Ŋmolõ

Index of Glossing Abbreviations 1

What follows here is a chart of the glossing abbreviations used in this document.

Phonology 2.1

Ŋmolõ has 12 phonemic consonants arranged thus:

		Peripheral				Core	
		Bilabial			Velar	Retroflex	Palatal
Stops	Voiced	Ď~m <i>b~m</i>	gb~	ŋm ŋm	ġ~ŋ g~ŋ	ḍ~ṇ d~n	ĝ~ñ c~ñ
	Unvoiced		k k	р <i>р</i>	k k	ţ t	ķ Ç
Approx.					w wh∼w~y	л л: r rr	
Lateral						! !	l ^y ly

 $\label{eq:continuous} \mbox{$ \Pi$ molo`s documentation uses Americanist Phonetic Notation (APA). / \mathring{b} g \mathring{b} \mathring{g}/ \mbox{ are implosive } / \mathring{b} g \mathring{b} \mathring{g}/. / \mathring{w}/ \mbox{ is a velar approximant } / \mathring{u}/, \mbox{ and all other underdot transcriptions } / \mathring{q} \mbox{ η $! $! $! / $ are retroflex } / \mathring{q} \mbox{ η $! $! $! / $ are palatal } / \r{f} \mbox{ η $c $ $ \& $ / $. }$

/i i:/ only contrast in medial intervocalic positions.

Ŋmolõ has the following vowels:

	Front	Back	
Close	I l	U 0	
Open	a a: a aa		
Diphthongs	aı au aı ao		

/u/ is equivalent to IPA /u/.

The syllable structure of \mathfrak{I} molõ is $C^1V(C^2)$. C^1 is any consonant, and C^2 is any consonant barring voiceless stops and approximants .

Nasal Prosody and Allophony 2.2

I)molõ has a system of nasal prosody, here transcribed as $/\sim$ / that encompasses whole words. This nasal prosody causes vowels to have nasalization, voiced consonants to be realized as their nasal stop counterparts. Nasal words are written with a tilde over their last vowel $/\psi$ / is realized as $[\psi]$ before /a a:/, written $<\psi$ >, [y] before /I/, written $<\psi$ >, and $/\psi$ / before [u], written $<\psi$ >. (Note: APA [y] is equivalent to IPA [j] — it is not a vowel) Intervocalically, voiceless consonants are fricated, $[x^w \ x \ s \ x]$. In standard IPA that would be, $[x^w \ x \ s \ c]$.

In open, word final consonants, /I U \sim I \sim U/ are realized as [i: u: e: o:].

Word finally, $/ l l^y / l^y$

Grammar 3

Sentences are SOV

Nominal Morphology 3.1

Ŋmolõ has a morphology

Morphophonology and Core Harmony 3.1.1

 η molõ has a system of core consonant harmony. The consonants of affixes will shift in place of articulation to match the preceding syllable. The retroflex consonants r rr are unaffected by this harmony.

A more circumstantial harmony sees *r* replacing lateral consonants and becoming lengthened.

1) Kpakpa ŋmolnabadororrã. [kpaxʷa ŋməlnabadərəxxi;a]

forehead ŋmolnã-pado-rol-ra

forehead speak-inch-circ-alt.sg.ntr

'You may begin speaking (given a set of circumstances).'

Article ba and Possession 3.1.2

 η molõ marks indefinite objects with the article ba [$\dot{b}a$]. Definite objects are unmarked:

2)	Badi gbarral [ˈbad̩i: gbaɹ̞:aʎ̩]
	ba-di gbarraly
	ART-CL:plant flower
	"A flower"
3)	Gbarral[gbaɹ:aҲ]
	gbarraly
	flower

"The flower"

Ba is suffixed with a classifier, in 1) -da. These classifiers are required for the article ba as well as possessive markers and numbers. The only time they are left out is with plain nouns as in 2). Classifiers are a relatively open class. Typically, new classifiers are coined from abbreviations of nouns or onomatopoeia. Some older classifiers take their shape from old words.

