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A Sketch of the Mwanele Language

A Constructed Language of the Gawoda Archipelago

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Version 2.2

A Sketch of the Mwanele Language
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Colophon

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All figures and photographs are my own, unless otherwise noted.

စၵ်ဂ်သု ဝဲဖၵ် နုၵါလၵ် ငံၵ်လၵ်
Ḥipa ṣa keman ṭoṅenekwe li ṭine.

ḥipa ṣa keman ṭoṅenek =we li ṭine
step one open journey =LNK mile thousand

“A journey of a thousand miles begins with one step.”

5MOYD #1000 – Lao Tzu

Contents

Contents	i
Abbreviations	iv
1 Phonology	1
1.1 Phonemes & Allophony	1
1.2 Stress & Pitch	4
1.3 Phonological Processes	5
2 Word Classes	13
2.1 Verbs	13
2.2 Nouns	16
2.3 Adverbs	20
2.4 Ideophones	22
2.5 Adjectives	23
2.6 Pronouns	24
2.7 Determiners	25
2.8 Numerals	25
2.9 Particles	25
3 Nouns	26
3.1 Modifiers	26
3.2 Augmentative & Diminutive	31
3.3 Personal Pronouns	31
3.4 Demonstratives	34
3.5 Number & Quantifiers	36
3.6 Proper Nouns	41
4 Verb Morphology	42

4.1	The Verb Template	42
4.2	Voice & Valence	43
4.3	Tense & Aspect	51
4.4	Directional Prefixes	57
4.5	Subordinators	60
4.6	Irregular Verbs	64
4.7	Postverbal Clitics	68
5	Verbal Constructions	73
5.1	The Copula	73
5.2	Existential Verbs	77
5.3	Comparative, Superlative, and Related Constructions	78
6	Serial Verb Constructions	82
6.1	Structure of an SVC	82
6.2	Manner or Adverbial	84
6.3	Modal	86
6.4	Multi-Part Events	87
6.5	Resultatives	89
6.6	Coverbs	93
6.7	Complementizing SVCs	95
7	Clause Structure	98
7.1	Basic Clause Structure	98
7.2	Commands	101
7.3	Questions	103
7.4	Relative Clauses	106
7.5	Nominalized Clauses	109
7.6	Extraposition	113
7.7	Conditionals	115
A	Samples of Spoken Mwanele	119
A.1	Narrative: Whelks	119
A.2	Narrative: Jump!	123
A.3	Narrative: Dog	126
A.4	Narrative: Farmer	128
B	Mwane Script	132

<i>CONTENTS</i>	iii
C Wordlist	135
Index	195
5MOYD Sentences	197

Abbreviations

1	First person	ITSF	Intensifier
2	Second person	LNK	Linking clitic
3	Third person	NAME	Personal name
ADV	Adverb	NEG	Negative
AND	Andative	NFI	Nonfuture imperfective
ANIM	Animate	NFP	Nonfuture perfective
APV	Antipassive	OBV	Obviative
ASEA	Asea directional	OPT	Optative
ASHORE	Ashore directional	ORG	Origin/ <i>origo</i>
AUG	Augmentative	ORN	Ornate
CAUS	Causative	PL	Plural
CMP	Complementizer	PLACE	Place name
CON	Conative	PRB	Prohibitive
CONC	Concessive	PRL	Perlative
COP	Copula	PROX	Proximal
DEF	Definite	PRP	Purpose nominalizer
DIM	Diminutive	PSV	Passive
DIST	Distal	Q	Question particle
DP	Discourse particle	REL	Relativizer
DS	Different subject	R/R	Reflexive/reciprocal
ERG	Ergative	RSN	Reason nominalizer
FTI	Future imperfective	RVS	Reversative
FTP	Future perfective	SS	Same subject
HAB	Habitual	VB	Verb
HES	Hesitation	VEN	Venitive
ID	Ideophone	WH	Wh-word
INAN	Inanimate	WRT	'With-respect-to' adverb

1 Phonology

1.1 Phonemes and Allophony

Consonant Inventory

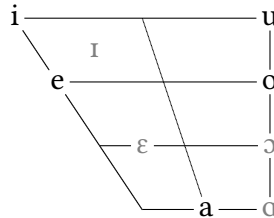
Mwaneḷe distinguishes four methods of articulation across only three places of articulation. Voicing contrast only for the stops; all sonorants are voiced and all fricatives are voiceless. The most notable feature of Mwaneḷe’s consonant inventory is the abundance of secondary articulations. At each POA/MOA, there is a pair of consonants distinguished by secondary articulation and traditionally divided into **mek** ‘light’ and **tax** ‘dark’ groups. Light consonants are plain coronals and labialized dorsals and labials, while dark consonants are plain dorsals and velarized coronals and labials. Labialized consonants are pronounced rounded with a strong labial offglide and velarized consonants are pronounced with velar constriction and a change to the following vowel which is sometimes more salient than the velarization itself. The consonant inventory of Mwaneḷe is shown below. TODO

	Labial		Coronal		Dorsal	
	Vel.	Lab.	Plain	Vel.	Plain	Lab.
Stop	p ^x b ^x	p ^w b ^w	t d	t ^x d ^x	k g	k ^w g ^w
Nasal	m ^x	m ^w	n	n ^x	ŋ	ŋ ^w
Fricative	f ^x	ɸ	ʃ	s ^x	x	x ^w
Approx.			l	l ^x	j	w

Vowel Inventory

Standard Mwaneḷe has a five-vowel system shown below. Some speakers, especially older speakers from the North, distinguish two low vowels, /æ/ and /ɑ/, but these have merged for most

people. Some vowels have lax, backed allophones after velarized consonants. These allophones are shown in gray.



In this grammar, a romanization is used to write Mwanele. Labialized consonants are written with <Cw> digraphs. Velarized labials (except /fʷ/) are written as if they were plain and velarized coronals (in addition to /fʷ/) are written with an underdot. The sounds /ɸ ʃ/ are written <f s>. All other consonants and vowels have their IPA values.

Allophony

Velarized coronals are usually pronounced on with the tip of the tongue on the teeth whereas plain coronals are usually pronounced with the blade of the tongue on or behind the alveolar ridge. The secondary articulations of the consonants affect the quality of the following vowel. For some speakers, the dental/alveolar contrast and the change in quality of the following vowel may be more salient than the secondary articulation itself. After velarized consonants, vowels tend to be backed and/or lax.

- (1.1) a. a e i o → ɑ ɛ ɪ ɔ / Cʷ _
 b. /pʷilʷe/ → [pʷɪ̠ʷɛ]

Speakers of inland dialects will round front vowels after labialized consonants. This is stigmatized as non-standard by speakers of other dialects but is widespread and systematic. Inland dialects have low enough mutual intelligibility with Southern Coastal Mwanele that they should be considered a separate language group. In this document, I'll describe features that are systematic and common among native bilingual speakers, but I'll make a note if they're limited to high-contact varieties.

- (1.2) a. e i → ø y / Cʷ _
 b. /kʷemʷe/ → [kʷómʷɛ]

Before /i/ and word-finally after /i/, the coronal fricatives merge to [ç] and the velar fricatives merge to [ç̠]. Some but not all speakers also palatalize /x/ before /e/.

- (1.3) a. $\int \begin{matrix} s^y \\ x \ x^w \end{matrix} \rightarrow \begin{matrix} \text{ç} \\ \text{ç} \end{matrix} / \left\{ \begin{matrix} _i \\ i_ \# \end{matrix} \right.$
- b. /sita xiki/ → [çíta çíki]

Plain voiceless stops are aspirated word-initially.

- (1.4) a. $t \ k \rightarrow t^h \ k^h / \# _$
- b. /ta'kan/ → [t^hakân]

Underlying velarized labial consonants are not velarized word-finally.

- (1.5) a. $p^y \ m^y \ f^y \rightarrow p \ m \ f / _ \#$
- b. /p^yam^y/ → [p^yâm]

Phonotactics

All words in Mwanele consist of alternating consonant and vowel segments. The basic syllable consists of any consonant followed by any vowel. The first syllable of a word may consist only of a vowel, and the last syllable of a word may end in a consonant. The final consonant may not be any glide, labialized consonant, or velarized coronal other than /l^y/.

The prosodic word consists of one morphological word followed by any number of clitics and contains one stressed syllable (see section 1.2). Because a morphological word or a clitic can end in a consonant and a clitic almost always begins in a consonant, underlying CC clusters are possible at clitic boundaries. The strategies for resolving these are discussed in section 1.3.

The structure of the word in Mwanele is given in 1.6 using Modified Baerian Notation.¹ The medial syllable unit is marked with σ , the morphological word is marked with ω , the optional clitic cluster is marked with κ , and the prosodic word is marked with π .

(1.6)

$$\# \left[\begin{matrix} _ \\ \pi \end{matrix} \left[\begin{matrix} _ \\ \omega \end{matrix} (C)V([\sigma CV])^*(C_2) \right] = ([\kappa \sigma(C_2)])^* \right] \#$$

C: any consonant

¹Recursive Baerian Phonotactics Notation was created by S. Baer and L.L. Blumire in 2017. This version is modified to use parentheses for optional segments rather than stacking with \emptyset .

V: any vowel

C₂: any of /p^y t k f^x ʃ x m^y n ŋ l l^y/

(X): zero or one X

(X)*: zero or more X

1.2 Stress and Pitch

The first syllable in the root of a morphological word is assigned stress. A stressed syllable receives a falling pitch if it's the last syllable of a prosodic word (which is possible for words built on monosyllabic roots) and a high pitch in any other position. Minimal pairs do exist, but they are predictable given the words' morphological breakdowns.

- | | | |
|-------|---|--|
| (1.7) | <p>/tak^wu/
 [t^hák^wu]
 ta - akwu
 PSV - <i>misfit</i>
 “(it) doesn't fit”</p> | <p>/ta'k^wu/
 [t^hak^wû]
 ta - kwu
 PSV - <i>use</i>
 “(it) gets used”</p> |
| (1.8) | <p>/g^{no}/
 [géno]
 geno
 <i>lizard</i>
 “lizard”</p> | <p>/ge'no/
 [genô]
 ge - no
 ORN - <i>width</i>
 “fat, heavy”</p> |

When clitics attach to a word with falling pitch on a final syllable, the stressed syllable is no longer last in its prosodic word, so it receives a high pitch instead.

