictionary, we find 105 without specified vowels. The number of entries in which the epenthetic vowel occurs together with specified vowels is much higher.

## 2.2.3 Minimal pairs for Komnzo vowels

The following minimal pairs and near minimal pairs illustrate the phonemic contrasts between vowels. Each vowel phoneme is set apart from its immediate neighbours in the vowel space. Each vowel phoneme is contrasted with the epenthetic vowel, i.e. the absence of a specified vowel ( $\emptyset$ ). Some combinations are redundant (e.g.: /i/ - /e/ and /e/ - /i/) and not repeated in the table.

Table 2.5: Minimal pairs of vowel phonemes

SEGMENTS	word	phonemic	phonetic	gloss
/i/ - /u/	<i>mith</i>	/mith/	[miθ]	‘face’
	<i>muth</i>	/muth/	[muθ]	‘(sago) grub’
	<i>grigri</i>	/gri.gri/	[ <sup>ɲ</sup> gri <sup>ɲ</sup> gri]	‘maggots’
	<i>gru</i>	/gru/	[ <sup>ɲ</sup> gru:]	‘shooting star’
/i/ - /ü/	<i>minzaksi</i>	/mi.nza.k.si/	[mi <sup>n</sup> dzakǎsi]	‘paint (vt.)’
	<i>münzaksi</i>	/mü.nza.k.si/	[mV <sup>n</sup> dzakǎsi]	‘allow’
	<i>di</i>	/di/	[ <sup>n</sup> di:]	‘back of head’
	<i>düdü</i>	/dü.dü/	[ <sup>n</sup> dY <sup>n</sup> dY]	‘in good shape’
/i/ - /e/	<i>si</i>	/si/	[si:]	‘eye’
	<i>se</i>	/se/	[se:]	‘torch’
	<i>bi</i>	/bi/	[ <sup>m</sup> bi:]	‘sago’
	<i>be</i>	/be/	[ <sup>m</sup> be:]	2SG.ERG
/i/ - /ö/	<i>di</i>	/di/	[ <sup>n</sup> di:]	‘back of head’
	<i>dö</i>	/dö/	[ <sup>n</sup> dœ:]	‘monitor lizard’
/i/ - $\emptyset$	<i>biribiri</i>	/bi.ri.bi.ri/	[ <sup>m</sup> biri <sup>m</sup> biri]	‘plant type’
	<i>bribri</i>	/b.ri.b.ri/	[ <sup>m</sup> bǎri <sup>m</sup> bǎri]	‘weeding’
	<i>with</i>	/with/	[wiθ]	‘banana’
	<i>wth</i>	/wth/	[wǎθ]	‘faeces’
	<i>fis</i>	/fis/	[fis]	‘husband’
	<i>fs</i>	/fs/	[fǎs]	‘fish type’

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/u/ - /i/	see above /i/ - /u/			
/u/ - /ü/	<i>futhfuth</i>	/futh.futh/	[ɸuθɸuθ]	‘scrapes’
	<i>füthfüth</i>	/füth.füth/	[ɸvθɸvθ]	‘hatched bird’
	<i>but</i>	/but/	[ <sup>m</sup> but]	‘kava sticks’
	<i>büt</i>	/büt/	[ <sup>m</sup> bvt]	‘amputated limb’
	<i>rusi</i>	/ru.si/	[rusi]	‘shoot (vt.)’
	<i>rüsi</i>	/rü.si/	[rvsi]	‘rain (v.)’
/u/ - /o/	<i>muramura</i>	/mu.ra.mu.ra/	[muramura]	‘medicine’
	<i>moramora</i>	/mo.ra.mo.ra/	[mɔramɔra]	‘tree type’
	<i>muth</i>	/muth/	[muθ]	‘(sago) grub’
	<i>moth</i>	/moth/	[mɛθ]	‘path’
	<i>tru</i>	/tru/	[tru:]	‘palm type’
	<i>tro</i>	/tro/	[trɔ:]	‘python type’
/u/ - Ø	<i>kursi</i>	/kur.si/	[kursi]	‘split (vt.)’
	<i>krsi</i>	/kr.si/	[kɛrsi]	‘block (vt.)’
	<i>kut</i>	/kut/	[kut]	‘trap’
	<i>kt</i>	/kt/	[kɔt]	‘grass type’
	<i>fuk</i>	/fuk/	[ɸuk]	‘in a group’
	<i>fk</i>	/fk/	[ɸɔk]	‘buttocks’
/ü/ - /i/	see above /i/ - /ü/			
/ü/ - /u/	see above /u/ - /ü/			
/ü/ - /e/	<i>fünz</i>	/fünz/	[ɸv <sup>n</sup> ts]	‘arm muscles’
	<i>fenz</i>	/fenz/	[ɸe <sup>n</sup> ts]	‘puss’
/ü/ - /ö/	<i>nümä</i>	/nü.mä/	[nymæ]	‘one week away’
	<i>nömä</i>	/nö.mä/	[noemæ]	‘yamcake’
	<i>düdü</i>	/dü.dü/	[ <sup>n</sup> dv <sup>n</sup> dv]	‘in good shape’
	<i>dödö</i>	/dö.dö/	[ <sup>n</sup> dœ <sup>n</sup> dœ]	‘plant type’
/ü/ - Ø	<i>sün</i>	/sün/	[svn]	‘dirt, dust’
	<i>sn</i>	/sn/	[sɛn]	‘yam type’

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	<i>tüfr</i>	/tü.fr/	[tʏϕǝr]	‘plenty’
	<i>tfrtfr</i>	/t.fr.t.fr/	[tǝϕǝrtǝϕǝr]	‘tree type’
/e/ - /i/	see above	/i/ - /e/		
/e/ - /ü/	see above	/ü/ - /e/		
/e/ - /ö/	not attested			
/e/ - /o/	<i>fethaksi</i>	/fe.tha.k.si/	[ϕeðakǝsi]	‘dip in’
	<i>fothaksi</i>	/fo.tha.k.si/	[ϕoðakǝsi]	‘take off (bag)’
	<i>game</i>	/ga.me/	[ <sup>ɲ</sup> game]	‘tongs’
	<i>gamo</i>	/ga.mo/	[ <sup>ɲ</sup> gamɔ]	‘magic spell’
/e/ - /a/	<i>yem</i>	/yem/	[jem]	‘cassowary’
	<i>yam</i>	/yam/	[jam]	‘event’
	<i>fetr</i>	/fe.tr/	[ϕetǝr]	‘dangerous’
	<i>fatr</i>	/fa.tr/	[ϕatǝr]	‘shoulder’
	<i>gwra</i>	/gwra/	[ <sup>ɲ</sup> g <sup>w</sup> ra:]	‘fish type’
	<i>gwre</i>	/gwre/	[ <sup>ɲ</sup> g <sup>w</sup> re:]	‘bird type’
/e/ - /ä/	<i>erbänzé</i>	/e.r.bä.nzé/	[ʔerǝ <sup>m</sup> bæ <sup>n</sup> tsǝ]	‘I untie them’
	<i>ärbänzé</i>	/ä.r.bä.nzé/	[ʔærǝ <sup>m</sup> bæ <sup>n</sup> tsǝ]	‘I untie for them’
	<i>fenz</i>	/fenz/	[ϕe <sup>n</sup> ts]	‘puss’
	<i>fänz</i>	/fenz/	[ϕæ <sup>n</sup> ts]	‘proper name’
	<i>nze</i>	/nze/	[ <sup>n</sup> dʒe:]	1SG.ERG
	<i>nzä</i>	/nzä/	[ <sup>n</sup> dʒæ:]	1SG.ABS
/e/ - Ø	<i>menz</i>	/menz/	[me <sup>n</sup> ts]	‘story man’
	<i>mnz</i>	/mnz/	[mǝ <sup>n</sup> ts]	‘house’
	<i>fethaksi</i>	/fe.tha.k.si/	[ϕeðakǝsi]	‘dip in’
	<i>fthaksi</i>	/f.tha.k.si/	[ϕǝðakǝsi]	‘take from fire’
	<i>ɲakwire</i>	/ɲa.kwi.re/	[ɲak <sup>w</sup> ire]	‘we run’
	<i>ɲakwiré</i>	/ɲa.kwi.ré/	[ɲak <sup>w</sup> irǝ]	‘I run’
/ä/ - /e/	see above	/e/ - /ä/		
/ä/ - /a/	<i>näbi</i>	/nä.bi/	[næ <sup>m</sup> bi]	‘one’

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	<i>nabi</i>	/na.bi/	[na <sup>m</sup> bi]	‘bow, bamboo’
	<i>fätr</i>	/fä.tr/	[fæt̚ɔ̃r]	‘left’
	<i>fatr</i>	/fa.tr/	[fat̚ɔ̃r]	‘shoulder’
	<i>mafä</i>	/ma.fä/	[maɸæ]	‘with whom’
	<i>mafa</i>	/ma.fa/	[maɸa]	‘who’
/ä/ - /ö/	not attested			
/ä/ - /o/	<i>bärbär</i>	/bär.bär/	[ <sup>m</sup> bær <sup>m</sup> bær]	‘half’
	<i>bor</i>	/bor/	[ <sup>m</sup> bɔ̃r]	‘rat’
	<i>nä</i>	/nä/	[næ:]	‘some’
	<i>no</i>	/no/	[nɔ:]	‘water’
/ä/ - /ø/	<i>fäk</i>	/fäk/	[fæk]	‘jaw’
	<i>fk</i>	/fk/	[fɔ̃k]	‘buttocks’
	<i>märmär</i>	/mär.mär/	[mærmær]	‘slope’
	<i>mrmr</i>	/mr.mr/	[mɔ̃rmɔ̃r]	‘inside’
	<i>bnä</i>	/b.nä/	[ <sup>m</sup> bɔ̃næ]	‘with you’
	<i>bné</i>	/b.né/	[ <sup>m</sup> bɔ̃nɔ̃]	2NSG.ERG
/a/ - /ä/	see above /ä/ - /a/			
/a/ - /e/	see above /e/ - /a/			
/a/ - /ö/	<i>namä</i>	/na.mä/	[namæ]	‘good’
	<i>nömä</i>	/nö.mä/	[nœmæ]	‘yamcake’
/a/ - /o/	<i>zan</i>	/zan/	[tsan]	‘fight’
	<i>zon</i>	/zon/	[tsɔ̃n]	‘plant type’
	<i>karfa</i>	/kar.fa/	[karɸa]	‘from village’
	<i>karfo</i>	/kar.fo/	[karɸɔ̃]	‘to village’
	<i>far</i>	/far/	[ɸar]	‘house post’
	<i>for</i>	/for/	[ɸɔ̃r]	‘riverbank’
/a/ - /ø/	<i>ngath</i>	/n.gath/	[nə <sup>ŋ</sup> gaθ]	‘friend’
	<i>ngth</i>	/n.gth/	[nə <sup>ŋ</sup> gɔ̃θ]	‘young sibling’

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	<i>tharthar</i>	/thar.thar/	[ðarðar]	‘next to’
	<i>thrthr</i>	/thr.thr/	[ðərðər]	‘intestines’
	<i>mar</i>	/mar/	[mar]	‘pandanus type’
	<i>mr</i>	/mr/	[mər]	‘brain’
	<i>sakwra</i>	/sa.kw.ra/	[sak <sup>w</sup> ər̥a]	‘I hit him’ (PST)
	<i>sakwré</i>	/sa.kw.ré/	[sak <sup>w</sup> ər̥ə]	‘I hit him’ (RPST)
/o/ - /e/	see above /e/ - /o/			
/o/ - /ö/	not attested			
/o/ - /a/	see above /a/ - /o/			
/o/ - /ä/	see above /ä/ - /o/			
/o/ - /u/	see above /u/ - /o/			
/o/ - ∅	<i>borsi</i>	/bor.si/	[ <sup>m</sup> b̥ər̥si]	‘laugh’
	<i>brsi</i>	/br.si/	[ <sup>m</sup> b̥ər̥si]	‘scoop water’
	<i>fothaksi</i>	/fo.tha.k.si/	[f̥oðak̥əsi]	‘take off’
	<i>fthaksi</i>	/f.tha.k.si/	[f̥oðak̥əsi]	‘take from fire’
	<i>rgosi</i>	/r.go.si/	[r̥ə <sup>ŋ</sup> g̥osi]	‘poke through’
	<i>rgsi</i>	/r.g.si/	[r̥ə <sup>ŋ</sup> g̥əsi]	‘wear clothes’
	<i>monz</i>	/monz/	[m̥o <sup>n</sup> ts]	‘trench, ditch’
	<i>mnz</i>	/mnz/	[m̥ə <sup>n</sup> ts]	‘house’
	<i>nzigom</i>	/nzi.gom/	[ <sup>n</sup> dzi <sup>ŋ</sup> g̥om]	‘chain smoker’
	<i>nzigm</i>	/nzi.gm/	[ <sup>n</sup> dzi <sup>ŋ</sup> g̥əm]	‘stickyness’

## 2.3 Regular phonological processes

### 2.3.1 Gemination

Gemination occurs with a subset of the consonantal phonemes (/t/, /k/, /f/, /th/, /m/, /n/, and /r/). We find geminates in medial, heterosyllabic consonant clusters where the rules of syllabification specify that no epenthetic vowel needs to be inserted (see §2.4.3). Phonetically, geminates are characterised by a prolonged realisation of fricatives, nasals, and alveolar trill. Geminate stops are realised with a delayed release of the airflow. Although gemination is caused by affixation in most cases, I discuss the topic here rather than as a morphophonemic rule because we also find monomorphemic roots with geminates. The

examples in Table 2.6 provide some attested examples from the corpus. In some of the examples, we find minimal pairs based on gemination as can be seen in the rightmost column.

Table 2.6: Geminate consonants

segment	geminate	non-geminate
/t/	<i>yttünzr</i> ‘s/he paints him’	n/a
/k/	<i>yakkarä</i> ‘quickly’ yak=karä walk=PROP	<i>yakarä</i> ‘in tears’ ya=karä cry=PROP
/m/	<i>yamme</i> ‘through this event’ yam=me event=INS	<i>yame</i> ‘mat’
	<i>fammäre</i> ‘without thinking’ fam=märe thoughts=PRIV	n/a
/n/	<i>yannor</i> ‘he shouts hither’ ya-n-nor 3SG.MASC-VENT-shout	<i>yanor</i> ‘he shouts’ ya-nor 3SG.MASC-shout
/f/	<i>fiyaffa</i> ‘from the hunt’ fiyaf=fa hunt=ABL	n/a
/th/	<i>yththagr</i> ‘it is sticking (on sth.)’	n/a
/r/	<i>firra</i> ‘place name’ <i>kwrro</i> ‘Blue-winged Kookaburra’	<i>fira</i> ‘betelnut’ n/a

Gemination is not attested for complex consonants, including the prenasalised stops (/b/, /d/, and /g/) as well as the two affricates (/z/ and /nz/) and /s/. Gemination is not relevant for the labialised velar stops (/kw/ and /gw/) and the velar nasal (/ŋ/) because these do not occur in coda position.

### 2.3.2 Final-devoicing

The process of final devoicing, naturally, affects only those consonants which (i) occur in final position (excluding non-final: /kw/, /gw/ and /ŋ/) and (ii) are voiced in all other environments (excluding voiceless: /t/, /k/, /f/, /s/, and /z/). The nasal stops and the approximants are also not affected by final devoicing. This leaves us with the following phonemes which are targetted by final devoicing: /b/, /d/, /g/, /nz/, /th/, and /r/.

The domain of final devoicing is the syllable. For example, in words where /nz/ occurs in onset position, it is always voiced: *nzafar* [ʰdzaɸar] ‘sky’ and *knzun* [kǎⁿdzun] ‘parallel’. If /nz/ occurs in final position, it is always voiceless: *mnz* [mǎⁿts] ‘house’. We find evidence in suffixation and encliticisation that the process is targetting the right edge of the syllable rather than the word. *Mnz* [mǎⁿts] ‘house’ may take the vowel initial locative enclitic =*en* in which case /nz/ occurs in onset position and is voiced: *mnzen* [mǎⁿdzen] ‘in the house’. This contrasts with the consonant initial formatives =*fa* (ABL) and =*wä* (EMPH). In both cases /nz/ is syllabified in coda position and is voiceless: *mnzfa* [mǎⁿtsɸa] ‘from the house’ and *mnzwä* [mǎⁿtswæ] ‘really the house’. We can formalise final devoicing in the following rule:

$$(2) \ /b/, /d/, /g/, /nz/, /th/ \rightarrow \{ [-voiced] / \_ \}_\sigma$$

The only exception is /r/, where final devoicing occurs only word-finally. However, final devoicing of /r/ is optional and more commonly found with older speakers.

### 2.3.3 Glottal stop insertion

There are only few lexemes in Komnzo which are vowel initial.<sup>5</sup> In addition, the non-singular undergoer prefix for second/third person in one of the five prefix series is also vowel initial. However, vowel initial words are a marginal pattern in Komnzo and with one exception, which I describe below, word-medial syllables without onsets are not found. A possible explanation for the occurrence of vowel initial words in Komnzo is contact with the Nambu languages to the east.

For this marginal pattern we find a rule of glottal stop insertion as in: *ebar* [ʔeᵐbar] ‘head’ or *ettünzr* [ʔettɻⁿdzǎɾ] ‘s/he paints them’. This rule is restricted to word-initial environment, because the rules of syllabification maximise onsets in almost all cases (see §2.4.3). There is only one exception. Word-medial glottal stop insertion occurs with the vowel initial possessive suffix =*ane*. When the possessive is suffixed to a word which ends in a vowel, a glottal stop is inserted at the morpheme boundary. An example is *kabe* ‘man’ → *kabeane* [kaᵐbeʔane] ‘of the man’.

<sup>5</sup>Among the 1700 entries in the dictionary, there are 54 vowel initial lexemes: /a/ (21), /e/ (17), /o/ (8), /ä/ (4), /u/ (3), /i/ (1). Three of these are loanwords.



## 2.4 The syllable and phonotactics

The phonotactics of Komnzo are best described in terms of the syllable. My description of the syllable is influenced by Blevins (1995). I begin by outlining different syllable templates and the constraints which help to define them (§2.4.1). I provide evidence for the internal structure of the syllable. Consonant clusters are shown in §2.4.2. It follows a step-by-step analysis of syllabification and epenthesis (§2.4.3). The section closes with a discussion of the minimal word (§2.4.4) and stress (§2.4.5).

### 2.4.1 Syllable structure

The template for the maximal syllable in Komnzo is  $[CCVC]_{\sigma}$ . The minimal syllable is  $[CV]_{\sigma}$  and in a more restricted environment  $[V]_{\sigma}$ . Thus, a syllable maximally consists of an onset, which may or may not be complex, a nucleus and a simple coda. Three constraints help to define the possible representations of the syllable in Komnzo:

1. Onsets are obligatory in word-medial and final position. There is a constraint against vowels in onset position:  $^*_{\sigma}[V$ . The only position where we find vowels in onsets is word-initially, but this is a marginal pattern. If the process of syllabification produces vowel initial words, a glottal stop fills the onset position (see §2.3.3). Word-internal or word-final syllables never lack a consonantal onset.
2. Syllables may have complex onsets with a maximal number of two adjacent consonants:  $_{\sigma}[CC$ . There are constraints on the phonemes involved in CC onset clusters. (see §2.4.2.1)
3. Syllables may only have a simple coda:  $C]_{\sigma}$ . Post-vocalic consonant clusters are always heterosyllabic, never tautosyllabic:  $^*CC]_{\sigma}$ . There are a number of constraints on the possibilities of heterosyllabic consonant clusters (see §2.4.2.2).

From the three constraints given above, we can now derive the following possible syllable types: CV, CVC, CCV, CCVC. Word-initially, we also find V and VC. Figure 2.2 presents the syllable in Komnzo as a binary branching construct.

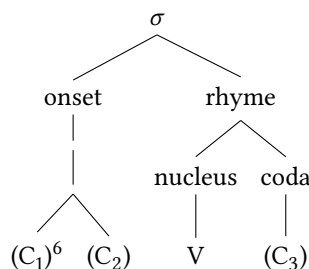


Figure 2.2: The internal structure of the syllable

A branching syllable is chosen over a flat structure because there is evidence for the rhyme as a separate node of which nucleus and coda are subnodes. Such evidence includes the different shapes and constraints for onset and coda. Onsets may be complex. Codas can only be simple. Onsets are obligatory in almost all cases while codas are optional. Onsets and rhyme combine freely, thus capturing the generalisation that onsets rarely influence the nucleus. All consonant phonemes may appear in a simple onset ( $C_1$ ). There are some restrictions, but these are internal to the onset (see §2.4.2.1). The coda position ( $C_3$ ) on the other hand is more limited as to which consonant phonemes may appear. The labialised velar stops /kw/ and /gw/ and the velar nasal /ŋ/ never appear in a coda.

The strongest evidence for an independent rhyme comes from syllable weight which impacts on vowel length of the nucleus. If there is a specified vowel in the nucleus, the vowel will become long in open/light syllables, and it will become short in closed/heavy syllables. This affects different vowels to varying degrees. We find a good example of this in the distribution of the two allophones of /o/ which are [ɔ] and [ɔ̃]. In the language name *Komnzo* /kom.nzo/ [kɔ̃m<sup>n</sup>dzɔ] the first vowel is very short (although stressed) and the second vowel is of normal length. It follows that syllable weight influences the length (and sometimes quality) of the vowel in the nucleus. The shortening or lengthening of nuclei may be overridden by minimal word constraints (see §2.4.4), but these rules hold for all polysyllabic roots. Consequently, we require reference to the rhyme as an independent subnode of the syllable.

## 2.4.2 Consonant clusters

We find tautosyllabic and heterosyllabic consonant clusters in *Komnzo*. These have very different restrictions in their possibilities.

### 2.4.2.1 Tautosyllabic clusters

Tautosyllabic clusters are restricted to the onset of a syllable, no more than two consonants may occur and they only involve a subset of the phonemes. In a  ${}_{\sigma}[C_1C_2]$  template,  $C_2$  may only be /r/ or /w/.

In a cluster with /r/ we find all consonant phonemes except for the three nasal stops ( ${}_{\sigma}[mr]$ ,  ${}_{\sigma}[nr]$ ,  ${}_{\sigma}[\eta r]$ ) and the approximants ( ${}_{\sigma}[wr]$  and  ${}_{\sigma}[yr]$ ) and /r/ itself ( ${}_{\sigma}[rr]$ ). This points to an explanation in terms of a sonority hierarchy in which nasal and approximants are more sonorous than the trill/tap. Some examples of  ${}_{\sigma}[Cr]$  clusters are *brüzi* ‘catfish type’, *frar* ‘small fishtrap’, *krüfr* ‘cold’, *gru* ‘shooting star’, *kwras* ‘Brolga’, *srima kabe* ‘scout, spy’, *thruthu* ‘bamboo type’, *trisi* ‘scratch (v)’, *zra* ‘swamp’.

In a cluster with /w/ the restrictions on  $C_1$  are more severe and roots in which it is attested are rare. We only find the following phonemes in  $C_1$  position: /k/, /g/, /z/, /nz/, /th/, and /s/. The first two phonemes in the list pose a problem because one has find a distinction between a  $Cw$  cluster and the labialised velar stops /kw/ and /gw/. This is

<sup>6</sup>Syllables without consonantal onsets are restricted to word initial environments. In this case, a phonological rule states that a glottal stop is inserted (§2.3.3).

impossible to do for lexemes, but we find some evidence in a morphophonemic rule in §2.5.3 where the vowel /u/ is realised as [w] and becomes part of a  $\sigma$ [Cw cluster. Some examples of lexemes with  $\sigma$ [Cw onset clusters are: *swäyé* ‘anchoring place’, *zwäf* ‘luke-warm’, *bzwär* [ʰbʰzwær] ‘place name’.

#### 2.4.2.2 Heterosyllabic clusters

Heterosyllabic clusters are much harder to pin down because - as we will see in §2.4.3 below - there are syllabicity alternations where a coda consonant may become an onset by inserting epenthetic schwa after which it breaks up the cluster. I will label the two consonants involved  $C_a$  (the coda of the first syllable) and  $C_b$  (the onset of the following syllable).

We find that where  $C_a$  and  $C_b$  are identical the consonants are never broken up but always realised as geminates. The attested geminate patterns are described as a phonological rule in §2.3.1. These patterns exclude a number of logically possible geminates: labialised velar stops (/kw/ and /gw/), velar nasal (/ŋ/), and all the prenasalised phonemes (/b/, /d/, /g/, and /nz/).<sup>7</sup> Other heterosyllabic clusters are rather unrestricted. Table 2.7 presents the possible cluster types in Komnzo and Table 2.8 lists examples of these types.

Table 2.7: Heterosyllabic consonant clusters

	oral	pren.						lab-
	/r/	stop	stop <sup>8</sup>	nasal	affr.	fric.	approx.	velar
/r/	✓	✓	n/a	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
oral stop	n/a	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	✓	✓	✓
pren. stop	n/a	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	✓	✓	n/a
nasal	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
affr.	n/a	✓	n/a	✓	n/a	✓	✓	n/a
fric.	n/a	✓	n/a	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
approx.	n/a	✓	n/a	✓	✓	✓	n/a	n/a
lab-velar	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Table 2.8: Examples of attested heterosyllabic consonant clusters

$C_a$	$C_b$	underlying representation	phonetic realisation	gloss
/r/	[+nasal]	/ker.ma/	[ke <sub>r</sub> ma]	‘from tail’
		/tr.nä/	[t <sub>ʃ</sub> rmæ]	‘palm frond’

<sup>7</sup>The labialised velar stop and the velar nasal may not occur as  $C_a$  because these never occur in coda position.

<sup>8</sup>The column and line labelled ‘prenasal’ includes prenasalised stops and the prenasalised affricate.

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C <sub>a</sub>	C <sub>b</sub>	underlying representation	phonetic realisation	gloss
/r/	[+oral]	/for.tu/ /ker.ko/	[fɔ̃rtu] [kɛrko]	‘scar’ ‘headdress’
/r/	[+affr.]	/zr.zü/	[tsɔ̃rtʃy]	‘knee’
/r/	[+fric.]	/war.fo/ /kr.si/ /tr.tha/	[warɸɔ] [kɔ̃rsi] [tɔ̃rða]	‘above’ ‘block (v)’ ‘life’
/r/	[+approx.]	/kar.wä.si/ /yar.yom.g.si/	[karwæsi] [jarjɔ̃m <sup>ɰ</sup> gəsi]	‘lie (v)’ ‘scream (v)’
/r/	[+lab-vel]	/ɲa.far.kw.re/	[ɲaɸark <sup>w</sup> ɔ̃re]	‘we leave’
[+oral]	[+oral]	/wät.ku/	[wætku]	‘pelican’
[+oral]	[+nasal]	/dek.ni.ni/ /rt.maksi/	[ <sup>ɰ</sup> deknini] [rɔ̃tmakəsi]	‘praying mantis’ ‘cut’
[+oral]	[+fric.]	/f.rk.thé/ /et.fth/	[fɔ̃rɔ̃kðə] [ʔetɸəθ]	‘red’ ‘sleep (n)’
[+oral]	[+approx.]	/thik.ya.si/ /zok.wa.si/ /mit.wa.si/	[ðikjasi] [tsɔ̃kwasi] [mitwasi]	‘build fence’ ‘speech’ ‘swing (v)’
[+oral]	[+lab-vel]	/tat.kwo.nam/	[tat <sup>w</sup> ɔ̃nam]	‘tree type’
[+pren.]	[+oral]	/gb.ka.rä/	[ <sup>ɰ</sup> gə <sup>m</sup> bkaræ]	‘with pandanus’
[+pren.]	[+nasal]	/ɲad.me/	[ɲa <sup>n</sup> tme]	‘with rope’
[+pren.]	[+fric.]	/bad.fo/	[ <sup>m</sup> ba <sup>n</sup> tɸɔ]	‘to the ground’
[+pren.]	[+approx.]	/mnz.wä/	[mɔ̃ <sup>n</sup> tswæ]	‘house (EMPH)’
[+nasal]	/r/	/nin.rr/	[ninrɔ̃r]	‘with us’
[+nasal]	[+oral]	/am.kf/ /thun.t.nä.gwr/	[ʔamkəɸ] [ðuntənæ <sup>ɰ</sup> gwɔ̃r]	‘breath’ ‘he lost them’

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C <sub>a</sub>	C <sub>b</sub>	underlying representation	phonetic realisation	gloss
[+nasal]	[+nasal]	/kan.m <sub>u</sub> o <sub>h</sub> a/	[kanm <sub>u</sub> o <sub>h</sub> a]	‘river snake’
[+nasal]	[+pren.]	/yar.yom.g.si/ /kum.da/ /kän.brim/	[jarjəm <sup>ɰ</sup> gəsi] [kum <sup>n</sup> da] [kæn <sup>m</sup> brim]	‘scream (v)’ ‘basket’ ‘come here!’
[+nasal]	[+affr.]	/san.zin/	[santʃin]	‘put him down!’
[+nasal]	[+fric.]	/zan.fr/ /kam.tha.tha/	[tsanφǝr] [kam <sub>u</sub> o <sub>h</sub> a]	‘far’ ‘like a bone’
[+nasal]	[+approx.]	/nze.nm.wä/	[ <sup>n</sup> dʒenəmwæ]	‘for us (EMPH)’
[+nasal]	[+lab-vel]	/ŋan.kwir/	[ŋank <sup>w</sup> ir]	‘run hither’
[+affr.]	[+oral]	/ez.kn.wr/	[ʔetskənwər]	‘he moves them’
[+affr.]	[+nasal]	/kâz.nob/	[kætsn <sup>ə</sup> m <sup>p</sup> ]	‘drink (it)’
[+affr.]	[+fric.]	/fz.fo/	[φǝtsφo]	‘to forest’
[+affr.]	[+approx.]	/fz.wä/	[φǝtswæ]	‘forest (EMPH)’
[+fric.]	[+oral]	/mnz.wä/	[m <sup>ə</sup> n <sup>n</sup> tswæ]	‘house (EMPH)’
[+fric.]	[+affr.]	/buf.zenz/	[ <sup>m</sup> buftʃe <sup>n</sup> ts]	‘your wife’
[+fric.]	[+fric.]	/ef.thar/ /füs.füs/	[ʔeφǝar] [φysφys]	‘dry season’ ‘wind’
[+fric.]	[+approx.]	/nzf.wi.yak/ /naf.wä/ /fi <sub>h</sub> .wo.g.si/	[ <sup>n</sup> tsǝφwɪjak] [naφwæ] [fiθw <sup>ɰ</sup> gəsi]	‘we walked’ ‘they (EMPH)’ ‘take out’
[+fric.]	[+lab-vel]	/math.kwi/ /y.ra.kth.kwa/	[maθk <sup>w</sup> i] [jǝrakǝθk <sup>w</sup> a]	‘personal name’ ‘he put on top’
[+approx.][+oral]		/faw.ka.rä/	[fa <sup>w</sup> karæ]	‘with payment’
[+approx.][+nasal]		/faw.ma/	[fa <sup>w</sup> ma]	‘from payment’

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C <sub>a</sub>	C <sub>b</sub>	underlying representation	phonetic realisation	gloss
[+approx.][+affr.]		/b̥äw.zö/	[ <sup>m</sup> bæ <sup>w</sup> tʃœ]	‘paperbark’
[+approx.][+fric.]		/wy.thk/	[wəʃ <sup>l</sup> ðök]	‘comes to end’

We can make a number of observations from Table 2.8 above. The prenasalised phonemes do occur in C<sub>a</sub> as well as C<sub>b</sub>. In the latter case, C<sub>a</sub> may only be another nasal as in: *kumda* [kum<sup>n</sup>da] ‘basket’, *kumgsi* [kum<sup>n</sup>gəsi] ‘smell (v)’, *dmgu* [<sup>n</sup>dəm<sup>n</sup>gu] ‘waterhole’, *tingwä* [tin<sup>n</sup>g<sup>w</sup>æ] ‘tree type’. If C<sub>a</sub> is a phoneme other than a nasal, the cluster will be broken up: *garda* [<sup>n</sup>garə<sup>n</sup>da] ‘canoe’, *äthgam* [ʔæðə<sup>n</sup>gam] ‘Parinari nonda’, *thfgarwrnth* [ðəʃə<sup>n</sup>garwərəməθ] ‘they were breaking them’. There are no attested cases of a prenasalised phoneme in C<sub>b</sub> with a homorganic nasal in C<sub>a</sub>, i.e. /m/+b/, /n/+nz/, /n/+d/.

There are only few clusters which involve /r/ in the C<sub>b</sub> position. This is caused by maximizing onsets during syllabification, which creates complex onset clusters of the type Cr. As a consequence, the only heterosyllabic clusters with /r/ in C<sub>b</sub> position are the ones which are illegal as onset clusters (e.g. \*<sub>σ</sub>[mr, \*<sub>σ</sub>[nr, \*<sub>σ</sub>[rr]. In other words, because \*<sub>σ</sub>[nr is illegal as an onset, we do find it as a heterosyllabic cluster (*ninrr* /nin.rr/ [ninrər] ‘with us’). Likewise, because <sub>σ</sub>[fr is a legal onset cluster, we never find it as a heterosyllabic cluster.

We do find heterosyllabic clusters which involve /w/ in C<sub>b</sub> position and a velar (prenasalised) stop in C<sub>a</sub> position. Evidence that these clusters are indeed heterosyllabic as opposed to an instantiation of the labialised velar stop /kw/ and /gw/ comes two sources. First, we find examples like *zokwasi* [tsökwasɪ] ‘speech’ where the short, centralised allophone of /o/ shows that /k/ is the coda of a closed syllable. Compare this with the discussion of /o/ (§2.2.1) and the discussion of syllable weight (§2.4.1). Secondly, verb stems ending in /k/ and /g/ select the *-wr* allomorph of the non-dual suffix (§5.5.3.3). Consequently, heterosyllabic clusters /k.w/ and /g.w/ as well as the complex phonemes /kw/ and /gw/ are required for an adequate description of the phonological system.

### 2.4.3 Syllabification and epenthesis

Syllable structure is generally understood not to be defined at the underlying representation (Blevins 1995: 221). Hence, we do not find minimal pairs based on syllabicity in Komnzo. As was explained in §2.2.2 above, schwa is not a phoneme but an epenthetic vowel inserted in order to break up consonant clusters. There is some degree of free variation in syllabicity and schwa insertion. An example is the word *mrn* ‘family, clan’ with the locative suffix *-en*. The resulting word *mrnen* ‘in the family’ may be realised either /mr.nen/ [mərnen] or /m.r.nen/ [mərənən]. There is no phonemic contrast and speakers find it difficult to perceive the difference in syllabicity.

The process of syllabification will be outlined here in the form of three ordered rules which predict epenthesis and syllable structure:

1. Associate each specified vowel with a syllable nucleus.
2. Establish and maximise onsets in accordance with syllable templates (See constraint number 2 in §2.4.1 on onset clusters). A phonological rule will insert a glottal stop if there is no consonantal onset in word initial position (see §2.3.3).
3. Break-up unsyllabified consonants with epenthetic vowels:
  - a) Exception: suffixes which allow no other syllabification than inserting the epenthetic vowel in final position. This includes the adjectivaliser *-thé*, non-singular ergative case marker *-yé* and the first singular actor verb suffix *-é*.
  - b) Elsewhere: proceed from right to left breaking up consonant clusters.
  - c) After each schwa insertion, establish codas in accordance with possible heterosyllabic consonant clusters. Otherwise, maximise onsets. Exception: word-initial segments are always recognised as onsets.
  - d) The epenthetic vowel is [ü] and [ĩ] if followed by heterosyllabic /w/ and /y/ respectively. In all other instances it is [ə̃].

The process of syllabification attempts to map the minimal syllable CV onto the underlying representation. The rules give preference to onsets rather than codas. Consequently, we do not find vowel initial syllables word-medially or word-finally.

I have modelled the process of syllabification as being divided into two steps. Syllables which contain full vowels are recognised first and in a second step epenthetic vowels are inserted to break up unsyllabified consonant clusters. This algorithm proceeds backwards (from right to left) and inserts epenthetic schwas between unsyllabified consonants to create syllable nuclei. The insertion ensures that onsets are maximised. After each onset, the process checks against the list of possible heterosyllabic consonant clusters (see §2.4.2.2) whether another insertion occurs right away or only after a coda has been recognised. In the latter case, it ‘jumps’ one consonant and breaks up the next pair of unsyllabified consonants. An exception is the word initial position where the segment is automatically recognised as an onset. The rules ensure that no word-initial schwa insertion occurs. The direction (right to left) explains why we find schwa never in word-final position. There are only a handful of lexemes in which schwa is attested word-finally.

The direction is important in order to explain forms like *wonrsoknwr* [wə̃nə̃rsəkə̃n-wə̃r]<sup>9</sup> ‘s/he is bothering me’ which is syllabified /wo.nr.so.kn.wr/. The algorithm is applied from right to left which is why the cluster /r.s/ is first recognised as a possible heterosyllabic consonant cluster. After this recognition, schwa is inserted between /n/ and /r/. If the process was applied from left to right, one would expect that /n.r/ is first recognised as a possible heterosyllabic cluster and schwa would be inserted between /r/ and /s/ which yields the incorrect form \*/won.r.so.kn.wr/. As pointed out above, there is some degree of optionality. In elicitation, informants accepted schwa insertion in both

<sup>9</sup>The allophone [ə̃] of the phoneme /o/ occurs here not because this might be a closed syllable, but because it follows a labio-velar approximant (see §2.2.1)

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places [wə̃nə̃rə̃səkə̃nwə̃r]. This might be an artefact introduced by elicitation, because in fluent speech this hardly ever occurs.

The algorithm specifies that schwa is inserted between consonants disregarding possible onset clusters (§2.4.1) whereas syllables with specified vowels maximise their onsets and produce onset clusters. Indeed, we do not find the possible onset clusters Cr or Cw with epenthetic vowels. There are only two exceptions for Cr. The first is the verb *frmnzsi* /fr̄m.nz.si/ ‘fix, prepare’ in which the onset cluster /fr/ is never broken up even if the verb is fully inflected: *yafrmnzr* /ya.f̄r̄m.nzr/ ‘s/he prepares him’. The second exception occurs with all verbs in a specific inflection: Word-initially, the irrealis prefix *ra-* becomes part of an onset cluster with the undergoer prefix. This cluster only contains an epenthetic vowel if (i) the restricted verb stem is used and (ii) the verb is marked for dual number: *thrbth* [ð̄rə̃ð̄ə̃m̄bə̃θ] ‘they put them inside’.<sup>10</sup>

In Figure 2.3-5 below, I present four examples spelling out the algorithm step by step:

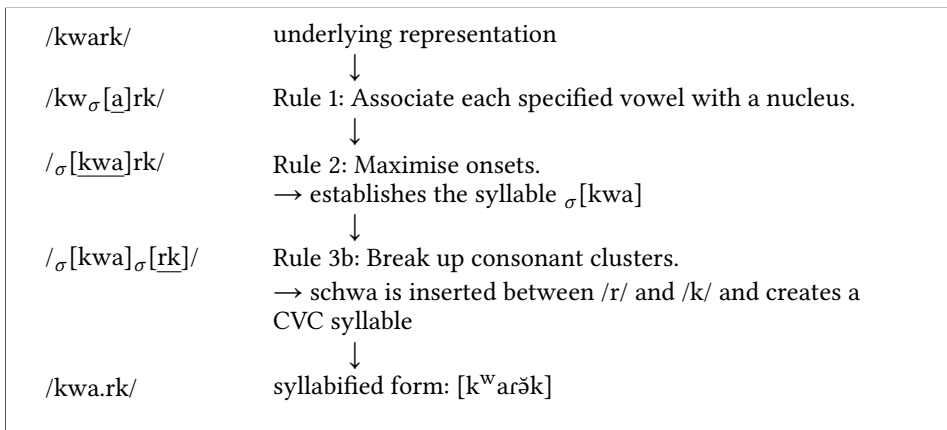


Figure 2.3: Syllabification of *kwark* ‘deceased’

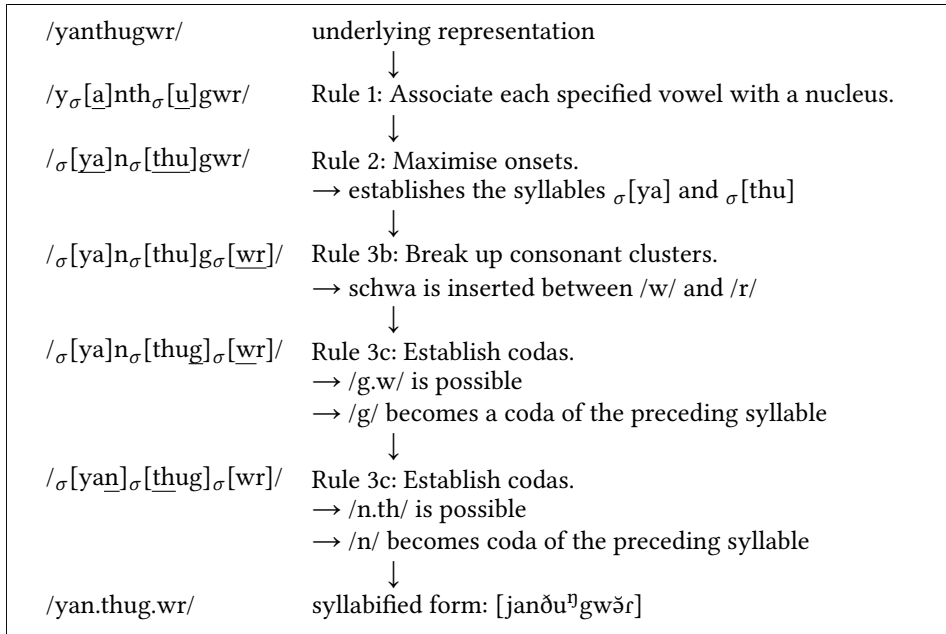
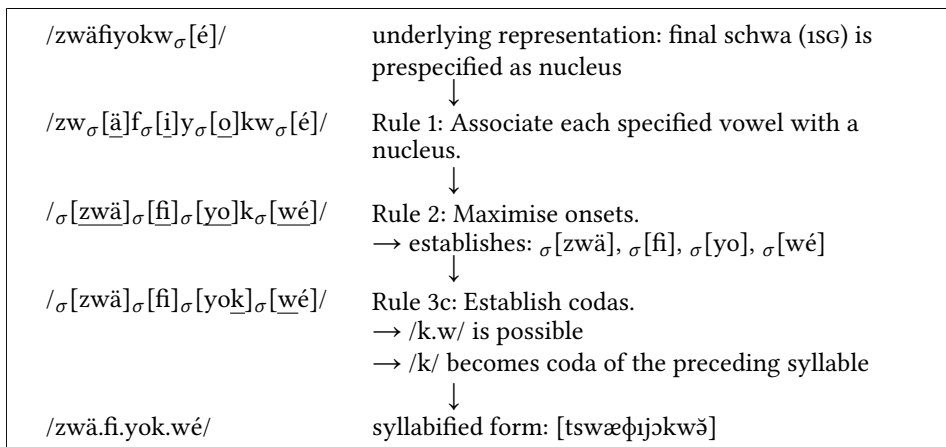
### 2.4.4 Minimal word

We find some constraints on the minimal size of a word in Komnzo. I will describe this here, because the minimal word helps to explain a number of phenomena. It has an impact on allophonic variation of /o/ (see §2.2.1), vowel length in general, and epenthesis.

Compared to polysyllables, monosyllabic roots have a slightly longer vowel if they are closed syllables and a very long vowel if they consist of an open syllable. This is relevant for roots with specified vowels only, not for roots with an epenthetic vowel. Three examples are: *fk* [fə̃k] ‘buttocks’, *fäk* [fæ̃k] ‘jaw’, and *fä* [fæ̃:] ‘there (DIST)’. In

<sup>10</sup>This verb is glossed as: th-r-Ø-thb-th 2|3NSG-IRR-ND-put.inside.RS-2|3NSG It is a rare inflection because three things have to come together: irrealis mood, restricted verb stem, dual number marker (which is a zero-morpheme in this case).



Figure 2.4: Syllabification of *yanthugwr* ‘s/he tricks him here’Figure 2.5: Syllabification of *zwäfiyokwé* ‘I finished sth. for her’

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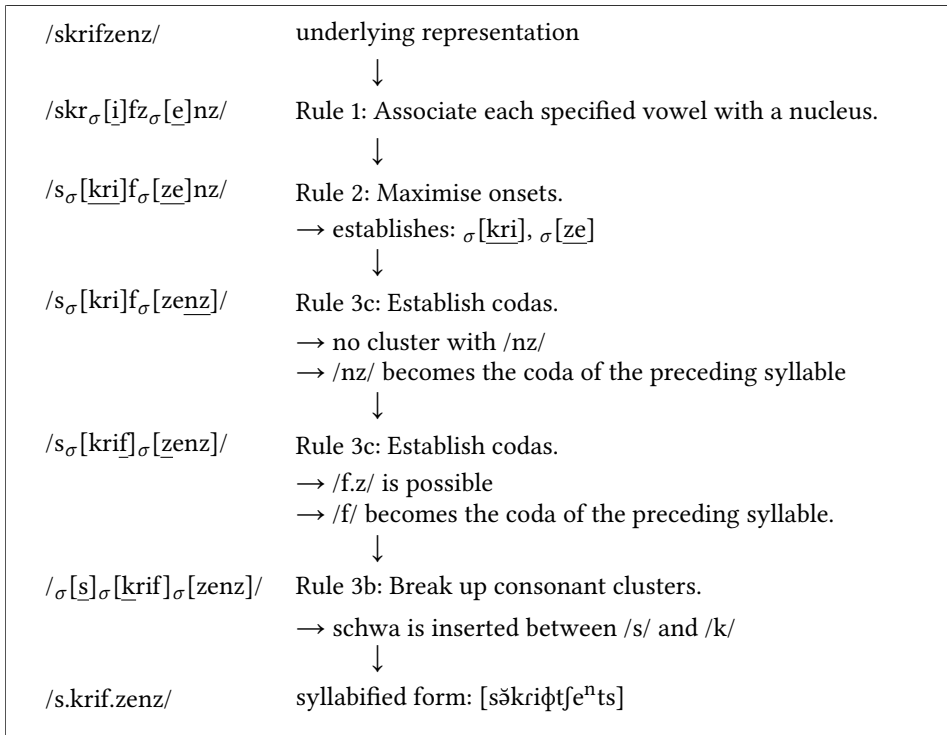


Figure 2.6: Syllabification of *skrifzɛnz* ‘Skri’s wife’

moraic theory, we could rephrase the minimal word constraint as: “Words with specified vowels need to be at least two morae long”.

We saw in §2.2.1 that the phoneme /o/ has two allophones: a short centralised rounded vowel [ɘ] which occurs in closed syllables and a rounded back vowel [ɔ] which occurs in open syllables. I employed this phenomenon above in §2.4.1 to justify the need of syllable weight as a concept. As for the phoneme /o/, in monosyllabic roots the difference between these syllable types is suspended and we do find [ɔ] in closed syllables as in: *gon* [ʰgɔn] ‘hips’ or *rot* [rɔt] ‘fence type’. Thus, the minimal word constraint overrides these allophonic rules. The constraint applies at the root level and not the level of the inflected word. For example, we find [ɔ] instead of [ɘ] in the verb *thorsi* [ðɔrsi] ‘put inside’ because *thorsi* is multimorphemic (*thor-* ‘put inside’ + *-si* NMLZ). With polysyllabic roots, this is not the case and the two variants of /o/ follow the allophonic rule as was laid out in §2.2.1. An example is: *thomonsi* [ðɔmɔnsi], which consists of (*thomon-* ‘pile up firewood’ + *-si* NMLZ).

The minimal word constraint impacts on syllabification because there are two variants for monosyllabic roots of the type CrV(C). These kinds of roots may be realised with a

lengthened vowel in the nucleus. Alternatively an epenthetic vowel may be inserted to break up the onset cluster thus creating a disyllabic form. In this case the specified vowel is of normal length and stress does not shift to the initial epenthetic vowel but remains with the specified vowel. Examples are: *srak* [sɾak] ~ [səɾak] ‘boy’ and *zra* [tsɾa:] ~ [tsəɾa] ‘swamp’.

### 2.4.5 Stress

Stress is a syllable-level phenomenon in Komnzo. A stressed syllable is marked by a clearer pronunciation, higher intensity and sometimes higher pitch. Vowel length is not an acoustic correlate of stress and even the epenthetic vowel (a short schwa) is frequently stressed. That being said, specified vowels usually become more centralised and shortened in word-final position which is always unstressed.

The domain of primary stress (marked by ' in the examples) is the initial syllable of a word. There are a number of exceptions to initial stress which I will describe below. Secondary stress (marked by , in the examples) carries little function in Komnzo and it is often hard to distinguish from unstressed syllables. Secondary stress is absent in bi- and tri-syllabic words. Only few roots have more than three syllables and none have more than four. An example of a four-syllable root is *'nge,mäku* /n.ge.mä.ku/ [nə<sup>ɣ</sup>gemæku] ‘term of address between foster parent and real parent’. It follows, that all words with more than four syllables are polymorphemic. For example, inflected verbs often comprise more than four syllables as in: *'kwamnzok,wrmth* /kwam.nzok.w.r.mth/ [k<sup>w</sup>am<sup>n</sup>dzək<sup>w</sup>ərəm<sup>θ</sup>] ‘They were dancing.’

There are some exceptions to initial stress. For example, in partial reduplication (§4.2) the first syllable is unstressed as in: *r'rokar* /r.ro.kar/ ‘things’. In full reduplication, we find initial stress *'rokar'rokar* as with the corresponding singleton form *'rokar*. A second environment in which the first syllable is unstressed are inflected verbs with a proclitic. An example is the form *bηatrakwr* /b.ηa.trak.wr/ ‘s/he falls there’. The proclitic *b=* (MED) is added on an ‘outer layer’ to the otherwise fully inflected verb. Cases like partial reduplication and verbal proclitics should be seen as exceptions to the rule of initial stress.

Stress is assigned from left to right. Words of up to four syllables construct a disyllabic trochee foot. In Table 2.9 below, I present templatic stress patterns for words between two and four syllables of length.

Words with more than four syllables vary in their assignment of secondary stress. Most five-syllable words assign secondary stress to the third syllable, but some assign it to the fourth. Most six-syllable and seven-syllable words assign secondary stress to the fourth syllable, thus, constructing a tri-syllabic foot, but there are also exceptions. Variation in words with more than four syllables might be explained in terms of open vs. closed syllables, or in terms of specified vs. epenthetic vowel nucleus. The nature of secondary stress in Komnzo remains to be investigated in more detail.

Table 2.9: Stress patterns of words with two to four syllables

syllable structure	example	phonetic	gloss
' $\sigma\sigma$	' <i>nzäthe</i>	[ <sup>n</sup> dʒæðe]	'namesake'
	' <i>ebar</i>	[ʔe <sup>m</sup> bar]	'head'
	' <i>nzrm</i>	[ <sup>n</sup> dʒərəm]	'flower'
' $\sigma\sigma\sigma$	' <i>kafara</i>	[kaβara]	'river pandanus'
	' <i>bägwrm</i>	[bæ <sup>n</sup> g <sup>w</sup> ərəm]	'butterfly'
	' <i>krbu</i>	[kər <sup>m</sup> bu]	'swelling'
' $\sigma\sigma,\sigma\sigma$	' <i>nänzüth, zsi</i>	[næ <sup>n</sup> dʒvθtsəsi]	'cover with soil/mud'
	' <i>kuku fasi</i>	[kukuφasi]	'Grey Shrike-trush'
	' <i>kde, wawa</i>	[kə <sup>n</sup> dewawa]	'firefly'

## 2.5 Morphophonemic Processes

The following section addresses morphophonemic processes which occur through affixation or cliticisation.

### 2.5.1 Vowel harmony after *-wä*

The emphasiser suffix *-wä* attaches to nominals. Affixation of *-wä* causes a change in the quality of the vowel of the preceding syllable regardless whether this syllable is part of the root or another suffix. Depending on the vowel quality its impact can be described as fronting or rounding. Some examples are given in Table 2.10.

The vowel harmony does not affect vowels in a closed syllable: *kafarwä* 'really big' not \**kafärwä* or *dö kerwä* 'really the lizard tail' not \**dö körwä*. The process is blocked by two intervening consonants. Vowel harmony of this type is restricted to morphophonemics because we do find lexemes where the vowels in question occurs in adjacent syllables, as in *namä* 'good' or *dowä* 'Wompoo Fruit Dove'.

### 2.5.2 Dissimilation between prefix and verb stem

We find a number of verb stems in which the vowel quality of the prefix is raised from /ä/ to /e/. This occurs only in inflections which build on the restricted stem, i.e. it is the prefix vowel which encodes the dual versus non-dual contrast. The vowel /ä/ marks usually non-dual, whereas /a/ or zero mark dual number. see §5.3 for stem types and §5.5.3.4 for a description of dual marking. Dissimilation targets the non-dual /ä/ and raises it to /e/. The trigger is the first vowel of the verb stem. Raising takes place when the first vowel is either /a/ or /ä/, for two verb stems it is /ö/. Some examples are: *mar-* 'see', *far-* 'set off', *faf-* 'hold' and *wär-* 'crack, happen', *rä-* 'be, do', *räs-* 'erect', *söbäth-*

Table 2.10: Vowel harmony caused by =wä

process	example	example with =wä
fronting of /o/	<i>karfo</i> ‘to the village’	<i>kar=fö=wä</i> village=ABL=EMPH
	<i>bobo</i> ‘towards there’	<i>bobö=wä</i> MED.ALL=EMPH
raising of /a/	<i>nima</i> ‘this way’	<i>nimä=wä</i> like.this=EMPH
	<i>bafanema</i> ‘because of that one’	<i>baf=ane=mä=wä</i> RECOG=POSS=CHAR=EMPH
rounding of /e/	<i>zafe</i> ‘long ago’	<i>zafö=wä</i> long.ago=EMPH
	<i>etfthme</i> ‘overnight’	<i>etfth=mö=wä</i> sleep=INS=EMPH

‘ascend’ and *sörfäth-* ‘descend’.<sup>11</sup> Thus, for verbs like *marasi* the non-dual of a recent past perfective is not realised as \**zamar* but *zemar* ‘he looked at himself’. Depending on syllabification and intervening prefixes, the trigger vowel in the verb stem and the prefix can be separated by another syllable. In most cases, this is a syllable created by epenthesis. Verb stems like *mräs-* ‘stroll’, *thfär-* ‘jump’ and *thkäf-* ‘start’ have an epenthetic vowel after the first consonant in their nominalisations, for example *mräzsi* /m.rä.z.si/ ‘stroll’. In the inflected verb form, the initial consonant is syllabified as a coda: *zemräs* ‘he strolled around’ (syllabified as /zem.räs/). If the ventive prefix *n-* is added to the inflection, trigger vowel and prefix vowel are separated by another syllable, but this does not affect the raising: *zenmräs* ‘he strolled towards here’ (syllabified as /zen.m.räs/). The raising pattern described here applies to inflections of various TAM categories (irrealis, imperatives, iteratives). They all share the use of the restricted stem and, consequently the fact that the vowel in the prefix encodes duality.

A special case is the copula *rä-*. Although highly irregular in many ways, it follows the dissimilation pattern just described. What is special about the copula is that the past suffix *-a* triggers the same kind of raising in the stem of the copula. Thus, we find *erera* ‘they were’ instead of \**erära*.

Raising of the prefix vowel is a morphophonemic process, not a general phonological process. For example, we do find lexemes where /ä/ and /a/ occur in adjacent syllables

<sup>11</sup>The majority of Komnzo verbs have two verb stems, a restricted and an extended stem (See §5.3). I list the restricted stems here, because the first vowel of the stem is relevant here. Elsewhere in this grammar, I use the extended stem or the nominalisation to refer to verbs. Therefore, I provide the respective extended verb stems here: *mar-* ‘see’, *fark-* ‘set off’, *fä-* ‘hold’, *wä-* ‘crack, happen’, *rä-* ‘be’, *räz-* ‘erect’, *mrä-* ‘stroll’, *thfä-* ‘jump’, *thkäfak-* ‘start’, *sog-* ‘ascend’, *rsör-* ‘descend’.

(*atätö* ‘tree type’ (Pouteria sp), *mätراقي* ‘bring out’); the same goes for /ä/ and /ä/ (*krätär* ‘tree type’ (Oriocalis sp), *thäfäm* ‘ripples’). Moreover, the /ä/ vowel is not raised to /e/ in verb inflections that build on the extended stem. Consider the 2|3NSG *e-* and the 3SG.F *w-* of the alpha prefix series. When the valency changing prefix *a-* is added to the inflection, these two formatives are realised as *ä-* and *wä-* respectively (see §5.5.1.2). However, the /ä/ vowel in these formatives is not raised to *e-* in inflected verb forms, for example *wäfänzr* ‘he shows her’ and not \**wefänzr*. One reason for this might be that raising the vowel to /e/ would neutralise the valency changing prefix *a-*. Another explanation might be that the raising pattern developed together with pre-stem dual marking, which is only found with restricted stem. Restricted stems in turn do not combine with the prefixes of the alpha series (see §5.5.1.2), which explains why these are not affected.

### 2.5.3 Approximant ↔ high vowel

In two different parts of the verbal inflectional paradigm, a change from the approximants to high vowels ([w] → [u] or [ü], and [y] → [i]) and the reverse from [u] to [w] is found.

All of the verbal proclitics consist only of a consonant, e.g. the immediate past *n=* or the three deictic proclitics *z=* PROX, *b=* MED, and *f=* DIST. These are cliticised to otherwise fully inflected verbs. In most cases, this creates an extra syllable word initially as in *bḡatrakwr* /b.ḡa.trak.wr/ ‘s/he falls there’. Some of the verb prefixes in the alpha series begin with an approximant (*wo-* 1SG, *w-* 3SG.F, and *y-* 3SG.MASC). If the clitics are attached to these forms the high approximants are realised as high vowel: *u-* 1SG, *ü-* 3SG.F, and *i-* 3SG.MASC. A few examples are given in (3-5) below.

- (3) *burera*  
 b=wo-rä-ra  
 MED=1SG.α-COP.ND-PST  
 ‘I was there.’
- (4) *zimuthgr*  
 z=y-mi-thgr  
 PROX=3SG.MASC.α-hang-STAT.ND  
 ‘It hangs here.’
- (5) *zürugr*  
 z=w-rugr  
 PROX=3SG.F.α-sleep.ND  
 ‘She sleeps here.’

Another change which involves high vowels and approximants is attested only for [u] ↔ [w]. The formatives of one of the subseries of beta ( $\beta_2$ ) end in a [u] vowel, for example *ku-* 1SG, *su-* 3SG.MASC, *thu-* 2|3NSG. The valency changing prefix *a-* occurs between the beta prefix and the verb stem, for example *ku-a-* ‘for me’, *su-a-* ‘for him’, *thu-a-* ‘for you/them’. In this case, the [u] becomes part of an onset consonant cluster and is realised as a high back approximant [w]. An example is given in (6-7).

- (6) *thufsinzr*  
 thu-fsi-nzr-∅  
 2|3NSG.β2-count.EXT-ND-2|3SG  
 ‘S/he counted them.’
- (7) *thwafsinzr*  
 thu-a-fsi-nzr-∅  
 2|3NSG.β2-vc-count.EXT-ND-2|3SG  
 ‘S/he counted for them.’

## 2.6 Loanwords and loanword phonology

A number of speech sounds are restricted to loanwords. These are the voiced oral stops [b], [d], and [g], the lateral approximant [l] and a few diphthongs. The ‘donor languages’ of almost all loanwords found in Komnzo are either English or Hiri Motu. Only few loanwords come from Bahasa Indonesia, for example the terms for introduced fish species: *ikan lele* ‘*Clarias batrachas*’, *mujair* ‘*Oreochromis mossambicus*’, *gastor* ‘*Channa striata*’. An increasing number of people start to learn the third official language of Papua New Guinea - Tok Pisin - and sometimes expressions like *maski* ‘nevermind’ can be heard amongst younger Komnzo speakers. Otherwise Tok Pisin plays only a minor role in loanwords.

From the degree of indigenisation of loanwords we can distinguish at least two periods: an early phase which lasted until the 1960s and a second phase from that time until today. The boundary between the two periods is rather fuzzy. The first period was characterised by English speaking patrol officers and officials who visited the area for very short periods. The second period began with the opening of a Mission school in Rouku in the mid 1960s. At the beginning, the language of instruction was Hiri Motu. In the 1970s the school was moved to Morehead and since then, the language of instruction is English. We find linguistic evidence for the two periods. Loanwords from the first period have undergone indigenisation in order to adapt to Komnzo phonology. Loans which entered the language during the second period are much closer to the original English or Motu pronunciation. An example is the word *doctor*. While it is pronounced [dokta] nowadays, some older speakers still use a second variant *nzokta* [ʰdzokta] which they report was common in their parent’s and grandparent’s generation.

Words from the first period are: *frayn misin* [φrajən misin] ‘plane, flying machine’, *kas raba* [kas ra<sup>mba</sup>] ‘gas lamp’, *dis* [ʰdi:s] ‘dish, plate’, *damaki* [ʰdamaki] ‘dynamite’. We find regular correspondences of English phonemes mapping onto Komnzo phonology. The bilabial stop [p] becomes a bilabial fricative [φ] in *frayn misin*, but in a cluster with the bilabial nasal [m] in *kas raba* it becomes a prenasalised voiced bilabial stop [ʰmb]. The velar voiced stop [g], also in *kas raba*, comes out as a voiceless velar stop [k]. The lateral approximant [l] in English *flying* becomes an alveolar tap or trill [r ~ r̥] in Komnzo *frayn* and again in *kas raba*. The English diphthong [ai] in ‘dynamite’ is monophthongised in *damaki*. The voiced alveolar stop [d] becomes prenasalised [ʰd] in *damaki* and *dis*. In the

same word, the post-alveolar fricative [ʃ] turns into an alveolar fricative [s]. However, there are too few loans from this early period to make a systematic comparison of all English phonemes in different environments.

The second period which lasts until today is characterised by loan phonemes. Indigenisation is found to a lesser degree. The second period is also characterised by the influx of loans from Hiri Motu. We find loan phonemes in the oral voiced stops [b], [d] and [g] as in: *bara* ‘paddle’, *durua* ‘help’, *dibura* ‘prisoner’, *gunana* ‘place name’<sup>12</sup> from Hiri Motu and *baisikol* ‘bicycle’ from English. Note that the English diphthong [aɪ] is retained and not monophthongised and the lateral approximant [l] also does not change.

There are two correspondences which we find in both periods. The first is between the voiceless bilabial stop [p] in English and the voiceless bilabial fricative [ɸ] in Komnzo. The second correspondence is between the lateral approximant [l] and the alveolar trill/flap [r ~ ɾ]. It seems, in the early period, [l] was changed in all environments, but the second period this only occurs in [pl] clusters in English. Elsewhere, [l] is taken over into Komnzo as a loan phoneme. We have seen some examples from the first period above. Examples from the second period are: *fren* ‘plane’, *fenzil* ‘pencil’, and *sosfen* ‘saucepan’.

## 2.7 Orthography development

There is no writing tradition in Komnzo, but most people can read and write in one of the official languages, namely English and Motu. The mission school, which was based at Rouku during the 1960’s, operated in Motu, but today English is the teaching language at the primary school in Morehead. Thus, reading and writing in Komnzo has not been promoted in the past. As a consequence, literacy in one’s mother tongue is an alien concept for most Komnzo speakers.

The first attempt to develop an orthography for Komnzo was during an alphabet workshop organised by Marco and Alma Bouvé at Morehead Station in 2000. It brought together representatives from a dozen villages. The two representatives from Rouku were Greg Marua and Wendy Yasii. When I began my work in Rouku, this orthography was not used except for a few words that were written on the blackboard in the elementary school. Regrettably, the Rouku elementary school has been disfunctional since 2010. During my fieldwork I have organised two orthography meetings. The outcome of these meetings was the Komnzo Language Council which includes representatives of all clans. The language council has remained an abstract administrative body overseeing my work. In practice, I concentrated most translation and elicitation work on 4-5 interested individuals. Together, we have revised the orthography several times. Table 2.11 and Figure 2.7 show the differences between the orthography from the workshop in 2000 and the current orthography. Changes are shown with an arrow (→).

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<sup>12</sup> *Gunana* means ‘the former (one)’ in Hiri Motu. In Komnzo, it designates a place ‘where old Rouku used to be’ as informants put it. A new hamlet was founded there a few years ago.



Table 2.11: Comparison of orthographies: consonants

	bilabial	dental	alveolar	palato-alveolar	palatal	velar	labio-velar
stop & affricate	b → n/a		t	ts → z		k	n/a → kw
prenasalised stop & affricate	mb → b		nt → d	nj → nz		ŋp → g	n/a → gw
fricative	f	th	s				
nasal	m		n			ng → ŋ	
lateral			r				
semivowel					y		w

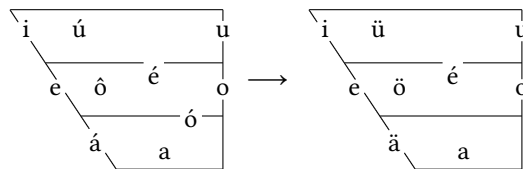


Figure 2.7: Comparison of orthographies: vowels



## 3 Word classes

In this chapter I describe the major and minor word classes of Komnzo. I provide the necessary criteria to determine the word class of a given lexical item based on its morphological possibilities, syntactic distribution and semantic content. This chapter contains detailed information about smaller word classes or subclasses which will not be discussed elsewhere in the grammar. For these I list all known members for quick reference.

The seven word classes are nominals (§3.1), verbs (§3.2), adverbs (§3.3), particles (§3.4), clitics (§3.5), connectives (§3.6), and interjections & ideophones (§3.7). nominals constitute a superclass comprising a variety of subclasses: nouns (§3.1.2), property nouns (§3.1.4), adjectives (§3.1.5), quantifiers & numerals (§3.1.6), locational nominals (§3.1.7), temporal nominals (§3.1.8), personal pronouns (§3.1.9), interrogatives (§3.1.10), indefinites (§3.1.11), and demonstratives (§3.1.12).

I categorise Komnzo word classes along a number of lines. The clearest distinction is between inflecting (nominals and verbs) and uninflecting word classes (all other). The distinction between open and closed word classes is more difficult. Only a few nominal subclasses (nouns, property nouns, numerals) and interjections accept new members in the form of loanwords or neologisms. Although large in terms of members, verbs are not an open word class. Major word classes are nouns, property nouns and verbs, each with more than 300 members in the current dictionary. All other word classes have less than 30 members and are considered minor classes.

### 3.1 Nominals

Nominals are the largest word class in Komnzo, consisting of a number of subclasses. The largest are the open subclasses of nouns (§3.1.2) and property nouns (§3.1.4) which both readily accept borrowings from other languages, particularly English and Motu. Adjectives (§3.1.5) constitute a minor, closed class. The nominal superclass includes a number of other small, closed word classes. These are quantifiers and numerals (§3.1.6), locational (§3.1.7), temporals (§3.1.8), free pronouns (§3.1.9), interrogatives (§3.1.10) and demonstratives (§3.1.12).

The unifying of nominals is their ability to serve as the host of case marking clitics. However, not all nominal subclasses can take the full set of case distinctions. For example, while nouns and free pronouns are prototypical nominals and take all cases, demonstratives, temporals, and locationals are more limited.

### 3.1.1 Criteria for distinguishing between nouns, property nouns and adjectives

Before addressing each subclass in turn, it is necessary to give an overview of the distinction between nouns, property nouns and adjectives. The two main criteria involved are the ability to act as the head of a noun phrase, and the ability to trigger agreement in both gender and number. Further criteria are the ability to enter into a possessive construction, the possibility of taking the adjectivaliser *-thé* and the different functions of the instrumental case *=me*. This section only lists the criteria. Examples are given in the following sections, which address each subclass in turn (§3.1.2-4).

Nouns and property nouns can act as the head of a noun phrase, whereas adjectives cannot. See §7.5 for further discussion of headedness. An adjective may be the only visible element of a noun phrase, but this is possible only if the missing head is established through context. This first criterion groups property nouns with nouns and singles out adjectives.

Agreement in gender and number is only triggered by nouns. Gender in Komnzo is covert (see §3.1.3), and the agreement target for gender is the 3<sup>rd</sup> singular prefix of the verb. Number agreement is marked at various morphological sites on the verb including the undergoer prefix, the actor suffix, and the duality affix (see §5.5.3). Adjectives fail to trigger gender or number agreement. Property nouns also fail to trigger gender agreement, because they are not indexed in the prefix. However, property nouns trigger a default sg number agreement in the suffix, for example in experiencer-object constructions where a property noun can be the stimulus flagged with the ergative case (see §8.3.10). Nouns trigger both gender and number agreement. Hence, the criterion of agreement groups property nouns with adjectives and singles out nouns.

As far as the other criteria are concerned, possessive constructions are only possible with nouns and property nouns and not with adjectives. The adjectivaliser *-thé* is common with particular nouns, optional with property nouns, but ungrammatical with adjectives. The instrumental case marker *=me* serves its prototypical function with nouns, but property nouns and adjectives function as adverbials when marked with the instrumental case. Table 3.1 provides an overview of the criteria.

Table 3.1: Feature matrix for nominals

	nouns	property nouns	adjectives
gender agreement	+	-	-
number agreement	+	- <sup>a</sup>	-
head of NP	+	+	-
possessive construction	+	+	-
adjectivaliser <i>-thé</i>	+	+/-	-
INS case	instrument	adverbial	adverbial

<sup>a</sup> indexed by a default sg in experiencer-object constructions (see §8.3.10)

### 3.1.2 Nouns

Nouns constitute a large, open class of lexical items which readily accepts new members by forming neologisms or adding loanwords from other languages. Nouns are typically referential and denote objects, locations, abstract notions, kinship relations, and proper names.

Semantically nouns can be subdivided into common nouns, kinship nouns, and proper nouns. Common nouns depict the natural world (*no* ‘rain’, *ttfö* ‘creek’, *ymd* ‘bird’) as well as artifacts (*mnz* ‘house’, *nag* ‘grass skirt’, *kufrraru* ‘bamboo flute’) or abstract concepts (*bthan* ‘magic’, *wath* ‘dance (n)’, *dradr* ‘taboo’). Common nouns are syntactically least restricted, i.e. they enter into most constructions and can be marked for all cases compared to the other nominal subclasses. Kinship nouns can intrinsically be specified for gender (*ηafe* ‘father’, *ηame* ‘mother’) or be flexible as to which gender is assigned (*nane* ‘elder sibling’, *ngth* ‘younger sibling’). Many kinship terms are self-reciprocal (*ηäwi* ‘maternal uncle ↔ sister’s child’, *yamit* ‘exchange cousin ↔ exchange cousin’). Kinship nouns frequently enter the close possessive construction (see §4.7.2). Proper nouns consist of personal names and place names. Place names are always feminine and they are often compounds made up of a plant name and the word *zftth* ‘base, stem, reason’ like in the place name *gani zftth* (‘*Endiandra brassii* + base’). Proper nouns are hardly ever modified by demonstratives, quantifiers or adjectives.

Nouns are distinct from other nominals in being the only lexical items which trigger gender agreement. The agreement target is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular prefix of the verb (see §5.5.2). The semantics of the gender system is described in the following section (see §3.1.3). Additionally, nouns trigger number agreement, in this they resemble other nominals subclasses such as pronouns. The agreement target for number depends on the type of argument, but it involves three distinct verbal affix slots (the undergoer prefix, the actor suffix, and the duality marker). The verb morphology will be laid out in chapter 5, but we get a glimpse of the agreement system below in the examples (5-8).

Nominal number marking takes place on the level of the noun phrase, leaving aside the use of numerals. Nominal number marking is underspecified for three reasons. First, only animates are marked for number, especially humans. Example (1) shows the allative case marker on several nominals, and only the animate referents are marked for number. Note that the spatial cases (locative, allative, ablative) have special formatives for animate referents (see §4.8). Secondly, number marking on the noun only occurs when the respective noun phrase is flagged with a case marker. Thus, nouns out of context or noun phrase in the absolutive case, which is zero, have no nominal number marking. Thirdly, nominal number marking is based on a singular versus non-singular distinction.<sup>1</sup> The full three-way distinction between singular, dual and plural is encoded in the verb. It follows that the majority of nouns or noun phrases are underspecified for number, and for core case arguments, number is assigned morpho-syntactically via the agreement system of the verb.

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<sup>1</sup>The associative case is an exception. With animate referents it is used for the inclusory construction (§7.6), and there the values are dual and plural, instead of singular and non-singular.

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- (1) *wati nzedbo zanrifthath mayawanmedbo rouku bänefo ... masufo.*  
 wati nzedbo zan\rifth/ath mayawa=medbo rouku  
 then 1NSG.ALL 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:PFV/send mayawa=ALL.ANIM.NSG rouku  
 bäne=fo (.) masu=fo  
 RECOG=ALL (.) masu=ALL  
 ‘Then they send the word to us ... to the Mayawas in Rouku ... to there ... to Masu.’  
 [tci20120814 ABB #34-35]

Nouns may undergo reduplication which then signals plurality and/or non-prototypicality, as in *yawiyawi* ‘money, coins’ from *yawi* ‘seed’ or *yamyam* ‘marks’ from *yam* ‘footprint’. An example is given below in (2) and (3). Example (2) shows the noun *znsä* ‘work’, while the reduplicant *znsäznsä* was often used for the kind of elicitation, recording and transcription work that I was doing (3).

- (2) *znsä kwabznwrme dagon fawr.*  
 znsä kwa\bz/nwrme dagon faw=r  
 work 1PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/work food payment=PURP  
 ‘We worked for food.’  
 [tci20120924-01 TRK #50]
- (3) *thrma n kwot thräre bänema znsäznsär thwanyan.*  
 thrma n kwot thrä\r/e bäne=ma znsä-znsä=r  
 later 1MN properly 1PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:IRR:PFV/do MED=CHAR REDUP-work=PURP  
 thwan\yan/  
 2|3DU:SBJ:RPST:IPFV:VENT/walk  
 ‘Later, we will get them out properly because you came for work.’  
 [tci20130907-02 JAA #251]

In order to derive adjectives, some nouns take the adjectivaliser suffix *-thé*. We can see this most clearly in the color terms: *kwayanthé* ‘white’ from *kwayan* ‘light’ or *frkthé* ‘red’ from *frk* ‘blood’. The productivity of *-thé* is rather limited and there are a number of lexical items which show frozen morphology. For example, *yfrsé* ‘black’ from *yfr* ‘*Syzygium* sp.’ (used for black paint) shows an irregular variant, *-sé* instead of *-thé*. For *dbömsé* ‘blunt’ there is no corresponding noun without the suffix. The restrictions in terms of productivity can be explained by the presence of a class of property nouns to be discussed below in §3.1.4. There is an alternative strategy for deriving color and shape adjectives. This involves the formation of a compound with the word *woku* ‘skin’ which takes adjectivaliser suffix. The Komnzo equivalent for English ‘green’ is expressed by *wämme taga wokuthé* (Lit. ‘tree leaf skin-like’) or the translation of ‘round’ is *aki wokuthé* (Lit. ‘moon skin-like’). An example of this is given in (4) below, where the speaker characterises a man as looking a bit ‘boyish’.

- (4) *fi sraksrak wokuthé yara.*  
 fi srak-srak woku-thé ya\r/a  
 3.ABS REDUP-boy skin-ADJZR 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be  
 ‘He was a bit boyish.’  
 [tci20131013-02 ABB #211]



### 3 Word classes

Words with fixed gender allow us to set up some general semantic rules. For example, elongated, big objects are usually masculine, while small round objects are feminine. Lexemes related to place and land are usually feminine. Abstract concepts or nominalised verbs are usually feminine. Most fish species are masculine, with the exception of the numerous catfish types, which are all feminine. Other species, like birds, are much more varied. Table 3.2 gives an overview of the semantic characteristics and lists some examples as well as exceptions.

A number of words always occur as in plural, which means that no gender is triggered in the agreement target. Only some of them are mass nouns, like *kithuma* ‘sago pulp’ and *grau* ‘red clouds’. Some are bordering the semantics of mass nouns, for example *ɲarake* ‘fence’ and *nag* ‘grass skirt’. On the other hand, words like *no* ‘water’ are feminine and not plural. Interestingly, body parts like arms and legs are often used in the plural, even though the language has a dual number category.

A few stems differ in their meaning depending on gender. For example, *mni* means ‘fire’ when feminine, but ‘firewood’ when masculine. Other examples are: *ekri* (F) ‘flesh’ vs. *ekri* (MASC) ‘meat’, *no* (F) ‘water’ vs. *no* (MASC) ‘rain’ and *efoth* (F) ‘day’ vs. *efoth* (MASC) ‘sun’.

Words with flexible gender are mostly kinterms, for example sibling terms, which encode relative age difference, but not gender. Thus, the word *nane* can mean ‘older brother’ or ‘older sister’. Many kinterms are reciprocal and may hold between a man and a woman. For example *ɲāwi* is used between a person and her/his mother’s brothers. In other words, a young girl or boy calls her/his mother’s brother *ɲāwi*, but he uses the same term back to her/him. The same is true for a man’s parents in-law. He calls both of them *enat* and they call him the same. Sometimes this can be specified by adding the word for man or woman, for example *enat ɲare* ‘mother in-law’ (Lit. ‘parent-in-law woman’).

Other nouns with flexible gender are animals for which a sex distinction is noticeable, for example *tauri* ‘wallaby’, *ruga* ‘pig’ or *ɲatha* ‘dog’. Yet other species like fish or insects are not flexible. Birds for which there is a visible difference between male and female adults are assigned different lexemes altogether. For example, the male eclectus parrot (*Eclectus roratus*) is referred to as *krara*, and the female as *tiɲa*, but in Komnzo both lexemes are masculine. Mismatches between biological gender and linguistic gender are quite common with birds. Two more examples are *nzöyar*, the fawn-breasted bowerbird (*Chlamydera cerviniventris*) and *ythama*, the raggiana bird of paradise (*Paradisaea raggiana*). For both species, the names seem to refer only to the male birds, which can be explained by the fact that the females are less visible both in their plumage as well as in their behaviour. The Komnzo words, *nzöyar* and *ythama*, are assigned to the feminine category, and they are often talked about as being female birds.

#### 3.1.4 Property nouns

There is a class of lexical items in Komnzo which shares features of both nouns and adjectives. I will refer to them as property nouns because they denote either physical prop-



Table 3.2: The semantics of the gender system

SEMANTICS	gender	examples	exceptions
big, elongated objects	MASC	<i>naifa</i> ‘bushknife’ <i>wämne</i> ‘tree’ <i>nabi</i> ‘bow’ <i>turama</i> ‘python’ <i>with</i> ‘banana’ <i>nasi</i> ‘long yam’	<i>sifren</i> ‘grass knife’ <i>waga</i> ‘leg’
small, round objects	F	<i>yawi</i> ‘seed, fruit’ <i>wawa</i> ‘yam’ <i>yare</i> ‘bag’ <i>brnze</i> ‘lips’ <i>riwariwa</i> ‘ring’ <i>kwanz</i> ‘bald head’	<i>nzagum</i> ‘fly’ <i>tora</i> ‘dog whistle’ <i>tef</i> ‘spot’
plants, trees	MASC	<i>rugaruga</i> ‘tree type’ (Gmelina ledermanii) <i>withwith</i> ‘vine type’ (Pseudouvaria sp) <i>mür</i> ‘grass type’ (Cyprus sp)	<i>ηazi</i> ‘coconut’ <i>gb</i> ‘black palm type’ (Livistona sp)
fish	MASC	<i>find</i> ‘giant glassfish’ (Parambassis gulliveri) <i>kwazür</i> ‘narrow-fronted tandan’ (Neosilurus ater) <i>wifaza</i> ‘seven-spot archerfish’ (Toxotes chatareus)	catfish types <i>katif</i> ‘trout morgunde’ (Mogurnda mogurnda)
catfish	F	<i>zök</i> ‘broad-snouted catfish’ (Potamosilurus latirostris) <i>thrfam</i> ‘daniel’s catfish’ (Cochlefelis danielsi)	<i>ikan lele</i> ‘walking catfish’ (Clarias batrachus)
events	F	<i>zan</i> ‘fighting’ <i>borsi</i> ‘game, laughter’ <i>si zübraksi</i> ‘prayer’	<i>wath</i> ‘dance’
landscape	F	<i>mni</i> ‘fire’ <i>kar</i> ‘place, village’ <i>zra</i> ‘swamp’ <i>daw</i> ‘garden’ <i>ηars</i> ‘river’	

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erties (*fagwa* ‘width’, *dambe* ‘thickness’, *zrin* ‘heaviness’) or abstract mental states (*noku* ‘anger’, *miyo* ‘desire’, *miyatha* ‘knowledge’, *weto* ‘happiness’). A few property nouns are more event-oriented expressing behavioural patterns (*mogu* ‘concentration’, *ofe* ‘absence’, *müsa* ‘restlessness’, *zirkn* ‘persistence’, *waro* ‘theft, deception’). Note that I translate property nouns in the glosses sometimes as abstract nouns (*miyamr* ‘ignorance’, *züb* ‘depth’) and sometimes as adjectives (‘ignorant’ and ‘deep’ respectively). I see no analytic gain in choosing one over the other and applying it consistently to all glosses in this grammar. The term property noun is chosen because most members of this word class express some physical or non-physical property, only a minority of them are event-oriented.

Property nouns can act as the head of a noun phrase and as such they act as the host for all case clitics just like nouns. With respect to the verb indexation, they are syntactically inert in two respects. First, property nouns do not register in the undergoer prefix and consequently do not trigger gender agreement. Consider the two elicited examples in (9). In (9a), the undergoer slot is filled by an invariant middle marker, and only the subject argument is indexed. The middle template has a number of functions described in §5.4.5. One of these functions is the suppressed-object function shown in (9a). The object is not indexed in the undergoer prefix of the verb form. This always occurs with property nouns, which creates an indeterminacy as to the argument status of *twof* ‘heat’ in (9a). Both translations given in (9a) are possible. In the first, the property noun is the object, in the latter it is a nominal predicate. Example (9b) shows that this ambiguity is resolved, if an argument – in this case a 3SG.F – is indexed in the prefix. As mentioned above, the verb prefix does not index property verbs like *twof*. The object argument must be a different noun, for example *bad* ‘ground, earth’, which is put into parentheses. Note that, irrespective of whether or not the object noun phrase is present or omitted from the clause, the third singular feminine indexed in the verb cannot refer to the property noun *tuof*.

- (9) a. *efothf twof ñafiyokwr.*  
 efoth=f twof ñafiyok/wr  
 sun=ERG.SG heat 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/make  
 ‘The sun creates the heat.’ or ‘The sun makes (something) hot.’
- b. *efothf (bad) twof wäfiyokwr.*  
 efoth=f (bad) twof wäfiyok/wr  
 sun=ERG.SG (ground) heat 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/make  
 ‘The sun makes (the ground) hot.’

Note that with intransitive verbs, like the copula, property nouns function as nominal predicates. A clause like (10) can only be interpreted as having an ellipitd subject which is 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular masculine. It cannot be analysed in a way that *frasi* ‘hunger’ is the argument of the copula.

- (10) *frasi yé.*

frasi \yé/  
 hungry 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘He is hungry.’ not: ‘It is hunger.’

Hence, we could say that property nouns escape indexation in the undergoer prefix and as a consequence there is no gender agreement. If informants are asked directly whether a given noun is feminine or masculine, they can answer this promptly, but with property nouns, they hesitate and often answer ‘it depends’. In an example like (10), it depends on the intended meaning: ‘she is hungry’ or ‘he is hungry’. Thus, it depends on the gender of the referent indexed in the copula, it does not depend of the property noun.

Secondly, property nouns indexed in the actor suffix trigger a default singular number agreement. This occurs in experiencer-object constructions (11) or in the middle template (12). In (11), the property noun *thkar* ‘hardness’ is flagged with the ergative case, and it is indexed in the suffix of the verb *fiyoksi* ‘make’. This example is from an myth in which a crocodile creates a large pool of water, because it got stuck, which is translates literally as ‘hardness made it’. In (12), the property noun *twof* ‘heat’ is in the absolutive case, and it is indexed in the suffix of the middle verb *sogsi* ‘ascend’. In both examples, the indexed person/number value is 2|3SG. See §8.3.10 for experiencer-object constructions and §5.4.5 for a description of the middle template.

- (11) *ɲanraknza zbo zf ziyé. zä zf fthé thkarf yaʔiyokwa ziyé.*  
 ɲan\rak/nza                      zbo        zf    z=\yé/                                      zä  
 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/crawl PROX.ALL IMM PROX=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST/be PROX  
 zf fthé thkar=f                      yaʔiyok/wa  
 IMM when hardness=ERG.SG 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:IPFV/make  
 z=\yé/  
 PROX=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘It crawled here to this place. That is when it got stuck right here.’ (Lit. ‘Hardness did it.’)  
 [tci20120922-09 DAK #17-18]

- (12) *nafane twof kresöbäth nzafarfo.*  
 nafane twof kreʔsöbäth/                      nzafar=fo  
 3SG.POSS heat 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/ascend sky=ALL  
 ‘Its heat rose up to the sky.’  
 [tci20110810-01 MAB #45-46]

Example (12) shows that property nouns can enter into a possessive construction. This is another characteristic they share with nouns and which sets them apart from adjectives. In this case, *twof* is the possessed. Although there are no examples attested in the corpus where a property noun is the possessor, this is possible.

In both predicative and attributive constructions, property nouns take the adjectivaliser *-thé* optionally. An attributive construction in English like ‘the embarrassed man’ could be expressed as *fäsi kabe* or *fäsihé kabe*. The former could be translated as a compound ‘shame man’ and the latter ‘embarrassed man’. Hence, when it comes to property nouns no clear distinction can be drawn between attributive constructions and nominal

compounds in a predicative construction. Moreover, a predicative construction like English ‘The man is ashamed’ can also be expressed with or without the adjectivaliser *-thé* as either *kabe fäsi yé* or *kabe fäsithé yé*.

In addition to nominal modification, property nouns can have a predicative function. Property nouns may occur with light verbs (*rä-* ‘do’, *fiyoksi* ‘make’, *ko-* ‘become’) or phasal verbs (*thkäfsi* ‘start’, *bthaksi* ‘finish’). In (13), a malevolent spirit is trying lure a traveller to stay the night at her camp. In the construction, the property noun *garam-garam* ‘sweet talk’ expresses most of the semantics of the event while the phasal verb *thkäfsi* ‘start’ takes the inflection and indexing.

- (13) *garamgaram srethkäf*. “*kwa nābrigwr? efoth byé!*”  
 garamgaram sre\thkäf/ kwa  
 sweet.talk 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/start FUT  
 nā\brig/wr efoth b=yé/  
 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/return sun MED=3SG.MASC:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘She started sweet-talking him: “Will you go back? The sun is already setting!”’  
 [tci20120901-01 MAK #88-89]

Coverb + light verb constructions of this kind have been described for a number of Australian languages. For example, in Jaminjung (Schultze-Berndt 2000) or Bilinarra (Meakins & Nordlinger 2014) we find a division of labour in complex predicates whereby a distinct word class of coverbs contributes most the meaning of an event while a light verb carries most of the inflectional material. In Komnzo, there are a few property nouns which seem to be more event-oriented in their semantics. However, there is insufficient morphological or distributional evidence for setting up a distinct word class of coverbs. In addition to the coverb function in example (13) above, property nouns can be used as secondary predicates. An example is provided in the use of *wri* ‘intoxication’ in (14), where an angry man is tranquilised by giving him Kava to drink.

- (14) *krärme srärirfth. wri kwosi sfthnm*.  
 krär=me srä\rirf/th wri kwosi  
 kava=INS 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/kill intoxicated dead  
 sf\thn/m  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR/lie.down  
 ‘They put him down with Kava. Then, he was lying down dead drunk.’  
 [tci20120909-06 KAB #95-96]

Property nouns marked with the instrumental case have an adverbial function. In example (15), the property noun *ktkt* ‘narrow’ is the single argument of the intransitive verb. In the text, a group of headhunters prepare to attack a hamlet. The sentence is accompanied by a gesture which resembles the movement of the arms as if embracing a person. Here *ktkt* is not functioning as a secondary predicate and it would be wrong to translate this as: ‘They became narrow’. Note that the verb is indexing 2|3SG and not 2|3NSG. Hence, a more literal translation is adequate: ‘Narrowness became/happened’ or a dummy subject ‘It became narrow’. In example (16), the same property noun *ktkt* takes

the instrumental case and functions adverbially. Here the speaker explains how the plant *grnzari* (Chantium Sp) grows.

- (15) *kwot kar fthé wkrkwath wkrkwath wkrkwath a ktkt zākora fof.*  
 kwot kar fthé 3x(w\krk/wath) a ktkt  
 properly village when 3x(2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:IPFV/block) and narrow  
 zä\kor/a fof  
 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/become EMPH  
 ‘They were blocking and blocking the village by narrowing (the circle).’  
 [tci20111119-03 ABB #134]
- (16) *ktktme erfikwr. nima fefe fof yrfikwr.*  
 ktkt=me e\rfik/wr nima fefe fof  
 narrow=INS 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/grow like really EMPH  
 y\rfik/wr  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/grow  
 ‘They grow closely together. This one really grows like that.’  
 [tci20130907-02 RNA #705]

### 3.1.5 Adjectives

Adjectives form a small class of lexical items in Komnzo. Semantically, adjectives denote size (*kafar* ‘big, great’, *katan* ‘small’, *yabun* ‘fat, big’, *tnz* ‘short’, *zanfr* ‘tall’), quality (*namä* ‘good’, *gathagatha* ‘bad’), age (*zafé* ‘old’, *zöftha* ‘new’), physical property (*kwosi* ‘rotten, dead’, *kwik* ‘sick’, *tayo* ‘ripe, dried’, *gauyé* ‘fresh, unripe’) and human propensity (*dmnzü* ‘silent’, *yoganai* ‘tired’, *zäzr* ‘exhausted’). Color adjectives, as we have seen in §3.1.2, are derived from nouns by suffixing *-thé*. There are a few adjectives which show irregular forms of this suffix (*zisé* ‘painful’ from *zi* ‘pain’) and/or which lack a corresponding noun or property noun (*dbömsé* ‘blunt’). Hence, these are treated as adjectives which show frozen morphology. In terms of size, there are about two dozen adjectives in Komnzo. The low number can be explained by the presence of a class of property nouns (see §3.1.4).

There are three adjectives in Komnzo which are special in that they always follow the element which they modify. Two denote human propensity: *bana* ‘poor, pitiful, hapless’ and *kwark* ‘deceased, late’ (18). The third denotes quality: *fefe* ‘true’.

Morphological evidence is provided by the adjectivaliser *-thé*, which cannot be suffixed at an adjective: \**katanthé* ‘small’, \**namäthé* ‘good’ or \**tnzthé* ‘short’. Some nouns, for example *kayanthé* ‘white’ (from *kwayan* ‘light’), and all property nouns can take the adjectivaliser.

Adjectives may serve as the host for all case clitics, if they occur in the rightmost position of the noun phrase. This occurs if (i) the head of noun phrase has been ellipted (17) or (ii) if an adjective follows the head of the noun phrase (18). See §7.5 for further discussion of headedness and ellipsis. Example (19) shows an adjective preceding the head of the noun phrase. We see from these examples, combined with the argument of

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ellipsis, that adjectives cannot function as the head of a phrase. This is supported by the observation that it is the head of a phrase which triggers agreement in the verb prefix and not the adjective.

- (17) *wati, kofä fthé brigsir n krär, katanf kwa ynbrigwr zbo.*  
 wati kofä fthé \brig/-si=r n krär/ katan=f  
 then fish(ABS) when return-NMLZ=PURP IMN 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/do small=ERG.SG  
 kwa yn\brig/wr zbo  
 FUT 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/return PROX.ALL  
 ‘When the fish tries to get out, the small (basket) will bring them back here.’  
 [tci20120906 MAB #56-57]

- (18) *nzwamnzm fof ... oromanä fof ... oroman kwarkä.*  
 nzwa\m/nzrm fof (.) oroman=ä fof (.) oroman  
 1SG:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell EMPH (.) old.man=ASSOC.PL EMPH (.) old.man  
 kwark=ä  
 deceased=ASSOC.PL  
 ‘We just stayed with the old man ... with the late old man.’  
 [tci20130911-03 MBR #72-73]

- (19) *bobomrwä arufe krathfänzr ... zagr karfo.*  
 bobo=mr=wä arufe kra\thfä/nzr (.) zagr kar=fo  
 MED.ALL=PURP=EMPH arufe 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/fly (.) far village=ALL  
 ‘He would fly all the way to Arufe ... to a distant village.’  
 [tci20130903-04 RNA #144-145]

As with property nouns, adjectives with an instrumental case can function adverbially. In (20), the adjective *gathagatha* ‘bad’ modifies the verb. In the example, a mother is scolding her daughter because she walks carelessly through the long grass. In (21) the adjective *kwosi* ‘rotten, dead’ functions predicatively. In this procedural text, the speaker demonstrates how to roll a little whistle from a coconut leaf. However, the first attempt to blow the whistle fails because the coconut leaf was not fresh.

- (20) *kabothma! tayafe gathagathamenzo niyak! kabothma!*  
 kaboth=ma tayafe gathagatha=me=nzo n\yak/ kaboth=ma  
 snake=CHAR tayafe bad=INS=ONLY 2SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/walk snake=CHAR  
 ‘Tayafe, you walk in a bad way! (Watch out) for the snakes!’  
 [tci20130907-02 JAA #143]

- (21) *keke kwot yanor. zane katanme kwosi yé.*  
 keke kwot ya\nor/ zane katan=me kwosi  
 NEG properly 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST/shout DEM:PROX small=INS dead  
 \yé/  
 3SG.MASC:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘It doesn’t whistle properly. This one is a little rotten.’  
 [tci20120914 RNA #55-56]

### 3.1.6 Quantifiers and numerals

The quantifier subclass typically contains lexical items that are “modifiers of nouns that indicate quantity and scope” (Schachter & Shopen 2007: 37). Quantifiers in Komnzo fall into two subclasses: non-numerical quantifiers (§3.1.6.1) and numerical quantifiers (§3.1.6.2), henceforth referred to as quantifiers and numerals respectively.

Both subclasses show similarities to adjectives. What unites them as a distinct subclass is the ability to take the distributive suffix (-*kak*). Quantifiers and numerals are the only roots that take the distributive suffix. Like adjectives, they can be flagged for case and may take the instrumental case (=me) with an adverbial function, for example indicating how many times a particular event occurred.

#### 3.1.6.1 Quantifiers

There are five quantifiers in Komnzo: *matak* ‘nothing’, *frü* ‘alone, single’, *etha* ‘few’, *tüfr* ‘many, plenty’, and *bramöwä* ‘all’.

Quantifiers may precede or follow the noun which they modify. That being said, it is much more common for a quantifier to follow the noun as in (22) and (23). Instances of a preceding quantifier are not attested in the corpus, but only verified through elicitation. (But see (28) below (and footnote 3) for a possible example).

- (22) *kofä bramöwä fthé kränmtherth watik zzarä kwot threnthfär ... nä totkarä.*  
 kofä bramöwä fthé krän\mther/th watik zzar=ä kwot  
 fish all when 2|3PL:SBJ:IRR:PFV:VENT/come.up then net=ASSOC properly  
 thren\thfär/ (.) nä tot=karä  
 2|3PL:SBJ:IRR:PFV:VENT/jump (.) other spear=PROP  
 ‘When all the fish come up, then they jump in with the nets ... others with  
 spears.’ [tci20110813-09 DAK #28]
- (23) *sitauane ηare mane erna minu erna ... nge matak.*  
 sitau=ane ηare mane e\r/na minu  
 sitau=POSS.SG woman which 2|3DU:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be barren.woman  
 e\rn/a (.) nge matak  
 2|3DU:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be (.) child nothing  
 ‘As for Sitau’s two wives, they were barren women without children.’  
 [tci20120814 ABB #469]

Quantifiers may take the distributive suffix (-*kak*) which can be translated as ‘each’ to English. For semantic reasons, neither *matak* ‘nothing’ nor *bramöwä* ‘all’ take this suffix. Two examples of the distributive suffix are given below in (24) and (25). In the first example, the how they harvested ‘each yam’. In the second example, the speaker emphasises that she caught plenty of different food: a lizard, several fish and a turtle.

- (24) *we kwot we näbikakme ... we nä wawa thfrärmth katan o kafar.*  
 we kwot we näbi-kak=me (.) we nä wawa  
 also properly also one-DISTR=INS (.) also INDF yam

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thfvrä/rmth katan o kafar  
 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/do small or big  
 ‘Again, they took them out (of the garden plot) one by one ... small or big ones.’  
 [tci20131013-01 ABB #364]

(25) *watik, faso tüfrkak erä.*  
 watik, faso tüfr-kak e\rä/  
 then, meat plenty-DISTR 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘Okay, there is plenty of different meat.’  
 [tci20120821-01 LNA #68]

Quantifiers may take an instrumental case (=me) in order to derive adverbs as is shown in example (26).

(26) *kabe ane frümenzo tnägsi zethkäfath.*  
 kabe ane frü=me=nzo tnäg-si ze\thkäf/ath  
 man DEM single=INS=ONLY lose-NMLZ 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV/start  
 ‘The people began to scatter.’ (Lit. ‘They began losing themselves alone’)  
 [tci20131013-01 ABB #54]

The distributive and the instrumental may also be suffixed to the same quantifier. In this case, their order is fixed: the instrumental follows the distributive as shown in example (27). The example also shows that, like other nominals, quantifiers can be reduplicated to indicate plurality. Here, the speaker talks about types of bows and how different men use these according to their abilities and preferences.

(27) *zawe ffrükakmenzo erä.*  
 zawe f-frü-kak=me-nzo e\rä/  
 preference REDUP-single-DISTR=INS=ONLY 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘They each have their preferences.’  
 [tci20120922-23 MAA #104]

Example (28) shows *etha* meaning ‘few’. Note that the word *etha* can also mean ‘three’, which I describe in §3.1.6.2.

(28) *tüfrmär kafarkafar nrä ... komnzo ethanzo.*  
 tüfr=mär kafar-kafar n\rä/ (.) komnzo etha=nzo  
 plenty=PRIV REDUP-big 1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) only few=ONLY  
 ‘We are not many old people ... just a few.’  
 [tci20121019-04 ABB #187-188]

Note in passing that in (28)<sup>3</sup> the quantifier *tüfr* ‘plenty’ is negated by using the privative case =*mär*. This is also possible with *etha*.

The two quantifiers *matak* ‘nothing’ and *bramöwä* ‘all’ deviate in their behaviour from other quantifiers. As mentioned above, they do not take the distributive suffix. Furthermore, they do not take the instrumental case =*me*. At least for *bramöwä* there might be

<sup>3</sup>In example (28) we can see that *tüfr* ‘plenty’ precedes the reduplicated adjective *kafarkafar* ‘big’. The example is interpreted to have an elided noun *kabe* ‘man’ as its head, thus *kafarkafar* means ‘the big ones’. This, then constitutes a corpus example of a quantifier preceding its head.



an explanation as to why this is the case. The emphatic marker =wä forces the preceding morpheme to harmonise its vowel. If the preceding morpheme is the instrumental marker, it will change from =me to =mö. It follows that, historically, *bramöwä* could be *bra=me=wä*. Since there is no corresponding lexical item *bra*, we are left to speculate, and accept it as a case of frozen morphology.

### 3.1.6.2 Numerals

The numerals of the Yam languages have received some attention in the literature because of their unique senary (base-6) system (cf. Donohue 2008, Hammarström 2009, and Evans 2009). In fact, Komnzo has two numeral systems: the senary system is unrestricted, but there is a second system with an upper limit of counting of four or five. This is similar to Donohue's description of Kanum, where an unrestricted system co-exists with a restricted system (Donohue 2008). Nowadays, one should include English numerals which constitute a third system commonly used in Komnzo. For the remaining description, I will concentrate on the senary system and the restricted system only.

The senary system is predominantly employed in ritualised counting as described in §1.3.3.1. The number of yams counted during a feast quickly runs up to several thousands, for large feasts even tens of thousands. On the other hand, everyday counting hardly ever goes above four or five, and English numerals are borrowed in situations where approximation of larger numbers is insufficient, for example when trading goods, charging one's mobile phone credit, or counting the eleven members of a soccer team. Hence, we find a double numeral system in Table 3.3 below. One set of numerals is commonly used, but it is restricted to low numbers. A second set is employed only in ritualised counting, but it is unrestricted.

Table 3.3: The numeral system

VALUE		restricted	ritualised
1		<i>näbi</i>	<i>näbi</i>
2		<i>eda</i>	<i>yda</i>
3		<i>etha</i>	<i>ytho</i>
4		<i>asar</i>	<i>asar</i>
5		( <i>tabuthui, tabru</i> )	<i>tabuthui</i>
6	6 <sup>1</sup>	( <i>tabuthui nibo, nibo</i> ) <sup>4</sup>	<i>nibo</i>
36	6 <sup>2</sup>		<i>fta</i>
216	6 <sup>3</sup>		<i>taruba</i>
1,296	6 <sup>4</sup>		<i>damno</i>
7,776	6 <sup>5</sup>		<i>wärämākä</i>
46,656	6 <sup>6</sup>		<i>wi</i>

<sup>4</sup>The term for five shows two variants. The term for six also shows two variants one of which is a combination

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Beyond the observation of practices, evidence for this double system comes from the lexical items themselves. In everyday counting, the words for ‘two’ and ‘three’ are *eda* and *etha*. In ritualised counting, the words are *yda* and *ytho* respectively. The latter pair reflects older forms which have not undergone the loss of word-initial *y*. The sound change *jə > e /#*. is attested in many pairs of lexical items between Komnzo and the neighboring Tonda varieties, e.g.: Wära *ymoth* ‘girl’ corresponds to Komnzo *emoth*. Another piece of evidence comes from the fact that the numeral *etha* ‘three’ can also mean ‘a few’ (cf. example (28) above). I take this as evidence for the fuzzy upper limit of the restricted set.

Large quantities can be constructed in the following way: a quantity of 72 is expressed as *eda fta* ‘2 36’ (or ‘2 6<sup>2</sup>’). A quantity of 73 would simply add *a näbi* ‘and one’ to the expression: *eda fta a näbi* ‘2 36 and 1’. Thus, the fact that *eda* precedes *fta* means ‘2 times 36’, whereas the fact that *a näbi* follows *fta* means ‘36 plus 1’. This has the effect that values which are relatively simple in a decimal system result in a long string in Komnzo, for example English ‘fifty’ corresponds to Komnzo *näbi fta a eda nibo a eda* (Lit. ‘1 times 36 and 2 times 6 and 2’). A senary system differs from a decimal system only in the location of simple and complex points in the number space, but not in its overall complexity. Consequently, there are values which require a very long string in English, but have a short expression in Komnzo, for example ‘forty-six thousand and six hundred and fifty-six’ corresponds to *wi* in Komnzo.

Numerals can take the same morphology as quantifiers (see §3.1.6.1). There are no corpus examples of a numeral taking either the distributive suffix or the instrumental case clitic, but example (29) illustrates the use of both. I was taught the phrase *näbikakme kätznob!* ‘drink it one by one!’ before I administered pain relief tablets to my friends and informants. I was corrected whenever I falsely used only the instrumental *näbime kätznob*, which means ‘drink it in one go!’ (Lit. ‘with one’).

- (29) *nä kabe näbikakmenzo ... finzo miyatha thfrärm fof.*  
*nä kabe näbi-kak=me=nzo (.) fi=nzo miyatha thfrärm*  
 some men one-DISTR=INS=ONLY (.) 3.ABS=ONLY knowledge 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/be  
 fof  
 EMPH  
 ‘Some people (one-by-one) ... only they held that knowledge.’

[tci20120909-06 KAB #13]

Ordinal numerals can be derived from cardinal numerals by attaching the characteristic case marker *=ma*. This is shown in examples (30) and (31).

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of *tabuthui* ‘five’ and *nibo* ‘six’. Outside of ritualised yam counting, I have overheard this only a few times by younger speakers. Older speakers did not produce a term for six or were reluctant to do so. The combination *tabuthui nibo* might be explained by the way how ritualised counting works: While two men move a set of six yams, one of them will shout out the numbers. He continues to shout the current number as long as it takes to move to the next one (e.g.: ‘two two two three’). This means that each cycle of six ends with *tabuthui nibo* ‘five six’. It seems that some speakers have taken this collocation and reinterpreted it to mean ‘six’. I take this as being indicative for the fuzzy upper limit of the restricted set.

- (30) *fi sraksrak wokuthé yara ethama mane yara.*  
 fi srak-srak woku-thé ya\ɾ/a etha=ma mane  
 3.ABS REDUP-boy skin-ADJZR 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be three=CHAR who(ABS)  
 ya\ɾ/a  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be  
 ‘As for the third one, he looked a bit boyish.’ [tci20131013-02 ABB #211]
- (31) *ethama bāne mane zrarä fof... wfathwr ane fof.*  
 etha=ma bāne mane zra\ɾä/ fof (.)  
 three=CHAR RECOG.ABS who(ABS) 3SG.F:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/be EMPH (.)  
 w\faθ/wr ane fof  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SGF:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/hold DEM EMPH  
 ‘At the third attempt she will really hold her up.’ [tci20110817-02 ABB #106-107]

The numeral *nābi* ‘one’ can be used in the sense of ‘one way’ or ‘for good’. Such an example is given in (32) below.

- (32) *wati, fi nābi zābrima. zbo yamnɾ ane woga oten.*  
 wati fi nābi zā\brim/a zbo ya\m/nɾ  
 then 3.ABS one SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/return PROX.ALL 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/dwell  
 ane woga ote=n  
 DEM man ote=LOC  
 ‘Then he returned for good. This man now lives here in Ote.’  
 [tci20120901-01 MAK #210-211]

### 3.1.7 Locationals

Komnzo has a small closed class of lexical items which I call locationals. Historically, some members of this subclass are derived from nouns. Locationals may act as hosts case clitics, but for spatial cases only (locative, allative, and ablative). Table (3.4) lists all nine members.

Locationals occur always as modifiers which follow the head of the noun phrase. A typical example is provided in (33) with *banban* ‘underneath’. The speaker describes how people reacted when the Imperial Japanese Air Service flew attacks on Merauke in Dutch New Guinea during WWII.

- (33) *fi fthé fof duga taga banbanen boba kwatharwrmth fof.*  
 fi fthé fof duga taga banban=en boba  
 3SG.ABS when EMPH taro leaf underneath=LOC MED.ABL  
 kwa\θar/wrmth fof  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/go.underneath EMPH  
 ‘That was really when they went underneath the taro leaves.’  
 [tci20131013-02 ABB #231-232]

Table 3.4: Locationals

FORM	gloss	historical derivation
<i>warfo</i>	above	<i>war</i> ‘top layer’ = <i>fo</i> (ALL)
<i>banban</i>	underneath	-
<i>zftthen</i>	below	<i>zftth</i> ‘base’ = <i>en</i> (LOC)
<i>mrmr</i>	inside	-
<i>zrfa</i>	in front	<i>zr</i> ‘tooth’ = <i>fa</i> (ABL)
<i>tharthar</i>	next to	-
<i>kamfa</i>	behind	<i>kam</i> ‘bone, backbone’ = <i>fa</i> (ABL)
<i>bobathm</i>	at the end of	-
<i>kratr</i>	in between	-

I analyse these as locational nominals rather than postpositions, because like all nominals, they are marked for case. Additionally, as we can see in the third column of Table 3.1.7, some of the locational nominals are historically derived from nouns. For these, I propose a path of development from a nominal compound to a lexical item of a different nominal subclass. As an example, let us hypothesise about the origin of *warfo* ‘above’. In a first stage, there would have been a nominal compound *mnz war* ‘house top’ made up of two nouns *mnz* ‘house’ and *war* ‘top’. Nominal compounds are described in (§7.5.3). This compound can be marked with the allative case productively, thus, producing *mnz warfo* ‘to the top of the house’. In a second stage, *warfo* became a single lexical item ‘above’ and lost the specific allative semantics. As a consequence, it can now be marked for spatial cases, for example the locative case (-*n*), producing *mnz warfon* ‘on top of the house’. This is commonly found in Komnzo, although presently there is no example in the corpus. Lexicalisation of this kind has progressed to varying degrees with the four locationals where a nominal derivation is a possible scenario. While *warfo*, *kamfa* and *zrfa* are commonly marked with the locative case clitic, this does not occur with *zftthen*. Hence, *zftthen* is at a transitional stage between a noun with productive morphology (the locative case =*en*) and a locational. The choice depends on whether one analyses *zftth* in expressions like *mnz zftth* ‘house base’ as part of a noun+noun compound or as a noun+locational construction.