Ŋmolô's possessive particles are as follows:

	Singular	Plural
Ego	yı-	whai-
Alter	ra-	raa-

ŋmolo distinguishes 1st and non-1st persons. 1st person singular includes only the speaker. 1st person plural includes the speaker and anyone the speaker wishes to include; this is heavily context dependent. The non-1st persons are anyone other than the speaker; these are also heavily context dependent.

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4) Yımõ dog... [yɛmoː dug]
   yı-mõ dog
   EGO.SG.POSS-CL:small.domesticated.animal dog
   "My dog"
5) Whaimõ dog... [waɛmo: dug]
   whai-mõ dog
   EGO.PL.POSS-CL:small.domesticated.animal dog
   "Our dog"
6) Ramõ dog... [ɹamo: dug]
   ra-mõ dog
   ALT.SG.POSS-CL:small.domesticated.animal dog
   "Your/his/her/their sg. dog"
7) Raamõ dog... [dug ia:mo:]
   raa-mõ dog
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ALT.PL.POSS-CL:small.domesticated.animal dog

"Your/their dog"

Alignment and Cases 3.1.3

Ŋmolõ features tripartite alignment. The intransitive case is unmarked.

	Intransitive	Accusative	Ergative
Singular	Ø	-Ďa	-lya
Plural	-cao	-baa	-lyaa

Following words that contain retroflex consonants in their final syllable, as their onset or coda,

-lya(a) becomes -la(a) and -cao becomes -dao.

The intransitive case marks the sole argument of an intransitive clause. The accusative and ergative mark the arguments of transitive clauses

There are also several other cases. In these cases number is not distinguished

Name	Name / Description		Marker	
			Plu.	
Dative	The dative is used to mark indirect objects and beneficiaries of actions. In this it combines the prototypical dative and benefactive.	-co	-cao	
Oblique	The oblique is used to indicate locations, accompaniment, and the instruments by which an action is completed.	-са	-саа	

⁻c becomes *-t* following another retroflex consonant.

8) Ŋmolnawõ yıbab whaañãõ. [ŋmɔlnawo: yıbab wa:ñaɔ]

√ŋmolnã-wo-∅ yı-bab whãã-cao

√speak-gnom-ego.sg.ntr ego.sg.poss-cl:comrade people-dat.pl

'I speak for my people.'

9) Whan çowora karralta. [wan kuwuja kaj:alta]

whãn √çowo-ra karral-ca

CL:general.person √walk-ALT.SG.NTR mountain-OBL.SG

'He is walking to the mountain.'

Pronouns 3.1.4

Apart from *Yı/Whaı*, those being ego singular and plural free pronouns, and *Kpakpa*, literally 'forehead' a common second person pronoun. Many third person pronouns are classifiers.

10) Kpakpalya yımobā kpakañaŋmalyā. [kp qx^wql^yq y $qxqnqqnmql^yq$]

kpakpa-lya yı-mõ-ba

forehead-ERG EGO.SG.POSS-CL:small.domesticated.animal-ACC

√kpakã>ca<ŋmã-lya

√know>alt.sg.acc⟨know-alt.sg.erg

"Do you know it?"

In this instance, 'it' refers to the speaker's dog.

See the dictionary, under §Classifiers for a non-exhaustive list of classifiers (as classifiers represent an open class, this list will never be exhaustive).

Verbal morphology 3.2

Ŋmolõ has a verbs.

Verb Complex 3.2.1

The verb complex of Ŋmolo looks as follows:

Р3	P2	P1	Ctom	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6
Negation	Valence	Semi-Modal	Stem	Aspect	Ego agn.	Pat.	Incorp.	Modal	Alt agn.

Stem, Incorporated Elements, and Prefixes 3.2.2

Stems are the head of the verb complex. Verbs are a closed class of words that is distinct from nouns. Incorporated elements are incorporated nouns and verbs that modify the meaning of the stem. These are usually unproductive and fossilized but can be subject to some analogy.