- | | | |
|-------|---|---|
| (1.9) | <p>/ʃun/
 [ʃûn]
 sun
 <i>woman</i>
 “a woman”</p> | <p>(1.10) /ʃun.je/
 [ʃúne]
 sun = je
 <i>woman</i> = PROX
 “this woman”</p> |
|-------|---|---|

1.3 Phonological Processes

Echo Vowels

Mwanele morphological words contain strictly alternating consonants and vowels. Some suffixes consist only of only a consonant. In order to prevent clusters from forming, some suffixes require an epenthetic echo vowel, which takes on the same quality as the nucleus of the previous syllable.

- | | |
|---|---|
| (1.11) gwonok
gwon -k
<i>speak</i> -FTI
“(they) will speak” | paɔloɔ!
paɔloɔ -ɔ!
<i>throw</i> -NFP
“(they) threw” |
|---|---|

If the echo vowel is a back vowel and the last consonant of the root is labial or dorsal then it will be labialized.

- | | |
|---|---|
| (1.12) wokwoɔ!
wok -ɔ!
<i>point</i> -NFP
“(they) pointed” | pakwuxwoɔ!
pakwux -ɔ!
<i>put</i> -NFP
“(they) put down” |
|---|---|

If the echo vowel is /a/, then the consonant is labialized only if the onset of the previous syllable is labialized. Since the last syllable of **sijak** begins with /j/, its echo vowel does not cause its final /k/ to be labialized, but since the last syllable of **xwak** begins with /x^w/, its echo vowel *does* labialize its final /k/ to /k^w/. This alternation is left over from before /æ/ and /a/ merged. The front /æ/ did not labialize consonants, but the back /a/ did. Analogical levelling resulted in the pattern most speakers use today.

Northern speakers who preserve the distinction between /æ/ and /a/ consistently only labialize before the latter. This results in a few verbs which behave differently in the Northern dialect, such as **uwanɔ** ‘to color’ whose nonfuture perfective is [úwanɔ^wal^y] in Southern Coastal Mwanele but [úwæɲæɔ^y] in Northern Mwanele.

- | | |
|--|--|
| (1.13) sijakaɔ!
sijak -ɔ!
<i>cut</i> -NFP
“(they) cut” | xwakwoɔ!
xwak -ɔ!
<i>learn</i> -NFP
“(they) learned” |
|--|--|

Darkening Suffixes

The non-future imperfective suffix **-lo**, the adverbial suffix **-le**, and the verb-deriving suffix **-luk** are traditionally called ‘darkening suffixes.’ When added to words that end in a consonant, the suffix’s approximant is lost and the last consonant of the root is darkened: velars become plain and coronals and labials become velarized.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>(1.14) Aḍoṇe
 aḍon -le
 <i>Anroo</i> -ADV
 “Anroo (lang.)”</p> | <p>Xakaṭe
 xakat -le
 <i>Haalcart</i> -ADV
 “Maruvian (lang.)”</p> |
| <p>(1.15) loṭo
 lot -lo
 <i>search</i> -NFP
 “(they) looked for”</p> | <p>mekuk
 mek -luk
 <i>light</i> -VB
 “(it) gets light”</p> |

Compare **mekuk** in example 1.15 with the related verb **mekwu** ‘to shine’ derived from the same root **mek** plus the verbalizing suffix **-u**. Normally a final /k/ would be labialized to /k^w/ before /u/, but since **-luk** is a darkening suffix, that labialization is blocked.

Cluster Reduction at Clitic Boundaries

Even though morphological words don’t allow consonant clusters, it’s possible for them to occur at clitic boundaries. There are different processes to break. Several clusters are simplified.

- (1.16) a. $C_1.C_1 \rightarrow C_1$
 b. $l.l^y, l^y.l \rightarrow l^y$
 c. $C.w \rightarrow \begin{cases} C^w / C:\{m^y, p^y, b^y, f^y, \eta, k, g, x\} \\ C / \text{all other } C \end{cases}$
 d. $C.j \rightarrow C$
 e. $t.d \rightarrow t$

Otherwise, most speakers insert short epenthetic vowels to break up remaining clusters. In careful speech, the epenthetic vowels echo the quality of the previous syllable’s vowel, but in most speech a lax central vowel is used.

Ongoing Loss of Epenthetic Vowels

Some speakers, especially women and children who speak Southern dialects or speakers of varieties in heavy contact with Lam Proj and Mekə, do not insert any epenthetic vowels at all. This is seen as nonstandard but is likely the beginning of a sound change.

Labialization Dissimilation

Mwaneḷe disallows words containing three consecutive labialized consonants. If three consecutive syllables start with labialized consonants, then the middle one loses its labialization.

$$(1.17) \quad C^w \rightarrow C / C^wV_VC^w$$

There are no roots that violate this constraint, but bound morphemes with labialized consonants or labializing echo vowels can trigger dissimilation. The process does not occur across word boundaries.²

- (1.18) a. **kwuḡamwen**
 ***kwuḡwamwen**
 kwu- ḡwamwen
 VEN- *push*
 “(they) push towards”
- b. **pwekeḡwe ḡwuwot**
 ***pwekweḡwe ḡwuwot**
 ***pwekweḡe ḡwuwot**
 pwekweḡ = we ḡwuwot
 hub = LNK *wheel*
 “the hub of the wheel”

The consonant /w/ can trigger dissimilation if it’s adjacent to other labialized consonants, but it itself can’t undergo dissimilation.

²Okay, it probably does in rapid speech within phrases. You could probably say 1.18b as [p^wékeḡ^weḡwuwot] if you were speaking quickly.

- (1.19) a. **tajuwanakwe gebe**
 ***tajuwanwakwe gebe**
 ta- uwan -k = we gebe
 CMP- *paint* -FTI = LNK *child*
 “that the children will paint”
- b. **tekwowukwe meṅok**
 ***tekwojukwe meṅok**
 ta- e- kwu- owu- k = we meṅok
 CMP- APV- VEN- *flow* -FTI = LNK *tide*
 “that the tide will be coming in”

One way to think about this is in terms of a series of weighted constraints. To find the surface form of a word, look for the form that incurs the smallest penalty.

- (1.20) a. *REPW (2): 2-point penalty for each C^wVC^w sequence³
- a. IDENT (3): 3-point penalty for each segment in the output that isn’t identical to the corresponding segment in the output
- b. KEEPW (2): an additional 2-point penalty on top of IDENT if you change /w/ to [j]⁴

If you say that you can labialize or delabialize consonants (but not move or delete them), then you can find a set of possible surface forms, and then judge them based on how well they fit the different constraints.

First I’ll use the root **ṅwamwen** as an example. It gets a two-point penalty for violating *REPW, but changing either labialized consonant would incur a three-point penalty for violating IDENT, so the underlying form is the same as the surface form.

	*REPW (2)	IDENT (3)	KEEPW (2)	Total
☞ ṅwamwen	*			2
ṅamwen		*		3
ṅwamen		*		3

³Where C^w is any of /m^w p^w b^w ɸ ṅ^w k^w g^w x^w w/ and V is any vowel.

⁴Although it doesn’t make sense right away to change /w/ to [j], they’re treated as a pair in other places such as in the native script and in language games.

When you add the prefix **kwu-**, you get an underlying form ***kwuŋwamwen** with two violations of ***REPW**. You can fix one of those violations by changing the first or last labialized consonant, or fix both of them by changing both. However, all of those result in worse penalties than the underlying form. The best-scoring result is where you change the second labialized consonant, incurring a penalty for violating **IDENT**, but fixing both violations of ***REPW** at the same time. (You can imagine that if there are n labialized consonants, then there are 2^n possible outputs in this system, but I won't show the worst-scoring ones here.)

	*REPW (2)	IDENT (3)	KEEPW (2)	Total
kwuŋwamwen	**			4
kujwamwen	*	*		5
☞ kwuŋamwen		*		3
kwuŋwamen	*	*		5
kujwamen		**		6

The first two constraints work well, unless there's a /w/ between two labialized consonants. That's where **KEEPW** comes in. Take **kwowukwe** for example.

	*REPW (2)	IDENT (3)	KEEPW (2)	Total
☞ kwowukwe	**			4
kowukwe	*	*		5
kwojukwe		*	*	5
kwowuke	*	*		5

If the surface form is the same as the underlying form, there are two violations of ***REPW** for a total penalty of 4. Like with the last example, changing either the first or last consonant will give you one violation each of ***REPW** and **IDENT** for a total penalty of 5. Since the middle consonant is a /w/, changing it incurs violations of both **IDENT** and **KEEPW**, which results in a total penalty of 5 again, outweighing the benefits of resolving both violations of ***REPW**. So in the end, the surface form is the same as the underlying form.

Velarization Spreading

Rule 1.1 describes a change to vowels after velarized consonants. Velarization can spread rightwards through transparent consonants to affect vowels in following syllables. Plain velar consonants are transparent for all speakers. Plain coronal consonants are transparent for some speakers, especially young speakers of Southern dialects.