Two characteristics unite locationals as a word class. Locationals always follow the head of the noun phrase, and they take only spatial cases. As we will see in §4.8, spatial cases can be extended to cover temporal semantics as in (34) below.

- (34) *zēna kwa ŋatrikwé fof ... nimame zrethkäfē zane ezi mrmren.*  
*zēna kwa ŋa\trik/wé fof (.) nima=me zre\thkäf/é*  
 today FUT 1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/tell EMPH (.) like.this=INS 1SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/start  
*zane ezi mrmr=en*  
 DEM:PROX morning inside=LOC  
 ‘Today, I will tell (a story) ... I will start like this in this morning.’

### 3.1.8 Temporals

Temporals are a functional class with members from different nominal subclasses which encode temporal semantics. Beyond the shared reference to time, temporals are united by their ability to act as hosts for a special set of temporal case clitics. Temporals are flexible with respect to their position in the clause, but they occur most commonly in initial position.

Temporals comprise lexical items cross-cutting three word classes. First, there are nouns denoting different times of the day (*ezi* ‘morning’, *efoth* ‘day’, *zizi* ‘afternoon, dusk’, *zbär* ‘night’). Secondly, there is a group of time adverbials (*zena* ‘now, today’, *kayé* ‘yesterday, tomorrow’, *nama* ‘two days ago, two days in the future’, *nümä* ‘a week ago, a week ahead’). Except for *zena*, these are bidirectional in their semantics. Thus, *kayé* could be glossed as ‘± 1 day’, *nama* as ‘± 2 days’ and *nümä* as ‘± a few days’. As for the latter two, the edges of the time interval are less clearly demarcated. Note that bidirectionals are found in other Papuan languages, for example in Usan (Reesink 1987: 70). Thirdly, there are three adjectives *zöftha* ‘before, first’, *zafe* ‘old, long time ago’, and *thrma* ‘later, after’, all unidirectional in their semantics.

The uniting characteristic of this class is its ability to inflect for temporal case. There are three temporal cases in Komnzo: the temporal locative (= *thamen*) ‘at that time’, the temporal possessive (= *thamane*) ‘that time’s’ and the temporal purposive (= *thamar*) ‘for that time’. Temporal cases are discussed in §4.9. In the following examples, the temporal purposive case is used on the noun *ezi* (35), on the time adverbial *nama* and the English loanword ‘Friday’ (36) and on the temporal adjective *thrma* (37). In (35) they speaker tells his friends to leave the work on a sago palm for the next day. In (36), the speaker begins his description of a namesake ceremony which is about to be held two days later. Finally, in (37), two speakers go through a set of stimulus pictures and try to sort them into a narrative.

- (35) *nze thäkora “fefe yé ezithamar. ezi n kwot sräfrmnze.”*  
 nze thä\kor/a fefe \yé/  
 1SG.ERG 1SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:PFV/speak really 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV.be  
 ezi=thamar ezi n kwot  
 morning=TEMP.PURP morning try properly  
 srä\frm/nze  
 1PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:IPFV/prepare  
 ‘I told them: “It is there for the morning. We will try and prepare it in the morning.”’  
 [tci20120929 SIK #65]
- (36) *fam monme erä ... namathamar fraidethamar ... nge fathasi yamyam monme kwa ñankwir.*  
 fam mon=me e\rä/ (.) nama=thamar  
 thought how=INS 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) +|-2days=TEMP.PURP

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fraide=thamar (.) nge fath-si yam-yam mon=me kwa  
 friday=TEMP.PURP (.) child hold-NMLZ REDUP-event how=INS FUT  
 ŋan\kwir/  
 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/run  
 ‘(My) thoughts for the day after tomorrow, for Friday, are like this. This how the  
 children’s ceremony will takes place.’ [tci20110817-02 ABB #3-5]

- (37) *zane mane rä thrmathamar zane rä.*  
 zane mane \rä/ thrma=thamar zane  
 DEM:PROX which 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be later=TEMP.PURP DEM:PROX  
 \rä/  
 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘As for this one, this is for later.’ [tci20111004 RMA #236-237]

Temporals can also take spatial cases as in (38) with the temporal noun *ezi* ‘morning’ and in (39) with the time adverbial *zena* ‘now’. The three adjectives of this subclass may also take spatial cases when they are in the final position of a noun phrase as in (40). In all of these cases, what is otherwise spatial marking is extended to express temporal semantics.

- (38) *frasinzo nzwamnzrm ezifa bobomr mor efoth.*  
 frasi=nzo nzwa\m/nzrm ezi=fa bobomr mor efoth  
 hunger=ONLY 1PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell morning=ABL until neck day  
 ‘We were staying very hungry from the morning until mid day.’  
 [tci20120924-01 TRK #37]

- (39) *wati, zenafa ... ni tüfr nagayé kwakonzre.*  
 wati zena=fa (.) ni tüfr nagayé kwa\ko/nzre  
 then today=ABL (.) INSG plenty children 1PL:SBJ:RPST:IPFV/become  
 ‘Nowadays, we, the children, have become plenty.’ (Lit. ‘From now on...’)  
 [tci20111107-01 MAK #149-150]

- (40) *twofthé fthé krafiyokwr. ane thrmafa zrānthore.*  
 twof-thé fthé kra\fiyok/wr ane thrma=fa  
 heat-ADJZR when 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/make DEM after=ABL  
 zrān\thor/e  
 1PL:SBJ>3SG:F:IRR:PFV:VENT/carry  
 ‘It has dried then. After that we bring it (the drum) here.’  
 [tci20120824 KAA #78-79]

Temporal nouns may also enter into a noun+locational construction (41) again with temporal interpretation of the locational.

- (41) *zane namä ezi mrmren nzä kwa trikasi ŋatrikwé.*  
 zane namä ezi mrmr=en nzä kwa trik-si ŋa\trik/wé  
 DEM:PROX good morning inside=LOC 1SG.ABS FUT tell-NMLZ 1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/tell  
 ‘In this beautiful morning, I will tell a story.’ [tci20111119-01 ABB #2-3]

### 3.1.9 Personal pronouns

Personal pronouns form a closed subclass of nominals distinguishing three persons in both singular and non-singular number. Personal pronouns have distinct forms for case (absolutive, ergative, dative, possessive, associative, characteristic, locative, allative, ab-lative, and purposive), although some cases are not found in the pronouns (proprietary, privative, instrumental, and similitive). The full list is given below in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5: Personal pronouns

CASE	1SG	1NSG	2SG	2NSG	3SG	3NSG
ABS	<i>nzä</i>	<i>ni</i>	<i>bä</i>		<i>fi</i>	
ERG	<i>nze</i>		<i>be</i>	<i>bné</i>	<i>naf</i>	<i>nafa</i>
DAT	<i>nzun</i>	<i>nzenm</i>	<i>bun</i>	<i>benm</i>	<i>nafan</i>	<i>nafanm</i>
POSS	<i>nzone</i>	<i>nzenme</i>	<i>bone</i>	<i>benme</i>	<i>nafane</i>	<i>nafanme</i>
ASSOC <sup>a</sup>	<i>ninrr</i>	<i>ninä</i>	<i>bnrr</i>	<i>bnä</i>	<i>nafrr</i>	<i>nafä</i>
CHAR	<i>nzonema</i>	<i>nzenmema</i>	<i>bonema</i>	<i>benmema</i>	<i>nafanema</i>	<i>nafanmema</i>
LOC	<i>nzudben</i>	<i>nzedben</i>	<i>budben</i>	<i>bedben</i>	<i>nafadben</i>	<i>nafanmedben</i>
ALL	<i>nzudbo</i>	<i>nzedbo</i>	<i>budbo</i>	<i>bedbo</i>	<i>nafadbo</i>	<i>nafanmedbo</i>
ABL	<i>nzudba</i>	<i>nzedba</i>	<i>budba</i>	<i>bedba</i>	<i>nafadba</i>	<i>nafanmedba</i>
PURP	<i>nzunar</i>	<i>nzenar</i>	<i>bunar</i>	<i>benar</i>	<i>nafanar</i>	

<sup>a</sup> The associative forms encode DU versus PL (§7.6).

We can see from Table 3.5 that, as with the case markers, there is no number distinction in the absolutive. Only the first person is an exception here. On the other hand, in the first person non-singular, the absolutive and ergative categories are neutralised. Furthermore, Table 3.5 shows that the characteristic pronouns are built from the possessive forms by suffixing *-ma*. The three local cases and the purposive pronouns share formal similarity with the dative pronouns, namely the [u] vowel in the singular forms. Personal pronouns typically constitute a complete noun phrase (§7.1). Unlike nouns, personal pronouns cannot be modified by demonstratives or quantifiers.

### 3.1.10 Interrogatives

Cross-cutting the division of nominals is the subclass of interrogatives. These are roots used to indicate that the speaker does not know the (full) identity of a referent. Interrogatives belong to the following nominal subclasses: pronouns (*ra* ‘what’, *mä* ‘where’, *mane* ‘who, which’, *rma* ‘why, for what’), quantifiers (*rmzam* ‘how many’), temporals (*rthé* ‘when’) or sentence interrogatives (*mon* ‘how’). The degree to which these can be marked for case varies. Interrogatives may constitute a full noun phrase (42) or fill the determiner slot (43) of a noun phrase. In the following examples NPs are enclosed by [].

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- (42) *ɲafyf ra kwa nm enzänzr?*  
 ɲafe=f [ra] kwa nm en\zä/nzr  
 father=ERG.SG what FUT maybe 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/carry  
 ‘What might the father be carrying?’ [tci20111004 RMA #79]
- (43) *eh, ra gru zane ɲamitwanzr nabi tutin?*  
 eh [ra gru zane] ɲa\mitwa/nzr nabi tuti=n  
 eh what shooting.star DEM.PROX 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/swing bamboo branch=LOC  
 ‘Hey, what shooting star is swinging here on the bamboo branch?’  
 [tci20111119-03 ABB #127]

The roots which are syntactically most active are the interrogative pronouns *ra* ‘what’ and *mane* ‘who, which’. Both can host almost all case clitics as we can see in Table 3.6.<sup>5</sup>

Table 3.6: Interrogative pronouns

case	inanimate	animate SG	animate NSG
ABS	<i>ra</i> what		<i>mane</i> who, which
ERG	<i>raf</i> what	<i>maf</i> who, which	<i>mafa</i> who (DU or PL)
DAT	<i>rafn</i> to what	<i>mafñ</i> to whom	<i>mafñm</i> to whom (DU or PL)
PURP	<i>rar</i> for what	<i>mafana</i> for who	<i>mafana</i> for who (DU or PL)
INS	<i>rame</i> with what	-	-
POSS	-	<i>mafane</i> whose	<i>mafane</i> whose (DU or PL)
CHAR	<i>rma</i> for what, why	<i>mafane</i> because of who	<i>mafane</i> because of who (DU or PL)
ASSOC <sup>a</sup>	-	<i>mafñ</i> with who	<i>mafñ</i> with who
LOC	<i>rafen</i> at, in what	<i>mafadben</i> at who	<i>mafadben</i> at who (DU or PL)
ALL	<i>rafo</i> to what	<i>mafadbo</i> to who	<i>mafadbo</i> to who (DU or PL)
ABL	<i>rafa</i> from what	<i>mafadba</i> from who	<i>mafadba</i> from who (DU or PL)

<sup>a</sup> The associative forms encode DU versus PL (§7.6).

<sup>5</sup> Some cases are impossible on semantic grounds, for example the instrumental case with animate referents, or a associative case with inanimate referents.





### 3 Word classes

rnzam=é                      thzé kre\kar/th                      (.) asar kabe o tabuthui kabe (.)  
 how.many=ERG.NSG ever 2|3PL:SBJ:IRR:PFV/pull (.) four man or five man (.)  
 neba thra\kogr/                      kre\kar/th                      bāne (.) tauri woku  
 opposite 2|3PL:SBJ:IRR:STAT/stand 2|3PL:SBJ:IRR:PFV/pull RECOG (.) wallaby skin  
 ‘However many will pull ... four or five people? They will stand opposite and pull  
 that one ... the wallaby skin.’ [tci20120824 KAA #89-92]

#### 3.1.11 Indefinites

The indefinite determiner in Komnzo is *nä*, and it covers the meaning of ‘some, other, another’. I show below that *nä* behaves morpho-syntactically like a demonstrative. Note that the numeral *nābi* ‘one’ is etymologically related to the indefinite. Historically, this analysis is supported by other Yam languages, for example Nen where *āmb* means ‘some’ and *āmb*s means ‘one’ (Evans 2017). In Komnzo, *nä* is used to form the indefinite pronoun *nä bun* ‘someone, some other’. In example (47), there are two occurrences of *nä bun* in dative case and in characteristic case.

- (47) *fi nā bunn saro! nā bunanema be zawob!*  
 fi nā.bun=n                      saʀ/o  
 but someone=DAT.SG 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:IMP:PFV:AND/give  
 nā.bun=ane=ma                      be                      za\wob/  
 someone=POSS.SG=CHAR 2SG.ERG 2|3SG:SBJ:IMP:PFV/eat  
 ‘But you give it (the yam) to someone else! You eat from someone else’s!’  
 [tci20120805-01 ABB #763-764]

Historically, *nä bun* seems to derive from a combination of *nä* plus the second person singular dative pronoun *bun* (see Table 3.5), but it is unclear how this has happened. Synchronically, speakers no longer parse the two components as separate items.<sup>6</sup> This is reflected in its grammatical behaviour: *nä bun* can be marked for the same range of cases as personal pronouns, and like personal pronouns it may constitute a complete noun phrase. Table 3.7 below lists all the case forms of *nä bun*.

Like the demonstratives (§3.1.12), the indefinite *nä* can stand alone and take a subset of case clitics. These are the instrumental (*nāme* ‘with some other’), characteristic (*nāma* ‘because of some other’), purposive (*nāmr* ‘for some other’), proprietive (*nākarā* ‘with some other’). More commonly *nä* functions as an indefinite determiner as in: *nä kar* ‘some, other place’ → ‘somewhere’ or *nä rokar* ‘some, other stuff’ → ‘something’ or *nä kayé* ‘some yesterday|tomorrow’ → ‘sometime’. This can be extended to *nä kabe* ‘some, another man’ → ‘someone’. Two examples of this are given below in (48) and (49).

- (48) *wati ane nā kayé thrākorth “ft kabe.”*  
 wati ane nā kayé                      thrä\kor/th                      ft kabe  
 well DEM INDF yesterday 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:IRR:PFV/say ft people  
 ‘Sometimes, they call those ones “ft people”.’ [tci20120814 ABB #322]

<sup>6</sup>Hence, it might also be written as one word, *nābun* instead of *nä bun*.

Table 3.7: The indefinite pronoun

case	SG	NSG
ABS	<i>nä bun</i>	
ERG	<i>nä bunf</i>	<i>nä buné</i>
DAT	<i>nä bunn</i>	<i>nä bunnm</i>
POSS	<i>nä bunane</i>	<i>nä bunaneme</i>
ASSOC <sup>a</sup>	<i>nä bunrr</i>	<i>nä bunä</i>
CHAR	<i>nä bunanema</i>	<i>nä bunanemema</i>
LOC	<i>nä bundben</i>	<i>nä bunmedben</i>
ALL	<i>nä bundbo</i>	<i>nä bunmedbo</i>
ABL	<i>nä bundba</i>	<i>nä bunmedba</i>
PURP	<i>nä bunar</i>	<i>nä bunmenar</i>

<sup>a</sup> The associative forms encode DU versus PL (§7.6).

- (49) *masu mane rera **nä far** fä yrästhgra.*  
 masu mane \rä/ra                      nä far fä  
 masu which 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be INDF post DIST  
 y\räs/thgra  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:STAT/be.erected  
 ‘As for Masu, there was another post planted over there.’

[tci20120805-01 ABB #472]

Negative indefinites are expressed by adding the negator *keke* as in example (50). Thus, *nä zokwasi* means ‘some words’, but if negated by *keke* it expresses ‘no words whatsoever’.

- (50) *zokwasimär ηafiyokwa ... **keke nä zokwasi.***  
 zokwasi=mär ηa\fiyok/wa                      (.) keke nä zokwasi  
 word=PRIV 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/make (.) NEG INDF words  
 ‘He was speechless ... no words whatsoever’

[tci20110802 ABB #115-116]

Negative indefinites can also be constructed with interrogatives. This is a strategy attested in many languages (Haspelmath 1997, Haspelmath 2013). Thus, the concept of ‘nobody’ can be expressed by *kabe nä keke* (Lit. ‘people some not’) or with an interrogative, for example *mane nä keke* (Lit. ‘who some not’). The order of elements is somewhat fixed in that the indefinite always follows the interrogative (51).

- (51) ***keke mane nä** yanyaka keräfi fumaksir fof.*  
 keke mane nä yan\yak/a                      keräfi fumak-si=r  
 NEG who INDF 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/walk arrow pull.out-NMLZ=PURP  
 fof  
 EMPH  
 ‘Nobody came to pull out that arrow.’

[tci20120814 ABB #144]



initial consonants: *z*, *b*, *f* and *m* respectively. The structure of the system is quite similar to Japanese demonstratives as described by Coulmas (1982).

Table 3.8: Demonstratives

	pronoun <sup>a</sup>	adverbial	adv.ALL	adv.ABL	verb clitic
PROX	<i>zane</i> this	<i>zä</i> here	<i>zbo</i> hither	<i>zba</i> hence	<i>z=</i> here
IMM		<i>zf</i> right here			
MED	<i>bäne</i> that	<i>bä</i> there	<i>bobo</i> thither	<i>boba</i> thence	<i>b=</i> there
RECOG	<i>baf</i> that one				
DIST	<i>ane</i> DEM	<i>fä</i> yonder	<i>fobo</i> to over there	<i>foba</i> from over there	<i>f=</i> yonder
INTERROG	<i>mane</i> which	<i>mä</i> where	<i>mobo</i> whither	<i>moba</i> whence	<i>m=</i> APPR
INDF	<i>nä</i> some, other				

<sup>a</sup> These are demonstratives which fulfill both pronominal and determiner functions.

Following Diessel (1999), I will outline the syntactic distribution of demonstratives first. In Table 3.8, a number of demonstratives appear in shaded cells. These have additional functions and to some extent different syntactic distributions. They will be discussed in separate sections to follow.

Diessel (1999) defines four syntactic contexts in which demonstratives occur: as independent pronouns that occupy an adpositional or verbal argument position ('pronominal'); with nouns in noun phrases ('adnominal'); as verb modifiers ('adverbial'); and in copula and non-verbal clauses ('identificational'). Some languages have distinct lexical categories for each function. Thus, Diessel calls the four categories: demonstrative pronominals, demonstrative determiners, demonstrative adverbs, and demonstrative identifiers (1999: 3). See Himmelmann (1996), who makes similar distinctions. Demonstratives in Komnzo occur in all four syntactic contexts. Below, I use the proximal in order to illustrate the different syntactic contexts.

### 3.1.12.1 Pronominal and adnominal demonstratives

Demonstratives can be used pronominally (54) or adnominally (55).

(54) *moba zane nm nzyaniyak?*

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moba zane nm nz=yan\yak/  
 where.ABL DEM:PROX maybe IPST=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/walk  
 ‘Where might this (man) have come from?’ [tci20120901-01 MAK #87]

- (55) *zane namä ezi mrmren nzä kwa trikasi ηatrikwé.*  
 zane namä ezi mrmr=en nzä kwa trik-si ηa\trik/wé  
 DEM:PROX good morning inside=LOC 1SG.ABS FUT tell-NMLZ 1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/tell  
 ‘In this beautiful morning, I will tell a story.’ [tci2011119-01 ABB #2-3]

When used pronominally, demonstratives serve as the host for a subset of the case clitics. The examples below show case marking with the instrumental (56), purposive (57), and characteristic case (58). Rarely, they occur with the proprietive (59), and there are no corpus examples with the privative case. Demonstratives are not marked for other cases, but they can take other nominal morphology like the exclusive clitic =*nzo* or the emphatic clitic =*wä*.

- (56) *arammba yare zaneme zf äfiyokwre.*  
 arammba yare zane=me zf äfiyok/wre  
 arammba bag DEM:PROX=INS IMM 1PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/make  
 ‘We make the Arammba bags with this one right here.’ [tci20130907-02 JAA #410]

- (57) *ebar fobo fof zä\bth/a. zanemr zena znrä.*  
 ebar fobo fof zä\bth/a zane=mr zena  
 head DIST.ABL EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/finish DEM:PROX=PURP today  
 z=n\rä/  
 PROX=1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘From this time onwards, the head-hunting finished. For this (reason), we are here today.’ [tci20111107-01 MAK #148-149]

- (58) *nafanmedben keke znsä rä. zanemanzo ηathwekwrth ... yusi fathasimanzo.*  
 nafanmedben keke znsä \rä/ zane=ma=nzo  
 3NSG.ANIM.LOC NEG work 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be DEM:PROX=CHAR=ONLY  
 ηa\thwek/wrth (.) yusi fath-si=ma=nzo  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be.happy (.) grass hold-NMLZ=CHAR=ONLY  
 ‘The (hard) work is not theirs (but ours). They are happy with doing just this ... just the weeding.’ [tci20130823-06 STK #109-111]

- (59) *zane fthé keke srarä ziyarä keke kwa sräthorth moneyme. zanekaräsü ane srarä kwot.*  
 zane fthé keke srarä/rä/ z=ya\rä/ keke  
 DEM:PROX when NEG 3SG.MASC:IRR:IPFV/be PROX=3SG.MASC:IO:NPST:IPFV/be NEG  
 kwa srä\thor/th money=me zane=karä=sü ane  
 FUT 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/carty money=INS DEM:PROX=PROP=ETC DEM



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#### 3.1.12.2 Adverbial demonstratives

Table 3.8 includes a column of adverbial demonstratives (e.g. *zä* ‘here’) with a dedicated form for the allative (*zbo* ‘hither’) and the ablative case (*zba* ‘from here’). These are used for verbal modification as in example (62) with *zä* ‘here’ and in example (63) with *foba* ‘from there’ and *zbo* ‘hither’.

- (62) *taurianeme moth zä wn\thn.*  
 tauri=aneme moth zä wn\thn/  
 wallaby=POSS.NSG path PROX 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/lie.down  
 ‘The wallabies’ path lies here.’ [tci20130903-01 MKW #35]
- (63) *wati, ane foba ñanmonziknwr. zbo wänyak. zane mnz zf wrwr.*  
 wati ane foba ñan\monzikn/wr zbo  
 then DEM DIST.ABL 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/prepare PROX.ALL  
 wän\yak/ zane mnz zf  
 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/walk DEM:PROX house IMM  
 w\ɾ/wr  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/build  
 ‘Then, this (bird) prepares over there and she comes here to build her nest right here.’ [tci20120815 ABB #48]

#### 3.1.12.3 Clitic demonstratives

Diessel (1999) includes the syntactic context of identification (identificational demonstratives) and finds a distinct class (demonstrative identifiers) in a number of languages. We find both the syntactic context as well as the distinct class in the language.

Komnzo possesses a set of deictic verbal proclitics which I call clitic demonstratives. Compare Table 3.8 above. They are used for identification and can attach to any inflected verb. In example (64) two brothers are trying to kill a creature by shooting an arrow into its heart.

- (64) *naf nima “keke fi miyamr erä fofosa mä rä. nze komnzo zimarwé fof.”*  
 naf nima keke fi miyamr e\rä/ fofosa mä  
 3SG.ERG QUOT NEG 3.ABS ignorance 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be heart where  
 \rä/ nze komnzo  
 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV.be 1SG.ERG only  
 z=y\mar/wé fof  
 PROX=1SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/see EMPH  
 ‘He said: “They don’t know where its heart is. I can see it here.”’  
 [tci20131013-01 ABB #104-105]

While they can attach to any verb, clitic demonstratives are found with the copula in 90% of the tokens. Usually, the copula follows the main verb, as in example (65) and (66). The clitic demonstrative plus copula stands in apposition to the main clause, but they often form one intonational unit.



- (65) *fi zena zane zf dö sakwré zyé.*  
 fi zena zane zf dö sa\kwr/é  
 but today DEM:PROX IMM goanna 1SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:RPST:PFV/hit  
 z=\yé/  
 PROX=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘But today I have killed this goanna here.’ [tci20120821-01 LNA #67]
- (66) *yasifa foba fof ni zane zewärke zena znrä.*  
 yasi=fa foba fof ni zane ze\wär/ake zena  
 yasi=ABL DIST.ABL EMPH INSG DEM:PROX 1PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV/crack today  
 z=n\rä/  
 PROX=1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘From Yasi, we originate from him and (therefore) we are here today.’ [tci20111107-01 MAK #86]

The clitic demonstrative plus copula is the primary strategy to make an identificational reference much like English ‘there it is’ or ‘here you go’. This is usually accompanied by a pointing gesture. Diessel points out that in other languages “demonstrative identifiers are often functionally equivalent to a demonstrative plus copula” (1999: 10). Thus, Komzoo confirms this pattern and, therefore, I analyse the clitic demonstrative plus copula as one unit. I adopt the label demonstrative identifier from Diessel. I address this topic in the description of verb morphology (§ 5.6.2).

The demonstrative identifier always agrees with some element in the main clause. Hence, if the argument in the clause is modified by a medial demonstrative, that same medial category will be used in the demonstrative identifier. An example with the proximal is given in (67) below. Note that the medial demonstrative identifier *byé* instead of the proximal *ziyé* would render the sentence ungrammatical.

- (67) *zane kabe zf yé zyé.*  
 zane kabe zf \yé/ z=\yé/  
 DEM:PROX man IMM 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be PROX=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘It is this man right here.’ [tci20111004 RMA #51]

The verbal clitic *m=* is a special case. It can be attached to a copula which will produce a question. In example (68) the speaker looks around for a particular tree type to show to me. Then she suddenly finds it.

- (68) *myé yorär? yorär zyé ... zikogr.*  
 m=\yé/ yorär yorär z=\yé/  
 where=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be yorär yorär PROX=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 (.) z=y\kogr/  
 (.) PROX=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:STAT/stand  
 ‘Where is yorär? Yorär is here ... It stands here.’ [tci20130907-02 JAA #449-451]

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The same *m=* clitic, when attached to verb forms in imperative or irrealis mood, receives an apprehensive interpretation: ‘don’t do X’ or ‘you might X’. Such an example is given below in (69). The *m=* clitic is discussed in §3.5.2 and again in §6.3.2 as part of the description of the TAM system.

- (69) *aya msar mkrätrth!*  
 aya msar m=krä\tr/th  
 oh ant APPR=2|3PL:SBJ:IRR:PFV/fall  
 ‘Oh, the ants might fall down!’ [tci20130907-02 RNA #678]

#### 3.1.12.4 Anaphoric *ane*

In Table 3.8 *ane* has been glossed as a general demonstrative (DEM), even though it is placed in the paradigm position where one would expect the distal demonstrative. However, *ane* has no spatial reference, but it is used for anaphoric reference. It marks a referent which has been established in the preceding context. Consequently, *ane* marks definiteness and is the opposite of the indefinite *nä* (§3.1.11). Both cannot occur in the same noun phrase.

There is evidence from several sources that *ane* is the result of phonological reduction and semantic bleaching. Recordings from the 1980’s by Mary Ayres contain a number of occurrences of a demonstrative *fane* and older speakers today identify this as ‘the way, how old people used to speak’. Indeed, the position in the paradigm would suggest an initial consonant *f*. This is attested in other Tonda varieties, e.g. Wartha Thuntai *fana*. We can conclude that this demonstrative has undergone phonological reduction from *fane* to *ane* over the last two generations of speakers. Moreover, we can infer semantic bleaching from spatial (distal) to anaphoric (tracking) from its position in the paradigm. However, we cannot put a time frame to the process of semantic bleaching, because it is unclear whether or not *fane* had a spatial meaning in the old recordings in addition to its anaphoric use.

The anaphoric demonstrative behaves in other respects like the demonstrative pronouns and determiners (cf. §3.1.12.1). One exception is the agreement described in §3.1.12.3 between the demonstrative in the main clause and the demonstrative identifier. Since *ane* has no spatial reference, it may combine with the proximal and the medial demonstrative identifier as can be seen in example (70) and (71) respectively.

- (70) *fintäth ane ziyé ... yemaneme dagon.*  
 fintäth ane z=\yé/ yem=aneme dagon  
 fintäth DEM PROX=3SG.MASC:NPST.be cassowary=POSS.NSG food  
 ‘This *fintäth* (fruit) here is the cassowaries’ food.’ [tci20130907-02 RNA #316]

- (71) *watik, nge ane zefar byé ruga monegsir.*  
 watik nge ane ze\far/ b=\yé/ ruga  
 then child DEM 2|3SG:SBJ:RPST:PFV/set.off MED=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be pig



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Example (73) is a first mention of a particular person in a narrative. Although not required, it is quite common for the speaker to fill in the ‘missing’ referent after a short lapse. Thus, the phrase *masenane mezü* ‘Masen’s widow’ refers back to *bafane mezü* ‘that one’s widow’.

- (73) *mabata fi mezü zwamnzrm. bafane mezü rera ... masenane mezü.*  
 mabata fi mezü zwa\m/nzrm baf=ane mezü  
 mabata 3.ABS widow 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell RECOG=POSS.SG widow  
 \rä/ra (.) masen=ane mezü  
 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be (.) masen=POSS.SG widow  
 ‘Mabata stayed as a widow. She was that one’s widow ... Masen’s widow.’

[tci20120814 ABB #18-20]

The recognitional demonstrative is built on the medial demonstrative, as we can tell by the initial consonant *b*. It follows that the recognitional must have emerged through semantic extension from the medial demonstrative, and only later developed distinct forms for all the cases. We find that a number of forms serve a double function. For example, *bäne* can function as demonstrative pronoun (‘that’) and as recognitional pronoun (‘the one I presume that you know about’). But the two differ in their combinatorics. While the demonstrative can modify as well as replace a nominal head of a phrase, the recognitional operates only pronominally. I have already shown in example (73) that it is quite common for a speaker to fill in the intended referent of a recognitional herself, sometimes after the clause, sometimes after a short pause. This leaves us with the problem of distinguishing the medial demonstrative from the recognitional in a phrase like *bäne kabe*. However, prosody will signal which of the two is it. If both words belong to the same intonation contour, it is the medial demonstrative: ‘that man’. If there is short break in the intonation or a longer pause, it is the recognitional: ‘that one ... the man’. The other case forms which are formally identical are impossible to distinguish in a clear way. For example, *bänema* ‘therefore, because’ is often used to connect another clause (cf. §3.1.12.1). In this case we always find a break in the intonation. It is best to interpret the formal identity as a signal of the semantic extension of the medial demonstrative. That being said, it would be wrong to conclude that the recognitional is merely a function of the medial demonstrative.

As we can see in Table (3.9), the recognitional can be marked for all cases. In this respect the recognitional surpasses even personal pronouns in the richness of its distinctions because there are animate and inanimate case forms.

#### 3.1.12.7 Manner demonstrative *nima*

Komnzo has a manner demonstrative *nima* which is best translated as ‘like this’ or ‘do this way’. In some languages this function is assigned to the class of verbs, for example Boumaa Fijian and Dyirbal (Dixon 2003: 72). In other languages it is a nominal, for example Kayardild (Evans 1995: 214). *Nima* falls in the latter category. It is a nominal which can be marked for a subset of cases (instrumental, characteristic, purposive, proprietive,



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kwof\rä/rm

1SG:SBJ:PST:DUR/be

‘They did not know about this ... (that) I was walking towards them ... and I did not know either.’ [tci20111119-03 ABB #136-137]

*Nima* is used for three functions: deictic reference (actual or mimicked), anaphora, or introducing direct speech. With an instrumental case marker *nimame* is often used as an emphatic affirmative, as English ‘Just like this!’ In (76) the speaker explains how his grandmother grew very old because she followed all the food taboos.

- (76) *nafaŋamane zokwasi nafaŋafane zokwasi naf mon zekarisa. nimame fof!*  
 nafa-ŋame=ane zokwasi nafa-ŋafe-ane zokwasi naf mon  
 3.POSS-mother=POSS.SG language 3.POSS-father=POSS.SG language 3SG.ERG how  
 ze\karis/a nima=me fof  
 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/hear like.this=INS EMPH

‘She listened to her mother’s words and to her father’s words. Just like this!’

[tci20120922-26 DAK #60]

When introducing direct speech *nima* may occur with a speaking verb (77) or just by itself (60 above). In these instances, it is glossed as a quotative marker (QUOT). This function is further described in §9.7.

- (77) *nzä nima zukorth “be fafä zane nagayé fäth zä thamonegwé!”*  
 nzä nima zu\kor/th be fafä zane  
 1SG.ABS QUOT 2|3DU:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:PST:PFV/speak 2SG.ERG after.this DEM.PROX  
 nagayé fäth zä tha\monewé  
 children DIM PROX 2SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:IMP:IPFV/take.care

‘The two told me: “You take care of these small children here!”’

[tci20121019-04 ABB #91-92]

## 3.2 Verbs

Verbs are by far the most complex lexical items in Komnzo with respect to morphology. Here, only a brief overview and some of the definitional criteria for identifying a particular item as a verb are given. For a full discussion of verbal morphology in Komnzo the reader is referred to chapters 5 and 6.

With around 380 members, verbs are the second largest word class after nouns. In spite of its size, verbs constitute a closed word class. There are no observed cases of loanwords or neologisms. Evidence for the closed status comes from two observations. First, the lack of derivational morphology (and shared roots) within the word class, but also between verbs and other word classes. Secondly, the fact that loanwords which are verbs in the donor language never end up in the verb class in Komnzo.

Within the word class of verbs there is no productive derivational morphology. Only a few non-productive patterns can be discerned, but the interpretation of these remains

highly speculative. One such example is the pair of verbs *knsi* ‘roll’ and *myuknsi* ‘roll, twist’. The former is often used for rolling cigarettes, while the latter is used for rolling up a tape measure. Hence, we could translate them as *knsi* ‘roll lengthwise’ and *myuknsi* ‘roll widthwise’, ignoring the second sense of *myuknsi* ‘twist’. Without the nominaliser, the stems are *kn* and *myukn*, and a possible hypothesis is that the *myu* says something about the orientation of the object that is rolled up. However, *myu* is not a word in Komnzo, nor is the pattern attested elsewhere in verb lexicon. A second example is the pair *misoksi* ‘look up’ and *risoksi* ‘look down’. The formal difference lies only in the first consonant. I analyze these as idiosyncrasies of particular stems which might reflect frozen derivational morphology.

The same observation can be made for the relation between the verb class and other word classes. There are currently only four examples where a verb stem is identical or similar to a nominal element and a semantic bridge can be established. The first is the verb *rmrsi* ‘rub, grind’ and the property noun *rmr* ‘roughness’. The second is the verb *miyogsi* ‘beg, ask for’ and *miyo* which can be either a property noun ‘desire’ or a noun ‘wish, taste’. The third is the verb *wasisi* ‘shine light on’ and the word for the Masked Owl *wasi*.<sup>8</sup> The last example is the verb *fokusi* ‘miss out on sth.’ and the word *fokufoku* which describes a patch of bush that was not burned or a patch of grass that was not cut down. There is a clear semantic overlap in the nominal and verbal semantics, but we cannot determine the direction of derivation. However, the scarcity of such examples is striking.

One wonders, then how new verb meanings enter the language. The clearest answer to this question comes from loanwords. Komnzo speakers were exposed to Hiri Motu during a short period in the 1950’s when the local Mission school was run by Motu-speaking teachers. Since the 1960’s the dominant educational as well as administrative language has been English. All loanwords which are verbs in Hiri Motu or English end up in the nominal subclass of property nouns, not in the verb class. Some Komnzo examples are *durua* ‘help’, *tarawat* ‘law, rightfulness’ from Motu, *senis* ‘change’ and *boil* ‘boil’ from English. It is the complex verb morphology, for example stem types sensitive to aspectual distinctions, which prevents new material from being incorporated into the verb class. Instead, these loan verbs are property nouns in Komnzo, and they are employed in a light verb construction (see §8.3.12). Cross-linguistically, this is a common strategy to integrate loan verbs (Wichmann & Wohlgemuth 2008).<sup>9</sup>

Morphosyntactically, we can define verbs as those lexemes which inflect for gender, person, number, tense, aspect, mood, valency, and directionality as can be seen in examples (78) and (79). With the exception of person and number, these are only found in verbs. The glossing of these grammatical categories, however, cannot be done straight-

<sup>8</sup>The Masked Owl (*Tyto novaehollandiae*), like most owls, has large eyes.

<sup>9</sup>From observation it is clear that younger speakers have already begun to replace some Komnzo verbs with English loans using a light verb construction with ‘do’. For example, *thofiksi* ‘disturb’ is commonly expressed as *disturb narär*, whereby *narär* is the inflected verb ‘do’, and the expression can be literally translated as ‘he does the distraction/disturbing’. One may predict that this pattern will become more dominant in the future. The shift from minor to major patterns in contact situations has been described by Heine and Kuteva (2005: 44).

### 3 Word classes

forwardly, because a number of them can only be understood after unifying values from different morphological slots. For example, the aspectual value PST:DUR in (78) is encoded simultaneously in the verb stem, the prefix and the durative suffix. Prior to this unification, each morpheme taken by itself is underspecified with respect to any particular grammatical category. The only exceptions are the two directional affixes. In this subsection, I will employ a double glossing style as in the chapters on verb morphology (chapters 5 and 6). A segmented, itemised glossing line is given first, while a second line shows the unified gloss in smaller print. Morphological complexity in verbs is discussed in §5.2, where the reader will also find a more detailed justification for the double-lined glossing convention.

- (78) *nafane nagayé thfrärm. naf thwamonegwrn.*  
 nafane nagayé thf-rä-rm naf  
 3SG.POSS children 2|3NSG.β2-COP.ND-DUR 3SG.ERG  
 2|3PL:PST:DUR/be  
 thu-a-moneg-wr-m-∅  
 2|3NSG.β1-VC-take.care.EXT-ND-DUR  
 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/take.care  
 ‘They were her children. She took care of them.’ [tci20120901-01 MAK #47]
- (79) *fi fthé enthorakwa ... mnz kabe fof. nima thäzigrthma “nä tmatm fefe nzḡawänzr. manema kabe zä naf nziyanathr?”*  
 fi fthé e-n-thorak-w-a-∅ (.) mnz kabe fof nima  
 3.ABS when 2|3NSG.α-VENT-arrive.EXT-ND-PST-2|3SG (.) house people EMPH QUOT  
 2|3PL:PST:IPFV:VENT/arrive  
 th-ä-zingrthm-a nä tmatm fefe  
 2|3NSG.γ-VC.ND-look.around.RS-PST some event real  
 2|3PL:PST:PFV/look.around  
 nz=ŋ-a-wä-nzr-∅ mane=ma kabe zä naf  
 IPST=M.α-VC-break.EXT-ND-2|3SG which=CHAR man PROX 3SG.ERG  
 IPST=2|3SG:NPST:IPFV/break  
 nz=y-a-na-thr-∅  
 IPST=3SG.MASC.α-VC-eat.EXT-ND-2|3SG  
 IPST=2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST/eat  
 ‘At that time the house owners returned to the village. They looked around and said, “Something terrible has happened. From which village was the man who she ate here?”’ [tci20120901-01 MAK #106-111]

Examples (78) and (79) show the intricate architecture of Komnzo verbs. The verb forms in both examples are inflected for various grammatical categories. The agreement target for gender is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular prefix on the verb, as can be seen in the last verb ‘eat’ in example (79). Person and number are encoded in the undergoer prefix as well as the actor suffix. However, these slots are underspecified: the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person



in the non-singular are neutralised in both slots. The 1<sup>st</sup> non-singular and 2<sup>nd</sup> singular are neutralised in the prefixes. These can be disambiguated by the free pronouns. In both slots, dual and plural are neutralised. The system of number marking combines a singular vs. non-singular opposition in the prefix and suffix with a dual vs. non-dual opposition in the duality affix. Thereby, one arrives at the three number values (SG, DU, PL). For about half a dozen high frequency verbs, such as the copula (78), the stem itself is sensitive to duality. For all other verbs, duality is either encoded by a prefix as in the second verb ‘look around’ in (79) or by a suffix as in all other verbs in (78) and (79). The morphological site of duality marking depends on the stem type. Almost all verbs in Komnzo have two stems from which aspectual distinctions can be build. I label the two stem types ‘restricted’ (RS) and ‘extended stem’ (EXT). It follows that tense, aspect and mood are expressed by a combination of verb stem, prefixes, and further suffixal material. As for the prefixes, there are five different prefix series labelled  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\beta_1$ ,  $\beta_2$ , and  $\gamma$  and an immediate past proclitic (for example in the last two verbs of 79). Beyond TAM, the prefixes encode information about person, number, and gender. Examples for the suffixal material are the durative suffix (DUR) in both verb forms in (78) and the past suffix (PST) in the first two verb forms in (79). The TAM value is calculated by unifying these different exponents. As the final category to mention here, the first verb ‘arrive’ in (79) is inflected for directionality. The two values of direction are ventive ‘towards’ (VENT) and andative ‘away’ (AND).

Verbs are the only lexical items which can take the nominalising suffix (-si). Nominalisations or infinitives are used as a citation form in the dictionary. Frequently, nominalisations were frequently given to me as *zokwasi ebar* ‘head words’ for an inflected verb form. Nominalisations are non-finite forms without inflectional material. Nominalisations can be treated like underived nouns. They can function as complements of phasal verbs (*finish, start, become*) or infinitival adjuncts. Example (80) is taken from story in which two birds have a competition on how long each one can hold its breath under water. Thus, *fsisi zäbthath* can be translated as ‘the counting finished’. Example (81) can be translated as ‘in the planting (season)’.

(80) *ane zwafsinzrm ... kwot e boböwä bäne zefafath ... fsisi zäbthath.*

ane zu-a-fsi-nzr-m-Ø (.)kwot e bobo-wä bäne  
DEM 3SG.F. $\beta_2$ -VC-count.EXT-ND-DUR-2|3SG (.) properly until MED.ALL-EMPH DEM:MED  
2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:IO:PST:DUR/count

z-ä-faf-a-th (.) fsi-si  
M. $\gamma$ -VC.ND-hold.RS-PST-2|3NSG (.) count-NMLZ  
2|3PL:SBJ:PST:PFV/hold

z-ä-bth-a-th  
M. $\gamma$ -VC.ND-finish.RS-PST-2|3NSG  
2|3PL:SBJ:PST:PFV/finish

‘He counted for her until he reached that number. Then, the counting was finished.’

[tci20130923-01 ALA #28-30]

### 3 Word classes

- (81) *fä fof sfrugrm ... nima eftharen zf ... nima worsin zf.*  
 fä fof sf-rug-rm (.) nima efthar=en zf (.) nima  
 DIST EMPH 3SG.M.β2-sleep.EXT.ND-DUR (.) like.this dry season=LOC IMM (.) like.this  
 3SG.M:SBJ:PST:DUR/sleep  
 wor-si=n zf.  
 plant-NMLZ=LOC IMM

‘He slept over there ... like this in the dry season ... like this in the planting season.’  
 [tci20131013-02 ABB #140-142]

In other respects, nominalised verbs can be treated like any other noun. They can take case, for example the ergative (82) or the instrumental in a resultative construction (83). They can be reduplicated as in (84). They can enter into possessive constructions either as possessed (84) or as possessor (85).

- (82) *zarfa surmänwrm ane wäsifnzo.*  
 zarfa su-rmän-wr-m-Ø ane wä-si=f=nzo  
 ear 3SG.MASC.β2-close.EXT-ND-DUR-2|3NSG DEM break-NMLZ=ERG=ONLY  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:DUR/close  
 ‘That breaking noise was blocking his ears.’ [tci20120818 ABB #68]

- (83) *ñafyf frthé bant wäfiyokwa, kidn ane rifthzsime zfrärm.*  
 ñafe-f fthé bant w-a-fi-yok-w-a-Ø kidn ane  
 father-ERG when ground 3SG.F.α-VC-make.EXT-ND-PST-2|3SG ancient.fire DEM  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:IPFV/make  
 rifthz-si=me zf-rä-rm  
 hide-NMLZ=INS 3SG.F.β2-COP.ND-DUR  
 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR/be  
 ‘When God made the Earth, the ancient fire was hidden.’  
 [tci20120909-06 KAB #62-63]

- (84) *fi miyomär yé. wri kabeaneme ttrikasi naf krarizr.*  
 fi miyo=mär \yé/ wri kabe=aneme  
 3.ABS desire=PRIV 3SG.MASC.α.COP.ND drunk man=POSS.NSG  
 3SG.MASC:α:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 t-trik-si naf k-ra-ri-zr-Ø  
 REDUP-tell-NMLZ 3SG.ERG M.β-IRR.VC-hear.EXT-ND-2|3SG  
 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/hear  
 ‘He doesn’t want to listen to those drunk people’s stories.’  
 [tci20111004 RMA #140]

- (85) *... tharisiane efoth fthé zfrärm.*  
 (.) thari-si=ane efoth fthé zf-rä-rm  
 (.) dig-NMLZ=POSS.SG day when 3SG.F.β2-COP.ND-DUR  
 3SG.F:PST:DUR/be  
 ‘... when it was harvesting season’  
 [tci20120805-01 ABB #356]

Almost all verbs have an infinitive derived by means of the nominaliser (-si). However, there are a few exceptions where either an underived noun is used or an nominal form is lacking altogether. For the most part, these are verbs of high frequency. In the following three examples, the noun meaning is given first and the verb meaning second: *zan* ‘fight, war (n); hit, kill (v)’ *wath* ‘dance, song (n); dance, sing (v)’ *zrin* ‘heaviness, burden (n); carry (v)’.

There are two options to analyse nominalisations in Komnzo. While I stress their verbal character, one could argue that they should be analysed as (deverbal) nouns. I believe that this is an analytic decision and that there are good arguments for both sides. I address this question here because the decision impacts several other parts of the grammar, for example the description of the cross-clausal function of the case markers (§4.3) and subordinate clauses (chapter 9), both of which involve infinitives. As shown above, nominalised verbs behave like nouns in terms of morphology, that is they can form reduplications and nominal compounds. Moreover, they can serve as hosts for the case enclitics. This supports the analysis of nominalisations as nouns. However, nominalised verbs retain particular verbal features, for example their argument structure. The agent (or most agent-like argument) of the finite verb can be expressed with the non-finite verb by means of a possessive construction. In *nafane tharisi* ‘her digging’, the third singular possessor refers to the agent argument. The patient (or most patient-like argument) can be expressed by the modifying element of a nominal compound. In *wawa tharisi* ‘yam digging’, the word for ‘yam’ is the patient of the event. Noun phrases of this type can be captured by the notion of an action nominal, which Comrie & Thompson describe as “a noun phrase that contains, in addition to a noun derived from a verb, one or more reflexes of a proposition or predicate” (2007: 343).

The verbal character of nominalisations in Komnzo is clearest in raising constructions. In example (86), the speaker demonstrates how to produce a children’s toy from a coconut leaf. She uses a raising construction (‘start rolling’) with a nominalised form of ‘roll’. This is followed by the finite form of ‘roll’. We find that argument indexing of the finite ‘roll’ (1SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ) has been raised to the phasal verb ‘start’. In conclusion, I acknowledge that nominalised verbs can be analysed as either (deverbal) nouns or infinitives. I have made explicit why I choose the latter option.

- (86) *myuknsi srethkäfe ... zane zf ymyuknwé.*  
 myukn-si s-rä-thkäf-é (.) zane zf  
 roll-NMLZ 3SG.MASC.γ-IRR.ND-start.RS-1SG (.) DEM:PROX IMM  
 1SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/start  
 y-myukn-w-é  
 3SG.MASC.α-roll.EXT-ND-1SG  
 1SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/roll  
 ‘I (usually) start rolling (the leaf). I roll this one right here.’

[tci20120914 RNA #45]

Word order in Komnzo is predominantly SOV, or more accurately AUV (agent under-goer verb). For pragmatic reasons, elements may follow the verb, but they are usually

part of a separate intonation group. The only exceptions are the emphatic particle *fof* (§3.4.2) and the demonstrative identifier (§3.1.12.3).

Verbs can be subcategorised along both grammatical and semantic lines. As for the latter, we find a class of positional verbs, which take a special stative suffix and encode postural or positional semantics, for example *migsi* ‘hang’, *thorsi* ‘be inside’, *rngthksi* ‘be in a tree fork’ (§5.4.4.2). Morphologically, one interesting fact is that only a small part of intransitive verbs are purely prefixing. Most intransitive verbs employ both the prefix and the suffix. In this case, an invariant middle prefix is used and the single argument is indexed in the suffix (§5.4.5). Transitive verbs index their subject in the suffix and the object in the prefix. Most stems can be applicativised by adding the *a-* prefix. In this case, the referent of the person prefix changes from the object (or subject of a prefixing verb) to an indirect object (usually a recipient, beneficiary, or raised possessor). I label the *a-* prefix vc for ‘valency change’. This is because *a-* is used to increase as well as to decrease the valency of a verb. Thus, the above-mentioned middle construction always takes the *a-* prefix. A general feature of Komnzo verbs is a high degree of flexibility, whereby most stems may enter various morphological templates and a handful of stems can be cycled through all. This is discussed in detail in §5.4.

## 3.3 Adverbs

Adverbs in Komnzo make up a small closed class of about a dozen lexical items. A number of nominals, such as temporals and demonstratives have an adverbial function. Moreover, the instrumental case (=me) on adjectives and property nouns provides an adverbial function.

Temporals have been discussed in §3.1.8. They are a functional subclass of nominals which can have an adverbial function. Spatial adverbials are expressed by the rich set of demonstratives discussed in §3.1.12.2. Hence, only manner adverbs comprise a word class in their own right. These are uninflecting words which are fairly free with respect to their position in the clause. Most commonly, they occur in preverbal position. Table 3.10 lists the currently attested manner adverbs.

As discussed in §3.1.1, the instrumental case (=me) provides an adverbial function on property nouns or adjectives. Some of the manner adverbs show remnants of frozen morphology. For example, *watmame* ‘for a daytrip’ shows a =me element, but the corresponding form \**watma* is missing.

## 3.4 Particles

We find two types of particles in Komnzo; TAM particles and discourse particles. Both are morphologically inert, but differ slightly in their syntactic distribution. The TAM particles are discussed in more detail in §6.3.

### 3.4.1 TAM particles

Table 3.10: Manner adverbs

KOMNZO	gloss
<i>eräme</i>	‘together’
<i>kwot</i>	‘properly’
<i>matar</i>	‘quietly’
<i>minzü</i>	‘very, too much’
<i>nezä</i>	‘in return’
<i>nm, nnzä</i>	‘perhaps, maybe’
<i>nimäwä</i>	‘likewise’
<i>ɲarde</i>	‘for the first time’
<i>gaso</i>	‘badly’
<i>gräme</i>	‘slowly’
<i>dmnzü</i>	‘silently’
<i>rürä</i>	‘alone, lonely’
<i>watmame</i>	‘for a daytrip’
<i>yakme</i>	‘fast’
<i>nzagoma</i>	‘in advance’
<i>ɲwä</i>	‘instead (of)’

There are five particles which are part of the tense-aspect-mood system. Most frequently, they occur in preverbal position, but other elements may intervene. These are important for TAM because even though Komnzo has a rich set of TAM related inflections on the verb, some categories can only be expressed by means of the particles, for example *kwa* for futurity and *z* for the completion. The five particles are shown in Table 3.11 below. I will address these in turn. Note that there are the proclitics *n=* and *m=*, which play a role in TAM marking as well. Depending on their morpho-syntactic context they can be analysed as clitics or as particles. This point is discussed below in §3.5.2.

Table 3.11: TAM particles

komnzo	gloss	function	translation
<i>kwa</i>	FUT	future	‘will’
<i>z</i>	ALR	iamitive <sup>a</sup>	‘already’
<i>nomai</i>	HAB	habitual	‘often’, ‘always’
<i>kma</i>	POT	potential	‘might’, ‘could’
<i>keke</i> or <i>kyo</i>	NEG	negator	‘not’

<sup>a</sup> I adopt the term *iamitive* from (Olsson 2013), who has coined it based on Latin *iam* ‘already’.

### 3 Word classes

The future marker *kwa*, sometimes just *ka*, is the only way of expressing the futurity of an event. It occurs with the non-past tense and the irrealis mood (87), both of which are insufficient for indicating that a particular event will take place in the future. The particle may occur just by itself in which case it is an imperative that means ‘wait!’ (87). The future particle *kwa* is discussed in §6.3.4.

- (87) *katakatan kwa zöbthé thrängathinzth nima: “kwa! komnzo kwa!”*  
 kata-katan kwa zöbthé thran\gathi/nzth nima kwa  
 REDUP-small FUT first 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:IRR:PFV:VENT/stop QUOT FUT  
 komnzo kwa  
 only FUT  
 ‘First, they will stop the small children (from jumping in). They will say: “Wait!  
 Just wait!”’ [tci20110813-09 DAK #25]

The iamitive marker *z* functions as a completive marker. It combines with all tense-aspect-mood categories, except for the imperative. The TAM system and the distinction between imperfective and perfective does not focus on completion, but on inceptive/punctual versus durative. The iamitive particle is the only way to indicate completion. It maybe used in declarative sentences (88) or with a rising intonation in polar questions (89). The particle *z* is discussed in §6.3.5.

- (88) *foba yakkarä enrera “oh, firran z thäkwrtth.”*  
 foba yak=karä en\rä/ra oh firra=n z  
 DIST.ABL walk=PROP 2|3PL:PST:IPFV:VENT/be oh firra=LOC ALR  
 thä\kwr/th  
 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:RPST:PFV/hit  
 ‘They came fast from there (and said:) “Oh, they already killed them in Firra.”’  
 [tci20131013-02 ABB #80]
- (89) *z safäs?*  
 z sa\fäs/  
 ALR 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:RPST:PFV/present  
 ‘Did you show him already?’ [tci20130907-02 RNA #540]

The habitual marker *nomai* functions either to indicate that an event happened regularly or that it took place for an extended time (90). There is a variant *nomair* which expresses ‘forever’ or ‘for a very long time’ (91). The final *r* element might be related to the purposive case. Its origin is still unclear as particles cannot host case clitics. The habitual particle *nomai* is discussed in §6.3.6.

- (90) *fi swathugwrm gaso. nimanzo nomai swafiyokwrm e nomai nomai nomai.*  
 fi swa\thug/wrm gaso nima=nzo nomai  
 3SG.ABS 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:DUR/trick badly like.this=ONLY HAB  
 swa\fiyok/wrm e 3x(nomai)  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:DUR/make until 3XHAB  
 ‘He tricked him badly. He kept on doing this to him for a long, long time.’

[tci20110802 ABB #95-96]

- (91) **nomair** *kwa namn<sub>zr</sub> kwot kwot kwot kwot e namä kakafar kwot käkorm.*  
 nomair kwa na\m/nzr 4x(kwot) e namä k-kafar kwot  
 HAB FUT 2SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/dwell 4x(properly) until good REDUP-big properly  
 kä\kor/m  
 2SG:SBJ:IMP:PFV/become  
 ‘You will live forever ... all the time until you really grow old.’

[tci20120922-26 DAK #16]

The potential marker *kma* occurs with verbs of different aspect values. It marks counterfactuality with deontic or epistemic interpretation, for example potentiality of an event (‘could’ or ‘could have’) or obligation (‘should’ or ‘should have’). In example (92), the speaker blames his wife for not telling him about a bushfire. In example (93), the speaker describes how he fought a bushfire in his garden. The particle *kma* is discussed in §6.3.3.

- (92) *nzä tosaianama kma kwräkor “käthf!” nzä nima fefe kwamn<sub>zrm</sub> kifa sfr<sub>wrmé</sub>.*  
 nzä tosai-a-ŋame kma kwrä\kor/  
 1SG.ABS baby-POSS-mother POT 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:IRR:PFV/speak  
 kä\thf/ nzä nima fefe kwa\m/nz<sub>rm</sub> kifa  
 2SG:SBJ:IMP:PFV/walk 1SG.ABS like.this really 1SG:SBJ:PST:DUR/sit rattan.wall  
 sf\r/wrmé  
 1SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST.DUR/weave  
 ‘The baby’s mother could have told me “You go!” but I was just sitting like this  
 and weaving the rattan wall.’ [tci20120922-24 STK #8-10]
- (93) **kma** *wämne ane fof kwakarkwé ane fof ... wämnef mane thänarfa ... keke ...  
 watikthémäre.*  
 kma wämne ane fof kwa\kark/wé ane fof (.) wämne=f mane  
 POT tree DEM EMPH 1SG:SBJ:RPST:IPFV/pull DEM EMPH (.) tree=ERG.SG which  
 thä\narf/a (.) keke (.) watik-thé=märe  
 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:PFV/press.down (.) NEG (.) enough-ADJZR=PRIV  
 ‘I should have pulled that tree off ... the one that was pushing down (the fences).  
 No (it was) not enough’. [tci20120922-24 MAA #42-43]

With verbs in imperative or irrealis mood, *kma* frequently occurs together with the clitic *m* which will be discussed in more detail below (§3.5.2). This combination of clitic, particle and verb inflection expresses a prohibitive. In this case, the clitic *m* may encliticise to *kma*. In fact, the resulting word *kmam* can stand as an utterance by itself meaning: ‘Don’t!’ or ‘Don’t do it!’ Below in (94) one such example is given, which comes from a public speech during a dance. For further discussion, the reader is referred to §3.5.2 and §6.3.2.

### 3 Word classes

- (94) *gatha fam kmam gnräre monwä z fam thäkuke.*  
 gatha fam kma=m gn\rä/ré mon=wä z fam  
 bad thought POT=APPR 2SG:SBJ:IMP:IPFV/be how=EMPH ALR thought  
 thä\kuk/e  
 1PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:RPST:PFV/erect  
 ‘You must not think bad about how we made up our minds.’  
 [tci20121019-04 ABB #243-244]

The negator *keke* occurs in preverbal position (95). In rapid speech it is something shortened to *ke*. There is a second negator *kyo* (96), which is mostly used by older speakers. Both negators can stand alone in an exclamation or as the answer to a question. Example (95) comes from a story about the speaker’s father’s generation. Example (96) is taken from a conversation about food taboos.

- (95) *tüfr kabe keke thfrärm.*  
 tüfr kabe keke thf\rä/rm  
 plenty people NEG 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/be  
 ‘They were not many people.’ [tci20120805-01 ABB #517]
- (96) *kyo kwa nr kabeyé thranathrth ... nima ivanañame brä.*  
 kyo kwa nr kabe=é thra\na/thrth (.) nima  
 NEG FUT belly people=ERG.NSG 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:IRR:IPFV/eat (.) like.this  
 ivan-a-ñame b=\rä/  
 ivan-POSS-mother MED=3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘The pregnant people will not eat them ... like Ivan’s mother there.’  
 [tci20120922-26 MAB #38]

I was told that the teachers in the mission school during the 1960’s discouraged their students from using *kyo* [kǎjo] because ‘it is a bad word’. At the time, the teachers were Motu speakers and this was also the language of instruction. In Motu, the word *kio* [kijo] means ‘vagina’. We can only hypothesise that the teachers of the mission school enacted pressure strong enough to replace the word *kyo* with the word *keke* whose origin is thus far unknown. Alternatively, the two negators might have existed simultaneously an the teachers’ pressure only skewed their respective frequency of use. The topic of negation is described in §8.5.

#### 3.4.2 Discourse particles

There are three discourse particles in Komnzo: *we* ‘also’, the intensifier *fof* and the word from which the language name is derived, *komnzo* ‘only, still’. These are used for different types of focus.

The particle *we* functions as an additive focus marker. I translate it with English ‘also’. It usually has scope over a whole proposition. It is rather flexible with respect to its position, and it may occur several times in a clause. Semantically, it always presupposes some event that has been established in the previous discourse. We can see this in example



(97) where the speaker makes an additional comment as to why his time as a busy yam gardener has come to an end.

- (97) *kafar z zākora fof... kafar ... watik, nzone tmä we katanme ηarsörém.*  
 kafar z zä\kor/a fof (.) kafar (.) watik nzone tmä we  
 big ALR 1SG:PST.PFV/become EMPH (.) big (.) then 1SG.POSS strength also  
 katan=me ηa\rsör/m  
 small=INS 2|3SG:RPST.DUR/recede  
 ‘I have grown old ... and also, my strength has also gone down a little.’

[tci20120805-01 ABB #662-664]

The particle *fof* is the word which occurs with the highest frequency in the corpus (around 2,000 tokens). It marks presentational focus of quite a wide range of elements. It always follows the element over which it has scope. This may be an adjunct (98), an argument (99), or the whole clause if it occurs after the verb (second *fof* in 99). In the examples below the rectangled brackets indicate the scope of the particle. Both examples come from a procedural text, in which the speaker presents his yam storage house. He explains the system by which the yams are piled up and sorted.

- (98) *watik zanenzo fthé fof krägathinzth zethn ... dagonma fof.*  
 watik zane=nzo [fthé fof] krä\gathinz/th  
 then DEM:PROX=ONLY [when EMPH] 2|3PL:SBJ:IRR:PFV/stop  
 z=e\thn/ (.) dagon=ma fof  
 PROX=2|3PLSBJ:NPST:STAT/lie.down (.) food=CHAR EMPH  
 ‘That is the time, when only these ones are left. These lying here ... (are) really for eating.’

[tci20121001 ABB #107]

- (99) *ηazäthema wawa ane fof erä fof.*  
 [ηazäthe=ma [wawa ane fof] e\rä/ fof]  
 [ηazäthe=CHAR [yam DEM EMPH] 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be EMPH]  
 ‘These yams are really from I)azäthe.’

[tci20121001 ABB #158]

The particle *komnzo* functions as a contrastive focus marker which has scope over the predicate. The clitic =*nzo* is its nominal counterpart. This will be described below in §3.5. The formal relationship between *komnzo* and =*nzo* holds true for other Tonda varieties. For example, Anta to the north has a corresponding particle *anta* and a clitic =*nta*.

In example (100), we see that *komnzo* has scope over the predicate; the copula in this case. I have often overheard women scolding their children by saying *komnzo kāmés* ‘Just sit down!’ In the example below, a man returns to the place where the people of Firra took revenge on his wife after she had killed one of them.

- (100) *wati nagawa ηabrigwa sir. komnzo rä o z kwarsir mnin?*  
 wati nagawa ηa\brig/wa si=r [komnzo  
 then nagawa 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/return eye=PURP [only

\rã/] o z kwa\rsir/ mni=n  
 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be] or ALR 2|3SG:SBJ:RPST:IPFV/burn fire=LOC  
 ‘Then Nagawa returned to check: was she still alive or did she burn in the fire?’  
 [tci20120901-01 MAK #167-170]

### 3.5 Clitics

Proclitics and enclitics are attested in Komnzo. The former are found only with verbs, whereas the latter attach to nominals. I follow selected criteria based on the literature on cliticness, especially (Zwicky & Pullum 1983) and chapter 8 of (Anderson 1992). The relevant criteria in Komnzo are (i) clitics operate on a phrase rather than a word level, (ii) clitics show a low degree of selectivity with respect to their hosts and (iii) clitics can attach to other clitics. A further criterion which pertains only to the verbal proclitics and the (nominal) exclusive enclitic is: (iv) clitics are reduced forms of independent lexical items.

#### 3.5.1 Nominal enclitics

All the case markers in Komnzo are analysed as clitics. Evidence for the first two criteria is given in examples (101) and (102) below, where the ergative attaches to the rightmost element of a given phrase. The phrase boundaries are marked by rectangled brackets in the examples. In (101), the noun phrase is *eda kwayan kabe* ‘two, white men’. In (102), the adjective has been postposed and consequently is the last element of the phrase. Although, case markers are attached only to nominals, there show a low degree of selectivity within this macro-word class. For a detailed discussion of the case markers, the reader is referred to §4.3.

- (101) *waniwanime* [*eda kwayan kabeyé*] *yzänmth*.  
 waniwani=me eda kwayan kabe=yé  
 picture=INS two white man=ERG.NSG  
 y\zä/nmth  
 2|3DU:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/carry  
 ‘The two white people are taking a picture of it.’ [tci20120821-01 LNA #35]
- (102) *famé wathofiyokwrmth fof ... zbomr e* [*eda kabe kafaré*] *zukorth* “*paituaf nima bänemr ñarär*.”  
 fam=é wa\thofiyok/wrmth fof (.) zbomr e  
 thought=ERG.NSG 2|3PL:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:RPST:DUR/disturb EMPH (.) PROX.PURP until  
 eda kabe kafar=é zu\kor/th paitua=f nima  
 two men big=ERG.NSG 2|3DU:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:RPST:PFV/say old.man=ERG.SG like.this  
 bänemr ña\rä/r  
 MED.PURP 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/do  
 ‘These thoughts were disturbing me until the two big men told me: “The old man thinks like this.”’ [tci20121019-04 SKK #22-24]

The other nominal enclitics are no case markers: exclusive =*nzo* (ONLY), empathic =*wä* (EMPH) and et cetera =*sü* (ETC). The first forms the nominal counterpart of the particle *komnzo* (§3.4.2). This clitic satisfies criteria (iv) in that it is a reduced form of an independent lexical item. It functions as a contrastive focus marker and I translate it to with English ‘only’. Hence, in example (103), the woman picks up the yamstick with only one thing on her mind. Note that this example shows that the clitic =*nzo* satisfies criteria (iii): the ability to attach to other clitics. The exclusive enclitic =*nzo* will be discussed again §4.17.2.

- (103) *yaka zanrnzo srewakuth.*  
 yaka      zan=r=nzo      sre\wakuth/  
 yamstick fight=PURP=ONLY 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/pick.up  
 ‘She picked up the yamstick to kill him.’ [tci20120901-01 MAK #86]

The emphatic enclitic =*wä* shows similar behaviour. It will be addressed in §4.17.1. The et cetera enclitic =*sü* only attaches to the associative or proprietive case markers. It will be discussed in §4.17.3.

### 3.5.2 Verbal proclitics

Verbal clitics are exclusively proclitics. They do not fully satisfy the criteria given above. For example, they only attach to one word class (verbs) and they have scope only over the inflected verb. On the other hand, all but one verbal proclitic are reduced forms of independent lexical items.

Additional evidence against analysing them as prefixes comes from phonology. In those cases where the proclitic creates an initial syllable through epenthesis, this syllable will not receive stress. For example, *bñasogwr* ‘he is climbing there’ is marked with the medial proclitic *b=*. Since all proclitics only consist of a single consonant, through syllabification an epenthetic vowel is inserted: [ʰm̩b̩əŋʰasoʰgʷə̃r]. On the surface, the second syllable is stressed. However, stress remains word-initial, because the clitic is not a part of the phonological word. Stress in Komnzo verbs is strictly word-initial and prefixes which create an initial syllable (even if filled with the epenthetic vowel) will be stressed, for example *ŋazi wsogwr* ‘He climbs the coconut’ is realised as [ŋatʃi wʰəsoʰgʷə̃r].

The first set of verbal proclitics are the clitic demonstratives. These are deictic proclitics which attach to an inflected verb form: *z=* PROX, *b=* MED, and *f=* DIST. They are described in §3.1.12.3 and §5.6.2.

The second set of verbal proclitics comprises *m=* and *n=*. Depending on their morpho-syntactic context, they can be classified as either clitics or particles. The *m=* proclitic was briefly addressed in §3.1.12.3. We saw in Table 3.8, that *m=* patterns with the interrogatives. Thus, it patterns with the three deictic proclitics. However, this is a marginal function, because it is found only with the copula. More frequently, *m=* occurs with verb forms in irrealis or imperative mood. In this case it adds the meaning of apprehension (‘X might happen!’) as in (104). Furthermore, with imperative verb forms only and the potential particle *kma* it expresses prohibition (‘don’t do X!’) as in (94). In these latter function,

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*m* is analyzed as a particle rather than a proclitic. These functions will be discussed in detail in §6.3.2.

- (104) *thambrnzo mthäkwr fafä.*  
 thambr=nzo m=thä\kwr/ fafä  
 hand=ONLY APPR=2SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:IMP:PFV/hit afterwards  
 ‘You might go home empty handed afterwards.’ (Lit. ‘You might hit only your hands afterwards.’)  
 [tci20121019-04 ABB #126]

The second clitic *n=* also serves a double function. If attached to a verb inflected for non-past, it marks immediate past.<sup>10</sup> I gloss it IPST and analyse it as a proclitic. See example (105) which was uttered at the end of a recording.

- (105) *trikasi mane nḡatrikwé fof ... ngafynm ... badafa ane fof ḡanritakwa fof.*  
 trik-si mane n=ḡa\trik/wé fof (.) ḡafe=nm (.)  
 tell-NMLZ which IPST=1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/tell EMPH (.) father=DAT.NSG (.)  
 bada=fa ane fof ḡan\ritak/wa fof  
 ancestor=ABL DEM EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/CROSS EMPH  
 ‘As for the story that I have just told, it was passed to (our) fathers from the ancestors.’  
 [tci20131013-01 ABB #403-405]

The second function of *n* occurs with verbs in one of the past tenses or in irrealis mood. It expresses that an event was ‘about to occur’ or that someone was ‘trying to do’ something. I call this the imminent function and here I analyse *n* as a particle rather than a proclitic because it can occur in various positions. This is shown in (106) where *n* occurs in preverbal position, and in (107) where it occurs freely in the clause. In (106), the speaker reports how she saw something moving in the grass in her garden. In (107), the speaker talks about trying to extinguish a fire in his garden. I refer the reader to §6.3.1 for further discussion of *n*.

- (106) *wati foba fof n zäbrimé ... wati nzun nima “kaboth kma zamath.”*  
 wati foba fof n zä\brim/é (.) wati nzun nima kaboth  
 then DIST.ABL EMPH IMN 1SG:SBJ:RPST:PFV/return (.) then 1SG.DAT QUOT snake  
 kma za\math/  
 POT 2|3SG:SBJ:RPST:PFV/run  
 ‘Well, I was about to return from there ... and I thought to myself “This must be a snake running off.”’  
 [tci20120821-01 LNA #9-10]
- (107) *kwankwiré zbo n fam zäre damaki yföfo ... “keke watikhémär zagr fefe rä.”*  
 kwan\kwir/é zbo fam zä\r/é damaki  
 1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/run PROX.ALL IMN thoughts 1SG:SBJ:RPST:PFV/do

<sup>10</sup>Note that this is shown in the unified gloss: both non-past (NPST) and immediate past (IPST) are marked on the verb. This is because the latter is expressed by a clitic, whereas the former is part of the verb morphology proper.

yfö=fo (.) keke watik-thé=mär zagr fefe \rä/  
 dynamite.well hole=ALL (.) NEG enough-ADJZR=PRIV far really

3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be

‘I was running around here considering (going to) the water well, but I thought  
 “No, not enough, it is too far.”’ [tci20120922-24 MAA #49-50]

### 3.6 Connectives

There are a number of small words in Komnzo which I label connectives. These serve to connect various constituents: noun phrases, clauses, discourse, etc. The most common ones are *a* ‘and’, *o* ‘or’, and *e* ‘until’. The last of the three is usually a long, stretched out vowel. See examples (108), (109), and (110) respectively.

- (108) *nagayé zbo thgathinzako ... mantma kafarwä a srak nge ... katanwä.*  
 nagayé zbo th\gathinz/ako (.) mantma kafar=wä  
 children PROX.ALL 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3DU.OBJ:PST:PFV:AND/leave (.) female big=EMPH  
 a srak nge (.) katan=wä  
 and boy child (.) small=EMPH  
 ‘He left the two children here ... the big girl and the small boy.’  
 [tci20100905 ABB #21-23]

- (109) *nafajamaf wnfathwr o ynfathwr.*  
 nafa-ŋame=f wn\fath/wr o  
 3.POSS-mother=ERG.SG 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:NPST:VENT/hold or  
 yn\fath/wr  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:VENT/hold  
 ‘(The child’s) mother holds her or holds him.’ [tci20111004 RMA #327-328]

- (110) *nzä nima waniyak e srn kränrsöfthé zrafo.*  
 nzä nima wa\niyak/ e srn krän\rsöfth/é  
 1SG.ABS like.this 1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/come until srn 1SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV:VENT/descend  
 zra=fo  
 swamp=ALL  
 ‘I came like this until I walked down to the swamp in Srn.’  
 [tci20111119-03 ABB #96]

The three adverbial demonstratives in the allative case may also be used to express meaning ‘until’ both in a spatial and temporal sense. However, they have to be marked for the purposive case, thus producing the forms *zbomr* from *zbo*, *bobomr* from *bobo*, and *fobomr* from *fbo*. This is not possible with the corresponding ablative forms, i.e. *zbamr*, *bobamr* and *fobamr* are all ungrammatical. Example (111) shows one occurrence of *bobomr* with a temporal meaning of ‘until’. Here, the speaker describes her daily routine in the high school in Daru

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- (111) *frasinzo nzwamnzrm ezifa bobomr mor efoth.*  
frasi=nzo nwa\m/nzrm ezi=fa bobomr mor efoth  
hunger=ONLY 1PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/sit morning=ABL until neck day  
'We were staying very hungry from the morning until mid day.'

[tci20120924-01 TRK #37]

The word *fthé* 'when' may be used to connect clauses as causal, temporal or conditional sequences (see §9.4.2 and §9.6). It may also be used without reference to another clause, in which case it can be translated as 'at the time when'. See example (112) below for a causal sequence.

- (112) *kafar n̄arr fthé sra\rä, nzmärkarä fthé sra\rä ... zöftha nagayé keke kwa sranathrth.*  
kafar n̄arr fthé sra\rä/ nzmär=karä fthé  
big bandicoot when 3SG.MASC:IRR:IPFV/be grease=PROP when  
sra\rä/ (.) zöftha nagayé keke kwa  
3SG.MASC:IRR:IPFV/be (.) new children NEG FUT  
sra\na/thr  
2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:IPFV/eat  
'If it is a big bandicoot, if it is one with grease, then the young children will not eat it.'

[tci20120922-26 DAK #82-83]

## 3.7 Ideophones and interjections

### 3.7.1 Ideophones

Komnzo ideophones depict almost exclusively sounds and, thus, cover the lower spectrum of the implicational hierarchy of sensory imagery as discussed in (Dingemanse 2012: 663). Komnzo ideophones cover a range of auditory phenomena: sounds from nature, animal sounds, human made noises, bodily noises, human made signals. Table 3.12 groups them according to their semantics.

Example (113) introduces the topic in the context of a rather gruesome story about an unsuccessful headhunting expedition. The ideophone *grr kwan* depicts the gurgling or rasping sound of someone breathing; in this example someone dying.

- (113) *wgathiknath fobo fof. frknzo zwanorm. grr kwannzo fobo zwanorm.*  
w\gathik/nath fobo fof frk=nzo  
2|3DU:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:IPFV/leave DIST.ALL EMPH blood=ONLY  
zwa\nor/m grr.kwan=nzo fobo zwa\nor/m  
3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR/shout rasping.sound=ONLY DIST.ALL 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR/shout  
'The two left her while she was bleeding from there (the throat). She was just gurgling.'

[tci20111119-01 ABB #154]

Ideophones occur as a compound with the word *kwan* 'noise, shout, sound'. This should not be taken as evidence that speakers are merely mimicking a particular auditory phenomenon in an ad hoc way. On the contrary, ideophones are conventionalised

lexical items like any other word. I will use the term ideophone only for those lexical items which do not have a lexical meaning other than the sound they depict. We can observe a gradient from lexical items to ideophones. For example *wth kwan* ‘fart’ consists of *wth* ‘excrete, faeces’ + *kwan*. It is a noun + noun compound and it would be wrong to call *wth* an ideophone. On the other end of the spectrum we have *brr kwan* ‘the sound of a bilabial trill’ which consists of *brr* + *kwan*. The former refers only to the particular sound and I will therefore call *brr* an ideophone. There are some transitional cases like *thmdi kwan* ‘sound of a sigh during sleep,’ which is in principle decomposable as *thm* ‘nose’ + *di* ‘back of the head’ + *kwan*. However, speakers do not decompose this word anymore, but understand *thmdi* as one lexical item that refers to a particular sound.

There are only two exceptions, which do not fit the above description: *buay* means ‘someone taking off in a hurry, fleeing, running away’ and *bra* means ‘something is finished, depleted, or gone’. Both lexical items differ in their semantics, i.e. *buay* expresses movement and *bra* expresses a (visual) state. They also differ in syntactic behaviour because they occur without the word *kwan*. However, I analyse them as ideophones following Dingemans who defines ideophones as “marked words that depict sensory imagery” (2012: 655).

There are a few special phonological characteristics of ideophones. For example, I have shown in §2.6 that the bilabial stop [b] is not an indigenous phoneme in Komnzo. We find [b] in a number of ideophones, for example *bübü kwan* ‘the sound a hunter makes when hitting the ground to attract wallabies’.

Ideophones can be modified by another nominal, an adjective or another noun. In example (114), we see the ideophone *ta kwan* ‘a high-pitched clicking, breaking sound’ as part of a compound modified by *zr* ‘tooth’.

- (114) *mnzfa boba kwan\ri/zrmth nzarwonaneme zr ta kwan.*  
 mnz=fa boba kwan\ri/zrmth nzarwon=aneme zr  
 house=ABL MED.ABL 2|3PL:SBJ:PST.DUR.VENT/hear barramundi=POSS.NSG tooth  
 ta.kwan  
 clicking.sound  
 ‘They were hearing the snapping of the barramundis from the house.’

[tci20120922-21 DAK #8]

### 3.7.2 Interjections

Interjections in Komnzo are a small class of uninflecting words used to express delight, bewilderment, a negative attitude, approval or refusal, commands, greetings, or vocatives. Interjections form a separate intonation group, and they stand as an utterance by themselves. Table 3.13 gives an overview of the most common interjections.

Table 3.12: Ideophones

sounds from nature	
<i>susu kwan</i>	sound of a running stream of water
<i>buku kwan</i>	sound of splashing water (fish jumping, people washing)
<i>ba kwan</i>	sound of something heavy falling on the ground
<i>bü kwan</i>	sound of a coconut falling on the ground
<i>rürü kwan</i>	sound of thunder (in the distance)
<i>wär kwan</i>	sound of thunder (close)
<i>u kwan</i>	sound of strong wind
animal sounds	
<i>sö kwan</i>	sound of wallabies grunting
<i>gu kwan</i>	sound of an animal grunting (e.g.: pigs, dogs)
<i>gww kwan</i>	sound of barking dogs
bodily sounds	
<i>nzam kwan</i>	sound of smacking one's lips
<i>gwrr kwan</i>	sound of swallowing something
<i>thmss kwan</i>	sound of someone snuffling, snorting
<i>grr kwan</i>	sound of stertorous or rasping breathing
<i>thmdrr kwan</i>	sound of snoring
<i>thmdi kwan</i>	sound of a sigh during sleep
<i>brr kwan</i>	bilabial trill (baby babbling or someone farting)
human made noises	
<i>ta kwan</i>	sound of something that breaks or cracks, e.g.: twigs
<i>tä kwan</i>	sound of chopping trees
<i>yo kwan</i>	sound of an arrow hitting something
<i>tütü kwan</i>	sound of steps, someone walking
<i>rrr kwan</i>	sound of rustling through dried leaves
<i>suku kwan</i>	sound of someone walking in water
human made signal sounds	
<i>bübü kwan</i>	sound of a hunter hitting the ground to attract wallabies
<i>ws kwan</i>	sound made to send the dogs after some animal
<i>äs kwan</i>	sound made to call the dogs
<i>knzu kwan</i>	sound of people shouting out for someone (usually [u:])
<i>fifiya kwan</i>	sound of whistling (a song)
<i>siya kwan</i>	sound of someone signaling by whistling
<i>ti kwan</i>	sound of someone singing in the distance
<i>si kwan</i>	hissing sound [s] in order to attract someone's attention
<i>dm kwan</i>	a signal of amazement produced as a series of alveolar clicks
<i>mü kwan</i>	a signal of approval or a backchannel marker produced as [m:]



Table 3.13: Interjections

form	translation (and context)
<i>aiwa</i>	'oh no' (used to signal compassion, negative surprise, emphasizing with another person's misfortune)
<i>awe</i>	'come!'
<i>awkot</i>	(used as a sudden surprise, e.g.: somebody trips over a log)
<i>awow</i>	'ok' (used to signal agreement)
<i>ayo</i>	'watch out' (used as a warning sign)
<i>kare</i>	'go (away)!'
<i>kiwar</i>	'good hunting luck' (used to wish a successful hunting either a person or ritually after setting a trap, hanging a fishnet, etc.)
<i>monzé</i>	'yes, of course' (used as a sign of agreement)
<i>razé</i>	'yeah' (used as a sign of emphatic agreement or approval)
<i>si rore rore</i>	(shouted out by women during poison-root fishing)



# 4 Nominal morphology

## 4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the nominal morphology of Komnzo. With the exception of the close possessive construction, all nominal morphology is encliticised or suffixed to the element over which it has scope, which is almost always the noun phrase. There is little to no allomorphy in the enclitic and affix formatives. There are no declension classes. There are special marking patterns for animate referents, which include a number distinction.

I begin by a description of reduplication, which is only found with nominals (§4.2). The remainder and bulk of this chapter describes case and further morphological markers. I introduce the reader to the 17 cases and their respective functions in §4.3. After this, each case is discussed in turn (§4.5 - 4.16). In §4.17, I describe three enclitics and one suffix which are not related to case. Finally, in §4.18, I offer a few concluding remarks on the formal and functional overlap between particular case markers.

## 4.2 Reduplication

There are two reduplication patterns in Komnzo. They differ only formally, not in their meaning, and words for which reduplication is a productive morphological process can form both patterns. I use the terms partial reduplication and full reduplication. In the former, the reduplicant is only the first consonant of the word. In the latter, the whole word is reduplicated.

Semantically, reduplication expresses non-prototypicality, plurality, or both. In (1), *ttrikasi* ‘stories’ is formed from *trikasi* ‘story’, and reduplication expresses plurality. In (2), the reduplication of *yawi* ‘seed’ refers to ‘coins’, i.e. it expresses non-prototypicality in addition to plurality.

- (1) *komnzo nima fä zämnzerake nä ttrikasi keke.*  
komnzo nima fä zä\mnzer/ake                      nä t-trika-si                      keke  
only like.this DIST INSG:SBJ:PST:PFV/fall.asleep INDF REDUP-tell-NMLZ NEG  
‘We just fell asleep there, no more stories.’ [tci20120922-25 ALK #45]
- (2) *ɲareane yawiyawime kwa ɲonathr ane kambef.*  
ɲare=ane                      yawi-yawi=me kwa ɲo\na/thr                      ane kambe=f  
woman=POSS.SG REDUP-seed=INS FUT 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/drink DEM man=ERG.SG  
‘That guy is going to drink with his wife’s money.’ [tci20111004 TSA #182]

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The nominal subclasses which can be reduplicated are nouns, adjectives, property nouns and quantifiers. Example (3) shows the quantifier *tüfr* expressing that many different jobs are involved in raising a pig. In (4), the adjective *tnz* ‘short’ is reduplicated, meaning that the man was just a bit short. In (5), the adjective *kafar* ‘big’ is reduplicated, meaning that the elders of the Mayawas of Firra had been killed in the headhunting raid.

- (3) *zena keke miyo worä ruga mgthksi ... znsä ttüfr.*  
 zena keke miyo wo\rä/                      ruga mgthk-si (.) znsä t-tüfr  
 today NEG desire 1SG.SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be pig feed-NMLZ (.) work REDUP-plenty  
 ‘Today, I do not want to feed pigs ... (too) much work.’  
 [tci20120805-01 ABB #819-820]
- (4) *nafafis yf nagawa ... tnztnz kabe sfrärm.*  
 nafa-fis            yf        nagawa (.) tnz-tnz            kabe sf\rä/rm  
 3.POSS-husband name nagawa (.) REDUP-short man 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR/be  
 ‘Her husband’s name (was) *Nagawa* ... he was a bit short guy.’  
 [tci20120901-01 MAK #17-18]
- (5) *nafanme mayawa kkafar z bramöwä thäkwrath firran.*  
 nafanme mayawa k-kafar    z    bramöwä thä\kwr/ath  
 3NSG.POSS mayawa REDUP-big ALR all            2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:PFV/kill  
 firra=n  
 firra=LOC  
 ‘All their Mayawa elders had been killed in Firra.’  
 [tci20111107-01 MAK 127]

In addition to productive reduplication with the above meanings, reduplications are found across the lexicon to form new meanings. There is a high number of reduplications in plant names and in the names for animals, especially bird and fish species. Often the pattern of reduplication establishes a semantic link between biota of different species, families or even kingdoms. I describe this phenomenon under label “sign metonymy” in §11.2.

Lastly, I want to mention that there are some reduplicative orphans which lack a corresponding simplex, for example *gwargwar* ‘mud’ or *narjar* ‘bamboo paddle’.

### 4.3 The form and function of case markers

I follow Blake (1994) in making a distinction between core cases and peripheral cases. Core cases in Blake’s typology “encode complements of typical one-place and two-place transitive verbs” (1994: 32), i.e. they are required by the verb’s argument structure. I define core cases in Komnzo as those cases whose referent can be indexed in the verb. Thus, core cases are the absolutive, ergative and dative case. Note that the absolutive is zero-marked. The possessive is also counted as core case, because the possessor can be raised and indexed in the verb. Peripheral cases are those cases whose referents are not

required by the structure of the verb, nor can they be indexed in the verb. I will use the term semantic cases for these.

Following (Andrews 2007b), I understand semantic roles to refer to ‘thematic relations’ or ‘deep cases’ (Fillmore 1968). From these, one can derive grammatical functions such as A, S, and P (Dixon 1972).<sup>1</sup> In the following, the terms core case and semantic case are used to refer to the cases, while the term semantic role is used to refer to the underlying semantics.

Following Evans and Dench (1988), who discuss the ways in which case can be used to establish three levels in Australian languages, I recognise three distinct levels at which cases operate in Komnzo. First, there is the adnominal level which relates one noun phrase within a matrix noun phrase. Secondly, there is the clausal level which operates directly below the clause level. Thirdly, there is the cross-clausal level which indicates that one clause is the argument of another clause. Table 4.1 provides an overview of the cases and their functions. Note that semantic cases can be subdivided into spatial, temporal and other.

Table 4.1: The Komnzo case system

		case label	semantic roles by function		
			adnominal	clausal	cross-clausal
core cases		absolutive		Agent, Experiencer, Theme, Patient	Agent, Experiencer, Theme, Patient
		ergative		Agent	Agent
		dative		Recipient, Beneficiary	
		possessive	Possessor		
semantic cases	spatial	locative		Location	Simultaneity
		allative		Goal of motion	
		ablative		Source of motion	
	temporal	temporal locative		Location in time	
		temporal purposive		Goal in time	
		temporal possessive	Origin	Origin	
	other	instrumental		Instrument, Manner	Result, Manner
		purposive		Purpose	Purpose
		characteristic	Origin	Source, Reason, Purpose	Reason, Purpose
		proprietary		Association	Association, Manner
		privative		Absence	
		associative		Association, Inclusion	Association
	similitive		Comparison		

As mentioned above, there is little allomorphy with the case markers. Examples are

<sup>1</sup>“I will use the term ‘semantic role’ to refer to both the specific roles imposed on NPs by a given predicate (..) and to the more general classes of roles, such as ‘agent’ and ‘patient’. Semantic roles are important in the study of grammatical functions [A, S and P] since grammatical functions usually express semantic roles in a highly systematic way” (Andrews 2007b: 136).

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the locative, allative and ablative case which have different formatives for animate and inanimate referents. It can be said that Komnzo nominal morphology is relatively simple, especially when compared to its verb morphology (see chapter 5). The formatives are given in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Case markers in Komnzo

case	inanimate	animate	
		singular	non-singular
ABS	∅	∅	=é (=yé) <sup>a</sup>
ERG	=f	=f	=é (=yé)
DAT	n/a	=n	=nm
POSS	=ane	=ane	=aneme
LOC	=en (=n)	=dben	=medben
ALL	=fo	=dbo	=medbo
ABL	=fa	=dba	=medba
TEMP.LOC	=thamen	n/a	n/a
TEMP.POSS	=thamane	n/a	n/a
TEMP.PURP	=thamar	n/a	n/a
PURP	=r	n/a	n/a
INS	=me	n/a	n/a
CHAR	=ma	=ane=ma	=aneme=ma
PROP	=karä / =kaf	=karä / =kaf	=karä / =kaf
PRIV	=märe	=märe	=märe
ASSOC <sup>b</sup>	=ä	=r	=ä
SIMIL	=thatha	n/a	n/a

<sup>a</sup> Overt marking of the ablative (NSG) is very rare.

<sup>b</sup> The associative forms encode DU versus PL (§7.6).

We find that case markers make a distinction between animate and inanimate referents. For certain cases, there are designated formatives for animate referents, for example all the spatial cases. Only with animate referents is there a number distinction (SG vs. NSG) in the case markers. Consider examples (6-8) below. The first example shows the locative case on *mnz* ‘house’, and the context of the story reveals that this is about several houses. The case marker, however, does not encode number. Examples (7) and (8) show that this is different for animate referents, and the case markers make a singular versus non-singular distinction.

- (6) *kwot namäme thfanakwrm ... mnzen thwarakthkwramo.*  
 kwot namä=me thfa\nak/wrm (.) mnz=en  
 properly good=INS 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/put.down (.) house=LOC

thwa\rakthk/wramo  
 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:IO:PST:DUR:AND/put.on.top  
 ‘She was sorting (the things) properly ... She put the things back in the  
 houses.’ [tci20120901-01 MAK #38-39]

- (7) *mizidben sokoro zewära.*  
 mizi=dben sokoro ze\wär/a  
 pastor=LOC.ANIM.SG school SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/happen  
 ‘The school was at the pastor(’s place).’ [tci20120904-02 MAB #16]

- (8) *nafangthmedben byamnzr.*  
 nafa-ngth=medben b=ya\m/nzr  
 3.POSS-younger.sibling=LOC.ANIM.NSG MED=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/dwell  
 ‘He stays at his small brothers’ place.’ [tci20120814 ABB #216]

As Table 4.2 above shows, most case markers employ an /m/ or /me/ element to mark non-singular number. I refrain from segmenting this element as a separate morph for two reasons. First, the /m/ or /me/ does not occur in all cases, for example not the ergative case. Secondly, its position is not fixed. With the possessive, /me/ follows the possessive marker =*ane*. With the dative, only /m/ follows the dative marker =*n*. With spatial cases /me/ precedes the locative, allative and ablative marker. I will offer an explanation of this in the final section of this chapter (§4.18).

These formatives attach to the rightmost element of the phrase, but have scope over the whole noun phrase. In example (9), the adjective *katan* ‘small’ precedes noun *nzram* ‘flower’ and the case marker attaches to the latter. Example (10) shows the same adjective postposed to the noun *yfö* ‘hole’. Again, the case marker attaches to the rightmost element.

- (9) *katan nzramma emarwr.*  
 katan nzram=ma e\mar/wr  
 small flower=CHAR 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/see  
 ‘You (can) identify them from the small flowers.’ [tci20130907-02 JAA #211]

- (10) *watik yfö katanr kwa yarenzr.*  
 watik yfö katan=r kwa ya\re/nzr  
 then hole small=PURP FUT 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/look  
 ‘Then, he will look around for a small hole.’ [tci20130903-04 RNA #26]

## 4.4 Absolutive

The absolutive case is almost always unmarked. The non-singular clitic (=é), (=yé) when it follows a vowel, is rarely used. On the clausal level the absolutive encodes the single argument of intransitive verbs (11), or the patient argument of transitive verbs (12).

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- (11) *nzä zä zf wamnzr.*  
 nzä zä zf wa\m/nzr  
 1SG.ABS PROX IMM 1SG.SBJ:NPST:IPFV/dwell  
 ‘I live right here.’ [tci20130823-08 WAM #85]
- (12) *nzä fthé fof afaf schoolen zwäthba.*  
 nzä fthé fof afa=f school=en zwä\thb/a  
 1SG.ABS when EMPH father=ERG school=LOC 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:PST:PFV/put.inside  
 ‘That was when father put me in school.’ [tci20120924-01 TRK #5]

When a nominalised verb functions as the patient of a matrix clause, it appears with no overt case marking. It could be analysed as being marked with absolutive case, though for reasons of parsimony I will not gloss it as such. This commonly occurs with phasal verbs, like in (13), where the speaker shows me how to make a whistle from a coconut leaf.

- (13) *myuknsi srethkäfe. zane zf ymyuknwé.*  
 myukn-si sre\thkäf/e zane zf  
 roll-NMLZ 1PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/start DEM:PROX IMM  
 y\myukn/wé  
 1SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/roll  
 ‘We would start twisting it. I am twisting this here.’ [tci20120914 RNA #45]

Overt marking of non-singular number is possible if the referent is animate. The formative is =é if the host is consonant final, and =yé if it is vowel final. Hence, there is a syncretism between absolutive and ergative non-singular. This pattern of syncretism is also found in the first person pronouns (§3.1.9), where *ni* is used for both ergative and absolutive non-singular. As a case marker on absolutive noun phrases it is very rare. One example is given below in (14).

- (14) *nzone amayé bä thfamrnm ksi karen.*  
 nzone ama=é bä thfa\m/rnm ksi kar=en  
 1SG.POSS mother=ABS.NSG MED 2|3DU:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell bush place=LOC  
 ‘My two mothers lived there in the bush.’ [tci20150919-05 LNA #240]

Only in the syntactic context of the inclusory construction is the absolutive non-singular obligatory (§7.6). Elsewhere it is optional, and tokens in the corpus are infrequent.

### 4.5 Ergative =f, =é

The ergative case marker is =f (SG) or =é (NSG). The ergative usually operates at the clausal level. It encodes the semantic role of actor or stimulus. Example (15) is taken from a “*Nzürna* story”. These stories are widespread in the Morehead region. The main character *nzürna*, but also the plot of the stories, bears some resemblance to the classic European witch stories.



- (15) *okay, ausi zakora “ɲame, nzürna ɲaryf wanmrinzr!” ... ausif sakora “anema fof gukonzé nima kmam foba gniyaké!”*  
 okay ausi za\kor/a ɲame nzürna ɲare=f  
 okay old.woman 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:PFV/speak mother nzürna woman=ERG  
 wan\mri/nzr (.) ausi=f  
 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/chase (.) old.woman=ERG  
 sa\kor/a ane=ma fof  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:PFV/speak DEM=CHAR EMPH  
 gu\ko/nzé nima kma=m foba gni\yak/é  
 1SG:SBJ>2SG:OBJ:RPST:IPFV/speak QUOT POT=APPR DIST:ABL 2SG:SBJ:IMP:IPFV/walk  
 ‘Okay, he said to the old woman: “Mother, the Nzürna woman is chasing after me!” The old woman told him: “That is why I told you: Don’t go there!”’  
 [tci20120827-03 KUT #114-115]

Examples (16) and (17) show the ergative non-singular formative. This is =é when the word is consonant final and =yé when it is vowel final. Example (16) is taken from a procedural text about a little whistle made from a coconut leaf. In example (17), the speaker complains about some families whose children seem to be shifting from Komnzo to Wära.

- (16) *rusa räkumgsir zane äfiyokwrth ... sraké.*  
 rusa räkumg-si=r zane ä\fiyok/wrth (.)  
 deer attract-NMLZ=PURP DEM:PROX 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/make (.)  
 srak=é  
 boy=ERG.NSG  
 ‘They make this one for attracting deer ... the boys (make it).’  
 [tci20120914 RNA #61]
- (17) *... a ɲameyé nafanme zokwasimöwä thwasäminzrmth*  
 (.) a ɲame=é nafanme zokwasi=me=wä  
 (.) and mother=ERG.NSG 3NSG.POSS speech=INS=EMPH  
 thwa\sämi/nzrmth  
 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/teach  
 ‘... and the mothers were teaching their own language (to the children).’  
 [tci20120924-02 ABM #37-38]

The ergative case can be used to encode inanimate actors who for some reason are attributed an actor-like behaviour. Example (18) comes from a hunting story where the speaker reaches the camp of his family in the night and sees a gaslamp hanging on the bamboos. Here, the wind (*füs*füs) is marked with the ergative.

- (18) *nabi tutin fä fof zumirwanzrm füs*füs.  
 nabi tuti=n fä fof zu\mirwa/nzrm füsfüs=f  
 bamboo branch=LOC DIST EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:DUR/swing wind=ERG  
 ‘The wind was swinging (the lamp) on the bamboo branch.’ [tci20111119-03 ABB #117]

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Example (19) is taken from an origin myth in which the island of New Guinea and the continent of Australia were still connected. The myth describes the rising sea levels and how the people had to take refuge on both sides. The inanimate referent *no* ‘water’ is flagged with the ergative case.

- (19) *nof nā nima thärkothmako ... nā nima thänkothma nzezawe.*  
 no=f nā nima thär\kothm/ako (.) nā nima  
 water=ERG some like.this SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:PFV:AND/chase (.) some like.this  
 thän\kothm/a nze-zawe  
 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:PFV:VENT/chase 1NSG.POSS-right  
 ‘The water chased some away like this ... and it chased some here to our side like this.’

[tci20131013-01 ABB #125-126]

Experiencer-object constructions are quite common in Komnzo, whereby the stimulus receives the ergative case and the experiencer the ablative. Constructions of this type have been described for Kalam by Pawley et al. (2000) and for Nen by Evans (2015b). As in Kalam, experiencer-object constructions are often used to express bodily and mental processes. Example (20) comes from a story about a man who was angry and tried to shock people at a dance. The fact that he was infuriated is expressed literally as ‘anger finished him’. Likewise, in example (21) the speaker announces that she wants to go to bed because ‘fear has grabbed her’.

- (20) *nokuyé fthé sabtha.*  
 noku=yé fthé sa\bth/a  
 anger=ERG.NSG when 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:PST:PFV/finish  
 ‘That is when he got really angry.’ (Lit. ‘That is when anger finished him.’)  
 [tci20120909-06 KAB #39]

- (21) *wtrif z zwefaf.*  
 wtri=f z zwe\faf/  
 fear=ERG ALR 2|3SG>1SG:RPST:PFV/hold  
 ‘I am already scared.’ (Lit. ‘Fear already holds me.’) [tci20130901-04 RNA #164]

The ergative case can also be attached to a nominalised verb as in example (22). This example is about a Marind headhunter who was trying to distract the people by imitating the sound that dogs make when they chew on bones. The poor guy was so busy making this noise that he did not hear how the village people were approaching him. Hence, it is the infinitive of ‘crack’ which receives the ergative case in (22).

- (22) *bäne thuwänzrm fof ... zarfa surmänwrm ane wäsifnzo.*  
 bäne thu\wä/nzrm fof (.) zarfa  
 DEM:MED 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/crack fof (.) ear  
 su\rmän/wrm ane wä-si=f=nzo  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:DUR/close DEM crack-NMLZ=ERG=ONLY  
 ‘He was cracking those (coconut shells). This cracking was blocking his ears.’  
 [tci20120818 ABB #67-68]

Thus, the ergative case can also function at the cross-clausal level. Example (23) shows that the infinitive to which the ergative is attached may also take an object. In the example a malevolent spirit, who lives in a tree, is about to be burned by an angry mob. She does not notice the fire at first because she is too concentrated on weaving a mat. The ‘mat weaving’ receives the ergative.

- (23) *mni wthomonwath a zräföfth ... fi yame yrsifnzo zukonzrm boba wämne yfön fof.*  
 mni w\thomon/wath a  
 fire 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:IPFV/pile.firewood and  
 zrä\föf/th (.) fi yame yr-si=f=nzo  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IRR:PFV/burn (.) but mat weave-NMLZ=ERG=ONLY  
 zu\ko/nzrm boba wämne yfö=n fof  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:PST:DUR/do MED.ABL tree hole=LOC EMPH  
 ‘They piled up the firewood and started to burn it ... but she was concentrated on weaving the mat there in the tree hole.’ (Lit. ‘The mat weaving did her.’)  
 [tci20120901-01 MAK #155-156]

Contractions showing the ergative at the cross-clausal level are infrequent in the corpus. Note that in both examples above, the exclusive clitic =nzo is attached to the ergative-marked infinitive in order to highlight that it was “only that event” which acted on a person.

## 4.6 Dative =n, =nm

The dative case marker is =n (SG) or =nm (NSG). It operates at the clausal level and encodes the semantic role of (animate) recipient or goal. If it is attached to a place name, as in example (24) below, the people of that place are meant, not the place. The dative is categorised as a core case because a dative marked noun phrase is indexed in the verb, as in the verb form *thägathinza* in (24). Unlike in other Tonda languages, for example in Ngkolmpu (Carroll 2017), the dative case cannot be used adnominally to mark a possessor.

In example (24), the speaker talks about the different places where he used to own a garden plot. Example (25) comes from a set of stimulus videos.

- (24) *nzone daw bä mane rera safsen ... nafanm thägathinza ... safs karnm.*  
 nzone daw bä mane \rä/ra safs=en (.) nafanm  
 1SG.POSS garden MED which 3SG.F:PST:IPFV/be safs=LOC (.) 3NSG.POSS  
 thä\gathi/nza (.) safs kar=nm  
 SG:SBJ>2|3PL:IO:PST:IPFV/leave (.) safs village=DAT.NSG  
 ‘As for my garden there in Safs, I left it for them ... for the Safs people.’  
 [tci20120805-01 ABB #652-653]

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- (25) *emoth a srak markai no ηarinth ... emothf yarithr srakn.*  
 emoth a srak markai no ηa\ri/nth (.) emoth=f  
 girl and boy white.man water 2|3DU:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/pour (.) girl=ERG  
 ya\ri/thr srak=n  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:NPST:IPFV/give boy=DAT  
 ‘The boy and the girl are pouring (each other) wine. The girl gives (it) to the  
 boy.’ [tci20111028-01 RNA #27-28]

The formatives in Table 4.2 might suggest a syncretism between the dative case and the locative case. The singular marker of the dative is =*n*, and the locative marker is also =*n* when it attaches to a vowel final word (for consonant final words, it is =*en*). However, no syncretism takes place because (i) inanimates do not take dative =(*e*)*n*, and (ii) animate referents receive a special formative of the locative case (= *dben*). Moreover, there is some variation for the dative when it is attached to a vowel final word. For example, the word *ηafe* ‘father’ with the dative =*n* can be pronounced as [ηaβen], [ηaβeʔən] or [ηaφjən] (as in 26 below).

In terms of meaning, there is some overlap between the allative and the dative case. Example (26) concludes an origin myth, and the speaker points out how the story was passed through the generations. The noun phrase *ηafynm* ‘for/to the fathers’ marks a goal. This could be equally expressed with an allative case marker *ηafemedbo* ‘to the fathers’.<sup>2</sup>

- (26) *trikasi mane ηatrikwé fof ... ηafynm ... badafa ane fof ηanritakwa fof.*  
 trik-si mane n=ηa\trik/wé fof (.) ηafe=nm (.)  
 tell-NMLZ which IPST=1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/tell EMPH (.) father=DAT.NSG (.)  
 bada=fa ane fof ηan\ritak/wa fof  
 ancestor=ABL DEM EMPH 2|3SG:OBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/pass EMPH  
 ‘The story which I have just told ... was really passed to the fathers from the  
 ancestor(s).’ [tci20131013-01 ABB #405]

## 4.7 Possessive marking

### 4.7.1 Possessive =*ane*, =*aneme*

The possessive case is =*ane* (SG) or =*aneme* (NSG). It marks the semantic role of possessor, and the noun or noun phrase to which it attaches always functions adnominally. Examples (27) and (28) show animate possessors. Example (27) is taken from a story about marriage customs and (28) is from a procedural about traditional fishing baskets. Note that all occurrences of the possessive case in (28) are within noun phrases whose nominal head is omitted because it can be recovered from the context.

<sup>2</sup>Note that the verb *ηanritakwa* ‘it (was) passed’ does not index the dative noun phrase *ηafynm* ‘for/to the fathers’. This occurs in (26) because the noun phrase is separated by a pause, by a moment of hesitation.

- (27) *bafane mezü rera ... masenane mezü.*  
 bafane mezü \rä/ra (.) masen=ane mezü  
 RECOG.POSS.SG widow 3SG.F:PST.IPFV/be (.) masen=POSS.SG widow  
 ‘She was this one’s widow ... Masen’s widow.’ [tci20120814 ABB #18-20]
- (28) *wati, net ane mane erä markaianeme erä ane ... zane zf ... kar kambeaneme zfrärm ... nzenme.*  
 wati net ane mane e\rä/ markai=aneme  
 then net DEM which 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be white.man=POSS.NSG  
 e\rä/ ane (.) zane zf (.) kar kambe=aneme  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be DEM (.) DEM:PROX IMM (.) village man=POSS.NSG  
 zf\rä/rm (.) nzenme  
 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR/be (.) INSG.POSS  
 ‘As for those nets, they are the white man’s (nets). This right here, this was the village people’s (fishbasket) ... ours.’ [tci20120906 SKK #53-56]

Examples (29) and (30) show the possessive case with inanimate possessors. When the host word is vowel final, there are different variants. In careful pronunciation, a glottal stop is inserted, for example [ɸiraʔane] in (29). In fast speech, this does not occur. Either the vowel is lengthened (if the word ends in /a/) or a glide is inserted, for example [ɸira.ne] in (29) and [ðarisijane] in (30). However, sometimes a velar nasal is inserted, and example (29) could be realised as [ɸiraŋane].

- (29) *faw wbrigwath ... firraane zanma fof.*  
 faw w\brig/wath (.) firra=ane zan=ma fof  
 payback 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:IPFV/return (.) firra=POSS.SG killing=CHAR EMPH  
 ‘They brought the payback ... because of the killing of Firra.’ [tci20111119-01 ABB #5-6]
- (30) *wati, nima fof kwa\fiyok/wrme ... tharisi taemen ... tharisiane efoth fthé zfrärm.*  
 wati nima fof kwa\fiyok/wrme (.) thari-si taem=en (.)  
 then like.this EMPH 1PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/make (.) dig-NMLZ time=LOC (.)  
 thari-si=ane efoth fthé zf\rä/rm  
 dig-NMLZ=POSS.SG day when 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR  
 ‘Well, this is what we were doing ... in the harvesting time ... when it was the day of harvesting.’ [tci20120805-01 ABB #354-356]

#### 4.7.2 Close possession

There is a second possessive construction in Komnzo, which involves a prefix. The formatives are given below in Table 4.3. Formally, these prefixes seem to be reductions of personal pronouns. Surprisingly, they originate not from the possessive but the dative pronouns (§3.1.9). This is evident from the vowel quality which signals the number distinction. For example, the first person singular possessive pronoun is *nzone* ‘my’, and the first singular dative pronoun is *nzun* ‘for me’. The possessive prefixes of the first and

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second singular show the /u/ vowel of the latter, not the /o/ vowel of the possessive series. Note that the number distinction is lost in third person. This is caused by the fact that in the third person pronouns (possessive as well as dative) there is no change in the vowel quality. The close possessive construction can also occur with other nominals, which are then treated like prefixes. I will discuss this at the end of this section.