11) Whan nmolnamaara. [wan nməlnama:...a]

whãn-∅ √nmolna-√baa-ra

CL:general.person-NTR √speak-√meander-ALT.SG.NTR

"He is slurring his words."

12) Whan çowobaara. [wan kuwuba: 12]

whãn-∅ √çowo-√baa-ra

CL:general.person-NTR √walk-√meander-ALT.SG.NTR

"He stumbles around."

In the above phrases, $\eta moln\tilde{a}$ -...- $m\tilde{a}\tilde{a}$ is the fossilized phrase and $\varsigma orro$ -...-baa is the analogy. As we see from 11) and 12) there is some productive analogy; however, this productive analogy is very scarce.

Classifiers can be incorporated into transitive verbs as well.

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13) Ŋaalyıñã. [ŋą:l<sup>y</sup>ęñą]
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√ŋaa-lyı-ca

√eat-ego.sg.erg-alt.sg.acc

"I am eating it."

14) Ŋaalyıŋatĩ. [ŋą:l^yɛ̞ŋąṣe̞:]

√ŋaa-lyı-gatı

√eat-ego.sg.erg-cL:edible.fruit

"I am eating it (edible fruit)".

This construction deletes the standard alter patient marker.

There are three prefix types in \mathfrak{I} mol \tilde{o} . Negation is prefixally marked in non-future verbs. This is marked by the prefix Ta-. Valence is marked with passive, causative, and anti-causative prefixes, Lo-, ka-, and kao-, respectively. Lastly, semi-modals refer to a set of prefixes that

coöccur with the irrealis modal *-gbo* to specific potential, necessary, and desiderative modality. These prefixes also occur the subordinating / nominalizing suffix *-dal*, as these, historically, were constructed with subordinate clauses. *-dal* can surface as *-cayl* under palatal harmony, when preceding syllable contains a palatal consonant.

Aspect and Modality 3.2.3

Ŋmolõ aspects are as follows:

Name	Description of Usage	Morpheme
Gnomic	Indicates general truths.	-wo Ŋmolnawõ 'I speak'
Progressive	Indicates an action that is ongoing.	-∅ Ŋmolnã 'I am speaking'
Habitual / Frequentive	Indicates actions that happen habitually or frequently	-kaa <i>Dogba kpakakaañãã</i> 'I habitually see the dogs.'
Perfective	Used to refer to actions as a complete whole.	-baba <i>Dogba kpakababañãã</i> 'I saw the dogs.'
Momentane	Used for actions that are sudden and short lived	-çaba ~ -daba <i>Dogba kpakaçabañãã</i> 'I saw the dogs suddenly.'
Inchoative	Used to refer to the beginning of a state / action.	-bado <i>Ŋmolnabanõ</i> 'I began speaking.'

Cessative	Used to refer to the end of a state or action.	-lyowo ∼ -lowo <i>Ŋmolnalowõ</i> 'I stopped speaking.'
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Modality is conferred through 8 modal particles.

Epistemic	Used to encode information that a speaker infers is true from outside factors. This is also used for suppositions.	-taal ~ -çaayl **Djmolnalowotaarra.* 'They may have stopped speaking.'
Future	Used to encode information that will happen in the future.	-gaıwha <i>Ŋmolnalowoŋaıwharã</i> . 'They will stop speaking.'
Negative Future	Used to encode information that will not happen in the future.	-gaowha <i>Ŋmolnalowoŋaowharã</i> . 'They won't stop speaking.'
Deontic / Irrealis	Used to encode commands, permissions, and requests. It is also used for conditionals and wishes.	-gbo Kpakpa ŋmolnalowoŋmoranãl? 'May you stop speaking?'
Potential	Used for actions that are within one's ability.	bo¹gbo <i>Kpakpa moŋmolnaŋmoranãl</i> . 'You can speak (it is within your ability).'
Circumstantial	Used to encode information that is possible given a set of circumstances.	-rol <i>Kpakpa ŋmolnapadororrã</i> . 'You may begin speaking.'
Necessary	Used to encode that which is a necessity.	caa¹gbo ~ daa¹gbo Kpakpa ñaŋmolnaŋmoranãl. 'You must speak.'
Desiderative	Used to encode information that is desired.	gbaa¹gbo

		Ŋmaaŋmolnaŋmoranãl. 'I want to speak.'
Interrogative	Used to ask questions.	ka¹gbo Taobaagbaogboradal? "Is that true?"