- (1.21) a. /m^yekil/ → [m^yékil]
 b. /d^yako/ → [d^yáko]
 c. /t^yes^yelo/ → [t^yés^yelo] or [t^yés^yel^yo]

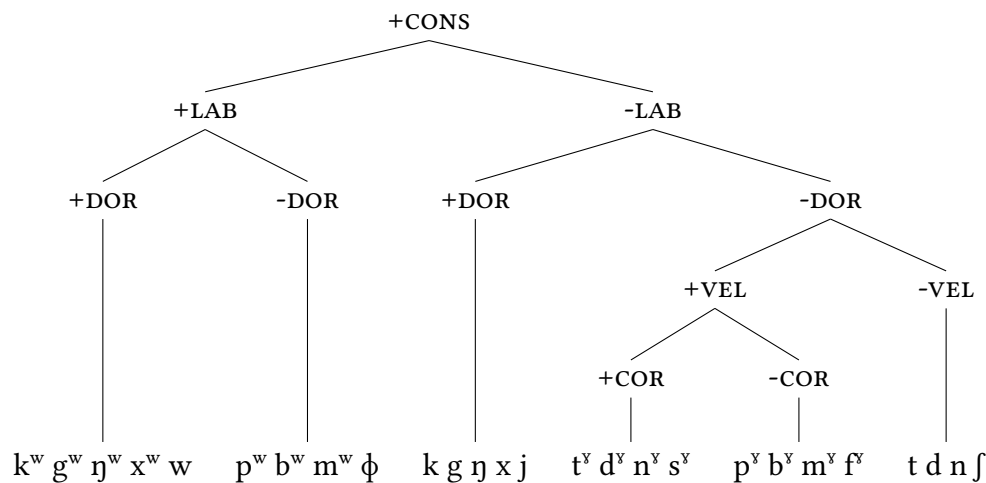
Labialized consonants are always opaque, so velarization can't spread across them. For speakers of Northern and Inland dialects, plain coronals are also opaque. The vowel /u/ has no distinct allophone after velar consonants and blocks the spread of velarization.

- (1.22) a. /d^yaŋ^wo/ → [d^yáŋ^wo]
 b. /b^yuxo/ → [b^yúxo]

One way to think of this is to separate out the secondary articulation features onto a separate autosegmental tier. Velarized consonants have a +VEL feature, which spreads until it hits a conflicting feature.

In order to describe this, I'll propose the following contrastive feature hierarchy for Mwanele consonants. Below this level you can distinguish them with ±STOP, ±NASAL, and ±VOICE, but those aren't as important here.

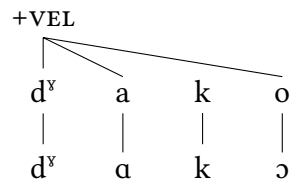
(1.23) **Contrastive Hierarchy of Mwanele Consonants**



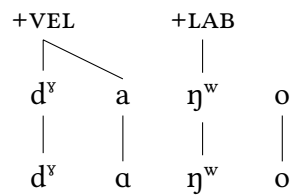
Suppose there's a tier corresponding to secondary articulation features, where you put +VEL, -VEL and +LAB, if any segments have those features. The rule in Standard Mwanele is that +VEL spreads rightwards until it hits a segment that already has either -VEL or +LAB. When +VEL spreads onto a vowel it triggers the allophony in 1.1.

Labialized consonants are assigned +LAB, so they always stop the spread. Plain coronal consonants are assigned -VEL, so they also stop the spread. Plain velar consonants don't have any of these features: they don't stop the spread of +VEL, but they can't trigger velar allophones by themselves either.

(1.24) a. **ɖako**

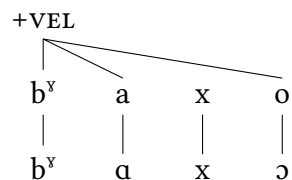


b. **ɖaŋwo**

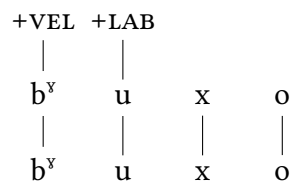


The high back vowel /u/ has no distinct allophone after velar consonants and it blocks rightward spreading of velarization. This could be explained if /u/ is assigned +LAB.

(1.25) a. **baxo**

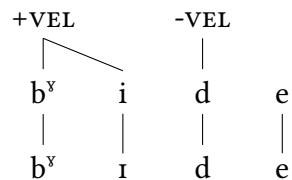


b. **buxo**

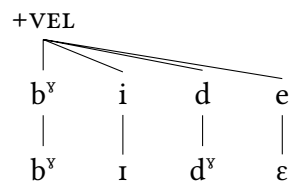


Some speakers of Southern dialects allow spreading across plain coronal consonants, which then get velarized themselves. This can be explained if speakers who allow this only have +VEL and +LAB as active features, but now -VEL. Without an explicit -VEL, there's nothing to stop the spread.

(1.26) a. **bide** (Standard Dialect)



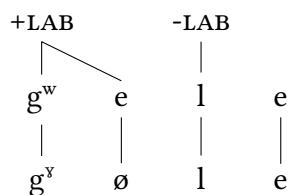
b. **bide** (Southern Dialect)



For the standard and Southern dialects, there ends up not really being a good reason to posit a specific +LAB feature (other than feeling kinda weird about saying that labialized velars are -VEL). If labialized velars and bilabials are assigned -VEL you get the behavior you see in Southern Mwanele, and if plain coronals also get assigned -VEL too, then you get the behavior you see in Standard Mwanele.

One argument in favor of keeping the +LAB feature is the rule 1.2, which describes the labialization of front vowels after labialized consonants in Northern dialects. If you have a separate +LAB feature, then you can describe that rule as rightward spreading of +LAB, either only to the vowel immediately to the right or until the feature hits a consonant with -LAB (since ±LAB is the highest feature on the tree in 1.23, every other consonant has -LAB so these rules end up being the same).

(1.27) **gwele** (Northern Dialect)



2 Word Classes

Mwaneḷe has 4 open word classes: verbs, nouns, adverbs and ideophones. In addition to the open classes, there are several closed classes including adjectives, pronouns, determiners, numerals, and conjunctions. I include some otherwise unsorted non-declining words in a catchall ‘particles’ class.

This chapter will talk about the distinguishing features of each word class and discuss any subclasses. Derivational morphology for the open classes will also be given.

2.1 Verbs

Verbs form a large open class in Mwaneḷe. Verbs are the only class that can serve as the main predicate of a clause. All verbs can take suffixes marking tense and aspect as well as the subordinating prefixes **ta-**, **ni-**, **lak-** and **li-**. Prototypical verbs can also take negation, voice marking, and directional prefixes.

Examples 2.1 and 2.2 show the verbs **ṭeṣe** ‘to see’ and **pikaṅ** ‘to be at home’ acting as the main predicates of their clauses and taking negation and TAM marking in 2.1 as well as voice marking and a directional prefix in 2.2.

(2.1) **De piṭeṣeḷ le.**

de pi- ṭeṣe -ḷ = le
1 NEG- see -NFP = 2

“I didn’t see you.”

(2.2) **ḷekwupikaṅ de.**

ḷe- kwu- pikaṅ = de
R/R- VEN- go.home = 1

“I’ll go home.”

The three categories of negation, voice, and direction can be marked on nearly all verbs. However, there are exceptions for each group.

Several verbs have suppletive negative forms. The copula **i** ‘to be’ has the negative form **pi** ‘to not be,’ and the existential verbs **xiti** and **joti** have negative counterparts **piti** and **poti**. The positive copula and existential verbs are negated with their suppletive forms and the negative forms do not receive additional negation. One exception to that is the idiomatic use of the causative form of the copula **paji** to mean ‘to give rise to,’ which is negated regularly to give **pipaji**.

Most verbs can take directional prefixes. Even verbs that don’t involve any sort of motion or orientation can take directional prefixes to mark aspectual information. The copula **i** is again an exception to this, and can’t take directional prefixes.

There are also a few verbs which cannot take the voice prefixes. The two motion verbs **eme** and **eḷo** can’t take voice marking. They both begin with **e-**, which is likely historically derived from the antipassive prefix. Affix placement shows that they are synchronically part of the stem: directional prefixes come before the **e-** in these verbs giving forms like **kweme** and **xelḷo**. Since voice marking attaches outside of directional marking, the expected antipassive voice prefix would instead result in forms like ***ekwume** and ***exelḷo**, which are not attested as independent verbs. These verbs are also unusual in being the only intransitive verbs that don’t take passive, antipassive, or reflexive/reciprocal marking.

The motion verbs **eme** and **eḷo** also do not seem to take causative marking. Speakers prefer to use the verbs **pa-m** and **pa-ḷ** respectively, both meaning ‘to send,’ and both are examples of atonic verbs that require a directional affix (see section 9). Some speakers reject further voice affixes on atonic verbs containing **pa-**, saying that it fills the voice slot in the verb template. Other speakers allow passivizing to give forms like **tapaxem** ‘to be sent away,’ but not other voice morphology.

Other than these cases, all verbs can take negation, voice, and direction marking.

Derivation of Verbs

The most common way to derive a new verb is with the suffix **-u**. The suffix most commonly attaches to nouns to make a verb describing the use, making or doing of that noun. It can also attach to adjectives to make inchoative verbs, although this usage is less common.

When a word ending in **-e** or **-a** takes the suffix **-u**, it results in **-o** in the bare form and **-ewe-** or **-awa-** in consonant-final inflected forms. Peripheral consonants are usually labialized before the suffix **-u**.

- (2.3)
- | | | | | | |
|----|-------------|-------------|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| a. | xoḷi | ‘bite’ | → | xoḷu | ‘to bite’ |
| b. | bifo | ‘shears’ | → | bifu | ‘to cut across’ |
| c. | joga | ‘seine net’ | → | jogo (jogawal) | ‘to catch by seining’ |
| d. | mek | ‘bright’ | → | mekwu | ‘to brighten, to appear’ |

The prefix **te-** plus the suffix **-u** can derive verbs meaning ‘to do without something’ from nouns.

- (2.4) a. **in** ‘sleep’ → **tejinu** ‘to spend a night without sleeping’
 b. **gap** ‘pausing’ → **tegabwu** ‘to be busy’
 c. **ta** ‘tea’ → **teto (tetawal)** ‘to go without necessities’

Inchoative verbs can be derived from adjectives by reduplicating their last syllable. If this results in a consonant cluster, then the coda of the first copy is deleted. One exception is if the cluster is a peripheral consonant followed by **w**, in which case the first consonant is labialized.

Verbs formed this way are intransitive and usually take the prefix **e-**. Causative verbs from adjectives can be made regularly with the causative prefix **pa-**.

- (2.5) a. **lipo** ‘elderly’ → **lijojo** ‘to age’
 b. **ɲewo** ‘good’ → **ɲewowo** ‘to improve’
 c. **ximik** ‘healthy’ → **ximimik** ‘to heal’
 d. **wam** ‘early’ → **wamwam** ‘to get earlier’

Causative verbs can be derived from nouns, adjectives, and numerals with the causative prefix **pa-** and the suffixes **-luk** and **-fa**. With consonant-final stems, **-fa** becomes **-a**, and **-luk** becomes **-uk** while velarizing the previous consonant if possible. These verbs can be used with causative **pa-** or passivized with **ta-** but they are generally not used bare or with the antipassive **e-**.