Table 4.3: Possessive prefixes

person	SG	NSG
1	<i>nzu-</i>	<i>nze-</i>
2	<i>bu-</i>	<i>be-</i>
3	<i>nafa-</i>	

I label this type of possessive marking “close possession” rather than “inalienable possession”. Although close possessive marking is used for entities which are characterised as being inalienable, for example kinterms or the origin of a person, close possessive marking is not obligatory for these concepts, but merely one of two options. Furthermore, some of the concepts which fall under the rubric of inalienability, for example body-part terms, rarely occur in the close possessive construction in Komnzo. Finally, for those lexical items which can be used in both possessive constructions, there is a semantic difference between normal versus close possession.

From a historical perspective, frequency can help to explain the emergence of the close possessive construction (see Bybee (2010: 142) for a discussion of frequency and language change). Given that some lexical items occur frequently in a possessive construction, we can assume that, in the course of time, the preceding pronoun reduced in form and turned into a prefix. Frequency is only one explanation and the inherently relational nature of some lexical items, such as kinterms, can also provide a pathway for the emergence of the close possessive construction. It is important to point out that the prefix pattern was not extended to all other nominals. On the contrary, the two marking patterns were associated with a semantic distinction between (normal) possession and close possession. Synchronically, this means that there is no clear-cut categorisation as there is with alienable/inalienable systems. Some lexical items are judged ungrammatical by my informants in a close possessive construction. For example, I was told that *\*nzumnz* ‘my house’ is ungrammatical, and *nzone mnz* should be used instead. However, I am cautious about these judgements, because I have overheard the very construction in conversation. On the other hand, informants agree that there are many lexical items which can alternate between the two possessive constructions depending on how a speaker wants to frame the connection between possessed and possessor, for example *nzone kar* ‘my village’ (normal possession) or *nzucar* ‘my village’ (close possession). Finally, there is no class of words for which close possession is obligatory.

Example (31) shows the possessive prefix on the word *kar* ‘village/place’. The example is taken from a myth, where the two protagonists are withholding a particular food

source from each other.

- (31) *“be nzun fof kwathungr! bukaren ane fof bä safak emgthkwa.”*  
 be nzun fof kwa\thung/r bu-kar=en ane  
 2SG.ERG 1SG.DAT EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:IO:RPST:IPFV/trick 2SG.POSS-village=LOC DEM  
 fof bä safak e\mgth/kwa  
 EMPH MED saratoga 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:IPFV/feed  
 “‘You have played a trick on me! In your place there, you have been feeding these  
 saratogas.’” [tci20110802 ABB #121-122]

Example (32) shows a double possessive construction ‘their father’s story’ involving both types of possessive marking. Note that (32) could also be expressed using a possessive pronoun as *nafane nafeane trikasi*.

- (32) *nafanafeane trikasi nariznth.*  
 nafa-nafe=ane trik-si nar\ri/znth  
 3.POSS-father=POSS.SG tell-NMLZ 2|3DU:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/hear  
 ‘They are listening to their father’s story.’ [tci20111004 RMA #164]

Close possession is also possible with personal names as possessors. In this case, the personal name is treated like a prefix, i.e. it is syllabified together with the possessed. This can be seen in example (33). The possessor is the personal name *Bäi* [<sup>m</sup>b’æi], and the possessed is *fzenz* [f’ätse<sup>n</sup>ts] ‘wife’. A normal possessive construction would add the possessive case to the possessor: *Bäiane fzenz* [<sup>m</sup>b’æjane f’ätse<sup>n</sup>ts] ‘Bäi’s wife’. Both words receive stress separately, and both are syllabified independently. In the close possessive construction, the two words are syllabified as one word: *Bäyfenzf* [<sup>m</sup>b’æj’äftse<sup>n</sup>ts]. Note that the initial consonant of *fzenz* is resyllabified as a coda, the epenthetic vowel [ə] occurs between the two words, and *fzenz* does not receive separate stress. All this is evidence that the possessor (the personal name) is treated like the prefixes described above.

- (33) *wati, bäyfenzf zwäkor “bone dagon fof erä!”*  
 wati bäi-fzenz=f zwä\kor/ bone dagon fof  
 then bäi-wife=ERG 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:RPST:PFV/speak 2SG.POSS food EMPH  
 e\rä/  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be:  
 ‘Then, Bäi’s wife said to me “Your food is here!”’ [tci20120922-24 MAA #81]

Note that in this construction there is no morph signalling the possessive relation, i.e. there is no possessive case marker. Only the fact that the possessor and possessed are syllabified as one word shows the presence of possessive semantics. Consequently, there is no “possessive” in the gloss, and only the hyphen between the two words shows that they are in a (close) possessive relationship.

For some items in a close possessive construction, there is an /a/ element between possessor and possessed. As in example (34) below: *kowi-a-fis* ‘Kowi’s husband’. Thus,

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in these cases there is an overt marker of the close possessive construction. The /a/ element seems to be a reduction of the possessive case marker =*ane*. The example is taken from a conversation about food taboos. The speaker is joking about his sister – a young unmarried woman.<sup>3</sup>

- (34) *fi kowiafisanimanzo fthé z änarä.*  
fi kowi-a-fis=ane=ma=nzo fthé z  
but kowi-POSS-husband=POSS.SG=CHAR=ONLY when ALR  
ä\na/thre (.) kowi=ane kabe fthé  
1PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/eat (.) kowi=POSS.SG man when  
sra<sup>rä</sup>/  
3SG.MASC:IO:IRR.IPFV/be  
'Only from Kowi's husband we will eat (food) ... If Kowi had a husband.'  
[tci20120922-26 DAK #137-138]

### 4.8 Spatial cases

There are three spatial cases in Komnzo: the locative (=en), allative (=fo) and ablative (=fo). All three cases have special formatives for animate referents with a number distinction (SG, NSG): locative (=dben, =medben), allative (=dbo, =medbo) and ablative (=dba, =medba). They function at the clausal level and are categorised as semantic cases. Unlike neighboring languages, for example Nama and Nen, there is no perlocative case in Komnzo. All three spatial cases have various semantic extensions. For example, they can be used in a temporal sense, even though there is a set of dedicated temporal case markers (§4.9).

All three animate non-singular case markers show some variation in their pronunciation. For example, *kabe=nmedben* and *kabe=medben* 'with/at the people' are both grammatical. The former contains an /n/, whereas the latter does not. I will offer an explanation for this in §4.18.

#### 4.8.1 Locative =en

The locative case marker is =en, for example *mnz=en* 'in the house'. If the host word ends in a vowel, the formative is =n, for example *mni=n* 'in the fire'. There are designated formatives for animate referents, which make a singular versus non-singular contrast. Example (35) shows the locative case in its basic use. Example (36) comes from a text about a young boy who drowned in the Morehead river after he got stuck underwater in the mud. The example is a detailed description of how the body was recovered from the river.

<sup>3</sup>The fact that in example (34) the possessive case =*ane* is encliticised to *kowiafis* 'Kowi's husband' is not relevant for the point here. This always occurs when the characteristic case is attached to an animate referent (§4.12).



- (35) *nzone fäms byé safsen*  
 nzone fäms b=\yé/ safs=en  
 1SG.POSS exchange.man MED=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be safs=LOC  
 ‘My exchange man is there in Safs.’ [tci20120805-01 ABB #269]
- (36) *zä thabr thentharfa ... ηakarkwa gwargwarfa ... srefzath ... neba thabr nima  
 sfrärm nagayedben ... neba ... nebame kwansogwrm nabin.*  
 zä thabr then\tharf/a (.) ηa\kark/wa  
 PROX arm 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:PFV:VENT/put.under (.) 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/pull  
 gwargwar=fa (.) sre\fzath/ (.) neba thabr  
 mud=ABL (.) 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/pull.out (.) opposite arm  
 nima sfrä/rm nagaye=dben (.) neba (.) neba=me  
 like.this 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR child=LOC.ANIM.SG (.) opposite (.) opposite=INS  
 kwan\sog/wrm nabi=n  
 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:DUR/ascend bamboo=LOC  
 ‘He put the arm underneath ... he pulled him from the mud ... he pulled him out  
 ... one arm was like this on the boy ... the other ... with the other he climbed up  
 on the bamboo.’ [tci20120904-02 MAB #189-193]

The locative can be translated to English with the prepositions ‘in’, ‘on’ or ‘at’. In order to express that some entity is inside something else, one can use the locational nominal *mrmr* ‘inside’ (37). See §3.1.7 for locationals. Note that example (37) shows that the locative marker attaches to the last item *mrmr* ‘inside’ of the phrase *firra kar mrmr* ‘inside the village of Firra’.

- (37) *firra kar mrmren kabe thwamnzrm fobo.*  
 firra kar mrmr=en kabe thwa\m/nzrm fobo  
 firra village inside=LOC man 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell DIST:ALL  
 ‘The people lived inside the village of Firra.’ [tci20120901-01 MAK #27]

The locative case can be extended to cover various abstract, non-spatial domains. In example (38) it is used temporally: ‘on that day’ and ‘in the afternoon’. Example (39) shows a metaphorical use of the locative case: *zokwasi=n* ‘in words’. This sentence was a description of a man who got infuriated at the demand of some of his relatives to give them his daughter as an exchange sister.

- (38) *ane efothen ... ane zizin ... Kukufia we sathora fof.*  
 ane efoth=en (.) ane zizi=n (.) Kukufia we sa\thor/a  
 DEM SUN=LOC (.) DEM afternoon=LOC (.) kukufia also 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:PFV/arrive  
 fof  
 EMPH  
 ‘On that day ... in the afternoon, Kukufia arrived again.’ [tci20100905 ABB #105-107]
- (39) *fi zokwasin kwanänzüthzr.*

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fi zokwasi=n kwa\nänzüth/zr  
 3.ABS speech=LOC 2|3SG:SBJ:RPST:IPFV/bury  
 ‘He got into a fuss.’ (Lit. ‘He buried himself in words.’) [overheard ]

The above functions of the locative were all at the clausal level. At the cross-clausal level, the locative can also be used with a nominalisation as the counterpart of an adverbial subordinator where it encodes an event that occurs simultaneously with that of the main clause. Example (40) is taken from a story about a malevolent spirit who had killed a man. In the example, she realises that others have discovered the truth.

- (40) *wtri we z zära nima “z zwemarth ... ane yam fiyoksin.”*  
 wtri we z zä\r/a nima z zwe\mar/th (.)  
 fear also ALR 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/do QUOT ALR 2|3PL:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:RPST:PFV/see (.)  
 ane yam fiyok-si=n  
 DEM event make-NMLZ=LOC  
 ‘She was already afraid and said: “They have already seen me doing that thing.”’ [tci20120901-01 MAK #150-152]

#### 4.8.2 Allative =fo

The allative case marker is =fo for inanimate referents and =dbo (SG) or =medbo (NSG) for animate referents. It encodes a spatial goal. Example (41) describes how the speaker and his family received the news that a widow from the neighbouring village should get remarried (to one of his friends).

- (41) *wati nzedbo zanrifhath mayawanmedbo rouku bänefo ... masufo.*  
 wati nzedbo zan\rifh/ath mayawa=medbo rouku  
 then INSG.ALL 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:PFV/send mayawa=ALL.ANIM.NSG rouku  
 bäne=fo (.) masu=fo  
 RECOG=ALL (.) masu=ALL  
 ‘Then they sent the word to us ... to the Mayawas in Rouku ... to there ... to Masu.’ [tci20120814 ABB #34-35]

The allative can be translated as movement ‘to’ or ‘towards’ some entity (41), but also as movement ‘inside’ some entity (42).

- (42) *zbo n zrätbë yare kwosifo.*  
 zbo n zrä\thb/é yare kwosi=fo  
 PROX.ALL IMN 1SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IRR:PFV/put.inside bag old=ALL  
 ‘I will try and put it here ... in the old bag.’ [tci20130907-02 RNA #261]

The allative can also be used metaphorically as in example (43), which is taken from a public speech.

(43) *zokwasifo buthorakwr.*

zokwasi=fo b=wo\thorak/wr

speech=ALL MED=1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/arrive

'I get to the point now!' (Lit. 'I arrive there to the words.')

[tci20121019-04 ABB #135]

The animate/inanimate distinction mentioned in §4.8 can be used to mark definiteness of animate referents, for example animals. In (44), the speaker points out that sorcerers usually do not attack a person directly, but they put a deadly spell on a person's dog or some other animal. Later, when the animal suffers and dies, the human victim will also die. Thus, in (44) 'the dog' and 'the wallaby' are generic, and therefore marked with the (inanimate) allative case marker. In contrast, example (45) is taken from a story about a dog and a crow. Both have been introduced previously and are known to the speaker as individual characters. Consequently, the dog in (45) is marked with the animate allative.<sup>4</sup>

(44) *taurifo tmatm zrafiyokwr o ŋathafo.*

tauri=fo tmatm zra\fiyok/wr o ŋatha=fo

wallaby=ALL event 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/make or dog=ALL

'(The sorcerer) would do this thing to a wallaby or to a dog.'

[tci20130903-04 RNA #114-115]

(45) *kofā ane zātr ... ymdane zr yfōfa ŋathadbo.*

kofā ane zā\tr/

(.) ymd=ane zr yfō=fa ŋatha=dbo

fish DEM 2|3SG:SBJ:RPST:PFV/fall (.) bird=POSS tooth hole=ABL dog=ALL.ANIM

'That fish fell down ... from the bird's mouth to the dog.'

[tci20111107-03 RNA #68-69]

Although it is possible to attach the allative to temporal nouns like *efoth* 'day', there are no corpus examples of this, and it is generally quite rare. The reason for this is the existence of a temporal purposive case marker =*thamar* (see §4.9.2).

4.8.3 Ablative =*fa*

The ablative case marker is =*fa* for inanimate referents and =*dba* (SG) or =*medba* (NSG) for animate referents. Example (46) shows the (inanimate) ablative case marker, and example (47) shows the animate ablative case marker.

(46) *torres strait islandfa thunrärm ... ane masis.*

torres strait island=fa thun\rä/rm (.) ane masis

torres strait island=ABL 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR:VENT/be (.) DEM matches

'They came from the Torres Strait Islands ... those matchboxes.'

[tci20120909-06 KAB #10]

<sup>4</sup>Unfortunately, there is no corpus example of a referent which undergoes a change from inanimate allative to animate allative when tracked through a discourse.

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- (47) *trikasi zane mane wnrä ... nzä mane ηatrikwé ... badabadamedba wnrä.*  
 trik-si zane mane wn\rä/ (.) nzä mane  
 tell-NMLZ DEM:PROX which 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/be (.) 1SG.ABS which  
 ηa\trik/wé (.) badabada=medba wn\rä/  
 1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/tell (.) ancestor=ABL.ANIM.NSG 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/be  
 ‘As for this story ... which I am telling ... it comes from the ancestors.’

[tci20110802 ABB #15-17]

The ablative can be used with a temporal meaning. There is only one corpus example of the case marker =*fa* (48), but the deictic demonstratives are frequently used with temporal semantics. Example (48) concludes a headhunting story in which the speaker points out that the population has increased after this had ceased. The word *zenafa* (‘from now’) is best translated as ‘nowadays’.

- (48) *wati, zenafa ... ni tüfr nagayé kwakonzre.*  
 wati zena=fa (.) ni tüfr nagayé kwa\ko/nzre  
 then today=ABL (.) 1NSG plenty children 1PL:SBJ:RPST:IPFV/become  
 ‘Nowadays, we have got plenty of children.’ [tci2011107-01 MAK #150-151]

Example (49) shows the use of the deictic demonstrative *foba* ‘from over there’ with a temporal meaning, i.e. it expresses a starting point. In the example, the speaker states why he does not know what happened to his family’s rain magic stones, and *foba* means ‘from that time onwards’.

- (49) *nzenme ηafe fthémäsü kwosi yara ... watik foba ni miyamr nrä mafadben zena ethn.*  
 nzenme ηafe fthémäsü kwosi ya\r/a (.) watik foba  
 1NSG.POSS father meanwhile dead 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be (.) then DIST.ABL  
 ni miyamr n\rä/ mafa=dben zena  
 1NSG ignorance 1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be who=LOC.ANIM.NSG today  
 e\thn/  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/lie.down  
 ‘In the meantime our father died ... and from then one we don’t know with  
 whom (the rain stones) are today.’ [tci20131013-01 ABB #399]

The allative can also be used metaphorically as in example (50), which is taken from a picture task. In the picture story, a man refuses to drink with his mates, because his alcoholism had brought him to jail. Thus, the allative on the word *zrin* ‘problem’ means ‘from this problem’.

- (50) *ane zrinfa watik ziyara.*  
 ane zrin=fa watik z=ya\r/a  
 DEM problem=ABL enough PROX=3SG.MASC:PST:IPFV/be  
 ‘He had enough of this problem here.’ [tci20111004 MAE #2]

## 4.9 Temporal cases

Komnzo has a set of temporal case markers: the temporal locative, purposive and possessive. All three temporal cases only attach to temporal nominals (§3.1.8), like *ezi* ‘morning’ or the interrogative *fhé* ‘when’. I adopt the labels locative, purposive and possessive because of the formal and semantic similarities with the respective cases. Formally, the temporal case markers consist of *=tham(a)* plus the case marker after which they are named. For example, the temporal locative is *=thamen*. At the present time, there is no etymological explanation for the *=tham(a)* element.

### 4.9.1 Temporal locative =thamen

The temporal locative indicates that something took place in a particular time frame. It is the time frame, usually a temporal nominal, to which the temporal locative attaches. Hence, it overlaps with the locative case, which can also be used on temporal nominals. Expressions like *ane efonthamen* ‘in that day’ (with a temporal locative) and *ane efothen* (with a locative) are equivalent. There is only a handful of corpus examples of the temporal locative. Example (51) comes from a narrative in which a young boy was attacked by a sorcerer at night in his garden. The young man shot the sorcerer with an arrow, and the sorcerer ran away. The next day a trail of blood could be seen as far as until the garden entrance. In the example, the speaker points out that he was bleeding only at the beginning and the temporal locative attaches to *zöftha* ‘first’. Thus, it locates the predicate ‘bleed’ into that time frame. In this case, the resulting form is not *zöfthathamen* as would be expected, but it is reduced to *zöfthamen*.

- (51) **zöfthamen** *zamatho frk komnzo zä wtnägwrmo ...*  
 zöftha=thamen z-a-math-o-∅ frk komnzo zä  
 first=TEMP.LOC M.γ-ND-run.RS-AND-2|3SG blood only PROX  
 2|3SG:SBJ:RPST:PFV:AND/run  
 w-tnäg-wr-m-o-∅  
 3SG.F.α-lose.EXT-ND-DUR-AND

‘At first, when he started to run and he was just losing blood here ...’

[tci20130901-04 YUK #40]

### 4.9.2 Temporal purposive =thamar

The temporal purposive case indicates that something is meant for a particular point in time. The case marker attaches to a temporal nominal, which specifies that point in time. Example (52) comes from a procedural text about poison-root fishing. While the speaker explains all the steps, others in the background are busy preparing and cooking the fish. At the end of the recording, he points out how some of the food is ‘for the afternoon’ and the leftovers are ‘for tomorrow’.

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- (52) *okay, zizithamar kwa ane fof erä ... nä thzé kaythamar thrägathinze.*  
 okay zizi=thamar kwa ane fof e\rä/ (.) nä thzé  
 okay afternoon=TEMP.PURP FUT DEM EMPH 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) some ever  
 kayé=thamar thrä\gathinz/e  
 tomorrow=TEMP.PURP 1PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:IRR:PFV/leave  
 ‘Okay, those are for the afternoon ... whatever (is there), we will leave it for  
 tomorrow.’ [tci20110813-09 DAK #60]

#### 4.9.3 Temporal possessive =*thamane*

The temporal possessive case indicates that something is from a particular point in time. It attaches to a temporal nominal, which specifies that point in time. Example (53) comes from a story, in which the two protagonists are withholding a particular food source from each other. In (53a), one of them sees a ground oven in the other’s camp and asks him about it. The other one responds in (53b) by saying that it is ‘yesterday’s oven’. Here the temporal possessive inherits the possibility of functioning adnominally from the possessive case.

- (53) a. “*nzungath, rar karo zane erä?*”  
 nzun-gath ra=r karo zane e\rä/  
 1SG.POSS-friend what=PURP earth.oven DEM:PROX 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 “My friend, what is this earth oven for?”
- b. “*keke ... kadakada su\tränwé ... kayé. kaythamane karo rä!*”  
 keke (.) kadakada su\trän/wé (.) kayé  
 NEG (.) yamcake 1SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:RPST:IPFV/slice (.) yesterday  
 kayé=thamane karo \rä/  
 yesterday=TEMP.POSS ground oven 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 “No, I cut the yam cake ... yesterday. This is yesterday’s oven.”  
 [tci20110802 ABB #90-94]

In example (54) below, the temporal possessive case at the clause level, not within a noun phrase. The example is from a stimulus picture task. The last part of the task is to retell a story from a first-person perspective. In the example, one of the participants instructs the other one to retell the story ‘from today onward’.

- (54) *nima befe we zakwther! zenathamane be katrikwé!*  
 nima befe we za\kwther/ zena=thamane  
 like.this 2SG.ERG.EMPH also 2SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IMP:PFV/change today=TEMP.POSS  
 be ka\trik/wé  
 2SG.ERG 2SG:SBJ:IMP:IPFV/tell  
 ‘You change it like this! You tell it from today.’ [tci20111004 MAE #5]

## 4.10 Instrumental =me

The instrumental case is used for material and immaterial instruments. It usually operates at the clausal level. Example (55) is taken from a conversation about a sorcerer who – after being shot – received help from his friend. The friend closed the wound ‘with mud’. Example (56) comes from the same story and shows an immaterial instrument. The origin of sorcerer could be identified because he spoke Wära or ‘with Safs language’. Example (57) comes from a public speech, where the speaker announces that he speaks on behalf of two older men (‘speak with their mouths’).

- (55) *naf we gwargwar=me ane yfö yanrmänwa.*  
 naf we gwargwar=me ane yfö yan\rmän/wa  
 3SG.ERG also mud=INS DEM hole 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:NPST:IPFV/close  
 ‘He also closed that hole on him with mud.’ [tci20130901-04 RNA #123]
- (56) *safs zokwasime zenafthma.*  
 safs zokwasi=me ze\nafth/ma  
 safs language=INS 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/talk  
 ‘He talked in Wära.’ (Lit. ‘He talked with Safs language.’)  
 [tci20130901-04 RNA #57]
- (57) *nafanme zr yföme ñanafé ... sowai a karbu ... zena zbär.*  
 nafanme zr yfö=me ña\na/fé (.) sowai a karbu (.) zena  
 3NSG.POSS tooth hole=INS 1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/speak (.) sowai and karbu (.) today  
 zbär  
 night  
 ‘Tonight, I am talking for them, for Sowai and Karbu.’ (Lit. ‘I talk with their mouths.’)  
 [tci20121019-04 ABB #91-92]

At the cross-clausal level the instrumental case is used for resultative constructions (58). Resultative constructions typically employ the copula and a nominalised verb form: *rfithzsime* translates literally as ‘with hiding’.

- (58) *nge kwa erifthznth ... nafañamayé ... rifthzsime kwa enrn.*  
 nge kwa e\rifth/znth (.) nafa-ñame=é (.)  
 child FUT 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3DU:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/hide (.) 3.POSS-mother=ERG.NSG (.)  
 rifthz-si=me kwa en\r/n  
 hide-NMLZ=INS FUT 2|3DU:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/be  
 ‘The mothers will hide the two children ... They will be hidden.’  
 [tci20110817-02 ABB #72-73]

The instrumental case is frequently used on property nouns (59) and adjectives (60) with an adverbial function. In example (59) the speaker talks about customs surrounding the yam harvest, and in (60) he explains why he is not planting big gardens anymore. In both examples, the instrumental case derives a manner adverb.

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- (59) *zünzme befe fthé zanathé bonemäwä keke tüfr thrarä.*  
 zünz=me befe fthé za\na/thé bone=ma=wä keke  
 greed=INS 2SG.ERG.EMPH when 2SG:SBJ:IMP:PFV/eat 2SG.POSS=CHAR=EMPH NEG  
 tüfr thra\rä/  
 plenty 2|3PL:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/be  
 ‘If you eat greedily, your own (yams) will not be plenty.’  
 [tci20120805-01 ABB #760]
- (60) *watik, nzone tmä we katanme ñarsörm.*  
 watik nzone tmä we katan=me ña\rsö/rm  
 then 1SG.POSS strength also small=INS 2|3SG:SBJ:RPST:DUR/recede  
 ‘Well, my strength has gone down a little.’  
 [tci20120805-01 ABB #664]

The instrumental case can also be attached to demonstratives as in (61), where the speaker explains to me how to protect one’s bamboo bow against insects. In (62), the instrumental is attached to *mane* ‘which’ and used as a relative pronoun ‘with which’.

- (61) *ngazime o zaru ... nzanzama ... watik aneme zminzakwé zabth.*  
 ngazi=me o zaru (.) nzanza=ma (.) watik ane=me  
 coconut=INS or candlenut (.) woodworm=CHAR (.) then DEM=Ins  
 z\minzak/wé zabth/  
 2SG:SBJ>3SG.F:IMP:IPFV/paint 2|3SG:SBJ:RPST:PFV/finish  
 ‘With coconut or candlenut, because of the woodworm. Finally, you paint (the bow) with that one and it is finished.’  
 [tci20120922-23 MAA #81-83]
- (62) *kitr zane erä ... yame yrsima ... amaf maneme yame wrwr.*  
 kitr zane e\rä/ (.) yame yr-si=ma (.)  
 river.pandanus DEM:PROX 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) mat weave-NMLZ=CHAR (.)  
 ama=f mane=me yame w\r/wr  
 mother=ERG which=INS mat 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/weave  
 ‘This is *Kitr*, for weaving mats ... with which mother weaves the mat.’  
 [tci20130907-02 JAA #235-236]

The instrumental attaches productively to several interrogative pronouns: *ra=me* ‘with what’ or *mane=me* ‘with which’. The interrogative *mon* ‘how’ can occur with or without the instrumental case; both *mon* and *monme* can be used interchangeably.

### 4.11 Purposive =r

The purposive case is used at the clausal and cross-clausal level. It expresses someone’s intention (63 and 64) or the inherent purpose of some entity (65). In example (63), a man informs his younger brothers about his plans for the night. Example (64) comes from a procedural about gardening and the speaker explains the purpose of the different steps involved.



- (63) *naf ni nZRÄkor* “ngthé ... nima nyak *ɲarsfo etfthmöwä kofär* ... *zbär kwa zuzir ɲarzre*.”  
 naf ni nZRÄkor/ ngthé (.) nima  
 3SG.ERG 1NSG younger.sibling 2|3SG:SBJ>1PL:OBJ:IRR:PFV (.) like.this  
 n\yak/ ɲars=fo etfth=me=wä kofä=r (.) zbär kwa  
 1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/go river=ALL sleep=INS=EMPH fish=PURP (.) night FUT  
 zuzi=r ɲa\r/zre  
 fishing=PURP 1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/throw  
 ‘He said to us: “Hey small brothers! We will go to the river ... overnight ... for fish. We will throw the fishing line in the night.”’ [tci20904-02 MAB #26-29]
- (64) *efäefä krarZrth ɲaraker ... wotu wotu räZsir*.  
 efäefä kra\r/zrth ɲarake=r (.) wotu-wotu räZ-si=r  
 aisle 2|3PL:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/throw fence=PURP (.) REDUP-stick erect-NMLZ=PURP  
 ‘They cut an aisle for the fence ... for erecting the sticks.’ [tci20120805-01 ABB #51-52]

The last noun phrase in (64) and in (65) below show the purposive case operating at the cross-clausal level. In both cases the purposive case marker is attached to an infinitival adjunct. In (65), the speaker talks about scorcerers who visit a deceased man’s grave after the burial to extract certain body parts. In both examples, the clause marked with the purposive contains the infinitive as well as the object of the event in the ablative, for example *tmä yarisir* ‘strength giving’ in (65).

- (65) *fi fenz ane bänemrNZO rä ... tmä yarisir*.  
 fi fenz ane bänemr=nZO \rä/ (.) tmä  
 but body.liquid DEM RECOG.PURP=ONLY 3SG.F:NPST:IPFV/be (.) strength  
 yari-si=r  
 give-NMLZ=PURP  
 ‘but that body liquid is only for this ... for giving strength.’ [tci20130903-04 RNA #139-140]

The noun phrase or the infinitival adjunct marked with =r ascribes a specific purpose, and in this ascriptive function, the purposive overlaps with the characteristic case. Hence, in (65) both *tmä yarisir* and *tmä yarisima* would be grammatical and identical in meaning. I described the nature of this overlap in §4.12.

There is a set of purposive personal pronouns in Komnzo. All the pronouns share a *-nar* element, for example *nzunar* ‘for me’, *nzenar* ‘for us’.<sup>5</sup> However, these pronouns are rarely used, in fact so rarely that I came accross them only very late in my fieldwork. Moreover, there is not a single token in the text corpus. As one would predict from the semantics of the purposive case, these pronouns encode a beneficiary or a goal. But this function is already covered by the dative case. I will offer a hypothetical semantic shift scenario at the end of this chapter which partly explains why the purposive pronouns are so rarely used.

<sup>5</sup>See Table 3.5 on page 107.



(69) *nzä ane markai zokwasima wtri kwarärm.*

nzä ane markai zokwasi=ma wtri kwa\rä/rm  
 1SG.ABS DEM outsider language=CHAR fear 1SG.SBJ:PST:DUR/be  
 ‘I was afraid of that white man’s language.’ [tci20130911-03 MAA #15]

Example (70) concludes a recording taken inside a yam house where the speaker has talked about the different types of yams and the sorting principle in the storage house. He launches a whole battery of noun phrases marked with the characteristic case to express what the story ‘was about’, and thus the case marker can also be used to express the topic of a conversation. In the example, the noun phrases are marked by angled brackets.

(70) *watik zane zizin [wawama] [trikasi tharisima] [tafoma] [sagusaguma] ... mon eworthre ... mane [dagonma] erä ... mane tafo erä ... zbo zf z\the brä trikasi ... eso kafar [bone namä yarizsima].*

watik zane zizi=n wawa=ma trik-si thari-si=ma  
 then DEM:PROX afternoon=LOC yam=CHAR tell-NMLZ harvest-NMLZ=CHAR  
 tafo=ma sagu-sagu=ma (.) mon  
 yam.type=CHAR REDUP-yam.type=CHAR (.) how  
 e\wor/thre (.) mane dagon=ma e\rä/ (.)  
 1PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/plant (.) which food=CHAR 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.)  
 mane tafo e\rä/ (.) zbo zf  
 which yam.type 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) PROX.ALL IMM  
 z\bth/e b=\rä/ trik-si (.) eso  
 1DU:SBJ>3SG.F:RPST:PFV/finish MED=3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be tell-NMLZ (.) thanks  
 kafar bone namä yariz-si=ma  
 big 2SG.POSS good listen-NMLZ=CHAR  
 ‘Well, in this afternoon ... (we talked) about yams, the story about harvesting,  
 about Tafo yams and Sagu Sagu yams ... how we plant them ... which ones are  
 for eating ... which ones are for Tafo (storing). We have finished it now there.  
 Thank you for listening.’ [tci20121001 ABB #215-221]

Note that the last two tokens of =ma in example (70) are different in their semantics. The noun phrase *dagonma* does not translate as ‘about the food’, but as ‘for eating’. The last token of =ma can be translated as both reason or purpose: *eso kafar [bone namä yarizsima]* ‘thanks because of your listening’ or ‘thanks for your listening’. Without examples like these the labels ‘source’ and ‘cause’ would be sufficient descriptions for this case marker. However, quite frequently =ma encodes a purpose and, therefore, I choose the cover term ‘characteristic’.

Consider example (71) below which comes from a walk through the forest. Along the path, the speaker shows me a particular grass. The leaf of this grass can be placed between the lips, and one can produce a high cheeping sound by blowing through it. She explains that this can be used ‘for attracting snakes’, thus, the characteristic is marking a purpose in (71a). After demonstrating how to produce the sound, she repeats in (71b) why the snake is coming (*kwanma* ‘because of the sound’) and concludes that she would not usually blow this grass (*anema* ‘therefore’). Here the characteristic case marks a reason.

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- (71) a. *kaboth räkumgsima yé.*  
 kaboth räkumg-si=ma \yé/  
 snake attract-NMLZ=CHAR 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘It is for attracting snakes.’ [tci20130907-02 RNA #612]
- b. *kaboth kwa ñankwir ane kwanma ... anema fof keke efsgwre.*  
 kaboth kwa ñan\kwi/r ane kwan=ma (.) ane=ma  
 snake FUT 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/run DEM noise=CHAR (.) DEM=CHAR  
 fof keke e\fsq/wre  
 EMPH NEG 1PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/blow  
 ‘The snake will run here because of that sound ... therefore we do not blow them.’ [tci20130907-02 RNA #615-616]

In her analysis of Ancient Greek, Luraghi suggests that “the notion of Reason, which, as remarked by Croft (1991), mediates between Cause and Purpose, really constitutes a kind of undifferentiated area, in which the reason that motivates an agent to act is cognitively equivalent to the purpose of the action, so that the two notions overlap completely” (2003: 46). See also Luraghi (2001) for a cross-linguistic study of semantic roles. In Komnzo, this overlap does not play out as a diachronic process, but as coexisting uses of the characteristic case. Example (72) below supports the point made by Luraghi. The noun *yasema* can be translated to English as cause/motivation (‘because of meat’) as well as purpose (‘for meat’). The reason for the action and the purpose of the action are expressed by =*ma*.

- (72) *nabimäre fthé gnräre bone nagayé kwa änor ... yasema.*  
 nabi=märe fthé gn\rär/é bone nagayé kwa  
 bow=PRIV when 2SG:SBJ:IMP:IPFV/be 2SG.POSS children FUT  
 ä\nor/ (.) yase=ma  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/shout (.) game=CHAR  
 ‘When you are without a bow, your children will cry for meat / because of meat.’ [tci20120922-23 MAA #89-91]

The characteristic case competes with the purposive case in marking the semantic role of purpose. In many utterances, they can be used interchangeably. Consider examples (73) and (74) below, where both can be used to express an inherent purpose of some entity (‘the leaf is for rolling cigarettes’). Likewise, in (71a) above, the purposive could be used (*kaboth räkumgsir yé* ‘it is for attracting snakes’). An intentional purpose of some individual (e.g. ‘he goes for hunting’) is most frequently expressed by the purposive case, not by the characteristic.

- (73) *zane mane yé ... bänemr yrärth ... sukufa knsir.*  
 zane mane \yé/ (.) bänemr  
 DEM:PROX which 3SG.MASC.NPST:IPFV/be (.) RECOG.PURP  
 y\rä/rth (.) sukufa kn-si=r  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:NPST:IPFV/do (.) tobacco roll-NMLZ=PURP  
 ‘As for this one ... they use is for that ... for rolling cigarettes.’

[tci20130907-02 RNA #506-508]

- (74) *ane taga mane erä sukufa knsima we erä.*  
 ane taga mane e\rä/ sukufa kn-si=ma we  
 DEM leaf which 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be tobacco roll-NMLZ=CHAR also  
 e\rä/  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘As for those leaves, they are also used for rolling cigarettes.’

[tci20130907-02 RNA #567]

With animate referents, the dative is used to mark a goal or beneficiary. The purposive case can be used for more abstract animate referents, for example *fäms ηare=r* ‘for/as exchange woman’.<sup>7</sup> The characteristic case cannot serve for marking purpose in this sense. Instead, with animate referents it always marks a reason, origin or cause. Additionally, animate referents must take the possessive case first, and then the characteristic =ma attaches to the possessive. In example (75), a young man explains how the food will be shared during an upcoming feast. The characteristic is attached to the possessive pronouns. Example (76) comes from a story in which the wife of a man had been killed, and at the end of the story he cries bitterly because of her. In both examples, the characteristic case attaches to a possessive: *nzenmema* and *nafaηareanema*. It is ungrammatical to use the unmarked (absolutive) forms: \**nima* and \**nafaηarema*.

- (75) *we nafa nzenmema sräthoroth ... ni nafañmema fof sränthore.*  
 we nafa nzenme=ma srä\thor/oth (.)  
 also 3NSG.ERG 1NSG.POSS=CHAR 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV:AND/carry (.)  
 ni nafañme=ma fof srän\thor/e  
 1NSG 3NSG.POSS=CHAR EMPH 1PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV:VENT/carry  
 ‘They will take it from us and we will take it from them.’

[tci20120929-02 SIK #97-98]

- (76) *yanzo bobo yanora nafaηareanema. ya=nzo bobo*  
 cry=ONLY MED.ALL  
 ya\nor/a nafa-ηare=ane=ma  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/cry 3.POSS-woman=POSS=CHAR  
 ‘He cried badly there because of his wife.’

[tci20120901-01 MAK #208-209]

The characteristic suffix is used to derive cardinal numerals: *eda* ‘two’ → *edama* ‘second’ (see §3.1.6.2). In example (77), the speaker explains what I have to do during an upcoming namesake ceremony.

- (77) *chrisf yathugwr keke kwa srefaf yakme ... ethama mane yé ... kwa fthé fof yfathwr.*  
 chris=f ya\thug/wr keke kwa  
 chris=ERG.SG 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/trick NEG FUT

<sup>7</sup>Example (31) on page 214 provides a textual example of *fäms ηarer*.



z=\yé/

PROX=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be

‘They opened it for me with the child. They lifted him up high (and said) “Here is the boy!”’ [tci20130823-08 WAM #43]

The proprietary is frequently used with the copula to express a property or quality of something: ‘with dust’ in (80), or someone: ‘with facial hair’ in (81). The kinds of properties assigned are usually portrayed as being of temporary nature.

(80) *gwrmgkarä zane kar rä.*

gwrmg=karä zane kar \rä/

dust=PROP DEM:PROX place 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be

‘This is a dusty place.’

[tci20121019-04 ABB #7]

(81) *kabe yé ... fäk thäbukarä yé.*

kabe yé (.) fäk thäbu=karä \yé/

man 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) jaw hair=PROP 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be

‘This is a man. He has a beard.’

[tci20111004 RMA #90]

Examples (82) and (83) contrast the proprietary case with the instrumental case. In example (82), the speaker talks about local medicine and how one has to mix the liquid of a particular plant with water. Hence, *nokarä* has to be translated as addition: ‘(together) with the water’. In example (83), the shallow water on the riverbank acts as an instrument making it easier to roll a heavy sago stem. Consequently, *nome* has to be translated as: ‘with (the help of) the water’.

(82) *nokarä swathknwé! ... ane kätznob!*

no=karä s\wathkn/wé (.) ane kätz\nob/

water=PROP 2SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IMP:IPFV/stir (.) DEM 2SG:SBJ:IMP:PFV/drink

‘You stir it with water and drink that!’

[tci20130907-02 RNA #189]

(83) *sathkäfake bi frezsi thenzgsi ... anemöwä tona sakorake ... zane nome.*

sa\thkäf/ake bi frez-si thenzg-si (.)

1PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:PFV/start sago bring.up.from.river-NMLZ roll-NMLZ (.)

ane=me=wä tona sa\kor/ake (.) zane

DEM=INS=EMPH high.ground 1PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:PFV/become (.) DEM:PROX

no=me

water=INS

‘We started bringing up the sago from the river by rolling it ... with that we brought it to the high ground ... with the water.’

[tci20120929-02 SIK #57-58]

The proprietary case operates at the cross-clausal level when it is attached to nominalised verb (84). Unlike the instrumental case, the proprietary does not form a resultative construction. In (84), the relationship between *borsi* ‘laugh’ and the predicate ‘he

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looks' is one of association or simultaneity. It can also be translated as a manner adverbial ('He stands laughingly.'). In example (85) the father comes while telling a story. In contrast, in resultative constructions, the result of some previous event is emphasised. For example, in (86) the speaker points to a stack of yams in his storage house stressing the fact that he has piled up different types of yam tubers. This can be analysed as a pseudo-passive construction (§8.3.5).

- (84) *gon z zefaf ... borsikarä efoth ymarwr.*  
 gon z ze\faf/ (.) bor-si=karä efoth  
 hip ALR 1SG:SBJ:RPST:PFV/hold (.) laugh-NMLZ=PROP sun  
 y\mar/wr  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/see  
 'He has his hands on his hips. As he looks up at the sun. he laughs.'  
 [tci20111004 RMA #502-503]
- (85) *nafanafe trikasikarä yanyak.*  
 nafa-ñafe trik-si=karä yan\yak/  
 3.POSS-father tell-NMLZ=PROP 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/walk  
 'The father walks here while he is telling a story.'  
 [tci20111004 RMA #329]
- (86) *zane fukthksime erä.*  
 zane fukthk-si=me e\rä/  
 DEM:PROX mix-NMLZ=INS 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 'These ones have been mixed.'  
 [tci20121001 ABB #178]

At the clausal level, the proprietive can also attach to a nominalised verb. Example (87) is the description of a picture card which depicts a prisoner sitting in his cell. Example (88) comes from the same recording, when the prisoner is set free and handed back his belongings. These two examples presuppose some kind of result – 'has been tied' and 'has been opened' respectively – but the previous event remains implicit. For example, in (88) the speaker draws attention to the fact that the door is open with the help of a demonstrative identifier *brä*. If the instrumental case was used instead (*yafüsime*), the result of the opening event would be emphasised.

- (87) *wati ane föf yamnzr ... fam ngarär ... fafen wäthsikarä yé.*  
 wati ane fof ya\m/nzr (.) fam nga\rär/ (.)  
 Then DEM EMPH 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/sit (.) thoughts 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/do (.)  
 fafen wäth-si=karä \yé/  
 during tie-NMLZ=PROP 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 'Well, that one is sitting ... he is thinking ... with his hands tied.'  
 [tci20111004 RMA #133-134]
- (88) *zrfö bana z seyafürth ... zrfö yafüsikarä brä.*  
 zrfö bana z se\yafür/th (.) zrfö yafü-si=karä  
 door poor ALR 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:RPST:PFV/open (.) door open-NMLZ=PROP



b=\rã/

MED=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be

‘They have already opened the door for the poor guy. (See) there, the door is open!’

[tci20111004 RMA #432-433]

There is a second variant of the proprietive marker, which is =*kaf*. In terms of frequency, the distribution of the two formatives is rather skewed: =*kaf* is attested 22 times in the corpus compared to 194 occurrences of =*karä*. The distribution patterns neither with age or language portfolio of individual speakers. In the close varieties Wära and Anta both formatives are also attested.

#### 4.14 Privative =märe

The privative case =*mär* or =*märe* is the opposite of the proprietive. It is used to indicate that some entity lacks something (90), someone (89) or some quality (91). The privative operates usually at the clausal level. Like the proprietive case, it can establish a semantic link between two noun phrases, but the two noun phrases do not form a syntactic constituent. In example (89), the speaker talks about older lineages of his clan. The example contrasts the proprietive and the privative case. The absence (*ngemär*) or existence (*ngekarä*) marked on *nge* ‘child’ relates those noun phrases to *fi* ‘they’ and *bäi* respectively. In the following examples (90 and 91), the noun phrase to which the privative-marked noun phrase links is omitted.

- (89) *sitau bagi fi zabthath ngemär ... bänzo ngekarä yara fof.*

sitau bagi fi za\bth/ath nge=mär (.) bäi=nzo nge=karä  
 sitau bagi 3.ABS 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:PFV/finish child=PRIV (.) bäi=ONLY child=PROP  
 ya\r/a fof  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be EMPH

‘Sitau and Bagi, they died without children ... only Bäi had children.’

[tci20120814 ABB #508]

- (90) *frasi kwa nrä ñanzmäre fthé gnräre*

frasi kwa n\rä/ ñanz=märe fthé gn\rä/ré  
 hunger FUT 2SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be row=PRIV when 2SG:SBJ:IMP:IPFV/be  
 ‘You will be hungry, if you don’t have a row (of yams in the garden).’

[tci20130822-08 JAA #54]

- (91) *miyomäre worä ... mrn ñarake miyomäre.*

miyo=märe wo\rä/ (.) mrn ñarake miyo=märe  
 desire=PRIV 1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) clan garden desire=PRIV  
 ‘I don’t want to make a family/clan garden (anymore).’

[tci20130823-06 STK #77]

There is one lexeme where the privative case has fused with a lexical item. The word *miyatha* ‘knowledge’ or ‘knowledgeable’ is used in constructions expressing a positive

epistemic state; usually of the structure *miyatha worä* ‘I know’ (Lit. ‘with knowledge I am’ or ‘knowledgeable I am’). In addition to the negator *keke*, one can negate this (‘I do not know’) by using the word *miyamr* ‘ignorance’ or ‘ignorant’, which contains *miya* and an element *mr*. The latter is a reduced and lexicalised form of the privative case marker =*mär*. We can see this in example (92), which comes from a myth where two brothers are trying to kill a creature by shooting an arrow into its heart.

- (92) *naf nima “keke fi miyamr erä fofosa mä rä.”*  
 naf nima keke fi miyamr e\rä/ fofosa mä  
 3SG.ERG QUOT NEG 3.ABS ignorant 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be heart where  
 \rä/  
 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘He said “No, they do not know where the heart is.”’  
 [tci20131013-01 ABB #104-105]

#### 4.15 Associative =*ä*

The associative case is used to express accompaniment at the clausal level or simultaneity of another event at the cross-clausal level. In both cases, the formative is =*ä*. With animates, there are two formatives =*r* and =*ä*, and a set of pronominals (Table 7.2 in §7.6). These are used for a special construction for which I adopt the term “inclusory construction” based on (Lichtenberk 2000) and (Singer 2001). I describe the inclusory construction in the context of the syntax of the noun phrase (see §7.6).

The associative case on inanimate referents is a minor pattern, because it overlaps in its semantics with the proprietive case =*karä* (§4.13). It may operate at the clausal level (94) or at the cross-clausal level (93). Example (93) is taken from a storyboard picture task where the speaker describes one of the pictures as part of a narration. The associative is attached to the nominalised verb *thweksi* ‘rejoice’ which acts as an infinitival adjunct.

- (93) *kfänrsöfth thweksiä.*  
 kfän\rsöfth/ thwek-si=*ä*  
 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:ITER:VENT/descend rejoice-NMLZ=ASSOC  
 ‘She always came down (the stairs) and was happy.’ [tci20120925 MKA #369]

Example (94) is taken from a story about a boy who drowned in the Morehead river. A group of policemen were on guard to deter crocodiles, while another man was trying to recover the body from the river. The phrase *markai nabiä* ‘with shotguns’ (literally: ‘with white man bows’) can also be marked with the proprietive case like the preceding phrase *gardakarä* ‘with canoes’ (93).

- (94) *fath wäfiyokwath neba wazi neba wazi ... frisman fi gardakarä markai nabiä ... bara kwarafinzrmth ... nümgarma*

fath wä\fiyok/wath neba wazi neba wazi (.)  
 clearing 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/make opposite side opposite side (.)  
 frisman fi garda=karä markai nabi=ä (.) bara  
 policeman 3.ABS canoe=PROP white.man bow=ASSOC (.) paddle  
 kwa\rafi/nzrmth (.) nümgar=ma  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/paddle (.) crocodile=CHAR  
 ‘The cleared the place along both sides ... the policemen with canoes and  
 shotguns ... they were paddling because of crocodiles.’

[tci20120904-02 MAB #162-165]

The third example (95) comes from visiting one of the many waterholes around Rouku, where people catch fish with poison-root during the dry season. The speaker points out how thoughtfully (‘with thoughts’) the ancestors looked after this place.

- (95) *kofä kwot kwarkonzrmth namä yamme ... nä kafar zra zane zf famä zumarwrnth nafa zf ... kafar kwarké.*

kofä kwot kwa\rko/nzrmth namä yam=me (.) nä kafar  
 fish properly 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/distribute good custom=INS (.) some big  
 zra zane zf fam=ä zu\mar/wrnth nafa  
 swamp DEM:PROX IMM thought=ASSOC 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:DUR/see 3NSG.ERG  
 zf (.) kafar kwark=é  
 IMM (.) big deceased=ERG.NSG  
 ‘They shared the fish in a good way. They looked after this swamp here  
 thoughtfully ... the late elders.’

[tci20120922-21 DAK #37-38]

## 4.16 Similitive =*thatha*

The similitive case functions at the clause level, and its semantics are quite compatible to the English expressions ‘like X’ or ‘similar to X’. In example (96)<sup>9</sup>, the speaker shows me a plant called *ηaziηazi* ‘Exocarпус sp’ and comments that its fruits taste a bit like a chewing gum and that it is similar to *ηazi* ‘coconut’.

- (96) *ηaziηazi ... pikethatha yé ... ηazithatha ... nafane yawi.*  
 ηaziηazi (.) pike=thatha \yé/ (.) ηazi=thatha (.)  
 ηaziηazi (.) chewing.gum=SIMIL 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) coconut=SIMIL (.)  
 nafane yawi  
 3SG.POSS fruit  
 ‘ηaziηazi ... its fruit is like a chewing gum ... like a coconut.’

[tci20130907-02 RNA #308-309]

Hence, the element marked with =*thatha* is portrayed as being similar to another element. Often enough that second element is established from context and the respective

<sup>9</sup>The word *pike* [pike] comes from Wrigley’s PK<sup>®</sup> chewing gum which has the initials of Philip Knight Wrigley printed in big letters on the package.

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noun phrase is omitted as in example (97) where the speaker describes an man hanging upside down from the branch of a tree.

- (97) *bidrthatha zbo sumithgrm ... wämnen.*  
bidr=thatha zbo su\mi/thgrm (.) wämne=n  
flying.fox=SIMIL PROX.ALL 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR:STAT/be.hanging (.) tree=LOC  
'He was hanging like a flying fox ... on the tree.' [tci20130901-04 RNA #48]

There are a few cases where the simulative case is attached to recognitional pronoun *bänethatha* 'like that one' or to the manner demonstrative *nimathatha* 'like in this way' as in example (98), where the speaker comments that some plants along the way look as if they had been planted by someone.

- (98) *nimathatha erä ... kma thuworthrth.*  
nima=thatha e\rä/ (.) kma thu\wor/thrth  
like.this=SIMIL 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) POT 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:RPST:IPFV/plant  
'These (plants) look a bit like ... as if they have planted them.'  
[tci20130907-02 JAA #281]

### 4.17 Further nominal morphology

This section describes a number of nominal enclitics or suffixes that do not mark a semantic role.

#### 4.17.1 Emphatic =wä

The emphatic enclitic =wä is used to intensify its host. For example, attached to a temporal adjective *zafe* 'old', it means 'really long ago' (99). If it is attached to a possessive pronoun, it is often translated as 'my own' instead of 'my' (100). As Komnzo has no dedicated marker for comparatives, the emphatic enclitic can be used for this (101).

- (99) *nze kwa natrikwé bun ... no kzima ... zaföwä ni monme no kzi thwafiyokwrme.*  
nze kwa na\trik/wé bun (.) no kzi=ma (.)  
1SG.ERG FUT 1SG:SBJ>2SG:IO:NPST:IPFV/tell 2SG.DAT (.) rain barktray=CHAR (.)  
zafe=wä ni mon=me no kzi thwa\fiyok/wrme  
old=EMPH 1NSG how=INS rain barktray 1NSG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/make  
'I will tell you ... about the rain-making barktray ... a really long time ago ... how we were making the rain-making barktray.'  
[tci20110810-01 MAB #1-3]

- (100) *nzonewä zane zf erä!*  
nzone=wä zane zf e\rä/  
1SG.POSS=EMPH DEM:PROX IMM 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
'These ones right here are my own!' [tci20121001 ABB #129]

- (101) *katakatanwä thfrä. nzenme kafar erä.*  
 kata-katan=wä thf\rä/ nzenme kafar  
 REDUP-small=EMPH 2|3PL:SBJ:RPST:IPFV/be 1NSG.POSS big  
 e\rä/  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘Those (yams) were smaller. Ours are big.’ [tci20120805-01 ABB #403]

Some words seem to have lexicalised the emphatic enclitic, i.e. they do not occur without =wä. One example is *nzüthamöwä* ‘time’ (in the sense ‘instance of something happening’). This word can take the =nzo ‘only’ enclitic, for example *näbi nzüthamöwänzo* ‘only one time’. Elsewhere, the emphatic enclitic =wä and the exclusive enclitic =nzo may not co-occur. Other examples are *bramöwä* ‘all’ and *gadmöwä* ‘good fortune’. Note that all three contain a /mö/ element. I suspect that this is a lexicalised version of the instrumental case marker =me. The vowel of the instrumental =me is regularly rounded in the presence of =wä. However, removing these putative lexicalised enclitics from these words results in three non-words: \*nzütha, \*bra and \*gad.

The emphatic enclitic can attach to lexical items preceding the case marker. Example (102) is from a story about two characters who each have a ford in the river where they place a fishing basket. In *edawäneme*, the enclitic has scope over the numeral *eda* ‘two’. Thus, it is emphasizing the fact that there are two, which suggests a distributive reading: ‘each one had a trapping place’. If the enclitic was attached after the case marker (*edaanemöwä*), the possession would be emphasised ‘two of their own’. Example (102) is the only instance in the corpus where the emphatic enclitic occurs between a lexical item and a case marker. Hence, it is a possible yet very rare construction.

- (102) *krsi zn we fä thwarnm ... edawäneme.*  
 kr-si zn we fä thwa\rn/m (.) eda=wä=aneme  
 block-NMLZ place also DIST 2|3DU:IO:PST:DUR/be (.) two=EMPH=POSS.NSG  
 ‘They also had a fishing place there ... each had one.’ [tci20110802 ABB #58-59]

#### 4.17.2 Exclusive =nzo

The exclusive enclitic =nzo has been described in §3.5. It forms the nominal counterpart to the discourse particle *komnzo* ‘only’ (§3.4.2) from which the language gets its name. The exclusive enclitic can attach to all nominals including pronouns, thus it occurs with a high frequency in the corpus. It usually attaches to the last element of the noun phrase over which it has scope. It is glossed as ONLY in the examples.

In example (103) the exclusive clitic attaches to a noun phrase with an adverbial function, *frme* ‘straight’. In (104), it is attached to an adjective.

- (103) *zokwasi mane rera komnzo frmenzo wyaka nzudbo.*  
 zokwasi mane re\r/a komnzo fr=me=nzo  
 speech which 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be only line=INS=ONLY

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- w\yak/a                          nzudbo  
 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:IPFV/walk 1SG.ALL  
 ‘As for the message, it just came straight to me.’ [tci20120814 ABB #50-51]
- (104) *zasath* “*bä namänzo nrä?*” “*keke nzä nimäwä worä.*”  
 za\s/ath                          bä    namä=nzo   n\rä/                          keke nzä  
 2|3DU:SBJ:PST:PFV/ask 2.ABS good=ONLY 2SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be NEG 1SG.ABS  
 nima=wä                          wo\rä/  
 like.this=EMPH 1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘They asked each other: “Are you alright?” “No, I am like this.”’  
 [tci20120827-03 KUT #159]

#### 4.17.3 Etcetera =sü

The enclitic =sü only attaches to either the associative or the proprietive case marker. It is often translated as “and all” by my informants. Consider example (105), in which a speaker reports how he and some of his brothers transported a heavy sago stem with a couple of canoes. The =sü enclitic expresses that there are more items than just the sago. Therefore, I label =sü as etcetera marker, and I gloss it with ETC.

- (105) *masenf fä fof nZRäs* “*kwa känthfe bikaräsü zbo!*” ... *watik bikaräsü narafinzake.*  
 masen=f    fä    fof    nZRä\s/                          kwa  
 masen=ERG DIST EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ>1PL:OBJ:IRR:PFV/call FUT  
 kän\thf/e                          bi=karä=sü    zbo    (.) watik bi=karä=sü  
 2PL:SBJ:IMP:PFV:VENT/walk sago=PROP=ETC PROX.ALL (.) then    sago=PROP=ETC  
 nja\rafi/nzake  
 1PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV/paddle  
 ‘Masen called out to us: “Come over here with the sago and all!” ... Then, we  
 paddled with the sago and everything.’ [tci20120929-02 SIK #41-42]

Example (106) show the etcetera enclitic attached to the associative case in an inclusive construction. The speaker describes how his friends slept in a camp where his father and other relatives were staying.

- (106) *ni nʔafyäsü fä fof nrugra.*  
 ni    nʔafe=ä=sü                          fä    fof    n\rugr/a  
 1NSG father=ASSOC.PL=ETC DIST EMPH 1PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV/sleep  
 ‘We slept there with father and all the others.’ [tci20110810-02 MAB #11]

Example (107) is taken from an origin myth in which two brothers are fighting with a creature. One of them warns his brother that he will shoot the creature now and he should be prepared. Hence, the second clause literally translates as “you must be with thoughts and all”.

- (107) *watik ngth biruthé! famkaräsü gnräre!*  
 watik ngth                    b=y\ru/thé  
 then younger sibling MED=1SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/shoot  
 fam=karä=sü                gn\rä/ré  
 thought=PROP=ETC 2SG:SBJ:IMP:IPFV/be  
 ‘Okay brother, I will shoot him now. You have to think and be prepared!’  
 [tci20131013-01 ABB #108-109]

#### 4.17.4 Distributive *-kak*

I analyze the distributive marker *-kak* as a suffix rather than an enclitic because it does not operate on the level of the phrase. It can only be suffixed to numerals and some quantifiers. Its meaning can be translated to English with ‘each’ or ‘individually’. The distributive is often followed by the instrumental as in (108). In this example, the speaker had lost his dogs during hunting. The distributive highlights that the dogs came back individually.

- (108) *ɲatha katakatan thunthorakwrm näbikakme.*  
 ɲatha kata-katan thun\thorak/wrm                    näbi-kak=me  
 dog REDUP-small 2/3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR:VENT/arrive one-DISTR=INS  
 ‘The small ones were arriving one by one.’  
 [tci20111119-03 ABB #69]

In example (109), a woman has finished presenting to me what she has caught during the day. This includes different fish, a goanna and a turtle. She concludes with the words ‘There is plenty of meat’. This could be translated as *faso tüfr erä* without the distributive. The distributive in (109) expresses that she has caught different kinds of meat.

- (109) *watik, faso tüfrkak erä.*  
 watik faso tüfr-kak            e\rä/  
 then meat plenty-DISTR 2/3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘Well, there is plenty of different meat.’  
 [tci20120821-01 LNA #68]

In example (110), the speaker tells me about different types of bows. He concludes by pointing out that different people like different types.

- (110) *zawe ffrükakmenzo erä*  
 zawe f-frü-kak=me=nzo                    e\rä/  
 talent REDUP-alone-DISTR=INS=ONLY 2/3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘People have different preferences.’ (Lit. ‘There are different individual talents.’)  
 [tci20120922-23 MAA #104]

#### 4.17.5 Diminutive *fäth*

I take the diminutive *fäth* ‘small one’ as an example to describe a small group of lexemes which behave similar to the enclitics described above. However, I do not analyse them

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as enclitics but rather as lexemes on the verge to becoming grammaticalised. The two main reasons are: (i) they often occur by themselves without a host, and (ii) they have a more lexical meaning. Out of the four lexemes, two have to do with location: *zn* and *faf*, both mean ‘place’, and two have to do with smallness or compactness: *fäth* ‘small one’ (glossed as DIM) and *fur* ‘bundle’.

Example (111) illustrates that *fäth* can occur as a free lexeme. However, *fäth* frequently occurs after a noun, as in (112) and (113). We could analyse *fäth* in (112) either as a compound of two nouns (‘story’ + ‘small one’), or as a diminutive enclitic which has scope over a preceding host. The latter analysis is supported by the fact that the two elements form an intonational unit.

- (111) *nzone nafe fthé fof katan fäth sfrärm.*  
nzone nafe fthé fof katan fäth sfrä\rm  
1SG.POSS father when EMPH small DIM 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR/be  
‘My father was a small boy at that time.’ [tci20111107-01 MAK #34]
- (112) *trikasi fäth fobo fof zwaythik fof.*  
trik-si fäth fobo fof zwa\ythik/ fof  
tell-NMLZ DIM DIST.ALL EMPH 3SG.F:SBJ:RPST:IPFV/come.to.end EMPH  
‘There, the small story comes to an end.’ [tci20111119-03 ABB #197]

If there is a case marker present, it will attach to *fäth* (113); a fact which supports both analyses.

- (113) *emoth fäthnm thrätrif.*  
emoth fäth=nm thrä\trif/  
girl DIM=DAT.NSG 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:IO:RPST:PFV/tell  
‘He told the small girls.’ [tci20120901-01 MAK #181]

On the basis of the arguments above, I decide to treat *fäth* as an independent lexeme. The same applies to *zn*, *faf* (both ‘place’) and *fur* (‘bundle’). I analyse them as lexemes which are on the verge of becoming grammaticalised. Note that only for *fäth* I employ the gloss DIM instead of a more lexical one (‘small one’).

### 4.18 A few historical notes

The case markers presented in this chapter show some semantic and formal overlaps which invite speculations as to their emergence. I want to lay out some hypotheses here. My main point is that the dative and the possessive are historically related, and that the original form played some role in marking animacy.

In Table 4.4, we can see a subset of the personal pronouns for different cases and the respective case enclitics for animate referents. Note that only the first and second person is shown. The third person forms are not relevant for the argument advanced here. For reasons of comparison, the table includes the possessive prefixes, even though they are not case markers.



Table 4.4: Case marking with animate referents

	personal pronouns				case enclitics	
	1SG	1NSG	2SG	2NSG	SG	NSG
CHAR	<i>nzonema</i>	<i>nzenmema</i>	<i>bonema</i>	<i>benmema</i>	<i>=anema</i>	<i>=anemema</i>
POSS	<i>nzone</i>	<i>nzenme</i>	<i>bone</i>	<i>benme</i>	<i>=ane</i>	<i>=aneme</i>
POSS-	<i>nzu-</i>	<i>nze-</i>	<i>bu-</i>	<i>be-</i>	n/a	n/a
DAT	<i>nzun</i>	<i>nzenm</i>	<i>bun</i>	<i>benm</i>	<i>=n</i>	<i>=nm</i>
LOC	<i>nzudben</i>	<i>nzedben</i>	<i>budben</i>	<i>bedben</i>	<i>=dben</i>	<i>=(n)medben</i>
ALL	<i>nzudbo</i>	<i>nzedbo</i>	<i>budbo</i>	<i>bedbo</i>	<i>=dbo</i>	<i>=(n)medbo</i>
ABL	<i>nzudba</i>	<i>nzedba</i>	<i>budba</i>	<i>bedba</i>	<i>=dba</i>	<i>=(n)medba</i>

One observation from the table is that the characteristic pronouns are built from the possessive pronouns, for example the first singular possessive *nzone* ‘my’ is used to express the meaning ‘because of me’ by simply attaching the characteristic case marker *=ma*. In fact, the pattern is so transparent that instead of analysing a form like *nzonema* as 1SG.CHAR an alternative analysis would be to analyse it in a more compositional way: *nzone=ma* 1SG.POSS=CHAR. This also holds true for nouns. Note that the use of the possessive is only required for animate referents. For example, *no=ma* ‘because of the rain’ can do without the possessive, but *\*kabe=ma* ‘because of the man’ is ungrammatical, and it has to be *kabe=ane=ma* (man=POSS.SG=CHAR). Hence, the possessive functions as a marker of animacy. I want to argue that in the other case formatives, we find frozen morphology that points to a similar strategy.

A second observation from the table lies in the formal similarity of the possessive and the dative case enclitics. The dative formatives resemble the possessive ones, but they lack the vowels: *=ane* (POSS) vs. *=n* (DAT), and *=aneme* (POSS.NSG) vs. *=nm* (DAT.NSG). Furthermore, the table shows that all case enclitics share an element marking non-singular number. This is /m/ for the dative and /me/ for all other cases. Again, we may analyse this element as a separate morpheme, for example *=ane=me* (=POSS=NSG) and *=n=m* (=DAT=NSG). In the remainder of this section, I want to argue for three points: (i) that these the possessive and the dative have developed from the same source, (ii) that the function of that source was to mark animacy, and (iii) that the source itself was segmentable into one morpheme marking animacy (*=n* or *=ane*) and a second morpheme marking non-singular number (*=m* or *=me*).

The main point of evidence comes from a variant of the non-singular formatives of the spatial cases. For example, the locative can be *=medben*, but there is a variant *=nmedben*. The latter includes an /n/ which is also found in the possessive and the dative enclitics. Note that for the possessive and the dative, /n/ is found in the singular and the non-singular formatives. For non-singular formatives of the three spatial cases, I want to argue that the /n/-variant is the older one. Note that the /n/ element is also present in

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the singular formatives of the three spatial cases, but it is difficult to recognize it as a segment, because all three case enclitics begin with a prenasalised alveolar plosive [ʰd]. Therefore, I want to suggest a more transparent analysis:

Table 4.5: Revised analysis of case markers for animate referents

	=ANIM=case	=ANIM=NSG=case
POSS	= <i>ane</i>	= <i>ane=me</i>
DAT	= <i>n</i>	= <i>n=m</i>
LOC	= <i>n=dben</i>	(= <i>n</i> )= <i>me=dben</i>
ALL	= <i>n=dbo</i>	(= <i>n</i> )= <i>me=dbo</i>
ABL	= <i>n=dba</i>	(= <i>n</i> )= <i>me=dba</i>

The revised analysis in Table 4.5 suggests that the spatial case enclitics attached to an /n/ formative which I suggest is a marker of animacy. Moreover, there is the /me/ formative for marking non-singular number.

This analysis rests on the assumption that the dative and the possessive are historically related. I want to draw on four points of evidence to support this claim. First, the enclitics of the two cases are similar, if we assume that the dative formatives once had vowels: =*ane* > =*n* and =*aneme* > =*nm*. Secondly, the close possessive prefixes in Table 4.4 show that the vowel in the singular prefixes groups them with the dative, not with the possessive. The first person close possessive prefix is *nzu-* like the first person dative pronoun *nzun*, whereas the first person possessive pronoun is *nzone*. Thirdly, the argumentation in the preceding paragraph shows that the element =*nme*, which precedes the spatial case markers, is historically related to both the possessive and the dative. The fourth piece of evidence comes from a comparison with Ngkolmpu, a related Tonda language spoken in Indonesia. In Ngkolmpu, the dative marks the possessor role in its adnominal function (Carroll 2017).

This leaves us wondering about the pTonda or pYam system and the path of grammaticalisation in Komnzo. The scenario sketched out above suggests that the original system was more like Ngkolmpu where one case marker serves both functions, dative and possessive. Alternatively, the predecessor could have had a much more general function. I have argued above that this functions was to mark animacy. Although speculative at present, I want to point out that a possible source of the animacy marker could be the anaphoric demonstrative *ane*, which can occur in postposed position. For the moment, we can only speculate on the path of grammaticalisation. More data from the other Yam languages is needed to settle this question.

# 5 Verb morphology

## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the verbal morphology of Komnzo, which is by far the most complex subsystem in the language, and reaches a scale of complexity which is found in polysynthetic languages.<sup>1</sup> Morphological complexity in Komnzo verbs arises not only from the number of affixes which the verb may host, but also from the way these combine to encode grammatical categories (see §5.2). In its simplest form a verb exists as an infinitive, that is the stem plus a nominaliser suffix. At their most complex, verbs may host a large number of affixes and clitics. Table 5.1 gives an overview of the verb template, the inflectional categories and the formatives to be discussed in this chapter.

The central feature that reverberates throughout Komnzo verb morphology is its cumulative and distributed combinatorics. The particular values of most grammatical categories are only arrived at after unifying information from several morphological slots within the verb structure. This feature has shaped my descriptive approach which bounces back and forth between a functional and a formal perspective. I address alignment and valency in §5.4, person, gender and number in §5.5, deixis and directionality in §5.6. At the same time, the functional perspective is interspersed with the description of structural phenomena like the two stem types in §5.3 or the suffixing subsystem in §5.5.1.1. Tense, aspect and mood will be described in Chapter 6. I describe the formatives and the possible combinations thereof in §6.2, the contribution of TAM particles in §6.3, and the semantic nuances of the TAM categories in §6.4. In order to avoid too much repetition, many cross-references in the text link related topics.

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<sup>1</sup>Most definitions of polysynthesis stress two main criteria: noun incorporation and the expression of syntactic relations by pronominal affixes (Baker 1996: 16; Evans & Sasse 2002: 2; and Mithun 2009). Komnzo lacks noun incorporation, but cross-references up to two participants with pronominal affixes. Typically, a verb consists of 3 up to 9 morphs.

Table 5.1: Templatic representation of verb inflection

clitic		PREFIX SLOTS			stem	SUFFIX SLOTS				
-4		-3	-2	-1	√	1	2	3	4	5
VALENCY			val change: <i>a-</i>							
person		undergoer: 1, 2, 3 or MIDDLE					actor: 1, 2 3 or ∅			
GENDER		undergoer: 3SG.F, 3SG.MASC								
number		undergoer: SG, NSG	dual: ∅- non-dual: <i>a-</i>			dual: <i>-n</i> non-dual: <i>-n<sub>ZR</sub>, -w<sub>r</sub>, -r</i>			actor: SG, NSG	
DEIXIS & DIRECTION		PROX: <i>z=</i> MED: <i>b=</i> DIST: <i>f=</i>	ventive: <i>n-</i>				andative: <i>-o</i>			
TAM		apprehensive: <i>m=</i> imminent: <i>n=</i>	prefix series: <i>α, β, β<sub>1</sub>, β<sub>2</sub>, γ</i>	irrealis: <i>ra-</i>	stem type: EXT (extended) RS (restricted)	stative: <i>-thgr</i>		past: <i>-a</i> durative <i>-m</i>	imperative: actor suffixes	

## 5.2 Morphological complexity

The relationship between the value of a grammatical category and its exponents exhibits varying degrees of complexity in Komnzo verbs. At its simplest, we find a one-to-one mapping between function and form, which exists for the directional affixes. For the most part, however, Komnzo verbs are characterised by complexity of exponence of the type one-to-many and many-to-many. Concerning the former, we find what Matthews (1974: 147-149) calls “cumulative exponence”, whereby one exponent expresses several grammatical categories, as well as “extended exponence”, whereby several exponents express one grammatical category. Note that the latter has also been called “multiple exponence” in the literature (Caballero & Harris 2012: 163). For example, the Komnzo verb prefixes are portmanteau realisations of the categories person, gender, number, tense and aspect. Conversely, a category like tense is encoded in three different slots on the verb. These slots can be independently manipulated, which results in a many-to-many mapping. Complex exponence of this type is a feature found in all Yam languages.

Let us take one inflected verb form to illustrate these types of exponence. Example (1) gives the inflected verb form *yfathwroth* ‘they hold him away’.<sup>2</sup>

- (1) *yfathwroth*  
 y\fath/wroth  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV:AND/hold  
 ‘They hold him away.’

Here we find a one-to-one mapping between the directional value (andative) and the suffix *-o*. This is expressed in Figure 5.1 below where the verb form has been segmented into morphs. A line indicates the exponence relationship between the value (AND) and the formative (*-o*).

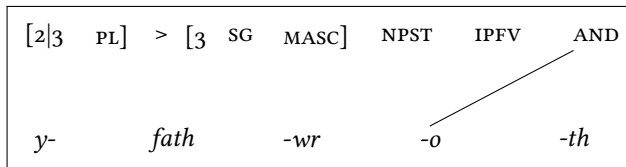


Figure 5.1: One-to-one mapping for the directional

Cumulative exponence is found in the verb prefix *y-* which fuses information on person (3), number (SG), and gender (MASC) of the object argument. In addition, *y-* contains information on tense (NPST) and aspect (IPFV). This is schematised in Figure 5.2.

Note that the prefix *y-* is necessary, but not sufficient, to establish the values for some of these categories. For example, the aspectual value of the verb (IPFV) is not expressed

<sup>2</sup>This verb form can have a stative as well as a dynamic reading: someone is holding a baby moving it away from the deictic centre (dynamic), or someone holds the baby in such a way that the toddler is facing away from the deictic centre (stative).

## 5 Verb morphology

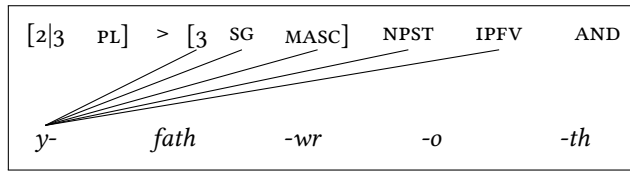


Figure 5.2: Cumulative exponence of person, number, gender, tense and aspect

solely by *y-*. This is what Matthews calls “extended exponence” (1974: 147-149) and Caballero & Harris refer to as “multiple exponence” (2012: 163). It is essentially the mirror image of Figure 5.2. Thus, Figure 5.3 below shows that aspect is distributed over three exponents in *yfathwroth*.

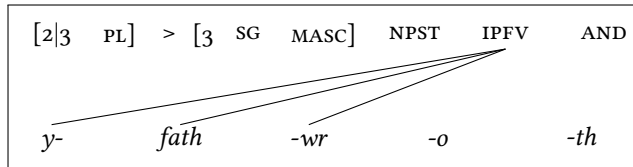


Figure 5.3: Extended exponence of aspect

A change in any one of the three slots above will cause a change in the TAM value. For example, the prefix *y-* can be replaced by *su-* to form a recent past imperfective (*sufathwroth*) or a suffix *-m* can be added after *-wr* to form a recent past durative (*yfathwrmoth*). If both of these changes are made at the same time, we get a past durative (*sufathwrmoth*). It follows that we are not dealing with a circumfix where separated formatives always occur together, but rather with a circumfixal paradigm where the formatives in the different slots are quite independent. Although there are some combinatorial restrictions, it would be a distortion to describe this as a circumfix. The essence of the system is that only by unifying the information from each slot are we in a position to calculate the correct value of a given grammatical category.

Thus, the overall complexity of Komnzo verbs results from the co-occurrence of different types of exponence relationships. Figure 5.4 below captures all the dependencies between the values of a grammatical category and the morphs that make up *yfathwroth*. Quite literally, we find a web of tightly interwoven dependencies.

Anderson uses the term “reciprocal conditioning” (1992: 55) for this phenomenon, whereby exponents depend on several grammatical categories, while being underspecified for a single grammatical category.<sup>3</sup> I adopt the term “distributed exponence” from

<sup>3</sup>Morpheme underspecification does not stop at the word boundary in Komnzo. For example, the actor argument in *yfathwroth* can be either second or third person. Without context, this ambiguity can only be resolved by the personal pronouns. The same is true for future tense or event completion, which are ex-

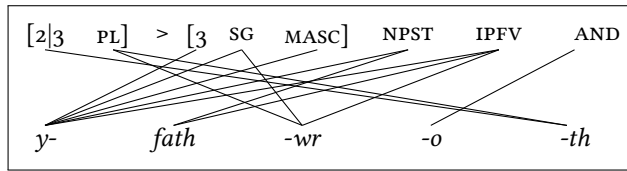


Figure 5.4: Reciprocal conditioning

Caballero & Harris (2012: 170), who point out that it may be related to multiple/extended exponence. Although it is excluded from the survey, Caballero & Harris mention distributed exponence in the theoretical discussion by explaining some aspects of Georgian verb morphology (Gurevich 2006). Baerman (2012) describes a phenomenon that could also be called distributed exponence for Nuer, a Western Nilotic language. The complexity of marking case and number in Nuer builds on suffixes and stem alternations, which are independently manipulated and give rise to inflectional classes. Baerman stresses the noniconicity of the system “in that these operations characterise simply a contrast of meaning, without being linked to any particular meaning” (2012: 490). Similarly, Komnzo verb morphology must be understood as a system where morphs contribute to a grammatical category, but a specific value of a given grammatical category requires information from several slots. Carroll provides the most detailed study of distributed exponence in his grammar on Ngkolmpu (2017), a related Tonda language.

There are practical consequences for the description of such a system. I have used a glossing style which follows the Word-and-Paradigm model (Matthews 1974: 67) throughout this grammar to give the reader effortless access to the morphosyntactic features of an inflected verb form. Since this chapter addresses verbal morphology, I will employ a double glossing and a verb like *yfathwroth* will be glossed as in (2) below. The first line gives a maximally segmented gloss in the Item-and-Arrangement style, while the second line in smaller print gives a unified gloss in the Word-and-Paradigm style.<sup>4</sup>

- (2) *yfathwroth*  
 y-fath-w-r-o-th  
 3SG.MASC:α-hold.EXT-ND-LK-AND-2|3NSG  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV:AND/hold  
 ‘They hold him away.’

The Item-and-Arrangement style provides more transparency in the morphological structure which is the aim of this chapter. In spite of that, widespread underspecification means that the gain in structural transparency comes at the cost of somewhat opaque glossing labels. For example, while we find in (2) established labels like SG (singular) and NSG (non-singular) to encode number, we also need to recruit ND (non-dual). As for tense

pressed periphrastically with the preverbal particles *kwa* and *z* respectively.

<sup>4</sup>Elsewhere in the grammar - where there is no double glossing, but only the unified gloss - the verb stem is shown by slanted lines \.../ on the segmentation line.

and aspect, we have to introduce even more abstract labels like  $\alpha$  (alpha) in the prefixes or EXT (extended) with the verb stem. These will be explained in the following sections. A further drawback of the Item-and-Arrangement style is that some of the grammatical values like non-past (NPST) or imperfective (IPFV) as well as subject (SBJ), object (OBJ) and indirect object (IO) cannot be shown on the gloss line because they can be inferred only after integrating several exponents.

### 5.3 Stem types

Komnzo verbal stems have two forms; an 'EXTENDED STEM' (EXT) and a 'RE-RESTRICTED STEM' (RS). As these labels indicate, the distinction is sensitive to aspect without encoding a specific aspectual category. For now it is sufficient to state that the labels refer to the temporal structure of the event, i.e. 'extended in time' and 'restricted in time'. The two stems differ (i) in their form, (ii) in the order of slots with respect to dual marking and (iii) in their combinatorial possibilities with the prefix series. I describe each point below.

#### 5.3.1 The formal relationship of extended and restricted stems

Komnzo has pairs of verb stems whose relationship is often unpredictable from any formal or semantic criteria. Nevertheless, there is a cline of similarity in form between the two stems which allows us to divide the verbal lexicon into seven classes (Table 5.2). For thirty percent, there is a rule-based relation between the shapes of the two stems. At the other end of the spectrum, we find suppletive pairs of stems in five percent of the verbal lexicon. For more than two thirds of the lexicon the shape of the stems is unpredictable.

In class I, which makes up 13% of verbs, the two stems are identical (EXT=RS). Class II verbs (16%) derive their extended stems from the restricted stem with a suffix (EXT=RS-*ak*). Thus class I and class II make up that portion of the verb lexicon with a rule-based relationship between the two stems. However, only a few generalisations can be made about the scope of the rule, i.e. given a particular lexeme, one cannot decide straightforwardly which class it belongs to. Amongst those few generalisations is the fact that most verbs in class I end in /n/, but this is not true of all. Moreover, verbs ending in /n/ are also found in the other classes.

The majority of verbs involve unpredictable changes at the right edge of the stem. In class III, which makes up 25% of verbs, a consonant is added to the extended stem in order to form the restricted stem (RS=EXT-C). The stem pairs of class IV verbs (30%) involve final consonant mutation. In class III and IV, the affected consonants are not conditioned by the phonological environment. Class V verbs (8%) are irregular, i.e. the difference involves more than the last consonant. The stems of class VI (5%) are fully suppletive. Finally, a handful of verbs in class VII are defective, and have only one of the two stems.

We can make a few observations from Table 5.2. First, we find a cline of similarity which ranges from identity of the two stems to suppletive pairs with the bulk of verbs between the two extremes. Classes II-V all have in common that the difference in form



Table 5.2: The formal relationship between EXT and RS stem

class	rule	EXT	RS	gloss	count
i	EXT=RS		<i>mar- zik- rikn- rmän- matukn-</i>	see turn off destroy close shake	42
ii	EXT $\leftarrow$ RS-ak	<i>rfitfak- morak- bthak- ritak- msak-</i>	<i>rfitf- mor- bth- rit- ms-</i>	answer lean finish cross sit	52
iii	EXT-c $\Rightarrow$ RS	<i>gar- fsi- tri- rni- thari-</i>	<i>garf- fsir- trinz- rnith- tharif-</i>	break count scratch smile dig	81
iv	mutation	<i>thwek- mthek- moneg- trakumg- bnaz-</i>	<i>thweth- mthef- mones- trakumth- bnaf-</i>	be glad lift up wait smash wake up	96
v	irregular	<i>rsör- thorak- myukn- rirkn- tur-</i>	<i>rsöfäth- thothm- myuf- rirkfth- turam-</i>	descend search twist avoid kiss	26
vi	suppletive	<i>re- ru- fn- na- zä- si-</i>	<i>zigrthm- mg- kwr- znob- thor- füs-</i>	look around shoot, spear hit, kill drink carry cook	15
vii	RS only	-	<i>-kuk<sup>a</sup></i>	stand	1
	EXT only	<i>rug- rmug-</i>	-	sleep envy	6
TOTAL					319

<sup>a</sup> This verb has a second stem *-kogr*, which I analyse as a positional stem (see §5.4.4.2).

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occurs the right edge of stem. Secondly, the classes and processes (consonant mutation, consonant addition, suffixation of *-ak*) are neither phonologically conditioned, nor can we detect a semantic basis for them. Thirdly, the system shows little productivity, which I take as evidence for lexicalisation. In Table 5.2, it is only class II for which a regular process can be formulated; the suffixation of *-ak*. Finally, we find that for almost all verbs, both stems are attested. As a result, virtually all verbs can be inflected for the entire range of TAM categories, which leaves little role to play for lexical aspect (or Aktionsart) in Komnzo.

I will offer a historical explanation below (see §5.3.4) as to how the two stems have evolved in Komnzo and in the Tonda subgroup more generally.

### 5.3.2 Dual marking with extended and restricted stems

The most salient difference between the two stems is the location of the dual marker, which follows the extended stem but precedes the restricted stem. I describe number marking in detail in §5.5.3. In the examples (3a-3c) and (4a-4c), I contrast the imperfective and perfective imperatives of ‘hit’. The former often has a continuative interpretation (‘keep on x-ing!’) while the latter points to inception (‘start doing x!’). In (3) and (4), all grammatical categories are held constant, and only the actor argument is cycled through the three number values. In (3a-3c), dual is shown by a suffix (*-n*), which contrasts with a non-dual (*-z*). In (4a-4c), dual is expressed by a zero which contrasts with a non-dual prefix (*a-*).

- (3) a. *be fi s-fn-z-é*  
 2SG.ERG 3.ABS 3SG.MASC: $\beta$ -hit.EXT-ND-2SG.IMP  
2SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IMP:IPFV/hit  
 ‘You keep hitting him!’
- b. *bné fi s-fn-n-e*  
 2NSG.ERG 3.ABS 3SG.MASC: $\beta$ -hit.EXT-DU-2NSG.IMP  
2DU:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IMP:IPFV/hit  
 ‘You (2) keep hitting him!’
- c. *bné fi s-fn-z-e*  
 2NSG.ERG 3.ABS 3SG.MASC: $\beta$ -hit.EXT-ND-2NSG.IMP  
2PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IMP:IPFV/hit  
 ‘You (3+) keep hitting him!’
- (4) a. *be fi s-a-kwr-∅*  
 2SG.ERG 3.ABS 3SG.MASC: $\beta$ -ND-hit.RS-2SG.IMP  
2SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IMP:PFV/hit  
 ‘You hit him!’
- b. *bné fi s-∅-kwr-e*  
 2NSG.ERG 3.ABS 3SG.MASC: $\beta$ -DU-hit.RS-2NSG.IMP  
2DU:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IMP:PFV/hit  
 ‘You (2) hit him!’

- c. *bné fi s-a-kwr-e*  
 2NSG.ERG 3.ABS 3SG.MASC: $\beta$ -ND-hit.RS-2NSG.IMP  
 2PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IMP:PFV/hit  
 ‘You (3+) hit him!’

The post-stem non-dual marker, *-z* in (3), has a number of phonologically conditioned allomorphs (see §5.5.3.3). The dual marker is always *-n*. In terms of segmentation, the post-stem slot is simple to recognise. This is not the case with the pre-stem duality marker which is zero for dual and *a-* for non-dual in (4). For purposes of illustration, I have selected the imperatives here because the segmentation is clearest. In other parts of the paradigm, segmentation is messier because the dual marker fuses with the valency change prefix resulting in an ablaut contrast; *a-* for dual and *ā-* for non-dual (see §5.5.3.4). From a historical perspective, this structural split between a pre-stem and a post-stem slot is a way of preserving dual marking after the original suffix had fused with the stem (see §5.3.4).

### 5.3.3 The combinatorics of extended and restricted stems

Extended and restricted stems taken alone are underspecified for a particular TAM value and information from other morphological sites is required. With respect to the five prefix series  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\beta_1$ ,  $\beta_2$ ,  $\gamma$  (see §5.5.1.1), the two stems differ in their combinatorial possibilities. For example, the  $\alpha$  prefixes combine with the extended stem and the  $\gamma$  prefixes combine with the restricted stem, but not vice versa. The  $\alpha$  series is recruited to form non-past, immediate past, recent past or past in imperfective or durative aspect depending on suffixal material. The  $\gamma$  series is employed for recent past or past, both perfective. The  $\beta$  prefixes combine with both stems to form imperatives and irrealis with imperfective and perfective aspect. The  $\beta_1$  and  $\beta_2$  prefixes combine with the extended stem (the latter exclusively so) to form recent past and past in imperfective or durative aspect, again depending on suffixal material. The  $\beta_1$  prefixes combine with the restricted stem to form an iterative. The details of the five prefix series as well as the aspectual distinctions will be addressed in §6.2. For present purposes, it is sufficient to stress that there are some limitations on the combinatorial possibilities for extended and restricted stems.

### 5.3.4 A comparative note on multiple stems

Verb stem pairs which are sensitive to aspect are known from other Papuan languages, for example Mian (Fedden 2011: 245). In the Southern New Guinea region, Marind shows striking architectural similarities to the Komnzo system. Drabbe reports on 4 verb classes in Marind (1955: 31). The first two classes which make up the main distinction are labelled “momentaan” versus “duratief.” Members of a third class can be both, and only the affixes signal the aspectual value of an inflected verb form. The fourth class is characterised as “momentaan,” but it can be turned into “duratief” by suffixing *-a(t)*. The overall design of the Marind system looks similar once we equate “duratief” with extended and “momentaan” with restricted. Drabbe’s third class in Marind bears resemblance to that group of

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Komnzo verbs where only one form is attested (class I in Table 5.2). The fourth class is very close to those stem pairs in Komnzo which add the suffix *-ak* to the restricted stem in order to form the extended stem (class II in Table 5.2). Moreover, the two suffixes, *-a(t)* in Marind and *-ak* in Komnzo, are formally similar. However, neglecting Drabbe's group three and four, the Marind system differs in that most verbs fall into either "momentaan" or "duratief." As we have seen above, almost all verbs in Komnzo have both stems.

Within the Yam family, multiple verb stems are found in the Nambu as well as the Tonda subgroup. However, the system as laid out here seems to be more developed in the Tonda languages. Pairs of verb stems are attested in Arammba, where Boevé & Boevé (2003) label them "common root" and "limited action root." In my own fieldwork, I found stem pairs in Anta, Wára, Wèré, Kámá, Kánchá, Blafe, Ránmo and Wartha Thuntai. As for Ngkolmpu<sup>5</sup>, there are up to three stems for some verbs and these are sensitive to aspect as well as verbal number (Carroll 2017). More descriptive work is needed to understand how the two stems are employed in the respective TAM systems of these languages.

I will offer a first tentative historical explanation based on the comparison of duality/TAM marking and multiple stems within the Yam family. In the Nambu subgroup, aspect-sensitive stems are only a marginal phenomenon. However, part of the verb inflection is a suffix which combines aspectual information with dual marking. For example, in Nen (Evans 2015a) and Nama (Siegel 2014) a thematic suffix follows the verb stem encoding TAM plus dual versus non-dual. In Komnzo, the suffix following the stem encodes only duality, but the presence versus absence of this suffix is determined by the stem type. Thus, it is involved in marking aspect (see §5.3.2).

I have shown above that the differences in form between the two stem types are located at the right edge. It is therefore a likely scenario that multiple stems have emerged through a process of demorphologisation (Hopper 1990: 154), i.e. through a fusion of suffixal material with the stem. Until more descriptive material is available, we are left to speculate on the nature of the original system. Logically, there are at least two possibilities: (i) the original suffix followed the Nambu pattern encoding TAM and duality simultaneously or (ii) there were separate suffixes for each category. Since both the occurrence of multiple stems as well as cognate forms are attested in all varieties of the Tonda languages, demorphologisation would constitute an innovation, which supports Tonda as a subgroup of the Yam family. This is of some importance, because other systematic differences between Nambu and Tonda, like word-initial velar nasals<sup>6</sup> or gender marking on verbs, can be explained by assuming the loss of a particular feature in Nambu rather than assuming an innovation in Tonda.

The historical scenario advanced above gave rise to different inflectional patterns within the Tonda subgroup. Languages further to the west including Blafe, Ránmo, Wartha Thuntai and to some extent Kánchá have lost dual marking except in some high frequency verbs like the copula. Other varieties like Wára, Anta and Komnzo have kept post-stem dual marking for one stem type, but requisitioned a different slot in the template for the other stem type. This would explain why, in terms of morphological segmen-

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<sup>5</sup>Ngkolmpu, as well as Bádi, Smerky and Sota, were classified as varieties of Kanum in the past.

<sup>6</sup>The Nambu language Dre which is spoken close to other Tonda languages has preserved initial velar nasals.

tation, the pre-stem dual marking with restricted stems is much messier than post-stem dual marking with extended stems (compare §5.3.2 and §5.5.3.4). We could say that in a historical process, dual marking has “hijacked” a slot which was hitherto solely employed for marking valency. A third pattern is attested in Wèré, where dual marking is consistently post-stem for both stem types. However, irregularities involving a vowel change in the prefixes for some parts of the paradigm show that the Wèré pattern is a case of regularisation of the Komnzo system rather than an independent development.

The scenario developed here has to be treated with some caution, as there are exceptions to the generalisations made above. For example, Nen has multiple stems for a few verbs like  $\sqrt{wam}$  versus  $\sqrt{wama}$  ‘give’, encoding imperfective and perfective aspect respectively (Evans forthcoming). Another exception is the Nambu language Nā, which has pre-stem dual marking for some middle verbs. Much more comparative work needs to be done to fully account for the emergence of multiple verb stems in these languages.

## 5.4 Alignment and verb templates

### 5.4.1 Grammatical relations

This section describes the argument structure in Komnzo. The term is understood as “the configuration of arguments that are governed by a particular lexical item” (Haspelmath & Müller-Bardey 2004: 1130). For the purpose of defining argument structure, we need to take into account particular constructions (Bickel 2011: 433). In Komnzo, these are case and agreement (i.e. verb indexing). There are no other constructions restricted to a set of arguments (e.g. control, relativisation, coordination, nominalisation of verbs).

First, I identify generalised semantic roles (GSRs) for each verb form. Following Bickel (2011), these roles are labelled as follows: A is the most agent-like argument and P is the most patient-like argument of a transitive verb, S is the sole argument of an intransitive verb. For ditransitive verbs, T is the most theme-like argument and R the most recipient-like argument.

In the following, I will outline the two parameters of argument structure in Komnzo. In (5a-c), I show the basic structure for one-argument and two-argument predicates in a reduced glossing style. A is assigned ergative case, while S and P are assigned absolutive case. Example (5c) shows that A is indexed in the suffix and P is indexed in the prefix. S has to be split into  $S_P$ , which is indexed in the prefix (5a), and  $S_A$ , which is indexed in the suffix (5b). The underlying factor is the dynamicity of the predicate (see §5.4.4).

- (5) a.  $\dot{f}i$       $y-kogr$   
       3(ABS) 3SG.MASC-stand  
       ‘He stands.’
- b.  $\dot{f}i$       $\eta amr\ddot{a}nzr-th$   
       3(ABS) stroll-3PL  
       ‘They stroll around.’

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- c. *nafa fi y-fnZR-th*  
 3PL.ERG 3(ABS) 3SG.MASC-hit-3PL  
 ‘They hit him.’

Examples (6a-c) show the argument structure for three-argument predicates. Note that I discuss why there are some problems in describing ditransitives in §5.4.6. For case assignment, the examples show that P and T are marked by the absolutive case and R by the dative case. The R is always indexed in the prefix, not P nor T. Furthermore, the verb form is inflected with the *a-* prefix, which I label *vc* for valency change.

- (6) a. *nafa giri nafan y-a-rithr-th*  
 3PL.ERG knife(ABS) 3SG.DAT 3SG.MASC-vc-give-3PL  
 ‘They give him the knife.’  
 b. *nafa bone zokwasi nzun w-a-rbänZR-th*  
 3PL.ERG 2SG.POSS speech(ABS) 1SG.DAT 1SG-vc-explain-3PL  
 ‘They explain your message to me.’  
 c. *nafa srak nafan y-a-brigwr-th*  
 3PL.ERG boy(ABS) 3SG.DAT 3SG.MASC-vc-return-3PL  
 ‘They return the boy for/to him.’

From the types of argument structure shown above, we can define the following grammatical relations in Komnzo:

1. The subject relation is characterised by either ergative or absolutive case assignment.
  - a) If the noun phrase is in the ergative, it will always be indexed in the suffix.
  - b) If the noun phrase is in the absolutive, it may be indexed in the suffix or the prefix. It is considered to be a subject, iff the clause contains no ergative-marked noun phrase.
2. The object relation is characterised by absolutive case assignment and indexation in the prefix. This only applies in the presence of another ergative noun phrase which is indexed in the suffix.
3. The indirect object relation is characterised by dative (or possessive) case assignment and indexation in the prefix. Additionally, the verb form receives the valency change prefix *a-*.

Similar to other grammatical categories, for example TAM and number, grammatical relations are constructed by unifying information from different sites. These are the person marking affixes and the diathetic prefix, but also the case assignment on the respective noun phrases. I describe the person marking affixes on the verb as the actor suffix and the undergoer prefix.<sup>7</sup> However, in the unified gloss, which is employed throughout this grammar, I use *SBJ* (subject), *OBJ* (object) and *IO* (indirect object). A reviewer

<sup>7</sup>I use a semantic definition of the term undergoer as that argument which is affected by the event.

suggested to use A (actor) and U (undergoer) and avoid using categories like subject and object. I agree that there is no strong evidence for a subject category in Komnzo. Nevertheless, I employ the terms subject, object and indirect object as metalinguistic labels that I find useful in communicating with other linguists. I do not claim that these play an overly important role in the grammar of Komnzo. In addition, there are practical reasons for using SBJ (subject), OBJ (object) and IO (indirect object) in the gloss line. If I employ A (actor) and U (undergoer), it would be impossible to show the distinction between an object and an indirect object in the unified gloss line.

### 5.4.2 Morphological templates

This section describes the structure of verbs by looking at the slots involved in the indexing of arguments. More precisely, I describe the arrangement of slots, the presence vs. absence of slots, as well as their content.

Based on the inflectional pattern, Komnzo verbs can be classified into prefixing, middle and ambifixing verbs, depending on whether prefix, suffix or both are employed. I use the term “template” for the different inflectional patterns. Hence, we can say that a verb form occurs in “a prefixing template” or in “an ambifixing template”. These templates are lexically determined for some verb lexemes, which means we can speak of “a prefixing verb” or “a middle verb”. For the majority of verb lexemes, the system is flexible and verbs occur in different templates. We can describe a particular verb lexeme by stating that “it occurs in the middle template and the ambifixing template, but not in the prefixing template”.

The slots involved in the definition of templates are the following: (i) the undergoer prefix, (ii) the diathetic prefix, and (iii) the actor suffix. The undergoer prefix can index an argument, or it can be filled by the middle prefix, which is person-invariant. The diathetic prefix can be absent or be filled by the valency change prefix.<sup>8</sup> The actor suffix can be either absent or present. Figure 5.5 provides a first schematic overview of the possible templates. Note that there are more than the three templates mentioned above. This is because the prefixing and the ambifixing template can be further subdivided depending on the presence versus absence of the valency change prefix. Hence, there is a prefixing template and an indirect object prefixing template; and there is a transitive ambifixing template and a ditransitive ambifixing template.

I briefly describe each template here and refer the reader to the subsequent sections in which a detailed description follows (§5.4.4-6). In the prefixing template, only the undergoer prefix is used for person indexing. In the indirect object prefixing template also, only the undergoer prefix is used for person indexing. However, the undergoer prefix indexes an indirect object (beneficiary or possessor). This is formally marked by the valency change prefix *a-*. In the middle template, the prefix is filled by a middle marker which is invariant for person and number. The sole argument is indexed in the suffix.

<sup>8</sup>I use the neutral term “valency change” because its function is to either increase or decrease the valency of a verb.

<sup>9</sup>The label ‘actor suffix’ is problematic with some lexemes which employ the middle template for a passive function. In this case, the suffix encodes a patient argument (see §5.4.5).

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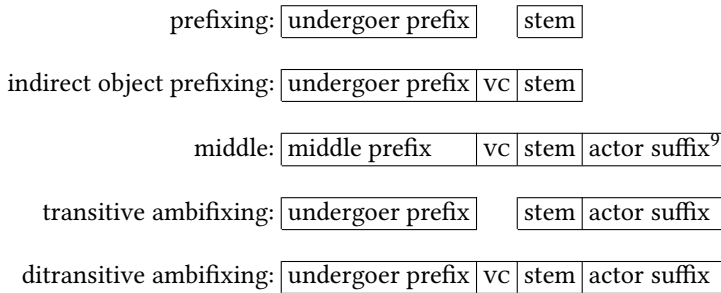


Figure 5.5: Morphological templates and argument structure

The middle marker is always followed by the valency change prefix *a-*. The middle template is used for a variety of functions, and depending on the function of the argument in the suffix it may index an agent or patient. The ambifixing transitive template uses both affixes for person indexing. The prefix encodes the object (patient, theme, experiencer) and the suffix encodes the subject (agent, stimulus). The ditransitive ambifixing template follows the pattern of the transitive template with the addition of the valency change prefix *a-*. The undergoer prefix indexes the indirect object (goal, beneficiary, possessor).

I illustrate the five templates with the verb *migsi* ‘hang’ in examples (7a-e). Note that although the system is flexible, i.e. verbs occur in different templates, there is only a small amount of verb lexemes which can occur in all five templates. I choose the positional verb *migsi* ‘hang’ in (7). Positional verbs have a number of peculiarities, for example a special verbstem and stative suffix, which also encodes number (see §5.4.4.2). This can be seen in (7a) and (7b).

- (7) a. PREFIXING:  
*y-mi-thgr*  
 3SG.MASC-hang.POS-STAT.ND  
 ‘He is hanging.’
- b. INDIRECT OBJECT PREFIXING:  
*y-a-mi-thgr*  
 3SG.MASC-vc-hang.POS-STAT.ND  
 ‘(Something) is hanging for him.’
- c. MIDDLE:  
*η-a-mig-wr-∅*  
 M-vc-hang.EXT-ND-2|3SG  
 ‘It hangs itself up.’
- d. TRANSITIVE AMBIFIXING:  
*y-mig-wr-∅*  
 3SG.MASC-hang.EXT-ND-2|3SG  
 ‘S/He hangs him up.’



## e. DITRANSITIVE AMBIFIXING:

*y-a-mig-wr-∅*  
 3SG.MASC-VC-hang.EXT-ND-2|3SG  
 ‘S/He hangs it up for him.’

The templates do not align neatly with transitivity. For example, only a small minority of intransitive verbs are prefixing (8a), while most employ a middle template (8b). The underlying semantic factor is the dynamicity of the event (see §5.4.4). On the other hand, the middle template covers a wide range of functions including reflexives and reciprocals, passives, as well as antipassives (see §5.4.5). Transitive verbs are usually expressed in the ambifixing template (8c). Ditransitive verbs occur in the ambifixing template with the addition of the valency change prefix *a-*, whereby an indirect object is introduced to the clause. The corresponding noun phrase is flagged with dative (8d) or possessive case, and it is indexed in the undergoer prefix (see §5.4.6).

- (8) a. *kktme erfikwr.*  
 kt-kt=me e-rfik-wr  
 REDUP-group=INS 2|3NSG:α-grow.EXT-ND  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/grow  
 ‘They grow in groups.’
- b. *nagayé ηakwinth.*  
 nagayé η-a-kwi-n-th  
 children M:α-VC-run.EXT-DU-2|3NSG  
 2|3DU:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/run  
 ‘The two children run.’
- c. *nafa ηad yrbänzrth.*  
 nafa ηad y-rbä-nzr-th  
 3NSG.ERG rope 3SG.MASC:α-untie.EXT-ND-2|3NSG  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/untie  
 ‘They untie the rope.’
- d. *nze nafa wawa yarithé.*  
 nze nafa wawa y-a-ri-th-é.  
 1SG.ERG 3SG.DAT yam 3SG.MASC:α-VC-give.EXT-ND-1SG  
 1SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:NPST:IPFV/give  
 ‘I give him the yam(s).’

It follows that the valency change prefix *a-* (vc) has a double function. It increases and decreases the valency of a verb. This is exemplified with *migsi* ‘hang’ in examples (7a-e) above. There are a number of deponent verbs attested, for example prefixing verbs or transitive ambifixing verbs which obligatorily take the *a-* prefix. I analyse them as deponent in the sense of Baerman et al (2006) because in these cases the undergoer prefix indexes a direct object, although the presence of the vc prefix suggests an indirect object.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup>Deponency is defined as a “mismatch between morphology and morpho-syntax” (Baerman et al. 2006).

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Table 5.3: Argument marking

template	semantic role in the prefix	diathetic prefix	semantic role in the suffix	case frame	construction
prefixing	experiencer, (agent) <sup>a</sup>	∅	n/a	ABS	intransitive (stative)
indirect object prefixing	beneficiary or possessor	<i>a-</i>	n/a	DAT or POSS	intransitive (stative)
middle	n/a	<i>a-</i>	agent	ABS	intransitive (dynamic)
middle	n/a	<i>a-</i>	agent	ABS	impersonal
middle	n/a	<i>a-</i>	patient	ABS	passive
middle	n/a	<i>a-</i>	agent	ABS	reflex. & recip.
middle	n/a	<i>a-</i>	agent	ERG (ABS) <sup>b</sup>	suppressed-object
transitive ambifixing	patient, theme	∅	agent	ERG ABS	transitive
transitive ambifixing	experiencer	∅	stimulus	ABS ERG	experiencer-object
ditransitive ambifixing	beneficiary, goal	<i>a-</i>	agent	ERG ABS DAT	ditransitive
ditransitive ambifixing	possessor	<i>a-</i>	agent	ERG ABS POSS	ditransitive

<sup>a</sup> This is a marginal pattern as almost all prefixing verbs have stative semantics.

<sup>b</sup> In suppressed-object clauses, the object is suppressed from the indexation in the verb.

Table 5.3 provides a fine-grained overview of the templates. I show the semantic roles of the arguments indexed in the affixes, the presence/absence of the valency change prefix, the case frame and the name of the corresponding construction. These constructions are described in the section on clause types (§8.3).

### 5.4.3 Valency alternations

In Komnzo, valency alternations are achieved by placing the verb in different templates. There is only a handful of verbs which occur in all the templates. I choose the verb *msaksi* ‘sit, dwell’ to show its possibilities below with text examples (9-12). Note that *msaksi* deviates in two ways from other verbs. First, it takes the valency change prefix obligatorily when it occurs in a prefixing template, as can be seen in (9). Secondly, there is a special verbstem for the prefixing template: *m*. In other templates, *msaksi* has the extended stem *msak* and the restricted stem *ms*, i.e. it is a class II verb (compare Table 5.2).

In example (9), the speaker showed me a place which used to be inhabited by a spirit. He states that nobody knows where the spirit lives nowadays. Hence, the verb *msaksi* has a stative meaning in the prefixing template and can be translated into English with ‘dwell, live, stay’, or ‘be sitting’.

- (9) *watik ηafāniza ... ni miyamr mā zena yamnzr.*

watik η-a-fāni-z-a-∅ (.)ni miyamr mā zena y-a-m-nzr

then M.α-VC-shift.place.EXT-ND-PST-2|3SG (.)1NSG ignorance where today 3SG.MASC.α-VC-dwell.EXT-

2|3SG:SBJ:IPFV:PST/shift.place

3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/dwell

‘Then he shifted (location). We don’t know where he lives today.’

[tci20120922-19 DAK #37]

Example (10) was uttered in the context of me visiting a garden place in the forest, where I was accompanied by the owner of the garden. The speaker happened to cycle past the garden place catching sight of me and the owner. The speaker comments on how he saw the two of us sitting down. Thus, *msaksi* in the middle template encodes a dynamic event and can be translated into English with ‘sit down’ or ‘assume a sitting position’.

- (10) *nze nimāwā! boba thnmaré ηamsakrnmth.*

nze nima=wā boba th-∅-n-mar-é

1SG.ERG like.this=EMPH MED:ABL 2|3NSG.γ-DU-VENT-see.RS-1SG

1SG:SBJ>2|3DU:OBJ:RPST:PFV:VENT/see

η-a-msak-rn-m-th

M.α-VC-sit.EXT-DU-DUR-2|3NSG

2|3DU:SBJ:RPST:DUR/sit

‘Me too! I saw you two from there and you were just sitting down.’

[tci20130823-06 STK #90]

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Example (11) shows *msaksi* in a transitive ambifixing template. The example comes from a narrative, in which an angry man is forcefully seated and calmed down by giving him kava to drink.

- (11) *wati ymsakwrth fof krär yarinakwrth bänemr fof nafane noku frazsir.*  
 wati y-msak-wr-th fof krär  
 then 3SG.MASC.α-sit.EXT-ND-2|3NSG EMPH kava  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/sit  
 y-a-rinak-wr-th bän=mr fof nafane noku  
 3SG.MASC.α-VC-pour.EXT-ND-2|3NSG DEM:MED=PURP EMPH 3SG.POSS anger  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:NPST:IPFV/pour  
 fraz-si=r  
 extinguish-NMLZ=PURP  
 ‘So they sit him down properly and pour kava for him to cool down his anger.’  
 [tci20120909-06 KAB 93-94]

Example (12) is an elicited example showing *msaksi* in a ditransitive ambifixing template, where the undergoer prefix indexes the possessor (‘his child’). Note that the same template is found in the second verb in (11), where the undergoer prefix indexes a beneficiary (‘pour kava for him’).

- (12) *nze nafange yamsakwé.*  
 nze nafa-nge y-a-msak-w-é.  
 1SG.ERG 3.POSS-child 3SG.MASC:α-VC-sit.EXT-ND-1SG  
 1SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:NPST:IPFV/sit  
 ‘I sit his child down.’

The above examples show that valency alternations are achieved by using the same verb in different templates. It is important to note that all the inflected verb forms share the same infinitive, which is formed by suffixing the nominaliser *-si* to the stem. In (13) and (14) I show the infinitive with a stative and a dynamic interpretation. Example (13) is the conclusion of a short narrative about taboos and customs that involve the bird of paradise. The speaker uses *msaksi* with a locative case suffix in a possessive construction to express ‘in our life’. In example (14), the speaker showed me a beautiful place on the bank of Morehead river. She comments that this is a good place to sit down and rest. Hence, the infinitive *msaksi* is used for both interpretations, a timeless state in (13) and a dynamic event in (14).

- (13) *nzenme trtha mrmren nzenme msaksin ... wtrikarä anema fof ηamränzre.*  
 nzenme trtha mrmr=en nzenme msak-si=n (.) wtri=karä  
 1NSG.POSS life inside=LOC 1NSG.POSS sit-NMLZ=LOC (.) fear=PROP  
 ane=ma fof η-a-mrä-nzr-e  
 DEM=CHAR EMPH M.α-VC-stroll.EXT-ND-1NSG  
 1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/stroll  
 ‘In our way of life ... in our living ... we walk about with fear because of this.’