Constructions featuring a semi-modal prefix generally take the suffix -dal, which is a subordinator, as these come from historically subordinate clauses.

Requests and commands, the deontic function of *-gbo*, will always coöccur with a perfective aspect, either the plain perfective or momentane, inchoative, cessative. Future and negative future also most often take a perfective aspect.

Modal Stacking 3.2.3.1

Ŋmolõ can have extensive stacked modals. Observe the following sentences:

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15) Kalakpagaiwhara. [kaḷax<sup>w</sup>aġaiwa.ia]

√kalakpa-gaiwha-ra

√rain-fut-Alt.sg.ntr
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"It will rain."

16) *Kalakpagawhataarra*. [kalax^wagawasa: ia]

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√kalakpa-gaiwha-taa-ra
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√rain-fut-evid-alt.sg.ntr

"(It seems) that it may rain."

17) Kalakpagaıwharorra. [kaḷax^waġaıwaɹuɹ:a]
√kalakpa-gaıwha-rol-ra
√rain-ғuт-сırс-аlт.sg.nтr
"(Given that clouds come) it will rain."

18) Kakalakpagaiwhagboradal? [kaxalaxwagaiwagbuɹaḍaʎ]

ka>√kalakpa-gaıwha<gbo-ra-dal

wh>√rain-fut<irr-alt.sg.ntr-nmz

"Will it rain?"

Person markings 3.2.4

Verbs are marked in 3 places for person, suffix position 2, 3, and 5. I)molõ person markings function around 2 axes of person, ego and alter, two axes of number, singular and plural, and three axes of case. Observe the following table:

		Ego)	Alter	
		Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
Agent	Intransitive	Ø	-whai	-ra	-raa
	Ergative	-lyı	-lyaı	-lya	-lyaa
Patient	Accusative	-C1	-caı	-ca	-caa
	Reflexive / Reciprocal	-tı	-taı	-ta	-taa

Reflexive and reciprocal markers are considered patient markers because they occupy the patient slot, even though the verb they attach to is always anti-causative, and therefore, intransitive. See §4.1.2.

These onsets can be affected by core-harmony. Palatal harmony causes -t to shift to -ç.

Retroflex harmony causes -ly -c to shift to -l -d.

Syntactic Shenanigans 4

Ŋmolõ has a syntax

Conjunctions 4.1

Ŋmolõ has several conjunctions:

The conjunction *kaça* functions similarly to "and" and "but":

19) Mamõ dogba lakaalyıñã kaça balaad ŋmoñaobã lakaalyıñã. [mạmọ: dugba lạxạ:l^yɛña kaxa

bala:d nmpñappa laxa:lyeña]

ba-mõ dog-ba √lakãã-lyı-ca

ART-CL:small.domesticated.animal dog-ACC √have-EGO.SG.ERG-ALT.ACC

kaça ba-laad ŋmoñao-ba √lakãã-lyı-ca

and art-cl:shearable sheep-acc \vee hold-ego.sg.erg-alt.acc

"I have a dog and a sheep for shearing."