The choice between the suffixes **-luk** and **-fa** in this construction mirrors that between the verbs **luk** and **fa** from which they are derived. The suffix **-fa** is the default choice and the suffix **-luk** is used to derive mirative verbs, where either the action or its result was unexpected to the speaker or where the speaker thinks it will be unexpected to the listener.

- (2.6) a. **ni** ‘two’ → **paɲifa** ‘to split in two’
 b. **edaɲ** ‘quiet’ → **pajedaɲa** ‘to make quiet’
 c. **owu** ‘running water’ → **pajowuluk** ‘to let run’
 d. **uwet** ‘urge to pee’ → **pajuwetuk** ‘to make someone need to pee’

A few verbs are made by compounding a verb with a noun. These can be intransitive activity verbs or they can be transitive verbs where the compounded noun restricts the class the objects belong to. This construction is not productive.

- (2.7) a. **lot** ‘to catch’ + **bwo** ‘fish’ → **lotobwo** ‘to catch fish’
 b. **tem** ‘to need’ + **in** ‘sleep’ → **temin** ‘to get tired’
 c. **gwon** ‘to say’ + **mwoɭu** ‘words’ → **gwomwoɭu** ‘to tell stories’

2.2 Nouns

Mwaneḷe has a large open class of nouns. Nouns refer to entities such as people, objects, places, and ideas. The primary role of nouns in the sentence is to act as arguments of verbs. Nouns require the copula **i** to be used as predicates. Nouns cannot modify other nouns without the linking clitic **=we** or the ornative clitic **ge=**, except in cases of compounding with light nouns.

Words in several closed classes can also serve as arguments of verbs. Along with nouns, these could form a higher-level class of nominals. Nouns can be distinguished from other nominals by other criteria shown in table 2.1.

	Nouns	Pronouns	Determiners	Numerals
Can be a verb argument	✓	✓	✓	✓
Needs =we for possession	✓		✓	✓
Can modify a noun without =we		✓	✓	✓
Can be modified by an adjective	✓			

Table 2.1: Criteria to distinguish nominals

Members of all of these classes can be arguments of verbs. For example, the intransitive verb **taṭeṣe** ‘to be seen’ can have a noun as its subject **taṭeṣe ḡin** ‘people are seen,’ a pronoun **taṭeṣe de** ‘I am seen,’ a determiner **taṭeṣe ole** ‘everyone/everything is seen,’ or a numeral **taṭeṣe lon** ‘four of them are seen.’

Nominals can be used as adnominal modifiers marking possession. When a noun is possessed by another noun, they are linked with the linking clitic:

- (2.8) a. ***em gebe**
 em gebe
 friend child
- b. **emwe gebe**
 em =we gebe
 friend =LNK child
 “the child’s friend”

The same construction is used for possession by determiners and numerals. **Emwe ole** ‘everyone’s friend’ and **emwe ḡi** ‘the friend of the two of them’ with the linking clitic are acceptable ways to express possession, but **#em ole** and **#em ḡi** without the linking clitic can’t be interpreted as possessives. Pronouns, on the other hand, don’t need the linking clitic to express possession. **Em**

de and **emwe de** are both acceptable ways to say ‘*my friend*.’ This distinguishes pronouns from nouns and other nominals.

Other than in the case of light noun compounding, nouns can’t directly modify other nouns. This distinguishes nouns from adjectives, pronouns, determiners, and numerals, all of which can. As seen above, a bare pronoun following a noun is interpreted as a possessor. The determiners **je** and **jo** can modify nouns as demonstratives and the determiner **lot** can modify nouns to express choice in *wh*-questions. Other bare determiners and numerals are interpreted as quantifying the nouns they modify.

Nouns are also the only class of words that can be modified by adjectives. So while **sunep xas** ‘*a tall girl*’ is grammatical, the adjective **xas** can’t modify pronouns, determiners or numerals. ***De xas**, ***ole xas** and ***ni xas** are not grammatical.

The pronoun, determiner and numeral classes are discussed in sections 2.6 to 2.8 below.

Derivation of Nouns

Compounding with light nouns is the most common way to derive new nouns. Common light noun heads include **ɲin** ‘*person*’, **gi** ‘*place*’, **xi** ‘*thing*’, **da** ‘*way*’ and **tok** ‘*event*’. These can be productively compounded with verbs or with other nouns.

Most of these straddle the boundary between prefixes and independent words. **ɲin** always retains its final **-n** and does not take primary stress, so I write it as a separate word. On the other hand, **tok** always loses its final **-k** before another consonant and can take primary stress or secondary stress with a high tone, so I write it as a prefix. The other words can follow either pattern, often with idiolectal variation.

Compounding with **ɲin** creates nouns referring to people. These are often words referring to groups of people or to occupations.

- (2.9)
- | | | | | | |
|----|----------------|---------------------|---|--------------------|-------------------------|
| a. | mwane | ‘ <i>Mwane</i> ’ | → | ɲin mwane | ‘ <i>Mwane person</i> ’ |
| b. | xwagobi | ‘ <i>wood</i> ’ | → | ɲin xwagobi | ‘ <i>carpenter</i> ’ |
| c. | loṣe | ‘ <i>to weave</i> ’ | → | ɲin loṣe | ‘ <i>weaver</i> ’ |

Compounding or prefixing with **gi** derives location words. With nouns this usually makes words for a place you’d find a thing and for verbs this usually makes words for a place where an action is done.

- (2.10)
- | | | | | | |
|----|-------------|-------------------------------------|---|---------------|--------------------------|
| a. | sejo | ‘ <i>to play</i> ’ | → | gisejo | ‘ <i>game court</i> ’ |
| b. | keṣe | ‘ <i>to be with, to accompany</i> ’ | → | gikeṣe | ‘ <i>meeting place</i> ’ |
| c. | biḷi | ‘ <i>green vegetables</i> ’ | → | gibiḷi | ‘ <i>garden</i> ’ |
| d. | mwe | ‘ <i>rice</i> ’ | → | gimwe | ‘ <i>farm</i> ’ |

Prefixing or compounding with **da** makes words for states and manners. They can refer to the state that a particular thing is in or they can refer to the general state or way of being something. **Da** is mainly used with other nouns rather than verbs.

- (2.11) a. **lak** ‘sky’ → **ḍalak** ‘weather’
 b. **min** ‘thought’ → **ḍamin** ‘emotional state’
 c. **ṅin** ‘person’ → **ḍaṅin** ‘human condition’
 d. **gebe** ‘child’ → **ḍagebe** ‘childhood’

Prefixing with **to(k)-** derived nouns referring to sessions or events. With durative verbs, it derives a word for a session of the activity described by that verb and for punctual verbs it derives a word for one instance of the event described. It can also derive events associated with a noun from that noun.

- (2.12) a. **in** ‘sleep’ → **ṭokin** ‘night of sleep’
 b. **xabwo** ‘to hit’ → **ṭoxabwo** ‘strike, hit’
 c. **bwo** ‘fish’ → **ṭobwo** ‘fishing expedition’
 d. **menek** ‘to travel’ → **toṅenek** ‘journey’

The word **jeṅwo** ‘trader’ is used in compounds referring to traders, salespeople, and other occupations. It’s not used alone.

- (2.13) a. **biḷi** ‘green vegetables’ → **jeṅwo biḷi** ‘grocer’
 b. **opwo** ‘spice mix’ → **jeṅwo opwo** ‘spice trader’
 c. **xexe-xejo** ‘junk, rubbish’ → **jeṅwo xejo** ‘tinker, junk seller’
 d. **paṭeṅ** ‘map, chart’ → **jeṅwo paṭeṅ** ‘stationer, map seller’

There are also several suffixes used to derive nouns. The most common suffix is **-ṅ**, which can be used to derive agent nouns and instrument nouns from verbs.

- (2.14) a. **lotobwo** ‘to fish’ → **lotobwoṅ** ‘fisherman’
 b. **paṭe** ‘to show’ → **paṭeṅ** ‘map, chart’
 c. **xabwo** ‘to fight’ → **xabwoṅ** ‘adversary’
 d. **wewu** ‘to call’ → **wewuṅ** ‘name’

In addition to the general suffix **-ṅ**, there are a number of more specific derivational suffixes for nouns.

The suffix **-ḍa** is used to derive nouns for quantities from adjectives. It’s likely related to the word **ḍa** ‘way’ which is used to derive state nouns from other nouns and verbs.

- (2.15) a. **xas** ‘tall, deep’ → **zasada** ‘height, depth’
 b. **defa** ‘higher, previous’ → **defada** ‘length of time in the past’
 c. **ola** ‘hot’ → **olada** ‘warmth, heat’

The suffix **-le** forms names for languages or dialects from names of groups of speakers or from places where the lect is spoken. The first two examples below derive language names from the ethnonyms. The third derives a language name from the name of a prominent city where a prestige dialect of the language is spoken. The last example derives the name of a lect which has asymmetrical but fairly high mutual intelligibility with Southern Mwanele and whose speakers consider themselves Mwane. Words derived with the suffix **-le** don’t make a strong distinction between language and dialect.

After consonants, **-le** becomes **-e** and the previous consonant is velarized when possible.

- (2.16) a. **mwane** ‘Mwane’ → **mwanele** ‘Mwanele’
 b. **kutas** ‘Qitec’ → **kutase** ‘Qitec language’
 c. **Xakat** ‘Haalcart’ → **xakate** ‘Maruvian’
 d. **Gawo Meka** ‘Meka Island’ → **mekale** ‘Meka Island Dialect’

The suffix **-kwu** derives tools or mechanisms from nouns referring to something used in conjunction with them.

- (2.17) a. **ge** ‘hand’ → **gekwu** ‘handle, grip’
 b. **enji** ‘foot’ → **enjikwu** ‘kickwheel’
 c. **nuṭo!** ‘lock’ → **nuṭokwu** ‘key’

The suffix **-ije** derives words for plants, mostly trees that are used for food. This is productive, taking native words as well as loanwords for foods introduced to Mwanele-speaking regions.