[tci20120817-02 ABB #40-43]

- (14) *camp rä ... zmbo fthé nanyak msaksir.*  
 camp rä                   (.) zmbo    fthé   n-a-n-yak  
 camp 3SG.F.COP.ND       (.) PROX.ALL when INSG.α-VC-VENT-walk.EXT.ND  
                           3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be                                   1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/come  
 msak-si=r  
 sit-NMLZ=PURP  
 ‘This is a camp ... We come here to sit down (and rest).’

[tci20130907-02 RNA #331-333]

The meaning of a verb in one template may differ substantially when used in another template. For example, the verb *rfiksi* ‘grow’ occurs in the prefixing template (8a), but it can be used in a transitive ambifixing template with the meaning ‘nurture’ (Lit. ‘grow somebody’). A second example is the verb *rbänzsi* ‘untie’ which usually occurs in a transitive ambifixing template (8c). Used in a ditransitive ambifixing template it has the meaning ‘explain’ (Lit. ‘untie for somebody’). Nevertheless, inflected verbs in different templates all share the same infinitive. In this aspect Komnzo differs from other Yam languages. For example in Nen, there are no infinitives for prefixing verbs, but instead valency-altered forms have distinct infinitives which include the relevant formatives from a set of diathetic prefixes (Evans 2015b). For example, one pair of infinitives is: *amzs* ‘sit (v.i.)’ versus *wamzs* ‘set, sit (v.t.)’. There are even triplets: *ang̃ws* ‘return (v.i.)’ versus *wañg̃ws* ‘return (v.t.)’ versus *wawañg̃ws* ‘return to/for (v.t.)’. In Komnzo, there are no distinct infinitives for valency-altered forms. Hence, *rfiksi* is the infinitive of both ‘grow’ and ‘nurture’, and *rbänzsi* is the infinitive of ‘untie’ and ‘explain’.

There are two ways of analyzing shared infinitives in Komnzo and I argue that both are needed. On the one hand, we can understand it as a system where valency is fluid and lexemes are flexible. Under this analysis a lexeme can alter its valency by occurring in different templates. On the other hand, we could adopt the notion of heterosemy (Lichtenberk 1991 and Evans 2010: 524) to capture that different lexical items and meanings are expressed by different templates.<sup>11</sup> A verb like *msaksi* shows that we need both perspectives. On the one hand, *msaksi*<sub>1</sub> means ‘dwell, live’ in a prefixing template, while *msaksi*<sub>2</sub> means ‘sit down’ in a middle/ambifixing template. We would understand *msaksi*<sub>1</sub> as being heterosemous to *msaksi*<sub>2</sub> because there is a significant shift in meaning due to the template. The same holds for pairs like *rfiksi* meaning ‘grow’ or ‘nurture’ and *rbänzsi* meaning ‘untie’ or ‘explain’. On the other hand, the system of valency alternations in Komnzo is very productive. Especially the middle template and the ditransitive ambifixing template can be used for almost every verb which can also occur in the transitive ambifixing template. Thus, describing the alternation between *msaksi* in (11) ‘sit someone down’ and (12) ‘sit down someone’s (child)’ in terms of heterosemy would fall short of an exhaustive description. It would not adequately capture the productivity of the system, nor would it fully explain shared infinitives for verb forms of different templates.

<sup>11</sup>This assumes a definition of the linguistic sign as having three parts: form, meaning and combinatorics (or syntax) as put forward by (Mel’čuk 1973) and (Pollard & Sag 1987: 51).

## 5.4.4 The prefixing template

## 5.4.4.1 Introduction

Prefixing verbs are a small class with around 20 lexical items attested so far. Some of them can occur in other templates, but most occur only in the prefixing template. Table 5.4 lists all the members of the prefixing class. Furthermore, there is a class of 41 positional verbs, which can occur in the prefixing template (see §5.4.4.2).

Table 5.4: Prefixing verbs

infinitive or stem <sup>12</sup>	gloss	possible templates	gloss
<i>-rug</i>	‘sleep’	pref. only	-
<i>-yak</i>	‘walk, go’	pref. only	-
<sup>a</sup> <i>-nyak</i>	‘come’	pref. only	-
<sup>a</sup> <i>yathizsi</i>	‘suffer’	pref. only	-
<sup>a</sup> <i>mthizsi</i>	‘rest’	pref. only	-
<sup>a</sup> <i>-nor</i>	‘shout, emit sound’	pref. only	-
<i>wäksi</i>	‘be caught by daybreak’	pref. only	-
<i>fogsi</i>	‘be caught by nightfall’	pref. only	-
<i>rmigfaksi</i>	‘be in the middle of (doing) sth.’	pref. only	-
<i>-thn</i>	‘be lying’	pref. only	-
<sup>a</sup> <i>yarenszi</i>	‘look around’	pref. only	-
<i>-ythk</i>	‘be finished’	pref. only	-
<sup>a</sup> <i>namgsi</i>	‘be panting, gasping’	pref. only	-
<i>thfäsi</i>	‘jump’	pref./middle	‘fly’
<sup>a</sup> <i>thgusi</i>	‘forget’	pref./trans.	‘confuse sth.’
<i>thoraksi</i>	‘appear, arrive’	pref./trans.	‘find, search’
<i>wokraksi</i>	‘float’	pref./trans.	‘make sth. float’
<i>-rä</i>	‘be’	all templates	‘do’
<sup>a</sup> <i>msaksi</i>	‘dwell, live’	all templates	‘sit (self or sb.)’
<i>sufaksi</i>	‘grow old’	all templates	‘bring to an end’
<i>ziksi</i>	‘turn off, be on the side’	all templates	‘put to the side’
<i>rfiksi</i>	‘grow’	all templates	‘nurture’

<sup>a</sup> These verbs are deponent, i.e. they use the vc prefix obligatorily.

<sup>12</sup> Infinitives are marked with the nominaliser suffix *-si*. Prefixing verbs are irregular in many respects. Some of the verbs listed here lack an infinitive and only the extended stem is given, while others employ a common noun as their infinitive, for example *etfth* ‘sleep’, *moth* ‘path, walk, come’ and *kwan* ‘noise, shout’. This does not correlate with whether there are other templates available. Where a nominalised form with *-si* is lacking, I give the extended stem. Another irregularity are verbs where the stem is sensitive to the dual versus non-dual distinction, for example ‘walk’ *-yak* (ND) versus *-yan* (DU) or ‘shout’ *-nor* (ND) versus *-rn* (DU). In these cases, the non-dual stem is listed.

Prefixing verbs are special in their morphology in that they can encode a fourth number value. The somewhat odd combination of a non-singular prefix and a dual suffix yields a large plural. This is attested in other Yam languages, for example for positional verbs in Nen and Nā (Evans 2014). I describe the four-way number contrast in §5.5.3.2.

Prefixing verbs are mostly stative in their semantics. Comparative work on split intransitivity has shown that differences in alignment are often semantically motivated (Merlan 1985, Mithun 1991 and Arkadiev 2008). In Komnzo, the semantic parameters involved are the dynamicity of the event and the volitionality of the participant, the former plays the dominant role. As we have seen in §5.4.3, predicates in a prefixing template tend to be more stative (9), while predicates in middle or ambifixing templates tend to be more dynamic (10-12). In other languages of the Yam family, the split between stative and dynamic event types is congruent with the distinction between prefixing and middle intransitives, for example in Nen (Evans 2015a) and Nama (Siegel 2014).<sup>13</sup>

In Komnzo, although all verbs in a middle or ambifixing template depict dynamic event types, we find a somewhat mixed picture with prefixing verbs. Table 5.4 contains a few dynamic events, for example *-nor* ‘shout’, *thoraksi* ‘appear, arrive’ and *rfiksi* ‘grow’. In some cases, volitionality is the semantic parameter involved in the prefixing/middle/ambifixing alternation: *thoraksi* and *rfiksi* in an ambifixing transitive template mean ‘find’ and ‘nurture’ respectively.<sup>14</sup> The verb *-nor* ‘shout’ allows no alternation, but occurs only in a prefixing template. Interestingly, *-nor* is often used in a pseudo-cognate object construction: *kwan yannor*<sup>15</sup> ‘He shouts (the shout)’ or *ya yannor* ‘He cries (the tears)’. Hence, with this verb a less volitional meaning like ‘emit a sound’ might be licenced. Pseudo-cognate object constructions are described in §8.3.11. Nevertheless, with other predicates in Table 5.4 such an explanation fails, for example *ziksi* ‘turn off, go in’ or *thfäsi* ‘jump’. Keeping the unusually small size of the prefixing class in mind, I interpret these cases as exceptions to the overall rule. Furthermore, the existence of a class of positional verbs (§5.4.4.2) underscores the split along the lines of event dynamicity and volitionality.

All prefixing verbs can take the valency change prefix *a-*. This template was labelled indirect object prefixing in Table 5.3. However, in doing so they remain monovalent in their cross-referencing. The ‘additional argument’, usually a Beneficiary or Possessor, replaces the ‘original argument’, usually an Experiencer. However, the event itself remains to ‘be about’ the original argument. A common usage of this pattern involves the copula: When handing something to a person, one would say *bnarä!* ‘There you are!’ (literally: ‘(It) is there for you!’). A textual example comes from a stimulus task in which two speakers are describing the content of picture cards (15). The picture in the example shows a policeman who hands some personal belongings to another man. After describing the scene, one of the two speakers points to a few things on the side asking what these were.

<sup>13</sup>Siegel uses different terminology in his description of Nama. What I call the prefixing template or stative intransitives equals “patientive intransitives”, and what I label the middle template or dynamic intransitives equals “agentive intransitives” (Siegel 2014: 213).

<sup>14</sup>In ambifixing templates, the case marking of a more agent-like argument is ergative. This is also found in middle templates with an suppressed-object function.

<sup>15</sup>*-nor* lacks a nominalised infinitive and instead the common noun *kwan* ‘shout, call’ is used.

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The first verb in (15) ‘be lying down’ indexes the (assumed) possessor and not the things on the ground. The second clause is accompanied by a pointing gesture in order to draw the interlocutor’s attention to the objects. Here, the copula indexes the things on the ground.

- (15) *mrmr ra yathn? zane zerä!*  
 mrmr ra y-a-thn zane  
 inside what.ABS 3SG.MASC.α-VC-lie.EXT.ND DEM:PROX  
 3SG.MASC.IO:NPST:IPFV/lie  
  
 z=e-rä  
 PROX=2|3NSG.α-be.EXT.ND  
 PROX=2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘What are these (of his) inside? These ones here!’ [tci20111004 TSA #29-30]

Table 5.4 indicates that eight out of 20 prefixing verbs obligatorily use the *a-* prefix without introducing an argument. I analyse these verbs as deponent (Baerman et al. 2006).

### 5.4.4.2 Positional verbs

The class of 41 positional or postural verbs underscores the role of dynamicity in the alignment of S. Positional verbs express states of the type ‘be in position X’ (‘be leaning,’ ‘be standing,’ ‘be submerged’ etc). Example (16) shows the verb *migsi* ‘hang’.

- (16) *bidrthatha zbo sumithgrm wämnen.*  
 bidr=thatha zbo su-mi-thgr-m wämne=n  
 flying.fox=SIMIL PROX.ALL 3SG.MASC.β1-be.hanging-STAT.ND-DUR tree=LOC  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR:STAT/be.hanging  
 ‘He was hanging like a flying fox on the tree.’ [tci20130901-04 RNA #48]

Like most positional verbs, *migsi* can enter into other templates, for example a middle template (‘assume a hanging position’) or a transitive template (‘hang something’). This is shown below in examples (17) and (18) respectively. Example (17) is part of a plant walk around Rouku village. The speaker shows me a plant in the part of the land which is inundated during the rainy season. Example (18) comes from a procedural text in which the speaker shows me around his yam storage house. He remarks that small yam suckers are called *sagusagu* and they are stored by tying several yams into bundles.

- (17) *bubukr zä zfkwa ηamigwrth ... watik kofäyé zbo zfkwa erkunzrth.*  
 bubukr zä zf kwa η-a-mig-wr-th (.) watik kofä=é zbo  
 insect PROX IMM FUT M.α-VC-hang.EXT-ND-2|3NSG (.) then fish=ERG.NSG PROX.ALL  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/hang



zf kwa e-rku-nzr-th

IMM FUT 2|3NSG.α-knock.down.EXT-ND-2|3NSG

2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/knock.down

‘The insects will hang (themselves) from here and the fish will knock them down right here.’

[tci20130907-02 RNA #657]

- (18) *nima yamme ane fof ηafmnzre bnrä ... bemigwre ane sagusagu.*

nima yam-me ane fof η-a-frm-nzr-e

like.this custom-INS DEM EMPH M.α-VC-prepare.EXT-ND-1NSG

1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/prepare

b=n-rä

(.) b=e-mig-wr-e

ane sagusagu

MED=1NSG.α-COP.ND (.) MED=2|3NSG.α-hang.EXT-ND-1NSG DEM sagusagu

MED=1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be MED=1PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/hang

‘We prepare them in this way ... We hang up those *sagusagu*.’

[tci20121001 ABB #38]

Positionals are attested in languages throughout the Yam family (Evans 2014). For Komnzo, I define them as a class of lexemes with positional or postural semantics which share the following morphosyntactic properties: (i) the ability to occur in the prefixing template, (ii) the ability to take the stative suffix *-thgr*, (iii) the ability to form related middle and transitive verb forms, and (iv) to inflect only for a subset of TAM categories when used in a prefixing template. Table 5.5 lists the 41 members of the class which are currently attested. We find both very general meanings (*rzarsi* ‘be tied’, *yufaksi* ‘be bent over’) and very specific meanings (*rngthksi* ‘be stuck in a tree fork’, *mgthksi* ‘be in the mouth’). Some of these verbs occur with prototypical participants, for example *zaksi* ‘be anchored’ with *garda* ‘canoe’ or *thamsaksi* ‘be spread out’ with *yame* ‘mat’.

Table 5.5 compares the extended (EXT) and restricted stem (RS) and shows that for some verbs a positional stem (POS) can be postulated. The positional stem is the lexical base to which the stative suffix *-thgr* attaches. In the first two groups of Table 5.5, the base is formally identical to the extended or restricted stem. Only in the third group, is the base different from both, in that it is always shorter. The last group contains three lexemes which are irregular in a number of ways: (i) they take a slightly different form of the stative suffix, which is given in parentheses for each, (ii) the last two lexemes in this group occur only as positionals, (iii) the second lexeme in the group lacks an infinitive.

The data from Table 5.5 shows that for some of the verbs we need to posit a third stem type, the positional stem, in addition to the extended and restricted stems we already encountered. The formal difference or similarity between the positional stem and the other two stem types for a given lexeme cannot be predicted on semantic or phonological grounds, but must be seen as lexicalisation in a specific morphosyntactic context. Furthermore, one should keep in mind that positional stems are not in a paradigmatic relationship of the kind we have seen with extended and restricted stems (§5.3). For example, the stative semantics of positionals blocks all perfective TAM categories.

Just like other verbs in the prefixing template, positionals may add a possessor or beneficiary by using the valency change prefix *a-*. An example of this is given in (19)

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Table 5.5: Positional verbs

infinitive	POS stem	EXT STEM	RS STEM	gloss
<i>mosisi</i>	<i>mosi-</i>	<i>mosi-</i>	<i>mosir-</i>	be gathered, piled
<i>moyusi</i>	<i>moyu-</i>	<i>moyu-</i>	<i>moyuth-</i>	be shrunk
<i>rfakusi</i>	<i>rfaku-</i>	<i>rfaku-</i>	<i>rfakuth-</i>	be sprinkled
<i>ttüsi</i>	<i>ttü-</i>	<i>ttü-</i>	<i>ttüth-</i>	be printed, carved
<i>tharasi</i>	<i>thar-</i>	<i>thar-</i>	<i>tharf-</i>	be underneath
<i>worsi</i>	<i>wor-</i>	<i>wor-</i>	<i>won-</i>	be planted
<i>brüzi</i>	<i>brüs-</i>	<i>brüz-</i>	<i>brüs-</i>	be submerged
<i>krsi</i>	<i>kr-</i>	<i>krth-</i>	<i>kr-</i>	be blocked off
<i>räzsi</i>	<i>räs-</i>	<i>rüz-</i>	<i>räs-</i>	be erected
<sup>a</sup> <i>rfuthraksi</i>	<i>rfuth-</i>	<i>rfuthrak-</i>	<i>rfuthr-</i>	be piled up
<i>rmithraksi</i>	<i>rmithr-</i>	<i>rmithrak-</i>	<i>rmithr-</i>	be joined together
<i>rmnzüfaksi</i>	<i>rmnzüf-</i>	<i>rmnzüfak-</i>	<i>rmnzüf-</i>	be side by side / parallel
<i>rthbraksi</i>	<i>rthbr-</i>	<i>rthbrak-</i>	<i>rthbr-</i>	be sticking (on sth.)
<i>rzarsi</i>	<i>rzaf-</i>	<i>rzar-</i>	<i>rzaf-</i>	be tied
<i>thamsaksi</i>	<i>thams-</i>	<i>thamsak-</i>	<i>thams-</i>	be spread out
<sup>a</sup> <i>yufaksi</i>	<i>yuf-</i>	<i>yufak-</i>	<i>yuf-</i>	be bent
<i>zakasi</i>	<i>z-</i>	<i>zak-</i>	<i>z-</i>	be anchored
<i>fätfaksi</i>	<i>fät-</i>	<i>fätfak-</i>	<i>fätf-</i>	be across sth.
<i>fethaksi</i>	<i>fe-</i>	<i>fethak-</i>	<i>feth-</i>	be dipped in water
<i>fifhaksi</i>	<i>fif-</i>	<i>fifthak-</i>	<i>fifth-</i>	be lying straight
<i>migsi</i>	<i>mi-</i>	<i>mig-</i>	<i>mir-</i>	be hanging
<i>moraksi</i>	<i>mo-</i>	<i>morak-</i>	<i>mor-</i>	be leaning
<sup>a</sup> <i>mgthksi</i>	<i>mg-</i>	<i>mgthk-</i>	<i>mgthm-</i>	be in the mouth
<i>mreznsi</i>	<i>mre-</i>	<i>mrezn-</i>	<i>mrezn-</i>	be straight
<sup>a</sup> <i>mtheksi</i>	<i>mthe-</i>	<i>mthek-</i>	<i>mthef-</i>	be lifted up
<i>myuknsi</i>	<i>myu-</i>	<i>myukn-</i>	<i>myuf-</i>	be twisted
<i>nänzüthzsi</i>	<i>nänzü-</i>	<i>nänzüthz-</i>	<i>nänzütham-</i>	be covered with soil
<i>rafiksi</i>	<i>rafi-</i>	<i>rafig-</i>	<i>rafinz-</i>	be on top of sth.
<i>rakthksi</i>	<i>rak-</i>	<i>rakthk-</i>	<i>rakthm-</i>	be on top of sth.
<i>rinaksi</i>	<i>ri-</i>	<i>rinak-</i>	<i>rin-</i>	be poured into
<i>rngthksi</i>	<i>rng-</i>	<i>rngthk-</i>	<i>rngthm-</i>	be in a tree fork
<sup>a</sup> <i>rgsi</i>	<i>rk-</i>	<i>rg-</i>	<i>rg-</i>	be wearing clothes
<i>sisraksi</i>	<i>si-</i>	<i>sisrak-</i>	<i>sisr-</i>	be sticking out of sth.
<i>sümraksi</i>	<i>süm-</i>	<i>sümrak-</i>	<i>sümr-</i>	be widened, be open
<i>thäfrsi</i>	<i>thäfrs-</i>	<i>thäf-</i>	<i>thäfrs-</i>	be covered
<i>tharuksi</i>	<i>tharu-</i>	<i>tharuk-</i>	<i>tharuf-</i>	be inside (open container)
<i>ththaksi</i>	<i>th-</i>	<i>ththak-</i>	<i>ththm-</i>	be pinned on sth.
<i>wäthsi</i>	<i>wä-</i>	<i>wäth-</i>	<i>wäf-</i>	be wrapped
<i>thorsi</i>	<i>th-(kgr)</i>	<i>thor-</i>	<i>thb-</i>	be inside (closed container)
n/a	<i>wä-(gr)</i>	n/a	n/a	be up high
<i>yukrasi</i>	<i>ko-(gr)</i>	n/a	<i>-kuk</i>	be standing

<sup>a</sup> These verbs are deponent, i.e. they use the vc prefix obligatorily.

where the speaker describes how he carried two fish up from the river. The first verb in (19) indexes the two catfish, but the second verb indexes a first singular, in this case the possessor ('my shoulder'). Thus, although the predicate is about the two fish ('They were on top'), the verb only indexes the first singular.

- (19) *thwä femithgrn zane zazame nwanwägr ... fatren.*  
 thwä f-e-mi-thgrn zane zaza=me  
 catfish DIST=2|3NSG:α-be.hanging-STAT.DU PROX carrying stick=INS  
 DIST=2|3DU:SBJ:NPST:STAT/be.hanging  
 n=wo-a-n-wä-gr (.) fatr=en  
 IPST=1SG-VC-VENT-be.on.top-STAT.ND (.) shoulder=LOC  
 1SG:IO:IPST:STAT:VENT/be.on.top  
 'Those two catfish are hanging there. I just brought them here on my shoulder  
 with the carrying stick.' [tci20121008-03 MAB #13]

As Table 5.5 shows, there are five out of 41 positional verbs which I analyse as dependent, i.e. they take the *a-* prefix obligatorily without adding an additional argument to the clause.

#### 5.4.5 The middle template

The majority of verb stems can enter into what I call the middle template. In the middle template, the prefix slot is filled by a person-invariant middle marker (glossed as *M*) and the single argument is cross-referenced in the suffix. In addition, the valency change prefix *a-* is employed. As we will see below, the suffix in this template may cross-reference an A, S or P argument. The distinction is signalled by the case marking on the NP (ergative vs. absolutive).

I employ the term "middle", as defined by Kemmer (1993: 207-210) for situation types with a low degree of elaboration. Low degree of elaboration may refer to the event and/or to the participants involved in the event. The middle template in Komnzo covers a range of functions: intransitives, passive-impersonals, reflexives and reciprocals as well as suppressed-object middles (or antipassives). Kemmer describes these events as typical "middle situation types" (1993: 15).

Intransitive event types in Komnzo are distributed over the prefixing and the middle template (see §5.4.4). The majority of syntactically intransitive verbs employ the middle template. As a consequence for the description of the middle template, we have to draw a distinction between intrinsic middle verbs and derived middle verbs. Intrinsic middles can only occur in the middle template. Derived middle verbs are derived from transitive verbs, whereby the middle template is used for different valency decreasing functions. There is a third group of verb stems, which almost always occur in the middle template, but with which a derived transitive or ditransitive is possible. These groups will be discussed below. For now, the main distinction is between verbs, for which the middle template is one strategy amongst others and verbs, which only occur in the middle template. I call the latter intrinsic middle verbs.

Table 5.6: Intrinsic middle verbs

infinitive	EXT STEM	gloss
<sup>a</sup> <i>moth</i>	<i>kwi-</i>	'run'
<i>mränzsi</i>	<i>mränz-</i>	'stroll'
<i>sogsi</i>	<i>sog-</i>	'ascend, climb up'
<i>rsörsi</i>	<i>rsör-</i>	'descend, climb down'
<sup>a</sup> <i>mni</i>	<i>rsir-</i>	'burn, cook' (v.i.)
<i>müsinzsi</i>	<i>müsinz-</i>	'glow'
<i>rfeksi</i>	<i>rfek-</i>	'limp'
<i>frezsi</i>	<i>frez-</i>	'come up (from river)'
<i>risoksi</i>	<i>risok-</i>	'look down'
<i>rnäthsi</i>	<i>rnäth-</i>	'get stuck'
<i>rninzsi</i>	<i>rninz-</i>	'smile'
<sup>a</sup> <i>wath</i>	<i>rnzür-</i>	'dance'
<i>rüsi</i>	<i>rü-</i>	'rain'
<i>sufaksi</i>	<i>sufak-</i>	'gulp down, guzzle'
<i>fänizsi</i>	<i>fäniz-</i>	'shift location'
<i>bznsi</i>	<i>bzn-</i>	'work'
<i>thärkusi</i>	<i>thärku-</i>	'crawl'
<i>farksi</i>	<i>fark-</i>	'set off'
<i>fsknsi</i>	<i>fskn-</i>	'doze'
<i>borsi</i>	<i>bor-</i>	'laugh, play'
<i>thweksi</i>	<i>thwek-</i>	'rejoice'
n/a	<i>ko-</i>	'become'
n/a	<i>rä-</i>	'do, think'

<sup>a</sup> These verbs employ a common noun as their infinitive

Some intrinsic middle verbs are listed in Table 5.6. In her cross-linguistic survey, Kemmer identifies a number of situation types which commonly occur with middle morphology (1993: 16-21). In Komnzo these are: translational motion ('run', 'climb up', 'climb down', 'shift location'), emotion middle ('laugh', 'rejoice', 'smile'), cognition middle ('think') and spontaneous events ('change', 'become'). The tendency to encode intransitive verbs with a dynamic event type in the middle template has been discussed above in §5.4.4.

In addition to intrinsic middle verbs, most verb stems can occur in the middle template with various related functions. One such verb is *brigs* 'return'. In the examples (20) and (21), the S argument is indexed in the suffix, while the prefix is filled with the middle morpheme. Since there is no formal difference in the middle template between intransitives, impersonals and reflexives, these should be understood as reflexiva tanta (Geniušienė 1987) and example (20) could also be translated as 'I return myself'.

- (20) *oh nzä karfo zena zf **ηabrigwé**.*  
 oh nzä kar=fo zena zf η-a-brig-w-é  
 oh 1SG.ABS village=ALL today IMM M.α-VC-return.EXT-ND-1SG  
 1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/return  
 ‘Oh, now I will go back to the village.’ [tci20111004 RMA 437]

- (21) *oh kaimätdbo fam **ηabrigwrth**.*  
 oh kaimät=dbo fam η-a-brig-w-r-th  
 oh sister.in.law=ALL.ANIM thoughts M.α-VC-return.EXT-ND-LK-2|3NSG  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/return  
 ‘Oh, (my) thoughts are returning to my sister-in-law.’ [tci20130907-02 JAA 665]

Examples (22a-22b) show *brigi* in different templates. Both examples are taken from the same story about a headhunt which took place in the narrator’s village Firra. In (22a), the ambifixing transitive template is used (Lit. ‘They returned the payback’). Just a few clauses later, the narrator concludes this part of the story in (22b) where the same referent, which was indexed in the prefix in (22a), is now indexed in the suffix with a passive or impersonal interpretation (Lit. ‘Revenge (was) returned’).

- (22) a. *okay, nafa nezä z faw **wbrignath** ... bänema nafanme mayawa kakafar z bramöwä thäkwrath firran.*  
 okay nafa nezä z faw w-brig-r-n-a-th (.)  
 okay 3NSG.ERG revenge ALR payment 3SG.F.α-return.EXT-LK-DU-PST-2|3NSG (.)  
 2|3DU:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:IPFV/return  
 bäne=ma nafanme mayawa ka-kafar z bramöwä  
 DEM:MED=CHAR 3NSG.POSS mayawa REDUP-big ALR all  
 th-ä-kwr-a-th firra=n  
 2|3NSG.γ-VC|ND-hit.RS-PST-2|3NSG firra=LOC  
 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:PFV/kill  
 ‘Okay, then the two took revenge, because all their Mayawa elders had been killed in Firra.’ [tci20111107-01 MAK 126-127]
- b. *watik, faw z **ηabrigwa** ane ... ane ebar nimame firran rera fof.*  
 watik faw z η-a-brig-w-a-∅ ane (.)ane ebar nima=me  
 then payment ALR M.α-VC-return.EXT-ND-PST-2|3SG DEM (.)DEM head like.this=INS  
 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/return  
 firra=n rä-r-a fof  
 firra=LOC 3SG.F.COP-LK-PST EMPH  
 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be  
 ‘Then, revenge was taken. This is really how the head(hunting) took place in Firra.’ [tci20111107-01 MAK 134-135]

Consequently, I refrain from using the terms ‘middle voice’ or ‘passive voice’. It is more adequate to speak of a middle template with a specific function. This function might be

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reflexive, reciprocal, passive or impersonal. Consider example (23) below, in which the speaker describes how he got home after a hard day of work in his garden. The first two verbs in (23) are prefixing verbs. The last three verbs occur in the middle template and could be translated as either reflexive ('wash self', 'change self', 'bring oneself up from river') or intransitives ('wash', 'get changed', 'come up from the river').<sup>16</sup>

- (23) *yoganai worärm, kwofiyak, kwamaikwé, sänis kwaräre, zänfrefé.*  
 yoganai wo-rä-r-m kwof-yak kw-a-mayk-w-é sänis  
 tiredness 1SG.α-be-LK-DUR 1SG.β2-walk.EXT.ND M.β1-VC-wash.EXT-ND-1SG change  
 1SG:SBJ:RPST:DUR/be 1SG:SBJ:RPST:IPFV/walk 1SG:SBJ:RPST:IPFV/wash  
 kw-a-rä-r-é z-ä-n-fref-é  
 M.β1-VC-do.EXT-LK-1SG M.γ-VC-ND-VENT-come.up.from.river.RS-1SG  
 1SG:SBJ:RPST:IPFV/do 1SG:SBJ:RPST:PFV:VENT/come-up-from-river  
 'I was tired. I walked. I washed myself. I got changed and I came up here from the  
 river.'  
 [tci20120922-24 MAA 78-80]

We find the same ambiguity between reflexive and reciprocal interpretations. In (24), the speaker describes how his ancestors used to live in small hamlets which comprised a clan or often a single patriline. The reciprocal interpretation of the second verb only comes from the context. The verb form *kwamarwrme* in a different context could equally be translated as a reflexive: 'We were looking at ourselves'.

- (24) *mrnmenzo nzwamnzrm. zagr sime kwamarwrme.*  
 mrn=me=nzo nzu-a-m-nz-r-m zagr si=me  
 clan=INS=ONLY INSG.β1-VC-dwell.EXT-ND-LK-DUR far eye=INS  
 1PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell  
 kw-a-mar-w-r-m-e  
 M.β1-VC-see-LK-DUR-INSG  
 1PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/see  
 'We used to stay in our clans. We saw each other only from a distance.'  
 [tci20120922-08 DAK 117-118]

We have seen an impersonal usage of the middle template in (22b) above. An example with a much clearer passive reading is provided in (25) below, where the speaker talks about sorting and selecting yam tubers in his storage house. The context reveals that it is the patient argument of the verbs ('choose', 'put down') which is indexed in the suffix. Keenan and Dryer include the entailment of an agent in their definition of passives setting them apart from middles (2007: 352). In Komnzo, this is dependent on the semantics of the verb. Prototypical transitive verbs, like 'choose' and 'put down' in (25), invite a passive interpretation rather than an impersonal one. However, in terms of morpho-syntax, there is no dedicated passive marking. Furthermore, the agent noun

<sup>16</sup>Note that 'get changed' is expressed with a nominal *sänis* (< English 'change') and a generic verb 'do', literally 'I do the change'. The nominal is not indexed in the verb. I describe light verb constructions in §8.3.12.

phrase cannot be included in the clause, because it would have to be indexed in the suffix of the verb, which is already occupied by the patient argument.

- (25) *zane zf woksimär erä. gaba foba fof kräwokthth bobo we kwa ḡanakwrth a nima berä.*

zane zf wok-si=mär e-rä gaba foba fof  
 DEM:PROX IMM choose-NMLZ=PRIV 2|3NSG.α-COP.ND eating yam DIST.ABL EMPH  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be

k-ra-a-wokth-th bobo we kwa  
 M.β-IRR-VC|ND-choose.RS-2|3NSG MED.ALL also FUT  
 2|3PL:SBJ:IRR:PFV/choose

ḡ-a-nak-w-r-th a nima b=e-rä  
 M.α-VC-put.down.EXT-ND-LK-2|3NSG and like.this MED=2|3NSG.α-COP.ND  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/put.down MED=2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be

‘These have not been selected. They will be selected over there and then put down there like those ones.’ [tci20121001 ABB 41-42]

A somewhat different function of the middle template is the suppressed-object middle. The formal difference with respect to the previous functions of the middle template lies in the marking of the NP, which receives an ergative. Thus, the argument is an actor and the event is inherently transitive. Consider example (26), which is taken from a conversation between two young men. The speaker reports to his friend what his wife thinks about his plan to shift the garden place to another location. In (26), the pronoun *naf* is in the ergative case and agrees with the verb *ḡanafr* which is in the middle template. The object is suppressed from indexation and without context we are left to speculate what it might be: the goal (‘she said to me’) or the clausal theme (‘to continue the old garden’).

- (26) *naf ḡanafr drdr mäyogsir.*

naf ḡ-a-na-f-r-Ø drdr mäyog-si=r  
 3SG.ERG M-VC-speak.RS-ND-LK-2|3SG old.garden repeat-NMLZ=PURP  
 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/speak

‘She suggested/said to continue the old garden.’ [tci20130823-06 STK 161]

The suppressed-object middle is obligatory for a few lexemes, for example *na-* ‘speak (v.t.)’ in (26), *karksi* ‘pull (v.t.)’ or *yonasi*<sup>17</sup> ‘drink (v.t.)’. For most verbs, the suppressed-object middle is a possible alternation and should be seen as derived from verbs which normally employ an ambifixing transitive template.

There are pragmatic reasons for suppressing the object, for example when the referent is common ground or when the event is somehow generic.<sup>18</sup> These motivations can

<sup>17</sup>Interestingly, ‘drink’ and ‘eat’ share the same extended stem (*na*), but ‘eat’ almost always occurs in an ambifixing transitive template and it employs a common noun as its infinitive (*daḡon* ‘food’). The verb ‘drink’ on the other hand employs the infinitive *yonasi* with a regular nominaliser suffix and it always occurs in a (suppressed-object) middle template. The restricted stems of ‘drink’ and ‘eat’ are different: *nob* and *wob* respectively.

<sup>18</sup>During the translation of texts, consultants would often rephrase the suppressed-object middle with a generic event (‘He did the X-ing’) instead of a specific event (‘He X-ed it’).

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be subsumed under Kemmer's criterion of low degree of (participant) elaboration with middle morphology. Consider example (27), where the speaker talks about how yams are stored. He says that the yams are heaped and sorted into separate piles and that the spatial layout signals the use of the yams. This last proposition is expressed as *naf ηatrikwr* 'it indicates'. The verb *trikasi* 'tell' is usually used for story telling or for reporting on something, but the event depicted in example (27) is generic and less elaborated.

- (27) *mnz mrmr fof enakwre zena monwä zane ethn zerä. naf ηatrikwr zane zf ηatr wawa erä zerä. zane gaba zferä zerä.*

mnz mrmr fof e-nak-w-r-e zena mon-wä zane  
house inside EMPH 2|3NSG.α-put.down.EXT-ND-LK-1NSG now how-EMPH DEM:PROX  
1PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/put-down

e-ethn z=e-rä naf  
2|3NSG.α-lie.down.EXT-ND PROX=2|3NSG.α-COP-ND 3SG.ERG  
PROX=2|3PL:NPST:IPFV/lie.down PROX=2|3PL:NPST:IPFV/be

η-a-trik-w-r-Ø zane zf ηatr wawa  
M.α-VC-tell.EXT-ND-LK-2|3SG DEM:PROX IMM rattan.vine yam  
2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/tell

e-rä z=e-rä zane gaba zf  
2|3NSG.α-COP-ND PROX=2|3NSG.α-COP-ND DEM:PROX eating yam IMM  
2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be PROX=2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be

e-rä z=e-rä  
2|3NSG.α-COP-ND PROX=2|3NSG.α-COP-ND  
2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be PROX=2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be

'We put (the yams) down in the house, how these are laying here. That will indicate that these are measuring yams<sup>19</sup> here and these are eating yams here.'

[tci20121001 ABB 15-16]

Another motivation for suppressing the object, partly relevant to the previous example, lies in the relative salience of the referent. There is a tendency for inanimate referents not to be indexed, as we can see in example (28). This example is taken from a stimulus task about domestic violence. The speaker takes over the role of one of the characters in the story. He uses the verb *fiyoksi* 'make' twice, first in a middle template and then in a transitive template.<sup>20</sup> The crucial difference between the two situation types lies in the salience of the referent. In the first clause the referent is generic and inanimate (*yam* 'custom, event'), but in the second clause it is a close relative (*nzenme emoth* 'our sister').

<sup>19</sup> *ηatr* is a rattan piece which is often used to measure the dimensions of a particularly big tuber. Large yams are used in competitions or as special gifts.

<sup>20</sup> As we will see in §5.4.6, some transitive verbs like *fiyoksi* obligatorily take the valency change prefix *a-*. Since the argument is in absolutive case, one would expect the inflected verb to be *wfiyokwr* (without the *a-* prefix). But this is ungrammatical and *fiyoksi* never occurs without the *a-* prefix. Thus, I regard *fiyoksi* and similar verbs as being deponent.



- (28) “*be nima yam ḡafiyokwr. nzenme emoth be nima wäfiyokwr!*”  
 be nima yam ḡ-a-fiyok-w-r-∅ nzenme emoth be  
 2SG.ERG like.this event M.α-VC-make.EXT-ND-LK-2|3SG 1NSG.POSS sister 2SG.ERG  
 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/make  
 nima w-a-fiyok-w-r-∅  
 likehis 3SG.F.α-VC-make.EXT-ND-LK-2|3SG  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/make  
 “You are behaving like this. You are doing this to our sister.”  
 [tci20120925 MAE 89]

We can conclude that intrinsic middles are intransitive event types, but the middle template is used for various functions. The uniting characteristic of these functions is a relatively low degree of elaboration. This may apply either to the participants (28), i.e. they rank low in importance/salience, or to the event itself (27), i.e. the event is less elaborated.

#### 5.4.6 The ambifixing template

The ambifixing template employs both affixes to index referents. The subject argument appears in the suffix, while the object argument is indexed in the prefix (29).

- (29) *gwamf nafangth sräkor: “muri zba känrit nzuzawe!”*  
 gwam=f nafa-ngth s-ra-a-kor-∅ muri zba  
 gwam=ERG 3.POSS-younger.sibling 3SG.MASC.β-IRR-ND-say.RS-2|3SG muri PROX.ABL  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/says  
 k-ä-n-rit-∅ nzu-zawe  
 M.β-ND-VENT-CROSS.OVER.RS-2SG.IMP 1SG.POSS-side  
 2SG:SBJ:IMP:PFV:VENT/CROSS.OVER  
 ‘Gwam said to his brother: “Muri, come over here to my side!”’  
 [tci20131013-01 ABB #96]

In most cases, the suffix indexes an Agent, as in (29) above. Example (30) shows an experiencer-object construction, in which the suffix encodes a Stimulus. After an evening of stories about sorcery, the speaker announces that she will go to sleep now because ‘fear has taken hold of her already’.

- (30) *nze rokar kwa thräfrmsé. wtrif z zwefaf.*  
 nze rokar kwa th-ra-a-frms-é wtri=f z zu-ä-faf-∅  
 1SG.ERG thing FUT 2|3PL:OBJ:IRR:PFV/prepare 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:RPST:PFV/hold  
 1SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:IRR:PFV/prepare 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:RPST:PFV/hold  
 ‘I will prepare (my) things. I am already scared.’ [tci20130901-04 RNA #164]

Since no more than two referents can be indexed on a verb, the same ambifixing template encodes transitive and ditransitive events. The differences lie in the presence versus absence of the valency change prefix *a-* and the case marking of that argument NP which

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is indexed in the prefix. In ambifixing transitives, the prefix encodes a Patient ('prepare' in 30), Theme (29) or Experiencer ('hold' in 30), all in the absolutive. The prefix in ambifixing ditransitives encodes a Goal (31) in dative case or a Possessor (32) marked with a possessive.

- (31) *nzun nafaemoth zwärath fof... bänemr ... fäms ηarer*  
 nzun nafa-emoth zu-ä-r-a-th fof (.) bäne=mr  
 1SG.DAT 3.POSS-sister 1SG.γ-VC.ND-give.RS-PST-2|3NSG EMPH (.) RECOG=PURP  
 2|3PL:SBJ>1SG:IO:PST:PFV/give  
 (.) fäms ηare=r  
 (.) exchange woman=PURP  
 'They gave me their sister as that ... as an exchange woman.'  
 [tci20120805-01 ABB #791-792]
- (32) *nzone miyo kwa wabthakwr.*  
 nzone miyo kwa wo-a-bthak-w-r-∅  
 1SG.POSS desire FUT 1SG.α-VC-finish.EXT-LK-2|3SG  
 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:IO:NPST:IPFV/finish  
 'You will fulfill my wish.'  
 [tci20130823-06 CAM #23]

Because the middle template is used for reflexives, the two argument slots of the ambifixing template may not be coreferential. Thus, if we wanted to change example (32) above to an auto-benefactive ('I fulfill my wish / I fulfill the wish for me'), it would be ungrammatical to say \**nzone miyo wabthakwé*. The underlined segment in the verb marks the actor as first singular. Instead, one would have to employ a middle construction for the verb: *nzone miyo ηabthakwé*.

Example (33) shows both a possessor and a goal in the first and second verb form respectively. The example is taken from a story about sorcerers, who – according to local belief – visit the grave sites of recently deceased people. The first clause shows that the possessor noun phrase can be dropped. The noun *mitafo* 'spirit' is usually feminine, but the verb encodes a masculine referent ('his spirit').

- (33) *befé mitafo sabrim nzun fefe kwagathif!*  
 be-wä mitafo s-a-brim-∅ nzun fefe  
 2SG.ERG-EMPH spirit 3SG.MASC.β-VC.ND-return.RS-2SG.IMP 1SG.DAT body  
 2SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:IMP:PFV/return  
 kw-a-gathif-∅  
 1SG.β-VC.ND-leave.behind.RS-2SG.IMP  
 2SG:SBJ>1SG:IO:IMP:PFV/leave.behind  
 'You take his spirit back and leave the body for me!' [tci20130903-04 RNA #92-93]

Example (33) highlights a problem that occurs with verb forms using the restricted stem. As I have shown in §5.3.2, with restricted stems the dual versus non-dual contrast and the valency change is expressed by a vowel change in the prefix. Although there are differences in the vowel pattern for different number combinations, which show the

absence versus presence of the valency change prefix, there are a number of neutralisations (§5.5.3.4). The first verb *sabrim* in example (33) can mean both ‘return him’ (with a direct object) or ‘return X for him’ / ‘return his X’ (with an indirect object). Only the fact that *mitafo* ‘spirit’ is feminine, while the prefix is governed by a masculine referent, indicates that the indirect object is indexed (‘return his spirit’).

The valency change prefix *a-* attaches productively to almost all transitive verbs introducing a third argument into the clause, usually a beneficiary (dative) or possessor (possessive). A number of lexemes are deponent in the sense that they obligatorily take the valency change prefix *a-*, while the clause remains transitive and the referent indexed in the prefix is flagged with the absolutive case. Such deponent verbs are *frmnzsi* ‘prepare’ (30) or *fiyoksi* ‘make’ (28). Given the basic productivity of the ditransitive alternation, we may ask whether the category ‘ditransitive’ exists in Komnzo at all or whether it is better to view the phenomenon merely as applicativisation, in other words whether all ditransitives are derived.<sup>21</sup> Two counterarguments can be brought forward. First, there are a few verbs which only exist in an ambifixing ditransitive template, the obvious one being *yarisi* ‘give’. Secondly, while the ditransitive alternation simply introduces a beneficiary for some verbs, there are rather idiosyncratic changes in meaning for other verbs. For example, *säminzsi* means ‘whisper’ in the ambifixing transitive template, but ‘teach’ in the ambifixing ditransitive template. Another example was given above in (8c) where *rbänzsi* means ‘untie’ as a transitive, but ‘explain’ in a ditransitive template. Although the meanings of the different templates share the same infinitive/nominalisation and are clearly related (‘untie’ → ‘untie for sb.’ = ‘explain’), they often differ in idiosyncratic ways (‘whisper’ → ‘whisper for sb.’ = ‘teach’). Thus, it is better to recognise ditransitive verbs as an independent category.

## 5.5 Person, gender and number

### 5.5.1 Person

Person marking in Komnzo verbs exhibits various patterns of syncretism and neutralisation in certain contexts. These patterns differ in the two sites of person marking: the prefix and the suffix. The suffixes show more complexity in their syntagmatic distribution: under certain conditions they are reduced to zero morphemes, neutralise their person values and, in addition, the status of the first singular as an independent morpheme is questionable. On the other hand, the suffixes show less paradigmatic complexity. They encode only two person values and there is only one suffix series. As for the prefixes, the opposite seems to be the case. Although they can be neatly separated and recognised, the prefix slot is equipped with five prefix series and widespread syncretism within the paradigm is a central characteristic. I will address each subsystem of person marking below.

<sup>21</sup>Please note that the *a-* prefix cannot be called an applicative prefix because it fulfills both functions: increasing and decreasing the valency. Thus, I prefer to label it valency change or valency switch.

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### 5.5.1.1 Person suffixes

The person suffix differentiates two person values: first and non-first person. Thus, second and third person are always neutralised and additional information from the personal pronouns or from context is required. As I will explain below, in certain morphological contexts, even this basic distinction is neutralised and only number marking is retained. Table 5.7 lists the suffix forms in indicative and irrealis mood.

Table 5.7: Person suffixes

gloss	formative	example	translation
1SG	-é	<i>ɲakwiré</i>	'I run'
1NSG	-e	<i>ɲakwire</i>	'we run'
2 3SG	-∅	<i>ɲakwir</i>	'you run' or 's/he runs'
2 3NSG	-th	<i>ɲakwirth</i>	'you run' or they run'

In middle and ambifixing templates, the person suffixes are involved in marking imperative mood. Table 5.8 below shows that the indexing of the addressee employs formatives which are identical to the first person suffixes in indicative or irrealis mood. Evans (2012b) describes an inflectional category in Nen called the assentive. The assentive is the second part of an adjacency pair (or dyadic sequence), and it follows an imperative ('Boil the water!' > 'I will boil the water.'). In the assentive, the person suffix deviates from indicative inflection in that it is identical to the preceding imperative; both being zero in perfective aspect. Although assentive inflections are not attested in Komnzo, the formal identity of first person indicative and second person imperative suffixes can be explained by such conversational adjacency pairs.

Komnzo imperatives can be imperfective ('Keep on doing X!') or perfective ('Do X!'). An example of this is shown in (34) below. This distinction is signalled by the stem type, but also by the fact that the second singular suffix in perfective imperatives is zero. The formatives are listed in Table 5.8 below.

Table 5.8: Imperative person suffixes

	gloss	formative	example	translation
EXT stem	2SG.IMP	-é	<i>kakwiré</i>	'You keep running!'
	2NSG.IMP	-e	<i>kakwire</i>	'You (pl) keep running!'
RS stem	2SG.IMP	-∅	<i>kamath</i>	'You run!'
	2NSG.IMP	-e	<i>kemathe</i>	'You (pl) run!'

In Table 5.8 above, the middle verb *-kwi* 'run' is shown. The distinction between second singular and non-singular is expressed in the suffix. Another quirk in the system, is that

the suffix *-é* is used even if the verb is a prefixing verb, despite the fact that the number distinction is shown in the prefixes only: *gn-* 2SG vs. *th-* 2NSG (see §5.5.1.2). A prefixing verb like *-kogr* ‘stand’ will be *gnkogré* ‘You (SG) keep standing!’ versus *thkogré* ‘You (PL) keep standing!’ In these cases I gloss *-é* as marking solely imperative mood, as in (34). However, prefixing verbs do follow the pattern in that only extended stems (imperfective imperative) receive the *-é* suffix, not the restricted stems (perfective imperatives). I show this in example (34), in which the speaker reports about the rough ways of going hunting with the Suki people.<sup>22</sup> See also §6.2.5 for further discussion of imperative marking.

- (34) *fiwä we nima ane kwa änor*: “*kwot fthé gnäkuk fathfathenwä gnkogé!*”  
 fi=wä we nima ane kwa e-a-nor kwot fthé  
 3.ABS=EMPH also like.this DEM FUT 2|3NSG-VC-shout.EXT.ND properly when  
 3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/shout  
 gn-ä-kuk fath-fath=en=wä  
 2SG.β.IMP-ND-stand.RS REDUP-clear.place=LOC=EMPH  
 2SG:SBJ:IMP:PFV/stand  
 gn-kog-é  
 2SG.β.IMP-stand.EXT.ND-IMP  
 2SG:SBJ:IMP:IPFV/stand  
 ‘They will also yell at one another like this “You stand properly in the clearing!  
 Keep on standing!”’ [tci20130927-06 MAB #52-53]

### The morphemic status of the first singular *-é*

I want to discuss the morphemic status of *-é* and provide evidence for the emergence of a marginal phoneme *é* [ə̃]. Both tables above include a suffix *-é* which for the purpose of the following discussion I will call ‘first person singular suffix’ disregarding that it may also signal a second singular in imperative mood without person marking in the prefixing template. This suffix is realised as a short schwa [ə̃] and I have argued in §2.2.2 that schwa is the epenthetic vowel whose distribution is predictable. Schwa is not predictable in word final position and, thus, has to be represented by a grapheme <é>. There are a handful of morphs in which schwa is attested word-finally, for example nominals (*kayé* ‘tomorrow, yesterday’, *megé* ‘green coconut leaf’), function words (*fthé* ‘when’) and suffixes (*-thé* ADJZR, *-é* 1SG). The following discussion puts forward the argument that *-é* is the result of a truncation of the non-dual suffix in extended stems, which might have originated in some verbs and was later generalised to all verbs. A possible historical explanation in terms of vowel reduction comes from neighboring varieties in which the first person is marked by an *-a* suffix, for example in Wára and Anta. In Komnzo, there exists a suffix *-a*, but it is a past marker.

As we can see in both tables above, *-é* contrasts with *-e* (1NSG) and  $\emptyset$  (2|3SG). The first singular *-é* could be analysed either as a morpheme in its own right or as the result of a truncation process of the non-dual suffix, which leaves no possible syllabification other

<sup>22</sup>This verb is irregular in that it encodes dual versus non-dual in the positional stem, *-kogr* ND vs. *-kogr* DU, but not in the restricted stem *-kuk*.

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than schwa in a word-final context. I am not claiming that truncation is a synchronic process, but I want to argue that truncation of the non-dual suffix plays a role in the explanation. I draw on evidence from more general properties of the suffix subsystem such as the non-dual suffix, the presence of a linking consonant and the neutralisation of person distinctions. As we will see below, the argumentation is only applicable to inflected forms which build on the extended stem. Restricted stems encode the duality contrast in pre-stem position. Hence, we have to assume that the result of the truncation process, the word final schwa *-é*, has been extended to other morphological contexts.

First, let us turn to the non-dual marker for extended stems. The verb *kwi* ‘run’ in Table 5.7 is irregular in that it employs *-r* for signalling the non-dual. The regular pattern, attested for 90% of verb lexemes, involves one of the three non-dual allomorphs *-wr*, *-nzs* and *-thr*. Consider the verb *marasi* ‘see’ in (35a-35f), which takes the *-wr* allomorph. In first person singular (35a), the non-dual suffix is *-w* instead of *-wr*.

- (35) a. *y-mar-w-é*  
 3SG.MASC-see-ND-1SG  
 ‘I see him.’
- b. *y-mar-n-e*  
 3SG.MASC-see-DU-1NSG  
 ‘We two see him.’
- c. *y-mar-wr-e*  
 3SG.MASC-see-ND-1NSG  
 ‘We see him.’
- d. *y-mar-wr-∅*  
 3SG.MASC-see-ND-2|3SG  
 ‘S/He sees him.’ or ‘You see him.’
- e. *y-mar-n-th*  
 3SG.MASC-see-DU-2|3SG  
 ‘They (two) see him.’ or ‘You (two) see him.’
- f. *y-mar-wr-th*  
 3SG.MASC-see-ND-2|3NSG  
 ‘They see him.’ or ‘You see him.’

In the examples above, only the first singular (35a) deviates in that it takes a truncated form *-w*, from which final *-r* is cut. This truncation with the first singular is attested for all three allomorphs of the non-dual suffix: *-wr* → *-w*, *-nzs* → *-nz* and *-thr* → *-th*. What weakens this particular piece of evidence is the fact that there is some variation between the non-truncated and the truncated formative even when other suffixal material follows like AND *-o*, 1NSG *-e* or 2|3NSG *-th*. For example, looking at the token frequency in the corpus of 2|3NSG *-th* preceded by *-nzs* (non-truncated) versus *-th* preceded by *-nz* (truncated), we find 91 verb forms with the non-truncated non-dual *-nzs<sup>23</sup>th* and 13 with the truncated non-dual *-nzth*.<sup>23</sup> A similar distribution is found with the first

<sup>23</sup>This search can be replicated by a simple search query: “nzs<sup>23</sup>th” versus “nzth” in word final context (in

non-singular *-e* suffix. There is no variation with the 2|3SG, which is a zero morpheme. The 2|3SG is never preceded by the truncated formative. In conclusion, the non-dual is never truncated with the 2|3SG zero, it shows some variation with other suffixes (but the non-truncated formative has a much higher frequency), and it is always truncated with the first singular.

Further evidence comes from person neutralisation patterns. The first singular *-é* disappears when further suffixes are added, for example the past suffix *-a*, the durative suffix *-m* or the andative suffix *-o*. Consider examples (36a, 36d and 36e) which neutralise the person value completely. In (35), the distinction between first and second/third person is basically a contrast between the surface result of a truncation process *-é* (35a) and a zero morpheme (35d). In (36a, 36d and 36e) below, we have to postulate a zero marker, which now only encodes number (SG) and contrasts with 1NSG *-e* (36b) and 2|3NSG *-th* (36c).

- (36) a. *y-mar-wr-a-∅*  
 3SG.MASC-see-ND-PST-SG  
 ‘I saw him.’ or ‘You saw him.’ or ‘S/He saw him.’
- b. *y-mar-wr-a-k-e*  
 3SG.MASC-see-ND-PST-LK-1NSG  
 ‘We saw him.’
- c. *y-mar-wr-a-th*  
 3SG.MASC-see-ND-PST-2|3NSG  
 ‘You saw him.’ or ‘They saw him.’
- d. *y-mar-wr-m-∅*  
 3SG.MASC-see-ND-DUR-SG  
 ‘I was seeing him.’ or ‘You were seeing him.’ or ‘S/He was seeing him.’
- e. *y-mar-wr-o-∅*  
 3SG.MASC-see-ND-AND-SG  
 ‘I see him that way.’ or ‘You see him that way.’ or ‘S/He sees him that way.’

A third piece of evidence comes from a linking consonant in the suffix subsystem. Example (36b) above shows that the past suffix *-a* and the 1NSG *-e* are separated by *-k*. We have seen in §2.4.3, that the phonology of Komnzo allows strings of consonants which are broken up by epenthesis. However, the phonological system does not tolerate strings of vowels, which is demonstrated by the appearance of the linker in (36b). This can be used to strengthen the argument that the first singular *-é* deviates from other suffixes. We would expect (36a) not to neutralise the person value, and instead to insert the linker between the past suffix *-a* and *-é* analogous to (36b). However, the predicted inflection \**ymarwraké* is ungrammatical.

The first singular *-é* occurs in other morphological contexts, where there is no truncated preceding element. As pointed out above, the template of restricted stems marks the dual versus non-dual contrast in pre-stem position and, thus, there is no non-dual

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REGEX syntax: “n<sup>z</sup>rth\b” versus “n<sup>z</sup>th\b”).

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marker to truncate (37a).<sup>24</sup> Likewise, there is no truncation of the dual marker *-n* in the template of extended stems (37b). However, the person neutralisations described above also occur in these contexts (37c and 37d).

- (37) a. *s-a-mar-é*  
 3SG.MASC-ND-see(RS)-1NSG  
 'I saw him.'
- b. *e-mar-n-é*  
 2|3NSG-see(EXT)-ND-PST-SG  
 'I see both of them.'
- c. *s-a-mar-a-∅*  
 3SG.MASC-ND-see(RS)-PST-SG  
 'I saw him.' or 'You saw him.' or 'S/He saw him.'
- d. *e-mar-n-a*  
 2|3NSG-see(EXT)-ND-PST-SG  
 'I saw both of them.' or 'You saw both of them.' or 'S/He saw both of them.'

We have to conclude that a case of truncation or a negative morpheme as a synchronic process can only be made for a very circumscribed morphological context: for non-dual inflected verbs built from the extended stem. For other contexts, we have to postulate a suffix formative *-é*. This is best explained by a historical process of vowel reduction or syllable loss, which created a new marginal phoneme *é*. This can be used to explain word-final schwa in other items.<sup>25</sup> As I mentioned in the beginning of this section, surrounding varieties like Wára or Anta mark the first person singular with an *-a* suffix. Comparative material from other Tonda varieties is needed to settle this question.

### Linking *-k*, person neutralisation and morpheme slots

In the preceding discussion, the linking consonant *-k* was introduced as a way of separating two adjacent vowel suffixes. This purely phonological explanation is insufficient and, on closer inspection, we find that the linker *-k* helps to arrange the suffixal material into morpheme slots. In addition to the first singular *-é*, the suffixal material includes the following morphemes: past *-a*, durative *-m*, andative *-o*, 1NSG *-e* and 2|3NSG *-th*. In the following section, I describe how these suffixes line up, which of them are mutually exclusive, and in which context person neutralisations occur.

First, the past suffix *-a* and the durative suffix *-m* never co-occur. The combinatorial system of Komnzo verb morphology employs a different strategy to express a past durative category, discussed in §6.2.

Secondly, the andative *-o* and the 1NSG *-e* stand in syntagmatic opposition to each other occupying the same slot. Consider examples (38a-38d) below. In examples (38b) and (38d) the person value is fully neutralised, because the suffix *-th*, which was indexing

<sup>24</sup>The verb *marasi* belongs to the class which has identical forms for restricted and extended stems (see Table 5.2), and only the template and the affixal material signal the aspectual value.

<sup>25</sup>The adjectivaliser *-thé* might be a reduced form of the similitive case marker *-thatha*.



2|3NSG in earlier examples (35e-35f and 36c), can now only be glossed as NSG.<sup>26</sup> The important observation in (38b) is that the linker *-k* is not used. If its appearance could be predicted on purely phonological grounds, we would expect a form like \**yamarwroke*. But this is ungrammatical. Thus, I characterise the linking consonant in the following way: *-k* occurs (i) after the past suffix *-a*, (ii) if the following suffix consists of a vowel formative.

- (38) a. *y-mar-wr-e*  
3SG.MASC-see-ND-1NSG  
'We see him.'
- b. *y-mar-wr-o-th*  
3SG.MASC-see-ND-AND-NSG  
'We see him that way.' or 'You see him that way.' or 'They see him that way.'
- c. *y-mar-wr-a-k-e*  
3SG.MASC-see-ND-PST-LK-1NSG  
'We saw him.'
- d. *y-mar-wr-a-k-o-th*  
3SG.MASC-see-ND-PST-LK-AND-NSG  
'We saw him that way.' or 'You saw him that way.' or 'They saw him that way.'

Examples (38b) and (38d) also show that amongst the three categories (person, number, direction) it is person which is neutralised first. In the discussion of examples (36a-36e), we found the same to be true for person values of the singulars.

Below in (39), we find a textual example of the person neutralisation in (38d). In the example, a woman talks about her marriage and how she and her husband prepared a feast for her brothers and uncles. In (39) the first person interpretation of the actor of *tharakoth*<sup>27</sup> is clear from the preceding verb *yafiyokrmake* which lacks the andative *-o* suffix and, thus, is inflected with the first non-singular *-e* suffix.

- (39) *tagon yafiyokrmake. babainm ane tharakoth.*  
 dagon y-a-fiyok-rn-a-k-e babai=nm ane  
 food 3SG.MASC-VC-make.EXT-PST-LK-1NSG uncle=DAT.NSG DEM  
 1DU:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:IPFV/make  
  
*th-a-r-a-k-o-th*  
 2|3NSG.y-VC.DU-give.RS-PST-LK-AND-NSG  
 1DU:SBJ>2|3PL:IO:PST:PFV:AND/give  
 'We prepared the food. We gave that to the uncles.' [tci20130823-08 WAM #66-67]

<sup>26</sup>An alternative would be to analyse *-th* as marking only number (NSG) not person. I reject this analysis, because (i) this would result in a system where only first person is marked overtly and (ii) the 1NSG in examples like (38a) would be an exception to the regular non-singular (*-th*).

<sup>27</sup>In *tharakoth* the pre-stem marker operates on a plural versus non-plural opposition. This pattern of pre-stem marking is discussed in §5.5.3.4.

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The suffix subsystem of Komnzo verbs is summarised in Figure 5.6. The elements which share a column or an extended column in the figure are mutually exclusive. For example, if *-é* occurs, all the other material will not appear or if the durative suffix *-m* occurs, the past suffix *-a* (along with the linker *-k*) will not appear. The system as described here is applicable to both stem types. For the restricted stem the only difference lies in the fact that duality is marked in pre-stem position as in *tharakoth* in (39). Therefore, some of the morphemes in the suffix system are optional: the dual/non-dual morphemes, the two TAM markers (PST *-a* and DUR *-m*) and the andative *-o*. Number (SG vs. NSG) is always marked.

STEM	(duality)	(TAM)	(DIRECTION, PERSON), NUMBER
√	<i>-nzi, wr-, r-</i> <i>-n</i>	<i>-é</i>	
		<i>-m</i>	<i>-e</i>
			<i>-∅</i>
		<i>-a(-k)</i>	<i>-o</i>

Figure 5.6: Suffix subsystem of Komnzo verbs

The suffixing system is thus characterised by syntagmatic complexity, i.e. the chain of suffixes does not allow a straightforward segmentation into slots and respective functions. Moreover, the presence versus absence of individual suffixes impacts on the form and function of other suffixes.

### 5.5.1.2 Person prefixes

The person prefixes are syntagmatically less complex than the person suffixes. The prefix system comprises a single slot which is always filled with a formative, i.e. there are no zero morphemes.<sup>28</sup> On the other hand, the prefix system is paradigmatically more complex. The prefix fuses person and number marking with information relevant to TAM. However, we have to draw on abstract glossing labels because the five prefix series are underspecified for a particular TAM value. Table 5.9 lays out the five prefix series:  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\beta_1$ ,  $\beta_2$ , and  $\gamma$ .

Before we look at the patterns of person marking, I will provide some justification as to why there are five independent series. Table 5.9 shows that there is widespread syncretism between the series, especially in the third person between the  $\beta$  and  $\gamma$  series. The formal difference between the  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$  and  $\gamma$  series is clearest in the first person singular and the middle marker, each of which distinguishes overtly all five series. Furthermore, the table shows that we can speak of three main series:  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\gamma$ , plus two subseries:  $\beta_1$  and  $\beta_2$ . These two subseries add an /u/ and /f/ element to the  $\beta$  series. I will discuss in detail why I still treat them as independent series in §6.2.1. An additional quirk is added to the system by the fact that, within the  $\beta$  series, the first nonsingular and the second

<sup>28</sup>The only formative which occurs in the person marking slot, but does not encode person, is the middle marker, which is used for other purposes (§5.4.5).

Table 5.9: Person prefixes

gloss	$\alpha$	$\beta$	$\beta_1$	$\beta_2$	$\gamma$
1SG	<i>w</i> o-	<i>k</i> w-	<i>k</i> u-	<i>k</i> wof-	<i>z</i> u-
1NSG	<i>n</i> -	<i>n</i> z- / <i>nzn</i> -	<i>n</i> zu-	<i>n</i> zf-	<i>nzn</i> -
2SG	<i>n</i> -	<i>n</i> z- / <i>gn</i> -	<i>g</i> u-	<i>g</i> f-	<i>nzn</i> -
3SG.F	<i>w</i> -	<i>z</i> -	<i>z</i> u-	<i>z</i> f-	<i>z</i> -
3SG.MASC	<i>y</i> -	<i>s</i> -	<i>s</i> u-	<i>s</i> f-	<i>s</i> -
2 3NSG	<i>e</i> -	<i>th</i> -	<i>th</i> u-	<i>th</i> f-	<i>th</i> -
M	<i>η</i> -	<i>k</i> -	<i>k</i> w-	<i>k</i> f-	<i>z</i> -

singular have two different formatives for the two modal categories: the imperative and irrealis.<sup>29</sup>

The prefixes differentiate three person values in the singular: first, second and third. The values of second and third person in non-singular are always neutralised, leaving this ambiguity for either context or the personal pronouns to resolve. The same holds true for the syncretism between the first non-singular and the second singular in the  $\alpha$  and the  $\gamma$  series.<sup>30</sup> This pattern of syncretism is found in languages across the Yam family (Evans et al. 2017).

The overview of the verb template presented in the introduction of this chapter (Table 5.1) shows that the person prefix is followed by the valency change prefix *a*- whose presence impacts on the formatives of the person prefixes in various ways. The  $\alpha$  series shows a number of irregularities given in Table 5.10, for example with the first singular: /*w*o-*a*-/  $\rightarrow$  *w*a-.

The other prefix series behave more regular in the presence of the valency change prefix *a*-, but there is some influence of the valency change prefix. For example, the formatives of the  $\beta_2$  series all end in a high back vowel [u], which turns into the corresponding glide when *a*- is present: 2SG *g*u-  $\rightarrow$  *g*wa-. The  $\beta$  and  $\beta_2$  series end in consonants. For both series, the *a*- prefix is simply added, for example 2|3NSG *th*-  $\rightarrow$  *th*a- for the  $\beta$  series and 2|3NSG *th*f-  $\rightarrow$  *th*fa- for the  $\beta_2$  series.

<sup>29</sup>The second singular differs in a number of ways which will be discussed in §6.2.1. Note that the second singular *gn*- is only used in the imperatives of prefixing verbs where the addressee argument is encoded in the prefix. Verbs in middle and ambifixing templates on the other hand employ the suffix to encode the addressee argument in the imperatives, leaving the prefix  $\beta$  series for the middle marker or the indexing of the undergoer argument.

<sup>30</sup>Table 5.9 also includes identical formatives *nz*- for first non-singular and second singular in the  $\beta$  series. The  $\beta$  series is used for irrealis inflection. The neutralisation is there on an abstract paradigmatic level, but the inflected verbs are never identical, because - unlike all other person/number combinations - the second singular does not take the irrealis prefix *ra*-. This will be further discussed in §6.2.1.

<sup>31</sup>In a Komnzo recording from the 1980's made by the anthropologist Mary Ayres, I found a different realisation of this prefix, namely [eja-]. In terms of segmentation, this is a much more transparent realisation. The recording was made with an older man, maybe in his late 60's. In modern Komnzo, there is no variation and the prefix is realised as given in the table [æ-].

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Table 5.10: Person prefixes:  $\alpha$ -series with valency change prefix  $a$ -

gloss	formative	segmentation
1SG	<i>wa-</i>	<i>w0-a-</i>
1NSG	<i>na-</i>	<i>n-a-</i>
2SG	<i>na-</i>	<i>n-a-</i>
3SG.F	<i>wä-</i>	<i>w-a-</i>
3SG.MASC	<i>ya-</i>	<i>y-a-</i>
2 3NSG	<i>ä-</i>	<i>e-a-</i> <sup>31</sup>
M	<i>ŋa-</i>	<i>ŋ-a-</i>

As I have discussed in §5.3.3, the  $\beta$ ,  $\beta_1$  and  $\gamma$  series may combine with the restricted stem, the last of the three exclusively so. With the restricted stem, dual marking takes place in pre-stem position (see §5.3.2) and the  $a$ - prefix simultaneously encodes valency change and the dual vs. non-dual contrast. As the marking pattern does not impact on the formatives of the person prefixes, I will defer this topic to the discussion of number marking in §5.5.3.4.

### 5.5.2 Gender

The agreement target of gender is the third singular prefix of the verb. There is a feminine and masculine gender category. Metalinguistic statements by speakers are often expressed as *madema rä* ‘It is a girl’ for feminine or *srak yé* ‘It is a boy’ for masculine. The formatives employed to encode gender across the prefix series are given in Table 5.9 above.

The discussion in §5.4 has shown that the prefix indexes the direct and indirect object in the ambifixing transitive template, and the subject of intransitives in the prefixing template. It follows that only those types of argument roles show agreement in gender, whereas the more agent-like arguments never show gender agreement.

The semantic perspective of gender classification of the noun lexicon is discussed in §3.1.3.

### 5.5.3 Number

Komnzo verbs encode three number values: singular, dual and plural. There exists an additional large plural which is available only for prefixing verbs or verbs in the prefixing template. I describe the fourth number value in §5.5.3.2.

The peculiarity of number marking in Komnzo lies in the fact that it is distributed over two separate slots which, looked at individually, do not distinguish all three values, but operate on a binary opposition. Hence, the overall ternary number opposition is reduced to a binary opposition in the respective slots on the verb. There are three logical possibilities for this reduction because each of the three number values can be contrasted

with its opposite: singular vs. non-singular; dual vs. non-dual; plural vs. non-plural. The combination of any two of the three binary oppositions is sufficient to encode all three number values. Figure 5.7 below shows the principle behind this reduction.

ternary:	SG	DU	PL
binary (SG vs. NSG):	SG	NSG	
binary (DU vs. ND):	ND	DU	ND
binary (PL vs. NPL):	NPL		PL

Figure 5.7: Three ways of breaking up a ternary opposition

Komnzo makes use of all three oppositions, but only two of the possible combinations. The person affixes operate always on a singular vs. non-singular opposition. A separate affix, which I call the duality affix, makes a distinction between dual vs. non-dual. I will show below that under certain circumstances, the same affix encodes plural vs. non-plural, but this is a marginal pattern (§5.5.3.4). The basic system of distributed number marking integrates a SG-NSG opposition in the person affixes with a DU-ND opposition in the duality affix. Figure 5.8 provides an overview of this principle.

		DUALITY AFFIX	
		DU	ND
PERSON AFFIX	SG	singular	
	NSG	dual	plural

Figure 5.8: Basic principle of distributed number marking on verbs

Figure 5.8 shows that out of four possible combinations, in fact only three are normally put to use, namely those that are logically compatible. Prefixing verbs and stems in a prefixing template, which includes positional verbs, are exceptional in that they utilise the fourth, seemingly non-sensical, combination SG-DU to encode a large plural (§5.5.3.2).

The two sites involved in number marking have very different properties. The binary opposition in the person prefixes and suffixes is much more stable in the sense that (i) the encoded value can be straightforwardly associated with an argument, because person and number marking are fused into one morpheme, (ii) the position of these affixes with respect to the stem is fixed and (iii) the values encoded are always SG and NSG. The duality affix differs in all three points and the subsequent discussion of number marking will focus on its peculiarities. But to give an overview here: first, if there are two participants indexed in the verb, the duality affix is ambiguous as to which of the two it is indexing. Secondly, duality is marked in a suffix with extended stems, but in a complex portmanteau prefix with restricted stems. Finally, as was mentioned above, in part of the paradigm, the DU-ND opposition is replaced by a PL-NPL opposition. I will discuss these points below.

### 5.5.3.1 Ambiguities in the reference of the duality affix

Examples (40a-g) show the verb *fathasi* ‘hold’ with different number combinations of the two arguments.<sup>32</sup> Only in example (40f), we find several possibilities with respect to number marking because both person affixes signal non-singular. The ambiguity stems from the fact that the duality marker is ambiguous as to which of the two arguments it is referencing. In other words, the dual morpheme *n-* in (40f) signals that one of the two participants is dual, but not which one. This does not create any ambiguities in cases where one of the two person affixes is singular (40a-e). Likewise, it is not a problem if both person affixes are non-singular and the duality affix is non-dual (40g). Although examples (40a-g) show the extended stem of the verb *fathasi*, this ambiguity is also found with restricted stems where the duality affix occurs in pre-stem position.

- (40) a. *y-fath-wr-∅*  
 3SG.MASC-hold.EXT-ND-2|3SG  
 ‘S/He holds him.’
- b. *y-fath-n-th*  
 3SG.MASC-hold.EXT-DU-2|3NSG  
 ‘They (2) hold him.’
- c. *y-fath-wr-th*  
 3SG.MASC-hold.EXT-ND-2|3NSG  
 ‘They (3+) hold him.’
- d. *e-fath-n-∅*  
 2|3NSG-hold.EXT-DU-2|3SG  
 ‘S/He holds them (2).’
- e. *e-fath-wr-∅*  
 2|3NSG-hold.EXT-ND-2|3SG  
 ‘S/He holds them (3+).’

<sup>32</sup>Note, that the English translations are all in third person, although some of the person indexing morphemes neutralise the distinction between second and third person and, thus, could also be translated as second person.

- f. *e-fath-n-th*  
 2|3NSG-hold.EXT-DU-2|3NSG  
 ‘They (2) hold them (3+).’ or ‘They (2) hold them (2).’ or ‘They (3+) hold them (2).’
- g. *e-fath-wr-th*  
 2|3NSG-hold.EXT-ND-2|3NSG  
 ‘They (3+) hold them (3+).’

For verbs in the transitive ambifixing and ditransitive ambifixing template, the distribution of the dual and non-dual markers can be expressed in an abstract way as in Figure 5.9.

		ACTOR		
		SG	DU	PL
UNDERGOER	SG	wr	n	wr
	DU	n	n	n
	PL	wr	n	wr

Figure 5.9: The duality matrix with *fathasi*

For verb forms which index only one argument the marking pattern is simpler, as there is no ambiguity in reference of the duality suffix. This is relevant for verbs in a prefixing or middle template. Examples (41a-c) show the verb *thoraksi* ‘appear’ in a prefixing template cycled through all three number values.

- (41) a. *wo-thorak-wr*  
 1SG-appear.EXT-ND  
 ‘I arrive.’
- b. *n-thorak-n* (~ *n-thorak-rn*)  
 1NSG-appear.EXT-DU  
 ‘We (2) arrive.’
- c. *n-thorak-wr*  
 1NSG-appear.EXT-ND  
 ‘We (3+) arrive.’

Note that there are two variants for the dual morpheme, *-n* and *-rn* in (41b), which are attested for almost all members of the small class of prefixing verbs. This variation is both intra-speaker and inter-speaker and, thus far, no patterning along social lines could be detected (e.g. age of the speaker, speaker’s exposure to other varieties, etc).

## 5.5.3.2 Large plurals with prefixing verbs

The prefixing template indexes the sole argument of the verb in the prefix, while the suffix slot is not used. We have seen that only a small number of verbs are inherently prefixing (§5.4.4), and about fifty stems may enter into this template. The latter group includes positional verbs (§5.4.4.2). I show below that because there is no ambiguity in the reference of the duality marker, all four cells in the paradigm can be exploited. This allows for a fourth number value, the large plural, which is formed by combining the dual marker with a singular. Figure 5.10 illustrates the pattern.

		DUALITY AFFIX	
		DU	ND
PERSON AFFIX	SG	large plural	singular
	NSG	dual	plural

Figure 5.10: Principle of distributed number marking for prefixing verbs

Consider example (42) below. The speaker in the story has been away from Rouku for a long time. He asks his brother whether the palm wine containers are still hanging, and the brother replies ‘there are plenty’. This is expressed by the copula in dual and the prefix in singular. Note that the stem of the copula is sensitive to dual versus non-dual. I used the gloss label *LPL* for large plural.

- (42) “*eh ngthé bana! sgeru komnzo emithgr?*” “*ah, segeru komnzo yrn*”  
 eh ngthé bana sgeru komnzo e-mi-thgr ah  
 hey brother poor palm.wine still 2|3NSG:α-hang.EXT-STAT.ND ah  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:STAT/hang

segeru komnzo y-rn  
 palm.wine still 3SG.MASC:α-COP.DU  
 3LPL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be

“Hey brother, are the palm wine (containers) still hanging?” “Yes, there are still plenty.” [tci20130927-06 MAB #189]

Examples (43a-d) are elicited forms showing the positional verb *rāzsi* ‘erect, stand up’ in all four number values.<sup>33</sup>

- (43) a. *woz w-rās-thg-r*  
 bottle 3SG.F-erect-STAT-ND  
 ‘The bottle is standing.’

<sup>33</sup>Note that we find the same variation in the dual morpheme (*-n* and *-rn*) as with other prefixing verbs. Compare with examples 41a-c above.



- b. *woz e-räs-thg-n* (~ *e-räs-thg-rn*)  
 bottle 2|3NSG-erect-STAT-DU  
 ‘The two bottles are standing.’
- c. *woz e-räs-thg-r*  
 bottle 2|3NSG-erect-STAT-ND  
 ‘The bottles are standing.’
- d. *woz y-räs-thg-n* (~ *y-räs-thg-rn*)  
 bottle 3SG.MASC-erect-STAT-DU  
 ‘All the bottles are standing.’ or ‘Many bottles are standing.’

Example (43d) shows the large plural construction in which the seemingly non-sensical combination of a singular in the person prefix and a dual in the duality slot yields a large plural or exhaustive plural interpretation. There are some restrictions to the large plural. First, as we have seen, it only occurs in the prefixing template. Even though a stem like *räs-* ‘erect’ can appear in a middle or ambifixing template, it cannot form large plurals in these templates. Secondly, large plurals only occur in third person, not in first or second. Note that it is always the masculine prefix which is used in the large plural construction, even if the referent is feminine, as with *woz* ‘bottle’ (43a). In this way, the large plural construction substantiates the principle of distributed exponence, whereby the morphological material at the language’s disposal is employed in ways that are not predictable by looking at individual morphemes.

Unfortunately, the large plural construction is attested only once in the corpus (42). The evidence presented above comes from elicitation.<sup>34</sup> Although the large plural is readily understood and judged grammatical by all my informants, I have not overheard it in daily conversation. Speakers commonly refer to this construction as ‘a way the old people spoke’. Therefore, we have to assume that it will fade from the speakers’ passive knowledge eventually and disappear altogether. In fact, the speaker in example (42) was an older man.

Although on different levels of comparison, dual marking in pre-stem position and the formation of large plurals are not compatible. This is partly caused by the stative semantics of verbs in the prefixing template. For example, positionals take the stative suffix *-thgr* which blocks all perfective semantics. Pre-stem dual marking on the other hand occurs only with restricted stems, and restricted stems are used to form perfectives. A positional verb like *räzsi* ‘erect’, can occur outside the prefixing template and form perfectives, but in this case the large plural does not apply. We saw in §5.4.4, that there are some prefixing verbs, which are not stative, for example *yarenzsi* ‘look around’ or *ziksi* ‘turn to side’. These do form perfectives in the prefixing template. However, the large plural combination results in an ungrammatical inflection.

I suggest that a historical perspective explains why this is the case. I show in §5.5.3.4, that pre-stem dual marking is messier than post-stem dual marking in the sense that it is less segmentable and there are more patterns of syncretism. I have argued in §5.3.4

<sup>34</sup>I want to thank Nick Evans for pointing out the combinatorial possibility (SG+DU) in Nen (Evans 2014) which allowed me to test this pattern with Komnzo speakers.

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that pre-stem dual marking is an innovation, and that post-stem dual marking is an older pattern. Thus, the large plural construction has not survived the change in the pattern shift. Therefore, prefixing verbs with dynamic semantics cannot form large plurals in their perfectives.

### 5.5.3.3 Allomorphy in the post-stem duality slot

Before I turn to the dual marking in pre-stem position with restricted stems, I discuss the topic of allomorphy in post-stem position. The dual morpheme in the duality slot shows little variation. The above described variation between *-n* and *-m* is found with prefixing verbs only; elsewhere the dual morpheme is always *-n*. As for the non-dual morpheme, the situation is different. There are three allomorphs (*wr-*, *nzr-*, *-r*) and their distribution is phonologically conditioned by the final element of the verb stem. The conditioning rules laid out in Table 5.11 account for 85% (275/322) of the attested verb lexemes.

Table 5.11: Allomorphs of the non-dual suffix

formatives	rule	count	EXAMPLE	gloss		
formative	rule	count	EXAMPLE	gloss		
<i>-wr</i>	/ k ] <sub>stem-</sub>	92	<i>mātrak-</i> <i>wek-</i>	‘bring out’ ‘invite’		
	/ g ] <sub>stem-</sub>	38	<i>māyog-</i> <i>brig-</i>	‘repeat’ ‘return’		
	/ n ] <sub>stem-</sub>	34	<i>wathkn-</i> <i>myukn-</i>	‘pack up’ ‘twist’		
	/ r ] <sub>stem-</sub>	25	<i>rsr-</i> <i>wagr-</i>	‘fish (poison)’ ‘meet’		
<i>-nzr</i>	/ V ] <sub>stem-</sub>	62	<i>yagu-</i> <i>yafü-</i> <i>mrä-</i> <i>fsi-</i> <i>tha-</i>	‘pour out’ ‘open’ ‘stroll’ ‘count’ ‘uncover’		
	<i>-r</i>	/ z ] <sub>stem-</sub>	24	<i>brüz-</i> <i>rifthz-</i> <i>rüz-</i>	‘submerge’ ‘hide’ ‘erect’	
			TOTAL	275		

The remaining 15% of verb lexemes are irregular (i) in taking a different formative to mark non-dual (e.g. *-thr* or  $\emptyset$ ), (ii) in taking one of the three allomorphs under violation



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- (46) *ngatha fäth ferä nafa kwränbrmth e ...*  
 ngatha fäth f=e-rä nafa  
 dog DIM DIST=2|3NSG.α-COP.ND 3NSG.ERG  
 DIST=2|3PL:SBJ:NPST/be  
 kw-rä-n-brm-th e (.)  
 1SG.β-IRR.ND-VENT-follow.RS-2|3NSG until (.)  
 2|3PL:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:IRR:PFV:VENT/follow  
 ‘The small dogs over there, they follow me until...’ [tci20111119-03 ABB #94]
- (47) *foba nzrans “bä mon ern?”*  
 foba nz-ra-n-s-Ø bä mon e-rn  
 DIST.ABL 1NSG.β-IRR.DU-VENT-ask.RS-2|3SG 2.ABS how 2|3NSG.α-COP.DU  
 2|3SG:SBJ>1DU:OBJ:IRR:PFV:VENT/ask 2|3DU:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘He asked us (2): “Who are you?”’ [tci20120904-02 MAB #125]
- (48) *paituaf nzräkor “nzä fiyaf r wiyak.”*  
 paitua=f nz-rä-kor-Ø nzä fiyaf=r  
 old.man=ERG.SG 1NSG.β-IRR.ND-speak.RS-2|3SG 1SG.ABS hunting=PURP  
 2|3SG:SBJ>1PL:OBJ:IRR:PFV/speak  
 wo-yak  
 1SG.α-walk.EXT.ND  
 1SG:NPST:IPFV/walk  
 ‘He said to us: “I will go hunting.”’ [tci20120821-02 LNA #11-12]
- (49) *kar zf rä zf masu ... manema nzräkorth masu kar.*  
 kar zf rä zf masu (.) mane=ma  
 place IMM 3SG.F.COP.ND IMM masu (.) which=CHAR  
 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 nz-rä-kor-th masu kar  
 1NSG.β-IRR.ND-speak.RS-2|3NSG masu place.  
 2|3PL:SBJ>1PL:OBJ:IRR:PFV/speak  
 ‘This place right here is Masu, which is why they call us Masu people.’  
 [tci20120922-08 DAK #87]
- (50) *ni nzrakorth “bä!” ... oroman babua ... “bä kwa ñakwinth zmbär aki kwayanen!”*  
 ni nz-ra-kor-th bä (.) oroman babua (.) bä kwa  
 1NSG 1NSG.β-IRR.DU-speak.RS-2|3NSG 2.ABS (.) old.man babua (.) 2.ABS FUT  
 2|3PL:SBJ>1DU:OBJ:IRR:PFV/speak  
 ñ-a-kwi-n-th zmbär aki kwayan=en  
 M.α-VC-run.EXT-DU-2|3NSG night moon light=LOC  
 2|3DU:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/run  
 ‘They said to us (2): “You!” to old man Babua “You two will run at night in the moonlight”’  
 [tci20120904-01 MAB #135-137]

Note that just like in post-stem dual marking (§5.5.3.1), pre-stem dual marking is ambiguous as to which of the two arguments is dual or non-dual. The verb *nzrakorth* ‘they said to us’ in (50) could be any of the three possible actor>undergoer combinations (PL>DU, DU>DU or DU>PL) because both person affixes index a non-singular participant. Thus, the absence of the *ä* vowel indicates that one of the two participants is dual, but not which one. Only context may solve this structural ambiguity, which in (50) is clear from the second verb *ηakwinth* ‘you two go’. For verbs in a prefixing template, there is no ambiguity since they index only one argument. Non-dual participants receive the *ä* vowel, while dual participants do not. The same holds for verbs in the middle template.

The marking pattern can be expressed in an abstract matrix as in Figure 5.11. In terms of structure, not in its formatives, this matrix is identical to post-stem duality marking (see Figure 5.9 above).

		ACTOR		
		SG	DU	PL
UNDERGOER	SG	ä	∅	ä
	DU	∅	∅	∅
	PL	ä	∅	ä

Figure 5.11: The duality matrix without vc prefix

There are some exceptions for the third singular prefixes (both feminine and masculine). The combination of SG>3SG in the ambifixing template and 3SG in the prefixing template receive the vowel *a* and not *ä* in all relevant TAM categories. In the imperatives, it is *a* for both combinations SG>3SG and PL>3SG. Inflections involving a dual participant would receive a zero marker. In a discussion after listening to old recordings made by the anthropologist Mary Ayres in the 1980’s, I was able to elicit one inflectional form that is relevant to this topic. The informant contrasted the modern Komnzo inflection *santhor* ‘He arrived here’ with an older form of the same verb *snäthor*.<sup>36</sup> A first observation is that the *ä* does occur in the older form. Interestingly, it occurs after the ventive *n*-prefix. At the current stage of documentation, not much can be said about the time frame during which this change has occurred. The informant who provided this information is now in his mid-60’s and he remembers ‘old people’ using this form. I was not able to elicit a full paradigm of these older inflections and, thus, we are denied insight into the changes that took place in the verb template. As for now, we can only state that the non-dual *ä* vowel existed at some point in time with third singulars in the prefix.

As I mentioned above, since pre-stem duality marking involves the *ä* vowel, it occupies a slot in the template which may be filled by other prefixal material, for example the irrealis prefix *ra*- and the valency changer *a*-, or both. We saw in the examples above,

<sup>36</sup> *s-a-n-thor*  
3SG.MASC.γ-ND-VENT-arrive.RS

*s-n-ä-thor*  
3SG.MASC.γ-VENT-ND-arrive.RS

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that the non-dual *ä* vowel superposes the irrealis *ra-* prefix which results in the form *rä-*. This is not the case for the imperatives and indicative inflected verbs. As we have seen in §5.3.3, restricted stems combine only with prefixes of the  $\beta$ ,  $\beta_2$  and  $\gamma$  series. Most formatives of these series are composed of only a consonant (See Table 5.9 in §5.5.1.2). Only the 1SG. $\gamma$  (*zu-*) and all formatives of the  $\beta_2$  series end in /u/, which resyllabifies as part of a complex onset (*zw-*) in the presence of *ä* or *a*. For example, the 1SG. $\gamma$  *zu-* in (51) is followed by a zero. Therefore, the verb is inflected for dual. In (52), the 1SG. $\gamma$  is followed by the non-dual *ä* vowel and the prefix changes into *zwä-*. Therefore, I analyse the distribution of the *ä* vowel as was shown above in Figure 5.11.

- (51) *nzä nima zukorth: “be fafä zane nagayé fäth zä thamonegwé!”*  
 nzä nima zu-Ø-kor-th be fafä zane  
 1SG.ABS QUOT 1SG. $\gamma$ -DU-speak.RS-2|3NSG 2SG.ERG after.this DEM:PROX  
 2|3DU:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:RPST:PFV/speak

nagayé fäth zä th-a-moneg-w-é  
 children DIM PROX 2|3NSG. $\beta$ -VC-wait.EXT-ND-2SG.IMP  
 2SG:SBJ>2|3PL:IO:IMP:IPFV/wait

‘They (2) said to me: “You will look after these small children here later!”’

[tci20121019-04 ABB #97]

- (52) *watik, naf zwäkora: “watik, nzone efoth fof zefafth.”*  
 watik naf zu-ä-kor-a-Ø watik nzone efoth fof z-ä-faf-th  
 then 3SG.ERG 1SG. $\gamma$ -ND-speak.RS-PST-2|3SG then 1SG.POSS sun|day EMPH M. $\gamma$ -ND.VC-hold.RS-2|3NSG  
 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:PST:PFV/speak 2|3NSG:SBJ:PST:PFV/hold

‘Then she said to me: “Well, my days are over now.”’

[tci20130911-03 MBR #76]

Pre-stem duality marking co-occurs with the valency change prefix *a-*. The resulting vowel pattern is summarised in the matrix in Figure 5.12, which shows that the non-dual *ä* vowel (i) replaces the *a-* prefix and (ii) that it patterns differently to the forms given so far. Compare Figure 5.11 above with Figure 5.12 below. Note that this neutralises the valency change prefix *a-* for some of the actor>undergoer combinations: PL>SG, SG>PL and PL>PL. For these combinations, it is only the case frame which identifies whether the undergoer argument is a direct object (ABS case) or an indirect object (DAT or POSS case).

		ACTOR		
		SG	DU	PL
UNDERGOER	SG	a	a	ä
	DU	a	a	a
	PL	ä	a	ä

Figure 5.12: The duality matrix with vc prefix

One exception is the combination of SG>SG. As we can see in Figure 5.12, this combination receives no *ä* vowel although both participants are non-dual. This pattern is regular for all persons. Thus, a PL>3SG would receive *ä*, whereas DU>3SG and SG>3SG would not receive it. For the last combination and all prefixing verbs with a 3SG this means that the valency change is neutralised and again only the case frame shows what type of undergoer is indexed. It is not neutralised for the other person values (SG>1SG, SG>2SG and 1SG, 2SG on prefixing verbs) precisely because SG>SG (and the SG in prefixing verbs) does not take *ä* but *a*.

Note that prefixing verbs with the valency change prefix *a-* show a pattern where *ä* only occurs on a plural, while *a* occurs with a singular and dual participant. At least on the surface, this results in the binary opposition of plural vs. non-plural. In (53) below, the prefixing verb *rfiksi* ‘grow’ occurs in the inflected form *zarfif* ‘sth. grew for/over it’. From the context, it is clear that the speaker is talking about the grass growing over the path. The verb encodes a feminine undergoer, which can only be interpreted as being the pathway (*moth*), because *yusi* ‘grass’ is masculine. A dual number of the undergoer would be *tharfif* and a plural *thärfif*. Thus, under several conditions (presence of valency change, prefixing template, restricted stem), the duality marker marks an opposition between plural and non-plural.

(53) *gathagatha moth rä ... z wrfrwake we ane zarfif.*

<i>gathagatha</i>	<i>moth rä</i>		(.) z
bad	path	3SG.F:COP:ND	(.) ALR
		3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be	

<i>w-rfr-w-a-k-e</i>	<i>we ane z-a-rfif</i>
3SG.F.α-trim.EXT-ND-PST-LK-1NSG also DEM	3SG.F.γ-ND.VC-grow.RS
1PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:IPFV/trim	3SG.F.IO:RPST:PFV/grow

‘This is a bad path. We cut it already, but (the grass) grew over it again.’

[tci20130907-02 RNA #39-41]

Before I conclude this section on number marking, I want to look at the behaviour of the *ä* vowel when the irrealis prefix *ra-* and valency change prefix *a-* come together. Since the irrealis prefix includes a vowel, the valency change prefix is neutralised in most parts of the paradigm. For extended stems, this neutralisation is complete, i.e. only the case frame indicates whether the undergoer argument is a direct object (ABS) or an indirect object (DAT or POSS). This will be further discussed in §6.2.2. For restricted stems, the valency change prefix *a-* is likewise neutralised, but the number marking pattern differs in those actor>undergoer combinations which involve SG>SG (Figure 5.12). Consider the vowel contrast between (44) which was given above and (54) below. The participant combination is held constant: 3SG>1SG. In (44) we find the *ä* vowel, because it is ditransitive and the valency change prefix *a-* is employed, but in (54) it is missing, because (44) is transitive and lacks the *a-* prefix. Compare (54) with (55) where the same verb *yarisi* ‘give’ shows the *ä* because the actor participant is plural.

(54) *nafane bärbärnzo keke kwrar.*

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nafane bärbär=nzo keke kw-ra-r-∅  
 3SG.POSS half=ONLY NEG 1SG.β-IRR.ND.VC-give.RS-2|3SG  
 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:IO:IRR:PFV/give  
 ‘She will not give me half of her (fish).’ [tci20120922-26 DAK #125]

- (55) *nä kwot kwrärth fafä.*  
 nä kwot kw-rä-r-th fafä  
 some again 1SG.β-IRR.PL.VC-give.RS-2|3NSG after.that  
 2|3PL:SBJ>1SG:IO:IRR:PFV/give  
 ‘They might give me some more later.’ [tci20120805-01 ABB #226]

We can conclude from the examples that the irrealis inflection complies with the number marking patterns as they were shown in Figure 5.12 above. The only difference lies in the fact that the irrealis prefix *ra-* creates neutralisations in more combinations (with regard to the valency change) because *ra-* contains a vowel. However, there is one important caveat to this conclusion. As I have pointed out in §5.4.4 and §5.4.6, there are some verbs which are deponent in the sense that they obligatorily take the *a-* without a change in the valency. Two examples are the transitive verb *fiyoksi* ‘make’ and intransitive/prefixing verb *yarenzsi* ‘look’. Consequently we would expect them to comply with the pattern in Figure 5.12. Consider example (56) with a SG>SG participant combination and example (57) with its single referent in SG. Both show the *ä* non-dual vowel, i.e. they violate the pattern in Figure 5.12 which predicts the vowel to be *a* and not *ä*. This violation occurs only with deponent verbs and only in irrealis mood. The natural explanation is that, for deponent verbs, the distinction between the presence vs. absence of the valency change prefix is redundant.

- (56) *katan kwa sräfiyothé. kafar minzü yé.*  
 katan kwa s-rä-fiyoth-é kafar minzü  
 small FUT 3SG.MASC.β-IRR.ND.VC-make.RS-1SG big very  
 1SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/make  
 \yé/  
 3SG.MASC.COP.ND  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘I will make it smaller. It is very big.’ [tci20120914 RNA #41-42]

- (57) *wati, we nima n kwräzigrthm “eh, ra gru zane ηamitwanzr nabi tutin?”*  
 wati we nima n kw-rä-zigrthm eh ra gru  
 then also QUOT IMN 1SG.β-IRR.ND.VC-look.RS eh what shooting.star  
 1SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/look  
 zane η-a-mitwa-nzr-∅ nabi tuti=n  
 DEM.PROX M.α-VC-SWING.EXT-ND-2|3SG bamboo branch=LOC  
 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/swing  
 ‘Then, I was about to look around and thought: “Hey, what is this shooting star swinging on the bamboo branch?”’ [tci20111119-03 ABB #126-127]



Another observation relevant for all TAM categories with pre-stem dual marking is the fact that the middle marker also obligatorily takes the valency change prefix *a-*. Likewise, a verb in the middle template which indexes a singular participant does not pattern along the lines of Figure 5.12, and instead it employs the *ä* vowel. Again, this can only be explained by taking into account that there is no need to make a distinction between the presence vs. absence of the valency change prefix, because it always occurs with the middle morpheme.

The patterning of *ä*, *a* and  $\emptyset$  in the prefixes cannot be adequately captured by the traditional notion of a morpheme with a distinct meaning. It seems to be the case that the vowel change is employed only to mark a difference in meaning without being easily linked to a specific meaning. The vowel change or the *ä* vowel in the prefix can be glossed as a non-dual for only part of the paradigm. In other parts of the paradigm, the distribution is employed to maximise the possible grammatical categories that can be encoded. Thus, pre-stem duality marking is much messier than post-stem duality marking. Both show some ambiguities and neutralisations, and in both cases the duality marker has to be integrated with the singular vs. non-singular opposition of the person affixes. But at the same time, pre-stem dual marking is sensitive to more grammatical categories and shows more idiosyncrasies.

## 5.6 Deixis and directionality

Komnzo verbs may be inflected for deixis and directionality. Deictic inflection comprises the values of proximal, medial, distal and interrogative. Directionality comprises a ventive ('hither') and an andative ('thither') category. Both deixis and directionality operate from a deictic center, which is usually the speaker, but may be extended to cover a particular character or place in a narrative, or a point in time. Morphologically, both sets are simple in that there is a one-to-one mapping between form and function.

### 5.6.1 The directional affixes *n-* and *-o*

Directional inflection takes place in two slots on the verb: the ventive prefix *n-* precedes the verb stem, while the andative suffix *-o* occurs in the second last slot on the verb preceding the person/number suffixes. Although morphologically possible, the two morphemes may not co-occur, i.e. a verb is marked either ventive or andative. In other Yam languages, the two morphemes share one slot in the verb template, for example in Nen (Evans 2015a). I have described in §5.5.1.1 how the presence of the andative suffix can lead to the neutralisation of the person value in the actor suffix. Example (39) in that section provided a text example of this neutralisation.

The use of directional marking is shown below in example (58). The sentence concludes a mythical story which explains why two particular clans do not intermarry, but instead 'help each other out' with girls to be exchanged with other groups. The speaker assumes the position of one of the two clans, both spatially as well as in terms of kin relations. The verb *yarisi* 'give' is then marked with an andative in the first clause ('give away')

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and a ventive ('give towards') in the second clause. Additionally, both clauses contain a deictic in ablative case (*zba* 'from here', *boba* 'from there').

- (58) *zba nezä ärithroth fäms ηarer. boba nezä änrihrth fäms ηarer*  
*zba nezä e-a-ri-thr-o-th fäms*  
 PROX.ABL in.return 2|3NSG.α-VC-give.EXT-ND-AND-NSG exchange  
 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:IO:NPST:IPFV:AND/give
- ηare=r boba nezä e-a-n-ri-thr-th*  
 woman=PURP MED.ABL in return 2|3NSG.α-VC-VENT-give.EXT-ND-2|3NSG  
 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:IO:NPST:IPFV:VENT/give
- fäms ηare=r*  
 exchange woman=PURP  
 'From here, they give them girls to exchange. In return, they give them girls to  
 exchange from there.' [tci20110802 ABB #159-161]

The directional affixes can be used with dynamic events as in (58) or with stative verbs as in (59), which is taken from the description of a picture card. The image depicts an older man who is standing in the background watching what is happening. The ventive inflection on 'stand' refers to the direction of his posture, i.e. he is standing facing towards the deictic centre.

- (59) *wotukarä ane ynkogr. sinzo foba ynrä.*  
*wotu=karä ane y-n-kogr si=nzo foba*  
 stick=PROP DEM 3SG.MASC.α-VENT-stand.ND eye=ONLY DIST:ABL  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/stand
- y-n-rä*  
 3SG.MASC.α-VENT-COP.ND  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/be  
 'He stands there with his walking stick and he is just looking from there.'  
 [tci20111004 RMA #253]

The copula may receive a directional inflection, giving the interpretation of 'come' (59) and 'go' (60), literally translated as 'be hither' and 'be thither'.

- (60) *watik, teacher zwäkor "keke kayé kwa nrno."*  
*watik teacher zu-ä-kor-∅ keke kayé kwa*  
 then teacher 1SG:γ-ND-speak.RS-2|3SG NEG tomorrow FUT  
 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:RPST:PFV/speak
- n-tn-o*  
 1NSG:α-COP.DU-AND  
 1DU:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:AND/be  
 'Then, the teacher said to me: "No, we will go tomorrow."  
 [tci20130823-06 STK #67-68]

The spatial semantics of directional inflection can be extended to cover metaphorical uses. Example (61) shows a temporal use where the speaker explains the old custom of tying a bowstring. Thus, he literally says that he ‘follows the custom hither’. Example (62) is a description of a very old woman, who has outlived some of her own children. The speaker uses the andative inflection on the verb *yathizsi* ‘die’ which is best translated into English as ‘pass away’.

- (61) *nzenme bada nimame zf ηatr thuzirakwrnth. watik, ni ane wänbragwre zenathamar.*  
 nzenme bada nima=me zf ηatr  
 1NSG.POSS ancestor like.this=INS IMM bowstring  
 thu-zirak-wr-m-th watik ni ane  
 2|3NSG.β1-tie.EXT-ND-DUR-2|3NSG then 1NSG DEM  
 2|3PL.SBJ>2|3PL.OBJ:PST:DUR/tie  
 w-a-n-brag-wr-e zena=thamar  
 3SG.F.α-VC-VENT-follow.EXT-ND-1NSG today=TEMP.ALL  
 1PL.SBJ>3SG.F.OBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/follow  
 ‘Our ancestors where tying the bowstring this way. We have been following (this custom) until today.’ [tci20130914-01 KAB #1-3]

- (62) *nagayé nafanemäwä nä z äthizrako.*  
 nagayé nafane=ma=wä nä z  
 children 3SG.POSS=CHAR=EMPH some ALR  
 e-a-thiz-r-a-k-o  
 2|3NSG.α-VC-die.EXT-ND-PST-LK-AND  
 2|3PL.SBJ:PST:IPFV:AND/die  
 ‘Some of her own children have already passed away.’ [tci20120922-26 DAK #54]

### 5.6.2 The deictic clitics *z=*, *b=*, *f=* and *m=*

Deictics include the three categories proximal *z=*, medial *b=* and distal *f=*. Additionally, there is an interrogative form *m=* which behaves slightly different. These morphemes are analysed as proclitics because they (i) attach to the outer layer of the verb, (ii) are not assigned stress (if they create an initial syllable through epenthesis) and (iii) are reduced forms of the demonstratives. In §3.1.12.3 and §3.5 I have labelled these clitic demonstratives.

Clitic demonstratives are always used situationally in order to point, direct or show the location of an event or a referent in relation to the deictic center. Example (63)<sup>37</sup> comes from a narrative. The deictic center of that part of the story is a man who sits in his camp and happens to hear someone shouting from the river. Note that both verbs

<sup>37</sup>The verb *-nor* ‘shout’ is deponent and takes the valency change prefix *a-* prefix without an impact on the argument structure.

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(‘hear’ and ‘shout’) are inflected with a ventive marker. Thus, we can translate the second verb *byannor*, to which the medial clitic demonstrative (*b*=MED) is attached, as ‘He shouts there towards here’.

- (63) *nafafämsf srenkaris* “oh, kabe *byannor* gardar.”  
 nafa-fäms=f s-rä-n-karis-∅ oh  
 3.POSS-exchange.man=ERG.SG 3SG.MASC.β-IRR.ND-VENT-hear.RS-2|3SG oh  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV:VENT/hear  
 kabe b=y-a-n-nor garda=r  
 man MED=3SG.MASC.α-VC-VENT-shout.EXT.ND canoe=PURP  
 MED=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/shout  
 ‘His exchange man heard him (and said:) “Oh, there is a man calling out for the canoe.”’ [tci20111119-01 ABB #68]

If the inflected verb is vowel initial or begins in a glide (only some formatives of the *α* series), the clitic demonstrative simply attaches as an onset, for example in (64)<sup>38</sup> or (66) below. Elsewhere, an initial syllable is created through epenthesis, as in (63) and (65).

- (64) *frükakmenzo nzwamnzrm. ane mrn fämnr. ane mrn fämnr. ane mrn fämnr.*  
 frü-kak=me=nzo nzu-a-m-nzr-m 3x[ane mrn  
 alone-DISTR=INS=ONLY 1NSG.β2-VC-sit.EXT-ND-DUR 3x[DEM clan  
 1PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/sit  
 f=e-a-m-nzr]  
 DIST=2|3NSG.α-VC-sit.EXT-ND]  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/sit  
 ‘We used to live in groups. One clan lives over there, one clan lives over there and one clan lives over there.’ [tci20120922-08 DAK #114-117]
- (65) *ane bä bkwaruthrmth büdisnen mnz znen.*  
 ane bä b=kw-a-ru-thr-m-th büdis=en mnz  
 DEM MED MED=M.β1-VC-bark.EXT-ND-DUR-2|3NSG büdis=LOC house  
 MED=2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/bark  
 zn=en  
 place=LOC  
 ‘Those (dogs) were barking there in Büdisn at the house.’ [tci20111119-03 ABB #95]

Clitic demonstratives are found most frequently attached to the copula which then follows the main verb of a clause. In the discussion of demonstratives, I have labelled this construction demonstrative identifier (see §3.1.12.3). In (66), the speaker points to another person cutting off the branches of a tree. Note that the deictic value (MED) is held constant on the demonstrative pronoun *bäne*, the clitic demonstrative on *rtmaks* ‘cut’ and the demonstrative identifier *byé*.

<sup>38</sup>The verb *msaksi* ‘sit|dwell’ is deponent and takes the valency change prefix *a-* without an impact on the argument structure

(66) *nima bäne birtmakwr byé.*

nima bäne b=y-rtmak-wr-Ø  
 like.this DEM:MED MED=3SG.MASC.α-cut.EXT-ND-2|3SG  
 MED=2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST.IPFV/cut

b=\yé/

MED=3SG.MASC.COP.ND

MED=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be

‘She cuts off that one there.’

[tci20130907-02 JAA #441]

I choose the label demonstrative identifier for the whole construction (clitic demonstrative plus copula), because the copula is inert to tense marking, i.e. it always occurs in non-past. In example (67), the speaker took me to a place on the riverbank which used to be a ‘story place’ a long time ago. Story places are always inhabited by spiritual beings and, therefore, they must not be disturbed by people. The verbs *rafisi* ‘paddle’ and *yak* ‘walk, go’ are in past tense and only the copula is in non-past.

(67) *gardame fthé kwarafinzrmth, boba wozinzo thfiyakm berä.*

garda=me fthé kw-a-rafi-nzr-m-th boba wozi=nzo thf-yak-m  
 canoe=INS when M.β1-VC-paddle.EXT-ND-DUR-2|3NSG MED.ABL side=ONLY 2|3NSG.β2-walk.EXT-DUR  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/paddle 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/walk

b=e-rä

MED=2|3NSG.α-COP.ND

MED=2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be

‘When paddling with the canoe, they only went there on the side there.’

[tci20120922-19 DAK #8]

Naturally, deictic markers are found mostly in situations where visual identification is important. Example (68) is taken from a plant walk where the speaker points out two different kinds of trees: *mni bāwzö* and *fothr* (sometimes called *fothr bāwzö*).<sup>39</sup> In the recording, *fothr bāwzö* trees stood between the speaker and some *mni bāwzö* trees. Hence, the latter are marked as being further away and all deictic markers are medial: the deictic (*bä* ‘there’), the proclitic on the verb (*bikogro* ‘it stands there’) and the deictic in ablative case (*bobafa* ‘from there’). Note that the verb is also inflected with an andative because more trees of the *mni bāwzö* kind were growing in that direction. As for the other tree, *fothr bāwzö*, it is marked by a proximal deictic (*zä* ‘here’), a proximal demonstrative identifier (*zyé* ‘it is here’) and another proximal deictic in ablative case (*zbafa* ‘from here’).<sup>40</sup>

(68) *bä ane mni bāwzö bikogro. zä yé zyé fothr zbafa. bobafa mni bāwzö.*

<sup>39</sup>The words *bāwzö* and *fothr* are proper nouns. However, *mni* means ‘fire’ and the name *mni bāwzö* ‘fire bāwzö’ is used because the bark of this tree is hardened over the fire and later used for house walls.

<sup>40</sup>Both deictics *bobafa* and *zbafa* are doubly ablative, i.e. *boba* is already ablative and contrasts with allative *bobo*. This is the only example in the corpus of doubly marked deictics.

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bä ane mni bäwzö b=y-kogr-o zä  
 MED DEM fire bäwzö MED=3SG.MASC. $\alpha$ -stand.ND-AND PROX  
 MED=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/stand  
 \yé/ z=\yé/ fothr zba=fa  
 3SG.MASC.COP.ND PROX=3SG.MASC.COP.ND fothr PROX.ABL=ABL  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be PROX=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 boba=fa mni bäwzö  
 MED.ABL=ABL fire bäwzö  
 ‘There, *mni bäwzö* is standing there. From here it is *fothr bäwzö* and from there (it  
 is) *mni bäwzö*.’ [tci20130907-02 RNA #166-168]

The three proclitics *z=*, *b=* and *f=* can in principle attach to verb forms of all TAM categories. For example in (65), the medial *b=* is cliticised to a verb in past durative. Nevertheless, they occur most frequently with verbs in present tense because of their situational use.