20) Mamõ dogba lakaalyıñã kaça balaad ŋmoñaobã talakaalyıñã. [mạmọ: ḍugba lạxạ:l^yɛña̞ kaxa bala:ḍ ŋmɔñaɔpa̞ ṭạlaxa:l^yɛña̞]
ba-mõ dog-pa √lakãã-lyı-ca
ART-CL:small.domesticated.animal dog-ACC √have-ego.sg.erg-ALT.ACC
kaça ba-laad ŋmoñao-ba ta-√lakãã-lyı-ca
and ART-CL:shearable sheep-ACC NEG-√hold-ego.sg.erg-ALT.ACC

Pal functions as 'so, therefore':

21) Whan lyaaçakac baabaobabalira pal nmolnamamamara. [wan lya:xaxag ba:baubabali.a

pa¾ nmɔlinamamama:ia]

whãn-∅ lyaaça-kac √baabao-baba-lı-ra

"I have a dog but I don't have a sheep for shearing."

CL:general.person-ntr hungry-advz √drink-pfv-alcohol-alt.sg.ntr

pal √nmolnã-baba-√baa-ra

so √speak-pfv-√meander-alt.sg.ntr

"He drank a lot, so he was slurring his words."

Subordinate and Insubordinate clauses 4.1.1

Subordinate clauses are suffixed with -dal, a suffix frequently associated with nominalization. It is thought that -dal, merged with an older subordinating suffix.

22) Whan nmolnamamama lyaaçakac baabaobabalıradal. [wan nməlnamamamama: 12] l^ya:xaxaĝ ba:baubabalı.iada [] whãn-∅ √nmolna-baba-√baa-ra CL:general.person-NTR √speak-PFV-√meander-ALT.NTR lyaaça-r(r)ac √baabao-baba-lı-ra-dal hungry-advz √drink-pfv-alcohol-alt.sg.ntr-nmz "The man was slurring because he had drank a lot." 23) Mõ lakaamamanãã mõ ŋaamamanãl. [mọ: laxa:mamana: mọ: ŋa:jɛmamanañ] mõ √lakãã-baba-Ø-daa mõ √ŋaa-baba-Ø-dal very √have-pfv-ego.sg.ntr-fear very √eat-pfv-ego.sg.ntr-nmz "I was so scared that I was eating a lot." The initial clause, "Whan ymolnamamamaara" and "Mõ lakaapapnãa" can be elided, however, to just leave the non finite verb: 24) Lyaaçarrac baabaobabalıradal. [l^ya:xaı:aĝ ba:baubabalııada¾] lyaaça-r(r)ac √baabao-baba-lı-ra-dal hungry-advz √drink-pfv-alcohol-alt.sg.ntr-nmz "Because he drank a lot."

25) Mõ ηaamamanãl. [mọ: ηa:mamanaλ]

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mõ √ŋãã-baba-Ø-dal
       very √eat-pfv-ego.sg.ntr-nmz
       "[I was so scared that] I was eating a lot."
Subordinate clauses can also be introduced with the phrase Kaad "when, if, whether".
   26) Kaad tanã kalakpagboradal, kpakpaba bolyıcagawha. [ka:d tana kalaxwagbujada, kpakpaba bolyıcagawha.
       kpax<sup>w</sup>aba bul<sup>y</sup>ıĝagaıwa]
       kaad tanã √kalakpa-gbo-ra-dal
       if blood √rain-irr-alt.sg.ntr-nmz
       kpakpa-ba √bo-lyı-ca-gaıhwa
       forehead-ACC √marry-EGO.SG.ERG-ALT.ACC-FUT
       "If it were to rain blood, I will marry (you)."
Even bowocalyı can be elided from these as well to give an insubordinate clause:
    27) Kaad tanã kalakpagboradal. [ka:d tạnạ kalax agbuada []
       kaad tanã √kalakpa-gbo-ra-dal
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This kind of formation, the introduction of an impossible and fantastic subordinate clause to answer a request is a common way of saying no in Ŋmolõ. Usually, however, it is ironic, unlike

when blood √rain-irr-alt.sg.ntr-nmz

"If it were to rain blood."

the examples above. The resulting insubordinate is very broad, however, and it can be used to respond to many requests.

'Like, as' adverbial clauses are suffixed with -darra, another subordinator.