- (2.18) a. **widu** ‘plantain’ → **widuje** ‘plantain tree’
 b. **kanak** ‘cinnamon’ → **kanakiije** ‘cinnamon tree’
 c. **ta** ‘tea’ (archaic) → **taliije** ‘tea bush’

Words for pain, ailments, and inflammation can be derived from the affected body part plus the suffix **-pakwa**. This can be used with body parts as well as internal organs.

- (2.19) a. **lafel** ‘gut’ → **lafelakwa** ‘intestinal distress’
 b. **walo** ‘belly’ → **walopakwa** ‘stomachache’
 c. **defa** ‘head’ → **defapakwa** ‘headache’
 d. **kwase** ‘back, spine’ → **kwasepakwa** ‘back pain’

2.3 Adverbs

Adverbs are a class of words that give information about the manner, location, or time of an action or event. Mwanele does have a distinct adverb class, although similar meanings are often expressed by verbs in manner SVCs. There are even cases where there are synonymous verb/adverb pairs, which means that meaning and usage aren't enough to distinguish an adverb class.

In Mwanele, adverbs come immediately after the verb, before any postverbal subject or object nouns and before any result complement. Verbs in manner SVCs on the other hand, come after any postverbal arguments or result complements. In the examples below, **kope** and **mebi** both mean 'quickly.' Since **kope** is an adverb, it comes right after the verb, but since **mebi** is itself a verb, it comes later in the clause. (Also, **mebi** takes voice marking as expected from a verb, but **kope** doesn't.)

(2.20) a. **De sijakaḷ kope kabi pilem.**

de sijak -ḷ kope kabi pilem
1 cut -NFP quickly onion separate

"I cut the onion up quickly."

b. **De sijakaḷ kabi pilem emebi.**

de sijak -ḷ kabi pilem e-mebi
1 cut -NFP onion separate APV-do.quickly

"I cut the onion up quickly."

Adverbs can't act as predicates. Unlike verbs, they can't act as a sentence's predicate alone, and unlike nominals and adjectives, they can't be used with the copula. This gives another test to tell them apart from verbs with adverbial meanings or uses.

(2.21) a. ***Kope ke.**

kope =ke
quickly = 3

b. **Emebi ke.**

e-mebi =ke
APV-do.quickly = 3

"They act quickly."

Or: "They are quick."

Manner adverbs tend to be gradable. That means you can use the comparative and superlative constructions with **te** ‘to surpass’ and **same** ‘to come first’ with them.

(2.22) **Le gwon newole mwanele te ke.**

le gwon newole mwanele te =ke
2 speak well Mwanele pass = 3

“You speak Mwanele better than him.”

There are many clitics that can’t stand alone as words but otherwise have the distribution of adjectives. I treat them as a subclass of adverbs and describe them in section 4.7.

Derivation of Adverbs

Manner adverbs can be derived with the suffix **-le**. After a stem-final consonant, the suffix becomes **-e** and the consonant is velarized when possible. This suffix is productively used with nouns and adjectives, although there are a few cases of it being used with other parts of speech as well.

- (2.23)
- | | | | | | |
|----|-------------|-----------------|---|---------------|-----------------------|
| a. | gama | ‘beautiful’ | → | gamaḷe | ‘beautifully’ |
| b. | gebe | ‘child’ | → | gebeḷe | ‘childishly’ |
| c. | lep | ‘surface, edge’ | → | lepe | ‘barely’ |
| d. | ḡwe | ‘to finish’ | → | ḡweḷe | ‘completely, totally’ |
| e. | ḡni | ‘two’ | → | ḡniḷe | ‘twice as much’ |

Adverbs describing events that happen at a regular frequency can be derived by reduplication of the first two segments of the word. For consonant-initial words, the initial CV is reduplicated and for vowel-initial words, the initial VC is reduplicated. (Although note the irregular dissimilation which gives **amamwo** below rather than the expected ***amwamwo**.)

This process can apply to nouns or adverbs that refer to intervals of time (in which case the adverb denotes something that happens once during that interval) or to events (in which case it denotes something that happens every time that event happens).

- (2.24)
- | | | | | | |
|----|--------------|---------------|---|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| a. | mekiḷ | ‘day’ | → | memekil | ‘every day’ |
| b. | jiḡ | ‘event, time’ | → | jijiḡ | ‘every time’ |
| c. | kajim | ‘food’ | → | kakajim | ‘at every meal’ |
| d. | amwo | ‘breath’ | → | amamwo | ‘every time you breathe, constantly’ |

2.4 Ideophones

Mwanele has a large open class of ideophones. Ideophones are a class of words that depict impressions of sounds, sights, feelings, and actions.

Ideophones are mainly used similarly to adverbs, to qualify the manner of verbs or add expression to the description of an action.

(2.25) **Tatimwu! de fawe bwulubwulu edol.**

ta-timwu -l̩ = de = fawe bwulubwulu e-dol
 PSV - *put.colder* -NFP = 1 = *suddenly* ID:*going.underwater* APV - *fall*

“I suddenly fell into the cold water.”

(WHELK: A.1)

Unlike adverbs, ideophones are never gradable. They can't be used with the comparative and superlative constructions.

(2.26) ***Mekil dejo! de tusutusu te meḍefa.**

mekil dejo -l̩ = de tusutusu te meḍefa
today tire -NFP = 1 ID:*exhausted pass yesterday*

Intended: “Today tired me out more than yesterday.”

In addition to being used similarly to adverbs, ideophones can be used as the complement of the verb **paji** ‘to cause to be.’ Ideophones used this way more or less serve as the main predicate of the clause.

(2.27) **De paji tilitili teṣe je.**

de pa-i tilitili teṣe = je
 1 CAUS-COP ID:*concentrating see* =PROX

“I concentrated hard to read this.”

lit. “I went *tilitili* seeing this.”

They can also be used as result complements of verbs. In this construction, the event or sensation depicted by the ideophone is a resulting state of the event described by the main verb. Resultative expressions in Mwanele are always perfective, so ideophones used in this construction can also add aspectual information, even when aspect isn't overtly marked on the verb.

(2.28) **Takeseke waxe, ɲe taɲugwu biluka gwudada.**

ta-keseke waxe ɲe ta-ɲugwu biluka gwudada
 PSV - *crush stem* DS PSV - *spoil greens* ID:*gross*

“It crushed the stems and fouled the greens.”

(FARMER: A.4)

Ideophones in Mwanele often contain repeating syllables. Common templates include ABAB repeats like **bwulubwulu** ‘*ID:underwater*’ and **sijaņasijaņa** ‘*ID:boring speech*’, ABAC repeats like **wonowolo** ‘*ID:announcement*’ and ABA repeats like **teketek** ‘*ID:repeated hitting*’ or **sijak-isija** ‘*ID:cutting*’, and ABB repeats like **lididi** ‘*ID:twinkling*’ or **siteletele** ‘*ID:clumsiness*’.

TODO

There are a few marginal sounds that can occur in ideophones. For example, a tapped [r] often occurs in ideophones. It’s replaced by a [d] in clear speech and is written as if it were /d/. For example **lididi** can be pronounced [liriri] in rapid speech or [lididi] in clear speech. Similarly, [ç] usually only occurs as an allophone of the sibilants before /i/, but it can occur before other vowels in ideophones. In slow speech it’s pronounced as [çij] followed by the vowel, so **sijaņasijaņa** can be pronounced as [çajaçaņa] in rapid speech or as [çijaņaçijaņa] in clear speech.

Ideophones are an open class in Mwanele. Ideophones can be readily loaned from other languages, such as **wonowolo** ‘*ID:announcement*’ which was loaned from the Anroo ideophone **vonorovo** (and changed to conform to the ABAC structure common in Mwanele ideophones).

New ideophones can also be formed by combining parts of existing ideophones. One way to do this is to combine two-syllable units from multiple ideophones. This often makes ideophones that describe a sequence of events or a change of state, for example from **tilitili** ‘*ID:concentration*’ and **sijakisija** ‘*ID:cutting*’ you can get **tilisijak** ‘*ID:focusing on something and cutting it*’. Another way is to combine syllables from the repeating units of two different ideophones and then reduplicate that combination. This is usually used for simultaneous events. An example is combining **xwulaxwula** ‘*ID:panting*’ and **lusulusu** ‘*ID:tired*’ to get **xwusuxwusu** ‘*ID:panting and exhausted*’.

2.5 Adjectives

Adjectives are words that describe properties or states and that can directly modify nouns. In Mwanele they form a closed class. There are no productive ways to derive adjectives from words of other classes. Adjectives for groups of people can sometimes be loaned in from the language spoken by that group, but otherwise adjectives are rarely loaned.

Adjectives used attributively can directly modify a noun. Adjectives used predicatively are used with the copula **i**.

(2.29) a. **xwejo mek gama**

xwejo mek gama
constellation bright beautiful

“a beautiful, bright constellation”

b. **Xwejo i mek xo gama.**

xwejo i mek xo gama
constellation COP *bright* *and* *beautiful*

“The constellation is bright and beautiful.”

Adjectives can’t be used as verb arguments themselves. At minimum, they can modify a light noun.

(2.30) a. ***De kwi ηwuη epi.**

de kwi ηwuη = epi
 1 *want* *red* = PL

b. **De kwi xi ηwuη epi.**

de kwi xi ηwuη = epi
 1 *want* *thing* *red* = PL

“I want the red ones.”

Adjectives can be distinguished as the only word class to take the suffix **-da** used in comparative and superlative constructions.

(2.31) **Tadelo tak tagwon je ete mikwada.**

ta- delo = tak ta- gwon = je e- te mikwa - da
 PSV- *be.possible* = DP CMP- *say* = PROX APV- *surpass* *simple* -WRT

“Of course it’s possible to say this more simply.” (5MOYD #1388)

2.6 Pronouns

TODO

From here on, I haven’t written up the sections yet. I’ll link to the relevant other bits of the grammar which I think have enough info!