The clitic *m=* only occurs with the copula and the meaning ‘where is X?’ as in (69). As I will discuss in §6.3, *m=* can attach to verbs in irrealis or imperative mood with an apprehensive (‘you might do X!’) and prohibitive interpretation (‘you must not do X!’) respectively. Formally, the *m=* clitic patterns with the other demonstratives (See Table 3.8 in §3.1.12).

(69) *mern?* ni *wmägne zöbthé*.  
 m=e-rn ni w-mäg-n-e zöbthé  
 where=2|3NSG. $\alpha$ -COP.DU 1NSG 3SG.F. $\alpha$ -lead.EXT-DU-1NSG first  
 where=2|3DU:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be 1DU:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/lead  
 ‘Where are they? We will lead (the path) first.’ [tci20130907-02 JAA #12]

# 6 Tense, aspect and mood

## 6.1 Introduction

Tense, aspect and mood is the most complex set of grammatical categories in the verb inflection, both in the way the categories are encoded and in the number of distinctions that can be expressed. Morphologically, there are 18 categories, which may be additionally supplemented by a set of TAM particles. There are four morphological tense values (non-past, immediate past, recent past and past), four aspect values (perfective, imperfective, durative and iterative) and three mood values (indicative, imperative and irrealis).

I will begin this section with an overview of the morphological material that is involved in TAM inflection. Most of these building blocks and the idiosyncrasies in their behaviour have been addressed in the preceding chapter and I will refer to these sections where appropriate. In the following, I will focus on the combinatorics of the morphemes and stems (§6.2), the impact of clitics and particles (§6.3) and the semantics of the resulting TAM categories (§6.4). Aspect in Komnzo can at best be somewhat misleadingly captured with the traditional definition of perfective versus imperfective which is often based on the completion of an event. Although I employ these labels, note that the perfective focusses more on the left edge of the event (inceptive) or expresses a momentaneous quality (punctual). With that in mind, I defer the discussion of the semantics of TAM to the end of this chapter (§6.4).

## 6.2 The combinatorics of TAM

The most basic element of TAM inflection is the distinction between an extended (EXT) and a restricted stem (RS). Both types are attested for almost every verb lexeme (§5.3). EXT and RS stems differ in their templates with respect to dual marking (§5.3.2) and in the possible combinations with the five prefix series  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\beta_1$ ,  $\beta_2$  and  $\gamma$  (§5.3.3). In addition to the five series, the irrealis prefix *ra-* and the immediate past proclitic *n=* are involved in TAM marking. The suffixal material includes a past suffix (*-a*) and a durative suffix (*-m*) and a special actor suffix series for the imperatives. Table 6.1 gives a full overview of the TAM categories and the way these are built up from the listed morphological material. An important distinction in the verb template, not expressed in Table 6.1, is the difference between post-stem dual marking with EXT stems and pre-stem dual marking with RS stems. This was described in detail in §5.5.3.

The combinations in Table 6.1 illustrate a feature of Komnzo morphology that reverberates throughout the verb inflection: the distribution of exponents. In other words,

a grammatical category is encoded and manipulated by morphemes that are scattered across the verb template. On the flip side of this phenomenon, most formatives lack a clear grammatical meaning or have multiple grammatical functions depending on their context. Thus, they have to be glossed in an abstract manner. However, there are degrees of morpheme underspecification. For example, two morphemes in Table 6.1 can be assigned an unambiguous grammatical meaning. These are the irrealis prefix *ra-* and the past suffix *-a*. The *-a* formative only occurs in past tense inflections. Hence, the label ‘past’ is a sufficient description of the *-a* suffix, but the suffix is insufficient for the grammatical category ‘past tense’ because other morphemes like the prefix series are required to form a past tense. A second group of morphemes is underspecified in the following way: they fulfill several functions, either simultaneously or in different morphological contexts. For example, the durative suffix *-m* encodes durative aspect, but it also ‘pushes back’ the tense value. Thus, when suffixed to a non-past (imperfective), it will produce a recent past (durative) and when it is suffixed to a recent past (imperfective), it will produce a past (durative). Thus, we could label it durative/backshifting suffix. However, the *-m* suffix also ‘pushes forward’ the tense value in the imperatives, where it produces a delayed imperative (‘do X a little later’) and duration is not part of its meaning. Furthermore, the *-m* suffix may occur with perfectives as a means of backgrounding an event, again without encoding duration. Thus, the choice of the glossing label ‘durative’ (DUR) for the *-m* suffix is somewhat arbitrary and we could equally label it ‘tense shifting’ or ‘background’ morpheme. For a third group of morphemes, especially the five prefix series, all attempts to assign them a grammatical meaning is rendered futile and we have to draw on abstract labels like  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$  and  $\gamma$ .



Table 6.1: The combinatorics TAM marking

TAM value			clitic <i>n=</i>	prefix series $\alpha, \beta, \beta_1, \beta_2, \gamma$	IRR prefix <i>ra-</i>	stem type EXT RS	TAM suffix PST (- <i>a</i> ) DUR (- <i>m</i> )	IMPERATIVE suffix IMP/2SG(- <i>é</i> ) 2NSG- <i>e</i>
non-past	imperfective	indicative		$\alpha$		EXT		
immediate-past	imperfective	indicative	<i>n=</i>	$\alpha$		EXT		
immediate-past	durative	indicative	<i>n=</i>	$\alpha$		EXT	- <i>m</i>	
recent-past	imperfective	indicative		$\beta_1$ or $\beta_2$		EXT		
recent-past	durative	indicative		$\alpha$		EXT	- <i>m</i>	
recent-past	perfective	indicative		$\gamma$		RS		
past	imperfective	indicative		$\alpha$		EXT	- <i>a</i>	
past	durative	indicative		$\beta_1$ or $\beta_2$		EXT	- <i>m</i>	
past	perfective	indicative		$\gamma$		RS	- <i>a</i>	
past	iterative	indicative		$\beta_1$ or $\beta_2$		RS		
past	iterative/durative	indicative		$\beta_1$ or $\beta_2$		RS	- <i>m</i>	
n/a	imperfective	irrealis		$\beta$	<i>ra-</i>	EXT		
n/a	durative	irrealis		$\beta$	<i>ra-</i>	EXT	- <i>m</i>	
n/a	perfective	irrealis		$\beta$	<i>ra-</i>	RS		
n/a	imperfective	imperative		$\beta$		EXT		IMP
n/a	perfective	imperative		$\beta$		RS		IMP
n/a (delayed)	imperfective	imperative		$\beta$		EXT	- <i>m</i>	IMP
n/a (delayed)	perfective	imperative		$\beta$		RS	- <i>m</i>	IMP

Not all logically possible combinations of morphs are grammatically acceptable. For example, the  $\alpha$  and  $\gamma$  prefix series only combine with EXT and RS stems respectively, but not vice versa. Likewise, the past suffix *-a* and the durative suffix *-m* are mutually exclusive and a verb form with both is rejected as ungrammatical. Third, the irrealis prefix *ra-* only combines with the  $\beta$  prefixes and not with the other prefix series. Lastly, the immediate past clitic *n=* can only attach to a verb form which employs the  $\alpha$  prefix series, not to the other combinations. We can conclude from this observation that the combinatorial space is not fully exhausted, i.e. not all logically possible combinations of the morphological material are actually employed. Such a system is not surprising because all natural languages evolve incrementally without an overall design. What is remarkable about Komnzo in specific and the Yam languages in general is the fact that so many combinations are employed. In other words, the genius of the verb morphology lies in its extensive exploitation of combinations.

In the following section, I will describe the functions and some of the distributional characteristics of the morphemes in Table 6.1.

### 6.2.1 The prefix series

The five prefix series  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\beta_1$ ,  $\beta_2$ ,  $\gamma$  were briefly addressed in §5.5.1.2. The table from page 222 is reproduced here as Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: TAM prefixes

gloss	$\alpha$	$\beta$	$\beta_1$	$\beta_2$	$\gamma$
1SG	<i>wo-</i>	<i>kw-</i>	<i>ku-</i>	<i>kwof-</i>	<i>zu-</i>
1NSG	<i>n-</i>	<i>nz- / nzn-</i>	<i>nzu-</i>	<i>nzf-</i>	<i>nzn-</i>
2SG	<i>n-</i>	<i>nz- / gn-</i>	<i>gu-</i>	<i>gf-</i>	<i>nzn-</i>
3SG.F	<i>w-</i>	<i>z-</i>	<i>zu-</i>	<i>zf-</i>	<i>z-</i>
3SG.MASC	<i>y-</i>	<i>s-</i>	<i>su-</i>	<i>sf-</i>	<i>s-</i>
2 3NSG	<i>e-</i>	<i>th-</i>	<i>thu-</i>	<i>thf-</i>	<i>th-</i>
M	<i>η-</i>	<i>k-</i>	<i>kw-</i>	<i>kf-</i>	<i>z-</i>

The  $\alpha$  prefixes combine only with the extended stem. They are used to encode non-past (1), recent past durative (2) and past imperfective (3). Example (1) comes from a hunting story, where the narrator meets a spiritual being in the forest. In (2), the speaker reports an incident from a neighboring village involving a young boy who was attacked by a sorcerer in his yam garden. Example (3), is from an interview about the customs around the sister-exchange marriage system.

- (1) “*nzä maf wonrsoknwr?*”  
 nzä maf wo-n-rsokn-wr-Ø  
 1SG.ABS who.ERG 1SG. $\alpha$ -VENT-bother.EXT-ND-2|3SG  
 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/bother

“Who bothers me here?”

[tci20111119-03 ABB #165]

- (2) *fthé zöfthamen zamatho frk komnzo zä wtnägwrmo.*  
 fthé zöftha=thamen z-a-math-o-∅ frk komnzo zä  
 when first=TEMP.LOC M.γ-ND-run.RS-AND-2|3SG blood only PROX  
 2|3SG:SBJ:RPST:PFV:AND/run

w-tnäg-wr-m-o-∅

3SG.F.α-lose.EXT-ND-DUR-AND

SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:RPST:DUR:AND/lose

‘At first, when he started to run, he was just losing blood here.’

[tci20130901-04 YUK #40]

- (3) *nzun etha nzüthamöwä warnzürwrath wath.*  
 nzun etha nzüthamöwä wo-a-rnzür-wr-a-th wath  
 1SG.DAT three times 1SG.α-VC-dance.EXT-ND-PST-2|3NSG dance  
 2|3PL:SBJ>1SG.IO:PST:IPFV/dance

‘They danced three times for me.’

[tci20120805-01 ABB #769]

If the proclitic *n=* is attached to a verb employing the *α* prefixes, the resulting inflection is either immediate past imperfective (4) or immediate past durative (5) depending on suffixal material. In other words, the immediate past is built from verbs inflected for non-past. This is preserved in the integrated glossing style, because the *n=* is analyzed as a clitic. The *n=* is related to the imminent particle *n* (see §6.3.1). Example (4) sums up a story about the origin of the Morehead people. In (5), the speaker talks about competitive yam cultivation and how older people assess a young man’s status by the number and size of his crop.

- (4) *trikasi mane nğatrikwé fof ... nğafynm ... badafa ane fof nğanritakwa fof.*  
 trik-si mane n=η-a-trik-w-é fof (.) nğafe=nm (.) bada=fa  
 tell-NMLZ which IPST=M.α-VC-tell.EXT-ND-1SG EMPH (.) father=DAT.NSG (.) ancestor=ABL  
 IPST=1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/tell

ane fof η-a-n-ritak-w-a-∅ fof  
 DEM EMPH M.α-VC-VENT-pass.EXT-ND-PST-SG EMPH  
 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/pass

‘The story which I have just told passed from the ancestors to (our) fathers.’

[tci20131013-01 ABB #403-405]

- (5) *fthé bone kafarwä nefathwrnth “eh yabun zane!” wtrikaräsü we gnrärm.*  
 fthé bone kafar=wä n=e-fath-wr-m-th eh yabun zane  
 when 2SG.POSS big=EMPH IPST=2|3NSG.α-hold.EXT-ND-DUR-2|3NSG eh big DEM:PROX  
 IPST=2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:DUR/hold

wtri=karä=sü we gn-rä-r-m

fear=PROP=ETC also 2SG.β-COP-ND-DUR

2SG:SBJ:FUTIMP:IPFV/be

‘When they have just held your big (yam tubers) and say: “Hey, that (is) a big one!”

then you have to be afraid!

[tci20120805-01 ABB #378-380]

The  $\beta$  series is split into a basic series  $\beta$  and two related series  $\beta_1$  and  $\beta_2$ . The basic  $\beta$  series is used for all the non-tensed categories like the irrealis (6) and the imperatives (7). Example (6) comes from a procedural text about fish baskets and the speaker explains how the fish gets trapped inside. In (7), the narrator took over the role of a character in a stimulus picture task.

- (6) *watik, fthé kranbrigwrth keke kwa zba we krämätroth.*  
 watik fthé k-ra-n-brig-wr-th keke kwa zba we k-rä-mätr-o-th  
 then when M. $\beta$ -IRR.VC-VENT-return.EXT-ND-2|3|NSG NEG FUT PROX.ABL also M. $\beta$ -IRR.VC.ND-exit.R  
 2|3PL:SBJ:IRR:IPFV:VENT/return 2|3PL:SBJ:IRR:PFV:AND/exit.R  
 ‘Well, when they turn around, they will not escape from here.’  
 [tci20120906 SKK #45]

- (7) “*bné kätzno! nzä keke miyo worä.*”  
 bné k-ä-znob-e nzä keke miyo wo-rä  
 2NSG.ERG M. $\beta$ -ND.VC-drink.RS-2NSG.IMP 1SG.ABS NEG desire 1SG. $\alpha$ -COP.ND  
 2PL:SBJ:IMP:PFV/drink 1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 “‘You drink! I don’t want to.’”  
 [tci20111004 RMA #282]

Table 6.2 shows that there are two formatives for the first non-singular (*nz-* and *nzn-*) as well as the second singular (*nz-* and *gn-*) of the  $\beta$  series. For the first person non-singular, *nz-* is used for irrealis (8) and *nzn-* for the imperatives (9). In example (8), the speaker explains how a kundu drum is carved and prepared. Example (9), is taken from a conversation by the fire that involved a lot of hearsay. In conclusion, the speaker tells the two addressees to go to Morehead and clarify the rumours.

- (8) *fiyaf nrayak tauri woku thoraksir.*  
 fiyaf=r nz-ra-yak tauri woku thorak-si=r  
 hunting=PURP 1NSG. $\beta$ -IRR-walk.EXT.ND wallaby skin search-NMLZ=PURP  
 1PL:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/walk  
 ‘We will go hunting and search for wallaby skin.’  
 [tci20120824 KAA #64]
- (9) *kanbrime! ... aneme nzenm nznatrife!*  
 k-a-n-brim-e (.) ane=me nzenm  
 M. $\beta$ -VC.DU-VENT-return.RS-2NSG.IMP (.) DEM=INS  
 2DU:SBJ:IMP:PFV:VENT/return  
 nzn-a-trif-e  
 1NSG.DAT 1NSG. $\beta$ -VC.DU-tell.RS-2NSG.IMP  
 2DU:SBJ>1DU:OBJ:IMP:PFV/tell  
 ‘You come back and tell us about it!’  
 [tci20130901-04 RNA #162]

For the second singular, the situation is more complicated. The *gn-* formative is used for the imperatives of prefixing verbs, where the prefix encodes imperative mood and

the addressee simultaneously (10). The second non-singular prefix is *th-* for all inflections that involve the  $\beta$  series. Note that, for ambifixing verbs in the imperative, there is no overt marking of second person in the prefix because it would be reflexive ('X yourself!') or auto-benefactive ('X for yourself!'). As pointed out in §5.4.5, reflexives and auto-benefactives are expressed in a middle template. Hence, the first verb in example (9) above, could be translated as a reflexive ('return yourselves!').

- (10) *ezi gnyako!*  
 ezi gn-yak-o  
 morning 2SG. $\beta$ .IMP-walk.EXT.ND-AND  
 2SG:SBJ:IMP:IPFV:AND/walk  
 'You go there in the morning!' [tci20120906 MAB #31]

The second formative for the second singular in Table 6.2 (*nz-*) is used for irrealis inflection of prefixing and ambifixing verbs. Interestingly, only the second person singular of ambifixing verbs does not employ the irrealis prefix *ra-* in the irrealis inflection (11). If it is a prefixing verb, the irrealis prefix *ra-* is employed (12)<sup>1</sup> Example (11) is taken from a procedural text in which the speaker shows me how to manufacture two children's toys. In (12), the malignant protagonist invites a stranger to stay with her.

- (11) *gräthé znsä rä ... thrma nzasämire bun.*  
 grä-thé znsä rä (.) thrma nz-a-sämire-é  
 slow-ADJZR work 3SG.F.COP.ND (.) later 2SG. $\beta$ -VC.ND-whisper.RS-1SG  
 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be 1SG:SBJ>2SG:IO:IRR:PFV/whisper  
 bun  
 2SG.DAT  
 'It is easy work ... I will teach you later.' [tci20120914 RNA #50-51]

- (12) *nima zräzigrm "awe nzone moba nZRanyak?"*  
 nima z-rä-zigr-m awe nzone moba  
 QUOT 3SG.F. $\beta$ -IRR.VC.ND-look.around.RS-DUR come 1SG.POSS where.ABL  
 3SG.F:SBJ:IRR:PFV/look.around  
 nz-ra-n-yak  
 2SG. $\beta$ -IRR.VC-VENT-walk.EXT.ND  
 2SG:SBJ:IRR:IPFV:VENT/walk  
 'She looks around and says "Come my friend! Where are you coming from?"'  
 [tci20120901-01 MAK #74]

The  $\beta_1$  and  $\beta_2$  series are used for recent past imperfective (13), past durative (first verb in 14) and past iterative (second verb in 14). In example (14), the speaker talks about his experiences at the Rouku mission school in the 1960's.

<sup>1</sup>Both verbs in this example are deponent employing the valency changing prefix *a-* without a change in the valency pattern. The second verb *yak* 'walk' is only deponent when it employs the ventive marker meaning 'come', not when it is neutral or andative 'walk', 'go away'

6 Tense, aspect and mood

- (13) *kayé ama zuzir zfyak.*

kayé ama zuzi=r zf-yak  
 yesterday mother fishing=PURP 3SG.F. $\beta_2$ -walk.EXT.ND  
 3SG.F:SBJ:RPST:IPFV/walk

‘Yesterday, mother went fishing.’

[tci20111107-03 RNA #40]

- (14) *teste nzwasäminzrm bobomr kwarikwari efoth ... sokoro kfäbth*

teste nzu-a-sämi-nzr-m-Ø bobomr kwarikwari efoth (.) sokoro  
 thursday INSG. $\beta_1$ -VC-whisper.EXT-ND-DUR-2|3SG until midday sun (.) school  
 2|3SG:SBJ>1PL.IO:PST:DUR/teach

kf-ä-bth-Ø

M. $\beta_2$ -VC.ND-finish.RS-2|3SG

2|3SG:SBJ:PST:ITER/finish

‘On Thursday, he was teaching us until midday and then school always ended (for the week).’

[tci20120904-02 MAB #14]

These two prefix series are derived from the  $\beta$  series by adding an element to it. For  $\beta_1$ , it is the vowel *u* and, for  $\beta_2$ , this is the consonant *f*. The only exceptions are the first person and the second person singular formatives (see Table 6.2 above). In a different analysis, the *u* and *f* elements could be described as separate morphemes. Like the prefixes, these two morphemes would have to receive an abstract label. Such an analysis would reduce the number of prefix series to three. Under the current analysis, there are three main series and two subseries. I retain the current analysis, but I do not see either as being more elegant or more parsimonious. More important is the question regarding the difference between  $\beta_1$  and  $\beta_2$  which for the moment is unsettled. I will briefly discuss two possible explanations.

First, the difference might be understood in terms of sociolinguistic variation, i.e. the use of either variant is determined by an individual’s linguistic biography. Although all Komnzo speakers are multilingual, the strongest influence comes from two close varieties, namely Wära and Anta. In my preliminary survey of the surrounding varieties, I found that  $\beta_1$  and  $\beta_2$  exist in Wära as well as Anta. My impressionistic view is that the  $\beta_2$  prefix series occurs much more frequently than  $\beta_1$ . More comparative work and documentation on both varieties is needed.

A second explanation is a true difference in meaning. Although  $\beta_1$  and  $\beta_2$  are almost always interchangeable without a clear change in meaning, there are some hints. For example, the copula can only take  $\beta_2$  and not  $\beta_1$  and the same is true for the verb *yak* ‘walk’ (13). Only when the copula is used in an ambifixing template, are both  $\beta_1$  and  $\beta_2$  possible. However, in an ambifixing template the copula cannot be translated as ‘be’, but instead functions as a light verb with the meaning ‘do’. For other verbs,  $\beta_1$  and  $\beta_2$  are interchangeable. This observation leads me to believe that the  $\beta_2$  prefixes encode either a longer duration of the event or a greater degree of affectedness of the participants. However, targeted elicitation and close observation of natural texts did not lead to a clear pattern along these lines. Informants found it hard to give a characterisation or translation of the difference and they often contradicted each other or themselves. I will



- (18) *watik wamnza ḡathanm biskar mni threthkäfé*  
 watik wo-a-m-nz-a ḡatha=nm biskar mni  
 then 1SG.α-VC-sit.EXT-ND-PST dog=DAT.NSG cassava fire  
 1SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/sit  
 th-rä-thkäf-é  
 2|3NSG.β-IRR.ND-start.RS-1SG  
 1SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:IRR:PFV/start  
 ‘Then I sat and started to cook the cassava for the dogs.’ [tci20111119-03 ABB #73]

### 6.2.3 The past suffix *-a*

The position of the past suffix *-a* within the suffixing subsystem is described in §5.5.1.1. The past suffix *-a* is employed for two TAM categories: the past imperfective (19) and the past perfective (20). Example (19) is taken from a text on oral history of the Morehead district. The narrator talks about conflicts caused by an alleged sorcerer in the 1940’s. The second example (20) comes from much more recent event. A woman talks about camping at the Morehead river and going fishing only a week before the recording was made.

- (19) *watik gathagatha zokwasi fä ykonath.*  
 watik gathagatha zokwasi fä y-ko-n-a-th  
 then bad words DIST 3SG.MASC.α-speak.EXT-DU-2|3NSG  
 2|3DU:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:IPFV/speak  
 ‘Then, they cursed him there.’ [tci20131013-02 ABB #102]
- (20) *zukurath “mama, bā bana ketharuf! zuzi kăzir!”*  
 zu-∅-kor-a-th mama bā bana k-ä-tharuf-∅ zuzi  
 1SG.γ-DU-speak.RS-PST-2|3NSG mother 2SG poor M.β-VC.ND-enter.RS-2SG.IMP fishing.line  
 2|3DU:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:PST:PFV/speak 2SG.SBJ:IMP:PFV/enter  
 k-ä-zir-∅  
 M.β-VC.ND-throw.RS-2SG.IMP  
 2SG.SBJ:IMP:PFV/throw  
 ‘They said to me: “Mama, get on (the canoe) and throw the fishing line!”’  
 [tci20120922-25 ALK #7-8]

### 6.2.4 The durative suffix *-m*

The durative suffix *-m* is described in §5.5.1.1 with regard to its position in the suffixing subsystem. It is employed for durative aspect which expresses an ongoing event in immediate past<sup>2</sup>, recent past (21), past (22) and irrealis (23). In example (21), the speaker reports on how he fought a bushfire in his garden the preceding day. Example (22) is taken from a story about rain-making magic which the narrator acquired and practiced

<sup>2</sup>The immediate past occurs with a low frequency in the text corpus and consequently, there is only a handful of examples in immediate past durative. Example (5) on page 248 is one of these.



in his youth. The irrealis example (23) is taken from a conversation about local customs surrounding the sister-exchange system.

- (21) *wthzak zane ɲanssirwrnth.*  
 wthzak zane ɲ-a-n-rsir-wr-m-th  
 sole DEM:PROX M.α-VC-VENT-burn.EXT-ND-DUR-2|3NSG  
 2|3PL:SBJ:RPST:DUR:VENT/burn  
 ‘These soles here of my feet were burning.’ [tci20120922-24 MAA #63]
- (22) *grigri zä kwasogwrnth.*  
 grigri zä kw-a-sog-wr-m-th  
 maggot PROX M.β2-VC-ascend.EXT-ND-DUR-2|3NSG  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/ascend  
 ‘The maggots were climbing up here.’ [tci20110810-01 MAB #71]
- (23) *fäms fthé krakwinmth ... fäms fämsnzo ...*  
 fäms fthé k-ra-kwi-n-m-th (.)  
 exchange.man when M.β-IRR.VC-argue.EXT-DU-DUR-2|3NSG (.)  
 2|3DU:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/argue  
 fäms fäms=nzo (.)  
 exchange.man exchange.man=ONLY (.)  
 ‘When exchange men are fighting ... exchange man (against) exchange man ...’  
 [tci20120805-01 ABB #460]

Part of the function of the durative suffix is to backshift the tense. If we remove the *-m* suffix from a verb inflected for recent past durative (21) or past durative (22), the resulting form would be non-past imperfective and recent past imperfective respectively. Figure 6.1 shows this with the verb *songs* from example (22).

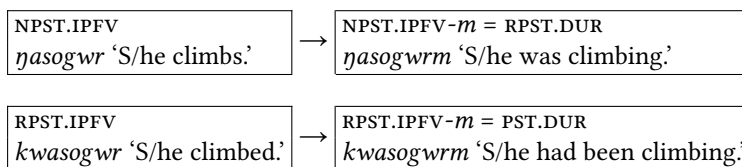


Figure 6.1: The backshifting function of the durative suffix *-m*

The durative suffix can also attach to an iterative inflection, in which case the iteration of the event is stretched over a longer duration as in (24) and (25). In (24), the speaker talks about the first fire which destroyed the world inhabited by humans. In (25), the speaker describes how the people used to avoid a particular place during the early and late hours of the day because it was inhabited by a story man.

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- (24) *zft̥h mni nã kayé zwäsm̥th kidn.*  
 zft̥h mni nã kayé zu-ä-s-m-th kidn  
 base fire some yesterday 3SG.F.β1-ND-call.RS-DUR-2|3NSG kidn  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG:OBJ:PST:ITER:DUR/call  
 ‘They always used to call the eternal fire Kidn.’ [tci20120909-06 KAB #55]
- (25) *kwamonegwr̥m̥th e efoth fthé zbo warfo kwänkorm̥ fthé kwarafinzr̥m̥th zã zerä.*  
 kw-a-moneg-wr-m-th e efoth fthé zbo warfo  
 M.β1-VC-wait.EXT-ND-DUR-2|3NSG until sun when PROX.ALL above  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/wait  
 kw-ä-n-kor-m-∅ fthé  
 M.β1-VC.ND-VENT-become.RS-DUR-2|3SG when  
 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:ITER:DUR:VENT/become  
 kw-a-rafi-nzr-m-th zã z=e-rä  
 M.β1-VC-paddle.EXT-ND-DUR-2|3NSG PROX PROX=2|3NSG.α-COP.ND  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/paddle PROX=2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘They were waiting until the sun always reached highest point and then they paddled here.’ [tci20120922-19 DAK #13]

The durative suffix *-m* can be suffixed to perfective verbs in recent past, past and irrealis. In this case, the event is only backgrounded without encoding a longer duration. However, these inflections are so rare that, at least for recent past and past, they are not attested in the corpus. For the irrealis perfective with the durative suffix, there are a handful of examples. In (26)<sup>3</sup>, the speaker talks about an old procedure for punishment which involved striking the culprit with a yam tuber over the head.

- (26) *nasime sräkwr̥m̥th ebaren “ah, miyatha kãkor bã monwã zbrigwé!”*  
 nasi=me s-rã-kwr-m-th ebar=en ah  
 long.yam=INS 3SG.MASC.β-IRR.ND-hit.RS-DUR-2|3NSG head=LOC ah  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV:BG/hit  
 miyatha k-ä-kor-∅ bã mon-wã  
 knowledge M.β-ND-become.RS-2SG.IMP 2.ABS how-EMPH  
 2SG:SBJ:IMP:PFV/become  
 z-brig-w-é  
 3SG.F.β-return.EXT-ND-2SG.IMP  
 2SG:SBJ>3SG:F:OBJ:IMP:IPFV/return  
 ‘They would hit him on the head with the long yam (and say) “Now you come up with a plan to pay this back!”’ [tci20120805-01 ABB #236-240]

<sup>3</sup>I will show the backgrounded status of the perfective verb in the unified gloss line with BG as in the examples below. In the maximally segmented gloss line, I will continue to use the durative label DUR.

Irrespective of perfectivity, the durative suffix on any irrealis inflection can have a far future interpretation. In examples (27) and (28), it is clear from the context that the event is set in the future and the *-m* on the verb indicates that the event is further in the future (as opposed to an irrealis without the *-m* suffix). In (27), the speaker showed me an old method of how to tie a bowstring. He then speculates as to if and when these old practices will vanish. Example (28) is taken from a conversation about yam cultivation during which the speaker complains about young people's lack of interest in gardening.

- (27) *ni miyamr mä kwa kräbth mane ... mrnen kräbthmo frthé*  
 ni miyamr mä kwa k-rä-bth-∅ mane (.) mrn-en k-rä-bth-m-o-∅  
 1NSG ignorance where FUT M.β-IRR.VC.ND-finish.RS-2|3SG which (.) clan-LOC M.β-IRR.VC.ND-finish.RS-  
 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/finish SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV:BG:AND/finish  
 frthé  
 when

'We do not know where it will finish ... in which generation it will finish.'

[tci20130914-01 KAB #43-44]

- (28) *nzä miyamr thrma ra sranathrmth ... nagayé*  
 nzä miyamr thrma ra s-ra-na-thr-m-th  
 1SG.ABS ignorance later what 3SG.MASC.β-IRR-eat.EXT-ND-DUR-2|3NSG  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:IPFV:BG/eat

(.) nagayé

(.) children

'I do not know what the children will eat later.'

[tci20120805-01 ABB #577]

If the durative suffix is attached to a verb in imperative mood, it encodes a delayed or future imperative ('do X a little later!').<sup>4</sup> The future imperative is also a rare inflection and we have seen one text example in (5) on page 248. In example (29) below, the speaker describes how competitive yam harvesting took place in the old days. After harvesting and sorting, a piece of rattan was used to measure the size of the largest tubers. This measurement was then sent to the competitors as a sign of one's superior harvesting skills.

- (29) *wati, natr thäriřthm nafanmedbo!*  
 wati natr th-ä-rifh-m-∅ nafanme=dbo  
 then rattan 2|3NSG.β-ND-send.RS-DUR-2SG.IMP 3NSG=ALL.SG  
 2SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:FUTIMP:PFV/send

'Then, you send the measure string to them!'

[tci20120805-01 ABB #402]

### 6.2.5 The imperative suffixes

The formatives of the imperative actor suffix series were given in Table 5.8 on page 216, where I pointed out the syncretism with the first person indicative actor suffixes and

<sup>4</sup>I gloss the future imperative with FUTIMP in the unified gloss line.

the second person imperative suffixes as well as the fact that the second singular suffix differs between perfective and imperfective imperatives. I refer the reader to section §5.5.1.1 for further information.

Here I describe the morphology of imperatives for the prefixing template. Prefixing verbs as defined here encode their single participant in the prefix. We saw in Table 6.2 on page 246 that imperatives are formed with the  $\beta$  prefix series. For prefixing verbs, the formatives are *gn-* (2SG.IMP) and *th-* (2NSG.IMP). A further suffix is added to prefixing verbs only. Consider example (30)<sup>5</sup> in which the speaker quotes himself talking to his wife. The imperative inflected verb is marked with an *-é* suffix which resembles the actor suffix of an ambifixing imperfective imperative (2SG.IMP) or of an ambifixing indicative of any aspect class (1SG). In the morphological context of prefixing imperatives, this *-é* does not encode a person value as can be seen in example (31) when the number of the addressee argument is plural. In other words, the *-é* suffix looks like a person/number suffix, but with prefixing verbs it is inert to those categories and it only encodes imperative mood.

- (30) *bä znrä. zä gnamnzé kwot e nzä kränbrimé!*  
 bä z=n-rä zä gn-a-m-nz-é kwot e nzä  
 2.ABS PROX=2SG.α-COP.ND PROX 2SG.β-VC-sit.EXT-ND-IMP properly until 1SG.ABS  
 PROX=2SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be 2SG:SBJ:IMP:IPFV/sit  
 k-rä-n-brim-é  
 M.β-IRR.VC.ND-VENT:return.RS-1SG  
 1SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV:VENT/return  
 ‘Now you are here. You stay here until I return.’ [tci20130823-06 STK #221]

- (31) ... *zär fiyafr mane eyak famäsü thyaké!*  
 (.) zär fiyaf=r mane e-yak fam=ä=sü th-yak-é  
 (.) night hunting=PURP who 2|3NSG.α-walk.EXT.ND thought=ASSOC=ETC 2|3NSG.β-walk.EXT.N  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/walk 2|3PL:SBJ:IMP:IPFV/walk  
 ‘You (boys) who go hunting at night must be careful!’ [tci20130901-04 RNA #27]

The *-é* formative for imperatives, regardless of whether it occurs on prefixing or ambifixing verbs, shows the same idiosyncrasies as the first person singular suffix *-é* that is described in §5.5.1.1. For example, it disappears when other suffixes are added as we saw in example (10) on page 249 where the *-é* suffix does not appear because of the andative suffix *-o*.

### 6.3 The TAM particles

The rich system of TAM categories in Komnzo can be further supplemented by a set of preverbal particles. These include the future *kwa*, the habitual *nomai*, the potential *kma*, the iamitive *z<sup>o</sup>*, the apprehensive or prohibitive *m* and the imminent *n*. The latter

<sup>5</sup>The verb *msaksi* ‘sit, dwell, stay’ is deponent and employs the valency changing prefix *a-* without a change in the valency of the verb.

<sup>6</sup>I adopt the term *iamitive* from Olsson (2013), who has coined the term based on Latin *iam* ‘already’.

two are related to the deictic proclitic *m=* and the immediate past *n=*. These particles integrate with the numerous TAM categories and there are only few limitations on the combinatorics.

### 6.3.1 The imminent particle *n*

The imminent particle *n* expresses the point in time just before the event takes place, usually without implying that it actually happened. This often gets translated by informants as ‘try to do X’ or ‘be about to do X’. Both interpretations are possible, the intentional and the imminent reading, and they are difficult to separate. In example (32), the speaker showed me how to weave a fish basket. He says that he will ‘try and fetch me when he is finished’ because he does not know whether or not it will be successful.<sup>7</sup>

- (32) *n thrma nzänmesé ... fthé zräbthé zane kafar.*  
 n thrma nz-ä-n-mes-é (.) fthé  
 IMN later 2SG.β-ND-VENT-fetch.RS-1SG (.) when  
 1SG:SBJ>2SG:OBJ:IRR:PFV:VENT/fetch  
 z-rä-bth-é zane kafar  
 3SG.F.β-IRR.ND-finish.RS-1SG DEM:PROX big  
 1SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IRR:PFV/finish  
 ‘Later I will try and fetch you, when I have finished that big (basket).’  
 [tci20120906 SKK #18]

The imminent particle can occur with inflections of different TAM categories. The important part of its semantic contribution is twofold: (i) the point in time before the event and (ii) the fact that the action has not yet been carried out or – in most cases – is not or was not carried out. Example (33) is taken from a headhunting story in which two men are about to kill a young woman when they realise that the rest of their headhunting party has left already.

- (33) *n zfrnmth di kam garsir “awkwot! ngemäku, kabe matak erä!”*  
 n zf-r-n-m-th di kam gar-si=r awkwot  
 IMN 3SG.F.β2-do.EXT-DU-DUR-2|3NSG back.of.head bone break-NMLZ=PURP interjection  
 2|3DU:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:DUR/do  
 ngemäku<sup>8</sup> kabe matak e-rä  
 foster.parent man nothing 2|3NSG.α-COP.ND  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘They were about to break her neck. (He said:) “Oh no, my friend, all the people have left!”’  
 [tci20111119-01 ABB #151-152]

There is an overlap in the semantics of the proclitic *n=* which encodes immediate past and the imminent particle *n*. I pointed out earlier that the immediate past clitic

<sup>7</sup>Indeed, he never came and showed me the finished fish basket because I left the village before.

<sup>8</sup>The term *ngemäku* is a form of address between two people where one has adopted the child of the other.

attaches to a verb which is otherwise inflected for non-past. Thus, it marks a point in time immediately before the present. The particle *n* occurs in front of verb forms of different TAM categories, marking a point in time immediately before the event. The semantic difference is in the implication as to whether or not the event was actually carried. In the case of the immediate clitic, the event has happened, but with the particle *n* this is not the case. The difference between the two also lies in formal criteria. The particle *n* is syntactically independent in that it may be unbounded as in (32) or it may occur directly in front of the verb where it is hard to say whether it is a proclitic or an independent element (33). On the other hand, the immediate clitic *n=* is always bound to the verb.

Speakers of Komnzo who have been brought up in a Wära speaking family, and most young speakers of all backgrounds have replaced the immediate past proclitic *n=* with its Wära equivalent *nz=*. This change only affects the proclitic and not the imminent particle *n*.

### 6.3.2 The apprehensive particle *m*

I point out in §5.6.2 that among the deictic proclitics there is one with a limited distribution. The *m=* proclitic can only attach to the copula, in which case it turns the clause into a question ('where is X?').<sup>9</sup> See example (69) on page 242. The *m* particle shows more syntactic flexibility as it can procliticise to the verb as *m=*, encliticise to the potential particle in the combination *kma=m* or occur by itself. The latter is only attested through elicitation and there are no corpus examples of independent *m*. Nevertheless, it sits somewhere between a particle and a clitic.

The particle *m* functions as an apprehensive. It is attested in the corpus with irrealis, imperatives as well as perfectives. Example (34) is from a story about a man who mocked a crowd of dancers by threatening them with a matchbox. They were afraid as they did not know about matches and lighters.

- (34) *krenafthth "sritüthe! sfafe! kidn mni mzarfusir ... frthe bramöwä ñarsirwre."*
- |                                   |                                   |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| k-rä-nafth-th                     | s-∅-ritüth-e                      |
| M.β-IRR.VC.ND-say.RS-2 3NSG       | 3SG.MASC.β-DU-grab.RS-2 3NSG.IMP  |
| 2 3PL:SBJ:IRR.PFV/say             | 2DU:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IMP:PFV/grab |
| s-∅-faf-e                         | kidn mni                          |
| 3SG.MASC.β-DU-hold.RS-2 3NSG.IMP  | kidn fire                         |
| 2DU:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IMP:PFV/hold |                                   |
| m=z-ä-rfusir-∅                    | (.) frthe bramöwä                 |
| APPR=M.γ-VC.ND-light.up.RS-2 3SG  | (.) when all                      |
| APPR=2 3SG:SBJ:RPST:PFV/light.up  |                                   |

<sup>9</sup>I will gloss *m* as interrogative (where=) when it attaches to the copula. I will gloss it as apprehensive (APPR) in all other cases including the cases where *m* and the potential particle *kma* express a prohibitive.

ŋ-a-rsir-wr-e

M.α-VC-burn.EXT-ND-1NSG

1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/burn

‘They said: “Grab him! Hold him! He might ignite the Kidn fire. (That is) when we will all burn.”’ [tci20120909-06 KAB #82]

In these cases, the particle *m* seems to override the TAM value of the verb. In (34), the verb is in recent past but lacks a recent past reading. Likewise, I often heard the warning *mkätr*<sup>10</sup> ‘(watch out) you might fall!’ where *m* is attached to an imperative inflection, but lacks an imperative reading. Naturally, if *m* occurs with an irrealis inflection, there is no such conflict. Example (35) below is taken from a story about a bushfire. The speaker explains how he set a small controlled fire in order to stop the wild bushfire from spreading.

(35) *we ane nzefé zaföfé ... we mkrärit we fafä.*

we ane nzefé z-a-föf-é (.) we

also DEM 1SG.ERG.EMPH 3SG.F.γ-VC.ND-burn.down.RS-1SG (.) also

1SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:RPST:PFV/burn.down

m=k-rä-rit-∅

we fafä

APPR=M.β-IRR.VC.ND-pass.RS-2|3SG also after.that

APPR=2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/pass

‘I also burned down this (grass) ... (the fire) might cross over later.’

[tci20120922-24 MAA #30-31]

If *m* occurs with an imperative inflected verb and the potential *kma* it functions as a prohibitive. Example (36) is from the very beginning of a hunting story. The speaker tells his son to be quiet during the recording, while I am setting up the microphone.

(36) *zokwasi wzänzr ... daddyf. kmam kanafré!*

zokwasi w-zä-nzr-∅ (.) daddy=f kma=m

words 3SG.F.α-carry.EXT-ND-2|3SG (.) father=ERG.SG POT=APPR

2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/carry

k-a-naf-r-é

M.β-VC-speak.EXT-ND-2SG.IMP

2SG:SBJ:IMP:IPFV/speak

‘Daddy is recording the words. You must not talk!’

[tci20130903-03 MKW #3-4]

In the prohibitive construction, the particle *m* is rather flexible. I can attach to the verb as a proclitic (37) or to the potential particle *kma* as an enclitic (36 and 38). What is important for the prohibitive reading is the co-occurrence of *m* and *kma* in the clause, not

<sup>10</sup> *mkätr*

m=k-ä-tr-∅

APPR=M.β-VC.ND-fall.RS-2SG.IMP

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the fact that they are conjoined. Example (37)<sup>11</sup> comes from a public speech at a dance in which the speaker tells the audience the rules for the night. Example (38) is taken from a text about food taboos.

- (37) *kma wäri**r** b**ä** mgnanyak**é** zena zbär zbo!*  
 kma wäri=r b**ä** m=gn-a-n-yak-**é** zena  
 POT sex=PURP 2.ABS APPR=2SG.β-VC-VENT-walk.EXT.ND-IMP today  
 APPR=2SG:SBJ:IMP:IPFV/come  
 zbär zbo  
 night PROX.ALL  
 ‘You must not come here for sex tonight!’ [tci20121019-04 ABB #46]
- (38) *be kmam ηazikar**ä** kathafrakw**é**!*  
 be kma=m ηazi=kar**ä** k-a-thafrak-w-**é** 2SG:SBJ:IMP:EXT/mix  
 2SG.ERG POT=APPR COCONUT=PROP M.β-VC-mix.EXT-ND-2SG.IMP  
 ‘You must not mix it with coconut’ [tci20120922-26 DAK #12]

### 6.3.3 The potential particle *kma*

The potential particle *kma* can be employed with almost all TAM categories. We saw above in §6.3.2 that it encodes a prohibitive when it occurs together with imperatives and the apprehensive particle *m*. This is the only construction in which *kma* and the imperative inflections occur together.

The potential particle *kma* is used to encode various types of speculation and counter-factuality with deontic or epistemic interpretation. Example (39) is taken from a public speech at a dance, where the guest side has brought too many people, and consequently the host side found it impossible to meet the needs of so many people. The speaker regrets that no proper arrangement has been made prior to the event. Thus, the clause ‘it should look good’ has a clear deontic reading.

- (39) *namä kma nimame zrarenzrm fof ... fthé namä yamme nüfifthakwrme.*  
 namä kma nima=me z-ra-re-nzr-m fof (.) fthé namä  
 good POT like.this=INS 3SG.F.β-IRR.VC-look.EXT-ND-DUR EMPH (.) when good  
 3SG.F:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/look  
 yam=me n=w-fifthak-wr-m-e  
 custom=INS IPST=3SG.F.α-put.down.straight.EXT-ND-DUR-1NSG  
 IPST=1PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:NPST:DUR/put.down.straight  
 ‘It would have looked good today, if we had straighten things out in a good way.’  
 [tci20121019-04 ABB #79]

<sup>11</sup>The verb *yak* ‘walk’ is deponent and employs the valency changing prefix *a-* without a change in the valency of the verb. It is only deponent when it employs the ventive marker meaning ‘come’, not when it is neutral or andative meaning ‘walk’, ‘go away’.



Example (40) is taken from an origin myth in which the speaker speculates that one of the protagonists ‘must have had’ a shotgun, while his brother only had bow and arrow.<sup>12</sup> This is a clear epistemic use of *kma*.

- (40) *nafangth kma markai nabikarä sfrärm.*  
 nafa-ngth kma markai nabi=karä sf-rär-m  
 3.POSS-ySib POT outsider bow=PROP 3SG.MASC. $\beta$ 2-COP.ND-DUR  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR/be  
 ‘His younger brother must have had a shotgun.’ [tci20131013-01 ABB #112]

### 6.3.4 The future particle *kwa*

Future is marked periphrastically in Komnzo with the particle *kwa*, which combines either with non-past (41) or irrealis inflections (42).

- (41) *zena kwa natrikwé bun ... no kzima.*  
 zena kwa n-a-trik-w-é bun (.) no kzi=ma  
 today FUT 2SG. $\alpha$ -VC-tell.EXT-ND-1SG 2SG.DAT (.) rain barktray=CHAR  
 1SG:SBJ>2SG:IO:NPST:IPFV/tell  
 ‘Today, I will tell you about the rain-making barktray.’ [tci20110810-01 MAB #1]
- (42) *gb kwa thrarfikwr zba.*  
 gb kwa th-ra-rfik-wr zba  
 sprout FUT 2|3NSG. $\beta$ -IRR-grow.EXT-ND PROX.ABL  
 2|3PL:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/grow  
 ‘The sprouts will grow from here.’ [tci20120805-01 ABB #35]

The future particle can also be used by itself meaning ‘wait’ as in example (43) where the name of a particular plant has slipped from the speaker’s mind.

- (43) *kwa! yf kwot keke miyatha worä.*  
 kwa yf kwot keke miyatha wo-rä  
 FUT name properly NEG knowledge 1SG. $\alpha$ -COP.ND  
 1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘Wait! I don’t quite know that name.’ [tci20130907-02 RNA #609]

When negated, the future particle *kwa* can express ‘not yet’ as in example (44) where speaker points out that he has not heard yet the name that will be given to a particular person at an upcoming namesake celebration.

<sup>12</sup>This is the *Kwafar* myth which is widespread in the Morehead area. It involves two brothers who - after fighting a malignant creature - are separated by a flood of water. The younger brother ran to the South towards Australia. In recent versions of the myth, the younger brother always holds a shotgun. This might be seen as an adaption of the story to the fact that during the colonial era Australians brought modern equipment like shotguns.

- (44) *ni miyamr mane zrarä ane kar yf fof. keke kwa kar yf nä zamare fof.*  
 ni miyamr mane z-ra-rä ane kar yf fof keke kwa kar  
 1NSG ignorance which 3SG.F.β-IRR-COP.ND DEM village name EMPH NEG FUT village  
 3SG.F:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/be  
 yf nä z-a-mar-e fof  
 name some 3SG.F.γ-ND-see-1NSG EMPH  
 1PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:RPST:PFV/see  
 ‘We do not know which local name it will be. We have not heard the name yet.’  
 [tci20110817-02 ABB #58-60]

Younger speakers of Komnzo are beginning to use the Wära equivalent *ka*, which lacks the labial part of the labio-velar onset.

### 6.3.5 The iamitive particle *z*

I adopt the term iamitive from Olsson’s (2013) comparative study of particles that express a perfect. Reesink (2009: 184) uses the term “perspectival aspect”, which he adopts from (Dik 1997). Olsson’s label is based on the Latin word *iam* ‘already’. Komnzo speakers often translate the iamitive particle *z* as ‘already’, hence the gloss label ALR. An introductory example is given in (45). This is taken from a recording where two women took me on a plant walk. Example (45b) is the answer to the question in (45a).

- (45) a. *zuyak z safäs?*  
 zuyak z s-a-fäs-Ø  
 zuyak ALR 3SG.MASC.γ-ND-show.RS-2|3SG  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:PFV/show  
 ‘Have you shown him zuyak (*Rhodania* sp) already?’  
 [tci20130907-02 JAA #44]
- b. *z fof!*  
 z fof  
 ALR EMPH  
 ‘Yes, (I have) already.’  
 [tci20130907-02 RNA #121]

Example (45) shows that the function of the iamitive is to express “current relevance” of some past event. Consequently, the particle may combine with verbs inflected for different TAM categories. Example (45) shows a verb in recent past perfective. In (46), the iamitive particle is used with a past durative inflected verb. This combination is rarer, but well attested in the corpus. In the example, the speaker explains which clans settled at which locations. He points out that his clan had already been living in Masu for a while.

- (46) *fi fobo thwamnzrm nima ... ni masun z nzwamnzrm.*  
 fi fobo thu-a-m-nzr-m nima (.)ni masu=n z  
 3.ABS DIST.ALL 2|3NSG.β1-VC-sit.EXT-ND-DUR like.this (.) 1NSG masu=LOC ALR  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/sit

nzu-a-m-nzr-m

1NSG.β1-VC-sit.EXT-ND-DUR

1PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/sit

‘They lived over there this way ... and we had already been living in Masu.’ [tci20120922-08 DAK #97-98]

The iamitive particle can also be used with a non-past. This is often restricted to interrogatives as in (47) where the speaker asks a crowd of people whether they can hear him speaking.

- (47) *zbär bä zagrwä ämnrö. z wanrizrth?*  
 zbär bä zagrwä e-a-m-nzr-o z  
 night MED far=EMPH 2|3NSG.α-VC-sit.EXT-ND-AND ALR  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:AND/sit

w-a-n-riz-r-th

1SG.α-VC-VENT-hear.EXT-ND-2|3NSG

2|3PL:SBJ>1SG:IO:NPST:IPFV:VENT/hear

‘Tonight you are sitting too far away. Can you hear me?’ [tci20121019-04 SKK #9]

The iamitive particle additionally expresses the completion of an event. Evidence for this come from different observations. First, it can express a the current relevance meaning. Secondly, the iamitive particle never combines with verbs in iterative aspect, which express an ongoing repetition of some event in the past. Thirdly, the iamitive particle marks sequentiality of events in some narratives where the verb form which combines with it seems to be almost a prerequisite to the following verb. Example (48)<sup>13</sup> is a description of a path. The speaker had taken the previous day. He describes the sequenced stages of his path to the location called *Tümgo*.

- (48) *bä komnzo zwäzik ... ksi karen z kwanyak e zbo zwänthor tümgon.*  
 bä komnzo zu-ä-zik (.) ksi kar=en z  
 MED only 1SG.γ-ND-turn.off.RS (.) bush place=LOC ALR  
 1SG:SBJ:RPST:PFV/turn.off

ku-a-n-yak

e

zbo

zu-ä-n-thor

tümgon=n

1SG.β1-VC-walk.EXT-ND until PROX.ALL 1SG.γ-ND-VENT-arrive.RS tümgon=LOC

1SG:SBJ:RPST:IPFV:VENT/walk

1SG:SBJ:RPST:PFV:VENT/arrive

‘It turned off (the path) there ... I walked in the bushy place until I arrived here in *Tümgo*.’ [tci20120922-24 MAA #8-10]

The iamitive particle *z* in *Komnzo* shares a number of semantic characteristics set out by Olsson (2013) in his comparative study. The main two characteristics are “the notion of a “new situation” that holds after a transition” and “the consequences that this

<sup>13</sup>The verb *yak* ‘walk’ is deponent and employs the valency changing prefix *a-* without a change in the valency of the verb. Note that this occurs only with the ventive marker, in which case the verb means ‘come’, not when it is neutral (‘walk’) or marked with the andative (‘go away’).

situation has at reference time for the participants in the speech event” (Olsson 2013: 43). The former was described above as event completion, and the latter as current relevance. In fact, the iamitive particle is the main way to express event completion in Komnzo, because the perfective aspect does not explicitly set this boundary on an event.

There has been much discussion in the literature about paths of grammaticalisation of perfects, for example in Bybee & Dahl (1989). In Komnzo, the iamitive particle *z* is formally closest to the proximal series of the deictic markers and one might speculate about these as a source of grammaticalisation (see §3.1.12).

### 6.3.6 The habitual particle *nomai*

The habitual particle *nomai* typically combines with durative inflections. In example (49), the cockatoo always warns the protagonist of another man who comes and visits him.

- (49) *krara ymd suwägrm maf swatrikwrn nomai nima “oh, kabe yanyak.”*  
 krara ymd su-wägr-m maf  
 cockatoo bird 3SG.MASC.β1-be.on.top.ND-DUR who.ERG  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR/be.on.top  
  
 su-a-trik-wr-m-∅ nomai nima oh kabe  
 3SG.MASC.β1-VC-tell.EXT-ND-DUR-2|3SG HAB QUOT oh man  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:PST:DUR/tell  
  
 y-a-n-yak  
 3SG.MASC.α-VENT-walk.EXT.ND  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/walk  
 ‘The cockatoo bird used to sit on top (of the tree), and told him always: “Oh, a man is coming.”’ [tci20100802 ABB #80-82]

The habitual can also combine with verb forms inflected for other TAM categories, such as imperfectives (50). It only occasionally occurs with perfectives as in (51) where the event is negated. In both examples, *nomai* expresses an extended amount of time, instead of a repeated habit.

- (50) *yamnza yamnza ... nomai ... ysokwr tüfr.*  
 2x[y-a-m-nz-a] (.) nomai (.) ysokwr tüfr  
 2x[3SG.α-VC-sit.EXT-ND-PST] (.) HAB (.) year plenty  
 2x[3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/sit]  
 ‘He stayed and stayed there for many years.’ [tci20120904-01 MAB #13]
- (51) *keke nomai zämsath.*  
 keke nomai z-ä-ms-a-th  
 NEG HAB M.γ-VC.ND-sit.EXT-PST-2|3NSG  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:PFV/sit  
 ‘They did not stay (there) for long.’ [tci20131013-02 ABB #87]



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the past. Events further back in time have to be expressed by the past tense. Likewise, one cannot use a recent past with the time adverbial *nama* which indicates a point in time that is removed two days from the present time ('day before yesterday' or 'day after tomorrow'). In short, the recent past reaches back one day, whereas the past tense covers everything before yesterday irrespective whether it happened a week ago or in ancestral time. Example (53) shows the use of *kayé* and the recent past. Example (54) shows the use of *nama* and the past tense.<sup>15</sup>

- (53) *kayé nzä boba zenfaré ... kanathr.*  
 kayé nzä boba z-ä-n-fär-é (.) kanathr  
 yesterday 1SG.ABS MED.ABL M.Y-VC.ND-VENT-set.off.EXT-1SG (.) kanathr  
 1SG:SBJ:RPST:PFV:VENT/set.off  
 'Yesterday, I set off from there towards here ... to Kanathr.'  
 [tci20120922-24 MAA #1]

- (54) *zane nane dayr zbo nama mane wänyaka ...*  
 zane nane dayr zbo nama mane  
 DEM:PROX elder.sibling dayr PROX.ALL two.days.ago which  
 w-a-n-yak-a (.)  
 3SG.F.α-VC-VENT-go.EXT.ND-PST (.)  
 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/go  
 'The older sister Dayr who came here two days ago ...'  
 [tci20130901-04 RNA #87]

Tense values can be used with a pragmatic motivation. It is quite common to foreground events in a narrative by putting them into non-past, even though the story is set in the recent past or the past. Example (55) comes from a story that took place in the speaker's youth. In the example clauses, he describes walking with a friend during night time. The two boys rested along the way and smoked tobacco. Although the story is set in the past, only the first and the last verbs in (55) are inflected in the past tense ('walk' in both cases). The 'sitting down' and the 'setting off' are inflected in irrealis, thus tenseless. The rolling of the cigarettes and their smoking is told in the non-past, which moves this part in the foreground.

- (55) *nyana ttfö bä rä ... bäne ... sazäthi fä kramse sukufa eknne änane boba krafare ...*  
*zbär nzfyannm.*  
 n-yan-a ttfö bä rä (.) bäne (.) sazäthi fä  
 1NSG.α-walk.EXT.DU-PST creek MED 3SG.F.COP.ND (.) RECOG (.) sazäthi DIST  
 1DU:SBJ:PST:IPFV/walk 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 k-ra-ms-e sukufa e-kn-n-e  
 MED.β-IRR.VC.DU-sit.RS-1NSG tobacco 2|3NSG.α-roll.EXT-DU-1NSG  
 1DU:SBJ:IRR:PFV/sit 1DU:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/roll

<sup>15</sup>*Nama* can also be used metaphorically to mean 'recently'.

e-a-na-n-e                      boba      k-ra-far-e                      (.) zbär  
2|3NSG.α-VC-eat.EXT-DU-1NSG MED.ABL MED.α-IRR.VC.DU-set.off.RS-1NSG (.) night  
1DU:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/eat                      1DU:SBJ:IRR:PFV/set.off  
nzf-yan-m  
1NSG.β2-walk.EXT.DU-DUR  
1DU:SBJ:PST:DUR/walk  
‘We walked. There is a creek there (called) Sazäthi. We sat down there, rolled  
the cigarettes and smoked. We set off from there. We were walking in the night.’  
[tc120210904-01 MAB #140-143]

Future reference can be expressed by irrealis or non-past inflections combined with the future particle *kwa*. The main difference between the two strategies seems to lie in the anticipated degree of certainty: the non-past inflection is usually used when the speaker is more certain that the event is going to take place.

## 6.4.2 Aspect

I have labelled the principal aspectual distinction in Komnzo imperfective versus perfective. Durative aspect is understood as a subtype of the imperfective and we could label these two as ‘basic imperfective’ and ‘durative imperfective’. I use the traditional labels imperfective and perfective, but I want to spell out the particular flavour that Komnzo gives to them.

The traditional definition of perfectivity often takes the completion of an event as a starting point (Frawley 1992: 296) or suggests that “perfectivity indicates the view of a situation as a single whole” (Comrie 1976: 16). In Komnzo, completion does not really play a role in the semantics of the perfective-imperfective distinction. The boundary set up by the perfective seems to concentrate more on the left edge – on the beginning of the event. Similar systems are found elsewhere in the Southern New Guinea region, for example in Marind (Drabbe 1955: 41), Nama (Siegel 2014) and Nen (Evans 2015b). In Komnzo, the main mechanism for expressing event completion – to set up a right edge event boundary – is the iamitive particle, which can occur with verb forms in perfective, imperfective and durative aspect (see §6.3.5). It follows that imperfectivity does not entail that the event is open-ended. Example (56) is taken from a head hunting story. The quantifier *bramöwä* ‘all’ signals that the attack was full-scale and all inhabitants were killed, but the verb form in (56) is in the imperfective.

- (56) *watik ebar kabe ane fof thäthora fof... bramöwä ane fof efnzath*  
watic ebar kabe ane fof th-ä-thor-a                      fof (.) bramöwä ane  
then head man DEM EMPH 2|3NSG.γ-ND-arrive.RS-PST EMPH (.) all DEM  
2|3PL:SBJ:PST:PFV/arrive  
fof e-fn-nz-a-th  
EMPH 2|3NSG.α-hit.EXT-ND-PST-2|3NSG  
2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:IPFV/hit  
‘Then, the head hunter arrived. They killed all of them.’

[tci20131013-02 ABB #143-145]

Likewise, perfectives do not entail that an event is finished, but rather that it has started or that its duration was of a punctual quality. The latter is shown in the first verb ‘arrive’ of the above example (56). The former is shown in example (57) below, which is taken from a story about a malignant being. At the end of the story that being tries to escape by entering a bird, but the villagers are quick to shoot down the bird. The entering event in (57) is expressed in the perfective, but the imminent particle *n* shows that the event has not started yet. Hence, completion of the entering event is not entailed, but excluded. Thus, a literal translation of *n zāthba* would be: ‘s/he was about to start to enter’.

- (57) *brbrnzo fof n zāthba bafen ... ymden fof.*  
 brbr=nzo fof n z-ä-thb-a-Ø baf=en  
 spirit=ONLY EMPH IMN MED.γ-ND-enter.RS-PST-2|3SG RECOG=LOC  
 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/enter

(.) ymd=en fof

(.) bird=LOC EMPH

‘Only the spirit was about to go inside that one ... inside the bird.’

[tci20120901-01 MAK #193-194]

Aspect in Komnzo seems to concentrate more on a punctual/inceptive versus ongoing/stretched-out distinction. I adopt the traditional labels perfective for the former and imperfective for the latter. The degree to which an event is ‘stretched-out’ would then decide whether the speaker chooses the imperfective or durative aspect. The basic binary distinction is clearest in the imperative forms. The imperfective imperatives often encode an ongoing action and, depending on context, they can be translated as ‘keep on X-ing’ or ‘do X for some time’. Perfective imperatives, on the other hand, express inceptive ‘start X-ing’ or punctuality ‘do X once/quickly’. In example (58), the speaker has just produced a toy bullroarer from a coconut leaf and shows me how to hold it properly. In (58a), she tells me not to hit something while swinging, and the imperative of ‘hit’ is in the perfective.<sup>16</sup> In (58b), she is already swinging the bullroarer telling me to hold it away from the body. Consequently, all the imperative verb forms (‘hold’, ‘blow’, and ‘swing’) are in the imperfective.

- (58) a. *fthé sakwr gwonyamen o festhen o wämnen ... keke kwa sranor.*  
 fthé s-a-kwr-Ø gwonyame=n o festh=en o wämne=n  
 when 3SG.MASC.α-ND-hit.RS-2SG.IMP clothes=LOC or body=LOC or tree=LOC  
 1SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC.OBJ:IMP:PFV/hit  
 keke kwa s-ra-nor  
 (.) NEG FUT 3SG.MASC.β-IRR.VC-shout.EXT  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/shout  
 ‘If you hit it on clothes, body or a tree, it will not make a sound.’

<sup>16</sup>This is a conditional construction which frequently employs imperative inflections together with *fthé* ‘when/if’ (see §6.4.3 and §9.6).



- b. *zagrwä nima sfathwé byé nima sfsgwé ... smitwanzé ... fi kwa yanor.*  
 zagr=wä nima s-fath-w-é  
 far=EMPH like.this 3SG.MASC.β-hold.EXT-ND-2SG.IMP  
 2SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IMP:IPFV/hold
- b=yé/ nima s-fsg-w-é (.)  
 MED=3SG.MASC.COP.ND like.this 3SG.MASC.β-blow.EXT-ND-2SG.IMP (.)  
 MED=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be 2SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IMP:IPFV/blow  
 s-mitwa-nz-é (.) fi kwa  
 3SG.MASC.β-swing.EXT-ND-2SG.IMP (.) 3.ABS FUT  
 2SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IMP:IPFV/swing
- y-a-nor  
 3SG.MASC.α-VC-shout.EXT.ND  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/shout  
 ‘You have to hold it away like this and blow and swing it like this ... (then) it  
 will make a sound.’ [tci20120914 RNA #25-28]

A number of authors have used a scale-based approach to model certain operators which change the structure of predicates (Kennedy & McNally 2005 and Kubota 2010). Such an approach is compatible with the TAM system of Komnzo, once we accept that the imperfective versus perfective distinction highlights different parts of event by manipulating the temporal scale. Applied to the Komnzo TAM system, such a model portrays perfectives as a means to (i) set an explicit initial boundary and to (ii) limit the temporal scale of the event. (Basic) imperfectives leave this initial boundary implicit, but highlight that the event was carried out for some time – a little further along the scale. The durative (imperfective) increases the temporal scale of the event. As shown above, none of these (morphological) aspectual categories sets an explicit boundary at the right edge of the event. The function of event completion is reserved for the iami-tive particle. I will leave the theoretical modelling of the semantics of the Komnzo TAM system for future research.

The theoretical discussion of aspect has often focussed on the distinction between viewpoint aspect and situation aspect.<sup>17</sup> Despite all terminological confusion, the former is often called ASPECT, and it is employed for “different ways of viewing the internal constituency of a situation” (Comrie 1976: 3). Situation aspect on the other hand has often been called AKTIONSART, and it is associated with the internal structure of the event. Thus, situation aspect is something objective about the nature of the event, whereas viewpoint aspect is subjectively manipulated by the speakers, or as Smith puts it: “the categories of viewpoint aspect are overt, whereas situation aspect is expressed in covert categories” (1997: 5). We have seen that this does not apply to Komnzo. Aspectual categories, although highly grammaticalised, are based on the situation type rather than on viewpoint, i.e. they are about inception/punctuality, iteration and duration rather than completion. The fact, that aspect is highly grammaticalised means that the categories are accessible to virtually all verb lexemes. I showed in §5.3 that the two stem types (RS and

<sup>17</sup>See Sasse (2002) for a formidable overview of the research on aspect.

EXT) are attested for almost all stems. This supports the argument that the notion of an objective internal event structure, which is fed into the inflectional system, plays little role in Komnzo.

As we have seen in the discussion of verbal morphology, a central part of the inflectional system are the two stem types. The labels EXT and RS refer of course to ‘extended in time’ and ‘restricted in time’ respectively. All perfectives are built from the RS stem and all imperfectives are built from the EXT stem. However, a relabelling of the RS stem as ‘perfective stem’ and the EXT stem as ‘imperfective stem’ would be misleading. For example, the RS stem is employed for iterative aspect, which is by definition not bounded in time. This contradiction can be resolved by assuming a more transparent contribution of the morphological mechanisms which participate in the iterative inflection. As shown in §6.2 (Table 6.1), the iterative builds on the RS stem, but it employs the  $\beta_1$  or  $\beta_2$  prefix series, which otherwise only occur with the EXT stem to build imperfectives and duratives. In other words, the iterative aspect limits the event structure by stem selection and simultaneously spreads out the event structure by the selection of the prefix series. This is an interesting scenario, which calls for further comparative research within the Yam languages to shed light on the grammaticalisation of iterative aspect.

### 6.4.3 Mood

There are three modal categories in Komnzo: indicative, imperative and irrealis, further nuances can be expressed with the help of particles, especially the potential *kma*, the imminent *n* and apprehensive *m* (see §6.3). Here, I will only describe some of the ways in which two of the three basic categories – the imperative and the irrealis – deviate from their conventional definitions.

Imperatives can be used in a number of ways that fall outside the definition of ‘giving an order’. In example (59), the speaker showed me the leaves of a pandanus plant pointing out that I can use the leaves to sleep on. The imperative form *gnyaké* ‘you go’ is thus not a command ‘go without a mat’, but more like a conditional ‘if you go without a mat’. The conditional interpretation also comes from the word *fthé* which means ‘when’ or ‘at the time when’. This type of conditional construction is an extended use of the imperative inflection. Most imperatives are used as commands, and there are conditional constructions without imperative inflections.

- (59) *yamemäre fthé gnyaké ... etfthar.*  
 yame=märe fthé gn-yak-é (.) etfth=r  
 mat=PRIV when 2|3SG.β-walk.EXT.ND-IMP (.) sleep=PURP  
2SG:SBJ:IMP:IPFV/walk  
 ‘When you go without a mat, (this one) for sleeping.’

[tci20130907-02 JAA #546-547]

As we have seen in §6.2.2, the irrealis is marked by the prefix *ra-*. There is no realis marker, but the absence of *ra-* indicates realis inflection. Beyond counterfactuality and futurity, irrealis mood has a number of semantic extensions in Komnzo. Cross-linguistically irrealis mood is employed for a wide range of functions which has led

some authors to challenge its validity as a comparative category (Bybee et al. 1994). Others have suggested a prototype approach to irrealis mood, for example Givon (1994: 327). I will adopt the latter here. Example (60) and (61) show the irrealis mood in its more central functions, counterfactuality and futurity respectively. Example (60) is taken from a headhunting story which involved the speaker's father.<sup>18</sup> Example (61) is taken from a procedural in which the speaker shows me how to make a toy from a coconut leaf.

- (60) *fi fthé niyamnzrm nafäsü kwa thräkwrth.*  
 fi fthé n=y-a-m-nzr-m nafä=sü kwa  
 3.ABS when IPST=3SG.MASC.α-VC-sit.EXT-ND-DUR 3ASSOC.PL=ETC FUT  
 IPST=3SG.MASC.SBJ:NPST:DUR/sit  
 th-rä-kwr-th  
 2|3SG.β-IRR.ND-hit.RS-2|3NSG  
 2|3PL.SBJ>2|3PL.OBJ:IRR:PFV/hit  
 'If he had stayed, they would have killed him with all the others.'  
 [tci20111107-01 MAK #80]
- (61) *katan kwa sräfiyothé ... kafar minzü yé.*  
 katan kwa s-rä-fiyoth-é kafar minzü yé  
 small FUT 3SG.MASC.β-VC.ND-make.RS-1SG big very 3SG.MASC.COP.ND  
 1SG:SBJ>3SG:OBJ:IRR:PFV/make  
 'I will make it smaller. This is too big.'  
 [tci20120914 RNA #41]

Irrealis inflected verbs can be used for habituals. This use, especially with past habituals, has been noticed in a cross-linguistic study by Cristofaro (2004). Example (62) comes from a procedural about poison-root fishing, which is a common activity during the dry season when the water recedes. The speaker talks about the preparations and the process of poison-root fishing, while his family is busy fishing in the background. All verb forms are in irrealis mood.

- (62) *thranäbünzrth ... sam ane mane erä threthkäfth ... zranrsrwrth fof no zrärerth ... thranor "si rore rore rore!"*  
 th-ra-näbü-nzr-th (.)sam ane mane e-rä th-rä-thkäf-th  
 2|3NSG.β-IRR-smash.EXT-ND-2|3NSG (.) liquid DEM which 2|3NSG.α-COP.ND 2|3NSG.β-IRR.ND-start.RS-2  
 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:IRR:IPFV/smash 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:IRR:PFV/start  
 (.) z-ra-n-rsr-wr-th fof no z-rä-rä-r-th  
 (.) 3SG.F.β-IRR-VENT-squeeze.EXT-ND-2|3NSG EMPH water 3SG.F.β-IRR.VC-do.EXT-ND-2|3NSG  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IRR:IPFV/squeeze 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:IO:IRR:IPFV/start  
 (.)  
 (.)

<sup>18</sup>The example also shows the 'relative use' of the immediate past. Although the events in the story happened a long time ago, the speaker uses the immediate past (*niyamnzrm* 'He was staying just before') to emphasise that the headhunt took place just after his father had left the village.

th-ra-nor    si.rore.rore.rore

2|3NSG.β-IRR-shout.EXT.ND INTERJECTION

2|3PL:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/shout

‘They would smash (the sticks). As for the liquids that start coming, they squeeze them and mix them properly with the water ... and they would shout out: “Si rore rore rore!!”’

[tci20110813-09 DAK #22-23]

Irrealis mood is frequently used in narratives which report factual truths. Foley (2000: 389) points out that Papuan languages often employ the realis-irrealis distinction for pragmatic purposes. In Komnzo, the pragmatic use comes from the alternation between irrealis and realis inflections especially in event sequencing. In this pattern, the irrealis is used for backgrounding. Example (63) is taken from a hunting story that occurred many years ago. The story is told from a first-person perspective, thus, there is no reason to question the factual truth of what is being told. The clauses in (63) describe a sequence of events: fall asleep > be sleeping > wake up. Only the foregrounded clause (‘sleep’) is expressed in realis (past durative), whereas the backgrounded clauses (‘fall asleep’ and ‘wake up’) are expressed in irrealis (perfective). In that sense, the irrealis verb forms act as a backgrounding bracket around the foregrounded clause.<sup>19</sup>

(63) *krämzéré efoth etfth kwofrugrm e zizi ... krebnafé.*

k-rä-mnzer-é    efoth etfth kwof-rugr-m    e          zizi

M.β-IRR.VC.ND-fall.asleep.RS-1SG sun    sleep 1SG.β2-sleep.EXT.ND-DUR until afternoon

1SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/fall.asleep

1SG:SBJ:PST:DUR/sleep

(.) k-rä-bnaf-é

(.) M.β-IRR.VC.ND-wake.up.RS-1SG

1SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/wake.up

‘I fell asleep (for) a daytime nap. I was sleeping until the late afternoon ... Then, I woke up.’

[tci20111119-03 ABB #31-32]

The interaction of TAM categories with information structure was described by Hopper (1979). Hartzler describes a similar function of the irrealis mood in Sentani (1983). I defer the discussion of this topic to §10.5, where a detailed analysis is offered drawing on a longer text segment.

<sup>19</sup>Note that example (55) on page 267 employs the same bracket-like use of the irrealis inflected verb forms. The only difference is that in (55), the foregrounded event is in the non-past, whereas in (63) above the foregrounded event is in past durative.

# 7 Syntax of the noun phrase

## 7.1 Introduction

The noun phrase in Komnzo is defined as a group of nominals which jointly fulfill a functional role in the clause. Noun phrases may also contain a single nominal. The case markers which assign the specific functional role attach to the rightmost element of the noun phrase. Noun phrases in Komnzo cannot be scrambled. Therefore, case enclitics and the emphatic particle *fof* – if present – can be used to identify the right edge of a noun phrase. Typically one intonation contour covers a single noun phrase.

The head of a noun phrase can be a noun (§3.1.2), a property noun (§3.1.4), a personal pronoun (§3.1.9), the indefinite pronoun (§3.1.11), the recognitional demonstrative (§3.1.12.6) or an interrogative (§3.1.10). The head of a noun phrase can be omitted, leaving only a demonstrative, adjective, quantifier or locational. This is possible only if the head of the noun phrase can be recovered from context. Noun phrases can be dropped from the clause, in which case only the indexing in the verb provides information about the arguments. Consequently, inflected verbs can and often do stand alone as a clause.

This chapter begins with an overview of the structure of the noun phrase in §7.2. I describe the slots of a noun phrase and their respective fillers in §7.3 - §7.5. The chapter closes with a description of the inclusory construction in §7.6. In this construction two or more noun phrases constitute a functional unit without forming a matrix noun phrase.

## 7.2 The structure of the noun phrase

Noun phrases are structure of functional slots. Each slot may be filled by particular elements. The abstract structure is shown in Figure 7.1.

I analyse the element in the HEAD slot as a semantic head which refers to the same entity as the whole phrase. This element is also the syntactic head, in that it governs the agreement in the verb form. However, this is only visible if the noun phrase has a core argument function. The HEAD slot can be complex, for example when it is filled with a compound. All other slots serve to limit the set of possible referents in the head. For this reason, proper nouns like personal or place names are rarely modified, and expressions like *ane Naimr* ‘that Naimr’ are only found if there are several individuals with that name and the speaker wishes to clarify which one is meant. Personal pronouns are never modified in that way.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Two exceptions are the postposed adjectives *bana* ‘hapless, poor, pityful’, which expresses a sympathetic emotion of the speaker towards the referent, and the postposed adjective *kwark* ‘deceased’. Both frequently

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(DETERMINER)	(PREMODIFIER)	(HEAD)	(POSTMODIFIER)
demonstrative	numeral	PERS pronoun <sup>b</sup>	DETERMINER <sup>c</sup>
indefinite	adjectives	INDF pronoun <sup>b</sup>	adjectives <sup>d</sup>
interrogative	quantifier	RECOG pronoun <sup>b</sup>	locational <sup>d</sup>
POSS pronoun	property noun	noun	quantifier
CHAR NP		property noun	numeral
CHAR NP		nominalised verb	
		compound	

<sup>a</sup> The noun phrase must be marked with adnominal case: POSS NP, TEMP.POSS NP or CHAR NP.

<sup>b</sup> These word classes constitute a whole noun phrase and, thus, are rarely modified.

<sup>c</sup> Elements in the DETERMINER slots can be postposed, if there is no case marker present.

<sup>d</sup> Locationals always occur in this slot (§3.1.7), a few adjectives are limited to this slot (§3.1.5).

Figure 7.1: The structure of the noun phrase

The DETERMINER slot is separate from the PREMODIFIER slot for two reasons. First, the elements in this slot are mutually exclusive. Hence, a noun phrase can contain either a possessive or a demonstrative in the DETERMINER slot, but not both. This contrasts with the elements in the PREMODIFIER slot, of which there can be multiple instances in the same noun phrase. Secondly, as we will see below, if the noun phrase is not case marked, the elements in the DETERMINER slot can be postposed. If there is a case marker postposing the determiner is a rare exception. Such a restriction does not apply to elements in the PREMODIFIER slot.

There are two modifier slots, because some word classes, for example locationals, can only occur in the POSTMODIFIER slot and not in the PREMODIFIER slot. Otherwise, almost all elements which are possible in the PREMODIFIER slot are also possible in the POSTMODIFIER slot.

Property nouns escape a clear assignment to the PREMODIFIER slot, because they can optionally take the adjectivaliser suffix *-thé*. In this case, they are derived adjectives in the PREMODIFIER slot, but derived adjectives show differences in their syntactic behaviour compared to non-derived adjectives. Without the adjectivaliser, property nouns can be a modifier element of a nominal compound. This is discussed in §7.5.3.

### 7.3 The DETERMINER slot

The DETERMINER slot can be filled with demonstratives (1), interrogatives (2), possessive pronouns (3) and whole noun phrases inflected for one of the adnominal cases. These

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occur with proper nouns (e.g. personal names) as well as personal pronouns.

include the possessive (4), temporal possessive (5) and characteristic case (6). In the following examples, noun phrases are marked by rectangled parentheses.

- (1) *fi keke zä wrugr [zane gwthen].*  
 fi keke zä w\rugr/ zane gwth=en  
 3.ABS NEG PROX 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/sleep DEM:PROX nest=LOC  
 ‘She does not sleep in this nest here.’ [tci20120815 ABB #19]
- (2) *wayti erä o [ra yawi] erä?*  
 wayti e\rä/ o ra yawi e\rä/  
 watermelon 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be or what round thing 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘These are watermelons or what fruits are these?’ [tci20111004 TSA #68]
- (3) *[nzone trikasi] fobo fof zwaythk.*  
 nzone trik-si fobo fof zwa\ythk/  
 1SG.POSS tell-NMLZ DIST.ALL EMPH 3SG.F:SBJ:RPST:IPFV/come.to.end  
 ‘My story has come to an end there.’ [tci20111004 TSA #260]
- (4) *wth fobo fof thämira ... [[ane kabeane] wth].*  
 wth fobo fof thä\mir/a (.) ane kabe=ane  
 intestines DIST.ALL EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:PFV/hang (.) DEM man=POSS  
 wth  
 intestines  
 ‘She hung the intestines there ... that man’s intestines.’  
 [tci20120901-01 MAK #116-117]
- (5) *[[kaythamane] karo] rä!*  
 kayé=thamane karo \rä/  
 yesterday=TEMP.POSS ground.oven 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘It is yesterday’s oven.’ [tci20110802 ABB #94]
- (6) *[[baguma] kabe] ... foba ... zena mifnen zämnzr.*  
 bagu=ma kabe (.) foba (.) zena mifne=n z=ä\m/nzr  
 bagu=CHAR man (.) DIST.ABL (.) now mifne=LOC PROX=2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/dwell  
 ‘The Bagu people ... from over there ... live here in Mifne (or: Mibini)  
 today.’ [tci20131013-01 ABB #175-177]

These different fillers cannot co-occur. Consider example (7), which is taken from a *nzürna trikasi*, a local equivalent to European witch stories. The example contains the complex noun phrase *nä karma kabe*, in which the indefinite *nä* ‘some, another’ and *kar=ma* ‘from the village’ are both candidates for the DETERMINER slot. However, the indefinite does not refer to *kabe* ‘man’, but to *kar* ‘village’. In other words, the indefinite fills the DETERMINER slot of the embedded noun phrase, and the embedded noun phrase fills the DETERMINER slot of the matrix noun phrase. This is shown with rectangled brackets in the example. Note that (4) shows the same structure.

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- (7) **[[nä karma] kabe] mane yanatha ... mogarkamma**  
 nä kar=ma kabe mane ya\na/ta (.)  
 INDF village=CHAR man which 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:IPFV/eat (.)  
 mogarkam=ma  
 mogarkam=CHAR  
 ‘It was a man from another village who she ate ... from Mogarkam.’

[tci20120901-01 MAK #225]

The determiner can appear in postposed position, which I analyse as non-prototypical order. The rest of this section describes this postposed position of the determiner. Example (8) is taken from the same story as the previous example. The noun phrase *tüfr yam nä* ‘many other things’ contains the quantifier *tüfr* in the PREMODIFIER slot, the noun *yam* ‘event’ in the HEAD slot, and the indefinite *nä* in postposed position. This noun phrase can be arranged in different orders, for example: *nä tüfr yam*, *nä yam tüfr*. However, the DETERMINER and PREMODIFIER slots cannot be exchanged. This order of elements, for example *tüfr nä yam* would be split into two co-referential noun phrases, which is signalled by a break in the intonation contour and case marking one both noun phrases. Case markers would attach to *tüfr* as well as *nä yam*.

- (8) **[tüfr yam nä] fefe thwafiyokwrm ... fi fathfa ane fof wäfiyokwa.**  
 tüfr yam nä fefe thwa\fiyok/wrm (.) fi fath=fa  
 plenty event INDF really SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/make (.) but clear.place=ABL  
 ane fof wä\fiyok/wa  
 DEM EMPH SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:IPFV/make  
 ‘She really did many other things ... but she did this in public.’

[tci20120901-01 MAK #223-224]

We saw in (7) that the determiner belongs to the head of the embedded noun phrase and not to the head of the matrix noun phrase. In such cases, the embedded noun phrase ‘blocks’ the DETERMINER slot, and postposing a determiner is the only option for it to refer to the head of the matrix noun phrase. This is shown in (9), where the postposed indefinite *nä* refers to the head of the matrix noun phrase. The embedded noun phrase *safsma* is marked with the characteristic case in adnominal function. It specifies the head of the matrix noun phrase: *safsma kabe* ‘man from *Safs*’. Note that the same could be expressed by a nominal compound *safs kabe* ‘*Safs* man’. The syntactic difference between an embedded noun phrase marked with the characteristic case and a nominal compound lies in the reference of the determiner: *ane safs kabe* ‘that *Safs* man’ versus *ane safsma kabe* ‘man from that *Safs*’ (i.e. not from some other place called *Safs*). It follows that the two elements in (9) restrict the reference of the head simultaneously: the embedded noun phrase *safma* and the postposed determiner *nä*. A postposed determiner usually occurs only, if the noun phrase is not flagged with a case marker. But there are exceptions to this. See (13) discussed below.

- (9) **[[safsma] woga nä] fobo swamnzrm ... gfi yf**



safs=ma woga nä fobo swa\m/nzrm (.) gfi yf  
 safs=CHAR man INDF DIST.ALL 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/dwell (.) gfi name  
 ‘Another man from Safs lived there ... by the name of Gfi.’ [tci20111107-01 MAK #76]

Although very rare, both DETERMINER slots – that of the embedded noun phrase and that of the matrix noun phrase – can be filled. In (10), the first non-singular possessive *nzenme* refers to *mayawa*, the head of the embedded noun phrase, and indefinite determiner *nä* refers to *kabe*, the head of the matrix noun phrase.

- (10) [[*nzenme mayawama*] *kabe nä*] *fä thägathizath*.  
 nzenme mayawa=ma kabe nä fä thägathizath  
 INSG.POSS mayawa=CHAR man INDF DIST 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:IPFV/leave  
 ‘They left some of our Mayawa people there.’ [tci20131013-01 ABB #170]

It follows from the discussion above that two determiners must belong to different noun phrases, if they occur next to each other, like *zane* and *nä* in example (11). In this example, I analyse *zane* as a noun phrase with an omitted head.

- (11) [*zane*] [*nä yawi*] *yé*.  
 zane nä yawi \yé/  
 DEM:PROX INDF round.object 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘This is another fruit.’ [tci20120815 ABB #39]

The elements in the DETERMINER slot cannot be inflected for the full range of cases. For example, demonstratives cannot be inflected for ergative, dative, possessive and the three spatial cases. In (12), the indefinite *nä* is interpreted as referring to object argument, not the ergative marked argument.

- (12) [*nof*] [*nä*] *nima thäkothmako*.  
 no=f nä nima thä\kothm/ako  
 water=ERG.SG INDF like.this 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:PFV:AND/chase  
 ‘The flood chased away others like this.’ [tci20131013-01 ABB #125]

However, elicitation has shown that even this is possible, but such a structure is very rare. A textual example is shown in (13), where *ane* refers to the preceding noun, which is flagged with an ergative. Note that in this example, *ane* is followed by the emphatic particle *fof*, which has always scope over the preceding phrase (§3.4.2). Thus, *fof* may ‘help’ to mark the right edge of the noun phrase *gwamf ane*. This is, however, not the main function of *fof*.

- (13) *wati [gwamf ane] fof ezi ηatha thäsa thgathgen*.  
 wati gwam=f ane fof ezi ηatha  
 then gwam=ERG.SG DEM EMPH morning dog  
 thä\s/a thgathg=en  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:PFV/call burned.place=LOC  
 ‘Well, that Gwam called the dogs to the burned place in the morning.’  
 [tci20131013-01 ABB #79]

The above description shows that there are some problems with the analysis of postposing elements in the DETERMINER slot. Determiners like *zane* or *ane* or *nä*, and even possessive phrases can stand alone, if the head of the phrase is recoverable from the context. An alternative would be to analyse the postposed elements as independent noun phrases which are (i) co-referential with the preceding noun phrase, and which (ii) lack an element in the HEAD slot. This is always possible and, as we will see below, it is quite common to have co-referential noun phrases in one clause. Sometimes intervening material, for example adverbials, allows us to make a clear decision. If there is no intervening material, only the intonation contour indicates whether a particular example should be analysed as one or two noun phrases.

Syntactic evidence for the possibility of postposing the determiner comes from fronted relative clauses which are commonly used for topicalisation (see §10.4). Fronted relative clauses of this type have the following structure: NP *mane* COPULA. They only allow a full noun phrase before the relative pronoun *mane* ‘which, who’. In (14), the noun phrase includes the postposed indefinite determiner *nä* following its head *ɲatha* ‘dog’. Below, the fronted relative clause is marked by parentheses.

- (14) *fi* ([*kafar ɲatha nä*] *mane erera*) *fi ane bä bkwaruthrmth büdisnen mnz znen.*  
*fi kafar ɲatha nä mane e\rä/ra fi ane bä*  
 but big dog INDF which 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be 3.ABS DEM MED  
*b=kwa\ru/thrmth büdisn=en mnz zn=en*  
 MED=2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/bark PL=LOC house place=LOC  
 ‘But, as for the other big dogs, they were barking there in Büdisn at the  
 house.’ [tci20111119-03 ABB #95]

## 7.4 The MODIFIER slots

The elements in the MODIFIER slots are different from those in the DETERMINER slot. They can all be inflected for case, if they happen to occur as the last element of the noun phrase. This is shown below in (15) and (16). In example (15), the modifier is an adjective in the PREMODIFIER slot. In example (16), the adjective follows the head in the POSTMODIFIER slot, and consequently the adjective receives the case marker.

- (15) *finzo fä fof ane kafar emothf thwathofiknm.*  
*fi=nzo fä fof ane kafar emoth=f thwa/thofik/nm*  
 3.ABS=ONLY DIST EMPH DEM big girl=ERG.SG SG:SBJ>2|3DU:OBJ:PST:DUR/disturb  
 ‘Only they (were) there. That big girl was disturbing them.’ [tci20111119-01 ABB #150]
- (16) *watik yfö katanr kwa yarenzr.*  
*watik yfö katan=r kwa ya\re/nzr*  
 then hole small=PURP FUT 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/look  
 ‘Then, he will look around for a small hole.’ [tci20130903-04 RNA #26]

There are some restrictions for specific elements, for example the locationals can only inflect for spatial cases. Furthermore, all locationals (§3.1.7) and a few adjectives (§3.1.5) only occur in the POSTMODIFIER slot, not in the PREMODIFIER slot. One such adjective is *kwark* ‘late, deceased’ in (17). It occurs in the POSTMODIFIER slot, and therefore it is flagged with the ergative case. Note that the proper name *Wäni* is also inflected with the ergative and forms a noun phrase co-referential to *nafaŋafe kwark* ‘his late father’.

- (17) *wati ... nafaŋafe kwarkf ... wänifkrekariso*  
 wati (.) nafa-ŋafe kwark=f (.) wäni=f kre\karis/o  
 then (.) 3.POSS-father deceased=ERG.SG (.) wäni=ERG.SG SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV:AND/hear  
 ‘Then, his late father, Wäni, heard (about it).’ [tci20120814 ABB #114]

Another difference between elements in the DETERMINER slot and the MODIFIER slots is that elements in the latter may be multiple. I can only give examples from elicitation here as there are no examples in the corpus, where (i) all slots are filled and (ii) multiple items occur in the MODIFIER slot.

- (18) a. *ane kafar yfrsé wämne*  
 ane kafar yfrsé wämne  
 DEM big black tree  
 ‘that big black tree’  
 b. *zane eda zanfr garda*  
 zane eda zanfr garda  
 DEM:PROX two long canoe  
 ‘these two long canoes’  
 c. *nafane kafar mnz banbanen*  
 nafane kafar mnz banban=en  
 3SG.POSS big house underneath=LOC  
 ‘underneath his big house’

The lack of textual examples which display all possible fillers at once is best explained by a strong tendency to distribute information over several co-referential noun phrases, either in the same clause or over a series of clauses. This can be seen in (17) and (14) above or (19) below, but also in many examples throughout this grammar. I address this topic in the following section.

## 7.5 The HEAD slot

As pointed out above in §7.2, the head of a noun phrase is both the notional head as well as the syntactic head. It is the notional head in the sense that it expresses what the whole noun phrase is about, and all other elements in a noun phrase serve to restrict the reference of the head. It is the syntactic head, because it agrees in gender and number with the indexation in the verb. Below, I will address two points which sit on opposite ends of a spectrum: the ellipsis of the head, and complex heads involving compounds.

### 7.5.1 Introduction

However, before I come to those two points I want to make a general point about noun phrases in Komnzo. It is quite common to have multiple co-referential noun phrases. These can occur in the same clause or across a sequence of clauses. In example (19), the speaker talks about an old woman who was married to three men in her lifetime, but she had children only with one of them. Several noun phrases are co-referential. In the example, they are indexed with subscripted numbers.

- (19) [ausiane nagayé]<sub>1</sub> ... [ananzo]<sub>1</sub> fof ern [edanzo]<sub>1</sub> ... [nä]<sub>2</sub> mane yarako  
 [ausiane kabe]<sub>2</sub> [nafafis]<sub>2</sub> ngemär yara ... [kafarkafar]<sub>2</sub> yara  
 ausi=ane                      nagayé (.) ane=nzo    fof    e\rn/  
 old woman=POSS.SG children (.) DEM=ONLY EMPH 2|3DU:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 eda=nzo (.) nä    mane ya\r/ako                                      ausi=ane                      kabe  
 two=ONLY (.) INDF which 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV:AND/be old woman=POSS man  
 nafa-fis                      nge=mär    ya\r/a                                      (.) kafar-kafar  
 3.POSS-husband child=PRIV 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be (.) REDUP-big  
 ya\r/a  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be  
 ‘The old woman has only those two children. As for the other one, old woman’s  
 man, her husband, he was without children. He was very old (when they got  
 married)’  
 [tci20131013-02 ABB #334-336]

On the other end of the spectrum, noun phrases can be wholly omitted, since the indexation in the verb is sufficient. In this way, a single verb often stands as a whole clause. Example (20) describes the path which the ancestor took and what actions he did along the way. Since the protagonist is highly topical at this point in the story, the respective noun phrase is left out. Moreover, the last two verbs *zwafrmnzrm* ‘he was preparing it (F)’ and *zurzirakwa* ‘he tied it (F)’ occur without any noun phrases. That is because the object noun phrase (*nabi ηatr* ‘bowstring’) was mentioned already.

- (20) nabi ηatr fä fof zurärm zwafrmnzrm ... zurzirakwa fof.  
 nabi    ηatr            fä    fof    zu\rä/rm  
 bamboo bowstring DIST EMPH SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:DUR/do  
 zwa\frm/nzrm                                      (.) zu\rzirak/wa                                      fof  
 SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:DUR/prepare (.) SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:IPFV/tie EMPH  
 ‘Over there, he made his bowstring. He prepared it. He tied it.’  
 [tci20131013-01 ABB #235-236]

### 7.5.2 Ellipsis of the HEAD

The head of a noun phrase is often omitted. Consider example (21), where a mother tells me that she had sent two small children to dig for worms. The example starts out with the noun phrase *zane edawä kakatan* ‘these two small (ones)’. Ellipsis of the head only

occurs when the head is recoverable from previous context, or if it is common ground between speaker and hearer.

- (21) *zane edawä kakatan ... fosam daisy fi zarath dd etharinath*  
 zane eda=wä ka-katan (.) fosam daisy fi za\r/ath  
 DEM:PROX TWO=EMPH REDUP-small (.) fosam daisy 3.ABS 2|3DU:SBJ:PST:PFV/do  
 dd e\thari/nath  
 worm 2|3DU:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:IPFV/dig  
 ‘These two small (ones), Fosam and Daisy, they did that. They dug the  
 worms.’ [tci20120922-25 ALK #5]

Example (22) shows the indefinite demonstrative *nä* used twice without a head. This is possible because the appropriate filler for the HEAD slot *zuzi* ‘fishing line’ was already mentioned.

- (22) *zuzi thethkäfath migsi ... nä zba wazi ... nä boba wazi.*  
 zuzi the\thkäf/ath mig-si (.) nä zba wazi  
 fishing.line 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:PFV/start hang-NMLZ (.) INDF PROX.ABL side  
 (.) nä boba wazi  
 (.) INDF MED.ABL side  
 ‘They started hanging the fishing lines ... some on this side and some on the  
 other side.’ [tci20150906-10 ABB #52-53]

Example (23) is a description of a fish trap. These long bamboo baskets always consist of a larger basket and a smaller basket which is placed inside the bigger one. In the example, the speaker refers to the smaller basket as *nafane nge* ‘its child’ and later only with an adjective *katan* ‘small’ which is flagged with an ergative case marker.

- (23) *nafane nge ... wati kofä fthé brigisr n krär ... katanf kwa ynbrigwr zbo ... keke  
 kwa kränmätr.*  
 nafane nge (.) wati kofä fthé brig-si=r n krär/ (.)  
 3SG.POSS child (.) then fish when return-NMLZ=PURP IMN 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/do (.)  
 katan=f kwa yn\brig/wr zbo (.)  
 small=ERG.SG FUT 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/return PROX.ALL (.)  
 keke kwa krän\mätr/  
 NEG FUT 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV:VENT/exit  
 ‘Its child ... well, when the fish tries to return, the small (one) will bring it back  
 here ... it will not get out.’ [tci20120906 MAB #55-58]

### 7.5.3 Compounds

On the other end of the spectrum are complex heads. The Komnzo lexicon contains a large number of nominal compounds. These may consist of nouns, property nouns and nominalised verbs. Table 7.1 shows a few examples of compounds with different nominal subclasses.

Table 7.1: Nominal compounds

TYPE OF COMPOUND	example	COMPONENTS		gloss
noun + noun	<i>wawa mnz</i>	<i>wawa</i> yam	<i>mnz</i> house	‘yamhouse’
	<i>wath kabe</i>	<i>wath</i> dance	<i>kabe</i> man/people	‘dancer(s)’
property noun + noun	<i>wri kabe</i>	<i>wri</i> intoxication	<i>kabe</i> man/people	‘drunkard’
noun + property noun	<i>zan miyo</i>	<i>zan</i> killing	<i>miyo</i> desire	‘bloodlust’
nom. verb + noun	<i>borsi zokwasi</i>	<i>bor-si</i> play-NMLZ	<i>zokwasi</i> words	‘joke’
noun + nom. verb	<i>si zübraksi</i>	<i>si</i> eye	<i>zübrak-si</i> close.eye-NMLZ	‘prayer’

Compounds are always right-headed, that is the rightmost element is not only the semantic head, but it determines the word class, number and gender of the whole compound. Although the first element in *wawa mnz* ‘yam house’ is masculine, it is the second element *mnz* ‘house’ which determines the gender (F in this case). Likewise, although the first element in *wri kabe* is a property noun – and property nouns do not show gender agreement – it is the second word *kabe* ‘man’ which enables gender agreement for the whole compound.

Compounds can be embedded within one another, which can lead to combinations of usually up to three elements. A rare example of a compound with four elements was coined by one of my informants to describe the botanist on our team: *wämne taga yf kabe* (Lit. ‘tree leaf name man’). Embedded compounds are always left-branching, and thus we can represent long compounds in this way: [[[*wämne taga*]<sub>3</sub> *yf*]<sub>2</sub> *kabe*]<sub>1</sub>. Two corpus examples for longer compounds are given in (24) and (25) below.

- (24) *ane ksi kar emoth thwanorm*  
 ane ksi kar emoth thwa\|nor/m  
 DEM bush place girl 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/shout  
 ‘These bush girls were shouting.’ [tci20120821-02 LNA #36]
- (25) *baf fthé sräbth nima ... kabe zan miyof*  
 baf fthé srä\|bth/ nima (.) kabe  
 RECOG.ERG.SG when 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/finish like.this (.) man  
 zan miyo=f  
 hitting desire=ERG.SG  
 ‘That is when it overcomes him ... that bloodlust for people.’  
 [tci20130903-04 RNA #84-85]

Complex heads are different from complex noun phrases, that is compounds in the HEAD slot are distinct from embedded noun phrases. The latter must be marked with adnominal case. Let us take the compound from example (24): *ane ksi kar emoth* ‘those bush girls’ (Lit. ‘bush place girls’). We can embed the noun phrase *ksi kar* ‘bush place’ into the matrix noun phrase by adding the characteristic case (=ma): *ksi karma emoth* ‘girls from the bush’. In addition to case marking, the reference of the demonstrative *ane* in initial position depends on whether a noun phrase is embedded or the head contains a compound. In the former case, *ane* refers to the head of the embedded noun phrase: *ane ksi karma emoth* ‘girls from that bush place’. If the head slot contains a compound, and no embedding takes place, the demonstrative refers to the compound as in (24). The reference of the DETERMINER slot is described above in §7.3.

Property nouns can appear in both positions of a compound (see Table 7.1 above). If a property noun appears as the first element, it modifies the head of the compound, for example *wri kabe* ‘drunkard’ in Table 7.1. Property nouns optionally take the adjectivaliser *-thé*. If this suffix is present, for example in *wri thé kabe*, it is clear that the derived adjective appears in the MODIFIER-1 slot, and is not part of a compound. The semantic difference is between *wri kabe* ‘drunkard’ – someone who is frequently drunk – and *wri thé kabe* ‘drunk man’ – someone who is drunk. Syntactically, the derived adjective behaves like other adjectives, for example it can appear after the head in the POSTMODIFIER slot. Without the adjectivaliser, a change in order would change the meaning of the compound, e.g. *kabe wri* ‘people’s / men’s intoxication’. However, as mentioned above, the adjectivaliser suffix is optional for property nouns. Additionally, property nouns can function predicatively (26). This creates some problems for the analysis of particular examples.

- (26) *kabe wri kwosi sfthnm.*  
*kabe wri kwosi sf\thn/m*  
 man drunk dead 3SG.MASC:PST.DUR/lie  
 ‘The man was lying down dead drunk.’

[overheard ]

Lastly, I want to address compounds which involve nominalised verbs. Consider the compounds in (27) and (28). In (27), the speaker points out that these were *mgthksi ruga* ‘raised pigs’ as opposed to wild pigs. In (28), the speaker stresses that he has raised enough pigs in his life, and that *ruga mgthksi* ‘pig feeding’ is too much work.

- (27) *ruga tabrunzo erera nima berä ... mgthksi ruga*  
*ruga tabru=nzo e\rä/ra nima b=e\rä/* (.)  
 pig five=ONLY 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be like.this MED=2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.)  
*mgthk-si ruga*  
 feed-NMLZ pig  
 ‘There were only five pigs like these ... raised pigs.’ [tci20120904-02 MAB #248-249]

- (28) *zena keke miyo worä ruga mgthksi ... znsä ttüfr*

## 7 Syntax of the noun phrase

zena keke miyo wo\rä/                      ruga mgthk-si (.) znsä t-tüfr  
 today NEG desire 1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be pig feed-NMLZ (.) work REDUP-plenty  
 ‘Today, I do not want to feed pigs ... too much work.’ (Lit. ‘I do not desire pig  
 feeding.’) [tci20120805-01 ABB #819-820]

We find that compounds which involve nominalised verbs follow the same rule as other compounds: the rightmost element acts as the head of the compound. For example, *zan kabe* (killing+man) ‘killer, headhunter’ is a kind of man, whereas *kabe zan* (man+killing) ‘war, fighting’ is a nominalised activity.<sup>2</sup> For the following discussion, I will refer to the first pattern as noun-headed compounds, and the latter as verb-headed compounds.

In noun-headed compounds, the argument role of the noun with respect to the verb is less determined than in verb-headed compounds. The following argument roles are found: actor (*zan kabe* ‘killer’), patient (*mgthksi ruga* ‘feeding pig’ in (27) above), instrument (*bi näbüsi wämne* ‘sago beating stick’), location (*yonasi faf* ‘drinking place’), or time (*tharisi efoth* ‘harvesting time’). This variability contrasts with verb-headed compounds, where the noun is always a patient or theme, as in *kabe zan* ‘war’ (Lit. ‘people hitting’), *ruga mgthksi* ‘pig feeding’ in (28) above, or *wawa yarisi* ‘yam exchange’ (Lit. ‘yam giving’). Note that there is an implied agent in most of these examples. It follows that (nominalised) intransitive verbs do not participate in verb-headed compounds. For example, there can be a *methizsi kabe* ‘resting person’ or a *yathizsi kabe* ‘dying person’. But the reverse order is ungrammatical: \**kabe methizsi* or \**kabe yathizsi*.

Some stems have been shown to be rather fluid in valency depending on the morphological template (see §5.4.3), for example *msaksi* ‘dwell, sit (v.i.), set (v.t.)’. It is no surprise that these verbs allow both types of compounds. The noun-headed compound *msaksi kabe* ‘sitting people’ can describe a group of people who stay behind, while others are attending a dance. The verb-headed compound *kabe msaksi* ‘married life’ takes on the transitive meaning of the verb, and it means literally: ‘the sitting down of the man’.<sup>3</sup>

### 7.6 The inclusory construction

The inclusory construction builds on the associative case (see §4.15). I adopt the term “inclusory construction” from Lichtenberk (2000) and Singer (2001). Singer defines the inclusory construction as “an endocentric construction in which some elements of a larger group are referred to along with the larger group itself” (2001: 1). Thus, we have a construction that involves a full set and one or more subsets. In Komnzo, the full set is always expressed in the verb form. Therefore, the inclusory construction only involves core arguments, that is arguments flagged with the ergative, absolutive or dative case. For the following description, I introduce the terms “associative phrase” and “core phrase”. The associative phrase expresses the participant who is included in the event. The core

<sup>2</sup> *Zan* ‘hit, kill’ is irregular in that its infinitive is not based on the normal stem-NMLZ pattern.

<sup>3</sup> From the perspective of a man, one could also use *ñare msaksi* ‘married life’ (Lit. ‘the sitting down of the woman’).



phrase expresses a subset different from the one expressed in the associative phrase or it may express the set. We will see below why this is sometimes difficult to determine with certainty. While the reference of the core phrase does not automatically include the subset expressed in the associative phrase, both are included in the full set which is expressed in the verb form. I choose the terms ‘core phrase’ and ‘associative phrase’ over more general terms like ‘subset A’ and ‘subset B’ because the core phrase is flagged with the case marker appropriate for the argument role of the set, while the associative phrase is flagged with the associative case.

What is special about the inclusory construction in Komnzo is that although both core phrase and associative phrase may refer to distinct subsets, the latter always does, the number marking on each phrase has scope over the total set. Consider example (29) where the set encoded in the verb is second/third dual. The two subsets are expressed by the personal names *Maureen* and *Kowi*. The core phrase is flagged with a non-singular ergative (*Maureen=é*), and the associative phrase is flagged with an associative dual (*Kowi=r*). The point here is that the scope of the number value is always the set and not the respective subsets.<sup>4</sup>

- (29) *Maureené bi ynäbünth Kowir.*  
 maureen=é            bi            y\näbü/nth  
 maureen=ERG.NSG sago(ABS) 2|3DU:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/beat  
 kowi=r  
 kowi=ASSOC.DU  
 ‘Maureen together with Kowi beats Sago.’ (Lit. ‘Maureen with Kowi, they beat Sago.’)

Example (29) shows that a non-singular attaches to a personal name. In example (30), the set encoded in the verb is first plural. Note that the core phrase is omitted here, but it could be expressed by the pronoun *ni* (1NSG). There are multiple associative phrases in the example: *nä srakä* ‘with some boy(s)’, *mafä thzé* ‘with whoever’ and *Mosesä* ‘with Moses’. Since the total set is bigger than the minimal group, i.e. bigger than two, the associative phrase has to be marked as plural. Therefore, the personal name *Moses* is marked for plural.

- (30) *nä srakä kwa nyak ... mafä thzé ... Mosesä.*  
 nä srak=ä            kwa n\yak/            (.) maf=ä            thzé (.)  
 some boy=ASSOC.PL FUT 1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/walk (.) who=ASSOC.PL ever (.)  
 moses=ä  
 moses=ASSOC.PL  
 ‘We will go with some boy(s) ... with whoever ... with  
 Moses.’ [tci20130907-02 RNA #749-750]

The abstract structure of the inclusory construction is shown in Figure 7.2 below. The circle represents the set, and the line in the middle cuts the total set into two subsets.

<sup>4</sup>Note that literal translations of the inclusory construction are rather clumsy: ‘Maureen with Kowi beat Sago’, whereas idiomatic English translations imply that the verb is indexing a singular as in (29).

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The arrows on the left point to the referents expressed by each element. Note that there could be more than one associative phrase as in (30), and an example like (30) could be further elaborated by adding associative phrases, for example *Maureenä* and *Kowiä* to mean ‘with Moses, with Maureen, with Kowi’. These additional associative phrases are not represented in Figure 7.2 because they would receive the same marking as the first associative phrase.<sup>5</sup> The arrow on the right shows that the number value encoded in each element tracks the number of the total set.

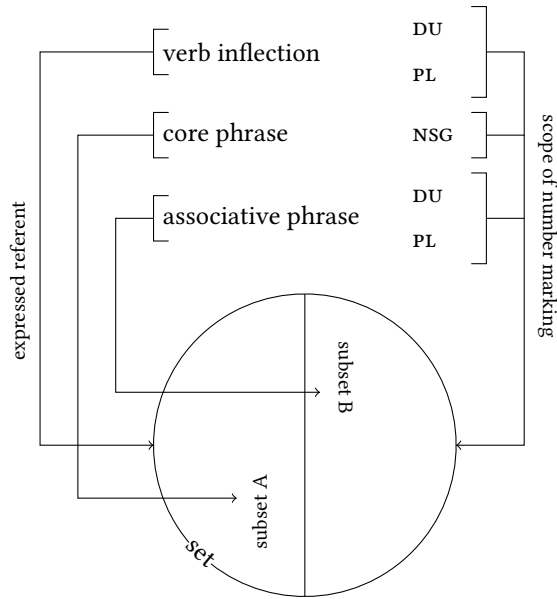


Figure 7.2: The inclusory construction

Figure 7.2 shows that the number values differ. The core phrase is always in non-singular. This is the expected behaviour of number marking on nominals (see §4.3), which makes a distinction between singular and non-singular leaving the subdivision between dual and plural to the verb inflection. As for the associative phrase, number marking is more specific showing agreement with the verb inflection, thus encoding dual versus plural instead of singular versus non-singular. Because the set in the inclusory construction is minimally two, a singular on the core phrase or a singular in the verb inflection would be ungrammatical. For the associative case, there is not singular number value available. The enclitics =*r* and =*ä* encode dual and plural respectively.

The corresponding pronominal forms of the associative case are shown in Table 7.2. The relevant pronominals are personal pronouns, the recognitional demonstrative, the indefinite pronoun and the interrogative. Two observations can be made from Table 7.2.