28) Whan balara bata toto karragradarra. [wan balara basa tusu: karagradarra.]

whãn-Ø √bala-ra

CL:general.person-NTR √set_off-ALT.NTR.SG

ba-ta toto √karrag-ra-darra

ART-CL:flying.animal bird √fly-ALT.NTR.SG-SUB

"The man sets off like a bird flies." (Zeph test #147)

These two can have their dependent clause elided:

29) Bata toto karragradarra. [basa tusu: ka.:ag.iada.:a]

ba-ta toto √karrag-ra-darra

ART-CL:flying.animal bird √fly-ALT.NTR.SG-SUB

"Like a bird flies."

It is thought that originally there were two subordinators, -darra 'like, as' subordinator and another one that merged with -dal, which was a general subordinator.

Lastly, as mentioned in several sections before. Semi-modal prefixes also require the subordinating / nominalizing suffix -dal as well.

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30) Ŋmolnalowoŋmorã? [ŋməlnaləwəŋəɹa]
   √nmolnã-lyowo-gbo-ra
   √speak-cess-deon-alt.ntr
   "May [you] stop speaking?"
31) Moŋmolnaŋmoranãl. [mənməlnanmoranak]
   mo>√ŋmolnã<gbo-ra-dal
   рот>speak<irr-alt-nмz
   "[You] can speak (it is in your physical ability)."
32) Ñaŋmolnalowoŋmoranāl. [ña̩ŋməlnaləwə̩ŋməɹa̞na̞λ]
   ca>√nmolnã-lyowo<gbo-ra-dal
   NEC>speak-CESS (IRR-ALT-NMZ
   "[You] must stop speaking."
33) Ŋmaaŋmolnalowoŋmonãl. [ŋmaːŋməlnaləwəŋməna¾]
   gbaa>√nmolna-lyowo⟨gbo-∅-dal
   DES>speak-CESS-EGO.SG.NTR (IRR-NMZ
   "I want to stop speaking."
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"A-Like" Clauses and Agent-Patient Alteration, Causatives, and Anti-Causatives 4.1.2

A certain set of intransitive verbs will be considered *A-like* in that their semantic agent takes the accusative case and functions syntactically as a patient. Many of these are stative intransitive verbs and take the prefix *baa-*, which is thought to be a fossilized causative prefix. Take the verb *Maataanã*.

```
34) Maatanañılyā. [mą:ṣạṇạñɛlya]

√maatanā-cı-lya

√be_red-ego.sg.acc-alt.sg.erg

"I am red / flushed."

35) Maatanañalyañāyl toto. [mạ:ṣạṇạñạlyaña¾,y ṭuṣu:]

√maatanā-ca-lya-dal toto

√be_red-alt.sg.acc-alt.sg.erg-nmz bird

"The red hen"
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These verbs are distinct from productive causatives as they are lexically bound to this, being a closed class. Productive causatives are formed with the prefix *ko*-. See *tanã* and *kotanã*.

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36) Tanã. [ṭạṇạ]

√tanã-∅

√bleed-EGO.SG.NTR

'I am bleeding.'
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37) Whanlã kotanañılyã. [wanla kəsanañel<sup>y</sup>a]
       whãn-lya ko-√tanã-cı-lya
       CL:general.person-erg.sg caus-√bleed-ego.sg.acc-alt.sg.erg
       'He is making me bleed.'
Anti-causative verbs are formed with the prefix kao-. Anti-causatives are also used with
reflexive and reciprocal markers.
    38) Kaotanã. [kąpsana]
       kao-√tanã-Ø
       ANTIC-√bleed-EGO.SG.NTR
       'I am being made to bleed.'
    39) Kaotanatĩ. [kąɔsana]
       kao-√tanã-tı
       ANTIC-√bleed-EGO.REFL
       'I am making myself bleed.'
   40) Kaotanatãĩ. [kąpsanasas]
       kao-√tanã-taı
       ANTIC-√bleed-EGO.RECIP
       'We are making eachother bleed.'
```