Pronouns are used to refer to people or sometimes things. They have roughly the same distribution as nouns but they don’t need =**we** to form possessives and they can’t be modified by adjectives. See section 3.3 for more info.

2.7 Determiners

Determiners can be used to refer to entities or groups of entities like nouns, but they can also modify nouns to mark deixis, quantification, or questioning. See sections 3.4 and 3.5 for more info.

2.8 Numerals

TODO

Numerals are used to count and to describe specific quantities and orders. For more information see the numerals subsection in 3.5.

2.9 Particles

TODO

Particles are a bit of a catchall class. They include conjunctions like **be**, **ne** and **xo**, role markers like **ki** and **e**, interjections like **loṭon** and **kwuṅo**, and speech-act-related words like **kwu**, **mwe**, and **gwu**. Maybe each of these groups forms its own very small word class.

3 Nouns

The simplest Mwaneḷe noun phrase consists of a bare noun or pronoun. Nouns can be followed by determiners, numerals, and modifiers like adjectives, possessors, and relative clauses.

- (3.1) a. **bwo**
fish
“fish”
- b. **bwo jenome we em le şam je**
fish young LNK friend 2 three PROX
“these three fresh fish of your friend’s”

Compared to its verbal morphology, Mwaneḷe’s nominal morphology is pretty sparse. There are no inflectional affixes and the only fully productive derivational affixes are the augmentative and diminutive, discussed in section 3.2.

In the romanization I use of Mwaneḷe, I conventionally write the clitics =**we** and **ge**= together with the words before and after them respectively. I write all other clitics as separate words. In the glosses, they’re all the same, separated from the host with an equals sign ‘=’.

3.1 Modifiers

Mwaneḷe noun phrases are mostly head-initial. Modifiers always follow the noun that they’re modifying.

- (3.2) **xwejo mek gama**
constellation bright beautiful
“a beautiful, bright constellation”

Modifiers can include words from the fairly large but closed adjective class, other nouns, possessors, modifying nouns joined with either the linking or ornative clitic, and relative clauses. This section will discuss all of these except for relative clauses, which are discussed in section 7.4.

Compounding

Mwaneḷe allows compounding of multiple nouns. The head noun is first, followed by modified nouns.

I know these exist but all the examples I can think of off the top of my head use the possessive or ornative, or are coordinate compounds. So...

Coordinate Compounds

Mwaneḷe makes use of coordinate compounds: noun compounds where, rather than having one noun act as a modifier to the other, two nouns stand together to make a compound having to do with both components equally. Coordinate compounds don't have clear headedness, and despite the name, they're never connected by coordinators like **xo** 'and.'

They usually refer to either a larger category that includes both of the nouns or to something associated with the two nouns. They can be coined spontaneously, but there's also a fair number of standard, somewhat lexicalized ones.

Compound	Literal Meaning	Figurative Meaning
mwa bwa	mother + father	'parents'
koḷa aḷa	aunt/uncle + cousin	'close family'
bwo xwego	fish + mollusc	'seafood'
lale kema	bedding + table	'furniture, the home'
lale ṣami	bedding + house shoes	'comfort, the home'
bili ḡwo	leafy greens + tuber	'produce, edible plants'
bili bes	leafy greens + fruit	
ṭa lak	sand + sky	'the world, everywhere'

Possession and the Linking Clitic

The clitic =**we** serves to link nouns to their modifiers. It's glossed as LNK for 'linker' or 'linking.' The linking clitic most often links a noun with a possessor. In addition to a possessee-possessor relationship, the head and modifier linked with =**we** can have a part-whole relationship, a product-source relationship, a relationship of association, or a relationship of purpose. Mwaneḷe doesn't distinguish between alienable and inalienable possession.

(3.3) **Taṣukoḷ kasawe Sowaṅ bulen.**

ta-ṣuko-ḷ kasa =we Sowaṅ bulen
 PSV-*burn*-NFP *house*=LNK NAME *hinder*

“Sowaṅ’s house burnt down on him.”

(5MOYD #1396)

(3.4) **Taḷek wame ḷewe kaṣa de kwu moṅ.**

ta-ḷe -k =wame ḷe =we kaṣa =de kwu moṅ
 PSV-*cover*-FTI=*soon* *roof*=LNK *house*=1 *use* *metal*

“The roof of our house will soon be covered with metal.”

(5MOYD #1218)

The linking clitic is used to link nominalized verbs to their primary argument. Nominalizations marked with **ta-** have their absolutive argument as their primary argument, and others have their nominative argument as their primary argument.

(3.5) **Le ṭem tapweṅowe takwe ṅalek.**

le ṭem ta-pweṅo =we tak =we ṅalek
 2 *need* CMP-*buy* =LNK *card*=LNK *choice*

“You should buy lottery tickets.”

(5MOYD #1363a)

The linking clitic isn’t used with unstressed personal pronouns, such as **de** in example 3.4, but it can be used with stressed pronouns or pronouns joined together with **xo** ‘and.’ In example 3.6, it’s used with **gwa** to distinguish that **gwa** is being used as a pronoun ‘someone’ as opposed to as a quantifier ‘some.’ This use is similar with the words **lot** ‘what, who, which’ and **ole** ‘all, everyone, everything.’

(3.6) **Ekwufalakwuḷ ke ṅi xi gimwewe gwa.**

e-kwu-ḷalakwu-ḷ =ke ṅi xi gimwe =we gwa
 APV-*VEN*-*steal* -NFP=3 *two* *be.at* *farm* =LNK *some*

“The two of them went off stealing at someone’s farm.”

(5MOYD #1356)

Compare these phrases with the linking clitic:

- **gimwewe gwa** ‘someone’s farm’
- **kasawe ole** ‘everyone’s house’
- **emwe lot** ‘whose friend’

and these phrases without it:

- **gimwe gwa** ‘some farm’
- **kasa ole** ‘every house’
- **em lot** ‘which friend’

Possessors are often omitted when they’re clear from context, especially when the possessor is the subject of the sentence or a participant in the conversation. The sentence below shows an example of both, where **em** ‘friend’ is understood as referring to the speaker’s friend, even without a possessive pronoun.

(3.7) **De mwateŋwe meḍefa takweme ki Fila ɽeṣe em.**

de mwaṭ -ŋwe meḍefa ta-kwu-eme ki Fila ɽeṣe em
 1 depend.on-FTP yesterday CMP- VEN- go ORG NAME see friend

“If I had gone to Fila yesterday, I would have seen my friend.” (5MOYD #1375)

Ornative

The ornative clitic **ge=** is used to link a noun phrase with a modifier indicating a material something is made of, an item something is temporarily bearing, or a notable characteristic of something.

(3.8) **Takwumejoḷ kema gegobi ki Ɖijak.**

ta-kwu-mejo -ḷ kema ge=gobi ki Ɖijak
 PSV- VEN- give.as.gift -NFP table ORN= wood ORG NAME

“Ɖijak was given a wooden table as a gift.” (5MOYD #1244)

(3.9) **Taɽeṣeḷ to geḷedefa xo ti geṣiwek.**

ta-ɽeṣe-ḷ to ge=ḷedefa xo ti
 PSV- see -NFP man ORN= hat and woman

ge=ṣiwek
 ORN= braid

“I saw the man with the hat and the woman with braids.”

It’s also used in the names of a lot of dishes to show a topping or characteristic ingredient.

(3.10) **Takwi tajimwe nomek gebiwet.**

ta - kwi ta - im = we nomek ge = biwet
 PSV - *want* CMP - *eat* = LNK *congee* ORN = *egg*

“I want to eat congee with an egg on top.”

Mwane Food

At first I thought the ornative marker was a prefix (which is part of the reason why it’s written together with the following word) but now I think it’s better to describe it as a clitic, since it can scope over whole phrases, not just the word it attaches to. This means that it can have ambiguous scope when there are multiple adjectives after **ge**’s host that could modify either the host or the whole phrase’s head.

(3.11) a. **sun geṣiwek taḷa owowu**

sun ge = [ṣiwek taḷa owowu]
woman ORN = *braid* *dark* *long*

“the woman with long, dark braids”

b. sun ge = [ṣiwek taḷa] owowu
woman ORN = *braid* *dark* *long*

“the tall woman with dark braids”

c. sun ge = [ṣiwek] taḷa owowu
woman ORN = *braid* *dark* *long*

“the tall, dark-skinned woman with braids”

It’s more common for adjectives modifying the head of whole noun phrase to come after the noun, but before any ornative or possessive phrases, like this:

(3.12) **sun geṣiwek taḷa**

sun owowu ge = ṣiwek taḷa
woman *long* ORN = *braid* *dark*

“the tall woman with dark braids”

The ornative marker **ge=** ends up with the same phrasal structure as the linker **=we**. The only difference is that **ge=** attaches to whatever comes after it and **=we** attaches to whatever comes before it. Since the grammar is otherwise the same, I figure they're operating with the same mechanics under the hood, just with different prosody on the surface.

3.2 Augmentative and Diminutive

Mwaneḷe has an augmentative suffix, which marks things as being larger in some way than usual as well as a diminutive suffix, which marks things as being smaller than usual in some way.

The augmentative suffix has the form **-de** after vowels and **-et** or **-ede** after consonants, and the diminutive suffix has the form **-pe** after vowels and **-ep** or **-epe** after consonants.

- (3.13) a. **ḑekep**
man-DIM
 “boy”
- b. **bwode**
fish-AUG
 “a big fish, a macker”
- c. **Ḑolep**
 NAME-DIM
 “little Ṭalol (nickname)”

Both are commonly used to make nicknames. The diminutive is associated with being cute, small, or young, and the augmentative is associated with being big, well-known or important, but also with clumsiness or oafishness (in an affectionate way though).

3.3 Personal Pronouns

Mwaneḷe has a fairly small pronoun system. Personal pronouns in all dialects have a three-way person distinction between first person **de**, second person **le**, and third person **ke**.

Like nouns, there's no distinction of other categories like number or case.

Pronoun	Meaning
de	1 st person
le	2 nd person
ke	3 rd person
dele	1 st person inclusive
keŋwu	3 rd person obviative
keje	3 rd person proximal
kejo	3 rd person distal

Table 3.1: **Standard** and **Dialectal** Pronouns

Dialectal Pronouns

While these three pronouns are widespread among all Mwanele speakers, there are several pronouns in use within smaller dialect areas.