<sup>5</sup>Naturally, this is only possible if there are more than two participants in the total set.

Table 7.2: Associative case / pronominals

	person	dual	plural
personal pronouns	1	<i>ninrr</i>	<i>ninä</i>
	2	<i>bnrr</i>	<i>bnä</i>
	3	<i>nafrr</i>	<i>nafä</i>
RECOGNITIONAL		<i>bafrr</i>	<i>bafä</i>
INDEFINITE		<i>nä bunrr</i>	<i>nä bunä</i>
INTERROGATIVE		<i>mafrr</i>	<i>mafä</i>
CASE ENCLITIC		= <i>r</i>	= <i>ä</i>

First, all forms include a /rr/ element for dual and an /ä/ element for plural. Secondly, most forms are built from the ergative pronominal. For example, the third person absolutive is *fi*, whereas the third person ergative is *naf* (SG) or *nafa* (NSG). The associative third person forms, *nafrr* (DU) and *nafä* (PL) are formally closer to the ergative than to the absolutive. Another example is the interrogative, where the absolutive is *mane* ‘who, which’ and the ergative is *maf* (SG) and *mafa* (NSG). The two exceptions are the first person and the indefinite pronoun. The first person non-singular is *ni*, and it neutralises the distinction between absolutive and ergative. The indefinite pronoun is *nä bun*, and it takes regular case enclitics just like nouns. Therefore, *nä bun* is analysed as being zero-marked, thus, absolutive.

Figure 7.2 shows that the core phrase always encodes non-singular number. As we have seen, this holds true for cases where there are only two participants and consequently the two subsets in the core phrase and the associative phrase refer to a single individual respectively. The examples below show this for an ergative-marked argument, *amayé nanyr* ‘mother with big sister’ (31), an absolutive-marked argument, *emothé bnrr* ‘girl with you’ (32), and a dative-marked argument, *sraknm nafrr* ‘boy with him’ (33). In contrasting examples without the inclusory construction, all of these would receive a singular marker of the respective cases. Note that the non-singular absolutive =*é* in (32) is the same as the non-singular ergative =*é* in (31). This syncretism is also found in the personal pronouns where *ni* is both first person non-singular absolutive and ergative (see §3.1.9). The absolutive singular is always zero-marked, and the non-singular formative =*é* is optional (§4.4). In the inclusory construction, however, non-singular number is obligatorily encoded on the core phrase.

(31) *mni ηagar nth amayé nanyr.*

mni ηa\gar/nth ama=*é* nane=*r*  
 firewood 2|3DU:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/break mother=ERG.NSG elder.sibling=ASSOC.DU  
 ‘Mother together with big sister split firewood.’ (Lit. ‘Mother with big sister, they split firewood.’)  
 [tci20150919-05 LNA #140]

(32) *kabef emothé emarn bnrr.*

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kabe=f      emoth=é      e\mar/n      bnrr  
 man=ERG.SG girl=ABS.NSG 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3DU:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/see 2.DU.ASSOC  
 ‘The man sees the girl together with you.’ (Lit. ‘The man sees them, the girl with you.’)

- (33) *ɲafyf sraknm dunzi ärin nafr.*  
 ɲafe=f      srak=nm      dunzi ä\ri/n      nafr  
 father=ERG.SG boy=DAT.NSG arrow 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3DU:IO:NPST:IPFV/give 3.DU.ASSOC  
 ‘The father gives the arrow to the boy together with him.’ (Lit. ‘Father gives them the arrow, the boy with him.’)

If the total set indexed in the verb is two, then it follows that the two phrases can only refer to a single individual, even though the core phrase has to be marked for non-singular (29 and 31-33). If the total set indexed in the verb is plural, it is unclear whether both subsets are bigger than one or whether one of them is singular and if so, which one. Example (30) above is unambiguous because the associative phrase is expressed by a personal name (*Moses*=ASSOC.PL). If the associative phrase it expressed by a noun or pronoun, we are left with contextual clues. In example (34), the speaker talks about marriage customs explaining that his clan will not exchange sisters with those clans, with which they share a land boundary. In this example, *nafä* has to be translated as a plural ‘with them’.

- (34) *ni nafäwä bad wkurwre ... fi neba erä ... ni neba*  
 ni nafä=wä      bad w\kur/wre      (.) fi      neba  
 1NSG 3PL.ASSOC=EMPH ground 1PL:SBJ>3SG.F:NPST:IPFV/split (.) 3.ABS opposite  
 e\rä/      (.) ni neba  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) 1      opposite  
 ‘We really share a land boundary with them. They are there and we (are) here.’  
 (Lit. ‘we cut the ground with them.’) [tci20120814 ABB #307]

In contrast, in example (35) *nafä* refers to a singular ‘with him’. This example is taken from a text about grief, and the speaker justifies a particular mourning custom by pointing out that he and his family have shared a lifetime with the deceased person.

- (35) *... bänema ni nafä kwamränzrme. ni nafä nzwamnzm.*  
 (.) bänema ni nafä kwa\mrä/nzrme ni nafä  
 (.) RECOG=CHAR 1NSG 3PL.ASSOC 1PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/stroll 1NSG 3PL.ASSOC  
 nzwam\m/nzrm  
 1PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell  
 ‘... because we walked around with him. We lived with him.’  
 [tci20120805-01 ABB #830-831]

It follows that out of context the pronoun *nafä* can refer to an individual or to a group of people in (34) and (35). This is also true for the pronoun *ni* (1NSG) in both examples. I pointed out above that the core phrase is always non-singular, even if the subset expressed by the core phrase is singular. Hence, the pronoun *ni* can refer to an individual

or a group of people, and out of context example (34) can be translated as ‘I share land with them’, ‘We share land with him’ or ‘We share land with them’. What it cannot mean is ‘I share land with him’. For this meaning, the verb would have to index a dual and the associative phrase would have to be marked for dual number.<sup>6</sup>

In the following discussion, I want to address the question whether or not the associative phrase and the core phrase form a constituent. From a semantic perspective, we can answer this question in the affirmative, but we can also find some structural evidence that the associative phrase and the core phrase form a functional unit. I have shown above that the associative phrase agrees with the verb in number. The core phrase, on the other hand, agrees with the verb in person and number. The number category is very telling because it is always non-singular. Additionally, the core phrase is assigned the appropriate the case marker by the argument structure of the verb. I take these points as structural evidence that the associative phrase and the core phrase form a functional unit. However, they do not constitute a formal unit; a phrase. In other words, the associative case in the inclusory construction does not function in the way that adnominal case does. For example, the characteristic case signals that one noun phrase is embedded into a matrix noun phrase. There is a fixed structure for embedding, and scrambling of elements which belong to the matrix phrase is not possible in Komnzo (§7.2). There may be several instantiations of an argument in a clause, but these noun phrases are always marked for the same case. As we have seen above, the associative phrase can be moved independently of the core phrase. Moreover, most corpus examples lack a core phrase altogether. In conclusion, the inclusory construction is different from adnominal case, like the characteristic or possessive case. The core phrase and the associative phrase are not integrated into a matrix phrase.

The inclusory construction also differs from coordinative constructions (see §9.2). Example (36) shows the same state-of-affairs as expressed in (29) above, but using a conjunctive coordination. The main structural differences are that in coordination: (i) a conjunction like *a* ‘and’ is required, (ii) the coordinated noun phrases have to precede and follow the conjunction, (iii) both noun phrases receive the same case marker, (iv) the case marker can be singular. Note that in (29) above the associative phrase *Kowir* could occur in all other positions. Nevertheless, the most natural positions are either after the verb or right after *Maureené*.

- (36) *Maureenf a Kowif bi ynäbünth.*  
 Maureen=f    a    Kowi=f    bi  
 maureen=ERG.SG and kowi=ERG.SG sago(ABS)  
 y\näbü/nth  
 2|3DU:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/beat  
 ‘Maureen and Kowi beat sago.’

Furthermore, the elements in an inclusory construction can be coordinated as in (37) where the two associative phrases *nä oromanr* ‘with another old man’ and *nä kabe* ‘with

<sup>6</sup>The inclusory construction can be seen as a syntactic equivalent to distributed exponence in the verb morphology (see §5.2).

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another man' are part of a disjunctive coordination connected by *o* 'or'.

- (37) *nä oromanr o nä kabər fi bämrn.*  
*nä oroman=r o nä kabe=r fi*  
 INDF old.man=ASSOC.DU or INDF man=ASSOC.DU 3.ABS  
*b=ä\m/rn*  
 MED=2|3DU:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/sit  
 'He is sitting there with another old man or another man.' (Lit. '...with some old man or with some man they two sit there.')

[tci20111004 RMA #343]

There is no clear semantic difference between coordination and the inclusory construction, but the difference seems to be pragmatic. While coordination places the two elements on the same rank, the inclusory construction may be used to highlight the referent expressed in the associative phrase. This is supported by the fact that in most corpus examples the core phrase is omitted, because its reference has been established earlier. Example (37) above was uttered as the description of a set of pictures cards. I reproduce the example in a longer context in (38) below. The speaker talks about the protagonist of the story who is drinking with his friends. While describing the picture card, the speaker points out that the protagonist is sitting with another man. He then asks about the topic of their conversation. This other man is expressed in the associative phrase. The same state of affairs could be expressed by a coordinative construction ('He and another man are sitting there'). The point is that the inclusory construction can be used to introduce a new participant, and thus has a pragmatic function. Note that the associative phrase occurs in the first position of the clause.

- (38) *ane fof yamnr byé. wri kabenzo ... ane bramöwä ... fof ausi fäth nä berä ... ttrikasi  
 ηatrikwrth ... nä oromanr o nä kabər fi bämrn ... skiski warfo. monme fi yatrikwr ...  
 nafan?*  
*ane fof ya\m/nzr b=yé/ wri*  
 DEM EMPH 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/sit MED=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be drunk  
*kabe=nzo (.) ane bramöwä (.) fof ausi fäth nä*  
 man=ONLY (.) DEM all (.) EMPH old.woman DIM INDF  
*b=e\rä/ (.) t-trik-si ηa\trik/wrth (.) nä*  
 MED=2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) REDUP-tell-NMLZ 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/tell (.) INDF  
*oroman=r o nä kabe=r fi b=ä\m/rn (.)*  
 old.man=ASSOC.DU or INDF man=ASSOC.DU 3.ABS MED=2|3DU:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/sit (.)  
*skiski warfo monme fi ya\trik/wr (.) nafan*  
 platform on.top how but 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:NPST:IPFV/tell (.) 3SG.DAT  
 'That is the one sitting there. (They are) drunkards ... all of them. There is some woman. They are telling stories. He is sitting there with another old man or another man ... on the platform. But what is he telling him?'

[tci20111004 RMA#340-345]

Lichtenberk suggests two parameters for a typology of inclusory pronominals: "(i) do the inclusory pronominal and the included NP together form a syntactic construction, a

phrase, or not?; and (ii) is there or is there not an overt marker of the relation between the inclusory pronominal and the included NP?” (2000: 3). This sets up a fourfold possibility space.<sup>7</sup> The second parameter is clear for Komnzo: the associative case is an overt marker of the inclusory construction. With respect to the first parameter, I hope to have shown above that Komnzo does not give a neat answer to these questions. In terms of agreement, we may say that the two elements agree, but they agree in their own ways. In terms of noun phrase syntax, it would be a rather aberrant noun phrase. Therefore, I suggest that Lichtenberk’s typology should be expanded. A more fine-grained reformulation of his first parameter could help capture what constitutes a ‘syntactic construction’, for example verb agreement and phrase structure. Singer’s typology (2001) concentrates on the locus of where the total set is encoded. She draws a distinction between Type 1, in which the set of total participants is represented by an independent pronoun, and Type 2, in which it is represented by a verbal affix. Komnzo clearly belongs into the Type 2 category. But we can make a case that Komnzo also belongs into Type 1, because the associative phrase, which can be a pronoun, encodes the number of the total set.

Lichtenberk argues that the marker of inclusory constructions is often historically related to the coordinate conjunction or to the comitative case, but he adds that the inclusory construction differs from both.<sup>8</sup> We have seen in §4.15, that there is no inclusory construction and no number distinction with inanimates, and only =*ä* is attached as a case marker. With inanimates, =*ä* can be analysed as comitative case. On the other hand, the function of =*r* (DU) and =*ä* (PL) with animates is an inclusory function, which differs markedly from the associative with inanimates. I follow Lichtenberk by analysing =*r* and =*ä* as markers of a distinct inclusory construction, but for practical purposes I retain the label ASSOC in the gloss instead of introducing a separate label for the inclusory category.

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<sup>7</sup>The four possibilities are: 1. +syntactic construction +overt marker, 2. +syntactic construction -overt marker, 3. -syntactic construction +overt marker, 4. -syntactic construction -overt marker.

<sup>8</sup>“In explicit inclusory constructions, the marker of the relation between the inclusory pronominal and the included NP is typically etymologically related either to the coordinate conjunction ‘and’ or to the comitative marker in the language.” (Lichtenberk 2000: 4) and “The phrasal inclusory construction is neither coordinating nor comitative; it is a construction *sui generis*.” (2000: 30, emphasis in original)





# 8 Clausal syntax

## 8.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses the syntax within simple clauses. In Komnzo, a large part of the argument structure is encoded in the verb morphology. This is described in §5.4, and summarised in Table 5.3. Therefore, the following description of clause types is brief for those types which have been addressed before, but more detailed for other types where the verb morphology plays a smaller role.

## 8.2 Constituent order

The dominant word order in Komnzo is AUV (actor undergoer verb). Recipients of di-transitives also precede the verb and follow the actor noun phrase, but there is no clear position with respect to the theme argument. Evidence for basic word order comes from the use of the recognitional demonstrative (see §3.1.12.6). In example (1), the object argument is expressed first by the recognitional *bäne* ‘those’ and then by the noun *züm* ‘centipedes’. The speaker uses the recognitional in absolutive case in the position where the constituent normally occurs. This is a tip-of-the-tongue situation, and therefore the speaker fills in the appropriate referent after the verb. Note that there is usually a break in the intonation contour if any constituent occurs after the verb.

- (1) *nzürna naref bäne sasryoftha züm.*  
nzürna nare=f bäne sa\sryofth/a züm  
nzürna woman=ERG RECOG.ABS SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:PST:PFV/send centipede  
‘The *nzürna* woman sent those ones after him ... the centipedes.’

[tci20120827-03 KUT #138]

Experiencer-object constructions (§8.3.10) deviate from the basic word order. The experiencer is placed almost always before the stimulus, i.e. the undergoer comes first and the actor follows (2). This can be explained by the relative salience of the experiencer in such constructions and the fact that it almost always ranks higher in terms of animacy.

- (2) *ηatha kawakawaf bthefaf.*  
ηatha kawakawa=f b=the\faf/  
dog madness=ERG MED=2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:RPST:PFV/hold  
‘The dogs went crazy there.’ (Lit. ‘Madness has grabbed the dogs.’)

[tci20130907-02 JAA #488]

AUV word order is only a tendency in Komnzo. In fact, most clauses lack overt noun phrases for the respective constituents. The flagging of noun phrases with case allows for some flexibility in the arrangement of constituents. However, deviations from the basic word order are often pragmatically motivated. In example (3)<sup>1</sup>, the speaker replies to a question whether a particular individual is his brother in-law. He says ‘really my brother in-law’ and then gives an explanation in the following clause, where the undergoer appears before the actor. The reversal of constituents can be explained as a strategy to focus the undergoer argument, that is *mayawa emoth* ‘Mayawa sister’ is focussed by fronting.

- (3) *nzone ngom fof... mayawa emoth naf zefafa fof.*  
 nzone ngom fof (.) mayawa emoth naf ze\faf/a  
 1SG.POSS brother.in.law EMPH (.) mayawa girl 3SG.ERG SG:SBJ:PST.PFV/marry  
 fof  
 EMPH  
 ‘My brother in-law ... He married a Mayawa sister.’

[tci20120814 ABB #391-392]

In example (4), both constituents follow the verb. The undergoer comes first and after a short pause the actor follows. Examples like these are rare, but frequently one of the constituents follows the verb. This can occur because the speaker wants to clarify the state of affairs or because she wants to put emphasis on the referent. There is usually a break in the intonation contour after the verb form.

- (4) *keke thufnzrm ane karma kabe ... naf.*  
 keke thu\fn/nzrm ane kar=ma kabe (.) naf  
 NEG SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/kill DEM village=CHAR man (.) 3SG.ERG  
 ‘She did not attack those village people.’ [tci20120901-01 MAK #50]

While the order of constituents is flexible to some extent, it rarely occurs that other elements like adverbs, TAM particles or the negator follow the verb. Komnzo supports a number of cross-linguistic generalisations found in verb final languages (Dryer 2007), for example that the possessor precedes the possessed. A second generalisation is that verb-final languages tend to have postpositions rather than prepositions. Komnzo does not have a category of adpositions, but locational nouns like *tharthar* ‘side’ or *mrmr* ‘inside’ always follow the noun whose location they specify (see §3.1.7).

## 8.3 Clause types

### 8.3.1 Non-verbal clauses

Non-verbal clauses are a marginal phenomenon in Komnzo. This section describes the few types of verbless clauses. These are usually short one or two word utterances in-

<sup>1</sup>Note that the stem *fath-* means ‘hold’, but in a suppressed-object construction it means ‘marry’ (see §8.3.7).

cluding an element which has some verb-like semantics, for example TAM particles or property nouns.

The TAM particles *kwa* FUT and *kma* POT can stand alone, when they are used as commands. For example, *kma* can mean ‘You have to!’, and with the apprehensive clitic *m* attached, it can mean the opposite: *kmam* ‘You must not!’. In example (5), the future particle *kwa* is used in the sense of ‘Wait!’. The speaker describes poison-root fishing and how they have to hold back the children from jumping into the water too early.

- (5) *katakatan kwa zöbthé thrängathinzth nima “kwa! komnzo kwa!”*  
 kata-katan kwa zöbthé thrän\gathinz/th nima kwa  
 REDUP-small FUT first 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:IRR:PFV:VENT/stop QUOT FUT  
 komnzo kwa  
 only FUT  
 ‘First, they will hold back the small ones and say: “Wait! Just Wait!”’  
 [tci20110813-09 DAK #25]

Another possible type of verbless clause is with the property nouns *miyo* ‘desire’ and *miyatha* ‘knowledge’ and their antonyms *miyomär* ‘aversion, dislike’ and *miyamr* ‘ignorance’. These words are usually used as nominal predicates with light verbs or with the copula. As a consequence, we find examples like (6), where the last clause *nzä miyamr* does not contain a verb. It is possible to insert the copula in the appropriate inflection (*worera* 1SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be), but often it is left out. Apart from examples like these, there are no verbless clauses in Komnzo.

- (6) *fi kafar mane erera näbi ane ofe ñarerath. mobo erera? ... nzä miyamr*  
 fi kafar mane e\rä/ra näbi ane ofe  
 but big which 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be one DEM disappearance  
 ña\rä/rath. mobo e\rä/ra (.) nzä miyamr  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV/do where.ALL (.) 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be 1SG.ABS ignorance  
 ‘As for the big dogs, they disappeared for good. Where did they go? ... I (do) not know.’  
 [tci20111119-03 ABB #70-72]

### 8.3.2 Copula clauses

Copula clauses are a subtype of non-verbal predication. They are described here in a separate subsection because the copula shows a number of idiosyncrasies. First, the copula has no restricted stem. Note that this can be predicted because the main function of the restricted stem the perfective aspect. Secondly, the stem of the copula is sensitive to duality: the non-dual stem is *rä*, while the dual stem is *rn*. Thirdly, the third person singular inflections are irregular (in non-past): masculine *yé*; feminine *rä*. Table 8.1 shows the copula forms in non-past, recent past and past tense. Finally, the copula stem *rä* can be used in an ambifixing template with the meaning ‘do’. This last point is discussed as part of the description of light verbs in §8.3.12.

Table 8.1: Copula inflection

gloss	NPST	RPST	RPST:DUR	PST	PST:DUR
1SG	<i>worä</i>	<i>kwofrä</i>	<i>worärm</i>	<i>worera</i>	<i>kwofräm</i>
1DU	<i>nrn</i>	<i>nzfrn</i>	<i>nrnm</i>	<i>nrna</i>	<i>nzfrn</i>
1PL	<i>nrä</i>	<i>nzfrä</i>	<i>nrärm</i>	<i>nrera</i>	<i>nzfrärm</i>
2SG	<i>nrä</i>	<i>nzfrä</i>	<i>nrärm</i>	<i>nrera</i>	<i>nzfrärm</i>
3SG.F	<i>rä</i>	<i>zfrä</i>	<i>rärm</i>	<i>rera</i>	<i>zfrärm</i>
3SG.MASC	<i>yé</i>	<i>sfrä</i>	<i>yrärm</i>	<i>yara</i>	<i>sfrärm</i>
2 3DU	<i>ern</i>	<i>thfrn</i>	<i>ernm</i>	<i>erna</i>	<i>thfrnm</i>
2 3PL	<i>erä</i>	<i>thfrä</i>	<i>erärm</i>	<i>erera</i>	<i>thfrärm</i>

The copula takes a copula subject and a copula complement. Copula clauses may express identity between two NPs (7). They are used in presentational constructions; usually with a clitic demonstrative (8).

- (7) *ni fthé miyatha zäkorake* “*babai zane bthan kabe yé.*”  
 ni fthé miyatha zä\kor/ake babai zane bthan kabe  
 1NSG when knowledge 1PL:SBJ:PST:PFV/become uncle DEM:PROX black.magic man  
 \yé/  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:COP  
 ‘That was when we realised “The uncle is this sorcerer.”’  
 [tci20130901-04 RNA #45]

- (8) *yorär ziyé ... zikogr.*  
 yorär z=\yé/ (.) z=y\kogr/  
 yorär PROX=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) PROX=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:STAT/stand  
 ‘Yorär (Syzygium sp) is here. It stands here.’ [tci20130907-02 JAA #450-451]

The complement may be marked with the proprietive case (see §4.13) or the privative case (see §4.14) to express the existence or non-existence of some entity in relation to the copula subject. The former is shown in (9), where they speaker literally says ‘the village is with a name’ to express that it has some reputation. The latter is shown in (10), where the speaker tells how he was looking for a creek that carried water.

- (9) *zane kar mane rä yfkarä rä.*  
 zane kar mane \rä/ yf=karä  
 DEM:PROX village which 3SG:F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:COP name=PROP  
 \rä/  
 3SG:F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:COP  
 ‘As for this village, it has a (good) reputation.’ [tci20120805-01 ABB 447-448]
- (10) *buyak we ttfö ane zräbrmé nimame ... keke ... nomär rä.*

b=wi\yak/ we ttfö ane zrä\brm/é nima=me (.)  
 MED=1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/walk also creek DEM 1SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/follow like.this:INS (.)  
 keke (.) no=mär \rä/  
 NEG (.) water=PRIV 3SG:F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:COP  
 ‘I walked there, I followed another creek like this ... No ... (The creek) had no  
 water.’ [tci20130903-03 MKW #92-93]

Adjectives and property nouns may also be copula complements, as shown in (11) and (12) respectively. In (11), the speaker reports how his fathers were comparing their yam harvest. In example (12), the speaker talks about how as a teenager she was afraid of the anthropologist Mary Ayres when she first visited Rouku.

(11) *katakatanwä thfrä! nzenme kafar erä!*  
 kata-katan=wä thf\rä/ nzenme kafar e\rä/  
 REDUP-small=EMPH 3PL:SBJ:RPST:IPFV:COP 1NSG:POSS big 3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:COP  
 ‘Their (yams) were a bit small! Our (yams) are big!’ [tci20120805-01 ABB 403]

(12) *nzä wwtri kwarärm ... markaianema ... nafanema fof.*  
 nzä w-wtri kwa\rä/rm (.) markai=ane=ma (.)  
 1SG.ABS REDUP-fear 1SG:SBJ:PST:DUR:COP (.) outsider=POSS.SG=CHAR (.)  
 nafane=ma fof  
 3SG.POSS=CHAR EMPH  
 ‘I was a bit afraid ... of the white woman ... really (afraid) of her.’  
 [tci20130911-03 MBR #10-11]

### 8.3.3 Intransitive clauses

In terms of verb morphology, intransitive clauses have been described in §5.4.2. The verb inflection employs the prefixing or the middle template. Their single argument is always in absolutive case. Two examples are given in (13) and (14).

The two prefixing verbs in (13) have no overt subject noun phrases, but the second clause contains an adjunct marked with the purposive case *karr* ‘for a village’ (or settlement place). In example (14), we see the middle verb *brigi* ‘return’ and the subject pronoun *nzä* in absolutive case.

(13) *ɲarsenzo swanyakm ... karr swanrenzrm.*  
 ɲars=en=nzo swan\yak/m (.) kar=r  
 river=LOC=ONLY 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR:VENT/walk (.) village=PURP  
 swan\re/nzrm  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR:VENT/look.around  
 ‘He was coming along the river ... he was looking for a place to settle.’  
 [tci20120922-09 DAK #14-15]

- (14) *nzä boba fthé kanathrfa zänbrima.*  
 nzä boba fthé kanathr=fa zän\brim/a  
 1SG.ABS MED.ABL when kanathr=ABL SG:SBJ:PST:PFV:VENT/return  
 ‘That was when I returned from Kanathr.’ [tci20120805-01 ABB #607]

### 8.3.4 Impersonal clauses

Impersonal clauses are expressed using the middle template of the verb, in which a person-invariant middle marker fills the prefix slot, while the suffix indexes the single argument of the predicate (see §5.4.5). The indexed noun phrase, if present at all, occurs in absolutive case. The salient feature of this clause type is that the referent of the verb indexing is impersonal, unclear or simply empty. Consider examples (15) and (16). In the first example, the speaker talks about rain-making magic, which involves a rotting mixture of meat and honey in bottles. These bottles or containers are opened and the rising odor is said to increase the rainfall. The third singular indexed by the verb form *kfäkor* refers to the changed weather conditions, and the English translation ‘it was enough’ exhibits the same general or impersonal meaning. The second example contains the noun *aki* ‘moon’, but it is unclear whether the verb really indexes this noun or whether its referent is empty. Hence, the two possible translations. During the transcription of example (16), the first translation was the preferred one in this particular context.

- (15) *watikthénzo fthé kfäkor ... we sgu thwäthbe woz thwärmäne.* watik-thé=nzo  
 enough-ADJZR=ONLY  
 fthé kfä\kor/ (.) we sgu thwä\thb/e woz  
 when 2|3SG:SBJ:ITER/become (.) also plug 1PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:ITER/put.inside bottle  
 thwä\rmän/e  
 1PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:ITER/close  
 ‘When it was enough, we put the lids back in and we closed the bottles.’  
 [tci20110810-01 MAB #59-62]
- (16) *aki zbo kräkor.*  
 aki zbo Krä\kor/  
 moon PROX.ALL 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/become  
 ‘It became moon(light) here.’ or ‘The moon came up here.’  
 [tci20120904-02 MAB #47]

Example (17), is a description of a picture as part of a stimulus task. The speaker takes on the role of a man in the picture and asks: ‘What is going on?’. Again the verb form *kwär* appears in the middle construction and indexes a third singular.

- (17) *sinzo foba ynrä nima “ra kwär bobo?”*  
 si=nzo foba yn\rä/ nima ra  
 eye=ONLY DIST.ABL 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/be QUOT what(ABS)

kre\wär/ bobo  
 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/happen MED:ALL  
 ‘He was just looking from over there and wondered: “What is going on there?”’ [tci20111004 RMA #353]

Impersonal constructions often involve light verbs, for example *rä-* ‘do’ and *ko-* ‘become’, which take a nominal predicate, for example a noun or property noun. In these cases, the nominal predicate will be unmarked for case, like the absolutive case. Therefore, it may be difficult to decide whether (i) it is a nominal predicate and the subject is empty, or (ii) whether the noun phrase in question is the subject indexed in the verb. Consider example (18) below, in which the speaker describes the location of the mythical place of origin *Kwafar*, which is located in the Arafura sea between Papua New Guinea and Australia. The verb form *ḡakonzr* ‘it becomes’ occurs in the relative clause, which is printed in boldface. The third singular indexed in the verb form could be *mazo* ‘ocean’ (lit: ‘where the ocean becomes’) or it could be an empty subject (lit: ‘it becomes ocean’).

- (18) *thden rera ... zane zena mane bad mane wythk mazo mä ḡakonzr a ...  
 australiane bad mä wythk.*  
 thd=en \rä/ra (.) zane zena mane bad mane  
 middle=Loc 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be (.) DEM:PROX today which ground which  
 w\ythk/ mazo mä ḡa\ko/nzr a (.)  
 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/come.to.end and (.) australia=POSS ground where  
 australia=ane bad mä w\ythk/  
 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/come.to.end  
 ‘It was in the middle ... this one, where the land ends ... where it becomes ocean  
 until where Australia’s land ends.’ [tci20131013-01 ABB #26-30]

Weather events often have empty or impersonal subjects. This can be shown with prefixing verbs, as well as middle verbs. A common way to say ‘It is going to rain’ is shown in (19). It is clear that *nor* ‘for rain’ is not indexed in the verb because it is flagged with a non-core case, the purposive case. Therefore, the reference of the third singular in the verb form is empty.

- (19) *nor yé.*  
 no=r \yé/  
 rain=PURP 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘It will rain.’ (Lit. ‘It is for rain’) [overheard ]

Another example is the phrase *wär kwan yanor* ‘it is thundering’ in (20). The thunder is expressed by the ideophone *wär kwan* ‘thundering noise’, and all ideophones of this type are nominal compounds headed by *kwan* ‘noise, sound’ (see §3.7.1). The verb *yannor* is inflected for a masculine subject, but *kwan* is feminine. Hence *wär kwan* is not the subject, and a literal translation would be: ‘He shouts the thunder sound’. Again the reference of ‘he’ is empty.

- (20) *wär kwan yanor.*  
 wär kwan ya\nor/  
 thunder 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/shout  
 ‘It is thundering.’ [overheard ]

Other weather or sound phenomena can be expressed by verbs in the middle template. In example (21), the verb ‘start’ is inflected for a 2|3SG subject, but its referent is unclear – partly because the verb does not index an object. Thus, the indexed argument could be (i) the sound of the fire (‘The fire sound started’), or (ii) it could be an empty subject (‘It started the fire sound’).

- (21) *fi mni zürnane u kwan zethkäfako.*  
 fi mni zürn=ane u kwan ze\thkäf/ako  
 but fire smoke=POSS.SG roaring.sound SG:SBJ:PST:PFV:AND/start  
 ‘but the fire smoke’s sound started (rumbling).’ [tci20120827-03 KUT #186-187]

### 8.3.5 ‘Passive’ clauses

Passives meanings are expressed in two ways: (i) by a verb in the middle template which indexes a patient role; the indexed noun phrase occurs in absolutive case (see §5.4.5), or (ii) by a resultative construction, in which a nominalised verb is flagged with the instrumental case (see §4.10). Note that both are not dedicated passive constructions. Instead, they should be understood as constructions which can express passive-like semantics.

Example (22) shows both constructions. The first two clauses are in a temporal relationship to the last clause, which is signalled by *fthé* ‘when’. This is not a subordinate relationship because *fthé* can also be used in independent clauses with the meaning of ‘that was when’. In the first clause, the single argument of the verb is *bad* ‘ground, earth’. This can be translated either as an reflexive/impersonal ‘the earth created (itself)’ or as a passive ‘the earth was created’. In the second clause, matters are clear because the verb is in a transitive template which shows actor agreement with ‘father’ (ERG) and under-goer agreement with ‘earth’ (ABS), thus: ‘the father created the earth’. The last clause, is a resultative construction. The nominalised verb *rifhzi* ‘hiding’ takes the instrumental case (‘with hiding’), which is best translated as a passive (‘was hidden’).

- (22) *bad fthé ηafiyokwa ... ηafyf fthé bad wäfiyokwa ... kidn ane rifhzsime zfrärm.*  
 bad fthé ηa\fiyok/wa (.) ηafe=f fthé bad  
 earth when SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/make (.) father=ERG when earth  
 wä\fiyok/wa (.) kidn ane rifhzi-si=me  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:IPFV/make (.) eternal fire DEM hide-NMLZ=INS  
 zfrä/rm  
 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR/be  
 ‘When the earth was made ... when God made the earth ... that eternal fire was hidden.’ [tci20120909-06 KAB #61-63]



### 8.3.6 Reflexive and reciprocal clauses

Formally, reflexive/reciprocal clauses are encoded by (i) the verb form in the middle template and (ii) the argument noun phrase in absolutive case. Ditransitives show exceptional grammatical behaviour in that the argument may be in absolutive or ergative case. There is no distinction between reflexives and reciprocals other than the fact that singulars do not allow a reciprocal reading. Below I will describe how reflexive/reciprocals differ from intransitive and impersonal clause on the one side, and from suppressed-object constructions on the other. This topic is also addressed in the description of the middle template (see §5.4.5).

In example (23) the speaker talks about a ritual which chases away evil spirits. This rather gruesome ritual involves young men shooting at each other with blunt arrows. In the last clause of the example the noun phrase *kabe* ‘man’ is in absolutive case and the verb employs the middle template and indexes one argument (2|3PL). The verb *rusi* ‘shoot’ has rather clear transitive semantics and, thus, invites a reciprocal interpretation.

- (23) *kabe kwaruthrmth frkkarä.*  
 kabe kwa\ru/thrmth frk=karä  
 man(ABS) 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/shoot blood=PROP  
 ‘The people were shooting at each other (until) they were  
 bleeding.’ [tci20150906-10 ABB #414]

In most cases only secondary information disambiguates between intransitive, impersonal and reflexive/reciprocal interpretations. By secondary information, I mean (i) context, (ii) grammatical devices which are not used solely for reflexive/reciprocal constructions, (iii) statistical tendencies of individual verbs. I will address these in turn. First, context is probably the most important, and it is evident that an example like (23) is usually preceded or followed by a description which disambiguates the state of affairs. Secondly, speakers may choose to repeat the absolutive noun phrase to make clear that the intended reading should be a reciprocal one. Consider example (24), which concludes a headhunting story. The pronoun *fi* occurs twice. Additionally, the utterance was accompanied by appropriate gestures to clarify the intended reciprocal meaning. The pronoun *fi* is marked with the exclusive enclitic =*nzo*. The repetition and the exclusive enclitic are secondary strategies which are not solely used to mark reflexive/reciprocal meanings. Note that the exclusive enclitic =*nzo* shows cognates in other Yam languages. In Nen, there is a set of reflexive/reciprocal pronouns which all end in *nzo*, for example *benzo* 2SG (Evans 2015b: 1072). In Komnzo, the exclusive clitic expresses the meaning of ‘only’ without reflexive/reciprocal semantics.

- (24) *ni woga tüfrmäre nrä ... bänema nzenme thden ane fof kwakwirm ... woga finzo  
 finzo kwafnzrmth.*  
 ni woga tüfr=märe n\rä/ (.) bäne=ma nzenme  
 INSG man plenty=PRIV 1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) DEM:MED=CHAR INSG.POSS  
 thd=en ane fof kwa\kwir/m (.) woga fi=nzo fi=nzo  
 middle=LOC DEM EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:DUR/run (.) man 3.ABS=ONLY 3.ABS=ONLY

kwa\fn/nzrmth  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/kill  
 ‘We are not many ... because this was going on in our middle ... The people, this  
 (group) and that (group) were killing each other.’ [tci20111107-01 MAK #157-158]

Although stems may alternate between different morphological templates, there is a statistical tendency to occur in a particular template for a particular stem. For example, typically transitive meanings (*rusi* ‘shoot’, *zan* ‘hit, kill’, *marasi* ‘see’) occur most of the time in the ambifixing transitive template. If such stems occur in a middle template, it invites a reflexive/reciprocal reading rather than an impersonal or intransitive one. We will see in the following section that the middle template can also be used for the suppressed-object construction (see §8.3.7). However, in the suppressed-object construction the noun phrase indexed in the verb form is marked for ergative case and not absolutive. On the other hand, stems which occur in the middle template most of the time (*maikasi* ‘wash’, *bringsi* ‘return’) should be analysed as reflexiva tanta (Geniušienė 1987), even though they may occur in the ambifixing transitive template (‘wash someone’, ‘bring back someone’). Hence, there is a statistical tendency for stems to occur in a particular template, which helps to disambiguate between an impersonal or reflexive/reciprocal reading.

Next, I want to set reflexive/reciprocals apart from what I call the suppressed-object construction (see §8.3.7). The state of affairs in reflexive/reciprocals is such that the actor and patient can be exchanged. In Komnzo, both are expressed by one noun phrase which occurs in absolutive case. Herein lies the formal difference to the suppressed-object construction. If the noun phrase *kabe* ‘people’ in example (23) was in ergative case – for example *kabe=yé* (man=ERG.NSG) – the sentence would mean ‘they were shooting (at sth.)’. This is the suppressed-object construction, which I describe in the following section (see §8.3.7). Note that the verb form *kwaruthrmth* remains the same, only the case marking changes.

For ditransitive verbs, the case marking is less fixed, and the argument noun phrase can appear in absolutive as well as ergative case, both with a reflexive/reciprocal meaning. In example (25) the verb form *ɲarinth* indexes only the subject (2|3DU), while the prefix slot is filled with the middle marker. The subject argument appears in the ergative (*nafa*). A suppressed-object reading is not possible with ditransitive verbs. Note that the argument could also occur in absolutive case (*fi*). This would create a clause with two absolutive noun phrases. Hence, the choice between ergative and absolutive seems to be dependent on the kinds of referents. In (25), both noun phrases are animate, and the use of the ergative case avoids confusion between agent (‘they’) and theme (‘sisters’).

- (25) *emoth nafa ɲarinth fof.*  
 emoth nafa ɲa’ri/nth fof  
 girl 3NSG.ERG 2|3DU:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/give EMPH  
 ‘They give each other sisters.’ [tci20120805-01 ABB #158]

At this stage, it is impossible to investigate this topic further, because (i) noun phrases

are frequently omitted and (ii) as I have argued in §5.4.6, except for a few verbs (*yarisi* ‘give’, *trikasi* ‘tell’, *fänzsi* ‘show’) all ditransitive verbs are derived.

### 8.3.7 Suppressed-object clauses

Suppressed-object clauses employ the middle template of the verb. The argument indexed in the verb is treated like an actor by the case system, i.e. it is flagged with the ergative case. The object may be overtly expressed with a noun phrase, but it is suppressed from indexation in the verb form.

I describe in §5.4.5 that almost all transitive verbs can enter into the suppressed-object construction for semantic as well as pragmatic reasons. For example, most of the time, the referents of suppressed-objects rank low in the animacy hierarchy (Silverstein 1976). In example (26) the speaker searches her shoes and complains that her friend has been wearing them. We only know about the object of *rgsi* ‘wear’ from the previous context, since it is not expressed as a noun phrase, nor is the object indexed in the verb form. The semantics of *rgsi* renders a reflexive reading (‘she wears herself’) non-sensical. Additionally, the fact that the subject is in ergative case (*naf*) rules out the reflexive/reciprocal interpretation. This is important because the verb form is identical between reflexive/reciprocals and the suppressed-object construction.

- (26) *ebar zfthnzo! naf rar ηargwrm?*  
 ebar zfth=nzo naf ra=r ηa\rg/wrm  
 head base=ONLY 3SG.ERG what=PURP SG:SBJ:RPST:DUR/wear  
 ‘Thickhead! Why was she wearing (the flipflops)?’ [tci20130901-04 RNA #173]

Objects can be suppressed for pragmatic reasons, often in addition to their low rank on the animacy hierarchy. That is because the suppression of the object has the pragmatic effect of focussing the subject. Example (27) is taken from a text about food taboos. This topic came up while talking about a very old woman, whose old age was ascribed to her respecting all food taboos. In the example, the speaker shifts the topic from the old woman to those people who did not respect food taboos. This shift of topic is achieved by (i) a fronted relative clause and (ii) the suppressed-object construction. As in the previous example, we only know about the object of *rirkisi* ‘respect, avoid’ from the preceding context.

- (27) *fi mafa keke kwarirkwrmth ... watik tekmär esufakwa.*  
 fi mafa keke kwarirkwrmth ... watik tekmär  
 but who.NSG.ERG NEG 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/respect (.) then duration=PRIV  
 esufakwa  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV/grow.old  
 ‘But those who did not respect (the food taboos) ... well, they grew old  
 quickly.’ [tci20120922-26 DAK #26-27]

Although the object is suppressed from indexation in the verb form, it may occur as a noun phrase in the clause. In example (28), the speaker talks about garden magic and

people who steal the soil from other people's gardens. In the relative clause, the object *bad* 'ground' is suppressed from indexation in the verb, yet it appears as a noun phrase. The subject is indexed in the verb suffix and the corresponding noun phrase, the relative pronoun *mafa*, is in ergative case.

- (28) *nä kabenzo nnzä wawa gamokarä erä bad mafa ηakarkwrth.*  
 nä kabe=nzo nnzä wawa gamo=karä e\rä/ bad  
 INDF man=ONLY perhaps yam spell=PROP 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be ground  
 mafa ηa\kark/wrth  
 who.ERG.NSG 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/take  
 'Perhaps only other people, who take the soil away, have yam magic.'  
 [tci20130822-08 JAA #42]

The suppressed-object may also be a relative clause as in example (29), which is taken from a picture stimulus task.

- (29) *emothf ηatrikwr monme zffnZR.*  
 emoth=f ηa\trik/wr mon=me zf\fn/nZR  
 girl=ERG 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/tell how=INS 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:RPST:IPFV/hit  
 'The girl tells (the story of) how he hit her.'  
 [tci20120925 MAE #102]

There are a few verbs which always occur in the suppressed-object construction. A few examples are: *yonasi* 'drink', *fathasi* 'marry', *frzsi* 'fish/net (poison-root)', *naf* 'talk, speak' and *karksi* 'pull'.<sup>2</sup> With other verbs there is only a statistical tendency to enter this construction. For example, *yarizsi* 'hear' occurs 104 times in the corpus; 25 times the object is indexed and 79 times it is suppressed. In other words, in only about a quarter of all tokens of *yarizsi*, the verb means 'hear X'. In the other three quarters of tokens of *yarizsi*, it means 'hear (sth.)'. In (30), we see an example of *yarizsi* and *rfnaksi* 'taste' in the suppressed-object construction. The speaker explains how the news of the beginning yam harvest spread from East to West; from village to village.

- (30) *watik, we masu karé kwekaristh "oh, nafa z zärfnth!"*  
 watik, we masu karé kwe\karis/th oh nafa z  
 then also masu village=ERG.NSG 2|3PL:SBJ:ITER/hear oh 2|3NSG.ERG ALR  
 zä\rfn/th  
 2|3PL:SBJ:RPST:PFV/taste  
 'Then the Masu people always heard (the other village): "Oh, they have already tasted (the yams)!"'  
 [tci20131013-01 ABB #363]

### 8.3.8 Transitive clauses

This section deals with prototypical transitive clauses, which are transitive in their verb morphology, i.e. they are built from the ambifixing transitive template, as well as their

<sup>2</sup>The stem *karksi* can occur in a transitive template with the meaning 'take'. If it occurs in a suppressed-object construction, it means 'pull'. I analyse these as two different lexical items, because there is a difference in the semantics as well as the combinatorics of the stem.

noun phrase syntax, i.e. the actor argument is flagged with the ergative and the undergoer argument is in the absolutive. Therefore, suppressed-object constructions (see §8.3.7) can be described as non-prototypical transitive clauses because (i) the verb appears in the middle template, (ii) the object noun phrase is frequently omitted. However, noun phrases can generally be dropped in all clause types. The ambifixing verb template is described in §5.4.6. An example of a transitive clause is given below in (31).

- (31) *nzürna ηaref bäne ηad yrtmakwa.*  
 nzürna ηare=f      bäne      ηad      y\rtmak/wa  
 spirit woman=ERG.SG DEM:MED string(ABS) SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:IPFV/cut  
 ‘The *nzürna* woman cut that string.’ [tci20120827-03 KUT #142]

### 8.3.9 Ditransitive clauses

Ditransitive clauses employ the same template as transitive clauses. However, the valency changing prefix *a-* shifts the reference of the verb prefix from the direct object to the indirect object. The corresponding noun phrase appears in dative case. This is described in §5.4.6. Note that the *a-* prefix may increase as well as decrease the valency of a verb, hence, the label “valency changing prefix” (see §5.4.2).

Example (32) below shows the verbs *trikasi* ‘tell’ and *fänzsi* ‘show’. The recipient arguments are flagged for dative case and the respective arguments are indexed in the two verbs.

- (32) *nzone ηafyn bäin ane trikasi yatrikwath ... nzunwä ηafyf bäif zwafäsa.*  
 nzone ηafe=n      bäi=n      ane trika-si  
 1SG.POSS father=DAT.SG bäi=DAT.SG DEM tell-NMLZ  
 ya\trik/wath      (.) nzun=wä      ηafe=f      bäi=f  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:PST:IPFV/tell (.) 1SG.DAT=EMPH father=ERG.SG bäi=ERG.SG  
 zwa\fäs/a  
 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:IO:PST:PFV/show  
 ‘They told that story to my father Bäi ... and father Bäi showed (it) to me.’  
 [tci20110802 ABB #18-20]

Ditransitive clauses may also contain cognate objects, as in (32) *trikasi yatrikwath* ‘they told him the story’. Another example is *yathugsi* ‘trick (v)’ which often occurs with *gaso* ‘trick, lie’.

In §5.4.6, I argued that ditransitive as a category should be recognised, even though most ditransitive verbs are derived from transitives by (i) adding the valency change prefix *a-*, which (ii) changes the reference of the verb prefix to an indirect object (goal, recipient, beneficiary) and (iii) putting the respective argument noun phrase in dative case. The same strategy can be used to raise possessors in the cross-referencing of the verb. In example (33), it is the possessor (*nzone* ‘my’ 1SG), which is indexed in the verb, and not the possessed (*miyo* ‘desire/wish’ 3SG.F).

(33) *nzone miyo kwa wabthakwr.*

nzone miyo kwa wo-a-bthak-w-r-∅  
 1SG.POSS desire FUT 1SG.α-VC-finish.EXT-LK-2|3SG  
 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:IO:NPST:IPFV/finish

‘You will fulfill my wish.’

[tci20130823-06 CAM #23]

The ditransitive pattern is very productive and almost all transitive verbs can enter this construction. Most verbs retain their transitive semantics, but can index a beneficiary of the event. For example, in (34), the verb *fsisi* ‘count’ in the clause takes the object ‘yam suckers’. The ditransitive pattern only adds a beneficiary which is indexed in the verb.

(34) *nä efothen ... wawa tafo yafsinzake ... babuan.*

nä efoth=en (.) wawa tafo yafsinzake (.) babua=n  
 INDF day=LOC (.) yam sucker 1PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:PST:IPFV (.) babua=DAT.SG  
 ‘Some day ... we counted yam suckers for him ... for Babua.’

[tci20120814 ABB #165-167]

As I pointed out in §5.4.4, prefixing verbs (intransitives) can enter the same pattern, whereby a beneficiary or raised possessor, in dative and possessive case respectively, is indexed in the verb form. Example (35) is taken from a recording where two speakers discuss the content of a picture card. The prefixing verb *-thn* ‘be lying’ in the example does not index the objects that are lying on the ground, but the possessor instead.

(35) *ra kwa nm bäne wäthn? ... nafane nainai?*

ra kwa nm bäne wä\thn/ (.) nafane nainai  
 what FUT maybe DEM:MED 3SG.F:IO:NPST:IPFV/be.lying (.) 3SG.POSS sweet.potato  
 ‘What (of hers) might be lying there? ... her sweet potatoes?’

[tci20111004 RMA #108]

### 8.3.10 Experiencer-object constructions

Experiencer-object constructions express bodily, mental and emotional processes (‘get sunburned’, ‘shiver in fear’, ‘be angry’). These are framed as transitive clauses whereby the stimulus acts on the experiencer. Constructions of this type have been examined by Pawley et al. for Kalam (2000) showing that experiencer-objects as well as experiencer-subjects are found in the semantic domain of bodily and mental processes.<sup>3</sup> Komnzo confirms their findings. In terms of their morpho-syntax, experiencer-object constructions are characterised by the following criteria: (i) the stimulus argument appears in the ergative, (ii) the stimulus is indexed by a default 3SG in the verb suffix, (iii) the experiencer occurs in absolutive case, and (iv) the word order is UAV (undergoer actor verb).

Consider the two ways of expressing a feeling of hunger in the elicited examples in (36). In (36a) the experiencer is the subject of the copula clause, but in (36b) it is the

<sup>3</sup>Note that the notion of experiencer is slightly extended here to include bodily processes in addition to mental or emotional ones.

object of the verb *rmatksi* ‘cut’. In the latter the feeling of hunger is portrayed as somewhat stronger. Note that the choice of verb is not entirely fixed. One can replace *rmatksi* ‘cut’ with a light verb, for example *rä-* ‘do’ (‘hunger does me’), or with the phasal verb *bthaksi* ‘finish’ (‘hunger finishes me’), thereby changing the degree or intensity of the experienced feeling. Thus, the experiencer-object construction is one possibility to express mental and bodily processes.

- (36) a. *nzä frasi worä*  
 nzä frasi wo\rä/  
 1SG.ABS hunger 1SG.SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘I am hungry.’
- b. *nzä frasif wortmakwr*  
 nzä frasi=f wo\rtmak/wr  
 1SG.ABS hunger=ERG.SG 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/cut  
 ‘I am hungry. / I am starving.’ (Lit: ‘Hunger cuts me.’)

Examples like (36a) were given to me in elicitation, when asking ‘How do I say ‘I am hungry?’’. I first encountered experiencer-object constructions in more natural situations, for example in overhearing conversations or when translating recordings. Komnzo speakers explicitly regard experiencer-object constructions as more original and creative language. Therefore, it seems natural that these were rarely offered in the context of elicitation. Experiencer-object constructions portray a situation in much more colourful terms. They often evoke some kind of emotional reaction (laughter or sympathy) from the audience, as in (37), where a woman describes what happened to her as a small child when she was hiding on a tree from a pig.

- (37) *nzä wthf warfo bä kwräbth.*  
 nzä wth=f warfo bä kwrä\bth/  
 1SG.ABS faeces=ERG.SG above MED 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:IRR:PFV/finish  
 ‘I really had to take a dump there on top (of the tree).’ (Lit: ‘Excretes finish me.’)  
 [tci20150919-05 LNA #117]

Experiencer-object constructions express bodily and mental processes, and it is this internal stimulus which ‘acts’ on the experiencer. Two text examples were given in the description of the ergative case (§4.5) and are repeated below in (38) and (39).

- (38) *nokuyé fthé sabtha.*  
 noku=yé fthé sa\bth/a  
 anger=ERG.NSG when 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:PST:PFV/finish  
 ‘That is when he got really angry.’ (Lit. ‘Anger finished him.’)  
 [tci20120909-06 KAB #39]
- (39) *wtrif z zwefaf.*  
 wtri=f z zwe\faf/  
 fear=ERG.SG ALR 2|3SG>1SG:RPST:PFV/hold  
 ‘I am already scared.’ (Lit. ‘Fear holds me.’)  
 [tci20130901-04 RNA #164]

The stimulus noun phrase can be modified, for example with a nominal compound. In example (40) the stimulus *miyo* ‘desire’ is modified by two elements yielding *kabe zan miyo* ‘desire to kill people’. This example is repeated from the discussion of complex heads in §7.5.3.

- (40) *baf fthé sräbth nima ... kabe zan miyof.*  
 baf fthé srä\bth/ nima (.) kabe  
 RECOG.ERG.SG when 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/finish like.this (.) man  
 zan miyo=f  
 hitting desire=ERG.SG  
 ‘That is when this overcomes him ... the bloodlust for people.’ (Lit. ‘People killing desire finishes him.’)  
 [tci20130903-04 RNA #84-85]

Experiencer-object constructions differ in their basic word order from other clauses in that the experiencer, the object, comes first. This can be explained by the special semantics of the experiencer-object construction, in which the most salient element is the experiencer. However, most of the examples in this section do not include an overt noun phrase. One example from the corpus is given in (41). Note that the speaker corrects himself in this example. He first uses the absolutive (*frfr*) ‘shiver’, but then repeats the same noun in the ergative (*frfré*).

- (41) *nge fäth frfr a frfré n safum.*  
 nge fäth frfr a frfr=é n sa\fum/  
 child DIM shiver ah shiver=ERG.NSG IMN 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:RPST:PFV/pull  
 ‘The small child was almost shivering’ (Lit. ‘The shivers were about to pull him.’)  
 [tci20130901-04 YUK #26]

Note that in (41), the noun phrase is marked with the non-singular ergative (=é), but the verb indexes a singular actor. This also occurs in (38). All other examples in the corpus employ the singular ergative (=f). I take this as evidence for the limited grammatical behaviour of property nouns. All property nouns – like *noku* ‘anger’ in (38) and *frfr* ‘shiver’ in (41) – evade cross-referencing in the verb prefix slot, usually a middle is used instead. Property nouns are only indexed in experiencer-object constructions, though not in the prefix, but with a default 2|3SG in the suffix (see §3.1.4).

The second domain of experiencer-object constructions are bodily processes, like in (41) above. Below in (42-45) a few more examples of this type are given.

- (42) *zä zf fthé thkarf yafiyokwa ziyé.*  
 zä zf fthé thkar=f ya\fiyok/wa  
 PROX IMM when hardness=ERG.SG 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST.IPFV/make  
 z=\yé/  
 PROX=3SG.MASC:NPST.be  
 ‘That is when it got stuck right here.’ (Lit. ‘Hardness made it.’)  
 [tci20120922-09 DAK #18]



- (43) *nzä sukufa zürnf wortmakwr.*  
 nzä sukufa zürn=f wo\rtmak/wr kwan=en  
 1SG.ABS tobacco smoke=ERG.SG 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/cut throat=LOC  
 ‘The tobacco is very strong.’ (Lit. ‘Tobacco smoke cuts me.’) [overheard ]
- (44) *nzrmf wortmakwr kwanen.*  
 nzrm=f wo\rtmak/wr kwan=en  
 bitterness=ERG.SG 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/cut throat=LOC  
 ‘It is very sour.’ (Lit. ‘Bitterness cuts me.’) [overheard ]
- (45) *watik nzfrä ... efothf nfariwr.*  
 watik nzf\rä/ (.) efoth=f n\fari/wr  
 enough 1PL:SBJ:RPST:IPFV/be (.) sun=ERG.SG 2|3SG:SBJ>1PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/dry  
 ‘We have done enough ... We are burning in the sun.’ (Lit. ‘The sun dries us.’)  
 [tci20111119-03 ABB #200]

### 8.3.11 Cognate and pseudo-cognate object constructions

Cognate objects are a common phenomenon in Komnzo. Examples (46–48) contain a nominalised verb and an inflected verb. In all three examples, the nominalisation and the inflected verb form are of the same lexeme. Hence, (46) translates literally as ‘I tell them the telling’. The inflected verb indexes the indirect object (2|3PL) and as other ditransitive verbs, *trikasi* is the direct object of the verb.

- (46) *nze ane trikasi ätrikwé.*  
 nze ane trik-si ä\trik/wé  
 1SG.ERG DEM tell-NMLZ 1SG:SBJ>2|3PL:IO:NPST:IPFV/tell  
 ‘I tell them the story.’ (Lit. ‘I tell them the telling.’) [tci20111119-03 ABB #161]

There is an analytical problem with verbs which occur in the middle template. Example (48) translates literally as ‘He laughs the laughter’ or as ‘He laughter-laughs’. The middle template used in (47) and (48) only indexes the subject argument, not the object. Because of this, it cannot be determined whether the nominalisations *maikasi* ‘washing’ and *borsi* ‘laughing’ function as objects or whether they function predicatively. We will see below that a predicative function is a possible analysis in some cases. From this perspective, cognate objects and predicative nominals in light verb constructions can be portrayed as contiguous phenomena. Light verb constructions are described in the following section (§8.3.12).

- (47) *maikasi bä ñamayukwro.*  
 maik-si bä ña\maik/wro  
 wash-NMLZ MED SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:AND/wash  
 ‘I will wash there.’ (Lit. ‘I washing-wash.’) [tci20130823-06 STK #53]

(48) *borsi ηaborwr.*

borsi ηa\bor/wr

laugh-NMLZ 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/laugh

'He laughs.' (Lit. 'He laughs the laughing.')

[tci20111004 TSA #128]

A second problem is that many verbs lack regular nominalisations, which are formed with the suffix *-si*. These verbs use a common noun as in example (49) below. The adjective *kwosi* 'dead' functions adverbially and adds the meaning of a deep sleep. The noun *etfth* 'sleep', however, is semantically fully included in the meaning of the verb *rug-* 'sleep', just like the regular nominalisation *borsi* 'laugh' is included the inflected verb in (48) above. As a consequence, *etfth* is optional and the sentence would be grammatical without it. Note that the same is true examples (46-48).

(49) *fi etfth kwosi sfrugrm.*

fi etfth kwosi sf\rugr/m

3.ABS sleep dead 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR/sleep

'He was sleeping soundly.' (Lit. 'He was dead sleep sleeping.')

[tci20120904-02 MAB #98]

For want of a better term, I label examples like (49) 'pseudo-cognate object' constructions. They are unlike cognate objects because the verb stem and the nominal element are formally not related. Other examples are *rnzür-* 'dance, sing' and *wath* 'dance (n), song' and *-nor* 'shout, emit sound' and *kwan* 'shout (n)'. Although the verb stem and noun are not cognate, distributional evidence shows that they stand in the same relationship as an inflected verb and the corresponding regular nominalisation with *-si*. For example, the phasal verb *bthaksi* 'finish' takes the noun *wath* 'dance (n), song' to mean 'finish singing'. This is because there is no regular nominalisation available for the verb *rnzür-* 'dance, sing'.

The noun in these constructions is not always redundant. For example, it can be modified as the head of a compound, thereby modifying the predicate. In (50) the noun *etfth* 'sleep' occurs in a compound modified by *efoth* 'day' indicating that the speaker was sleeping during the day.

(50) *efoth etfth kwofrugrm e zizi.*

efoth etfth kwof\rugr/m e zizi

day sleep 1SG:SBJ:PST:DUR/sleep until afternoon

'I was sleeping during the day until the afternoon.' (Lit. 'I was day-sleep sleeping.')

[tci20111119-03 ABB #31]

This kind of predicate modification is developed to varying degrees. The best example is the intransitive verb *nor-* 'shout, emit a sound', which again lacks an infinitive and instead *kwan* 'shout (n), call' is used. Hence, *kwan yanor* 'He shouts the shout' or 'He emits the shout' is a common expression. Komnzo has a long list of ideophones, which express auditory sensations (§3.7.1). All of these enter into compounds of the type ideophone + *kwan* as in *sö kwan* 'sound of wallabies grunting' or *nzam kwan* 'the sound of

smacking one's lips'. Most auditory sensations are expressed in this construction with the verb *nor-*. In example (51), the gurgling sound of a headhunter's victim is described.

- (51) *grr kwannzo fobo zwanorm.*  
 grr kwan=nzo fobo zwa\nor/m  
 rasping.sound shout=ONLY DIST.ALL 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR/shout  
 'She was just gurgling.' (Lit. 'She was shouting/emitting only the rasping sound.')
- [tci20111119-01 ABB #154]

Example (52) comes from a hunting trip, where I was instructed to imitate the sound of a jumping wallaby (*bübü kwan*) by hitting the ground with a thick stick.

- (52) *bübü kwan gnanoré!*  
 бүбү kwan gna\nor/é  
 thumping.sound shout 2SG:SBJ:IMP:IPFV/shout  
 'You must beat the ground!' (Lit. 'You must shout/emit the thumping sound.')
- [overheard ]

Lastly, the verb can be modified by using a different noun. This is a marginal pattern, and I can give only two examples. Instead of *kwan*, one can use the noun *frk* 'blood' with verb *nor-* 'shout' to express that someone is bleeding as in (53), which comes from the description of a picture card.

- (53) *ηare frk neba komnzo wānor.*  
 ηare frk neba komnzo wā\nor/  
 woman blood opposite only 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/shout  
 'The woman is only bleeding on the other side.'
- [tci20111004 RMA #402]

The second example is the noun *wanzo* 'dream' which can be used with *rug-* 'sleep' (instead of *etfth* 'sleep (n)'). In example (54), the speaker talks about the mythological significance of the bird of paradise, when it appears in one's dream.

- (54) ... *ythamama wanzo fthé nzarurgr.*  
 (.) ythama=ma wanzo fthé nzra\rugr/  
 (.) bird.of.paradise=CHAR dream when 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/sleep  
 '... when you are dreaming of the bird of paradise.'
- [tci20120817-02 ABB #29]

There are a handful of (intransitive) verbs for which pseudo-cognate constructions are possible, even though there is a regular nominalisation with *-si* available. For example, *bznsi* 'work (v.i.)' can occur together with *znsä* 'work (n)'. Another example is *mthizsi* 'suffer' which can occur with *zi* 'pain' as in example (55).

- (55) *zi swathizrm ... ekri zi ... kofä ysama.*  
 zi swa\thi/zrm (.) ekri zi (.) kofä ys=ma  
 pain 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR/suffer (.) flesh pain (.) fish thorn=CHAR  
 'He was in pain ... body pain ... from the fish spike.'
- [tci20100905 ABB #91-93]

We have seen above that cognate and pseudo-cognate constructions are similar to light verb constructions in that a nominal element contributes to the meaning of the predicate. They are markedly different in the degree of modification, because light verbs are much more general in their semantics (*rä-* ‘do’, *fiyoksi* ‘make’, *ko-* ‘become’). It might be best to view this as a cline: on one end of the spectrum we have cognate object constructions, where the nominalisation of the verb occurs together with the same verb as in (46-48). On the other end of the spectrum we have light verb constructions, where the nominal element not only carries most of the meaning of the predicate, but it always differs formally from the verb. Light verbs are described in the next section.

### 8.3.12 Light verb constructions

There are number of light verbs in Komnzo. These are *rä-* ‘do’, *ko-* ‘become’, *fiyoksi* ‘make’ and the two phasal verbs *thkäfsi* ‘start’ and *bthaksi* ‘finish’. The first two are interesting from a lexical perspective. The light verb *rä-* is build from the same stem as the copula. In a prefixing template this stem means ‘be’, but in an ambifixing template it means ‘do’. The second stem *ko-* only occurs in ambifixing templates, where it can mean ‘speak’ or ‘become’. Although these are only statistical tendencies, in the middle template *ko-* usually means ‘become’, where in a transitive template it usually means ‘speak’.

The light verb ‘do’ is usually used in the middle template indexing only the subject argument. A very frequent collocation is with *fam* ‘thought’, thus, literally: ‘do thoughts’ means ‘think’. Examples (56) and (57) are taken from a picture stimulus task. Note that *fam* is not indexed in the verb form, even if the light verb indexes an object. In (57) *fam* functions predicatively, and a literal translation of ‘He thinks of her’ is ‘He thought-does her’.

- (56) *wati, ane fof yamnzr fam qarär.*  
 wati ane fof ya\m/nzr fam qarär/r  
 then DEM EMPH 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/sit thought 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/do  
 ‘Okay, this one is sitting. He is thinking.’ [tci20111004 RMA #133]

- (57) *zane emoth fam wrär anema yatrikwr nafan.*  
 zane emoth fam w\rär/r ane=ma  
 DEM:PROX girl thought 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/do DEM=CHAR  
 ya\trik/wr nafan  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:NPST:IPFV/tell 3SG.DAT  
 ‘He thinks of that girl and he tells him about her.’ [tci20111004 RMA #52]

This is a general feature of light verbs. They require a nominal element which functions predicatively. Hence, we find predicative nominals in both intransitive (56) and transitive structures (57). In these examples, the predicative nominal was the noun *fam*, but very often property nouns are used for this function, especially property nouns with more event-oriented semantics. In example (58), the speaker remarks that his dogs have disappeared. The meaning of disappearing is expressed by the property noun *ofe* ‘absent/absence’.

- (58) *fi kafar mane erera näbi ane ofe ɲarerath.*  
 fi kafar mane e\rä/ra näbi ane ofe ɲa\rä/rath.  
 but big which 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be one DEM absent 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV/do  
 ‘As for the big dogs, they disappeared for good.’ [tci20111119-03 ABB #70]

The light verb *ko-* ‘become’ shows a similar behaviour. It can appear with nominals like in (59) with the adjective *kafar* ‘big’. But often ‘become’ occurs with property nouns which function predicatively. In (60), the property noun *wefwef* ‘excited/excitement’ contributes most of the meaning of the event.

- (59) *wati fi zena nge=mär ... kafar z zäkor.*  
 wati fi zena nge=mär (.) kafar z zä\kor/  
 then 3.ABS today child=PRIV (.) big ALR SG:SBJ:RPST:PFV/become  
 ‘Well, today she has become already old without (having) children.’  
 [tci20120814 ABB #214-215]

- (60) “Daddy skri, bun ane fof yé. be ane sawob.” *watik skri ane wewefwnzo kräkor.*  
 daddy skri bun ane fof \yé/ be ane  
 father skri 2SG.DAT DEM EMPH 3SG.MASC:NPST:IPFV/be 2SG.ERG DEM  
 sa\wob/ watik skri ane wewef=nzo  
 2SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IMP:PFV/eat then skri DEM excited=ONLY  
 krä\kor/  
 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/become  
 “Daddy Skri, this one is for you. You eat this one.” Well, Skri got excited!  
 [tci20120922-25 ALK #24-25]

The light verb ‘become’ together with the property noun *miyatha* ‘knowledge’ is used to express coming into the state of knowing something, literally ‘become knowledge(able)’. In example (61) a man, who fell off a coconut palm in an attempt to steal palm wine, is badly insulted. The imperative *miyatha käkor* can be translated as both ‘you know it!’ or ‘you feel it!’.

- (61) *fof nrä! miyatha käkor! buɲame zakiyar!*  
 fof n\rä/ miyatha kä\kor/  
 EMPH 2SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be knowledgeable 2SG:SBJ:IMP:PFV/become  
 bu-ɲame za\kiyar/  
 2SG.POSS-mother 2SG:SBJ>3SG:F:IMP:PFV/copulate  
 ‘It is you! You feel it now! Fuck your mother!’ [tci20120904-01 MAB #95]

Example (62) is about the *tütü* bird (Pheasant Coucal), who used to be the custodian of fire before people knew about it. In the example, they find out about the bird’s secret. Note that the light verb ‘become’ indexes the *tütü* bird (3SG.F). Thus, the predicative nominal *miyatha* ‘knowledgeable’ in the light verb construction can be used with an intransitive (61) or transitive sense (62).

- (62) *nä kayé ... miyatha wkonzath. “oh budben mni rä fof”*  
 nä kayé (.) miyatha w\ko/nzath oh  
 INDF yesterday (.) knowledgeable 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:IPFV/become oh  
 budben mni \rä/ fof  
 2SG.LOC fire 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be EMPH  
 ‘One day ... they found out about her. “Oh, so the fire is really with you.”’  
 [tci20131008 KAB #10-11]

The verb *fiyoksi* ‘make’ can occur as a proto-typical transitive verb without the “semantic assistance” of a predicative nominal. However, it commonly occurs as a light verb. In example (63), we find two occurrences of *fiyoksi*. The first token indexes *zrin* ‘problem, burden’ (3SG.F) as its object argument, and *fiyoksi* can be translated as ‘create’. The second token of *fiyoksi* indexes the subject. In the latter, the predicative nominal *durua* ‘help’ contributes most of the semantic content of the predicate.

- (63) *nzä nima “bone zrin rä bone nagayf ane zrin zwafiyokwr keke kwa monme durua ñafiyokwre”*  
 nzä nima bone zrin \rä/ bone nagay=f ane  
 1SG.ABS QUOT 2SG.POSS problem 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be 2SG.POSS child=ERG DEM  
 zrin zwa\fiyok/wr keke kwa mon=me durua  
 problem 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:RPST:IPFV/make NEG FUT how=INS help  
 ña\fiyok/wre  
 1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/make  
 ‘I said: “This is your problem. Your child has created this problem. We will not help.”’  
 [tci20120922-24 STK #22]

Analogous to the other light verbs, *fiyoksi* can be used in a transitive structure. In example (64), an infamous sorcerer is annoyed by a few other men. The main semantic contribution to the event comes from the property noun *thythy* ‘nuisance’, while the object indexed in the light verb is the sorcerer (3SG.MASC).

- (64) *wati thythy zä zf swafiyokwrnth.*  
 wati thythy zä zf swa\fiyok/wrnth  
 then nuisance PROX IMM 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:DUR/make  
 ‘Then, they were annoying him here.’  
 [tci20131013ß02 ABB #59]

The two phasal verbs usually take nominalised verbs as their complements (see §9.3.1), but they can also be supplemented by property nouns with more event-oriented semantics. Hence, they exhibit the same double life as full verbs and light verbs as *fiyoksi*. Two examples of *thkäfsi* ‘start’ functioning as a light verb are given below. In (65) a man is trying to enter the house in which two children are hiding. The phasal verb indexes the two children, while the semantic content of the event comes solely from the property noun *zirkn* ‘persistence’.

- (65) *wati zänfrefa yanyak nagayé kma n zirkn thrathkäf ... zirkn.*  
 wati zän\ref/a yan\yak/ nagayé kma  
 then SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/come.up 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/walk children POT  
 n zirkn thra\thkäf/ (.) zirkn  
 IMN persistence 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3DU:OBJ:IRR:PFV/start (.) persistence  
 ‘Then, he came up from the river, he walked. He was about to start hassling the  
 two children ... hassling (them)’ [tci20100905 ABB #111]

In example (66), a malevolent spirit is trying to persuade a man to stay the night in her house. Again, the property noun *garamgaram* ‘sweet-talk’ expresses most of the semantics of the event.

- (66) *garamgaram srethkäf.*  
 garamgaram sre\thkäf/  
 sweet.talk 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR.PFV/start  
 ‘She started sweet-talking him.’ [tci20120901-01 MAK #88]

As I have shown above, that light verbs (*rä-* ‘do’, *ko-* ‘become’, *fiyoksi* ‘make’, *thkäfsi* ‘start’ and *bthaksi* ‘finish’) require semantic assistance from nominal predicates. However, nominal predicates can be found with other verbs, i.e. full verbs. In the following examples, the concepts of ‘being concentrated’ (67) and ‘being locked in’ (68) are expressed by the property nouns *mogu* ‘concentration’ and *ttw* ‘inertia’ respectively. Both meanings could be expressed with light verbs, for example (67) could be expressed as *mogu nararé* ‘I am concentrating’ (Lit. ‘I am concentration-doing’). The two examples below employ full verbs instead, which should be seen as more idiosyncratic way of speaking.

- (67) *biskar mnifnzo mogu kwofkämgrwm*  
 biskar mni=f=nzo mogu kwof\kämgrwm  
 cassava cooking=ERG.SG=ONLY concentration 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:PST:DUR/block  
 ‘Cooking the cassava took all my attention. (Lit. ‘Cassava cooking concentration blocked me.’)’ [tci20111119-03 ABB #79]

- (68) *ttw zwermänth. wati fobo thufnrmth*  
 ttw zwe\rmän/th wati fobo  
 inertia 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:ITER/close then DIST.ALL  
 thu\fn/nzrmth  
 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/kill  
 ‘They always closed off (the village). Then, they were killing them.’ [tci20120818 ABB #46-47]

I point out in §3.2 that verbs are considered to be a closed word class in Komnzo. Part of the argumentation is based on the observation that loanwords, which are verbs in the donor language, commonly end up as property nouns in a light verb construction. One

such example was shown above in (63) with the property noun *durua* ‘help’, which is a transitive verb in Motu (Turner-Lister & Clark 1935: 61). Below, two examples with English loans are given. In example (69) the verb *fiyoksi* indexes the object *zokwasi* ‘words’ (2|3PL), while the loanword *senis* ‘change’ expresses most of the semantics (Lit. ‘I will not change-make the words’). In example (70) the middle verb *rä-* ‘do’ is supplemented by the English loan *zek* ‘check’ (Lit. ‘I check-do for water’).

- (69) *zokwasi ke kwa senis thräfiyothé.*  
 zokwasi keke kwa senis thrä\fiyoth/é  
 words NEG FUT change 1SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:IRR:PFV/make  
 ‘I will not change my promise.’ [tci20121019-04 ABB #226]
- (70) *kränrsöfthé mäbri ttfö ... nor bobo zek kräre ... keke*  
 krän\rsöfth/é mäbri ttfö (.) no=r bobo zek  
 1SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/descend mäbri creek (.) water=PURP MED.ALL check  
 krä\r/é (.) keke  
 1SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/do (.) NEG  
 ‘I went down to the creek in Mäbri to check for water, but no (water).’  
 [tci20130903-03 MKW #146-147]

For situations of language contact, Heine and Kuteva describe how minor patterns in a language can become a major patterns (2005: 44). It is clear that light verb constructions are not a minor pattern in Komnzo. However, it seems evident that with more (verb) loans entering the language, light verb constructions will become even more widely used.

## 8.4 Questions

Content questions in Komnzo are formed by replacing the respective noun phrase with an interrogative. Word order may or may not be changed for pragmatic purposes. As content questions are always pragmatically motivated, the element which is asked about is automatically focussed. Therefore, the interrogative is often found in fronted position, but fronting is not part of question formation. Example (71) shows an example with the interrogative *ra* ‘what’.

- (71) *nafafis zräs “be ranzo kayé thwanfiyokwr?”*  
 nafa-fis zräs/ be ra=nzo kayé  
 3.POSS-husband 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IRR:PFV/ask 2SG.ERG what=ONLY yesterday  
 thwan\fiyok/wr  
 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:RPST:IPFV:VENT/make  
 ‘Her husband asked her: “Just what have you done to them yesterday?”’  
 [tci20120901-01 MAK #163]

Example (72) shows an example where the interrogative occurs inside a complex noun phrase ‘whose sister’. Note that the noun phrase which contains the interrogative has



been fronted for pragmatic reasons. This is an example of a rhetorical question, because it came up in a discussion about the type of punitive actions one would launch against one's brothers-in-laws.

- (72) *“mafane emoth be zulfnzrm?” nima fof skonzé*  
 maf=ane emoth be zu\fn/nzrm nima fof  
 who=POSS sister 2SG.ERG 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:DUR/hit QUOT EMPH  
 s\ko/nzé  
 2SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IMP:IPFV/speak  
 “Whose sister were you beating?” that is what you must say to him.  
 [tci20120805-01 ABB #219]

Polar questions are often structurally identical to indicative statement, but they have a rising intonation contour as in (73) and (74). Additionally the iative particle *z* ‘already’ can be used even though the verb is in the non-past (73).

- (73) *zbär bä zagrwä ämnzro. z wanrizrth?*  
 zbär bä zagr=wä ä\m/nzro z  
 night 2.ABS far=EMPH 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:AND/sit ALR  
 wan\riz/rth  
 2|3PL:SBJ>1SG.IO:NPST:IPFV:VENT/hear  
 ‘You are sitting far away. Can you hear me?’ (Lit. ‘You hear my (words)  
 already?’)  
 [tci20121019-04 SKK #9]
- (74) *ane wri kambeyé kma n yrärth “kwa kräznobe?” naf ekonzr “keke”*  
 ane wri kambe=yé kma n y\rä/rth  
 DEM intoxication man=ERG.NSG POT IMN 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/do  
 kwa krä\znob/e naf e\ko/nzr keke  
 FUT 1PL:SBJ:IRR:PFV/drink 3SG.ERG 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/speak NEG  
 ‘These drunkards are trying (to convince him): “Will we drink?” He says to them  
 “No”’  
 [tci20111004 RMA #509]

Alternative questions are formed by a disjunctive coordination with *o* ‘or’. In (75), the alternatives are expressed by two clauses, and in (76) by two noun phrases.

- (75) *fam kwarärmth “kwa ywokrakwr o kwa ηabrüzr?”*  
 fam kwa\rä/rmth kwa y\wokrak/wr o kwa  
 thought 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/do FUT 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/float or FUT  
 ηa\brüz/r  
 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/submerge  
 ‘They were thinking: “Will it float or will it sink?”’  
 [tci20120929-02 SIK #31]
- (76) *zokwasi fefeme natrikwé o markai zokwasime?*  
 zokwasi fefe=me na\trik/wé o markai zokwasi=me  
 language real=INS 1SG:SBJ>2SG.IO:NPST:IPFV/tell or white man language=INS  
 ‘Will I tell you (the story) in Komnzo or in English?’ (Lit. ‘... in the real language  
 or the white man’s language?’)  
 [tci20120901-01 MAK #1]

Question tags like *o keke* ‘or not’ can be added, which also receive a rising intonation.

- (77) *kwa nm weto worär o keke?*  
 kwa nm weto wo\rä/r o keke  
 FUT maybe joy 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/do or NEG  
 ‘Maybe he will be happy towards me or not?’ [tci20111004 RMA #477]

## 8.5 Negation

At the clause level, negation is expressed periphrastically with the negator *keke* in pre-verbal position as in example (78). See §3.4.1 for more information on *keke* and its variant *kyo*.

- (78) *nafanme emoth keke kränrit nzedbo.*  
 nafanme emoth keke krän\rit/ nzedbo  
 3PL.POSS girl NEG 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV:VENT/CROSS.OVER 1NSG.ALL  
 ‘They will not exchange sisters with us.’ [tci20120814 ABB #319]

One exception is the prohibitive construction (see §6.3.2). This construction consists of the potential particle *kma*, the apprehensive clitic *m=*, and the verb in the imperative. The apprehensive clitic may attach either to the verb or to the potential particle. This construction is best translated into English as ‘must not’ as can be seen in example (79). Note that the negator cannot be included in this construction.

- (79) *nznäbrimath “bä kma thiyaké! kafarnzo ni nyak!”*  
 nznä\brim/ath bä kma=m thi\yak/é  
 2|3PL:SBJ>1PL:OBJ:PST:PFV/return 2.ABS POT=APPR 2PL:SBJ:IMP:IPFV/walk  
 kafar=nzo ni n\yak/  
 big=ONLY 1NSG 1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/walk  
 ‘They brought us back and said: “You must not go! Only us big ones will go.”’ [tci20120904-02 MAB #232-233]

Negation at the level of the constituent can be expressed in a number of ways. The word *matak* ‘nothing’ is used to express non-existence, usually in a copula clause. This is shown in example (80) where a man takes notice that he is alone in the village. *Matak* can also be used in a non-verb predication, for example *nge matak* ‘(they were) no children’. Alternatively, any noun phrase can be negated by using the privative case marker *=mär*. This is described in §4.14.

- (80) *kabe matak erä nima z bramöwä kwafarkwrth.*  
 kabe matak e\rä/ nima z bramöwä  
 people nothing 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:COP like.this ALR all  
 kwa\far/krth  
 2|3PL:SBJ:RPST:IPFV/set.off  
 ‘There are no people (here). All of them have already left.’ [tci20120901-01 MAK #77]

Negative indefinites expressing ‘none whatsoever’ or ‘nothing at all’ are constructed by adding the negator *keke* to an noun phrase that includes the indefinite marker *nä*. For example, *nä kabe* means ‘some man’ or ‘someone’, but *kabe nä keke* means ‘nobody at all’. Note that the indefinite is always postposed in this construction. The same can be achieved by adding *nä* to an interrogative as in (81). I describe this topic in more detail in §3.1.11.

(81) *keke kwa ra nä zränzinth.*

keke kwa ra    nä    zrän\zin/th

NEG FUT what INDF 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:IO:IRR:PFV:VENT/put.down

‘They will leave nothing for her.’

[tci20131004 RMA #9]







zwä\rmän/th  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG:F:OBJ:RPST:PFV/close  
 ‘She did not come outside because they had already closed her thoughts (with  
 magic).’ [tci20120901-01 MAK #148-149]

Lastly, I want to contrast the use of the recognitional from other demonstratives. Consider example (5), which includes the general demonstrative *ane* in the characteristic case in the second clause. The demonstrative *ane* functions anaphorically, and in that sense it is the mirror image of the recognitional. The events ‘disturb’ and ‘submerge’ stand in a causal relationship, but the components are reversed. We can translate it to English with ‘therefore’ or ‘that’s why’. The two clauses are otherwise independent. This is also supported by the paragraph marker *watik* ‘well, then’ which occurs at the beginning of the second clause, but this is optional.

- (5) *ane ηatha bä nzwathofikwr ... watik anema nzibrüzé bobo.*  
 ane ηatha bä nzwathofik/wr (.) watik ane=ma  
 DEM dog MED 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:RPST:IPFV/disturb (.) then DEM=CHAR  
 nz=ybrüzé bobo  
 IPST=1SG:SBJ>2|3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/submerge MED.ALL  
 ‘That dog disturbed me there. Well, that’s why I pushed him into the  
 water.’ [tci20130903-03 MKW #188]

The examples above illustrate, that there is a cline between syntactically integrated clauses, i.e. subordinated clauses, and independent clauses. While both ends of the cline are relatively easy to identify, the middle is a grey zone. It is clear that examples like (5) consists of two independent clauses. Likewise, the nominalised predicates in (1 - 3) are clear cases of subordination. But examples like (4) are somewhat indeterminate. On the one hand, the recognitional pronoun creates a gap that needs to be filled. In other words, semantically, the second clause is subordinated to the first clause. On the other hand, the second clause is syntactically independent. Therefore, I refrain from analysing the recognitional as a subordinator, but rather as having a connecting function.<sup>1</sup>

The following description is functionally motivated, that is subsections are sorted thematically. For example, a subsection on purposive clauses will include clear cases of subordination, but also constructions where the purpose is expressed in an independent clause connected with the recognitional. I will describe coordinated clauses (§9.2), complement clauses (§9.3), adverbial clauses (§9.4), relative clauses (§9.5), conditional and temporal clauses (§9.6) and direct speech and thought (§9.7).

## 9.2 Coordinated clauses

Coordination refers to syntactic constructions where two or more elements of equal status are connected (Haspelmath 2007). Komnzo employs the same mechanisms for

<sup>1</sup>Note that the recognitional demonstrative can be inflected for following cases: characteristic =*ma* ‘because’, instrumental =*me* ‘thereby’ and purposive =*mr* ‘in order to, until’.

## 9 Complex syntax

coordinating noun phrases as it does for coordinating clauses. The word *a* ‘and’ can be used for conjunctive coordination (6) and the word *o* ‘or’ can be used for disjunctive coordination (7).

- (6) *mni wthomonwath a zräföfth.*  
 mni w\thomon/wath a zräföf/th  
 fire 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:PST:PST:IPFV/prepare.fire and 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:IRR:PFV/burn  
 ‘They piled the fire and burn it.’ [tci20120901-01 MAK #155]
- (7) *nafanamaf wnfathwr o ynfathwr.*  
 nafa-ŋame=f wn\fath/wr o  
 3.POSS-mother=ERG.SG 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:NPST.VENT/hold or  
 yn\fath/wr  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST.VENT/hold  
 ‘(The child’s) mother holds her or holds him.’ [tci20111004 RMA #327-328]

For conjunctive coordination it is quite common to have no overt marker (8). Especially in sequences of events, two or more inflected verbs can follow each other. Example (8) describes the felling a sago palm.

- (8) *wati yfarwake ... sabthake ... safümnzake fof.*  
 wati y\far/wake (.) sa\bth/ake (.)  
 then 1PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:PST:IPFV/chop (.) 1PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:PST:PFV/finish (.)  
 sa\fümnz/ake fof  
 1PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:PST:PFV/pull.over EMPH  
 ‘Then we chopped it (and) finished it (and) pulled it over.’  
 [tci20120929-02 SIK #19-21]

Other ways of coordinating two clauses involve the manner demonstrative *nima* ‘like this’, which is commonly used to introduce direct speech (see §9.7). In example (9), *nima* indicates the manner of movement (accompanied with a appropriate gesture), but it also connects the two following clauses.

- (9) *nabi tutin fä fof zumirwanzrm füsfüsf... nima zفزänzrm fombo ... nima zفزänzrm.*  
 nabi tuti=n fä fof zu\mirwa/nzrm füsfüs=f  
 bamboo branch=LOC DIST EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:DUR/swing wind=ERG.SG  
 (.) nima zفzä/nzrm fombo (.) nima  
 (.) like.this 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:DUR/carry DIST.ALL (.) like.this  
 zفzä/nzrm  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:DUR/carry  
 ‘The wind was swinging (the lamp) on the bamboo (and) it was moving it there  
 (and) it was moving it here.’ [tci20111119-03 ABB #117-118]



## 9.3 Complement clauses

### 9.3.1 Phasal verbs

The most common complement taking predicates in Komnzo are the two phasal verbs *thkäfksi* ‘start’ and *bthaksi* ‘finish’. Other verbs show similar behaviour, for example *gathiksi* ‘stop, leave’, *mäyogsi* ‘continue, repeat’.

With phasal verbs the indexation structure from the nominalised verb is raised into the matrix clause. The values of those categories expressed in the verb form are marked on the phasal verb. This may include number, person and gender of the arguments, but also tense, aspect, mood and direction. Example (10) shows the ‘non-phasal’ clause *bad wtharinzake* ‘we were digging the ground’. The verb indexes the actor (1PL) and the undergoer *bad* ‘ground’ (3SG.F). In the first clause of the example, the same state of affairs is expressed, but the verb ‘dig’ occurs in its infinitive *tharisi*, and its argument structure is raised into the phasal verb *thkäfksi* ‘start’. Now it is the phasal verb which indexes a first plural actor and a third singular feminine undergoer.

- (10) *watik bad fof tharisi zathkäfake ... bad wtharinzake zabthake.*  
 watik bad fof thari-si za\thkäf/ake (.) bad  
 then ground EMPH dig-NMLZ 1PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:PFV/start (.) ground  
 w\thari/nzake za\bth/ake  
 1PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:IPFV/dig 1PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:PFV/start  
 ‘Then we started to dig the ground. We were digging the ground and finished  
 it.’ [tci20120929-02 SIK #72-73]

This is also found with ditransitive events, as in (11) below. The verb *thkäfksi* ‘start’ indexes the indirect object. Note that the dative noun phrase is omitted.

- (11) *wri no n säthkäfath yarisi.*  
 wri no n sä\thkäf/ath yari-si  
 drunk water IMN 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:PST:PFV/start give-NMLZ  
 ‘They were about to give him alcohol.’ [tci20120925 MAE #158]

Verbs in the middle template also raise their respective indexation into the phasal verb. The middle template can be used with several functions (see §5.4.5). Example (12) shows the verb *yonasi* ‘drink’, which always occurs in a middle template. In the example *yonasi* occurs in the infinitive. Consequently, the phasal verb takes over this indexing pattern and only encodes the subject, but not the object.

- (12) *nä kayé ... watik yonasi zethkäfa.*  
 nä kayé (.) watik yona-si ze\thkä/fa  
 some day (.) then drink-NMLZ SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/start  
 ‘One day, he started to drink.’ [tci20120925 MAE #83]

In example (13), the prefixing verb *msaksi* ‘sit, dwell’ is used in its infinitive. Since, the phasal verb *thkäfksi* ‘start’ cannot enter the prefixing template, the middle template is

used instead. As I describe in §5.4.4, the prefixing template is a minor pattern in Komzo and most intransitive verb are encoded using the middle template. Furthermore, the prefixing template usually has stative semantics.

- (13) *wati foba msaksi fefe zathkäfake.*  
 wati foba msak-si fefe za\thkäf/ake  
 then DIST.ABL dwell-NMLZ really 1DU:SBJ:PST:PFV/start  
 ‘From there, we began our married life.’ (Lit. ‘We began dwelling.’)  
 [tci20130823-08 WAM #47]

Example (14) shows that for the middle verb *yak* ‘run’ the phasal verb takes over the indexation.<sup>2</sup> Note that the directional value (VENT) is also raised into the phasal verb.

- (14) *kabe ane zenthkäfath yak.*  
 kabe ane zen\thkäf/ath yak  
 man DEM 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:PFV:VENT/start run  
 ‘The people started to run here.’  
 [tci20131013-01 ABB #91]

### 9.3.2 Complements of knowledge

Complements of knowledge are structured differently from phasal complements. They involve a property noun with predicative function plus the copula to form a predicate of knowledge (*miyatha* ‘knowledge(-able)’) or ignorance (*miyamr* ‘ignorant/ignorance’). Note that the latter has probably developed from a more overt marking that involved the privative case marker =*mär*. The acquisition of knowledge is expressed by the property noun *miyatha* plus the light verb *ko-* ‘become’. The epistemic content of these predicates of knowledge and ignorance – what is known or not known – can be expressed by a number of different strategies. Examples (15) and (16) show complements in which a nominalised verb form in the absolutive is added. In (15), the nominalised verb constitutes the head of a compound ‘coconut climbing’.

- (15) *nzä miyatha worä ηazi sogsi.*  
 nzä miyatha wo\rä/ ηazi sog-si  
 1SG.ABS knowledge 1SG.SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be coconut climb-NMLZ  
 ‘I know how to climbing coconut.’ (Lit. ‘I am knowledgeable (about) coconut climbing’)  
 [overheard ]

The predicate of knowledge construction (*miyatha/miyamr* plus copula) is a frequent collocation. Therefore, it is possible to drop the copula altogether as in (15).

<sup>2</sup>This verb is irregular: instead of a nominalised infinitive with *-si*, the third singular masculine form *yak* is used. However, *yak* is the third singular of ‘walk’ and not of ‘run’. This would be *ηakwir*. Thus, ‘walk’ employs the noun *moth* ‘path, way’ as its nominalisation and ‘run’ employs *yak*.

- (16) *bäne ruga yfränzre ... afa fi miyamr ykwasi ... nzeféngo.*  
 bäne ruga y\frä/nzre (.) afa fi miyamr  
 DEM:MED pig 1PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:NPST:IPFV/singe.off (.) father 3.ABS ignorance  
 ykwa-si (.) nzefé=nzo  
 cut.meat-NMLZ (.) 1SG.ERG.EMPH=ONLY  
 ‘We burn the hair off that pig ... father doesn’t know how to cut it ... only I  
 (know).’ [tci20120821-02 LNA #61-62]

As described in §4.12, the characteristic case can express a topic of conversation. Example (17) shows that the epistemic content can also be marked with the characteristic case.

- (17) *zf wthkärwé zokwasi nzä monme miyatha worä no kzima.*  
 zf w\thkär/wé zokwasi nzä mon=me miyatha  
 IMM 1SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/start speech 1SG.ABS how=INS knowledge  
 wo\rä/ no kzi=ma  
 1SG.SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be rain barktray=CHAR  
 ‘I will start the story how I know about the rain making (magic).’  
 [tci20110810-01 MAB #8]

The epistemic content can be expressed as a relative clause, which takes the predicate of knowledge as its head as in example (18).

- (18) *bä z miyatha erä maf n zwäng?*  
 bä z miyatha e\rä/ maf n  
 2.ABS ALR knowledge 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be who.ERG IMN  
 zwäng/  
 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:RPST:PFV/shoot  
 ‘Do you know who almost shot me?’ [tci20130927-06 MAB #37]

The epistemic content can also be expressed in an independent clause, connected, for example, with *nima* ‘like this’ (19). The use of *nima* in this example can also be analysed as quoting inner thought (see §9.7).

- (19) *fi miyamr sfrärm nima fi zbo ern.*  
 fi miyamr sf\rä/rm nima fi zbo  
 3.ABS ignorance 3SG.MASC:SBJPST:DUR/be like.this 3.ABS PROX.ALL  
 e\rn/  
 2|3DU:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘He did not know those two are here.’ [tci20130927-06 MAB #123]

The acquisition of knowledge is expressed by replacing the copula with the light verb *ko-* ‘become’. Example (20) is taken from a text about a punitive custom, whereby the perpetrator is humiliated by giving him a large amount of yams, which he is expected to pay back the following year. The epistemic content is expressed by a relative clause.

- (20) “*miyatha kākōr bā monwā zbrigwé bā ra nrā? daw kabe?*” *nima kwakonzrmth.*  
 miyatha kākōr/ bā mon=wā  
 knowledge 2SG:SBJ:IMP:PFV/become 2.ABS how=EMPH  
 z\brig/wé bā ra n\rä/ daw kabe  
 2SG:SBJ>3SG.F:SBJ:IMP:IPFV/return 2.ABS what 2SG.SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be garden man  
 nima kwa\ko/nzrmth  
 QUOT 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/say  
 “‘You see how you pay this back! What are you? A gardener?’ that is what they  
 were saying.” [tci20120805-01 ABB #241]

Note that the phrase *miyatha kākōr!* can be purely epistemic “(Now) you know it!” or it can express an experiential sensation “(Now) you feel it!”.

### 9.3.3 Complements of desire

Much of what has been said about complements of knowledge, can be said about complements of desire. The property noun *miyo* ‘desire’ is used for this.<sup>3</sup> It can be negated with the privative case =*mār*: *miyomār*. Again a property noun plus copula construction expresses the concept of ‘want, wish or hope’: *ra miyo erā?* ‘What do you want’ (Lit. ‘What desire you are?’). The clause encoding the desired (or undesired) can be expressed in a variety of ways. Example (21) shows a nominalised verb *mgthksi* ‘feed’ in the absolutive. The verb is heading a compound ‘pig feeding’.

- (21) *zena keke miyo worā ruga mgthksi ... znsä ttüfr.*  
 zena keke miyo wo\rä/ ruga mgthk-si (.) znsä t-tüfr  
 today NEG desire 1SG.SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be pig feed-NMLZ (.) work REDUP-plenty  
 ‘Today, I do not want to feed pigs ... too much work.’ (Lit. ‘I am not desirous for  
 pig feeding’) [tci20120805-01 ABB #819-820]

In example (22), the word *zokwasi* is used as a nominalisation ‘speaking’.

- (22) *keke zokwasi miyo nzä worärm yoganai worärm.*  
 keke zokwasi miyo nzä wo\rä/rm yoganai wo\rä/rm  
 NEG speech desire 1SG.ABS 1SG:SBJ:RPST:DUR/be tired 1SG:SBJ:RPST:DUR/be  
 ‘I did not want to talk. I was tired.’ [tci20120922-24 MAA #78]

The property noun *miyo* can also be used without the copula as in (23).

- (23) *frzsi miyomäre fthé kafara znfonzo kerafith thämther. sayäfianme rifthzsi fath zn*  
*rä.*  
 frz-si miyo=märe fthé kafara zn=fo=nzo  
 net-NMLZ desire=PRIV when river pandanus place=ALL=ONLY

<sup>3</sup>Note that *miyo* can also be a noun meaning ‘wish’ and ‘taste’.

ke\rafith/                      thä\mther/                      sayäfi=anme  
 2SG.SBJ:IMP:PFV/paddle 2SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:IMP:PFV/lift.up river crayfish=POSS.NSG  
 rifthz-si fath zn \rä/  
 hide-NMLZ place place 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘If you don’t want to net, you paddle to the river pandanus place and lift them up.  
 It is river crayfish’s hiding place.’ [tci20130907-02 RNA #450-451]

The desired proposition can also be expressed in an independent clause which is only semantically connected the desiderative proposition. In example (24), a man threatens a young boy who shot with an arrow at him.

- (24) *zbo z fefe saththma “nzä fthé miyo kwrarä zena zf mr kwa nwänzé.”*  
 zbo z fefe sa\ththm/a                      nzä fthé miyo  
 PROX.ALL IMM really 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG,MASC:IO:PST:PFV/stick.on 1SG.ABS when desire  
 kwra\rä/                      zena zf mr kwa n\wä/nzé  
 1SG:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/be today IMM neck FUT 1SG:SBJ>2SG:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/crack  
 ‘He stuck (the gun) right at him (saying): “If I want I crack your head right here  
 now”’ [tci20130927-06 MAB #45]

## 9.4 Adverbial clauses

Adverbial clauses show a wide range of possible constructions. These range from infinitival adjuncts to independent clauses. In the following section purposive, temporal and manner adverbial clauses are described. Note that the domain of cause was used to introduce the reader to the various levels of syntactic syntactic integration of two clauses. Therefore, I will not discuss this domain here, but refer to §9.1.

### 9.4.1 Purposive adverbials

Purposive adverbials are found in different construction. Example (25) is from a procedural about making a drum. The speaker explains how a bamboo ring will hold the membrane in place after it is glued to the drum.

- (25) *nabi riwariwa kwa wäfiyokwre ... narsir fof.*  
 nabi riwariwa kwa wä\fiyok/wre                      (.) nar-si=r  
 bamboo ring FUT 1PL:SBJ>3SG.NPST:IPFV/make (.) press.down-NMLZ=PURP  
 fof  
 EMPH  
 ‘We make a bamboo ring ... for pressing down (the  
 membrane).’ [tci20120824 KAA #87-88]

In example (26), the speaker shows me a particular tree used for poison-root fishing. The example shows that the purposive clause can take an object by forming a compound ‘for swamp poisoning’ > ‘to poison the swamp’. Note that the recognitional pronoun is used just before the nominalised verb.

- (26) *nä kayé zane zf yirwre bänemr ... zra rrsir.*  
 nä kayé zane zf y\|r/wre bäne=mr (.)  
 INDF day DEM:PROX IMM 1PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/scrape RECOG=PURP (.)  
 zra rsr-si=r  
 swamp poison.fishing-NMLZ=PURP  
 ‘Sometimes, we scrape (the root of) this one here for poisoning the  
 waterholes.’ [tci20130907-02 RNA #340]

Purposive clauses can also be less syntactically integrated and form an independent clause. In this case, they are usually introduced by the recognitional flagged with purposive case *bänemr*, which I translate with ‘in order to’. Example (27) describes a tall structure used show off the amount of a group’s yams harvest. This structure involved a long post around which many layers of yam tubers were tied with thick rope.

- (27) *wati far ane thden sfräzrmth bänemr kwim ḡadme sfmthzḡwrnth.*  
 wati far ane thd=en sfräz/rnth bäne=mr  
 then post DEM middle=LOC 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:DUR/erect RECOG=PURP  
 kwim ḡad=me sf|mthzg/wrnth  
 kwim rope=INS 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:DUR/encircle  
 ‘Then, they were erecting a post in the middle in order to wrap around the kwim  
 (Acacia mangium) rope.’ [tci20120805-01 ABB #463]

### 9.4.2 Temporal adverbials

Temporal adverbials are found in a number of constructions. Example (28) shows the locative case attached to a nominalised verb. The clause *ane yam fiyoksin* ‘doing that’ is therefore subordinated to the matrix clause. The relation between the two clauses is one of simultaneity.

- (28) *bäne zrazänzr ... fenz kzikaf ... mä ke kwa kabef sre mar ane yam fiyoksin.*  
 bäne zra\zä/nzr (.) fenz kzi=kaf (.)  
 RECOG.ABS 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IRR:IPFV/carry (.) body liquid barktray=PROP (.)  
 mä keke kwa kabe=f sre\mar/ ane yam  
 where NEG FUT man=ERG 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/see DEM event  
 fiyok-si=n  
 make-NMLZ=LOC  
 ‘He will carry that one ... the body liquid with the barktray ... where no man will  
 see him while doing that.’ [tci20130903-04 RNA #49-52]

In order to connecting more independent clauses, the word *fthé* ‘if, when’ is used. This is further described in §9.6 together with conditional clause. A close temporal connection between the two clauses can established by the word *fthémäsü* ‘meanwhile, during’. The words *fthé* and *fthémäsü* are historically related, but the etymology of the *mäsü* part is unclear. In example (29), the speaker talks about a particular tree which flowers during

the planting season. Note that the first and last clause contain *fthé* ‘when’ and the middle clause contains *fthémäsü*.

- (29) *efthar fthé kräkor minzü ... fthémäsü wawa worsi threthkäfth ... nzram fthé fof kwa narär.*  
 efthar fthé krä\kor/ minzü (.) fthémäsü wawa  
 dry season when 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/become very (.) meanwhile yam  
 wor-si thre\thkäf/th (.) nzram fthé fof kwa  
 plant-NMLZ 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:IRR:PFV/start (.) flower when EMPH FUT  
 ŋa\rä/r  
 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/do  
 ‘When it reaches the height of the dry season ... while they are starting to plant the yams ... that is when this one will flower.’

[tci20130907-02 JAA #220-221]

*Fthémäsü* is not a subordinator, because it can be used on independent clauses with the translation ‘in the meantime’. In example (30), the speaker explains that after his father’s death, the stones for rain-making were lost.

- (30) *nzenme ŋafe fthémäsü kwosi yara ... watik foba ni miyamr nrä mafadben zena ethn.*  
 nzenme ŋafe fthémäsü kwosi ya\r/a (.) watik foba  
 1NSG.POSS father meanwhile dead 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be (.) then DIST.ABL  
 ni miyamr n\rä/ mafa=dben zena  
 1NSG ignorance 1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be who=LOC.ANIM.NSG today  
 e\thn/  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/lie.down  
 ‘In the meantime our father died ... and from then one we don’t know with whom (the rain stones) are today.’

[tci20131013-01 ABB #399]

A third strategy to connect a clause temporally is by using the recognitional inflected with the locative case *bafen*. But this is an infrequent strategy, because (i) the temporal function is an extension of the locative case and (ii) connecting clauses is only one function of the recognitional. Example (31), is about two men from Rouku who used to work on the Fly River. They run into another men from Rouku, who has been away for a long time. The recognitional occurs twice. First is it coreferential with holiday: ‘in that time ... during the holidays’. The second use is difficult to analyse, because this is also a temporal/conditional construction, but one can assume that *bafen* introduces the second clause.

- (31) *fthé nima bafen kabrignoth holidayen bafen fefe katrife “fi bobo yé!”*  
 fthé nima baf=en ka\brig/rnoth holiday=en baf=en  
 when like.this RECOG=LOC 2DU:SBJ:IMP:IPFV:AND/return holiday=LOC RECOG=LOC  
 fefe ka\trif/e fi bobo \yé/  
 really 2DU:SBJ:IMP:PFV/tell 3.ABS MED.ALL 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘When you return in the holidays, then you have say: “He is there!”’

### 9.4.3 Manner adverbials

The proprietive and instrumental case on a nominalised verb can be used to express as manner adverbial clause. In the functional extension the two cases marker can also express a relation of association and temporal overlaps respectively. Hence, the nominalised verb flagged with the proprietive case in example (32) can be translated as ‘He held hips while rejoicing’ or ‘He held hips rejoicingly.’

- (32) *thweksikarä gon z zefaf.*  
 thwek-si=karä gon z ze\faf/  
 rejoice-NMLZ=PROP hip ALR 2|3SG:SBJ:RPST:PFV/hold  
 ‘He held hips while rejoicing’ or ‘He held hips rejoicingly.’

[tci20111004 RMA #174]

The recognitional case also serve to introduce a clause which expresses a manner (or temporal association). In example (33), the speaker explains how he and his friends where loading a heavy sago stem on a canoe. Some people from Morehead Station were sceptical about this plan. Thus, *bäneme thfkogrm* ‘They were standing with/like this’ connects to the following clause which expresses ‘they stood thinking ...’

- (33) *nä station kabe fä zämosirath bäneme thfkogrm ... fam kwarärmth “kwa ywokrakwr o kwa ñabrüzr?”*  
 nä station kabe fä zä\mosir/ath bäne=me  
 INDF station man DIST 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:PFV/gather RECOG=INS  
 thf\kogrm/ (.) fam kwa\rä/rmth kwa  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/stand (.) thought 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/do FUT  
 y\wokrak/wr o kwa ña\brüz/r  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/float or FUT 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/submerge  
 ‘Some station people gathered there. They were standing thinking: “Will it float or will it sink?”’

[tci20120929-02 SIK #30-31]

The most common way to encode a manner adverbial is by a relative clause with *mon* or *monme* ‘how’ (see §9.5). Example (34) is taken from a picture task, where the participants were asked to arrange picture cards into a story. In the example, the speaker explains the task to a bystander. Note that the recognitional *bäneme* ‘with this, in this way’ also appears in the first clause. The second recognitional *bäne* refers to *trikasi* ‘story’ as we can see in the last clause.

- (34) *zēna ane bäneme nzezinakwre monme bäne wyak brä ... trikasi monme kma zrärä.*  
 zēna ane bäne=me nz=e\zinak/wre mon=me  
 NOW DEM RECOG=INS IPST=1PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/put.down how=INS



bäne w\yak/ b=\rä/ (.) trik-si  
 RECOG.ABS 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/walk MED=3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) tell-NMLZ  
 mon=me kma zra\rä/  
 how=INS POT 3SG.F:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/be  
 ‘Now we are putting (the pictures) down how it goes there ... how the story  
 should be.’ [tci20111004 RMA #313-314]

## 9.5 Relative clauses

I follow Andrews in defining relative clauses as a “subordinate clause which delimits the reference of an NP by specifying the role of the referent of that NP in the situation described by the RC [relative clause]” (2007a: 206). I adopt Andrews’ label NP<sub>MAT</sub> or matrix NP for the NP in the matrix clause, and NP<sub>REL</sub> for the NP in the relative clause. The latter is always expressed by interrogative pronouns, which function as relative pronouns. Hence, Komnzo and other Yam languages, employ the “relative pronoun strategy” for relativisation, which from a cross-linguistic perspective is found mostly in Europe (Haspelmath 2001).

Relative clauses in Komnzo are adjoined clauses in the sense of Hale (1976), who notes that adjoined relative clauses are “subordinate in some way, but [their] surface position with respect to the main clause is marginal rather than embedded” (1976: 78). Andrews defines them as having the relative clause appear outside the matrix NP. Relative clauses in Komnzo are almost always right-adjoined, i.e. they follow the matrix NP. Alternatively, they may refer to the whole preceding (matrix) clause. The matrix NP can be fronted together with the relative clause, which is a common strategy used for topicalisation (see §10.4).

We can represent the structure of relative clauses schematically as in Figure 9.1. The matrix element, [...]MAT in the figure, is usually a noun phrase, which can be omitted if it is understood from context. Alternatively, the matrix element can be a matrix clause. The relative clause, [...]RC in the figure, consists of the relative pronoun and the verb. There may be one noun phrase preceding the relative pronoun, but there cannot be more than one noun phrase in this position.

[NP<sub>i</sub>]<sub>MAT</sub> [(NP) REL.PRON<sub>i</sub> V]<sub>RC</sub>

Figure 9.1: Schematic representation of a relative clause (RC)

I begin by describing the formal structure of relative clauses. Formally, they are similar to content questions, because the relative pronouns are identical to the interrogative pronouns.<sup>4</sup> We could say that interrogatives function as relative pronouns, which is why I do not gloss them as REL in the following examples. Instead, I gloss them the

<sup>4</sup>I refer the reader to §3.1.10 for a description of interrogative pronouns. See especially Table 3.6, but also the interrogatives in Table 3.8.

same way that pronouns in interrogative function are glossed. However, relative clauses are semantically distinct from content questions because the answer to the question is already given in the form of the NP<sub>MAT</sub>. Relative clauses are also syntactically different from content questions in that the relative pronoun has to occur as the second element (See Figure 9.1 above). Such a restriction does not apply to content questions. This is illustrated in (35-37) below, where the relative clause in each example is printed in bold face.

Example (35) comes from a hunting story where the narrator had encountered a spirit which began chasing him. In the example, the relative pronoun *maf* follows the pronoun *nzä*. The relative clause follows the NP<sub>MAT</sub> *ane kabe* ‘that man’.

- (35) *nze nima “byannor ane kabe fof **nzä maf wonrsoknwr.**”*  
 nze nima b=yan\nor/ ane kabe fof nzä  
 1SG.ERG QUOT MED=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/shout DEM man EMPH 1SG.ABS  
 maf won\rsoKn/wr  
 who.SG.ERG 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:OBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/bother  
 ‘I said: “He is shouting out there. This man who bothers me.”’  
 [tci20111119-03 ABB #164-166]

In example (36) the speaker describes why he did not pay attention to a fire that almost burned his garden. In the example, the relative pronoun *mane* is preceded by the noun phrase *mnz tharthar* ‘side of the house’. This is an adjoined relative clause because it is outside the NP<sub>MAT</sub>, which in this case is *mni* ‘fire’, whose antecedent is understood from the context.

- (36) *ni fi ane zumarwrme **mnz thartharen mane zfrärm.***  
 ni fi ane zu\mar/wrme mnz tharthar=en mane  
 1NSG but DEM 1PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:DUR/look house side=LOC which(ABS)  
 zfrä\rm  
 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR/be  
 ‘But we were looking at that (fire), which was on the side of the house.’  
 [tci20120922-24 STK #5]

Finally, in (37) the speaker describes how he was trying to remove a burning tree from his garden fence. The relative pronoun *mane* follows the ergative marked *wämne* ‘tree’. This is an adjoined relative clause because it is outside the matrix NP, which in this case is *narake* ‘garden fence’, whose antecedent is understood from the context.

- (37) *kma wämne ane fof kwakarkwé ane fof **wämnef mane thänarfa ... keke watikthémäre.***  
 kma wämne ane fof kwa\kark/wé ane fof wämne=f mane  
 POT tree DEM EMPH 1SG:SBJ:RPST:IPFV/pull DEM EMPH tree=ERG which(ABS)  
 thä\narf/a (.) keke watik-thé=märe  
 SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:IPFV/press.down (.) NEG enough-ADJZR=PRIV  
 ‘I should have pulled that tree (from the fence) which the tree was pushing down.  
 No, (I was) not (strong) enough!’  
 [tci20120922-24 MAA #42-43]

A second rule is needed for examples where the relative pronoun occurs in initial position of the relative clause. Although this is possible, such examples are much less frequent than the second position. The relative pronoun can occur in first position only (i) if it is preceded by the NP<sub>MAT</sub> (39 and 40), or (ii) if the only other element in the relative clause is the verb (38).

- (38) *bundbonzo rä mane zawokth.*  
 bundbo=nzo \rä/ mane za\wokth/  
 2SG.ALL=ONLY 3SG.F:NPST:IPFV/be which(ABS) 2SG:SBJ:IMP:PFV/choose  
 ‘It is up to you which one you choose!’ [tci20111004 RMA #528]

Example (39) is taken from a picture stimulus task. One of the participants is correcting the other. Note that the English translation is misleading. The noun phrase *mafanemäwä waniwani* is a complex noun phrase and the relative pronoun *mafanema* is marked flagged with the characteristic case in adnominal function. Thus, *mafanemäwä waniwani* should be translated not as genitive ‘whose picture’, but as origin ‘picture of/about who’.

- (39) *sukawi, nima keke rä. zane fhéthamane yé ... ane kabe fof mafanemäwä waniwani zöbthé nzünmarwre.*  
 sukawi nima keke \rä/ zane fhé=thamane  
 sukawi like.this NEG 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be DEM:PROX when=TEMP.POSS  
 \yé/ (.) ane kabe fof mafane=ma=wä  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) DEM man EMPH who.SG.POSS=CHAR=EMPH  
 waniwani zöbthé nz=wn\mar/wre  
 picture first IPST=1PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/see  
 ‘Sukawi, it is not like that. This is from that time ... really this man whose picture we just saw before.’ [tci20111004 RMA #194]

In example (40), the relative pronoun occurs initially following the NP<sub>MAT</sub> *dödö*.

- (40) *ane fathnzo zfrärm wämne keke ... dödönzo ... dödö maneme ɲarenwre fath.*  
 ane fath=nzo zf\rä/rm wämne keke (.) dödö=nzo (.) dödö  
 DEM clearing=ONLY 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR/be tree NEG (.) dödö=ONLY (.) dödö  
 mane=me ɲa\ren/wre fath  
 which=INS 1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/sweep clearing  
 ‘This was a clearing, no trees ... only dödö (*Sida acuta*) ... dödö, with which we sweep the clear places.’ [tci20120821-02 LNA #25-27]

Next I describe which kinds of argument roles can be relativised in the matrix clause (NP<sub>MAT</sub>), and which can occur in the relative clause (NP<sub>REL</sub>). As the examples in this section show, there is virtually no restriction on the possible argument roles. NP<sub>REL</sub> is expressed by the relative pronoun, which can inflect for all cases (see §3.1.10). The examples given in this section include the following cases: ergative (35), absolutive (36, 37, 38), characteristic (39), dative (45), locative (41) and instrumental (40).

It is harder to determine the argument role of NP<sub>MAT</sub> because its presence is optional. We saw in (37) above that the relative pronoun *mane* referred to the fence, which the burning tree had pushed down. But this not expressed by a noun phrase, nor is the fence indexed in the verb of the matrix clause. We only know about it from the preceding context of the story, and the plural prefix in the verb of the relative clause.<sup>5</sup> In (36), the fire is not expressed as a noun phrase, but the prefix of the verbs *zumarwrme* ‘we were seeing it’ and *zfrärm* ‘it was’, both index *mni* ‘fire’ (3SG.F). However, we can always determine the argument role of NP<sub>MAT</sub> from the context. The following argument roles are found in the examples given in this section: the single argument of an intransitive verb (35), patient (36), location (41), discourse topic (42), actor (43), and recipient (44).

- (41) *mni wthomonwrth yfö mä zfrärm.*  
 mni w\thomon/wrth yfö mä zfrä/rm  
 fire 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/pile.up.fire hole where 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR  
 ‘They prepare the fire where the hole was.’ [tci20120901-01 MAK #153-154]
- (42) *anema nä katan zokwasi nimamenzo fof zfrä ... nzone katan masisma ... ane mnima zöbthé mane zukonzrmth kidn o zfth mni.*  
 ane=ma nä katan zokwasi nima=me=nzo fof zfrä/ (.)  
 DEM=CHAR INDF small words like.this=INS=ONLY EMPH 3SG.F:RPST:IPFV/be (.)  
 nzone katan masis=ma (.) ane mni=ma zöbthé mane  
 1SG.POSS small matches=CHAR (.) DEM fire=CHAR before who(ABS)  
 zu\ko/nzrmth kidn o zfth mni  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:DUR/speak kidn or base fire  
 ‘This was another small story like this ... about my small matches ... about the fire, which they were calling Kidn or base fire before.’  
 [tci20120909-06 KAB #126-127]
- (43) *kabef tauri samg ηatha tüfrkarä mane yé.*  
 kabe=f tauri sa\mg/ ηatha tüfr=karä  
 man=ERG wallaby 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:RPST:PFV/shoot dog plenty=PROP  
 mane \yé/  
 who(ABS) 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘The man who has many dogs shot the wallaby.’ [overheard ]
- (44) *be kmam nabi thar nafanm mane wtri ηarärth.*  
 be kma=m nabi tha\r/ nafanm mane wtri  
 2SG.ERG POT=APPR bow 2SG:SBJ>2|3PL:IO:IMP:PFV/give 3NSG:DAT who(ABS) fear  
 ηa\rä/rth  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/do  
 ‘You must not give a bow to those who are fearful.’ [overheard ]

It is also possible that the relative clause is free in the sense that it refers to the whole

<sup>5</sup>The word *ηarake* ‘fence’ is frequently used in the plural.

matrix clause and not to a particular nominal (Andrews 2007a: 213). Such examples are given in (38) above and (45) below.

- (45) *be fam kwot karäre tosin mafan kwa yarithr.*  
 be fam kwot ka\rä/ré tosin mafan kwa  
 2SG.ERG thought properly 2SG:SBJ:IMP:IPFV/do torch who.SG.DAT FUT  
 ya\ri/thr  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:NPST:IPFV/give  
 ‘You have to think properly to whom you will give the torch.’ [overheard ]

The NP<sub>MAT</sub> can be fronted together with the relative clause as in (46). This is commonly used for topicalisation. After showing me a traditional fishing basket, the speaker shifts the topic to more modern methods of fishing. The NP<sub>MAT</sub> is *net* in (46).

- (46) *wati, net ane mane erä markai=aneme erä ane.*  
 wati net ane mane e\rä/ markai=aneme  
 then fishing.net DEM which 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be outsider=POSS.NSG  
 e\rä/ ane  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be DEM  
 ‘Okay, as for the fishing nets, they are the white man’s (things).’  
 [tci20120906 SKK #53-54]

In example (47) the speaker talks about food taboos. He makes the point that a particular woman in the village has grown very old because she has always respected those food taboos. The relative clause (in bold) marks a shift in topic to all those people who did not respect the food taboos. Thus, the antecedent of the relative clause is omitted and it is understood from context, and the third plural argument indexed in the verb forms *kwarirkwrmth* ‘they respected’ and *thufathwrm* ‘it grabbed them’.

- (47) *watik, fi komnzo zathfär ... bänema fof nima rirksima brä ... nima kwarirkwrm ...  
 fi mafa keke kwarirkwrmth ... watik, tekmar esufakwa kwikkwikf thufathwrm.*  
 watik fi komnzo za\thfär/ (.) bänema=ma fof nima  
 then 3.ABS only 3SG.F:SBJ:RPST:PFV/jump (.) DEM:MED EMPH like.this  
 rirk-si=ma b=\rä/ (.) nima  
 respect-NMLZ=CHAR MED=3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) like.this  
 kwa\rirk/wrm (.) fi mafa keke kwa\rirk/wrmth (.)  
 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:DUR/respect (.) but who.NSG.ERG NEG 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/respect (.)  
 watik tek=mär e\sufak/wa kwik-kwik=f  
 then duration=PRIV 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV/grow.old REDUP-sickness=ERG  
 thu\fath/wrm  
 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/hold  
 ‘She just lives on ... because of her respect ... she was respecting (the law) ... but  
 those who did not respect (the law) ... well, they grew old quickly and they got  
 sick.’ [tci20120922-26 DAK #22-27]

The fronted relative clause as a topicalisation strategy is described in detail in §10.4.

## 9.6 Conditional and time clauses

Conditional and time clauses are expressed in the same way, only the context resolves which of the two is meant. If will use the term conditional in the subsequent description to cover both. Conditionals are formed by using the word *fthé* ‘when, if’. Note that *fthé* is not a subordinator per se, because it can also occur in independent sentence with the meaning ‘that is when’. Thus, *fthé* is required for a conditional, but it is not sufficient. The word *fthé* is used in the clause which sets up the conditional, often called the if-clause (Thompson et al. 2007: 255). The second clause, often called the when-clause, receives no special marking.<sup>6</sup> The clearest conditional reading is found with the second person. Although an irrealis verb inflection is also possible, in most cases, the imperative is used in one of the two clauses as in example (48) and (49).

- (48) *ɲanzmäre fthé gnräre frasi kwa nrä.*  
 ɲanz=märe fthé gn\rä/ré frasi kwa n\rä/  
 ROW=PRIV when 2SG.SBJ:IMP:IPFV/be hunger FUT 2SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘If you are without a row (of yams in the garden), you will be hungry.’  
 [tci20130822-08 LNA #17]

- (49) *wati, zena fthé zanmar ... yusi fr mane rä ... ane fof nzone farsima rä.*  
 wati zena fthé zan\mar/ (.) yusi fr mane  
 then today when 2SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IMP:PFV/see (.) grass stem which  
 \rä/ (.) ane fof nzone far-si=ma  
 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) DEM EMPH 1SG.POSS fell-NMLZ=CHAR  
 \rä/  
 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘If/When you look at it ... the grassland there ... that is from my cutting down  
 (the trees).’  
 [tci20120805-01 ABB #614]

Both clauses can be marked for various TAM categories, for example imperative in the if-clause and irrealis in the when-clause in (50), where speaker shows me the proper use of a toy bullroarer.

- (50) *zbo fthé sakwr fefen o wännen ... keke kwa srannor.*  
 zbo fthé sa\kwr/ fefe=n o wänn=en (.)  
 PROX.ALL when 2SG.SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IMP:PFV/hit body=LOC or tree=LOC (.)  
 keke kwa sran\nor/  
 NEG FUT 3SG.MASC:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/shout  
 ‘If you hit it here against the body or against a tree, it will not make a  
 sound.’  
 [tci20120914 RMA #31-33]

In (51), all clauses are in past durative, yet the conditional construction can be interpreted as both real (as in the translation) and unreal (‘if they had paddled with noise, the story man would have shoot them with magic’).

<sup>6</sup>Note that for time clauses, this would be the when-clause and then-clause respectively.

- (51) *zizi zä keke kwarafinzrmth ɲoɲoyamkarä ... bänema fthé ɲoɲoyamkarä kwarafinzrmth menzf thfruthrm ... bthanme.*  
 zizi zä keke kwa\rafi/nzrmth ɲoɲoyam=karä (.) bänema  
 afternoon PROX NEG 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/paddle noise=PROP ... RECOG=CHAR  
 fthé ɲoɲoyam=karä kwa\rafi/nzrmth menzf  
 when noise=PROP 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/paddle story man=ERG.SG  
 thfru/thrm (.) bthan=me  
 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/shoot (.) magic=INS  
 ‘They did not paddle her with a lot of noise in the afternoon, but if they were paddling with a lot of noise, the story man was shooting his magic at them.’  
 [tci20120922-19 DAK #14-15]

## 9.7 Direct speech and thought

Direct speech is a common construction in Komnzo. In most cases direct speech is introduced by a speech verb, for example *ko-* ‘speak’ or *na-* ‘say’, and the manner demonstrative *nima* ‘like this’ (see §3.1.12.7). Direct speech receives a separate intonation contour and the whole clause is often produced at a slightly higher pitch to indicate that the speaker is taking on another person’s role. An example is given in (52).

- (52) a. *watik, srank kma sakora nima “srank, ni krafare!”*  
 watik srank kma sa\kor/a nima srank ni  
 then srank POT SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:PFV/speak QUOT srank 1NSG  
 kra\far/e  
 2|3DU:SBJ:IRR:PFV/set.off  
 ‘Well, he tried to tell Srank: “Srank, we go!”’  
 b. *srankf zenaftha “keke efoth zizi fefe rä nzä kayé woräro.”*  
 srank=f ze\nafth/a keke efoth zizi fefe  
 srank=ERG.SG SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/say NEG sun afternoon really  
 \rä/ nzä kayé wo\rä/ro  
 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be 1SG.ABS tomorrow 1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:AND/be  
 Srank said: “No, it is late afternoon. I will go tomorrow.”  
 [tci20111107-01 MAK #44-45]

The manner demonstrative functions as a quotative marker. It can introduce direct speech without a speech verb, as in example (53) below.

- (53) *naf nima “nakre! wimäsen mni bñasog.”*  
 naf nima nakre wimäs=en mni b=ɲa\sog/  
 3SG.ERG QUOT nakre mango.tree=LOC fire MED=2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/climb  
 ‘He said: “Nakre! The fire is climbing up the mango tree.”’  
 [tci20130901-04 RNA #152-153]

There is no dedicated construction for indirect speech. Indirect speech equivalents can be expressed by a speech verb with an adverbial adjunct (54) or a clause connected with *mon* ‘how’ (55).

- (54) *naf ηanafr drdr mäyogsir.*  
 naf ηa\na/fr drdr mäyog-si=r  
 3SG.ERG 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/speak old.garden repeat-NMLZ=PURP  
 ‘She said to continue the old garden.’ [tci20130823-06 STK 161]

- (55) *emothf ηatrikwr monme zfnzr.*  
 emoth=f ηa\trik/wr mon=me z\fn/nzr  
 girl=ERG.SG 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/tell how=INS 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:IPFV/hit  
 ‘The girl reports how he hit her.’ [tci20120925 MAE #102]

An individual’s inner thoughts are treated like direct and indirect speech. Hence, we find examples like (56) and (57) which mirror what has been described above for speech. The only difference lies in the framing expression, which is often the light verb construction *fam* ‘thought’ + *rä-* ‘do’.

- (56) *fam zära “kar bä rä a kar töna fobo fof wyak fof.”*  
 fam zä\r/a kar bä \rä/ a kar  
 thought SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/do village MED 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be and place  
 töna fobo fof w\yak/ fof  
 high.ground DIST.ALL EMPH 1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/walk EMPH  
 ‘He thought “There is a village. I will walk there to the high ground.”’  
 [tci20131013-01 ABB #259]

- (57) *fam ane fof ηarär monme sufzrmth monme santhbath.*  
 fam ane fof ηa\rä/r mon=me  
 thought DEM EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/do how=INS  
 su\fn/nzrmth mon=me  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:DUR/hit how=INS  
 san\thb/ath  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:DUR:VENT/put.inside  
 ‘He is thinking how they were hitting him and how they locked him up.’  
 [tci20111004 RMA #457]



# 10 Information structure

## 10.1 Introduction

This chapter should be seen as a preliminary study of those linguistic structures captured under the rubric of information structure. I address a number of mechanisms which are employed to create textual cohesion, emphasis and event sequencing. In linguistic theory, the notions of topicalisation, emphasis, focus, fore- and backgrounding have been used to analyse information structure. In Komnzo, as in many other languages, the correlates of these abstract concepts are drawn from a wide range of linguistic phenomena. They may be expressed by nuances in intonation, designated morphology, specific particles, syntactic constructions, or an exploitation of the rich TAM system. Some of these mechanisms are typical of certain text genres while others are more pervasive.

I will describe different particles and enclitics that are used to mark focus, intensification and emphasis in §10.2 and briefly point to the narrative paragraph marker *watik* in §10.3. It follows a discussion of topicalisation in §10.4. The chapter closes with a description of how Komnzo speakers exploit their complex TAM system to sequence event descriptions in §10.5.

## 10.2 Clitics and particles

There are a number of particles, enclitics, affixes in Komnzo that are used for focus. These are sometimes glossed as intensifiers, emphasisers, or they are sometimes translated into English by ‘only’ or ‘also’. They interact with focus, but it might be premature to analyse them purely as focus markers. By looking at a longer piece of text, I will describe the intensifier *fof*, the emphatic enclitic =*wä*, the contrastive markers *komnzo* and =*nzo*, and the particle *we*. All of these elements are pervasive in the language and not preferred in any particular text genre.

Following König (1991), who discusses focus particles, I draw a distinction in function between presentational, contrastive and additive focus. König states that: “[a] focus particle relates the value of the focused expression to a set of alternatives” (1991: 32). A contrastive focus excludes all alternatives while presentational focus emphasises whatever lies within its scope. Additive focus presupposes a previous proposition and highlights that the same applies to another referent. We find that Komnzo employs the particle *fof* and the enclitic =*wä* for presentational focus, the particle *komnzo* and the related enclitic =*nzo* for contrastive focus, and the particle *we* for additive focus.

These mechanisms may be categorised according to their scope. The particle *fof* usually has scope over the element which it follows. This may be a whole clause if it occurs

post-verbally. More commonly, it is found after demonstratives, deictics or complete noun phrases in which case it has scope over these elements (see §3.4.2). The enclitic =wä attaches to noun phrases, but is most commonly found with pronouns. The particle *komnzo* occurs pre-verbally and has scope over the predicate, while the enclitic =nzo attaches mostly to nominals and noun phrases and, thus, has scope over arguments or adjuncts. The particle *we* occurs in front of a clause over which it has scope or is sometimes used twice bracketing an element.

A third criterion for categorising these elements is according to their semantic content. König points out that English words like ‘even, just, only’ have a lexical meaning, whereas focus particles in other languages mark ‘pure focus’ (1991: 29ff.). He cites Somali (Saeed 1984: 21ff.) and Manam (Lichtenberk 1983: 476ff.) as languages where focus particles have been described as being lexically empty. We can attribute such a characteristic to the particle *fof*. It is the word which occurs with the highest frequency in the corpus. Informants often found it hard to give a separate translation of *fof*, and when pressed to do so often translated it with ‘really’. As there are two adverbs *fefe* ‘really’ and *minzü* ‘very’ expressing the same, I take *fof* to have no lexical meaning. This holds not true for the other elements discussed here. The particle *komnzo* as well as the enclitic =nzo are often translated as ‘only’. The particle *we* is often translated as ‘also’ or ‘too’.

I will make use of a text excerpt to explain how these mechanisms are put to use in *Komnzo*. The example text in (1) below is the last part of a *nzürna* story which is a common narrative in the Morehead region with numerous local variants. The *nzürna* character is a female being who can change her appearance. Although these stories are often comical, the *nzürna* poses some kind of a threat to the protagonists of the story. She is said to kill and eat especially small children. Mary Ayres roughly translated *nzürna* *ɲare* as “devil woman” (1983: 93). In contrast to mythical stories, or knowledge about magic and sorcery, *nzürna* stories are ‘public’ stories often retold and joked about. This particular *nzürna* story is set in Firra, a now abandoned village about 15km south of Morehead. The narrator is Maraga Kwozi, a man who used to live in Firra. The *nzürna* used to help and look after the people of Firra until the day that she killed and ate a stranger who was visiting the village. Outraged at this vicious incident, the village people took revenge and burned the tree in which she and her husband Nagawa were living. Nagawa could escape from the fire, but his wife was killed. The text excerpt below sets in after the main story was told. Nagawa returns to their home in Waisam to find out if his wife has survived the attack by the villagers. The elements to be discussed are underlined:

- (1) 1 *ane thrma mni fthé zäbtha.*  
     ‘After this, the fire had finished.’  
   2 *wati nagawa ɲabrigwa ... sir*  
     ‘Then Nagawa returned ... to see’  
   3 *“komnzo rä o z kwarsir mnin?”*  
     “Is she still alive or did she burn in the fire?”  
   4 *ɲabrigwa ... bobomr we waisam wäsü fthé sanmara.*

- ‘He went back ... there he also saw that Wäsü tree in Waisam.’
- 5 *watik fi “nafazfthenwä.”*  
‘Then he (said): “It was all her own fault.”’
- 6 *yanzo bobo yanora ... nafaḡareanema.*  
‘He was just crying ... for his wife.’
- 7 *wati, fi näbi zäbrima.*  
‘Thus, he went back for good.’
- 8 *zmbo yamnzr ane woga oten.*  
‘This man lives now here in Ote.’
- 9 *emoth fäthä ämnzr.*  
‘He lives with his daughters.’
- 10 *watik, kabeyé komnzo fä nomai sumarwre ... ymarwre fthé ...*  
‘Well, the people still see him there ... we see him when ...’
- 11 *fä ḡaritaḡwr nima firrafo yak ... we nima ḡabrigwr.*  
‘he crosses (the river) on his way to Firra ... and also when he returns.’
- 12 *tnz fäth ane kabe yé*  
‘He is a short man.’
- 13 *ane nzürna ḡareane zokwasi nimame fof rä fof.*  
‘That Nzürna woman’s story is just like that.’
- 14 *mane bobo firran zwamnzrm.*  
‘the one, who was staying in Firra.’
- 15 *tüfr yam nä fefe thwafiyokwrm ...*  
‘She did many things, ...’
- 16 *fi fathfa ane fof wäfiyokwa ...*  
‘but this one thing she did in public ...’
- 17 *nä karma kabe mane yanatha mogarkamma*  
‘eating that man from another village ... from Mogarkam.’
- 18 *nafane zokwasi ... ane trikasi fobonzo wythk fof brä.*  
‘her story ... that story ends there. It is over.’
- 19 *ane nzürna ḡareanema*  
‘about that Nzürna woman.’
- 20 *watik, fobo fof zräkoré*  
‘Well, that is what I told you.’
- 21 *nä karen nima nä buné bänema ...*  
‘In other villages (there are) others ...’
- 22 *nä nzürna ḡare zokwasi trikasi bä räro ...*  
‘other Nzürna woman stories are there ...’
- 23 *fi ane kar woga mane erä fi ane miyatha erä*  
‘but it is those village people who know about these.’

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- 24 *nzefé nzüwäbragwé nima ni miyatha nrä*  
 ‘I followed like we know (this story).’
- 25 *nzekaren ane yam kwafiyokwrm ...*  
 ‘She did this in our village ...’
- 26 *nzenme nafyé mä thwamnzrm*  
 ‘where our fathers lived.’
- 27 *nafyé we nzenm natrikwath*  
 ‘The fathers also told us (about it).’
- 28 *nima zbo zf zakoré. fof zäbthé*  
 ‘I have said it now. I am finished.’

[tci20120901-01 MAK #201-238]

The intensifier *fof* occurs in lines 13, 16, 18, 20, and 28. In 13 the narrator marks the end of the story by stating the story is “just like that” and *fof* occurs twice. In the first instance it has scope over *nima=me* ‘like.this=INS’. In the second instance, it occurs postverbally and has scope over the whole proposition. It is very common to give an affirmative reply by saying *nima fof* or *nimame fof* ‘just like this’. Such a reply rarely occurs without *fof*. In lines 16 and 20, *fof* occurs after the demonstratives *ane* (DEM) and *fobo* (DIST:ALL) which is also very common. In line 16, the narrator emphasises that amongst many things that she did, it was this one incident where she stepped out of line. In line 20, he literally says “to there, I spoke” emphasising the point where his story has come an end to now. In lines 18 and 28, *fof* has scope over the predicate which in this case is the whole proposition. In line 18, the verb form is *wythk* ‘it comes to an end.’ In 28, the verb *zäbthé* ‘I am finished’ follows and finally closes the narration. In each case, *fof* sets a mark which can be compared to a gesture like slamming one’s hand on the table. It underlines and emphasises whatever lies in its scope.

The particle *komnzo* and the enclitic *=nzo* occur in lines 3, 6, and 18. In line 3, *komnzo* occurs in a question: ‘Is she still alive or did she burn in the fire?’ The first clause only contains *komnzo* and the copula *rä* which translates literally ‘she only exists’. In line 6, *=nzo* is cliticised to *ya* ‘cry, wail’ and thus translates literally as ‘he was shouting out only wails’. In line 18, *=nzo* is attached to a demonstrative *fobo* DIST:ALL. The narrator stresses the fact that the story ends at that point and does not continue. Thus, with all three examples, we find a contrastive function of *komnzo* and *=nzo*, setting a referent apart from other options.

The particle *we* functions as an additive marker like the English particle *also*. It occurs in lines 4, 11, and 27. In line 4, it introduces the account of Nagawa’s return: that of seeing the Wäsü tree. In line 11, the narrator talks first about Nagawa crossing the river and then adds another clause about his return trip when he crosses the river again. The function of additive focus is particularly clear in line 27. After the narrator explains that he is entitled and knowledgeable to tell the story because it took place in his village (lines 24-26), he adds another piece of justification, namely that his fathers told him the story.

The emphasising suffix *=wä* occurs only once in the text (line 5). In his pain and sadness, Nagawa realises that it was his wife’s action that had led to the act of revenge. This

comment could have been expressed as *nafa-zfth-en* 3.POSS-fault-LOC ‘her fault’, but the speaker adds *=wä nafa-zfth-en=wä* which can be translated as ‘her own fault.’ For a more detailed discussion of *=wä* see §4.17.1.

### 10.3 The paragraph marker *watik*

The word *watik* or sometimes *wati* means ‘enough’. I often overhead it used with the adjectivaliser suffix *-thé* and the instrumental *=me*. Thus, *watikthéme* ‘(I have) enough’ is a common reply to an offer of more food or more tea. In narratives or procedural texts *watik* is often used to mark a new thought or the beginning of a paragraph. Its use is typically followed by a short pause similar to the English expressions ‘well’, ‘and then’, ‘thus’, or ‘next’. We find such instances of *watik* or *wati* in the text excerpt above (1) in lines 2, 5, 7, 10, and 20. *Watik* introduces new episodes in each of these lines.

### 10.4 Fronted relative clauses

Relative clauses are right-adjoined (see §9.5), and an example of a relative clause is given in (2). The matrix noun phrase *bäne dgwr* ‘that orchid’ is followed by the relative clause [in rectangled parentheses]. Usually the relative clause follows the matrix clause.

- (2) *dgwrfa enrgegwr bäne dgwr [boba mane themare] berä.*  
 dgwr=fa enrgegwr/ wr bäne dgwr boba  
 orchid=ABL 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/pull-off DEM:MED orchid MED.ABL  
 mane the\mar/e b=e\rä/  
 which 1PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:RPST:PFV/see MED=2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘(The bowerbird) pulls them off the orchid. That orchid, which we saw over  
 there.’ [tci20120815 ABB #32]

In public speeches one often hears topic constructions such as (3) where the speaker proclaims to the people gathered at a feast that it is time to sing and dance (and not to fight). Literally, this sentence can be translated as: ‘The drums which resonate, they resonate for the dance ... only for this.’ Formally, this is a fronted noun phrase with a following relative clause. In most cases, the following relative clause consists of *mane* ‘what, which’ and the copula (4). As a convention, I translate this with the English phrases ‘as for X’, ‘concerning X’ or ‘when it comes to X’.

- (3) *brubru [mane änor] wathma änor ... zane frümöwä*  
 brubru mane ä\nor/ wath=ma ä\nor/  
 drum which 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/shout dance=CHAR 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/shout  
 (.) zane frü=me=wä  
 (.) DEM:PROX alone=INS=EMPH  
 ‘As for the drums, they are resonating for the dance ... only for this.’  
 [tci20121019-04 ABB #46]

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- (4) *komnzo zokwasi [mane rä] ... faremane zokwasi fefe ane fof rä ... komnzo.*  
 komnzo zokwasi mane \rä/ (.) farem=ane zokwasi fefe  
 komnzo language which 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) farem=POSS.SG language real  
 ane fof \rä/ (.) komnzo  
 DEM EMPH 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) komnzo  
 ‘When it comes to Komnzo, this the Farem’s real language ... Komnzo!’

[tci20120924-02 ABM #4-5]

As we see in (4), the relative clause often contains the copula (Lit. ‘Komnzo language which is ...’). The result is that it contributes nothing to the state of affairs, but its main function is pragmatic. Therefore, I analyse the fronted noun phrase together with the relative clause under the label fronted relative clause, i.e. fronted with respect to the matrix clause, and I put both together in parentheses in the following examples. Note that there may also be no matrix noun phrase in cases where it is the event that is topicalised, for example in (5).

- (5) [*mane ynzänza*] ... *büdisn mä nzrugrm ... oroman fä fof samara ... njafe*  
 mane yn\zä/nza (.) büdisn mä  
 who SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/carry (.) büdisn where  
 nzn\rugr/m (.) oroman fä fof sa\mar/a (.)  
 1PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/sleep (.) old.man DIST EMPH SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:PST:IPFV/see (.)  
 njafe  
 father  
 ‘As he was carrying him ... at Büdisn where we were sleeping ... the old man,  
 father, saw him there.’

[tci20110810-02 MAB #55-56]

Fronted relative clauses are the main strategy to introduce or reactivate topics in the sense described by Keenan and Schieffelin (1976: 342). We find them not only in public speeches, but also in narratives, where speakers employ them to indicate a change in topic or to introduce a topic. I will describe this function by taking the reader through a particular narrative. Example sentence (6) introduces the protagonist of the story, a man named Kukufia.

- (6) [*kukufia mane yara*] *masun swamnzrm.*  
 kukufia mane ya\r/a masu=n swa\m/nzrm  
 kukufia which 3SG.MASC:PST:IPFV/be masu=LOC 3SG.MASC:PST.DUR/dwell  
 ‘Kukufia lived in Masu.’

[tci20100905 ABB #8-9]

In order to state the simple fact that Kukufia lived in Masu, it would be sufficient to say *kukufia masun swamnzrm* ‘Kukufia lived in Masu’. But because the sentence establishes the topic (Kukufia), a fronted relative clause is used. This is a very common way to introduce a character to a story.

Kukufia is a malicious character who comes to Rouku and tortures two children while their parents are away at a sago camp. Kukufia takes the two children fishing in his canoe. He pokes the small boy with the bones of a fish. One day, the father of the two children returns looking for them. Example (7) shows, how this change in topic is expressed.

- (7) a. *fafen nge zi swathizrm ... ekri zi ... kofä ysma.*  
 fafen nge zi swa\thi/zrm (. ) ekri zi (. ) kofä  
 meanwhile child pain 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR/die (. ) body pain (. ) fish  
 ys=ma  
 bone=CHAR  
 ‘In the meantime, the child was in pain ... body pain from the fish bones.’
- b. *watik [nafañafe mane yanra] nagayé thrathorthm.*  
 watik nafa-ñafe mane yan\r/a nagayé  
 then 3.POSS-father which 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST.IPFV.VENT/be children  
 thra\thorthm/  
 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:IRR.PFV/search  
 ‘Okay ... As for their father, he was looking for the children.’  
 [tci20100905 ABB #90-95]

Again, the change in topic is marked by a fronted relative clause (7b). The construction is not purely pragmatic here, as there is a ventive marker on the copula (*yanra*) which indicates that the father is coming.

Further along in the story, the father finds his children locked inside the house. He finds out about Kukufia’s visits and decides to hide underneath the house. When Kukufia returns later in the day, the father shoots him with an arrow. Kukufia runs away to Masu where his two wives live. The father follows the trail of blood. In Masu, Kukufia transforms into a little baby boy hanging on the breast of one the wives. This is the point in the text where we find the next fronted relative clause (8b).

- (8) a. *kukufia näbi zamatha dunzikarä ... ñakwir e Masu kräkwther.*  
 kukufia näbi za\math/a dunzi=karä (. ) ña\kwi/r e Masu  
 kukufia one 3SG:PST.PFV/run arrow=PROP (. ) 3SG:NPST/run until masu  
 kräkwther/  
 3SG:IRR.PFV/change  
 ‘Kukufia ran away with the arrow (inside him) ... He was running until Masu where he changed (his appearance).’
- b. *[nafane ñare mane zfrärm] ... entama ... thrma ñare. wati mämen fombo zämira fof.*  
 nafane ñare mane zfrä/rm (. ) enta-ma (. ) thrma ñare  
 3SG.POSS woman which 3SG.F:SBJ:PST.DUR/be (. ) two-CHAR (. ) after woman  
 wati mäme=n fombo zä\mir/a fof  
 then breast=LOC DIST:ALL 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/hang EMPH  
 ‘It was his wife ... the second ... the latter wife. He was hanging on her breast.’  
 [tci20100905 ABB #117-121]

The narrator first describes Kukufia’s escape in (8a) and then changes the topic to the wife on whose breast the little baby boy is hanging (8b). The new topic is again introduced by a fronted relative clause. Kukufia’s fate is sealed as the father quickly recognises the small boy. He kills Kukufia and his two wives on the spot and the story ends.

Fronted relative clauses of this type are used both to topicalise an expression as in the introductory example to this section (3) but also to indicate a change in the topic as in the examples above. The relative pronoun used for this type of construction is always *mane* ‘who, which’.

## 10.5 TAM categories and event-sequencing

Foley points out that Papuan languages often exploit their rich TAM systems for pragmatic purposes (2000: 389). TAM marking and discourse notions such as foregrounding has been discussed by many authors, for example by Hopper (1979). One such example from the Papuan language Sentani comes from Hartzler (1983) who has shown that clauses in irrealis are commonly used for backgrounded, presupposed propositions, whereas realis is used for foregrounded, asserted propositions. Komnzo puts its TAM system to the same pragmatic use in order to create textual cohesion, but in Komnzo more TAM categories are involved (see §6.4). This pragmatic use is often found in texts or parts of texts where the sequence of events is important, for example in procedurals, and descriptions of a path.

I will begin by comparing the abovementioned realis-irrealis distinction. Consider the following text (9) which describes the first part of a wedding ceremony. This procedural was given by Abia Bai. The actual wedding took place two days after the recording was made. Therefore, the description of the event is set in the future, which reduces the number of possible TAM categories. The speaker may only choose between the indicative non-past and the irrealis verbal inflection.<sup>1</sup> In (9), I have underlined the verbs in irrealis mood in Komnzo as well as in the English translation. All other verbs are in non-past and indicative mood.

- (9) 1 *wati foba nimame kwa ñathkärwr.*  
 ‘Well, it will begin like this.’
- 2 *tagon rthé thrarakthkwrth thräbthth*  
 ‘The food will be placed on the platform. That will be finished.’
- 3 *zöbthé fefe kwa ... chris e nafañare maki ernth fof.*  
 ‘First, they put painting on Chris and his wife.’
- 4 *maki fthé thrarntth ... fthé thrabthth ...*  
 ‘When they put on the painting ... when they have finished ...’
- 5 *watik, foba kwa änrokonth.*  
 ‘next they will escort them this way.’
- 6 *fthé thrnthbth nima ...*  
 ‘When they will bring them in ...’
- 7 *faf mä kwa nge fathasi zn rä fof ...*  
 ‘to the place where the children’s feast will take place ...’

<sup>1</sup>Future reference is expressed periphrastically with the particle *kwa* which may occur with non-past indicative and irrealis inflections.



- 8 *kwa änrökonth kwot bobomr ...*  
 ‘they will escort them up until ...’
- 9 *thranthaiŋth faf znfo.*  
 ‘they will arrive at the place.’
- 10 *watik kwa emsakrnth.*  
 ‘Next, they will sit them down.’
- 11 *thramsth kramsth*  
 ‘They will sit them down. They will sit down.’
- 12 *watik, zöbthé fefe kwa äyoknth a ätriknth nima:*  
 ‘Well, first, they will advise them and they will say:’

[tci20110817-02 ABB #22-40]

The content of this little excerpt is quickly summarised: After the food preparations, the bride and the groom will be decorated and painted. The women will escort the couple to the village square where they will be placed on a bench only to be lectured about codes of conduct and the expected behaviour.

We find that the speaker alternates between realis and irrealis mood. Realis occurs with the painting (line 3), the escorting (line 5), the escorting again (line 8), the sitting down (line 10) and the advising (line 12). Irrealis occurs with the finishing of the food preparations (line 2), the painting and the finishing thereof (line 4), the bringing (line 6), the arriving (line 8) and the sitting down (line 11). This alternation in TAM categories is congruent with an alternation between foregrounded, asserted events and backgrounded, presupposed events. In some instances, the verb in realis is repeated in irrealis, e.g. the sitting down in lines 11 and 12. Additionally, the repetition of one part of a proposition in the next proposition can be described as kind of tail-head-linkage.<sup>2</sup> Thus, we find a rhetorical device that is used both for textual cohesion and foregrounding.

As for stories in the past, speakers have more TAM values to choose from. They may alternate again between irrealis and realis, but they may also exploit the aspectual categories: perfective and imperfective. As was described in §6.4.2, the imperfective is divided again into a basic imperfective and durative. Thus, the richness of the TAM system allows speakers to make finer distinctions.

I will show this in another text excerpt (10). This text is part of a story about a man who fell off a coconut palm and died. It was told by Marua Bai who remembers this incident well. The protagonist of the story used to wander around in the night and steal other people’s palm wine. Palm wine is produced by cutting a fresh shoot up in the palm. A bamboo container which is tied underneath the shoot captures the sap. The sap slowly ferments and turns into an alcoholic substance. The main character of the story sets off alone in the night. He climbs and raids a number of palms. At the third palm, a coconut leaf breaks and he falls some twenty meters into a pineapple plant. Even though he survives his severe injuries, he dies about a week later. For each verb in each of the

<sup>2</sup>De Vries (2005) offers a typology for tail-head-linkage in Papuan languages. However, for the most part his sample consists of languages where this is achieved by using (parts of) serial verb constructions.

10 Information structure

lines of text, the TAM value is given on the right. Where there are two verbs in a line, the underlined segments show which verb belongs to which translation and TAM value.

(10)

1	<i>wati fam änatha:</i> He was thinking:	PST.IPFV
2	<i>“kwa ñabrigwé skerur.”</i> “I will go back for coconut wine.”	NPST
3	<i>zbär kretharuf gardafo.</i> In the night, he got into the canoe.	IRR.PFV
4	<i>kwanrafinzrm gardame.</i> He was paddling here with the canoe.	PST.DUR
5	<i>mane yanra zäzr mnz ... finzo ... kabe matak</i> When he got to Zäzr Mnz ... (it was) only him ... nobody else	PST.IPFV
6	<i>yokwa kar ane fof ... matak</i> the same thing in Yokwa ... nobody	n/a
7	<i>garda sräzin ... yaniyak aki kwayanen ... mnz.</i> He <u>put down</u> the canoe ... and came in the moonlight ... to the house.	<u>IRR.PFV</u> NPST
8	<i>nä skeru ñasongwr.</i> He climbed a (coconut) wine palm.	NPST
9	<i>warfo ... fä ñonathr.</i> Up there ... he was drinking.	NPST
10	<i>zrämbth we nä ñazifo kresöbäth.</i> He finished and climbed another coconut.	2X IRR.PFV
11	<i>fä ñonathr.</i> He was drinking.	NPST
12	<i>we nä kabeane ñazifo kresöbäth</i> and again he climbed another man’s coconut.	IRR.PFV
13	<i>mane ñasogwa warfo ...</i> As he climbed on top ...	PST.IPFV
14	<i>kräms drari wrbr.</i> He <u>sat down</u> and untied the bamboo container.	<u>IRR.PFV</u> NPST
15	<i>fof n zäznoba.</i> He was about to drink.	PST.PFV
16	<i>zamthetha drari.</i> He lifted up the bamboo container.	PST.PFV

## 10.5 TAM categories and event-sequencing

17	<i>bäw! nazi tafokarä ane zägarnza.</i> Bang! The coconut leaf broke off (with him).	PST.IPFV
18	<i>zane zäkurfa ziyé</i> This one here split.	PST.PFV
19	<i>zenta njagarwa</i> He split his crotch.	PST.IPFV
20	<i>fainr fr sazika</i> He went into the pineapple plant.	PST.PFV
21	<i>fä swanorm “ara ara” ... kambe matak</i> There he was shouting “ah ah” ... no people (heard him)	PST.DUR

[tci20120904-01 MAB #42-69]

Several observations which pertain to event sequencing as well as foregrounding can be made from this text. First, the narrator uses non-past tense for several clauses: the walking to the house (line 7), the climbing (line 8), the drinking (lines 9 and 11) and the untying (line 14). In some cases, the non-past alternates again with the irrealis perfective forms (line 10, 12, and 14) as we have seen in the wedding text above. The use of a non-past tense in a story which is otherwise told in recent past or past is quite common. In these cases, the non-past is used to foreground or emphasise the clauses in question.

Secondly, we find that it is the past imperfective which is used for the foregrounded clauses (in lines 13, 17, and 19). In line 17, the breaking of the coconut leaf is in the imperfective, whereas the preceding events in lines 15 and 16 are in the perfective. This might seem to contradict the notion of perfectivity, but the reader should keep in mind that the perfective in Komnzo focusses more on the beginning of an event (inceptive, or punctual) not on the completion of an event. See §6.4.2 for a description of the semantics of aspect in Komnzo. Lines 18 and 19 both describe the severe injury which the protagonist received from his fall. Again the imperfective aspect is used for the foregrounded clause which provides more detail about the injury (i.e. that he split his crotch).

Although preliminary at this stage of research, we may attempt to build a hierarchy of TAM values with respect to foregrounding. In such a hierarchy irrealis inflections are more backgrounding than realis inflections. All past tenses are more backgrounding than the non-past. Finally, as we have seen, the perfective is more backgrounding than the imperfective. It follows that the most foregrounding TAM value is the non-past, while the irrealis (perfective) is the most backgrounding TAM value. The pragmatic functions of the TAM system in Komnzo provide a rich field for future research.



# 11 Aspects of the lexicon

## 11.1 Introduction

This chapter brings together two topics which can be roughly subsumed under the rubric of lexicology. First, I describe sign metonymy and metaphor expressed by reduplication (§11.2). These are found especially in terms for plants and birds. The second part is a description of the conceptualisation of landscape (§11.3). These sections are sprinkled with anthropological comments.

## 11.2 Sign metonymies

### 11.2.1 Overview

This section builds on (Evans 1997), who discusses ‘sign metonymies’ in Australian languages. He points out how biota of different species, families or even kingdoms are connected through sharing a linguistic sign, i.e. they are referred to by the same word or they share a stem. One observation, that can be made for Komnzo is the high number of reduplications that are found in plant names, and to some extent in names for animals, especially bird and fish species. In some cases we have a reduplicative orphan, because the base form is missing. In other cases, the base form exists only in another language. However, in most cases a base form exists in the Komnzo lexicon.

The semantic link between the two referents shows a wide range of complexity. At the lower end, reduplication can single out some salient part of one plant, usually the fruit, establishing a relation of non-prototypicality. For example, *mefa* and *mefamefa* refer to two chestnut species (*Semecarpus* sp), but the nuts of *mefa* are roasted and eaten, while the nuts of *mefamefa* are much smaller. Note that non-prototypicality is a general feature of reduplication in Komnzo (§4.2). At the upper end of complexity, the reduplication pattern links referents through several steps of technical or cultural practices. One example is *ruga* ‘pig’ and *rugaruga* ‘tree type’ (*Gmelina ledermanii*). The two biota are linked in the following way: *rugaruga* is the tree from which *brubru* ‘kundu drums’ are made. These drums are used for *wath* ‘dance’ or *ruga wath* ‘pig dance’, because a pig will be killed and distributed in the morning hours after the dance. Thus, the technical concept of ‘drum’ and the cultural practice of ‘dance’ mediate between *ruga* ‘pig’ and *rugaruga* ‘tree type’.

Examples of this type have to be checked thoroughly with several speakers. Otherwise, we run the risk of either (i) documenting folk etymologies or (ii) not recognizing existing links at all. In an early stage of my fieldwork, the connection between *ruga* and

*rugaruga* was explained in terms of spatial relations: the pig is often found in the vicinity of this tree. We will see below that this is true for other connections, but not for this particular example. During a plant walk, I was shown the *rugaruga* tree, and when I invoked the spatial explanation, my informants ruled out that explanation by saying ‘pigs roam around anywhere’.

In the cases involving reduplication, there is a clear direction from baseform > reduplication. In such cases, we may ask if there are any detectable patterns in the direction of the semantic extensions. Most examples follow the animacy hierarchy in the way that what ranks higher is the baseform and what ranks lower is the reduplicated form. For example, *züm* ‘centipede’ reduplicates to *zümzüm* ‘grass type’ (1b), or the fish *kwazür* reduplicates to *kwazürkwazür* ‘grass type’ (8a), or *zuaku* ‘widow(er)’ reduplicates to *zuakuzuaku* ‘fly river anchovy’ (10c). Those examples, which violate this rule involve inanimate referents, like *karo* ‘anthill’ and *karokaro* ‘grassland goana’ (9a). Some of them can be explained by invoking relative salience or importance in every-day life.

Patterns of shared stems allow us not only to gain insight into the local classification of plants and animals, but can reveal culturally significant connections from plant usage to esoteric knowledge. The following description will group examples by the type of semantic connection. Note that, under Evans’ definition, reduplication is only one type; identical forms or inflected forms are also included (Evans 1997: 136).

### 11.2.2 Metaphor

Metaphorical links between different biota can be based on movement (1), appearance (2), colour (3), taste (4), feeling (5), hearing/sounds (6) or patterns of human interaction (7). Note that a few examples link biota to non-biological concepts (2a, 2d, 5, 7a), and in example (2b) the base form is a Nama word.

- (1) a. *dö* ‘monitor lizard’; *dödö* ‘plant type used for brooms, broom’ (Melaleuca sp). MOVEMENT: the lizards “sweeps” the floor with its tail when it walks.  
 b. *züm* ‘centipede’; *zümzüm* ‘grass type’; MOVEMENT: the grass grows flat along the ground and has little spikes like the centipede.
- (2) a. *toku* ‘carry someone on the back with the legs around the neck’; *tokutoku* ‘bird type’ (Bar-shouldered Dove); APPEARANCE: the bird has a thick brown line on the back of its neck at the same place where one would carry a child.  
 b. *min* ‘nose’ in Nama; *minmin* ‘bird type’ (Purple-tailed Imperial Pigeon). APPEARANCE: the bird has large nose-like beak.  
 c. *msar* ‘weaver ant’; *msarmsar* ‘insect larvae, esp. bees’ APPEARANCE: the bee larvae look like little ants.  
 d. *garda* ‘canoe’; *gardagarda* ‘tree type’; APPEARANCE: the seeds of this tree are long and thin; they crack open lengthwise resembling the shape of a canoe.
- (3) *yem* ‘cassowary’ (Casuarius casuarius); *yemyem* ‘tree type’ (Aceratium sp); COLOR: the fruit of this tree is bright red as the cassowarie’s skin hanging from its throat.

- (4) a. *thatha* ‘sugarcane’ (Poaceae sp); *thathathatha* ‘grass type’; TASTE: the grass tastes as sweet as the sugarcane. In the neighboring variety Wära, sugarcane is *kthko* and the grass type is *kthkokthko*.  
 b. *with* ‘banana’; *withwith* ‘tree type’ (Pseudouvaria sp); TASTE: fruit tastes sweet like a banana.
- (5) *kata* ‘bamboo knife’; *katakata* ‘grass type’ (Carex sp); FEELING: the grass is as sharp as a bamboo knife.
- (6) *ηatha* ‘dog’; *ηathanatha* ‘bronze quoll’ (Dactylopsila trivirgata); SOUND: the bronze quoll barks like a dog.
- (7) a. *tafko* ‘hat’; *tafkotafko* ‘tree type’ (Macaranga sp); INTERACTION: the large leaves of this tree can be used as a hat against rain or sun.  
 b. *ηazi* ‘coconut’ (Cocos nucifera); *ηaziηazi* ‘grass type’ (Exocarpus largifolius); INTERACTION: the grass is put on the flowers of a coconut when it flowers for the first time to make it grow strong.

### 11.2.3 Metonymy

Metonymic links between animals and plants can be of three types: temporal (8), spatial (9) and technical/cultural (10). Note that for some examples, the link involves a biological term and a non-biological term as in *zuaku* ‘widower, orphan’ and *zuakuzuaku* ‘fly river anchovy’ (10c).

- (8) a. *kwazür* ‘narrow-fronted tandan’ (Neosilurus ater); *kwazürkwazür* ‘grass type’ (Helminthostachis zeylanica). TEMPORAL: the flowering of this grass signals that the fish is greasy; HUMAN INTERACTION: fishnets and fishhooks are painted with the root of this plant to ensure a good catch.  
 b. *tauri* ‘wallaby’; *tauritauri* ‘tree type’ (Diplanchia hetrophila); TEMPORAL: In June/July, when the tree flowers, wallabies like to stay close to the this tree; people set traps its vicinity or hide them for hunting.  
 c. *dbän* ‘tree type (Lamiodendron sp)’; *dbän tayo* ‘yam harvest season’ (Lit. ‘weak, ripe *dbän*’); TEMPORAL: The dry, falling leaves of this tree signal the begin of the yam harvest.
- (9) a. *karo* ‘anthill; ground oven’; *karokaro* ‘monitor lizard (grassland)’ SPATIAL: during the dry season, the grassland goana likes to dig a hole and hide inside the anthill.  
 b. *nzöyar* ‘bowerbird’ (Fawn-breasted Bowerbird); *nzöyarnzöyar* ‘tree type’ (Elaeocarpus sp); SPATIAL: the bowerbird collects the branches and fruit of this tree to build its display area.  
 c. *dagu* ‘tree type’ (Banksia dentata); *dagu* ‘python type’; SPATIAL: the python sleeps on the tree. APPEARANCE: the bark of the tree looks like the python.

## 11 Aspects of the lexicon

More complex connections involve technical concepts (10a) or references to cultural concepts (10b, 10d).

- (10) a. *tru* ‘palm type’ (Hydriastele sp); *kwartru* ‘thin long trough which collects the sago’; *trtru* ‘current, stream of water’ TECHNICAL: *kwartru* is made from the palm leaf. while washing the sago pulp the water runs along the trough; therefore, a waterstream of any kind can be called *trtru*.
- b. *ruga* ‘pig’ > *rugaruga* ‘tree type’ (Gmelina ledermanii); CULTURAL: pigs a killed during dances, which are often called *ruga wath* ‘pig dance(s)’. At such dances, *brubru* ‘kundu drum(s)’ are used and the tree *rugaruga* provides the best timber for carving drums.
- c. *zuaku* ‘widow(er), orphan’; *zuakuzuaku* ‘fly river anchovy’ (Thryssa rastrosa); CULTURAL: widows wear a woven mourning belt from one week after the death of a relative to up to a year. The bones of the fish look like a mourning dress.
- d. *bidr* ‘flying fox’; *bidr* ‘joking name for woman’; CULTURAL: This builds on the tree metaphors in which the tree is the base of people. It may stand for a mythical origin or for one’s place of birth. Women shift to their husband’s village just like flying foxes move from one tree to another.

The most complex connections involve esoteric knowledge. A particular puzzling example involves the link between the names of two birds and the word for ‘vulva’. The reduplications *ktikti* and *dirdir* refer to two birds, the ‘Greater Streaked Lory’ and the ‘Red-cheeked Parrot’ respectively.<sup>1</sup> Both lack a corresponding baseform in Komnzo. However, the word *dir* [ˈdir] means ‘vulva’ in Blafe and there is a cognate in Nen *kter* [kəter] ‘vulva’. This is to say that the two bird names as well as the words in Blafe and Nen are cognate, while the Komnzo word for ‘vulva’ *nzga* is probably not. Note that Blafe and Nen are spoken about 60km to the West and East respectively.

The link between the two bird names and the word ‘vulva’ can be explained by the *fütha* myth, which talks about the origin of the bullroarer (Ayres 1983: 80). *Fütha* is a story place in Rouku. This story also appears in (Williams 1936: 307) as an episode of the Kwavaru myth. According to the myth, a man heard a roaring noise coming from his wife’s belly. He wondered what was causing the noise. He wanted to have this object. He called several birds to fetch that thing from his wife’s vagina. Many of them failed, but in their attempts, they spilled blood on themselves. That is why their plumage contains patches of red. Finally, one of the birds was successful. It stole the bullroarer and brought it to the man. Since then, the bullroarer is a secret object, only for initiated men. In William’s version, the woman breaks down bleeding and crying, and thus, the story explains the origin of menstruation as well.

The reduplication pattern makes reference to the red plumage of the two birds *ktikti* and *dirdir*. Moreover, there are other small birds with red color that involve these words. For example, *kti tharthar* ‘Spangled Drongo’ has bright red eyes (*tharthar* means ‘side,

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<sup>1</sup>*ktikti* refers to either the Greater Streaked Lory (*Chalcopsitta scintillata*) or the Rainbow Lorikeet (*Trichoglossus haematodus*) or the term covers both, *dirdir* is the Red-cheeked Parrot (*Geoffroyus geoffroyi*).



next to'), *ηazi dirdir* 'Red-flanked Lorikeet' (*ηazi* 'coconut') and *kor dirdir* 'Orange-breasted Fig-parrot'.<sup>2</sup> The shared linguistic sign links these bird names to baseforms meaning 'vulva'. But this is esoteric knowledge, which should not be shared with women or uninitiated men. Therefore, the link is hidden by using baseforms from distant languages: not from Komnzo, nor from neighboring languages.

#### 11.2.4 Conclusion

This has been a preliminary analysis of the data on sign metonymies. Comparative data is needed to explain more semantic links which have so far been only documented. Data from other languages can provide two kinds of evidence. First, there will be more cases, in which the base form comes from another language, as in (2b) or in the myth described above. Secondly, we may find that the same biota are linked in other languages. Two examples of this come from Wära and Blafe. In Wära, the link between sugarcane and a particular grass type (4a) is established by the reduplication of the non-cognate word *kthko* [kəθko]. In Blafe, the temporal link between the fish and the grass type (8a) is established by the cognate word *bäwr* [bæwər].

### 11.3 Landscape terminology

#### 11.3.1 Conceptualisation of landscape

FE Williams opens his monograph about the Morehead district with the following description of the landscape: "Its scenery often has a mild, almost dainty, attractiveness in detail, but represents on the whole the extreme of monotony" (Williams 1936: 1). The Komnzo terminology reflects Williams' observation. There are general terms for landscape types, but we also find words expressing very specific local arrangements. For example, while there is a general distinction between *fz* 'forest', *ksi kar* 'open grassland' and *fath* 'clear place' we also find fine-grained distinctions like *fokufoku* 'small patch of forest', *fz minz* 'thin strip of forest' (Lit. 'forest vine'), *thaba* 'clearing surrounded by forest' and *morthr* 'edge of forest with a smaller patch forest close by'. Some of the more general terms are shown with pictures in §1.3.2.

Large parts of the Morehead district are inundated by rising water during the wet season. This usually takes place between January and June, but there is some fluctuation from year to year. It is hardly surprising that this regular cycle has found its way into the lexicon of Komnzo. I invite the reader on a walk from the high ground down to the river. I translate the term *töna* as 'high ground'. It is that part of the land, regardless of vegetation type, which is virtually never covered by water. Settlements and yam gardens are located on *töna*. Small hills are referred to by *märmär* or the Motu loan *ororo*.<sup>3</sup> These areas may become islands (*bod*) during high floods. Wide, gentle slopes (*rsrs*) lacerated

<sup>2</sup>Spangled Drongo (*Cyclopsitta gulelmiterti*), Red-flanked Lorikeet (*Charmosyna placentis*) and Orange-breasted Fig-parrot (*Cyclopsitta gulelmiterti*).

<sup>3</sup>Nowadays, Komnzo speakers refer to people from the highlands as *märmär kabe* 'hill people'.

by many small creeks (*ttfö*) lead to lower areas. It is often along creeks where people plant sago palms or sometimes taro. Closer to the river, the ground can be very uneven and bumpy due to running water. This is called *kore*. A little lower, lies that part of the land which is always covered by water during the rainy season. Often backwater stays in stagnant pools, which dry up only during the height of the dry season. These places are called *zra*, which I translate with 'swamp', but maybe the term 'billabong' commonly used in Australian English is more fitting. In this area, we find smaller pools of water which dry up (*nawan*) and larger pools which are permanent (*dmgu*). The ankle-deep, muddy water covered with leaves is called *nzäwi*. Walking towards the river, the land rises again in many places. This difference in elevation is almost unnoticeable, but it is enough so that this area dries up first at the end of the wet season. These area between the swamp and the river are called *for* and people plant cassava, sweet potato and taro here. The steep riverbanks along the Morehead river are called *rokuroku*, a word from which the village name Rouku originates. The sides of the river are covered with patches of *süfi* 'floating grass', and in some places this layer is called *tüf* when it is thick enough to support the cultivation of sweet potatoes. Finally, there is the river which is called *ɲars*. Although found only in the southwest around Bensbach, large open lagoons are called *füwä* in Komnzo.

Especially in dry season much of people's daily life involves coming and going from the high ground to the river. This movement has left some impact in the verb lexicon. For example, the stem *frezsi* usually means 'take something out of the water'. In a middle template it means 'come up from the river' and can be used when disembarking a canoe, or walking back from a river camp to the village.

There are numerous creeks leading to the Morehead river. The mouth of a creek or a river is referred to by *zft̥h* 'base'. This word can refer to the base of a tree, but it can also mean 'origin, reason'. Interestingly, the smaller creeks may be called *ttfö tuti* 'creek branches, creek twigs' or *ttfö minz* 'creek vines'. The place where the creeks start be can called either *ttfö ker* 'creek tail' or *ttfö zrminz* 'creek root'. The same can be said about the Morehead river. Thus waterways are often conceptualised by a tree metaphor. This stems from the *kwafar* myth which explains the origin of all people from a huge tree. Kwafar is located somewhere in the Arafura Sea between Papua New Guinea and Australia. In the myth, the giant tree burns down and a flood caused by killing a mythical creature forces people to retreat northwards and southwards. The roots in the ground also burned and with the rising water they became creeks and rivers. In other versions of the myth, the tree falls northwards and the creeks and rivers are formed from the burned stem, branches and twigs of the tree.

### 11.3.2 Place names

Place names in the Morehead district are both numerous and densely clustered (Ayres 1983: 129).<sup>4</sup> The village of Rouku alone consists of some three dozen named places. The

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<sup>4</sup>I would like to thank Mary Ayres for giving me access to her fieldnotes which proved to be enormously helpful during the elicitation and investigation of place names.

knowledge of most place names is common knowledge and FE Williams notes that “if you ask your guide where you stand at any moment, he will be able to give a name to the land.” (1936: 207). However, the details of every small track and the stories that belong to it is something only known by the rightful owners of that piece of land. In that sense, knowledge about place names can be compared to a proof of ownership. Therefore, I deliberately do not include a complete list of collected place names, nor do I provide a detailed map. Below, I address selected topics related to place names.

All place names in Komnzo are proper nouns, but they differ with respect to their meaning. Some place names have no meaning other than the places they designate, for example *fthi*, *kanathr* or *ɲazäthe*. At some point in the past, they might have been segmentable into meaningful parts or constitute a meaningful word in themselves, but this knowledge has faded away.<sup>5</sup> Place names commonly preserve features which have become non-productive or lexemes which have become archaic. This can also be found in Komnzo. For example, the place name *thmefi* can be split into the components *thm* ‘nose’ and *efi* ‘hair’, meaning ‘moustache’. The word *efi* is archaic in Komnzo, and instead *thäbu* is used. In fact, some speakers are unaware of the possible segmentation.

More commonly, Komnzo place names consist of two elements, which usually form a nominal compound. These compounds range from rather dry descriptions, like *gani zfth* ‘*gani* tree base’ (Endiandra brassii), to the most colourful illustrations, as in *nzga warsi* ‘vagina chewing’, *kwanz fath* ‘bald head clearing’. Many nominal compounds consist of a plant name plus a landscape term or a term used for the part of a plant. The most common landscape terms are *zra* ‘swamp, waterhole’ and *ttfö* ‘creek’. The most common plant part terms are *zfth* ‘base’ and *fr* ‘stem, grove’.<sup>6</sup> A few examples are: *karesa zfth* ‘*karesa* base’ (Melaleuca sp), *atätö fr* ‘*atätö* stem’ (Pouteria sp), *wsws zra* ‘*wsws* tree swamp’ (Combretum sp). These are not descriptions of places, but place names. A phrase like *karesa zfth* can refer to the base of any *karesa* tree, but it refers only to one named place.

A few place names are inflected verb forms, for example *karifthe* ‘you two send each other off!’.<sup>7</sup> This place connects to a myth in which the ancestor of the Garaita people and the ancestor of the Rouku people were fighting. At the end of the story, they depart in opposite directions from *karifthe*. Another name which includes an inflected verb is *kafthé fr*. The first element is means ‘take off your bag!’ and the second means ‘stem, grove’. Interestingly, *kafthé* is not Komnzo, but Wartha.<sup>8</sup> I will address the topic of double language place names below. For some place names, there is no etymology available, for example *yrn* ‘they are many’.

Simpson and Hercus (2002) provide a list of differences between introduced and indigenous place names in Australia. In the following, I apply some points of their typology

<sup>5</sup>Two of these examples look like inflected verb forms; *kanathr* is similar to an imperative form of ‘eat’ in a middle template: *kanathé* ‘eat yourself!’; *ɲazäthe* contains the middle prefix *ɲa-*, a possible non-dual marker *-th* and the first non-singular suffix *-e*. However, the assumed verb stem *zä-* does not exist in modern Komnzo.

<sup>6</sup>The word *zfth* can mean (i) ‘base of a plant, tree’, (ii) rivermouth, (iii) ‘origin’ or (iv) ‘reason’.

<sup>7</sup>ka\rifth/e

2|3DU:SBJ:IMP:PFV/send

<sup>8</sup>Imperative perfectives in Komnzo mark dual versus non-dual with a vowel change in the prefix, and the suffix is zero for second singular. The corresponding Komnzo verb form would be *käthf*.

to the Morehead district. The first point which Hercus and Simpson discuss is the difference between a system and a local network. The former is meant to provide an overview, a kind of standardised template for naming places, which can be applied universally and is open to everyone. Komnzo place names, like indigenous place names in Australia differ in that they often constitute smaller networks of place names. For example, the number of named places is much denser in the vicinity of inhabited places or previously inhabited places. As pointed out above, Komnzo places often belong to a particular clan or family, and the detailed knowledge about these places and the stories which connect to them is not always something for public distribution.

A second difference raised by Hercus and Simpson is that between local mnemonics and mnemotechnics. They point out that place names have developed organically over a long time as local mnemonics to refer to places. This applies to places in Europe and Australia (or the Morehead district) alike, but not to introduced place name systems. For example, the Komnzo place name *swäri zfth* 'swäri base' must have started as the description of a place with an especially large or beautiful *swäri* tree (*Alstonia actinifila*), but over time it has lost its descriptive function. Today it is used even though the *swäri* tree was cut down decades ago. Francesca Merlan has described place name systems of this kind as being "non-arbitrary", because they establish a direct relationship to the designated places (Merlan 2001). In contrast to local mnemonics technological advances like writing and mapping provides a kind of mnemotechnics, which opens the possibility to include arbitrary place names like *Sydney* or *Port Moresby*.

Simpson and Hercus make out three naming strategies that are rarely found in indigenous Australia: commemoration strategies, topographic descriptors and relative location. Commemoration strategies are wholly absent in Komnzo place names. They are only found in those names introduced by Europeans. For example, the Morehead river was named after B.D. Morehead who was the premier of Queensland between 1888 and 1890. The Bensbach river was named during a joint expedition in 1895 by W. MacGregor and J. Bensbach who was the Dutch Resident at Ternate at the time. While Hercus and Simpson point out that topographic descriptors are rare in indigenous Australia, they are quite common in Komnzo. However, as pointed out above, they include only a small set of words (*zfth* 'tree base', *fr* 'stem, grove' or *ttfö* 'creek'). Relative terms like *North Melbourne* or *West-Berlin* are almost completely absent in Komnzo as they are in Australian languages. The only example, in which a place name establishes a relation to another place is *fthiker*. The link here is a creek which has its mouth at place called *fthi* and its starting point at *fthiker* 'fthi tail'. Note that creeks themselves are usually not named, but the word *ttfö* 'creek' can be added to a place situated on a creek.

### 11.3.3 Mixed place names

An interesting phenomenon that sheds some light on multilingualism is the fact that many place names are composed of words from two languages. I call these mixed place names. Most of these involve one Komnzo word. But in a few place names both words are from different languages even though the place is located on Komnzo speaking territory.

The basic principle of mixed place names is shown in Figure 11.1 for *fotnz*. This is a place near Rouku village, which can be parsed as one word from Wartha Thuntai and one word from Komnzo.

place name: *fotnz* ‘short coconut’

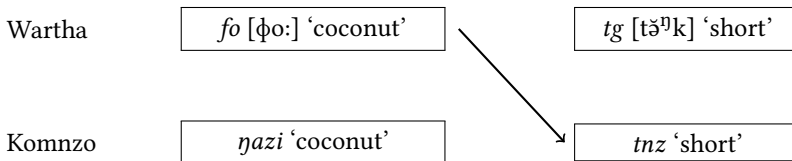


Figure 11.1: The principle of mixed place names: *fotnz*

This principle is rather pervasive. A quarter of recorded place names involve a word from another language. Below, I give a few examples (11-13). These are sorted according to whether the Komnzo word is the first (11) or last element (12). I show the place name as a single word in most cases, because often speakers only realised their segmentability when I prompted them. This is followed by a literal English translation of the contributing elements, after which the two languages are given. In parentheses, I provide the two words in each language. Note that I follow here the Komnzo orthography, because with the exception of Nama there is no orthography available for these varieties. A few cases are problematic because one of the two words is identical in the contributing languages (13). However, all examples designate places on Komnzo speaking territory.

- (11) a. *fotnz* ‘coconut + short’; Wartha Thuntai (**fo** *tg*) + Komnzo (*ɲazi* **tnz**).  
 b. *säzäri* ‘paperbark + bending over’; Wartha Thuntai (**sä** *ytho*) + Komnzo (*karesa* **zäri**); The word *zäri* ‘bending (branches)’ is considered archaic, but there is the modern word *zäre* ‘shade’.  
 c. *tratabäk* ‘bird type + back’; Kánchá (**tratra** *bak*) + Komnzo (*drädrä* **bäk**).  
 d. *makozanzan* ‘vagina + beating’; Aramma (**mako** *kamakama*) + Komnzo (*nzga* **zanzan**).  
 e. *füsari* ‘garden row + axe’; Nama (**fü** *mbilë*) + Komnzo (*ɲanz* **sari**); The word *sari* is considered archaic.  
 f. *düdüsam* ‘broom + liquid’; Nama (**düdü** *wkwr*) + Komnzo (*dödö* **sam**).  
 g. *fakwr* ‘after + ashes’; Nama (**fa** *fak*) + Komnzo (*thrma* **kwr**).  
 h. *wästhak* ‘tree type (*Ficus elastica*) + place’; Nama (**wäs** *näk*) + Komnzo (*wäsü* **thak**); The word *thak* is archaic in Komnzo and only found in *mni thak* ‘fire place’.
- (12) a. *zthékabir* ‘penis + sleep(n)’; Komnzo (**zthé** *etfth*) + Wära (*zthk* **kabir**).

## 11 Aspects of the lexicon

- b. *snzäzwär* ‘river crayfish + base’; Komnzo (*snzä zfth*) + Wartha (*dawi zwär*).
  - c. *ormogo* ‘Emerald Dove + house’; Komnzo (*or mnz*) + Nama (? *mogo*); The name of this bird in Nama is unknown.
  - d. *yem gi faf* ‘cassowary killing place’; Komnzo (*yem zan faf*) + Nama (*awyé gi faf*).
  - e. *märofak* ‘tree type (*Dillenia ensifolia*) + ashes’; Komnzo (*märo kwr*) + Nama (*mane fak*).
- (13)
- a. *sizwär* ‘eye + base’; Komnzo (*si zfth*) + Wartha Thuntai (*si zwär*).
  - b. *gawe* ‘I + also’; Komnzo (*nzä we*) + Wartha Thuntai (*ga we*).
  - c. *mnzärfr* ‘ant + stem’; Nama (*mnzär fr*) + Komnzo (*msar fr*).
  - d. *zöfäthak* ‘bird + place’; Wära (*zöfä thak*) + Komnzo (*ymd thak*); The word *thak* is archaic in Komnzo and only found in *mni thak* ‘fire place’.

Mixed places names pattern roughly according to geography. For example, place names containing Nama words are mostly found east of Rouku, while place names involving Wartha Thuntai words are mostly found to the southwest. There are many exceptions, where (i) the place does not fit geography or (ii) the ‘foreign’ word could be from more than one language. However, the overall pattern suggests that geography plays a role. Thus, if we showed these places on a map and marked them for the contributing ‘foreign’ languages, we could geographically visualise speech varieties. Data from other villages and their place names is needed to corroborate this observation.

The pattern of mixed place names calls for an investigation of naming customs. However, as with most place names, the point in time when such double language names were coined is far removed. Most of my informants did not remember anyone giving a name to these places. A common response was ‘we learned them from our fathers’. In fact, most informants find the idea of naming a place somewhat strange. That being said, we can still draw some conclusions about naming customs. Mixed place names differ from the monolingual, decriptive place names. One can imagine a gradual transition from a description to a proper name like *swäri zfth* ‘*swäri* base’ mentioned above. With mixed place names such a transition is an unlikely scenario. Instead a more deliberate act of coining the name has to be assumed. Note that we also find monolingual place names, where a transition from description to proper name can be ruled out on semantic grounds, for example *nzarga wth* (tree type + faeces) or *zäzr mnz* (lazy + house). However, the point here is that a gradual transition is unlikely because two languages are involved, even if the name is of a more decriptive nature like (11h) and (12b). These observations authenticate the importance of place in Morehead culture, an argument that was put forward by Mary Ayres (1983).

Mixed place names can shed some light on the degree of multilingualism in the language communities concerned. There are varying degrees of metalinguistic awareness both between different place names and between different speakers. That is to say that speakers differ in their language profiles, and ultimately differ in how much access they have to the word in the ‘foreign’ language. Moreover, some place names are easier to

parse, while others have undergone phonological reduction or one of the segments has become archaic. Generally speaking, most speakers are aware of these double language names and the meaning in the respective languages. One observation that can be made is the complete absence of doublets, that is cases where both terms refer to the same referent, but in different languages. There are examples of doublets in Komnzo, but not for place names. For example, there is a cassava type called *ubi biskar*. The word *ubi* is from Malay and the word *biskar* is a Komnzo word, but both mean ‘cassava’. This type of doublet is to be expected if the speakers who coined the name did not know the meaning of the ‘foreign’ word. The pattern that we find with place names suggests the opposite. At the time of coinage, one has to assume a degree of multilingualism at least as high as today.

### 11.3.4 Social landscape

This section addresses the topic of social landscape, by which I mean the reference system used for people in relation to space. The Komnzo terms for this domain conceptualise either pure geography or what we may call kinship-dependent geography. The importance of place in the Morehead district has been described in great detail by Mary Ayres. I sketch out the sister-exchange system only where it is relevant to the discussion. Otherwise I refer the reader to (Ayres 1983) and §1.3.8.

The purely geographic terms are based on an east-west axis. The people who live in the east are referred to with the word *nzödmä*, while the people in the west are called *smärki*. These labels are often only applied to people living two villages away. They are rarely used for one’s immediate neighbours. The system is ego-centric in that the same labels or cognate terms are applied in other villages. If one moves further west, the term *güdmä* [ʔgy<sup>n</sup>dmæ] is used for everyone to the east, including the people of Rouku.<sup>9</sup> Likewise the people in the east would call everyone who lives west of them *smärki*. Thus, the terms *nzödmä* and *smärki* do not refer to a specific group, but mean ‘people from the east’ and ‘people from the west’ respectively. This caused some confusion for early ethnographers (Williams 1936: 36), but was explained by Ayres (1983: 132). The east-west axis is validated by the term *tharthar kabe* ‘people on the side’, which is used for the Aramma speakers in the north.<sup>10</sup> Further north, the speakers of Suki and Gogodala are collectively labelled with the proper name *wiram*. Also the people in the south do not fit in the east-west schema, but are instead referred to by proper names, for example *wartha*, or they may be called *mazo kabe* ‘coast people’. Groups which live further away have proper names, for example the Kanum and Marind speakers in the west are called *kodomarid* and the speakers of Kiwai are called *turéd*.

As pointed out by Ayres, people define themselves as belonging to a particular origin place. The ancestors of different clans and sections might have arrived from different directions, but they ‘spread out’ from the same origin place. Hence, people can be referred to by their origin place. For Komnzo speakers, this is *farem kar* ‘farem place’, which is

<sup>9</sup>The word *güdmä* in Nama and Blafe are cognate with Komnzo *nzödmä*. In Komnzo, Wära, Anta and Wéré velar stops have undergone palatalisation before front vowels, for example [ʔg] > [ʔdʒ].

<sup>10</sup>Often the phrase *sarsar nar* is used, which means the same in Aramma.





# Sample text: Nzürna trikasi

## *Nzürna trikasi*

This text belongs to a genre called *nzürna trikasi* ‘*nzürna* stories’. I translate *nzürna* with ‘devil’, ‘spirit’ or ‘witch’. Although all of these translations fall short of a full description, the *nzürna* character has some resemblance to witches in a western context. They are malevolent beings, usually old women, who live in the forest. They have long eyebrows and sharp fingernails, with which they disembowel people to devour them. They can change their appearance to look like a human being. They can summon and control animals, especially the centipede (*züm*). They often trick people who foolishly walk alone in the forest.<sup>1</sup>

Although *nzürna* stories belong to a particular place, they are very much public stories. The *nzürna* character is often joked about openly. For example, one may call a person or a dog “*nzürna*”, when it roams around in the dark. Although there are many local variations of the *nzürna* theme, we can identify some recurring elements. First, the *nzürna* often lives in a tree, usually a *wäsi* tree. Secondly, most stories involve some innocent person who is killed and eaten. Third, relatives and friends of the victim take revenge by burning the *nzürna*.

The following *nzürna* story belongs to the hamlet of Firra. The narrator is Maraga Kwozi. He was born in Firra, but he told me the story in Morehead. This *nzürna* story deviates in two points. First, the *nzürna* character lives together with a husband, and they have children. Secondly, the *nzürna* character lived in harmony with the people of Firra up until she kills and eats a visitor.

This text can be accessed under: <https://zenodo.org/record/1294666>

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<sup>1</sup>All texts in the appendix have been edited in the following way: (i) I corrected mistakes that came up during the transcription, (ii) I have removed overly long speech pauses, and (iii) I have lumped together some annotations and split others. All editorial changes were kept to a minimum. The unedited versions can be found in the archive.

- 1 *zaföwä ... fthé kabe keke kwot tüfr thfrärm*  
 zafe=wä (.) fthé kabe keke kwot tüfr thf\rä/rm  
 before=EMPH (.) when man NEG properly plenty 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/be  
 ‘Long time ago, that is when there were not many people’
- 2 *thwamnzrm zane kafar baden thé z kabe enrera*  
 thwa\m/nzrm zane kafar bad=en thé z kabe  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell DEM:PROX big ground=/Loc when ALR man  
 en\rä/ra  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/be  
 ‘and they were living here on this land. That is the time when people came.’
- 3 *nä kabe thfamnzrm ... mogarkamen ... kar nima rä ... mogarkam*  
 nä kabe thfa\m/nzrm (.) mogarkam=en (.) kar nima  
 INDF man 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell (.) mogarkam=LOC (.) village like.this  
 \rä/ mogarkam  
 3SG.F:NPST:IPFV/be mogarkam  
 ‘Some people lived in Mogarkam ... There is a village there ... Mogarkam.’
- 4 *okay, nä thfamnzrm firran*  
 okay nä thfa\m/nzrm firra=n  
 okay INDF 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell firra=LOC  
 ‘Okay, others lived in Firra.’
- 5 *okay, nä fä fefe thwamnzrm mänwä kar bramöwä erä*  
 okay nä fä fefe thwa\m/nzrm mä=wä kar bramöwä  
 okay INDF DIST really 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell where=EMPH place all  
 e\rä/  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘Okay, others lived right there, where all the villages (and hamlets) are.’
- 6 *firra mrmren ... mane zfrärm ... nzürna ñare bobo zwamnzrm*  
 firra mrmr=en (.) mane zf\rä/rm (.) nzürna ñare bobo  
 firra inside=LOC (.) which 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR/be (.) nzürna woman MED.ABL  
 zwa\m/nzrm  
 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell  
 ‘As for Firra, a nzürna woman lived in the village.’
- 7 *nzürna ñare nafafisr wä thfrnm*  
 nzürna ñare nafa-fis=r=wä thf\rn/m  
 nzürna woman 3.POSS-husband=ASSOC.DU=EMPH 2|3DU:SBJ:PST:DUR/be  
 ‘The nzürna woman was with her husband.’
- 8 *nafafis yf nagawa ... tnztnz kabe sfrärm*  
 nafa-fis yf nagawa (.) tnz-tnz kabe sf\rä/rm  
 3.POSS-husband name nagawa (.) REDUP-short man 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR/be  
 ‘His name (was) Nagawa ... He was a short guy.’

- 9 *nafane njare ... nzürna njare fof yf mane zfrärm zafo ... nafrr thwamrnm*  
 nafane njare (.) nzürna njare fof yf mane zfrä/rm zafo  
 3SG.POSS woman (.) nzürna woman EMPH name which 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR/be zafo  
 (.) nafrr thwam\rn/m  
 (.) 3DU.ASSOC 2|3DU:SBJ:PST:DUR/be  
 ‘His wife ... the nzürna woman whose name was Zafo ... He lived with her.’
- 10 *wati, mä fefe thwamrnm wäsü ... nafanme mnz zfrärm*  
 wati, mä fefe thwam\rn/m wäsü (.) nafanme mnz  
 then where really 2|3DU:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell wäsü (.) 3NSG.POSS house  
 zfrä/rm  
 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR/be  
 ‘Where they really lived (was) the wäsü tree (Ficus elastica) ... it was there house.’
- 11 *wäsü kafar sukogrm ... ane yfön thuthkrnm*  
 wäsü kafar su\kogr/m (.) ane yfö=n  
 wäsü big 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR:STAT/stand (.) DEM hole=LOC  
 thu\thkr/nm  
 2|3DU:SBJ:PST:DUR:STAT/be.inside  
 ‘There was a big wäsü tree standing ... They were inside that hole.’
- 12 *boba mnz nafanme zfrärm mä thwamrnm*  
 boba mnz nafanme zfrä/rm mä thwa\rn/m  
 MED.ABL house 3NSG.POSS 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR/be where 2|3DU:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell  
 ‘This was their house, where they were living’
- 13 *firra kar mrmren kabe thwamnzrm fobo*  
 firra kar mrmr=en kabe thwa\rn/nzrm fobo  
 firra village inside=LOC man 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell DIST.ALL  
 ‘People were living over there in the village of Firra.’
- 14 *kabe fthé kwarfakunzrmth fthé thfyakm*  
 kabe fthé kwa\rfaku/nzrmth fthé thfyak/m  
 man when 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/sprinkle when 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/walk  
 ‘When the people spread out, when they went ...’
- 15 *nima njarake znfo o fiyaf r o ... nima efothen ... etfthmövä fthé thfyakm*  
 nima njarake zn=fö o fiyaf=r o (.) nima efoth=en (.)  
 like.this fence place=LOC or hunting=PURP or (.) like.this day=LOC (.)  
 etfth=me=wä fthé thfyak/m  
 sleep=INS=EMPH when 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/walk  
 ‘like this to the garden place or hunting or during the day ... or when they went  
 overnight’
- 16 *ane nzürna njare ausi fof kwänzinzr ... fi zwanyakm*  
 ane nzürna njare ausi fof kwän\rn/zinzr/ (.) fi  
 DEM spirit woman old woman EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ:ITER:VENT/replace (.) 3.ABS

- zwan\yak/m  
 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR:VENT/walk  
 ‘that nzürna woman, that old woman always took over the place ... she came.’
- 17 *gatha kar fthé thumarwrm ... gathagathame thfnakwrmth mnz gatha kar.*  
 gatha kar fthé thu\mar/wrm (.) gathagatha=me  
 rubbish when 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/see (.) bad=INS  
 thfnak/wrmth mnz gatha kar  
 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/put.down house rubbish  
 ‘When she saw the rubbish ... they had carelessly put down the rubbish in the house’
- 18 *dödö thfefaf ane zurenwrm mnz fath thwafiyokwrm*  
 dödü thfe\faf/ ane zu\ren/wrmö  
 broom 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:ITER/hold DEM 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG:F:PST:DUR:AND/sweep  
 mnz fath thwa\fiyok/wrm  
 house clear.place SG:SBJ>2|3PL:IO:PST:DUR/make  
 ‘She always grabbed the broom, swept the house and cleaned it for them.’
- 19 *nafanme kkauna monme gathagathame thfnakwrmth kwot namäme thfanakwrm*  
 nafanme k-kauna mon=me gathagatha=me  
 3NSG.POSS REDUP-stuff how=INS bad=INS  
 thfnak/wrmth kwot namä=me  
 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:IO:PST:DUR/put.down properly good=INS  
 thfa\nak/wrm  
 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/put.down  
 ‘How they had dropped their things carelessly, she was sorting them properly.’
- 20 *mnzen thwarakthkwramo ... mni tnztnz rä ... kwanbrigwrm nafanemäwä mnzfo*  
 mnz=en thwa\rakthk/wramo (.) mni tnz-tnz  
 house=LOC 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:IO:PST:DUR:AND/put.on.top (.) firewood REDUP-short  
 \rä/ (.) kwan\brig/wrm nafaneme=wä mnz=fo  
 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:/Ipfv/be (.) 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:DUR/return 3NSG.POSS=Emph house=ALL  
 ‘She put their (things) back in the house ... for example the small pices of firewood ... She brought them back to their houses.’
- 21 *fthé we thwanyakm thwänthor ... ane mnz woga fthé swänthor*  
 fthé we thwan\yak/m thwän\thor/ (.) ane mnz  
 when also 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR:VENT/walk 2|3PL:SBJ:ITERVENT/arrive (.) DEM house  
 woga fthé swän\thor/  
 man when 3SG.MASC:SBJ:ITER:VENT/arrive  
 ‘When they were coming back, each time they arrived ... each time when the house owner arrived’
- 22 *“oh zane njare z nzwänyak mnz fath zf nzürenwro zrä.”*  
 oh zane njare z nz=wän\yak/ mnz fath zf  
 oh DEM:PROX woman ALR IPST=3SG.F:NPST:IPFV:VENT/walk house clear place IMM



- 29 *firran mane thwamnzrm mema zokwasi woga yara ... fthé thwamnzrm kabe*  
 firra=n mane thwa\m/nzrm mema zokwasi woga  
 firra=LOC which 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell mema language man  
 ya\r/a (.) fthé thwa\m/nzrm kabe  
 3SG.MASC:PST:IPFV/be (.) when 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell man  
 ‘As for the ones who lived in Firra, they were speaker of Mema. That’a when the  
 people lived in Firra.’
- 30 *wati, fi mane yaka e “krara krara krara”*  
 wati fi mane \yak/a e 3xkrara  
 then 3.ABS which 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/walk until 3xsound.of.cooctatoo  
 ‘Well, when he walked. “krara krara krara”’
- 31 *firra sathora fof with fren fof “krara krara krara”*  
 firra sa\thor/a fof with fr=en fof 3xkrara  
 firra 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:PFV EMPH banana stem=LOC EMPH 3xsound.of.cooctatoo  
 ‘He arrived in Firra (and he went) between the banana trees “krara krara krara”’
- 32 *fi zära yakme we senis zära ... kabe wokuthé zäkora nima kabe*  
 fi zä\r/a yak=me we senis zä\r/a (.) kabe  
 3.ABS 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/do walk=INS also change 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/do (.) man  
 woku=thé zä\kor/a nima kabe  
 skin=ADJZR 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/become like.this man  
 ‘He quickly changed. He became like a human being ... like a man.’
- 33 *ane si thäbu zanfr ra zane thfrärm ... ofe ñarerath ... zäwthefa ... kabe zäkora*  
 ane si thäbu zanfr ra zane thfrä\rm (.) ofe  
 DEM eye hair long what DEM:PROX 2|3PL:SBJ:PST.DUR/be (.) absence  
 ña\rä\rath (.) zä\wthef/a (.) kabe  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV/do (.) 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/change (.) man  
 zä\kor/a  
 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/become  
 ‘These long eyebrows and whatever else there was, it disappeared. He changed.  
 He became a human.’
- 34 *watik ñare nima zräzigrm “awe nzone moba nzranyak?”*  
 watik ñare nima zrä\zigrm/ awe nzone moba  
 then woman QUOT 3SG.F:SBJ:IRR:PFV/look.around come 1SG.POSS where.ABL  
 nzran\yak/  
 2SG:SBJ:IRR:IPFV:VENT/walk  
 ‘Well, the woman was looking around and said “Come my friend, where do you  
 come from?”’
- 35 *naf we komnzo zära nima “oh zane ausinzo zf zagathifh”*  
 naf we komnzo zä\r/a nima oh zane ausi=nzo  
 3SG.ERG also only 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/do QUOT oh DEM:PROX old woman=ONLY

- zf za\gathif/th  
 IMM 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:RPST:PFV/leave  
 ‘He was also thinking “Oh, they have left only this old woman behind.”’
- 36 *“kabe matak erä nima z bramöwä kwafarkwrth nima erä ñarsfo” ... “awow”*  
 kabe matak e\rä/ nima z bramöwä  
 man nothing 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be like.this ALR all  
 kwa\fark/wrth nima e\rä/ ñars=fo  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV/set.off like.this 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be river=ALL  
 “‘Nobody is here. All the people left this way to the river.’ ... ‘Okay’”
- 39 *yamenzo srathams ... kramath with tayo yanrkunzr ... yarithr*  
 yame=nzo sra\thams/ (.) kra\math/  
 mat=ONLY 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:IRR:PFV/spread.out (.) 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/run  
 with tayo yan\rku/nzr (.)  
 banana ripe 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:NPST:IPFV/knock.down (.)  
 ya\ri/thr  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:NPST:IPFV/give  
 ‘She spread (the mat) for him, ran and knocked down some ripe banana for him  
 ... and gave them to him.’
- 40 *kafar famä zäkora nima “nzone dagonma zane zf yé. z nzyanyak”*  
 kafar fam=ä zä\kor/a nima nzone dagon=ma  
 big thought=ASSOC 2|3SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/become QUOT 1SG.POSS food  
 zane zf \yé/ z  
 DEM:PROX IMM 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be ALR  
 nz=yan\yak/  
 IPST=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/walk  
 ‘She had big thoughts “This one here is my dinner. He came already.”’
- 40 *bänema yrgfakwa nima “zane karma keke yé. moba zane nm nzyanyak?”*  
 bäne=ma y\rgfak/wa nima zane  
 DEM:MED 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:IPFV/recognise QUOT DEM:PROX  
 kar=ma keke \yé/ moba zane nm  
 village=CHAR NEG 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be DEM:PROX maybe where.ABL  
 nz=yanyak  
 IPST=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/walk  
 ‘because she realised “He is not from this village. Where might he have come  
 from?”’
- 41 *garamgaram srethkäf “kwa ñabrigwr? efoth byé!”*  
 garamgaram sre\thkäf/ kwa  
 sweet.talk 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/start FUT  
 ña\brig/wr efoth b=\yé/  
 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/return sun MED=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘She started sweet-talking him “Will you return today? The sun setting already?”’

- 42 *“keke, zä zf kwa worugr. kwa fof thrämonesé kayé fthé thräthor.”*  
 keke zä zf kwa wo\rug/r kwa fof  
 NEG PROX IMM FUT 1SG.SBJ:NPST:IPFV/sleep FUT EMPH  
 thrä\mones/é kayé fthé thrä\thor/  
 1SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:IRR:PFV/wait tomorrow when 2|3PL:SBJ:IRR:PFV/arrive  
 “No, I will sleep right here. I will wait until they return tomorrow.”
- 43 *zbär ... faf ñathamsakrnth ... etfth kramnzerth*  
 zbär (.) faf ña\thamsak\rnth (.) etfth  
 night (.) place 2|3DU:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/spread.out (.) sleep  
 kra\mnzer/th  
 2|3DU:SBJ:IRR:PFV/fall.asleep  
 ‘The night came and they spread the mats. They fell asleep.’
- 44 *etfth kwosi krämnzer ... ausi nzürna ñare krebnaf “züm züm züm züm”*  
 etfth kwosi krä\mnzer/ (.) ausi nzürna ñare  
 sleep dead 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/fall.asleep (.) old woman spirit woman  
 kre\bnaf/ 4x(züm)  
 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/wake.up 4x(centipede)  
 ‘He was fast asleep! The nzürna woman woke up (and called out) “centipedes!  
 centipedes! centipedes! centipedes!”’
- 45 *subnazrm fof ... sain swarithrm ... wati*  
 su\bnaz/rm fof (.) sain  
 SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:DUR/wake.up EMPH (.) sign  
 swa\ri/thrm (.) wati  
 SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:PST:DUR/wake.up (.) enough  
 ‘She was really waking him up, giving him a sign ... but no.’
- 46 *keke zethäkna ane*  
 keke ze\thäkn/a ane  
 NEG SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/shake DEM  
 ‘That guy did not move.’
- 47 *yaka zanrnzo srewakuth.*  
 yaka zan=r=nzo sre\wakuth/  
 yam.stick hit=PURP=ONLY SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/pick.up  
 ‘She picked up the yam stick to kill him.’
- 48 *di fof safrnza kwosi.*  
 di fof sa\frnz/a kwosi  
 back.of.head EMPH SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:PFV/uproot dead  
 ‘She whacked him on the head and killed him.’
- 49 *kwot yanatha fä fof ... bramöwä.*  
 kwot ya\na/tha fä fof (.) bramöwä  
 properly SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:IPFV/eat DIST EMPH (.) all  
 ‘She ate him there ... all of him.’



- 50 *sabtha wthnzo ezänzr. füni komnzo bikogr firran.*  
 sa\bth/a wth=nzo  
 SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:PFV/finish intestines=ONLY  
 e\zä/nzr füni komnzo  
 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/carry füni still  
 b=y\kogr/ firra=n  
 MED=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:STAT/stand firra=LOC  
 ‘She finished him and carried away only the intestines. The füni tree still stands in Firra.’
- 51 *wämne ... yf füni yé ... firran bä ykogr.*  
 wämne (.) yf füni \yé/ (.) firra=n bä  
 tree (.) name füni 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) firra=LOC MED  
 y\kogr/  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:STAT/stand  
 ‘The name of the tree is füni. It stands there in Firra’
- 52 Maraga addresses me directly now.  
*nä kayé fthé boba gnyako nima kwa ymarwr ... ane kafar wämne.*  
 nä kayé fthé boba gn\yak/o nima kwa  
 INDF yesterday when MED.ALL 2SG:SBJ:IMP:IPFV:AND/go like.this FUT  
 y\mar/wr (.) ane kafar wämne  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:NPST:IPFV/see (.) DEM big tree  
 ‘When you go there some day, you will see it ... that big tree.’
- 53 Marua, who sits in the back, tells him that I have been to Firra in the previous week.  
*z nyakako? ... zba mothfa mane ykogr füni.*  
 z n\yak/ako (.) zba moth=fa mane  
 ALR 2SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV:AND/walk (.) PROX.ABL path=ABL which  
 y\kogr/ füni  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:STAT/stand füni  
 ‘You already went? It is here on the road, where the füni tree stands.’
- 54 *ane bafen ... yakan dganzo saräsa.*  
 ane baf=en (.) yaka=n dga=nzo  
 DEM RECOG=LOC (.) yamstick=LOC bifurcation=ONLY  
 sa\räs/a  
 SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:PFV/erect  
 ‘At that place ... on the yamstick ... she rammed it in the ground.’
- 55 *wth fobo fof thämira ... ane kabeane wth. fi zäbrimako ... zäthbako mnzen.*  
 wth fobo fof thämira (.) ane kabe=ane  
 intestines DIST.ALL EMPH SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:PFV/hang (.) DEM man=POSS  
 wth fi zä\brim/ako (.) zä\thb/ako  
 intestines 3.ABS SG:SBJ:PST:PFV:AND/return (.) SG:SBJ:PST:PFV:AND/enter

- mnz=en  
house=LOC  
'She hanged the intestines up there ... that guy's intestines! Then she went back. She went inside the house.'
- 56 *nafafis oromanf zräsés fof* "be ranzo äñfiyokwr, ah? ... bä moba nrä? ... mä nznrugr?"  
nafa-fis oroman=f zrä\ses/ fof be  
3.POSS-husband old man=ERG 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IRR:PFV/ask EMPH 2SG.ERG  
ra=nzo äñfiyok/wr ah (.) bä moba  
what=ONLY 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/make ah (.) 2.ABS where.ABL  
n\rä/ (.) mä nzn\rugr/  
2SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) where 2SG.SBJ:RPST:IPFV/sleep  
'Her husband, the old man, asked her "Hey, just what have you been up to? Where are you coming coming from? Where have you slept?"'
- 57 *"mä kwa! bä fof zämnzeré ... zbärma."*  
mä kwa bä fof zä\mnzer/é (.) zbär=ma  
where FUT MED EMPH 1SG:SBJ:RPST:PFV/fall.asleep (.) night=CHAR  
'She replied "Where do you think? I slept there because it got night."'
- 58 *"nagayaneme znsän zwäfonz. ane gathagathame kkauna mane egathikwroth."*  
nagayé=aneme znsä=n zwä\fonz/ ane  
children=POSS.NSG work=LOC 1SG:SBJ:RPST:PFV/be.caught.by.nightfall DEM  
gathagatha=me k-kauna mane e\gathik/wroth  
bad=INS REDUP-thing which 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV:AND/leave  
"I was caught by nightfall while working for the children sorting those things which they leave scattered around."
- 59 *nafafis miyamr.*  
nafa-fis miyamr  
3.POSS-husband ignorance  
'Her husband was clueless.'
- 60 *fi thé enthorakwa ... mnz kabe fof ... nima thäzigrthma*  
fi fthé en\thorak/wa (.) mnz kabe fof (.) nima  
3.ABS when 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/arrive (.) house people EMPH (.) like.this  
thä\zigrthm/a  
2|3PL:SBJ:PST:PFV/look  
'At that time the house owners returned to the village. They looked around and said,'
- 61 *"nä tmatm ffé nzjawänzr ... manema kabe zä naf nzyanathr?"*  
nä tmatm fefe nz=ñj\wä/nzr (.) mane=ma kabe zä  
INDF event real IPST=2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/happen (.) which=CHAR man PROX

- naf      nz=ya\na/thr  
 3SG.ERG IPST=2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/eat  
 “Something terrible has just happened. From which village was the man who she ate here?”
- 62 *äniyaka zbär zf zukwinzrmth zfkonzrmth.*  
 än\yak/a                                      zbär zf zu\kwi/nzrmth  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/walk night IMM 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:DUR/argue  
 zf\ko/nzrmth  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:DUR/tell  
 ‘In the night, they came right here and they cursed her and told her.’
- 63 *zäbrimath “mon kwa wäfiyokwre? bänema kabe z nzirärkwr ... z nzyanathr.”*  
 zä\brim/ath                                      mon kwa wä\fiyok/wre  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:PFV/return how FUT 1PL:SBJ>:3SG.F:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/make  
 bäne=ma      kabe z      nz=y\rärk/wr                                      (.) z  
 RECOG=CHAR man ALR IPST=2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/mess.up (.) ALR  
 nzyanathr  
 IPST=2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/eat  
 ‘They returned and said “What are we going to do with her? She already messed up this man. She already ate him.”’
- 64 *wati bthan kabe thfrärm ... kabe firran mane thwamnzrm.*  
 wati bthan kabe thf\rä/rm                                      (.) kabe firra=n      mane  
 then magic man 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/be (.) men firra=LOC who  
 thwa\m/nzrm  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/be  
 ‘Okay, there were sorcerers living in Firra.’
- 65 *wati, tmatm äfiyokwrth. tmatm zwafiyokwrnth*  
 wati t-tmatm      ä\fiyok/wrth                                      t-tmatm  
 then REDUP-action 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/make REDUP-action  
 zwa\fiyok/wrnth  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:PST:DUR/make  
 ‘Okay, they make their magic things. They were doing this to her.’
- 66 *fam wäfiyokwrth näbinzo “mnime n zräföfe.” ... nima tmatmr rä*  
 fam      wä\fiyok/wrth                                      näbi=nzo      mni=me n  
 thought 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:NPST:IPFV/make one=ONLY fire=INS IMM  
 zräföf/e                                      (.) nima      tmatm=r      \rä/  
 1PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IRR:PFV/burn (.) like.this action=PURP 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘They came up with a plan “We will burn her with fire.” This was the plan.’
- 67 *wati, bthan tmatmme nafane fam zwarmänwrnth.*  
 wati bthan tmatm=me nafane fam      zwa\rmän/wrnth  
 then magic action=INS 3SG.POSS though 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:IO:PST:DUR/close  
 ‘Okay, they were distracting her mind with magic.’

- 68 *wärmänwath e ane bafen keke kwamätrakwrm bänema fam z zürmänth.*  
 wä`rmän/wath e ane baf=en keke  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.OBJ:IO:NPST:IPFV/close until DEM RECOG=CHAR NEG  
 kwa`mätrak/wrm bäne=ma fam z zü`rmän/th  
 SG:SBJ:PST:DUR/come.out RECOG=CHAR thought ALR 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:IO:ITER/close  
 ‘They were distracting her so that she did not come out of that place, because her thoughts were always distracted.’
- 69 *wtri we z zära nima “z zwemarth ane yam fiyoksin.”*  
 wtri we z zä`r/a nima z zwe`mar/th ane  
 fear also ALR 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be QUOT ALR 2|3PL:SBJ>1SG.OBJ:RPST:PFV/see DEM  
 yam fiyok-si=n  
 event make-NMLZ=LOC  
 ‘She was also afraid and thought “They already know that I have done this.”’
- 70 *mni wthomonwrth yfö mä zfrärm.*  
 mni w`thomon/wrth yfö mä zfrä`r/m  
 fire 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:NPST:IPFV/pile.up.fire hole where 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR/be  
 ‘They piled up the fire wood where the entrance was.’
- 71 *mni wthomonwath a zräföfth.*  
 mni w`thomon/wath a zrä`föf/th  
 fire 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:PST:IPFV/pile.up.fire until 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IRR:PFV/burn  
 ‘They piled it up and they set it on fire.’
- 72 *fi yame yrsifnzo zukonzrm boba wämne yfön fof.*  
 fi yame yr-si=f=nzo zu`ko/nzrm boba  
 3.ABS mat weave-NMLZ=ERG=ONLY SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:DUR/become MED.ABL  
 wämne yfö=n fof  
 tree hole=LOC EMPH  
 ‘She was preoccupied with weaving the mat there in the tree hole.’
- 73 *nafafis bana krebnaf krekaris “u” mni u kwan fof.*  
 nafa-fis bana kre`bnaf/ kre`karis/ u mni  
 3.POSS-husband poor 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/wake.up 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/hear u fire  
 u kwan fof  
 sound of strong wind EMPH  
 ‘Her husband woke up and heard it: “uh” the sound of the fire.’
- 74 *kafar wäsü sukogrm mrab fren.*  
 kafar wäsü su`kogr/m mrab fr=en  
 big tree type 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR/stand bamboo grove=LOC  
 ‘The big wäsü tree was standing there in a bamboo grove.’
- 75 *waisamen ... waisamen ane kar yf rä mobo zwamnzrm ... mrab fr thden.*  
 waisamen (.) waisamen ane kar yf rä/ mobo  
 waisamen (.) waisamen DEM place name 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be where.ALL



- sa\thfär/ako  
3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:PFV:AND/jump  
'That was when he left her alone. He jumped out.'
- 83 *nima fi fthé sathfärako yakäsü ... trtha zuthorakwrm.*  
nima fi fthé sa\thfär/ako yak=ä=sü (.) trtha  
like.this 3.ABS when 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:PFV:AND/jump run=ASSOC=ETC (.) life  
zu\thorak/wrm  
SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:DUR/search  
'When he jumped out in a rush, he was running for his life.'
- 84 *foba näbi fthé zanmatha fof.*  
foba näbi fthé zan\math/a fof  
DIST.ABL one when SG:SBJ:PST:PFV:VENT/ran EMPH  
'From there, he ran for good.'
- 85 *emoth fäth nima ämnzr oten.*  
emoth fäth nima ä\m/nzr ote=n  
girl DIM like.this 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/dwell ote=LOC  
'The daughters are living there in Ote.'
- 86 *komnzo zena bobo rä. ane kar we nä fof rä trikasi kar fof.*  
komnzo zena bobo rä/ ane kar we nä fof  
still today MED.ABL 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be DEM village also INDF EMPH  
rä/  
trik-si kar fof  
3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be tell-NMLZ village EMPH  
'This place is still there and there is also a story about that place.'
- 87 *dödö fr rä kafar dödö fr zbo thden rä.*  
dödö fr rä/ kafar dödö fr  
tree type grove 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be big tree type grove  
zbo thd=en rä/  
3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be middle=LOC 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
'The is a dödö grove (Melaleuca sp), a big dödö grove about halfway.'
- 88 *näbüwä thé zanmatha ote. emoth fäthnm thrätrif*  
näbi-wä fthé zan\math/a ote emoth fäth=nm  
one=EMPH when SG:SBJ:PST:PFV:VENT/run ote girl DIM=DAT.NSG  
thrä\trif/  
2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:IO:IRR:PFV/tell  
'Then he ran off for good to Ote. He told the girls: '
- 89 *"beñame ausi ... bzaföfth ... nafanemäwä!"*  
be-ñame ausi (.) b=za\föf/th (.)  
2NSG.POSS-mother old woman (.) MED=2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:PFV/burn (.)  
nafane=ma=wä  
3SG.POSS=CHAR=EMPH  
"Your mother, the old woman ... they burned her there! It was all her own fault!"

- 90 *“kafar yam zwa\fiyokwr ... kabe nä z swanathr!”*  
 kafar yam zwa\fiyok/wr (.) kabe nä z  
 big event 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:RPST:IPFV/make (.) man INDF ALR  
 swa\na/thr  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:RPST:IPFV/eat  
 “She has made a big mistake. She ate a man!”
- 91 *fi nimanzo fefe yarako.*  
 fi nima=nzo fefe ya\r/ako  
 3.ABS like.this=ONLY really 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV:AND/be  
 ‘He had left just like this.’
- 92 *fi nima mni zewaräfa ... ñarsira*  
 fi nima mni ze\waräf/a (.) ña\rsir/a  
 but like.this fire SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/burn.down (.) SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/burn  
 ‘But the fire burned down ... it was burning’
- 93 *ñarsira kma zräzigrm “moba kwa krämätré? moba?”*  
 ña\rsir/a kma zrä\zigrm/ moba kwa  
 SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/burn POT 3SG.F:SBJ:IRR:PFV/burn where.ABL FUT  
 krä\mätr/é moba  
 1SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/exit where.ABL  
 ‘It was burning and she tried to escape and said “Where will I get out? Where?”’
- 94 *näbi fefe zaföfath ñarsira eee kwot zäbtha.*  
 näbi fefe za\föf/ath ña\rsir/a eee  
 one really 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:PST:PFV/burn.down SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/burn until  
 kwot zä\bth/a  
 properly SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/finish  
 ‘They really burned her for good. The fire burned until she was finished.’
- 95 *brbrnzo fof n zäthba bafen ... ymden fof.*  
 brbr=nzo fof n zä\thb/a baf=en (.) ymd=en fof  
 spirit=ONLY EMPH IMN SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/enter RECOG=LOC (.) bird=LOC EMPH  
 ‘Only her spirit was about to enter that bird.’
- 96 *“kuka kuka” fä mane wänor “kuka kuka”*  
 kuka kuka fä mane wänor/ kuka kuka  
 kuka kuka DIST who 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/shout kuka kuka  
 “kuka kuka” the one that shouts “kuka kuka” over there.’
- 97 *krärth ane bthan woga ane kuka kuka zrämgh krätr.*  
 krä\r/th ane bthan woga ane kuka kuka  
 2|3PL:SBJ:IRR:PFV/do DEM magic man DEM kuka bird  
 zrä\mg/th krä\tr/  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:IRR:PFV/shoot 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/fall  
 ‘They got up. The sorcerers shot that kuka kuka bird and it fell down.’

- 98 wati, fefe zaföfath ane fobo fä zäbtha.  
 wati fefe za\föf/ath ane fobo fä  
 then really 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:PST:PFV/burn.down DEM DIST.ALL DIST  
 zä\bth/a  
 SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/finish  
 ‘They burned the bird over there until that it was finished.’
- 99 ane thrma mni fthé zäbtha wati nagawa ñabrigwa sir  
 ane thrma mni fthé zä\bth/a wati nagawa ña\brig/wa  
 DEM after fire when SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/finish then nagawa SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/return  
 si=r  
 eye=PURP  
 ‘After the fire had finished, Nagawa went back to see.’
- 100 “komnzo rä o z kwarsir mnin?”  
 komnzo rä/ o z kwa\rsir/ mni=n  
 sill 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be or ALR SG:RPST:IPFV/burn fire=LOC  
 ‘He asked himself “Is she still alive or did she burn in the fire?”’
- 101 ñabrigwa bobomr we waisam wäsü thé sanmara “watic fi nafazfthenwä”  
 ña\brig/wa bobomr we waisam (.) wäsü thé  
 SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/return until also waisam (.) wäsü when  
 san\mar/a watic fi nafa-zfth=en=wä  
 SG:SBJ:PST:PFV:VENT/see then 3.ABS 3.POSS-fault=LOC=EMPH  
 ‘He walked until Waisam. When he saw the wäsü tree he said “Well, it was her own fault.”’
- 102 yanzo bobo yanora ... nafañareanema ... wati, fi näbi zäbrima.  
 ya=nzo bobo ya\nor/a (.) nafa-ñare=ane=ma (.)  
 cry=ONLY MED.ALL 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/shout (.) 3.POSS-woman=POSS=CHAR (.)  
 wati fi näbi zä\brim/a  
 then 3.ABS one SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/return  
 ‘He was crying badly for his wife. Then he returned for good.’
- 103 zbo yamnzr ane woga oten. emoth fäthä ämnzr.  
 zbo ya\m/nzr ane woga ote=n emoth fäth=ä  
 PROX.ALL 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/dwell DEM man ote=/Loc girl DIM=ASSOC.PL  
 ä\m/nzr  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/dwell  
 ‘That man lives here in Ote. He lives together with his daughters.’
- 104 watic kabeyé komnzo fä nomai sumarwre ymarwre fthé  
 watic kabe=yé komnzo fä nomai su\mar/wrth  
 then man=ERG.NSG still DIST always 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:RPST:IPFV/see  
 y\mar/wre fthé  
 INSG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:RPST:IPFV/see when  
 ‘The people still see him there, we see him when...’