In Southern dialects, especially among speakers bilingual in Mekale and Kiraga, the pronoun **dele** is used for first person plural inclusive, where other dialects would just use **de** or a conjunct **de xo le**.

More widespread in Southern dialects is the pronoun **keŋwu** (from a shortening of **ke ŋawu** ‘other them’), used to refer to third-person referents that aren’t topical.

(i) **Ke tegu keŋwu xi kasa keŋwu.**

ke tegu -l̩ =keŋwu xi kasa =keŋwu
 3 find -NFP =3OBV be.in house =3OBV

“He_i ran into him_j at his_j house.”

For speakers of dialects that have **keŋwu**, when **ke** is used as a possessor, it must corefer with the subject of the sentence.

(ii) **Sowaŋ loŋo biŋo ke.**

Sowaŋ lot -lo biŋo =ke
 NAME search -NFI scissors =3

“Sowaŋ_i is looking for his_{i/%j} scissors.”

In Northern dialects, there are pronouns **keje** and **kejo** which come from combining **ke** with the proximal and distal demonstratives **je** and **jo**. They can be used as normal third-person pronouns while emphasizing a location close to or far from the speaker.

(iii) **Keje ole kwolu de mu.**

keje =ole kwolu =de =mu
 3PROX = *all* *help* =1 =DP

“All these guys really helped me.”

They can also be used to track different referents, especially when talking about events with multiple participants. They often show up as contrastive topics or focuses. Usually **keje** refers back to the most recently mentioned participant and **kejo** to the one before that, but in running speech, often one participant will be referred to with **keje** and another with **kejo** as a reference tracking strategy.

(iv) **Mwana kwumejo! pwexabwo ki Oluna, ɲe pijelumejo! keje, ɲe lo exesoto! kejo.**

Mwana kwu-mejo -! pwexabwo ki Oluna ɲe pi- e- lu-mejo
 NAME VEN- *give.gift* -NFP *bracelet* ORG NAME DS NEG- APV- RVS- *give.gift*

-! =keje

-NFP = 3PROX

ɲe =lo e- xe- soto -! =kejo

DS = so APV- AND- *be.angry* -NFP = 3DIST

“Mwana_i gave Oluna_j a bracelet as a gift, but she_j didn’t give (her_i) anything back, so she_i got angry.”

When unstressed personal pronouns are used as possessors, they cliticize to the previous word and don’t take the possessive clitic **we**, like in example 3.14 **kola aɲa=de**. When they’re the subject of an intransitive verb or the object of a transitive verb, they cliticize to the verb. Unlike stressed pronouns or nouns, unstressed absolutive pronoun clitics come before any adverb or other clitics.

(3.14) **Ko!a aɲa de xiti gawo, be elotobwolo de ole gijo eɲome.**

ko!a aɲa =de xiti gawo be e- lotobwo -lo =de =ole gijo e-
aunt/uncle *cousin* =1 *be.in* *island* SS APV- *catch.fish* -NFI =1 = *all* *there* APV-

nome.
wade

“My family lives on an island, and we would all wade in the water and catch fish.”

(WHELK: A.1)

Focused pronouns, pronouns with modifiers, and pronouns in conjuncts are stressed and use **we** to link them to noun phrases when used as possessors. Exceptions are the quantifiers **ole** ‘all’ and **epi** ‘PL’ as well as the number **ni** ‘two,’ which can occur with clitic pronouns like in example 3.14, but don’t have to. Stressed absolutive pronouns appear after adverbs, in the same place as regular noun phrases.

(3.15) **De gwono!**, ‘Lo **ɲewo**, **legwonok mekenji de ni.**

de gwon-! lo ɲewo le-gwon-k mekenji de ni
1 say -NFP DP good R/R-say -FTI tomorrow 1 two

“I said, ‘Well good, the two of us will talk tomorrow.’”

(5MOYD #1291)

(3.16) **Leṭeṣeṅwe mwon le xo de.**

le-ṭeṣe-ṅwe mwon le xo de
R/R-see -FTP tomorrow 2 and 1

“You and I will see each other tomorrow.”

(5MOYD #1253)

3.4 Demonstratives

Mwaneḷe demonstratives distinguish between two degrees of distance: proximal **je** for things that are close to the speaker or listener or recently mentioned and distal **jo** for things that are far from the speaker and listener or mentioned earlier in the conversation. The demonstratives can be enclitics on noun phrases they modify or stand alone as pronouns.

Je and **jo** by themselves tend to refer to objects, but not to places or times. You can refer to places with the words **gije** ‘here’ and **gijo** ‘there’ (from **gi** ‘place’) and to times with the words **ɲeke** ‘now, immediately’ and **ɲeko** ‘then, at that time’ (from **ɲek** ‘to be at a time’). Unlike noun phrases with demonstratives, these words can be used as adverbs.

(3.17) **Enaka tapijeximiḷe gebe je wo**

e-naka ta-pi-e-xe-im-! =we gebe =je =wo
APV-be.far CMP-NEG-APV-AND-sleep-NFP=LNK child =PROX =not.yet

“It’s odd that this kid hasn’t gone to sleep yet.”

(5MOYD #1245)

(3.18) **ŋin ŋalek pakwuje tafalakwuwe dibiso jo e ke**

ŋin ŋalek pa-kwu-je ta-ḥalakwu =we dibiso =jo e ke
person choose CAUS- VEN- put CMP- steal =LNK pig =DIST ERG 3

“The judge claims that he stole that pig.” (5MOYD #1239)

Demonstratives can be used to mark noun phrases as definite. They’re only used with anaphoric definites, where the noun phrase is referring back to something that was mentioned before. They aren’t used with uniqueness definites (things like ‘the sun’ or ‘the president,’ where there’s only one of them in a context, so you don’t need extra information to pick which one).

In example 3.19, the first clause mentions a particular cloud and the sun. In English, both ‘the cloud’ and ‘the sun’ are marked as definite: ‘the cloud’ is identifiable because it refers to the specific cloud mentioned in the clause before, and ‘the sun’ is definite because there’s only one sun, so it’s unique in context. In Mwanele, you can mark ‘the cloud’ with a demonstrative to show that it refers back to something mentioned previously. ‘The sun’ on the other hand doesn’t get marked with a demonstrative because its definiteness comes from uniqueness. It doesn’t take a demonstrative even if it’s *also* referring back to an expression in an earlier clause.

(3.19) **Fune pasiṅ megwa patakwa ḷak, be...**

”A cloud covered the sun and darkened the sky, but...”

a. **fune je jekisi ŋeke megwa**
cloud PROX pass.by right.away sun

“the cloud passed by the sun soon after.”

b. **#fune jekisi ŋeke megwa je**
cloud pass.by right.away sun PROX

Intended: “the cloud passed by the sun soon after.”

Idioms with a Fossilized Article

Even though Modern Mwanele doesn’t have a definite article, past Mwanele did. It was a proclitic that was **u=** before consonants and **w=** before vowels, and it labialized initial consonants whenever possible. Even though it’s not used anymore, it stuck around in a few expressions, including **pale wamwo** ‘to hold your breath’ (from **pale** ‘stop’ and **amwo** ‘breath’) and **Umweṅok Te**, a name for Mwane New Year (also called by the article-less form **Meṅok Te**).

There’s also an idiom used to express gratitude, **da i tak u** __ literally ‘__ is so sweet’ but in a fairly archaic expression. Speakers who use this will change **u** to **w** before vowels, but

many don't labialize initial consonants.

(3.20) **Da i tak u ɲode.**

da i =tak u = ɲode
sweet COP = certainly DEF = ocean

“The ocean is so sweet.”

(WHELK: A.1)

Mwanele also has a determiner **lu** ‘*such*’ which refers to things of a type similar to others in context.

(3.21) **Pitaṭeṣe gwu lu min egiṣe.**

pi- ta- ṭeṣe gwu =lu min e- giṣe
 NEG- PSV- see *problem = such know APV- glide*

“Such problems aren't easily recognized.”

Or: “Problems like these aren't easily recognized.”

(5MOYD #1403)

3.5 Number and Quantifiers

Mwanele doesn't require number marking for number. There's also no grammatical distinction between count nouns and mass nouns. Unless they're explicitly marked for number, most nouns can refer to individual things, groups of things, or masses. The bare noun **ṣaluk** ‘*coconut*’ can refer to an individual coconut, a group of several coconuts, the material or substance of coconut considered as a mass, or all coconuts in general. When necessary, there are ways to mark number explicitly.

Inherent Number

Some nouns refer to multiple things by default. The largest group of these are inherently dual nouns, which refer to pairs of things when unmarked. Most of these are nouns referring to body parts which naturally come in pairs, such as **ṭeṣel** ‘*eyes*,’ **ɲukwol** ‘*nostrils*,’ and **kanan** ‘*lungs*.’ Others refer to other naturally paired things such as **pamwu** ‘*riverbank*’ and **iwamwan** ‘*couple, members of a couple*.’

There are also words that refer to sets of more than two by default, for example **dis** ‘*teeth*’ refers to someone's full mouth of teeth by default rather than an individual tooth.

To refer to an individual thing whose lexical entry is plural by default, speakers will quantify it with the word **şat** ‘one, single.’ In sentence 3.22a below, many or all of the speaker’s teeth are hurting them, but in sentence 3.22b, just one particular tooth is.

(3.22) a. **Dis xođulo de.**

dis xođu -lo =de
teeth bite -NFI = 1

“My teeth hurt.”

b. **Dis şat xođulo de.**

dis =şat xođu -lo =de
teeth = one bite -NFI = 1

“My tooth hurts.”

Numerals

Mwaneleş uses a pretty standard base-ten counting system. Here are the basic numerals.