- 105 *fä ɲaritaƙwr nima firrafo yak we nima ɲabrigwr*  
 fä ɲa\ritak/wr nima firra=fo \yak/  
 DIST 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/cross like.this firra=ALL 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/return  
 we nima ɲa\brig/wr  
 ‘he goes across the river and when he goes to Firra and also when he returns that same way again.’
- 106 *tnz fäth ane kabe yé*  
 tnz fäth ane kabe \yé/  
 short DIM DEM man 3SG.MASC:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘He is a short guy.’
- 107 *ane nzürna ɲareane ... zokwasi nimame fof rä fof*  
 ane nzürna ɲare=ane (.) zokwasi nima=me fof \rä/  
 DEM nzürna woman=POSS (.) speech like.this=INS EMPH 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 fof  
 EMPH  
 ‘This nzürna woman’s story really happened like this.’
- 108 *mane bobo firran zwamnzm.*  
 mane bobo firra=n zwa\m/nzm  
 who MED.ALL firra=LOC 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell  
 ‘The nzürne who was living there in Firra.’
- 109 *tüfr yam nä ffé thwaƙfiyokwrm*  
 tüfr yam nä ffé thwa\fiyok/wrm  
 many event INDF really SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/make  
 ‘She did many things,’
- 110 *fi fathfa ane fof wäfiyokwa*  
 fi fath=fa ane fof wä\fiyok/wa  
 but clear.place=ABL DEM EMPH SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:IPFV/make  
 ‘but she did this one thing in public.’
- 111 *nä karma kabe mane yanatha mogarkamma.*  
 nä kar=ma kabe mane ya\na/ta  
 INDF village=CHAR man who SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:IPFV/eat  
 mogarkam=ma.  
 mogarkam=CHAR  
 ‘Eating this man from another village from Mogarkam.’
- 112 *nafane zokwasi ... ane trikasi fobonzo wythk fof brä ... ane nzürna ɲareanema.*  
 nafane zokwasi (.) ane trik-si fobo=nzo  
 3SG.POSS words (.) DEM tell-NMLZ DIST.ALL=ONLY  
 w\ythk/ fof b=\rä/ (.) ane  
 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/come.to.end EMPH MED=3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) DEM

Sample text: Nzürna trikasi

- nzürna ɲare=ane=ma  
 nzürna woman=POSS.SG=CHAR  
 ‘Her story story finishes there, the one about that nzürna woman.’
- 113 *watik, fobo fof zräkoré.*  
 watik fobo fof zrä\kor/é  
 then DIST.ALL EMPH 1SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IRR:PFV/speak  
 ‘Well, I have told it from there.’
- 114 *nä karen nima nä buné bänema ...*  
 nä kar=en nima nä bun=é bäne=ma (.)  
 INDF village=LOC like.this INDF=ERG.NSG RECOG=CHAR  
 ‘In other villages, others can tell’
- 115 *nä nzürna ɲare zokwasi trikasi bä räro fi ane kar woga mane erä fi ane miyatha erä.*  
 nä nzürna ɲare zokwasi trik-si bä \rä/ro fi ane  
 INDF nzürna woman words tell-NMLZ MED 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:AND/be but DEM  
 kar woga mane e\rä/ fi ane miyatha  
 village man who 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be 3.ABS DEM knowledgeable  
 e\rä/  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘other nzürna stories there. But it is those other village people who know about these.’
- 116 *nzefe nzüwäbragwé nima ni miyatha nrä.*  
 nze=wä nz=wä\brag/wé nima ni  
 1SG.ERG=EMPH IPST=1SG.SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/follow like.this 1NSG  
 miyatha n\rä/  
 knowledgeable 1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘I just followed the story as we know it.’
- 117 *nzekaren ane yam kwaɲiyokwrm nzenme ɲafyé mä thwamnzrm.*  
 nze-kar=en ane yam kwa\ɲiyok/wrm nzenme ɲafe=yé  
 1NSG.POSS-village=LOC DEM event SG:SBJ:PST:DUR/make 1NSG.POSS father=ABS.NSG  
 mä thwa\m/nzrm  
 where 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell  
 ‘She was doing this in our village, where our fathers were living’
- 118 *ɲafyé we nzenm natrikwath.*  
 ɲafe=yé we nzenm na\trik/wath  
 father=ERG.NSG also 1NSG.DAT 2|3PL:SBJ>1PL.IO:PST:IPFV/tell  
 ‘and our fathers also told us about it.’
- 119 *nima zbo zf zakoré ... fof zäbthé.*  
 nima zbo zf za\kor/é (.) fof  
 like.this PROX.ALL IMM 1SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:RPST:PFV/speak (.) EMPH

zä\bth/é.

1SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:RPST:PFV/finish  
'I said it like this and I finished it.'

[tci20120901-01 ]



# Sample text: Kwafar

## *Kwafar*

The following text was prompted by my question “Where did the yams come from?” It was told by Abia Bai. The text should be seen as a compendium rather than a single storyline. It was recorded as my fieldtrip in 2013 came to an end. During the previous weeks, I had talked with Abia many times about different topics and he promised to tell me these stories properly in the context of a recording session.

The text can be cut into three storylines, which I have been told independently by others. The first part is the *Kwafar* myth. *Kwafar* is a place off the coast between the island of New Guinea and the Australian continent. According to the story, there was a large *wāsi* tree at *kwafar* and the people of different tribes and languages lived together in this tree. Eventually, the tree burned down and the people started spreading out from there. Many clans of the Morehead district have an apical ancestor who came from *kwafar*. One of the many myths located at *Kwafar* involves two brothers, who went hunting in the area. The brothers came across a mysterious being which devours the bodies of those people who have died in the fire. The two brothers try to shoot the creature, but only the older brother is successful. As his arrow pierces the creature, a flood of water bursts out of the wound. In recent versions of the myth, the younger brother is said to be white like Europeans. He owns a shotgun instead of a bow. He runs south towards what is now Australia. The older brother runs north. He stops the flood by beating the water with branches of *dödö* (*Melaleuca* sp). At this point, Abia transitions into the second part. This is the story of *Mathkwi*, the apical ancestor of his clan. This story involves many small episodes about the route that *Mathkwi* took and all the things he carried and brought along. The third part is about customs and traditions around yam cultivation and a particular magic stone which Abia’s father used to own.

This text can be accessed under: <https://zenodo.org/record/1292876>

Sample text: Kwafar

- 1 *moba zrathkäfe?*  
 moba zra\thkäf/e  
 where.ABL 1DU:SBJ:IRR:PFV/start  
 ‘Where do we start?’
  
- 2 CD speaking:  
*wawa moba enrera?*  
 wawa moba en\rä/ra  
 yam where.ABL 2|3PL:PL:PST:IPFV:VENT/be  
 ‘Where did the yams come from?’
  
- 3 *okay, kwa zöbthé zrathkäfe nimame trikasi fof ... kwafar ...*  
 okay kwa zöbthé zra\thkäf/e nima=me trik-si fof (.) kwafar (.)  
 okay FUT first 1DU:SBJ:IRR:PFV/start like.this=INS tell-NMLZ EMPH (.) kwafar (.)  
 ‘Okay, first we will start the story really ... with Kwafar.’
  
- 4 *nimame fof nzranyan e zbo zrabthe*  
 nima=me fof nzran\yan/ e zbo  
 like.this=INS EMPH 1DU:SBJ:IRR:IPFV:VENT/walk until PROX.ALL  
 zra\bth/e  
 1DU:SBJ:IRR:PFV/finish  
 ‘We will go like this until we finish the story here.’
  
- 5 *ra nzigfu enfathwath*  
 ra nzigfu en\fath/wath  
 what magic.stone 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/hold  
 ‘about what magic rain stones were they holding’
  
- 6 *ra fofosa nzigfu enfathwath?*  
 ra fofosa nzigfu enfathwath  
 what heart magic.stone 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/hold  
 ‘and what magic yam stones were they holding.’
  
- 7 *watik zbo zf zrabthe aneme fof.*  
 watik zbo zf zra\bth/e ane=me fof  
 then PROX.ALL IMM 1DU:SBJ:IRR:PFV/finish DEM=INS EMPH  
 ‘We will finish with this topic right here.’
  
- 8 *trikasi näbi kwa wänyak.*  
 trik-si näbi kwa wän\yak/  
 tell-NMLZ one FUT 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/walk  
 ‘In this way, it will come as one story.’
  
- 9 *zrethkäfé?*  
 zre\thkäf/é  
 1SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IRR:PFV/start  
 ‘Should I start?’
  
- 10 *okay, zane mane rä ... zane trikasi ... ñafyf bäyf mane ñatrikwa*

- okay zane mane \rä/ (.) zane trik-si (.)  
 okay DEM.PROX who 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) DEM.PROX tell-NMLZ (.)  
 ŋafe=f bäi=f mane ŋa\trik/wa  
 father=ERG.SG bäi=ERG.SG who SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/tell  
 ‘As for this one, this story, it was father Bāi who told it.’
- 11 *nzenm natrikwa ... watik ane trikasi fof zena ŋaritakwr.*  
 nzenm na\trik/wa (.) watik ane trik-si fof zena  
 1NSG.DAT SG:SBJ>1PL:IO:PST:IPFV/tell (.) then DEM tell-NMLZ EMPH today  
 ŋa\ritak/wr  
 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/cross.over  
 ‘He told it to us and today it will pass on.’
- 12 *trikasi mane rä kwafarma rä.*  
 trik-si mane \rä/ kwafar=ma \rä/  
 tell-NMLZ which 3SG.F:NPST:IPFV/be kwafar=CHAR 3SG.F:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘This story is about Kwafar.’
- 13 *“kwafar” ŋafyf nima fof kwatrikwr “kwafar mane rera thden rera”*  
 kwafar ŋafe=f nima fof kwa\trik/wrm kwafar mane  
 kwafar father=ERG.SG QUOT EMPH SG:SBJ:PST:DUR/tell kwafar which  
 \rä/ra thd=en \rä/ra  
 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be middle=LOC 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be  
 “‘Kwafar’, father was telling us, ‘Kwafar was in the middle.’”
- 14 *zane zena mane bad mane wythk.*  
 zane zena mane bad mane w\ythk/  
 DEM.PROX today which ground which 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/come.to.end  
 ‘Here, where this land ends today,’
- 15 *mazo mä ŋakonr a australiane bad mä wythk.*  
 mazo mä ŋa\ko/nr a australia=ane bad mä  
 ocean where 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/become until australia=POSS.SG ground where  
 w\ythk/  
 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/come.to.end  
 ‘where the ocean begins until where the Australian continent ends.’
- 16 *fä mä fi zfrärm ane kwafar fof ... kabe mä kwamosinzrmth.*  
 fä mä fi zfrärm ane kwafar fof (.) kabe mä  
 DIST where 3.ABS 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR/be DEM kwafar EMPH (.) people where  
 kwa\mosi/nzrmth  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/gather  
 ‘that’s where Kwafar was located and where the people were gathering.’
- 17 *wäsi warfo thfrugrm.*  
 wäsi warfo thfrugr/m  
 wäsi above 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/sleep  
 ‘People were sleeping on top of the wäsi tree (Ficus elastica).’

Sample text: Kwafar

- 18 *wäsi bäne ykonzrth nä bä bikogro ... zärkarä.*  
 wäsi bäne y\ko/nzrth nä bä  
 wäsi DEM.MED 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/speak INDF MED  
 b=y\kogr/o (.) zär=karä  
 MED=3SG.MASC:NPST:IPFV:AND/stand (.) shade=PROP  
 ‘They call this one wäsi. There is one standing over there ... the one with shade.’
- 19 *kabe fä fof thwamnzrm fof.*  
 kabe fä fof thwa\m/nzrm fof  
 people DIST EMPH 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell EMPH  
 ‘The people were living there.’
- 20 *zokwasi ffrümenzo ... nä zfthen thwamnzrm nä thden thwamnzrm nä kerker thwamnzrm.*  
 zokwasi f-frü=me=nzo (.) nä zfth=en thwa\m/nzrm  
 language REDUP-single=INS=ONLY (.) INDF base=LOC 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell  
 nä thd=en thwa\m/nzrm nä kerker thwa\m/nzrm  
 INDF middle=LOC 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell INDF tail 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell  
 ‘They spoke different languages ... some people were living at the base, some people were living in the middle and some people were living up in the branches.’
- 21 *watik zokwasi ane ffrümenzo kwanafrmeth.*  
 watik zokwasi ane f-frü=me=nzo kwa\na/frmeth  
 then language DEM REDUP-single=INS=ONLY 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/talk  
 ‘Well, they were speaking different languages.’
- 22 *nä kayé wäsi ane zäföfa fof... zästha fof.*  
 nä kayé wäsi ane zä\föf/a fof (.) zä\sth/a  
 INDF yesterday wäsi DEM SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/burn EMPH (.) SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/set.alight  
 fof  
 EMPH  
 ‘One day that wäsi tree burned down. It really went up in flames.’
- 23 *nä kabe nima kwakwikwrnth*  
 nä kabe nima kwa\kwi/kwrnth  
 INDF people like.this 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/run  
 ‘Some people ran away this way.’
- 24 *nä kabe nima mnin kwarsirwrnth*  
 nä kabe nima mni=n kwa\rsir/wrnth  
 INDF people like.this fire=LOC 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/burn  
 ‘Some people burned in the fire.’
- 25 *watik wäsi ane kwot narsira ... zäbtha*  
 watik wäsi ane kwot narsira/a (.) zä\bth/a  
 then wäsi DEM properly SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/burn (.) SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/finish  
 ‘That wäsi tree burned completely. It finished.’



- 26 *kabe bä mane thwägrm warfo nä mrmr ... fi we nimäwä kwarsirwrmth*  
 kabe bä mane th\wägr/m warfo nä mrmr (.) fi we  
 people MED who 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/be.on.top above INDF inside (.) 3.ABS also  
 nima=wä kwa\rsir/wrmth  
 like.this=EMPH 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/burn  
 ‘The people who lived on top and some who lived inside, they burned.’
- 27 *watik ... ezi ... kabe ane frümenzo tnägsi zethkäfath ... bä frümenzo thwamnzrm.*  
 watik (.) ezi (.) kabe ane frü=me=nzo tnäg-si  
 then (.) morning (.) people DEM single=INS=ONLY lose-NMLZ  
 zä\thkäf/ath (.) bä frü=me=nzo thwa\m/nzrm  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:PFV/start (.) MED single=INS=ONLY 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell  
 ‘Then, in the morning, the people began to scatter all over the place. They were  
 living by themselves.’
- 28 *watik, mni fthé ñarsira ... kar ane bramöwä ñarsira fof ... thgathg zfrärm ... fath  
 thefath fath*  
 watik mni fthé ña\rsir/a (.) kar ane bramöwä  
 then fire when SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/burn (.) place DEM all  
 ña\rsir/a fof (.) thgathg zfrä\rm (.) fath  
 SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/burn EMPH (.) scorched.place 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR/be (.) clear.place  
 thefath fath  
 burned.place clear.place  
 ‘When the fire burned, it burned really the whole area. It became a scorched  
 landscape, a clear place.’
- 29 *watik menzmenz ane fof yabun kafar ... thgathg bänemr ane fof zenfara ...*  
 watik menz-menz ane fof yabun kafar (.) thgathg bäne=mr ane  
 then REDUP-story.man DEM EMPH fat big (.) burned.place RECOG=PURP DEM  
 fof zen\far/a (.)  
 EMPH SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/set.off (.)  
 ‘Well, that big, fat creature went to the burned place to get and eat those ones ...’
- 30 *kabe mane thfthnm kwosi.*  
 kabe mane thf\thn/m kwosi  
 people who 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/lie.down dead  
 ‘the people who were lying around dead.’
- 31 *watik ... gwamf ñatha thäsa ... ezi ... ane ... thefath thgathgen fof ... yaser*  
 watik (.) gwam=f ñatha thä\s/a (.) ezi (.)  
 then (.) gwam=ERG.SG dog SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:IPFV/call.for (.) morning (.)  
 ane (.) thefath thgath=en fof (.) yase=r  
 DEM (.) burned.place scorched.place=LOC EMPH (.) meat=PURP  
 ‘Well, Gwam called for the dogs for hunting, in the morning at that scorched  
 place.’
- 32 *watik ñatha anenzo fof sathkäfa.*

Sample text: Kwafar

- watik ηatha ane=nzo fof sa\thkäf/a  
 then dog DEM=ONLY EMPH SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:PFV/start  
 ‘Well, he started hunting with that one dog only.’
- 33 *ηatha ane swaruthrm gwam mon nima yarera*  
 ηatha ane swa\ru/thrm gwam mon nima  
 dog DEM SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:PST:DUR/bark gwam how like.this  
 ya\rä/ra  
 SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:PST:IPFV/do  
 ‘The dog was barking at the creature and Gwam noticed it.’
- 34 *eda erna kabe kafar yf mane thfrnm ... nafangthrwä gwam ... muri*  
 eda e\rn/a kabe kafar yf mane thfrnm/m (.)  
 two 2|3DU:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be man big name who 2|3DU:SBJ:PST:DUR/be (.)  
 nafa-ngth=r=wä gwam (.) muri  
 3.POSS-younger.sibling=ASSOC.DU=EMPH gwam (.) muri  
 ‘They were two men who had well-known names Gwam with his small brother Muri.’
- 35 *gwam yara nafanane ... muri nafangth*  
 gwam ya\r/a nafa-nane (.) muri  
 gwam 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be 3.POSS-older.sibling (.) muri  
 nafa-ngth  
 3.POSS-younger.sibling  
 ‘Gwam was his older brother and Muri the younger brother.’
- 36 *wati gwamf ane fof ezi ηatha thäsa thgathgen e*  
 wati gwam=f ane fof ezi ηatha thä\s/a  
 then gwam=ERG DEM EMPH morning dog SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:PFV/call.out  
 thgathg=en e  
 burned.place until  
 ‘Well, that Gwam was calling out for the dogs in that burned place.’
- 37 *anzenzo fof ηatha yayamgwa ... yayamgwa.*  
 ane=nzo fof ηatha ya\yamg/wa (.)  
 DEM=ONLY EMPH dog SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:IPFV/shock (.)  
 ya\yamg/wa  
 SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:IPFV/shock  
 ‘That creature shocked the dog, it shocked him.’
- 38 *ane menznzo fof kabe maf änaatha fof*  
 ane menz=nzo fof kabe maf ä\na/tha  
 DEM story.man=ONLY EMPH people who.ERG.SG SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:IPFV/eat  
 fof  
 EMPH  
 ‘that creature which ate the people.’
- 39 *fewakafkwosi thwanathrm*

- fewa=kaf kwosi thwa\na/thrm  
 stench=PROP dead SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/eat  
 ‘It was eating the rotten corpses.’
- 40 *murif zagr ymarwa fof ... maf yé? gwamf!*  
 muri=f zagr y\mar/wa fof (.) maf  
 muri=ERG.SG far SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:IPFV/see EMPH (.) who.ERG.SG  
 \yé/ gwam=f  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be gwam=ERG.SG  
 ‘Muri was seeing him from a distance ... Who’s that? Gwam! (not Muri)’
- 41 *“ra bāne yé?” nima n samara ... o “ra menzmenz yé?”*  
 ra bāne \yé/ nima n  
 what DEM.MED 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be like.this IMN  
 sa\mar/a (.) o ra menz-menz  
 SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:PFV/see (.) or what REDUP-story.man  
 \yé/  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 “‘What is this?’ he was about to see it ‘What creature is this?’”
- 42 *kabe nrma fi fobo fof ηagathikwa fof ... ane menzmenz*  
 kabe nr=ma fi fobo fof ηa\gathik/wa fof (.) ane  
 people stomach=CHAR 3.ABS DIST.ALL EMPH SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/stop EMPH (.) DEM  
 menz-menz  
 REDUP-story.man  
 ‘Because its stomach was full with people, it stopped there ... that creature.’
- 43 *kabe ane zenthkāfath yak.*  
 kabe ane zen\thkāf/ath yak  
 man DEM 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/start running  
 ‘The people (survivors) started running here.’
- 44 *ηatha mane kwaruthrm tifr ... yf ηatha yara ane tifr*  
 ηatha mane kwa\ru/thrm tifr (.) yf ηatha ya\r/a ane  
 dog who SG:SBJ:PST:DUR/bark tifr (.) name dog 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be DEM  
 tifr  
 tifr  
 ‘As for the barking dog, it was Tifr. The dog’s name was Tifr.’
- 45 *wati sathkāfath.*  
 wati sa\thkāf/ath  
 then 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:IPFV/start  
 ‘Then, they started going at the creature.’
- 46 *kabeyé ane dunzi kma sfruthrmth ... keke*  
 kabe=yé ane dunzi kma sf\ru/thrmth (.) keke  
 man=ERG.NSG DEM arrow POT 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:DUR/shoot (.) NEG  
 ‘The people were trying to shoot arrows at the creature without success.’

- 47 *gwamf nafangth sräkor* “muri! zba känrit nzuzawe! nzefé biruthro.”  
 gwam=f nafa-ngth srä\kor/ muri  
 gwam=ERG.SG 3.POSS-younger.sibling 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/speak muri  
 zba kän\rit/ nzu-zawe nze=wä  
 PROX.ABL 2SG:SBJ:IMP:PFV/CROSS.over 1SG.POSS-side 1SG.ERG=EMPH  
 b=y\ru/thro  
 MED=SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV:AND/shoot  
 ‘Gwam said to his small brother: “Muri! Come over to my side! I will shoot it there.”’
- 48 *naf nima* “samg! bänema nä buné fof yruthrth byé keke kwosi yathizr.”  
 naf nima sa\mg/ bänema nä bun=é  
 3SG.ERG QUOT 2SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IMP:PFV/shoot RECOG=CHAR INDF=ERG.NSG  
 fof y\ru/thrth b=|yé/  
 EMPH 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/shoot MED=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 keke kwosi ya\thiz/r  
 NEG dead 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/die  
 ‘He replied: “Shoot it! Because others are shooting and it is not dying.”’
- 49 *naf nima: “keke fi miyamr erä fofosa mä rä. nze komnzo zimarwé fof.”*  
 naf nima keke fi miyamr e\rä/ fofosa mä  
 3SG.ERG QUOT NEG 3.ABS ignorant 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be heart where  
 \rä/ nze komnzo  
 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be 1SG.ERG only  
 z=y\mar/wé fof  
 PROX=1SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/see EMPH  
 ‘He replied: “No, they do not know where the heart is. Only I can see it here.”’
- 50 *zirkn thfrnm. nä bun kwanafm. nä bun kwanafm.*  
 zirkn thf\rn/m nä bun kwa\na/frm nä bun  
 persistent 2|3DU:SBJ:PST:DUR/be INDF SG:SBJ:PST:DUR/talk INDF  
 kwa\na/frm  
 SG:SBJ:PST:DUR/talk  
 ‘They were going back and forth. One was talking and then the other was talking.’
- 51 *watik “ngth biruthé!”*  
 watik ngth b=y\ru/thé  
 then younger.sibling MED=1SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/shoot  
 ‘Well, (Gwam said) “Brother, I shoot it now!”’
- 52 *“famkaräsü gnräre!” ... nafananaf ane fof*  
 fam=karä=sü gn\rä/ré (.) nafa-nana=f ane fof  
 thought=PROP=ETC 2SG:SBJ:IMP:IPFV/be (.) 3.POSS-older.brother=ERG.SG DEM EMPH  
 ‘Muri said “You must watch out!” His big brother was the one who shot.’
- 53 *trikasi nima rä*

- trik-si nima \rã/  
 tell-NMLZ like.this 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘The story is like this.’
- 54 *nafangth kma markai nábikarä sfrärm*  
 nafa-ngth kma markai näbi=karä sfrä/rm  
 3.POSS-younger.sibling POT white.man bow=PROP 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR/be  
 ‘His small brother must have had a shotgun.’
- 55 *watik nafangth mane yara naf keke samga ... nafananafnzo*  
 watik nafa-ngth mane ya\r/a naf keke  
 then 3.POSS-younger.sibling who 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be 3SG.ERG NEG  
 sa\mg/a (.) nafa-nana=f=nzo  
 SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:PST:PFV/shoot (.) 3.POSS-older.brother=ERG.SG=ONLY  
 ‘But his small brother did not hit the creature. only his older brother.’
- 56 *näbi ñathunza ... zf sfthnm*  
 näbi ña\thu/nza (.) zf sfthn/m  
 bow SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/fold (.) IMM 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR/lie.down  
 ‘He drew the bow while the creature was laying down here.’
- 57 *yo kwan ... fof sargosira fofosa fefen*  
 yo kwan (.) fof  
 sound.of.arrow.hitting.sth EMPH SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:IPFV/penetrate  
 sa\rnosi/ra fofosa ffe=n  
 heart real=LOC  
 ‘Wham! The arrow poked right through to the heart.’
- 58 *no fof zärfetha*  
 no fof zä\rfeth/a  
 water EMPH SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/burst  
 ‘Water bursted out.’
- 59 *no ane zamatha*  
 no ane za\math/a  
 water DEM SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/run  
 ‘That water was gushing out.’
- 60 *wati no mane kwakwirm fof*  
 wati no mane kwa\kwir/m fof  
 then water which SG:SBJ:PST:DUR/run EMPH  
 ‘Well, the water that was flowing’
- 61 *wäsi zrminz mä ñanrsira fof... mni mä ñanrsira*  
 wäsi zrminz mä ñan\rsir/a fof (.) mni mä  
 wäsi root where SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/burn EMPH (.) fire where  
 ñan\rsir/a  
 SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/burn  
 ‘to the place where the wäsi roots had burned, where the fire had burned.’

Sample text: Kwafar

- 62 *no fä kwanthorthrm fof ... ane zrminz fof*  
 no fä kwan\thor/thrm fof (.) ane zrminz fof  
 water DIST SG:SBJ:PST:DUR:VENT/enter EMPH (.) DEM root EMPH  
 ‘The water went inside there ... into those roots.’
- 63 *nof nä nima thärkothmako. nä nima thänkothma nzezawe.*  
 no=f nä nima thä\kothm/ako nä nima  
 water=ERG.SG INDF like.this SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:PFV:AND/chase INDF like.this  
 thän\kothm/a nze-zawe  
 SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:PFV:VENT/chase INSG.POSS-side  
 ‘The water chased some people that way and it chased others here to our side.’
- 64 *gwamane nima zenmathath ... muriane nima.*  
 gwam=ane nima zen\math/ath (.) muri=ane nima  
 gwam=POSS.SG like.this 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:PFV:VENT/run (.) muri=POSS.SG like.this  
 ‘Gwam’s people ran this way. Muri’s people ran that way (towards Australia).’
- 65 *mane ηankwirwath zentnäthath*  
 mane ηankwirwath zentnäthath  
 who 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/run 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:PFV:VENT/scatter  
 ‘Those who came running started to go in different directions.’
- 66 *nä enrera bawi.*  
 nä en\rä/ra bawi  
 INDF SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/be bawi  
 ‘Some came to Bawi.’
- 67 *wartha nima bämnr wartha a kondomarin ... smärki.*  
 wartha nima b=ä\m/nr wartha a kondomarin (.)  
 wartha like.this MED=2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/dwell wartha and marind (.)  
 smärki  
 smärki  
 ‘Like the Wartha people living there. The Wartha and Marind ... and the Smärki.’
- 68 *nafanme ... foba fof ηankwira fof*  
 nafanme (.) foba fof ηan\kwi/ra fof  
 3NSG.POSS (.) DIST.ABL EMPH SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/run EMPH  
 ‘Their ancestor was coming really from there.’
- 69 *fi foba fof ηankwirwath ... bawi*  
 fi foba fof ηan\kwi/rwath (.) bawi  
 3.ABS DIST.ABL EMPH 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/run (.) bawi  
 ‘They came from Bawi.’
- 70 *watik gwamf fä fof mni ... bäne zafrafa fof no.*  
 watik gwam=f fä fof mni (.) bäne  
 then gwam=ERG.SG DIST EMPH fire (.) RECOG







- 86 *we foba ... thden nä kwot we mayawama kabe fof.*  
 we foba (.) thd=en nä kwot we mayawa=ma kabe fof  
 also DIST.ABL (.) middle=LOC INDF properly also mayawa=CHAR people EMPH  
 ‘and again ... half way he left some more Mayawa people again.’
- 87 *foba ... baguma kabe ... zena mifnen zämnzr.*  
 foba (.) bagu=ma kabe (.) zena mifne=n  
 DIST.ABL (.) bagu=CHAR people (.) today mibini=LOC  
 z=ä\m/nzr  
 PROX=2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/dwell  
 ‘He left some Bagu people there. They live in Mibini today.’
- 88 *sagara fä thägathinzath. okay fi nima erera ... mogarkam.*  
 sagara fä thä\gathinz/ath okay fi nima  
 sagara DIST 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:IPFV/leave okay 3.ABS like.this  
 e\rä/ra (.) mogarkam  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be (.) mogarkam  
 ‘They left some Sagara people there. They used to live in Mogarkam.’
- 89 *nä mane erera nima erera bäne ... drdr ... nä sagara fof.*  
 nä mane e\rä/ra nima e\rä/ra bäne (.) drdr  
 INDF who 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be like.this 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be RECOG (.) derideri  
 (.) nä sagara fof  
 (.) INDF sagara EMPH  
 ‘Others were there in Derideri ... another Sagara clan.’
- 90 *bagu mane enrera bäne ... mäta.*  
 bagu mane e\rä/ra bäne (.) mäta  
 bagu who 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/be RECOG (.) mäta  
 ‘The Bagus who were coming, they went to Mäta.’
- 91 *sagara mane enrera garaita.*  
 sagara mane e\rä/ra garaita  
 sagara who 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/be garaita  
 ‘and the Sagaras continued to Garaita.’
- 92 *mayawa ni zbo zf nnrera.*  
 mayawa ni zbo zf nn\rä/ra  
 mayawa INSG PROX.ALL IMM 1PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/be  
 ‘We Mayawas came right here.’
- 93 *okay nzenme bada ... mrzarane bada mane yanra ... fi fof yanra bäne ... mathkwi.*  
 okay nzenme bada (.) mrzar=ane bada mane  
 okay INSG.POSS ancestor (.) mrzar=POSS.SG ancestor who  
 yan\r/a (.) fi fof yan\r/a  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/be (.) 3.ABS EMPH 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/be

Sample text: Kwafar

- bäne (.) mathkwi  
 RECOG (.) mathkwi  
 ‘Okay, our ancestor, the Mrzar clan’s ancestor who came was Mathkwi.’
- 94 *yf ane yanra mathkwi!*  
 yf ane yan\ra mathkwi  
 name DEM 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/be mathkwi  
 ‘That was the name, Mathkwi!’
- 95 *mathkwif ane enfathwa ... wawa fofosa.*  
 mathkwi=f ane en\fath/wa (.) wawa fofosa  
 mathkwi=ERG.SG DEM SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/hold (.) yam heart  
 ‘Mathkwi was holding those magic yam stones.’
- 96 *naf ane ynfathwa fof.*  
 naf ane yn\fath/wa fof.  
 3SG.ERG DEM SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/hold EMPH  
 ‘He was holding that one.’
- 97 *wati näbi ane komnzo fofosa yara wawama ... nasi ... duga ... biskar ... dagon nä berä fof*  
 wati näbi ane komnzo fofosa ya\ra wawa=ma (.) nasi  
 then one DEM only heart 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be yam=CHAR (.) long.yam  
 (.) duga (.) biskar (.) dagon nä b=e\rä/ fof  
 (.) taro (.) cassava (.) food INDF MED=2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be EMPH  
 ‘Okay, there was just one stone for yams, long yams, taro, cassava and the other food there.’
- 99 *watik fi anekarä fof yanra fof.*  
 watik fi ane=karä fof yan\ra fof  
 then 3.ABS DEM=PROP EMPH 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/be EMPH  
 ‘He came with this one.’
- 100 *mane yanyaka e ... wm bä ythn ... zabrta.*  
 mane yan\yak/a e (.) wm bä  
 who 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/walk until (.) stone MED  
 y\thn/ (.) zabrta  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/lie.down (.) zabrta  
 ‘As he came to the place where the stone is lying, there at Zabrta,’
- 101 *fä fof ñanritakwath fof.*  
 fä fof ñan\ritak/wath fof  
 DIST EMPH 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/CROSS EMPH  
 ‘they crossed the river.’
- 102 *kwanritakwrmth trkren.*  
 kwan\ritak/wrmth trkr=en  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR:VENT/cross flood=LOC  
 ‘They were going across during the rainy season.’

- 103 *watik, nima n fam zära “garaita zawe? keke, nä kabe foba z sfyak.”*  
 watic nima n fam zä\ra/a garaita zawe keke nä kabe foba  
 then QUOT IMN though SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/do garaita side NEG INDF man DIST.ABL  
 z sfyak/  
 ALR 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/walk  
 ‘He was thinking: “Should I go to Garaita? No, another man went this way  
 already.”’
- 104 *watik, nima zethkäfa fi ... saf.*  
 watic nima ze\thkäf/a fi (.) saf  
 then like.this SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/start 3.ABS (.) saf  
 ‘Then, he started coming this way towards Safs.’
- 105 *nimame ane zethkäfa mothr mane yanra e ... akrimogo.*  
 nima=me ane ze\thkäf/a mothr mane  
 like.this=INS DEM SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/start walking=PURP who  
 yan\ra/a e (.) akrimogo  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/be until (.) akrimogo  
 ‘He started to walk like this, he walked until Akrimogo.’
- 106 *yam fä fof thremar fof.*  
 yam fä fof thre\mar/ fof  
 footprint DIST EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:IRR:PFV/see EMPH  
 ‘He saw footprints there.’
- 107 *“oh, nä nima z eräro.”*  
 oh nä nima z e\rä/ro  
 oh INDF like.this ALR 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:AND/be  
 ‘He said “Oh, others were walking along here already.”’
- 108 *watik, keräfi foba fof zäzira fof e ... kar yf rä ymnz.*  
 watic keräfi foba fof zä\zi/ra fof e (.) kar yf  
 then blackpalm DIST.ABL EMPH SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/throw EMPH until (.) place name  
 \rä/ ymnz  
 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be ymnz  
 ‘Then he shot an arrow from there until ... the name of the place is Ymnz.’
- 109 *watik, fobo fof “oh, kabe bä yé ... watic, nimame wyak.”*  
 watic fobo fof oh kabe bä \yé/ (.) watic  
 then DIST.ALL EMPH oh man MED 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) then  
 nima=me w\yak/  
 like.this=INS 1SG:1SG:NPST:IPFV/walk  
 ‘Okay, there he said: “Oh, there is a man there! Okay, I will go that path then.”’
- 110 *watik foba fof akrimogofa zenfara fof.*  
 watic foba fof akrimogo=fa zen\far/a fof  
 then DIST.ABL EMPH akrimogo=ABL SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/set.off EMPH  
 ‘Okay, he set off from there, from Akrimogo.’

Sample text: Kwafar

- 111 *akrimogo ... foba näbi yanyaka. karane yf rä füsari.*  
 akrimogo (.) foba näbi yan\yak/ kar=ane yf  
 akrimogo (.) DIST.ABL one 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/walk place=POSS.SG name  
 \rä/ füsari  
 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be füsari  
 ‘From Akrimogo he was coming straight to ... the name of that place is Füsari.’
- 112 *füsäriifa ... rarafü kar ... rarafü karfa ... kafrir fä tfön zänrita e ... bäne ... zofok.*  
 füsäri=fa (.) rarafü kar (.) rarafü kar=fa (.) kafrir fä tfö=n  
 füsäri=ABL (.) rarafü place (.) rarafü place=ABL (.) kafrir DIST creek=LOC  
 zän\rit/a e (.) bäne (.) zofok  
 SG:SBJ:PST:PFV:VENT/CROSS until (.) RECOG (.) zofok  
 ‘From Füsari to Rarafü, from Rarafü to Kafrir, he crossed the creek, until he arrived at Zofok.’
- 113 *zofok fä yamthiza.*  
 zofok fä ya\mthi/za  
 zofok DIST 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/rest  
 ‘He rested there in Zofok.’
- 114 *nabi komnzo bekogr.*  
 nabi komnzo b=e\kogr/  
 bamboo still MED=2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:STAT/be.standing  
 ‘The bamboos are still standing there.’
- 115 *nabi ηatr fä fof zurärm zwafrmnzrm.*  
 nabi ηatr fä fof zu\rä/rm  
 bamboo bowstring DIST EMPH SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:DUR/do  
 zwa\frm/nzrm  
 SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:DUR/prepare  
 ‘He was fixing his bowstring there.’
- 116 *zurzirakwa fof.*  
 zu\rzirak/wa fof  
 SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:IPFV/tie EMPH  
 ‘He tied it properly.’
- 117 *bäne yanatha ... nasi nömä. nasi nömä yanatha.*  
 bäne ya\na/tha (.) nasi nömä nasi  
 RECOG SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:IPFV/eat (.) long.yam yamcake long.yam  
 nömä ya\na/tha  
 yamcake SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:IPFV/eat  
 ‘He ate that yamcake (from long yams). He ate the yamcake.’
- 118 *rfarrfar futhfuth mane erera ... watik, wmr ane fof ηakwthenzath fof.*  
 rfar-rfar futh-futh mane e\rä/ra (.) watik wmr=r ane  
 REDUP-crumb REDUP-scrap which SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be (.) then stone=PURP DEM

- fof ɲa\kwthe/nzath fof  
 EMPH 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV/change EMPH  
 ‘As for those crumbs, those scraps, they turned into stones.’
- 119 *zäkwtherath ... watik komnzo berästhgr.*  
 zä\kwther/ath (.) watik komnzo b=e\räs/thgr  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:PFV/change (.) then still MED=2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:STAT/be.erecited  
 ‘They changed into stones. They are still sticking out there.’
- 120 *wm mane yé ... ynfathwa fof no nzigfu ... watik ane fof yräza fof ... zofok kar.*  
 wm mane |yé/ (.)  
 stone which 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.)  
 yn\fath/wa fof no nzigfu (.) watik ane  
 SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/hold EMPH water magic.stone (.) then DEM  
 fof y\rä/za fof (.) zofok kar  
 EMPH SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/erect EMPH (.) zofok place  
 ‘As for the stone that he held, the rain magic stone, he pushed it in the ground at Zofok.’
- 121 *watik foba yanyaka bäne ... misa zfth. mäbri misa zfth yrn.*  
 watik foba yan\yak/a bäne (.) misa zfth mäbri  
 then DIST.ABL 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/walk RECOG (.) misa zfth mäbri  
 misa zfth yrn  
 misa zfth yrn  
 ‘Then he went to Misa Zfth from there. Mäbri, Misa Zfth and Yrn.’
- 122 *fä zänrsöftha fof ... yanyaka benzü zfth.*  
 fä zän\rsofth/a fof (.) yan\yak/a  
 DIST SG:SBJ:PST:PFV:VENT/descend EMPH (.) 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/walk  
 benzü zfth  
 benzü zfth  
 ‘There he came down and walked to Benzü Zfth.’
- 123 *foba fof ymd threnkaris fof ... afa kfokfo ythama*  
 foba fof ymd thren\karis/ fof (.) afa kfokfo  
 DIST.ABL EMPH bird 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:IRR:PFV:VENT/hear EMPH (.) afa kfokfo  
 ythama  
 ythama  
 ‘From there he heard those birds *afa kfokfo* (Hooded Butcherbird) and *ythama* (Paradisaea raggiana).’
- 124 *fam zära “kar bä rä. ah, kar töna fobo fof wyak fof.”*  
 fam zä\r/a kar bä \rä/ ah kar töna  
 thought SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/do place MED 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be ah place high.ground  
 fobo fof wo\yak/ fof  
 DIST.ALL EMPH 1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/walk EMPH  
 ‘He thought “There is a place there. Ah, I will go there to the high ground.”’

Sample text: Kwafar

- 125 *yanyaka fä fof zänrita fof rä kukwrb fr zra ... mnzär fr neba.*  
 yan\yak/a fä fof zän\rit/a  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/walk DIST EMPH SG:SBJ:PST:PFV:VENT/CROSS.OVER  
 fof \rä/ kukwrb fr zra (.) mnzär fr neba  
 EMPH 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be kukwrb fr swamp (.) mnzär fr opposite  
 ‘He walked and crossed the river at Kukwrb Fr swamp opposite from Mnzär Fr.’
- 126 *wati fä fof yanyaka fof ... mä swanyakm ... mä zänfrefa ... nömä futhfuth ... fä fof ... nantnägwath.*  
 wati fä fof yan\yak/a fof (.) mä  
 then DIST EMPH 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/walk EMPH (.) where  
 swan\yak/m (.) mä  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR:VENT/walk (.) where  
 zän\fref/a (.) nömä futh-futh (.) fä fof  
 SG:SBJ:PST:PFV:VENT/come.up.from.river (.) yamcake REDUP-scraps (.) DIST EMPH  
 (.) nan\tnäg/wath  
 (.) 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/lose  
 ‘Well, he walked there. and where he was walking, where he came up, he dropped those crumbs from the yamcake.’
- 127 *mane yanra e zrä zöfäthak bä brä brä ... zafe nazi fr ... nä fof ethn berä*  
 mane yan\r/a e z=\rä/ zöfäthak  
 who 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/be until PROX=3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be zöfäthak  
 bä b=\rä/ b=\rä/ (.) zafe nazi  
 MED MED=3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be MED=3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) old coconut  
 fr (.) nä fof e\thn/ b=e\rä/  
 stem (.) INDF EMPH 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:STAT/be.lying MED=2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘He walked up right here Zöfäthak, over there by the old coconut trees. There are some stones lying down there.’
- 128 *watik nä fä fof nantnägwath fof*  
 watik nä fä fof nan\tnäg/wath fof  
 then INDF DIST EMPH 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/lose EMPH  
 ‘Well, some more crumbs were dropped there.’
- 129 *fä fof sakuka “oh, zane zf zunthorakwé.”*  
 fä fof sa\kuk/a oh zane zf  
 DIST EMPH 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:PFV/stand oh DEM:PROX IMM  
 zun\thorak/wé  
 1SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:RPST:IPFV:VENT/search  
 ‘There he stood and said “Oh, this is what I was looking for.”’
- 130 *fz zamara afa kfokfo zakarisa ... bäne zakarisa ythama*  
 fz za\mar/a afa kfokfo za\karis/a (.) bäne  
 forest SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:PFV/see afa kfokfo SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/hear (.) RECOG

- za\karis/a                      ythama  
 SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/hear ythama  
 'He saw the forest, he heard the butcherbird and the bird of paradise.'
- 131 *watik krenafth* "nima wyak. zbo kar rä farem kar."  
 watik kre\nafth/                      nima    wo\yak/                      zbo      kar  
 then 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/speak like.this 1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/walk PROX.ALL place  
 \rä/                      farem kar  
 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be farem place  
 'Then he said "I will go this way. There is a place here, Faremkar."'
- 132 *watik, fthé yaka bobo, foba krekaris* "oh, füthan nä zbo kabe yamnzr."  
 watik fthé \yak/a                      bobo    foba    kre\karis/  
 then when 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/walk MED.ALL DIST.ABL 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/hear  
 oh fütha=n    nä    zbo      kabe ya\m/nzr  
 oh fütha=LOC INDF PROX.ALL man 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/dwell  
 'When he walked there, he heard someone from over there "Oh, a man lives here  
 in Fütha."'
- 133 *we foba krekaris* "oh, farem karen kabe yé."  
 we foba    kre\karis/                      oh farem kar=en    kabe  
 also DIST.ABL 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/hear oh farem place=LOC man  
 \yé/  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 'He also heard someone from over there "Oh, a man lives here in Faremkar."'
- 134 *watik yako.*  
 watik \yak/o  
 then 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:AND/walk  
 'Then he walked away.'
- 135 *faremaneme kabe z sathora.*  
 farem=aneme    kabe z    sa\thor/a  
 farem=POSS.NSG man ALR 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:PFV/arrive  
 'The Farem clan's man had already arrived.'
- 136 *bafane bada fof ... fatamaane.*  
 baf=ane              bada    fof    (.) fatama=ane  
 RECOG=POSS.SG ancestor EMPH (.) fatama=POSS.SG  
 'that one's ancestor, Fatama's ancestor.'
- 137 *farem thden watik foba fof sräkor* "foba fof bä fä fof gnamnzé! ey, fisor bthanen  
 käms!"  
 farem thd=en      watik foba    fof    srä\kor/  
 farem middle=LOC then DIST.ABL EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/speak  
 foba    fof    bä    fä    fof    gna\m/nzé                      ey    fisor bthan=en  
 DIST.ABL EMPH 2.ABS DIST EMPH 2SG.SBJ:IMP:STAT/dwell hey fisor bthan=LOC

- kä\m/s  
2SG.SBJ:IMP:PFV/dwell  
'In the middle of Farem, he told him from there: "You stay right there! Hey, you settle at Fisor Bthan!"
- 138 *wati we nä sräthoro ... bäne ... wazu.*  
wati we nä srä\thor/o (.) bäne (.) wazu  
then also INDF 3SG.MASC:SBJ:IRR:PFV:AND/arrive (.) RECOG (.) wazu  
'Then, another one arrived ... that one ... Wazu.'
- 139 *fä fof sräkor "watik, foba fof käms wazufa!"*  
fä fof srä\kor/ watik foba fof  
DIST EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/speak then DIST.ABL EMPH  
kä\m/s wazu=fä  
2SG.SBJ:IMP:PFV/dwell wazu=ABL  
'He told him there: "Okay, you settle there at Wazu!"
- 140 *watik fthé zamara katan fäth ane zfrärm*  
watic fthé za\mar/a katan fäth ane zf\rä/rm  
then when SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:PST:PFV/see small DIM DEM 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:DUR/be  
'He looked at the place. It was a small patch.'
- 141 *"kwa nzä zä zf kwramnZR? nima ñabrigwé."*  
kwa nzä zä zf kwra\m/nZR nima ña\brig/wé  
FUT 1SG.ABS PROX IMM 1SG.SBJ:IRR:IPFV/dwell like.this 1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/return  
'"Will I stay right here? I will go back this way."'
- 142 *moba fthmäSü zänbrima watik ... nasi nömä ane fof tnägsi thenthkäfa rrfar ... futhfuth.*  
moba fthmäSü zän\brim/a watik (.) nasi nömä ane  
MED.ABL while SG:SBJ:PST:PFV:VENT/return then (.) long.yam yamcake DEM  
fof tnäg-si then\thkäf/a r-rrar (.)  
EMPH lose-NMLZ SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:PFV:VENT/start REDUP-crumb (.)  
futh-futh  
REDUP-scrap  
'While he was coming back from there, he started dropping this yamcake crumbs ... the scraps.'
- 143 *zä zfe zane zf zethno zerä*  
zä zf e zane zf z=e\thn/o  
PROX IMM until DEM:PROX IMM PROX=2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:STAT:AND/be.lying  
z=e\rä/  
PROX=2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
'Right here to these these stones right here.'
- 144 *fä fof ane futhfuth thuntnägwrM*



- fä fof ane futh-futh thun\tnäg/wrm  
 DIST EMPH DEM REDUP-SCRAP SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR:VENT/lose  
 ‘Over there he was dropping the scraps.’
- 145 *nä bä enthn e nima zyaro e masu.*  
 nä bä en\thn/ e nima  
 INDF MED 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:STAT:VENT/be.lying until like.this  
 z=ya\r/o e masu  
 PROX=3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV:AND/be until masu  
 ‘There are some stones lying there. and then he walked that way until Masu.’
- 146 *foba fof sathora “nzukar, zä zf ämnzr!”*  
 foba fof sa\thor/a nzu-kar zä zf  
 DIST.ABL EMPH 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:PFV/arrive 1SG.POSS-place PROX IMM  
 ä\m/nzr  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/dwell  
 ‘He arrived over there and said “This is my place. My people will live right here!”’
- 147 *watik menz kar ane fof zräkorth bäne ... yari.*  
 watik menz kar ane fof zrä\kor/th bäne (.) yari  
 then myth place DEM EMPH 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IRR:PFV/call RECOG (.) yari  
 ‘Well, they call this story place Yari.’
- 148 *yari sathora fof.*  
 yari sa\thor/a fof  
 yari 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:PFV/arrive EMPH  
 ‘He had arrived at Yari.’
- 149 *watik fä fof ... no nzigfukarä fi fof sathora fof.*  
 watik fä fof (.) no nzigfu=karä fi fof  
 then DIST EMPH (.) rain rain.stone=PROP 3.ABS EMPH  
 sa\thor/a fof  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:PFV:VENT/arrive EMPH  
 ‘Over there ... he arrived with the magic rain stone.’
- 150 *fi mane yanra nzigfu nä fofosa yfathwa fof nasi, wawa, duga, fiskar ... ranzo fä dagon eräro.*  
 fi mane yan\r/a nzigfu nä fofosa  
 3.ABS who 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/be rain.stone INDF heart  
 y\fath/wa fof nasi wawa duga fiskar (.)  
 SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:IPFV/hold EMPH long.yam yam taro cassava (.)  
 ra=nzo fä dagon e\rä/ro  
 what=ONLY DIST food 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:AND/be  
 ‘As he came, he had this rain stone and another stone ... for long yams, yams, taro and cassava ... all the crops.’
- 151 *anekaräsü swamnzrm fof.*

Sample text: Kwafar

- ane=karä=sü swa\m/nzrm fof  
 DEM=PROP=ETC 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR/dwell EMPH  
 ‘He was staying with these ones.’
- 152 *fthé wawa thuworthrmth.*  
 fthé wawa thu\wor/thrmth  
 when yam 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/plant  
 ‘Whenever the people were planting yams,’
- 153 *watik sfrärm e wawa taga kwot thkarthé kwafiyokwrnth.*  
 watik sf\rä/rm e wawa taga kwot thkarthé  
 then 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR/be until yam leaf properly hard  
 kwa\fiyok/wrnth  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/make  
 ‘he was there until the yam leaves were becoming dry.’
- 154 *watik fthé fof wawa taga nä thurtwnrm ... nasi taga ... kemar taga ... taga bäne bera biskar duga.*  
 watik fthé fof wawa taga nä thu\rtn/wrm (.) nasi  
 then when EMPH yam leaf INDF SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/pull.off (.) long.yam  
 taga (.) kemar taga (.) taga bäne b=e\r/a biskar duga  
 leaf (.) kemar leaf (.) leaf RECOG MED=2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be cassava taro  
 ‘That was when he pulled of some yam leaves, long yam leaves, kemar (type of yam) leaves and those leaves there ... cassava and taro.’
- 155 *watik nzigfu mrmr foba sfrärm ... ane tagame sumyuknwrnth.*  
 watik nzigfu mrmr foba sf\rä/rm (.) ane taga=me  
 then magic.stone inside DIST.ABL 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR/be (.) DEM leaf=INS  
 su\myuk/nwrnth  
 SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:DUR/wrap  
 ‘The magic stone was there inside. He was wrapping it with these leaves.’
- 156 *surdiknwrnth ... watik wawa zfthen swäzin*  
 su\rdikn/wrnth (.) watik wawa zfth=en  
 SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:DUR/tie.around (.) then yam base=LOC  
 swä\zin/  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:ITER/put.down  
 ‘He tied them around. Then he used to put it down to the yams.’
- 157 *sfthnm e wawa fthé thwemar nima thkarthé zäkorth.*  
 sf\thn/m e wawa fthé thwe\mar/  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR/be.lying until yam when 2|3SG:SBJ:>2|3PL:OBJ:ITER/see  
 nima thkarthé zä\kor/th  
 like.this hard 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:PFV/become  
 ‘The stone was lying there until he saw that the leaves became dry.’
- 158 *watik ausiausi thukonzrm “käthfe kabe!”*

- watik ausi-ausi                   thu\ko/nzrm   kä\thf/e  
 then REDUP-old.woman SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/say 2PL:SBJ:IMP:PFV/walk  
 kabe  
 people  
 ‘Then he said to the women: “People, go!”’
- 159 *ausiausi thfyakm ηanz ffrümenzoma ...*  
 ausi-ausi                   thf\yak/m   ηanz  
 REDUP-old.woman 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/walk garden.row  
 f-frü=me=nzo=ma   (.)  
 REDUP-single=INS=ONLY=CHAR (.)  
 ‘The women went and took from each patch ...’
- 160 *wawa ane ... ebar fr wawa ebar fr kafar*  
 wawa ane (.) ebar fr   wawa ebar fr   kafar  
 yam   DEM (.) head stem yam   head stem big  
 ‘those yams ... the best yams and big yams.’
- 161 *watik nä ηanzma wawa näbi nä ηanzma nä ηanzma nä ηanzma nimanzo watik*  
 watik nä   ηanz=ma   wawa näbi nä   ηanz=ma   nä   ηanz=ma   nä  
 then INDF garden.row yam   one INDF garden.row INDF garden.row INDF  
 ηanz=ma   nima=nzo   watik  
 garden.row like.this=ONLY then  
 ‘one yam from one patch, from another patch, from another patch, from another  
 patch ... in this way.’
- 162 *mnime thufränzrmth ... watik thufthakwrmth foba ... karome thurzathrmth.*  
 mni=me thu\frä/nzrmth   (.) watik  
 fire=INS 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/singe (.) then  
 thu\thak/wrmth   foba   (.) karo=me  
 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/take.out.of.fire DIST.ABL (.) oven=INS  
 thu\rza/thrmth  
 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/cook.in.oven  
 ‘They were burning the hair off the yams. Then they took them out of the fire and  
 cooked them in the ground oven.’
- 163 *zizi ane fof thfzänzrmth bobo ... far mä suräzrmth.*  
 zizi       ane fof   thf\zä/nzrmth   bobo (.) far mä  
 afternoon DEM EMPH 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/carry MED.ALL (.) post where  
 su\räz/rmth  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:PST:DUR/erect  
 ‘In the afternoon, they carried these yams where they had planted a post.’
- 164 *mathkwi o karawa o kukuma o ote ...*  
 mathkwi o karawa o kukuma o ote (.)  
 mathkwi or karawa or kukuma or ote (.)  
 ‘Mathkwi or Karawa or Kukuma or Ote ...’

Sample text: Kwafar

- 165 *watik ane far fof sfrästhgrm wawa fobo fof thunakwrm.*  
 watik ane far fof sfräs/thgrm wawa fobo fof  
 then DEM post EMPH 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:DUR/be.erected yam DIST.ALL EMPH  
 thu\nak/wrm  
 SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/put.down  
 ‘Well, that post was standing there and he put the yams down on its base.’
- 166 *fobo ffé n wawa kwanäbünzrmth ... kwosi kwakonzrmth bänemr e ... tayo tfotfo.*  
 fobo ffé n wawa kwa\näbü/nzrmth (.) kwosi  
 DIST.ALL really IMN yam 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/decompose (.) rotten  
 kwa\ko/nzrmth bäne=mr e (.) tayo tfotfo  
 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/become MED=PURP until (.) ripe almost  
 ‘When those yams were about to fall apart, about to become rotten, the yams (in  
 the ground) were almost ready.’
- 167 *tayo wawa fthé kwakonzrmth ...*  
 tayo wawa fthé kwa\ko/nzrmth (.)  
 ripe yam when 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/become (.)  
 ‘When the yams were getting ready ...’
- 168 *rfnaksir bobo zarfa thfrärm ... mäta garaita*  
 rfnak-si=r bobo zarfa thfrä/rm (.) mäta garaita  
 tase-NMLZ=PURP MED.ALL ear 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/be (.) mäta garaita  
 ‘they heard from Mata and Garaita that they started to taste them.’
- 169 *nafa fthé kwänrfnth ... “ayo!” wrwr fof zefaro ... swänrifthh*  
 nafa fthé kwän\rfn/th (.) ayo wrwr fof  
 3NSG.ERG when 2|3PL:SBJ:ITER/taste (.) watch.out eastwind EMPH  
 ze\far/o (.) swän\rifth/th  
 SG:SBJ:PST:PFV:AND/set.off (.) 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:ITER/send  
 ‘When tasting the yams, they always shouted “Watch out!!” and the eastwind  
 blew the message here.’
- 170 *watik we masu karé kwekaristh “oh, nafa z zärfnth.”*  
 watik we masu kar=é kwe\karis/th oh nafa z  
 then also masu place=ERG.NSG 2|3PL:SBJ:ITER/hear oh 3NSG.ERG ALR  
 zä\rfn/th  
 2|3PL:SBJ:RPST:PFV/taste  
 ‘The Masu people used to hear this and said “Oh, they have started tasting the  
 yams already.”’
- 171 *we kwot we näbikakme we nä wawa thfrärmth katan o kafar ... thuwoknzrmth ...*  
*watik kwarzathrmth.*  
 we kwot we näbi-kak=me we nä wawa thfrä/rmth  
 also properly also one-DISTR=INS also INDF yam 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/do  
 katan o kafar (.) thu wok/nzrmth (.) watik  
 small or big (.) 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/choose (.) then

- kwa\rza/thrmth  
2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/cook.in.oven  
'Again they took some yams, one by one, big or small. They selected them and they cooked them in the oven.'
- 172 *tawar ane thfrärmth ηazi thurwrmth ... kwot thufathwrmth kobakob*  
tawar ane thfrä/rmth ηazi  
yam.pulp DEM 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/do coconut  
thu\rw/rmth (.) kwot thu\fath/wrmth  
2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/scrape (.) properly 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/hold  
kobakob  
round.object  
'They took out the yam pulp and mixed it with scraped coconut and then they formed little round balls out of the dough.'
- 173 *kwarfnakwrmth watik nima kwanrzmth.*  
kwa\rfnak/wrmth watik nima kwan\rz/rmth  
SG:SBJ:PST:DUR/taste then like.this SG:SBJ:PST:DUR:VENT/throw  
'Then they tasted the yams and they threw their arms up this way.'
- 174 *fatr nima thwafiyokwrmth "ayo! farem benm fräro!" ... nima fof*  
fatr nima thwa\fiyok/wrmth ayo farem benm  
upper.arm like.this 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/make watch.out farem 2NSG.DAT  
f=\rä/ro (.) nima fof  
DIST=3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:AND/be (.) like.this EMPH  
'They threw the arms up like this and shouted "Watch out! Farem people, this is for you!" like this.'
- 175 *watik ane fthé kwärit ane tmatm*  
watic ane fthé kwä\rit/ ane tmatm  
then DEM when 2|3SG:SBJ:ITER/pass.by DEM event  
'Each time when that ritual had passed'
- 176 *rfnaksi tmatm thumarwrmth e ... rrr kwan fthé bäne kwäkorth ... tayo kwot thuwäkwrwm*  
rfnak-si tmatm thu\mar/wrmth e (.) rrr kwan fthé  
taste-NMLZ event 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:PST:DUR/see until (.) rustling.sound when  
bäne kwä\kor/th (.) tayo kwot thu\wäk/wrm  
RECOG 2|3PL:SBJ:ITER/become (.) ripe properly 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/ripen  
'when they saw the tasting rituals, when the yam leaves were rustling, when the yams were ready ...'
- 177 *watik fthé fof yaka swefafth.*  
watic fthé fof yaka swe\faf/th  
then when EMPH digging.stick 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:ITER/hold  
'that was when they picked up the digging stick and began to harvest.'
- 178 *anenzo fof ... ane tmatm kwaritakwrm e zbo bäidbo ... bäi kafar zäkora*

Sample text: Kwafar

- ane=nzo fof (.) ane tmatm kwa\ritak/wrm e zbo  
 DEM=ONLY EMPH (.) DEM event SG:SBJ:PST:DUR/CROSS.OVER until PROX.ALL  
 bäi=dbo (.) bäi kafar zä\kor/a  
 bäi=ALL.SG (.) bäi big SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/become  
 ‘That was it. That ritual was passed on to Bäi. Bäi had become a big man.’
- 179 *nafanafyf... nafane nafyf ane fof sara fof... foba fof otef.*  
 nafa-ñafe=f (.) nafane ñafe=f ane fof  
 3.POSS-father=ERG.SG (.) 3SG.POSS father=ERG.SG DEM EMPH  
 sa\ɾ/a fof (.) foba fof ote=f  
 SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC.IO:PST:PFV/give EMPH (.) DIST.ABL EMPH ote=ERG.SG  
 ‘His father and his father passed on this tradition ... all the way from Ote.’
- 180 *watik naf we ane fof thwamonegwrw no bäne ... no nzigfu a fofosa frä ... dagon fofosa fof.*  
 watik naf we ane fof thwa\moneg/wrw no bäne (.)  
 then 3SG.ERG also DEM EMPH SG:SBJ>2|3PL.OBJ:PST:DUR/look.after rain RECOG (.)  
 no nzigfu a fofosa f=\rã/ (.) dagon fofosa fof  
 rain rain.stone and heart DIST=3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) food heart EMPH  
 ‘He also looked after that rain magic stone and the other stone there ... the magic food stone.’
- 181 *foba e ni kafar ñankonzake.*  
 foba e ni kafar ñan\ko/nzake  
 DIST.ABL until INSG big 1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/become  
 ‘Later we grew up.’
- 182 *nzesinenwä ane fof komnzo thfrnm ane eda ... eda rokar fof.*  
 nze-si=en=wä ane fof komnzo thf\ɾn/m ane eda (.)  
 INSG.POSS-eye=LOC=EMPH DEM EMPH still 2|3DU:SBJ:PST:DUR/be DEM two (.)  
 eda rokar fof  
 two things EMPH  
 ‘We still saw those two with our own eyes ... those two stones.’
- 183 *e nama masun ane yam tmatm z zwabrgwre fof.*  
 e nama masu=n ane yam tmatm z  
 until recently masu=LOC DEM custom event ALR  
 zwa\brg/wre fof  
 1PL:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:RPST:IPFV/follow EMPH  
 ‘We have followed this tradition until recently in Masu.’
- 184 *e watik foba zänbrimake zena mänwä zä namnZR zf... znrä.*  
 e watik foba zän\brim/ake zena mä=wä zä  
 until then DIST.ABL 1PL:SBJ:RPST:PFV/return today where=EMPH PROX  
 na\m/nZR zf (.) z=n\rã/  
 1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/dwell IMM (.) PROX=1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘Then we returned from there to where we are living now ... right here.’

- 185 *watik fi fthmäsü kwik ... kwosi yara ... greg täwdben ane thfrärm.*  
 watik fi fthmäsü kwik (.) kwosi ya\ʀ/a (.) greg  
 then 3.ABS meanwhile sick (.) dead 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be (.) greg  
 täw=dben ane thf\rä/ʀm  
 father=LOC.SG DEM 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:DUR/be  
 ‘In the meanwhile father had become sick and died. Those stones were with  
 Greg’s father.’
- 186 *ane bäne ... nzigfu thfrnm edawä.*  
 ane bäne (.) nzigfu thf\ʀn/m eda=wä  
 DEM RECOG (.) magic.stone 2|3DU:SBJ:PST:DUR/be two=EMPH  
 ‘Those were magic stones ... those two.’
- 187 *watik nzenme njafe fthmäsü kwosi yara.*  
 watik nzenme njafe fthmäsü kwosi ya\ʀ/a  
 then 1NSG.POSS father meanwhile dead 3SG.MASC:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be  
 ‘Well, our father died in the meantime ...’
- 188 *watik foba ni miyamr nrä mafadben zena ethn.*  
 watik foba ni miyamr n\rä/ mafa=dben zena  
 then DIST 1NSG ignorant 1PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be who=LOC.SG today  
 e\thn/  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be.lying  
 ‘and since then we do not know with whom these (magic stones) are now.’
- 189 *z thrifthmath fof*  
 z th\ʀifthm/ath fof  
 ALR 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3DU:OBJ:PST:PFV/hide fof  
 ‘They already hid them away.’
- 190 *watik ane bäne mane rera ... ane trikasi mane nñatrikwé fof ... njafynm badafa ane  
 fof njanritakwa fof*  
 watik ane bäne mane \rä/ra (.) ane trik-si mane  
 then DEM RECOG which 3SG.F:SBJ:PST:IPFV/be (.) DEM tell-NMLZ which  
 n=ña\trik/wé fof (.) njafe=nm bada=fa ane fof  
 IPST=1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/tell EMPH (.) father=DAT.NSG ancestor=ABL DEM EMPH  
 njan\ritak/wa fof  
 SG:SBJ:PST:IPFV/pass EMPH  
 ‘The story which I have just told it was passed from the ancestor to the fathers.’
- 191 *bada aki kwark benrera fof ... zath kwark enrera e njafydbo we nzedbo fof n zänrita  
 nima*  
 bada aki kwark b=en\rä/ra fof (.)  
 ancestor grandfather deceased MED=2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/be EMPH (.)  
 zath kwark en\rä/ra e njafe=dbo we  
 grandfather deceased 2|3PL:SBJ:PST:IPFV:VENT/be until father=ALL.SG also

Sample text: Kwafar

nzedbo fof n zän\rit/a nima  
INSG.ALL EMPH ALR SG:SBJ:PST:PFV/pass like.this

‘The ancestors came and the late grandfathers came until it came to father. It was about to pass to us,’

192 *watik maf keke wäbragwr ane*

watik maf keke wä\brag/wr ane  
then who.ERG.SG NEG 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/follow DEM

‘but nobody follows this today any longer.’

[tci20131013-01]



# Sample text: Fenz yonasi

## *Fenz yonasi*

This text was recorded from Nakre Abia. The topic of *bthan kabe*, sorcerers or magicians, can be overheard routinely in daily discourse. Much of the talk about sorcery is speculative and of a very general nature. In contrast, the details and specific actions of sorcerers, let alone accusations, are rarely expressed publically. The only place for open accusations are court cases where there are several mediators and a strict code of conduct which regulates speaking time and turn-taking. It took me long time to find someone who would explain the different beliefs surrounding the actions of sorcerers. This short text was offered to me by Nakre Abia. Her narrative was prompted by a minimal pair, one of which was the word *fenz* 'body liquid'. *Fenz* may refer to puss or to the liquids inside a rotting corpse. Nakre explains that sorcerers visit the gravesites of recently deceased people and extract body parts including the liquid. They take their strength from *fenz yonasi*, the 'drinking of the body liquid'. The following day, I asked her to tell me about this in more detail.

This text can be accessed under: <https://zenodo.org/record/1305970>

Sample text: *Fenz yonasi*

- 1 *bänema kwa ηatrikwé ... nzefé.*  
 bäne=ma kwa ηa\trik/wé (.) nzefé  
 RECOG=CHAR FUT 1SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/tell (.) 1SG.ERG.EMPH  
 ‘I will talk about this.’
- 2 *fenz ane mane ηonathrth ... kwosifr kabeaneme ... bthan kabeyé.*  
 fenz ane mane ηo\na/thrth (.) kwosifr kabe=aneme (.)  
 body.liquid DEM which 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/drink (.) corpse man=POSS.NSG (.)  
 bthan kabe=yé  
 magic man=ERG.NSG  
 ‘The body fluid that they drink ... the dead people’s fluid ... those sorcerers.’
- 3 *trikasi zrethkäfé*  
 trik-si zre\thkäf/é  
 tell-NMLZ 2|3PL:SBJ:IRR:PFV/drink  
 ‘I start the story.’
- 4 *bthan kabe fthé fenz yonasi ... bänemr zrethkäfth mätraksir.*  
 bthan kabe fthé fenz yona-si (.) bäne=mr zre\thkäf/th  
 magic man when body.liquid drink-NMLZ (.) RECOG=PURP 2|3PL:SBJ:IRR:PFV/start  
 mätrak-si=r  
 take.out-NMLZ=PURP  
 ‘When the sorcerers drink the body fluids, they start by bringing out this one.’
- 5 *kzi kwa yafiyokwrth.*  
 kzi kwa ya\fiyok/wrth  
 bark.tray FUT 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/make  
 ‘they make a barktray.’
- 6 *srafiyokwrth karesama kzi. srärzirth.*  
 srafiyokwrth karesa=ma kzi  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:IPFV/make paperbark=CHAR barktray  
 srär\zir/th  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/tie  
 ‘They make a bark tray from the paperbark tree. They tie it’
- 7 *watik kwa eyak. nima kwosifr fthé ... kabe fthé ynänzüthzrth baden ...*  
 watik kwa e\yak/ nima kwosifr fthé (.) kabe fthé  
 then FUT 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/walk like.this corpse when (.) man when  
 y\nänzüth/zrth bad=en  
 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/bury ground=LOC  
 ‘and then they go. When people have buried a corpse in the ground,’
- 8 *fthé one week srakor ...*  
 fthé one week sra\kor/  
 when one week 3SG.MASC:SBJ:IRR:PFV/become  
 ‘after one week has passed,’

- 9 *fthé fof krefar ane bthan kabe bobo ... fokam znfo, fokam mnzfo ... sikwankwanme zbär thd.*  
 fthé fof kre\far/ ane bthan kabe bobo (.) fokam  
 when EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/set.off DEM magic man MED:ALL (.) grave  
 zn=fo fokam mnz=fo (.) sikwankwan=me zbär thd  
 place=LOC grave house=LOC (.) secret=INS night middle  
 ‘the sorcerer sets off to go to the grave yard, to the grave house. He goes secretly  
 in the middle of the night.’
- 10 *kabef keke kwa sremar.*  
 kabe=f keke kwa sre\mar/  
 man=ERG.SG NEG FUT 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/see  
 ‘No one will see him.’
- 11 *süsübäthen kwa yak ... tosinmäre ... kwayanmäre.*  
 süsübäth=en kwa yak/ (.) tosin=märe (.)  
 darkness=LOC FUT 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/walk (.) flashlight=PRIV (.)  
 kwayan=märe  
 light=PRIV  
 ‘He will walk in the darkness without a flashlight ... without light.’
- 12 *kwa yak. yfrsé gwonyamekarä kwa yé.*  
 kwa yak/ yfrsé gwonyame=karä kwa  
 FUT 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/walk black clothes=PROP FUT  
 \yé/  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘He will go and he will wear black clothes.’
- 13 *keke kwa kwayanthé gwonyamekarä bänema kabef sremar ... kabeyé sremarth*  
 keke kwa kwayan-thé gwonyame=karä bänema kabe=f  
 NEG FUT light-ADJZR clothes=PROP RECOG=CHAR man=ERG.SG  
 sre\mar/ (.) kabe=yé  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/see (.) man=ERG.NSG  
 sre\mar/th  
 2|3PL:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/see  
 ‘No bright clothes because someone might see him ... people might see him.’
- 14 *watik yfö katanr kwa yarenzr.*  
 watik yfö katan=r kwa ya're/nzr  
 then hole small=PURP FUT 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/look.around  
 ‘Okay, he will look around for a small hole.’
- 15 *katan yfö fthé zremar ... ebarfa fä fof kwa bäne ythorthr ... nabi a mrrab.*  
 katan yfö fthé zre\mar/ (.) ebar=fa fä fof kwa  
 small hole when 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IRR:PFV/see (.) head=ABL DIST EMPH FUT

- bäne y\thor/thr (.) nabi a mrrab  
 RECOG.ABS 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/insert (.) bamboo and small.bamboo  
 ‘When he sees a small hole, he will insert this small bamboo at the head end of the grave.’
- 16 *mrrab zbo zanfr byé.*  
 mrrab zbo zanfr b=\yé/  
 small.bamboo PROX.ALL long MED=3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘A small bamboo about this long.’
- 17 *ane fof sräsryöfth bobo yfön.*  
 ane fof srä\sryöfth/ bobo yfö=n  
 DEM EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/send MED.ALL hole=LOC  
 ‘He will push this one into the hole.’
- 18 *watik fobo fof srayak.*  
 watik fobo fof sra\yak/  
 then DIST.ALL EMPH 3SG.MASC:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/walk  
 ‘Okay, it will go like this.’
- 19 *kzi zräzin nabi tonze ... mrrab tonze.*  
 kzi zrä\zin/ nabi tonze (.) mrrab  
 barktray 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IRR:PFV/put.down bamboo close (.) small.bamboo  
 tonze  
 close  
 ‘He will put the barktray close to the bamboo ... close to the small bamboo.’
- 20 *fenzane bäne ... mrrab bäne kwa ... wämne yrthakunzr.*  
 fenz=ane bäne (.) mrrab bäne kwa (.) wämne=me  
 body.liquid RECOG.ABS (.) small.bamboo RECOG.ABS FUT (.) stick=INS  
 y\rthaku/nzr  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/spray  
 ‘He sprays the body liquid with that small bamboo ... with that stick.’
- 21 *watik fenz ane kwa ñankarkwr naf*  
 watik fenz ane kwa ñan\kark/wr naf  
 then body.liquid DEM FUT 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/pull 3SG.ERG  
 ‘He sucks up the body fluid’
- 22 *fobo fof krayagunzr kzifo.*  
 fobo fof kra\yagu/nzr kzi=fo  
 DIST.ALL EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/pour barktray=ALL  
 ‘and he pours it into the barktray.’
- 23 *nafawatikthmenzo ... ke ka krärtf... ane kzi*  
 nafa-watik-th=me=nzo (.) keke kwa krärtf/ (.) ane  
 3.POSS-enough-ADJZR=INS=ONLY (.) NEG FUT 2|3SG:OBJ:IRR:IPFV/fill.up (.) DEM

- kzi  
barktray  
'There is enough for him. That barktray won't be filled right up.'
- 24 *fthé zremar nima "watikthmenzo zfrü" mrrab ane sräfum.*  
fthé zre\mar/ nima watik-th=me=nzo  
when 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IRR:PFV/see QUOT enough-ADJZR=INS=ONLY  
zf\rä/ mrrab ane  
3SG.F:SBJ:RPST:IPFV/be small.bamboo DEM  
srä\fum/  
2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:IPFV/pull.out  
'When he looks at it and thinks "That's enough" he pulls out the small bamboo.'
- 25 *watik kwot zrarmänwr ... yfö. watik krefar fof.*  
watik kwot zra\rmän/wr (.) yfö watik  
then properly 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IRR:IPFV/close (.) hole then  
kre\far/ fof  
2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/set.off EMPH  
'Then he closes up the hole and leaves the place.'
- 26 *bäne zrazänzr ... fenz ... kzikaf ... mä ke kwa kabef sremar ane yam fiyoksin*  
bäne zra\zä/nzr (.) fenz (.) kzi=kaf (.)  
RECOG.ABS 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IRR:IPFV/carry (.) body.liquid (.) barktray=PROP (.)  
mä keke kwa kabe=f sre\mar/ ane yam  
where NEG FUT man=ERG.SG 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/see DEM event  
fiyok-si=n  
do-NMLZ=LOC  
'He carries those body fluids with the barktray (to some place) where no one can see him in doing that thing.'
- 27 *kwa wrifhZR.*  
kwa w\rifh/zr  
FUT 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/hide  
'He will hide it.'
- 28 *watik fi zöbthé zane bäne kramanziknwr ... zzarfa, wämne, bäne ferä ... ymd thäbu nzabu.*  
watik fi zöbthé zane bäne kra\manzikn/wr (.) zzarfa  
then but first DEM:PROX RECOG.ABS 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/prepare (.) ginger  
wämne bäne f=e\rä/ (.) ymd thäbu nzabu  
stick RECOG.ABS DIST=2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) bird hair wing  
'But first he will prepare some things: ginger, some sticks, and those bird feathers or wings.'
- 29 *watik ane thrma ane fof krefar fokamfo.*

- watik ane thrma ane fof kre\far/ fokam=fo  
 then DEM after DEM EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/set.off grave=ALL  
 ‘Okay, after this, he sets off from the grave.’
- 30 *ane fthé zrarinakwr ... kzin. zrãbth.*  
 ane fthé zra\rinak/wr (.) kzi=n  
 DEM when 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IRR:IPFV/pour (.) barktray=LOC  
 zrã\bth/  
 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/finish  
 ‘He finishes pouring it in the barktray.’
- 31 *watik yonasi fof zrãrifthm.*  
 watik yona-si=r fof zrã\rifthm/  
 then drink-NMLZ=PURP EMPH 2|3SG:SG:IRR:PFV/hide  
 ‘He really hides now for drinking it.’
- 32 *zõbthé bãneme kwa wrthakunzr ... zzarfame bãnema gatha miyosé rä.*  
 zõbthé bãne=me kwa w\rthaku/nzr (.) zzarfa=me  
 first RECOG.=INS FUT 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/spray (.) ginger=INS  
 bãne=ma gatha miyosé \rã/  
 RECOG=CHAR bad taste 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘First, he will sprinkle it with ginger, because it has a bad taste.’
- 33 *nafane miyo keke namä wãrä.*  
 nafane miyo keke namä wã\rã/  
 SG.POSS taste NEG good 3SG.MASC:IO:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘Its taste is not good.’
- 34 *zrarthakunzr zrãbth.*  
 zra\rthaku/nzr zrã\bth/  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IRR:IPFV/spray 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/finish  
 ‘He finished sprinkling the ginger.’
- 34 *wati bãne ane kwa yfethakwr ... ymd nzabu.*  
 wati bãne ane kwa y\fethak/wr (.) ymd nzabu  
 then RECOG.ABS DEM FUT 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/dip.in (.) bird wing  
 ‘Then he dips in the bird wing.’
- 35 *srafethakwr ... keke kwa zane touch srarär ane fenzme.*  
 sra\fethak/wr (.) keke kwa zane touch  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:IPFV/dip.in (.) NEG FUT DEM:PROX touch  
 sra\rär/  
 ane fenz=me  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:IRR:IPFV/do DEM body.liquid  
 ‘He dip sit in. but he should not touch this here (lips) with the body fluid.’
- 36 *kwan krakurwr.*  
 kwan kra\kur/wr  
 throat 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/split  
 ‘It hurts the mouth.’

- 37 *zrarär kwanen ... bänema ... thafma ... gatha miyoma.*  
 zra\rär/ kwan=en (.) bäne=ma (.) thaf=ma (.) gatha  
 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/do throat=LOC (.) RECOG=CHAR (.) bitter=CHAR (.) bad  
 miyo=ma  
 taste=CHAR  
 ‘It will hurt because of it is bitterness ... because of its bad taste.’
- 38 *zrarär ... zrafethakwr we ... zbo sranakwr ... krafigthkwr.*  
 zra\rär/ (.) zra\fethak/wr we (.) zbo  
 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/do (.) 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:IRR:IPFV/dip.in also (.) PROX.ALL  
 sra\nak/wr (.) krafigthk/wr  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:IRR:IPFV/put.down (.) 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/lick  
 ‘He dips it in and places the feather here in the mouth and licks it.’
- 39 *we nimanzo kwot e zräbth ane fenz.*  
 we nima=nzo kwot e zrä\bth/ ane fenz  
 also like.this=ONLY properly until 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/finish DEM body.liquid  
 ‘This way, he will finish all those body fluids.’
- 40 *fthé zräbth kzi ane kwa yfönzr mnime fewama.*  
 fthé zrä\bth/ kzi ane kwa  
 when 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/finish barktray DEM FUT  
 y\fö/nzr mni=me fewa=ma  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/burn fire=INS smell=CHAR  
 ‘When he is finished, he will burn the barktray in the fire because of its stench.’
- 41 *mnime sräföf watik.*  
 mni=me srä\föf/ watik  
 fire=INS 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/burn enough  
 ‘He burns it in the fire and then its over.’
- 42 *kräbrim nafane mnzfo.*  
 Krä\brim/ nafane mnz=fo  
 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/return 3SG.POSS house=LOC  
 ‘He returns to his house.’
- 43 *kwa yrugr e ... baf fthé sräbth nima kabe zan miyof.*  
 kwa y\rugr/ e (.) baf fthé  
 FUT 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/sleep until (.) RECOG.ERG.SG when  
 srä\bth/ nima kabe zan miyo=f  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/finish like.this man killing desire=ERG.SG  
 ‘He sleeps until when that bloodlust comes over him.’
- 44 *okay fthé fof krefar.*  
 okay fthé fof kre\far/  
 okay when EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/set.off  
 ‘Okay, that is when he sets off.’

- 45 *keke kwa mnzen ane tmatm zrafiyokwr ane yam.*  
 keke kwa mnz=en ane tmatm zra\fiyok/wr ane yam  
 NEG FUT house=LOC DEM event 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/make DEM event  
 ‘He will not do these things in the house.’
- 46 *zagr kwa yak ksi karen. bä sramnZR.*  
 zagr kwa \yak/ ksi kar=en bä  
 far FUT 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/walk bush place=LOC MED  
 sra\m/nZR  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/dwell  
 ‘He will go far away to the bush. He will stay there.’
- 47 *foba fof krefar kabe zanr.*  
 foba fof kre\far/ kabe zan=r  
 DIST.ABL EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/set.off man killing=PURP  
 ‘It is really from there, that he goes and kills people.’
- 48 *si kwa zöbthé ηazübrakwr warfo kabeDBO.*  
 si kwa zöbthé ηa\zübrak/wr warfo kabe=dBO  
 eye FUT first 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/pray above man=ALL.ANIM.SG  
 ‘First, he will pray to god.’
- 49 *warfo kabe kwa ykonZR “befe mitafo sabrim! nzun fefe kwagathif!”*  
 warfo kabe kwa y\ko/nZR befe mitafo  
 above man FUT 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/speak 2SG.ERG.EMPH spirit  
 sa\brim/  
 nzun fefe  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:IMP:PFV/return 1SG.DAT body  
 kwa\gathif/  
 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:IO:IMP:PFV/leave  
 ‘He says to god: “You take the spirit! Leave the body for me!”’
- 50 *watik ane kabe kwa yfänZR.*  
 watik ane kabe kwa y\fa/nZR  
 then DEM man FUT 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/show  
 ‘Then he points to this man.’
- 51 *kabe yf kwa ybräknwr nima “bäi! bäiane mitafo be sabrim! nzun fefe kwagathif!”*  
 kabe yf kwa y\bräkn/wr nima bäi bäi=ane  
 man name FUT 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/call.out QUOT bäi bäi=POSS.SG  
 mitafo be sa\brim/ nzun fefe  
 spirit 2SG.ERG 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:IMP:PFV/return 1SG.DAT body  
 kwa\gathif/  
 2|3SG:SBJ>1SG:IO:IMP:PFV/leave  
 ‘He calls out that man’s name: “Bäi! You take Bäi’s spirit. Leave the body for me!”’
- 52 *fthé krefar kabef keke kwa sremar bänema ...*



- fthé kre\far/ kabe=f keke kwa  
 when 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/set.off man=ERG.SG NEG FUT  
 sre\mar/ bäne=ma (.)  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:PFV/see RECOG=CHAR (.)  
 ‘When he sets off, no man should see him, because’
- 53 *mnzen fthé srarugr nagayé disturb o ñare disturb srarär.*  
 mnz=en fthé sra\rugr/ nagayé disturb o ñare disturb  
 house=LOC when 3SG.MASC:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/sleep children disturb or woman disturb  
 sra\rär/  
 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/do  
 ‘if he sleeps in the house, the children or his wife might disturb him.’
- 54 *watik anema fof krämätr outside nä karfo ksi karen. fä sramnZR.*  
 watik ane=ma fof krä\mätr/ outside nä kar=fo ksi  
 then DEM=CHAR EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/bring.out outside INDF place=ALL bush  
 kar=en fä sra\m/nZR  
 place=ALL DIST 3SG.MASC:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/dwell  
 ‘Therefore, he goes out to another place in the bush. He stays there.’
- 55 *fä ane tmatm kwa kabe yafiyokwr. bthazan yfnZR.*  
 fä ane tmatm kwa kabe ya\fiyok/wr bthazan  
 DIST DEM event FUT man 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/make black.magic  
 y\fn/nZR  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/hit  
 ‘He makes these things with the man there. He puts black magic on him.’
- 56 *foba fof kre\thfär ... mobo fthzé ... nima ... zba fthé roukuma nge srarä.*  
 foba fof kre\thfär/ (.) mobo fthzé (.) nima (.) zba  
 DIST.ABL EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/fly (.) MED.ALL ever (.) like.this (.) PROX.ABL  
 fthé rouku=ma nge sra\rä/  
 when rouku=CHAR child 3SG.MASC:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/be  
 ‘From there, he flies away to where ever he wants. It might be a boy from here  
 from Rouku.’
- 57 *zbär kwa yam zä wäfiyokwr zba krethfär safso.*  
 zbär kwa yam zä wä\fiyok/wr zba  
 night FUT custom PROX 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/make PROX.ABL  
 kre\thfär/ safso=fo  
 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/fly safso=ALL  
 ‘He will do that in the night. He will fly from here to Safs.’
- 58 *bä ... bthazan srafnZR bthanme srafnZR.*  
 bä (.) bthazan sra\fn/nZR bthan=me  
 MED (.) black.magic 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:IPFV/hit magic=INS

- sra\fn/nzr  
2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:IRR:IPFV/hit  
'There he puts black magic on someone. He puts a spell on him.'
- 59 *e ... kränbrim we ane we zbär.*  
e (.) krän\brim/ we ane we zbär  
until (.) 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV:VENT/return also DEM also night  
'And then he returns here again in the night.'
- 60 *keke kwa bä srarugr o srawäkwr.*  
keke kwa bä sra\rugr/ o sra\wäk/wr  
NEG FUT MED 3SG.MASC:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/sleep or 3SG.MASC:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/wake  
'He will not sleep there or wake up there.'
- 61 *zbär we kwa ñanbrigwr keke kwa mothen fi srayak fi krathfänzr.*  
zbär we kwa ñan\brig/wr keke kwa moth=en fi  
night also FUT 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV:VENT/return NEG FUT path=LOC 3.ABS  
sra\yak/ fi kra\thfä/nzr  
3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/walk 3.ABS 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/fly  
'He will return in the night. He will not walk on the road, but he will fly.'
- 62 *nima ane wäfiyokwr.*  
nima ane wä\fiyok/wr  
like.this DEM 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/make  
'That's what he does.'
- 63 *fthé sräbth ... kabe bthazan srethkäf watik fä mane kwik erä fof.*  
fthé srä\bth/ (.) kabe bthazan  
when 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:SBJ:IRR:PFV/finish (.) man black.magic  
sre\thkäf/ watik fä mane kwik e\rä/ fof  
2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:PFV/start then DIST who.ABS sick 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be EMPH  
'When he is finished, the black magic will set in. It is then, when they will get really sick.'
- 64 *keke, taurifo tmatm zrafiyokwr o ñathafo ... o faso rrokar berä.*  
keke tauri=fo tmatm zra\fiyok/wr o ñatha=fo (.) o faso  
NEG wallaby=ALL event 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/make or dog=ALL (.) or meat  
r-rokar b=e\rä/  
REDUP-stuff MED=2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
'No, he does that thing to a wallaby o dog ... or to some other animal there.'
- 65 *ane rrokarfo kwa tmatm yafiyokwr keke kwa nima nä kabledben.*  
ane r-rokar=fo kwa tmatm ya\fiyok/wr keke  
DEM REDUP-stuff=ALL FUT event 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:NPST:IPFV/make NEG  
kwa nima nä kabe=dben  
FUT like.this INDF man=LOC.ANIM.SG  
'He does that to those animals, not to a man.'

- 66 *fi ane kabeane mitafo kwa wthorthr.*  
 fi ane kabe=ane mitafo kwa w\thor/thr  
 but DEM man=POSS.SG spirit FUT 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.F:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/enter  
 ‘But it will go inside that man’s spirit.’
- 67 *nä faso rokarfo o fthzé ñatha zräthb ...*  
 nä faso rokar=fo o fthzé ñatha zrä\thb/ (.)  
 INDF meat stuff=ALL or ever dog 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:PFV/enter (.)  
 ‘It goes into some animals or dogs ...’
- 68 *ra fthzé sraä ... ymd.*  
 ra fthzé sra\rä/ (.) ymd  
 what ever 3SG.MASC:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/be (.) bird  
 ‘whatever there may be ... a bird.’
- 69 *watik ane fof kwa tmatm yafiyokwr ñatha yafiyokwr nafane yfkaf.*  
 watik ane fof kwa tmatm ya\fiyok/wr ñatha  
 then DEM EMPH FUT event 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:NPST:IPFV/make dog  
 ya\fiyok/wr nafane yf=kaf  
 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:IO:NPST:IPFV/make 3SG.POSS name=PROF  
 ‘Well, he makes this thing. He does it do a dog with his (the man’s) name.’
- 70 *nezä kabe kwa kwosi yé. keke ñatha kwa kwosi sraä yakme.*  
 nezä kabe kwa kwosi \yé/ keke ñatha kwa kwosi  
 in.return man FUT dead 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be NEG dog FUT dead  
 sra\rä/ yak=me  
 3SG.MASC:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/be run=INS  
 ‘As a consequence, the man will die. But the dog will not die quickly.’
- 71 *mon tariasi fthé kratariwr ñatha ...*  
 mon tari-si fthé kra\tari/wr ñatha (.)  
 how weaken-NMLZ when 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/weaken dog (.)  
 ‘As the dog gets weaker,’
- 72 *we kabe nimaäwä kwa ñatariwr ...*  
 we kabe nima=wä kwa ña\tari/wr (.)  
 also man like.this=EMPH FUT 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/weaken (.)  
 ‘the man will also get weaker.’
- 73 *kwot e ñatha fthé zä kwosi sraä kabe bä kwa kwosi yé.*  
 kwot e ñatha fthé zä kwosi sra\rä/ kabe bä kwa  
 properly until dog when PROX dead 3SG.MASC:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/be man MED FUT  
 kwosi \yé/  
 dead 3SG.MASC:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘until some time passes. When the dog dies, the man will also die.’
- 74 *bänema ñatha ane nafane yfkaf sfrä.*

Sample text: Fenz yonasi

- bäne=ma    ɲatha ane nafane yf=kaf    sfrä/  
 RECOG=CHAR dog    DEM 3SG.POSS name=PROP 3SG.MASC:SBJ:RPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘Because that dog was with his name.’
- 75 *nimame ane fof bthan erä ... äfiyokwrth.*  
 nima=me    ane fof    bthan e\rä/    (.)  
 like.this=INS DEM EMPH magic 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.)  
 ä\fiyok/wrth  
 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/make  
 ‘This is how the magic works, how they do it.’
- 76 CD: *rma fi ɲonathrth ane fenz?*  
 rma fi    ɲo\na/thrth    ane fenz  
 why 3.ABS 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/drink DEM body.liquid  
 ‘Why do they drink the body fluids?’
- 77 *okay, ane fenz mane ɲonathrth tmä naf fof ärithr.*  
 okay ane fenz    mane ɲo\na/thrth    tmä    naf    fof  
 okay DEM body.liquid which 2|3PL:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/drink strength 3SG.ERG EMPH  
 ä\ri/thr  
 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:IO:NPST:IPFV/give  
 ‘Okay, drinking the body fluids gives them strength.’
- 78 *kwosifr kabeane tmäf fof ezänzr nä karfo.*  
 kwosifr kabe=ane    tmä=f    fof e\zä/nzr  
 corpse man=POSS.SG strength=ERG EMPH 2|3SG:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/carry  
 nä    kar=fo  
 INDF place=ALL  
 ‘The deceased man’s strength carries them to another place.’
- 79 *nä kayé kam kwa emätrakwrth ... kabe kam ... kwosifr kam.*  
 nä    kayé    kam kwa e\mätrak/wrth    (.) kabe kam (.)  
 INDF yesterday bone FUT 2|3PL:SBJ>2|3PL:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/take.out (.) man bone (.)  
 kwosifr kam  
 corpse bone  
 ‘Sometimes they extract a bone, a human bone, a bone from a corpse.’
- 80 *watik, ane fof thfäsir fof.*  
 watik ane fof    thfä-si=r    fof  
 then    DEM EMPH fly-NMLZ=PURP EMPH  
 ‘That one is really for flying.’
- 81 *ane kamf kwa yzänzr bobo nä karfo.*  
 ane kam=f    kwa y\zä/nzr    bobo    nä  
 DEM bone=ERG.SG FUT 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/carry MED:ALL INDF  
 kar=fo  
 place=ALL  
 ‘That bone will carry them away to another place.’

- 82 *fi fenz ane bänemrnzo rä ... tmä yarisir.*  
 fi fenz ane bäne=mr=nzo \rä/ (.) tmä  
 but body.liquid DEM RECOG=PURP=ONLY 3SG.F:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be (.) strength  
 yari-si=r  
 give-NMLZ=PURP  
 ‘But the body liquid is just for giving them strength’
- 83 *kamfi ane kwa yzänzr bobo nima safS ...*  
 kam=f fi ane kwa y\zä/nzr bobo  
 bone=ERG.SG 3.ABS DEM FUT 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/carry MED.ALL  
 nima safS (.)  
 like.this safS (.)  
 ‘The bone will carry there, for example to Safs’
- 84 *o wämnefr nima zagr kwa ñathfänzr weam.*  
 o wämnefr nima zagr kwa ña\thfä/nzr weam  
 or wämnefr like.this far FUT 2|3SG:SBJ:NPST:IPFV/fly weam  
 ‘or Wämnefr. He will fly far this way to Weam.’
- 85 *fthzé bobomrwä arufe krathfänzr ... zagr karfo.*  
 fthzé bobomr=wä arufe kra\thfä/nzr (.) zagr kar=fo  
 ever MED:ALL=EMPH arufe 2|3SG:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/fly (.) far place=LOC  
 ‘Where ever he wants. He will fly all the way to Arufe, to places far away.’
- 86 *ane kam ane tmäfkwa yzänzr.*  
 ane kam ane tmäf kwa y\zä/nzr  
 DEM bone DEM strength FUT 2|3SG:SBJ>3SG.MASC:OBJ:NPST:IPFV/carry  
 ‘That bone and that strength will carry him.’
- 87 *kam a fenz.*  
 kam a fenz  
 bone and body.liquid  
 ‘the bone and the body fluids.’
- 88 *eso kafar. anenzo katan trikasi zfrä.*  
 eso kafar ane=nzo katan trik-si zfrä/  
 thank big DEM=ONLY small tell-NMLZ 3SG.F:SBJ:RPST:IPFV/be  
 ‘Thank you! That was just my small story.’
- 89 *trikasi nimanzo worä kabeyé mane watrikwrth.*  
 trik-si nima=nzo wo\rä/ kabe=yé mane  
 tell-NMLZ like.this=ONLY 1SG.SBJ:NPST:IPFV/be man=ERG.NSG which  
 wa\trik/wrth  
 2|3PL:SBJ>1SG:IO:NPST:IPFV/tell  
 ‘This is my version, which others were telling me.’
- 90 *fi srakéwä fthzé kwot kratrikwrth.*

*Sample text: Fenz yonasi*

fi sra<sup>k</sup>=é=wä fthzé kwot kra\trik/wrth  
but boy=ERG.NSG=EMPH whenever properly 2|3PL:SBJ:IRR:IPFV/tell  
'But the boys talk about this all the time.'

91 *gadmöwä!*  
gadmöwä  
thanks  
'Thank you!'

[tci20130903-04 ]

# List of recordings

## Overview

The following table lists the 65 texts which make up the Komnzo text corpus at the present time. The table provides general information about each text: the archive ID, title, digital object identifier (DOI), text genre, length in min:sec, number of annotation units (records), and number of tokens (words). The archive ID refers to the date on which the recording was made. For example, tci20110810-02 refers to the second recording session on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August 2011. The corpus contains the following text genres: nrr = narrative, prd = procedural, cvr = conversation, stt = stimulus task, pub = public speech. Moreover, all speakers are listed with their name, age and their section/clan: M = Mayawa, S = Sagara, B = Bagu.

The reader of the digital version of this grammar can simply click on the DOI in the table to access the respective dataset, which contains the audio, video, and transcription files. For the reader of the print version, all material is available under: <https://zenodo.org/communities/komnzo>. Future changes, especially to the transcription files, will be marked at the Zenodo website with consecutive version numbers of the respective dataset, and each version will receive its own DOI number. A snapshot of all transcription files at the time of the publication of this grammar can be found as a zip-file under: <https://zenodo.org/record/1306247>.

At the present time, the Komnzo corpus consists of 65 texts with a total of 11hrs and 42min of transcribed material, and around 54,000 words. 34 speakers are featured: 9 female speakers and 25 male speakers covering an age range from 20 to 68.

Table .1: Overview of the text corpus

TEXT ID	CORPUS DOI	TITLE	GENRE	SPEAKER	AGE	SEX	SEC	LENGTH (mm:ss)	RECORDS
tci20100905	10.5281/zenodo.1218622	<i>kukufia</i>	nrr	Abia Bai	60	m	M	06:00	137
tci20110802	10.5281/zenodo.1219532	<i>safak a faikore</i>	nrr	Abia Bai	60	m	M	06:37	144
tci20110810-01	10.5281/zenodo.1209855	<i>no kzi</i>	prd	Marua Bai	68	m	M	03:24	76
tci20110810-02	10.5281/zenodo.1219876	<i>ruga fiyaf</i>	prd	Marua Bai	68	m	M	03:24	80
tci20110813-09	10.5281/zenodo.1292770	<i>zra frzsi</i>	prd	Daure Kaumb	38	m	M	03:49	64
tci20110817-02	10.5281/zenodo.1216887	<i>nge fathasi</i>	prd	Abia Bai	60	m	M	04:44	122
tci20111004	10.5281/zenodo.1215730	picture task	stt,	Railey Abia	31	m	M		542
			cvr	Taylor Abia	24	m	M	37:24	261
				Mae Karembu	25	m	M		5
tci20111028-01	10.5281/zenodo.1284365	put project	stt	Nakre Abia	28	f	M	23:08	88
tci20111107-01	10.5281/zenodo.1285129	<i>ebar zan</i>	nrr	Maraga Kwozi	63	m	M	11:23	194
tci20111107-03	10.5281/zenodo.1284494	crow&jackal	stt	Nakre Abia	28	f	M	06:20	80
tci20111119-01	10.5281/zenodo.1291004	<i>faw brigsj</i>	nrr	Abia Bai	60	m	M	10:16	197
tci20111119-03	10.5281/zenodo.1300677	<i>fiyafir</i>	nrr	Abia Bai	60	m	M	09:50	202
tci20111119-06	10.5281/zenodo.1302995	<i>nzürna trikasi</i>	nrr	Marua Bai	68	m	M		159
				Ronnie Marua	40	m	M	07:57	19
tci20120805-01	10.5281/zenodo.1291348	yam culture	nrr	Abia Bai	60	m	M	48:50	850
tci20120814	10.5281/zenodo.1291350	<i>babuane trikasi</i>	nrr	Abia Bai	60	m	M	13:46	255
tci20120815	10.5281/zenodo.1299687	<i>nzöyär</i>	nrr	Abia Bai	60	m	M	03:02	74
tci20120817-02	10.5281/zenodo.1299697	<i>ythama</i>	nrr	Abia Bai	60	m	M	01:31	49
tci20120818	10.5281/zenodo.1299699	<i>ebar zan</i>	nrr	Abia Bai	60	m	M	05:03	91
tci20120821-01	10.5281/zenodo.1299705	<i>dö</i>	nrr	Lucy Abia	56	f	S	03:54	81



TEXT ID	CORPUS DOI	TITLE	GENRE	SPEAKER	AGE	SEX	SEC	LENGTH (mm:ss)	RECORDS
tci20120821-02	10.5281/zenodo.1299707	<i>ruga fiyaf</i>	nrr	Lucy Abia	56	f	S	05:00	115
tci20120824	10.5281/zenodo.1300789	<i>brubru</i>	prd	Karo Abia	42	m	M	06:35	160
tci20120827-03	10.5281/zenodo.1294658	<i>nzürna trikasi</i>	nrr	Kurai Tawéth	42	m	B	11:57	250
tci20120901-01	10.5281/zenodo.1294666	<i>nzürna trikasi</i>	nrr	Maraga Kwozi	63	m	M	10:30	196
tci20120904-01	10.5281/zenodo.1299316	<i>ñazi traksi</i>	nrr	Marua Bai	68	m	M	07:21	185
tci20120904-02	10.5281/zenodo.1294670	<i>srak brüzi</i>	nrr	Marua Bai	68	m	M	12:20	278
tci20120906	10.5281/zenodo.1294674	<i>gwfiyar</i>	prd,	Sékri Karémbu	38	m	M	10:36	110
			cvr	Marua Bai	68	m	M		96
tci20120909-06	10.5281/zenodo.1300793	<i>masis</i>	nrr	Kaumb Bai	65	m	M	07:12	123
tci20120914	10.5281/zenodo.1303336	<i>frfr &amp; kifikifi</i>	prd	Nakre Abia	28	f	M	04:27	66
tci20120922-08	10.5281/zenodo.1303977	<i>masu</i>	nrr	Daure Kaumb	38	m	M	06:12	122
tci20120922-09	10.5281/zenodo.1303981	<i>sfsam</i>	nrr	Daure Kaumb	38	m	M	02:41	48
tci20120922-19	10.5281/zenodo.1304219	<i>ymäd zfth</i>	nrr	Daure Kaumb	38	m	M	02:17	44
tci20120922-21	10.5281/zenodo.1304230	<i>säñfok</i>	prd	Daure Kaumb	38	m	M	02:44	48
tci20120922-23	10.5281/zenodo.1304450	<i>nabi</i>	prd	Masen Abia	35	m	M	07:56	111
tci20120922-24	10.5281/zenodo.1304456	<i>mni</i>	nrr,	Masen Abia	35	m	M	09:12	90
			cvr	Steven Karémbu	28	m	M		39
tci20120922-25	10.5281/zenodo.1305034	<i>zuzi</i>	nrr	Alice Karo	38	f	S	04:12	56
tci20120922-26	10.5281/zenodo.1294676	<i>dagon dradr</i>	nrr, cvr	Moses Marua	50	m	M	11:38	30
				Marua Bai	68	m	M		64
				Daure Kaumb	38	m	M		145
tci20120924-01	10.5281/zenodo.1305050	<i>daru</i>	nrr	Trafe Kaumb	29	f	M	05:19	69
tci20120924-02	10.5281/zenodo.1305055	<i>zokwasi</i>	nrr	Abraham Maembu	45	m	S	02:53	47
tci20120925	10.5281/zenodo.1292778	picture task	stt, cvr	Mae Kapa	46	m	M	42:59	431
				Kaumb Bai	65	m	M		256
				Mea Abia	55	m	M		19

TEXT ID	CORPUS DOI	TITLE	GENRE	SPEAKER	AGE	SEX	SEC	LENGTH (mm:ss)	RECORDS
tci20120929-02	10.5281/zenodo.1305062	<i>wath frmzsi</i>	nrr	Sitau Karémbu	42	m	M	05:46	102
tci20121001	10.5281/zenodo.1294680	<i>wawa mnz</i>	prd	Abia Bai	60	m	M	12:13	222
tci20121008-03	10.5281/zenodo.1305430	<i>dobakwr</i>	nrr, prd	Moses Marua	50	m	M	04:13	28
				Marua Bai	68	m	M		17
tci20121019-04	10.5281/zenodo.1305436	<i>se zokwasi</i>	pub	Abia Bai	60	m	M	27:40	267
				Sékri Karémbu Sitau Karémbu	38 42	m m	M M		81 51
tci20130822-08	10.5281/zenodo.1305440	<i>ɲarake znsä</i>	prd, cvr	Janet Abia	26	f	M	05:15	55
				Lucy Abia	56	f	S		41
tci20130823-06	10.5281/zenodo.1305922	garden	cvr	Caspar Mokai	35	m	S	21:29	113
				Steven Karémbu	28	m	M		233
tci20130823-08	10.5281/zenodo.1305942	<i>fathasi</i>	nrr	Wafine Mokai	32	f	M	06:07	85
tci20130901-04	10.5281/zenodo.1305946	<i>bthan kabe</i>	cvr, nrr	Yufai Karémbu	24	m	M	14:12	74
				Nakre Abia	28	f	M		175
				Mbai Karo	20	m	M		22
tci20130903-01	10.5281/zenodo.1305960	<i>kut</i>	prd	Maambu Kwozi	35	m	M	05:59	66
tci20130903-02	10.5281/zenodo.1305962	<i>kata</i>	nrr	Maambu Kwozi	35	m	M	01:30	27
tci20130903-03	10.5281/zenodo.1305964	<i>fiyaf trikasi</i>	nrr	Maambu Kwozi	35	m	M	09:24	193
tci20130903-04	10.5281/zenodo.1305970	<i>fenz yonasi</i>	nrr	Nakre Abia	28	f	M	07:16	150
tci20130905-02	10.5281/zenodo.1305977	<i>ɲoti</i>	nrr	Maambu Kwozi	35	m	M	05:36	124
tci20130907-02	10.5281/zenodo.1292845	plant walk	cvr, prd	Nakre Abia	28	f	M	63:37	748
				Janet Abia	26	f	M		731
tci20130911-03	10.5281/zenodo.1305987	<i>mary</i>	nrr	Mabata Abraham	40	f	M	04:41	47
tci20130914-01	10.5281/zenodo.1305989	<i>ɲatr rziraksi</i>	prd	Kaumb Bai	65	m	M	03:01	49
tci20130923-01	10.5281/zenodo.1306003	<i>yem/kwras</i>	nrr	Alice Abia	34	f	M	04:17	72

TEXT ID	CORPUS DOI	TITLE	GENRE	SPEAKER	AGE	SEX	SEC	LENGTH (mm:ss)	RECORDS
tci20130927-06	10.5281/zenodo.1292871	old times	nrr,	Marua Bai	68	m	M	20:20	383
			cvr	Caspar Mokai	35	m	S		63
tci20131004-05	10.5281/zenodo.1306007	<i>sota</i>	cvr	Nakre Abia	28	f	M	05:54	65
				Railey Abia	31	m	M		17
				Dorothy Railey	28	f	B		25
				Yufai Karémbu	24	m	M		8
				Ester Railey	12	f	M		6
				Ronnie Marua	40	m	M		11
tci20131008-01	10.5281/zenodo.1306009	<i>tütü</i>	nrr	Kaumb Bai	65	m	M	03:23	49
				Abia Bai	60	m	M		7
tci20131013-01	10.5281/zenodo.1292876	<i>kwafar</i>	nrr	Abia Bai	60	m	M	25:00	516
tci20131013-02	10.5281/zenodo.1292878	<i>ausi bada</i>	nrr	Abia Bai	60	m	M	16:51	364
tci20131103-08	10.5281/zenodo.1306013	<i>se zokwasi</i>	pub	Ako Koko	55	m	S	14:58	214
tci20150906-10	10.5281/zenodo.1294682	<i>srak brüzsi</i>	nrr	Abia Bai	60	m	M	18:43	415
tci20150916-03	10.5281/zenodo.1306019	<i>nümgar</i>	nrr	Sékri Karémbu	38	m	M	09:50	140
				Nakre Abia	28	f	M		24
				Mea Abia	55	m	M		25
tci20150919-05	10.5281/zenodo.1294712	<i>ausi</i>	nrr, cvr	Lucy Abia	56	f	S	18:40	375
				Sékri Karémbu	38	m	M		30
				Nakre Abia	28	f	M		20
TOTAL								11:42:44	13.333



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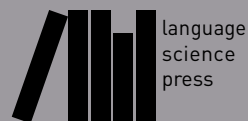




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# A grammar of Komnzo

Komnzo is a Papuan language of Southern New Guinea spoken by around 250 people in the village of Rouku. Komnzo belongs to the Tonda subgroup of the Yam language family, which is also known as the Morehead Upper-Maró group. This grammar provides the first comprehensive description of a Yam language. It is based on 16 months of fieldwork. The primary source of data is a text corpus of around 12 hours recorded and transcribed between 2010 and 2015.

Komnzo provides many fields of future research, but the most interesting aspect of its structure lies in the verb morphology, to which the two largest chapters of the grammar are dedicated. Komnzo verbs may index up to two arguments showing agreement in person, number and gender. Verbs encode 18 TAM categories, valency, directionality and deictic status. Morphological complexity lies not only in the amount of categories that verbs may express, but also in the way these are encoded. Komnzo verbs exhibit what may be called ‘distributed exponence’, i.e. single morphemes are underspecified for a particular grammatical category. Therefore, morphological material from different sites has to be integrated first, and only after this integration can one arrive at a particular grammatical category.

The descriptive approach in this grammar is theory-informed rather than theory-driven. Comparison to other Yam languages and diachronic developments are taken into account whenever it seems helpful.