şa(t)	<i>one</i>	xa	<i>seven</i>
ņi	<i>two</i>	po	<i>eight</i>
sam	<i>three</i>	wam	<i>nine</i>
lon	<i>four</i>	tal	<i>ten</i>
ge	<i>five</i>	lese	<i>hundred</i>
luk	<i>six</i>	ține	<i>thousand</i>

When counting, ‘one’ is said as **şa**, but when quantifying something, it is said as **şat**. Multiples of powers of ten are formed by compounding the power of ten with the multiplier. These are put together from largest to smallest multiple to build numbers. The word **xo** can be added between number groups. Numerals follow the nouns they quantify.

(3.23) **bwo sam ține (xo) ge lese (xo) po tal (xo) şat**
fish three thousand and five hundred and eight ten and one
“three thousand five hundred and eighty one fish”

Words describing groups of a particular size can be formed from numerals with the suffix **-ala**, for example, **samala** ‘trio’ or **ținala** ‘group of a thousand.’

There is a word **bwu** ‘half’ which patterns like a numeral. It refers to half of an individual, rather than to half of a group, so **beṭalu bwu** means ‘half a sapote’ and never *‘half of the sapotes.’ **Bwu** can be used with other numerals, for example **ḡolu ḡi bwu** ‘two and a half cups of tea’ or **ḡin bwu ṭine** ‘half a thousand people, five hundred people.’

There are two ways to construct fractions or proportions. Unitary fractions other than one half are made using the particle **kwo** followed by the denominator of the fraction. I gloss **kwo** as ‘part’ even though it’s not used as a standalone word.

(3.24) **Ekwugwon de lepe ki kwo tal ge.**

e- kwu- gwon =de lepe ki kwo tal ge
APV- VEN- speak =1 barely ORG part ten five

‘I’ve barely talked to a fifteenth (of them).’

Non-unitary fractions are said as numerator-**ki**-denominator. I’m analyzing (and glossing) this as being the same **ki** used to mark sources and goals of associated motion.

(3.25) **ḡi ki tal xo sam ki tal kwun bwu.**

ḡi ki tal xo sam ki tal kwun n bwu
two ORG ten and three ORG ten VEN- give half

‘Two tenths plus three tenths is one half.’

The use of fractions to quantify over groups is discussed below.

Quantification

Quantifiers describe how many of something a noun phrase refers to. Several Mwaneḡe quantifiers occur as noun phrase enclitics, including **ṣat** ‘one,’ **ḡwa** ‘some,’ **epi** ‘PL,’ and **ole** ‘all.’

The word **ṣat** ‘one’ is used to specify reference to a single thing.

(3.26) **Xemeḡwe Kamel esotu mwat piṭeṣe ke ṭaḡoḡ ṣat.**

x- eme -ḡwe Kamel e- sotu mwat pi- ṭeṣe =ke ṭaḡoḡ ṣat
AND- go -FTP NAME APV- be.angry depend.on NEG- see =3 k.o.bird one

‘Kamel will leave angry if she doesn’t see (at least) one bird.’ (5MOYD #1271)

(3.27) **Di gebe, be pakwakwu pwagope luk ki ḡukwoḡ ṣat.**

di gebe be pa- kw- akwu pwagope luk ki ḡukwoḡ
1.COP child SS CAUS- VEN- fit.imperfectly marble do.unexpectedly ORG nostrils

= ʃat
= one

“When I was a child, I accidentally got a marble stuck in my nostril.” (5MOYD #1289)

The word **gwa** ‘some’ is used to make statements about more than one, but not all of something. Using **gwa** carries the implication that your statement does not apply to all of something. Phrases with **gwa** are rarely referential.

Under negation, **gwa** can also act like a negative quantifier. Some speakers will use **pigwa** under negation.

(3.28) **De pigwo ɲin Xakat (pi)gwa.**

de pi- gwo ɲin Xakat = (pi)gwa
1 NEG- like Maruvian = some

“I don’t like any Maruvians.”

Or: “I like no Maruvians.”

Since **gwa** is only used this way under negation, it isn’t idiomatic to use it as a negative quantifier for the subject of a transitive verb. Instead, speakers use periphrasis with negative existential verbs.

(3.29) **Epiti ɲin (pi)gwa ligwo ɲin Xakat.**

e- piti ɲin = (pi)gwa li- gwo ɲin Xakat
APV- be.in.NEG person = some REL- like Maruvian

“Nobody likes Maruvians.”

Or: “There is no person who likes Maruvians.”

The word **epi** more or less marks plurality. Like **gwa**, it is used with noun phrases describing more than one of something. Unlike **gwa**, it doesn’t imply that a statement is not true of all of something.

(3.30) a. **Kwemel em de gwa, #be mu kwemel em de ole!**

kwu-eme-! em =de=gwa be mu kwu-eme-! em =de=ole
VEN-go -NFP friend=1 =some SS really VEN-go -NFP friend=1 =all

“Some of my friends came, in fact all of my friends came!”

b. **Kwemeḷ em de epi, be mu kwemeḷ em de ole!**

kwu -eme -ḷ em =de =epi be mu kwu -eme -ḷ em =de =ole
 VEN -go -NFP friend =1 =PL SS really VEN -go -NFP friend =1 =all

“Some of my friends came, in fact all of my friends came!”

The word **ole** ‘all’ is a universal quantifier, used to make a statement that applies to all members of a group. When used as a clitic on a noun phrase, it often has a distributive meaning, like ‘each’ or ‘every.’

(3.31) **ŋin ole gwolo tatasiwe gwuxe memekil.**

ŋin =ole gwo -lo ta -tasi =we gwuxe memekil
 person =all like -NFI CMP - write =LNK letter every.day

“Everyone liked that I wrote letters every day.”

(5MOYD #1274)

Quantifiers that follow the noun phrase as clitics are non-proportional quantifiers, meaning that the amount they describe does not depend on the total amount of members of the group they’re quantifying over. Numerals pattern the same way as non-proportional quantifiers. Since postnominal **ole** is distributive rather than collective, it is an exception.

Proportional quantifiers on the other hand, come before the noun and are linked with the linking clitic =**we**. **Ole** can be used this way with a collective rather than distributive meaning or to quantify over the whole of a definite group of things.

(3.32) **De paxejeḷ ŋwoma ole litaṭeṣe.**

de pa- xe- je-ḷ ŋwoma =ole li- ta-ṭeṣe
 1 CAUS - AND - take - NFP mango =all REL - PSV - see

“I took each mango I saw.”

(3.33) **De paxejeḷ olewe ŋwoma litaṭeṣe.**

de pa- xe- je-ḷ ole =we ŋwoma li- ta-ṭeṣe
 1 CAUS - AND - take - NFP all =LNK mango REL - PSV - see

“I took all of the mangoes I saw.”

Other sorts of proportional quantifiers that come before nouns and are linked with =**we** include fractions built with **kwo** and **ki**, the words **bwu** and **kwobwa** both meaning ‘half,’ and **deṅ** ‘most.’

TODD

(3.34) **kwo samwe balo**

kwo sam =we balo
part three = LNK class
 “a third of the students”

The word **bwu** ‘half’ has a different meaning if it is used before or after a noun. Before a noun with the linking clitic, it means ‘half of a group’, the same as **kwobwa**. After the noun, it refers to half of an individual object. Compare **bwuwe widupe** ‘half of the bananas’ with **widupe bwu** ‘half of a banana.’

Like in other places, =we is not used to link quantifiers to clitic pronouns. The pronouns can cliticize directly onto the last word in the quantifier phrase, for example **deŋ ke** ‘most of them’ or **kwobwa de** ‘half of us.’ Unlike with nouns, **ole** can have a collective meaning when following pronouns in addition to a distributive one.

3.6 Names and Proper Nouns

Titles

Titles follow the first name. The word **koḷa** ‘aunt/uncle’ is commonly used as a term of respect to strangers, especially older than you.

(3.35) **Iwan koḷa gome taṣukowe bebwo.**

iwan koḷa gome ta-ṣuko =we bebwo
 NAME *uncle start CMP- burn = LNK fish.meat*

“Mr. Iwan started to burn the fish.”

(5MOYD #1290)

4 Verb Morphology

4.1 The Verb Template

The verb is the core of the Mwanele sentence. Mwanele often favors lexicalizing not only actions, but also manners and states with verbs, and the verb or verb complex is usually the main carrier of grammatical information. Verbs are also rich in inflectional morphology, especially compared to the minimal morphology on other word classes.

Mwanele verb morphology is primarily prefixing. There is a set of synthetic suffixes marking tense, aspect, and mood. These primarily distinguish between perfective/imperfective and future/non-future verbs, but there are two additional, less common aspect suffixes in the same slot. Other morphology is entirely prefixing. Moving out from the verb root, there are directional prefixes, voice markers, negation, and subordinators. Directional prefixes primarily indicate the orientation of motion relative to some deictic center. Voice markers change the valence and argument structure of verbs, either to add a causer or to derive an intransitive verb from a transitive verb. Before voice markers comes the prefix **pi-** which marks sentential negation. The outermost set of prefixes mark subordination. There are three nominalization markers and a relativization marker.

Verbs consist minimally of a root with primary stress on the first syllable.¹ They can take up to one affix in any of the five slots. The main verb of a clause can be followed by a group of clitics including unstressed absolutive pronouns, the linking clitic (in the case of nominalizations), clitic adverbs, and discourse particles. These belong to the same prosodic word as the verb, but they aren't morphologically integrated into the verb, so they'll be discussed elsewhere.

The template for a regular Mwanele verb is shown in the table below.

¹With the exception of six irregular verbs discussed in section 9.

Subordination		Negation		Voice		Direction		TAM	
ta-	CMP	pi-	NEG	e-	APV	kwu-	VEN	-ɿ	NFP
ni-	PRP			ta-	PSV	xe-	AND	-lo	NFI
lak-	RSN			pa-	CAUS	je-	PRL	-ɲwe	FTP
li-	REL			le-	R/R	lu-	RVS	-k	FTI
						no-	ASEA	-kwi	CON
						beg-	ASHORE	-me	HAB

Table 4.1: The Mwanele verbal template

4.2 Voice and Valence

Mwanele verbs mark transitivity fairly strictly. Mwanele distinguishes between intransitive verbs, which have a single subject, and transitive verbs, which have two arguments, an agent and a patient. Unmarked verbs are transitive by default. There are three prefixes that decrease the valence by one, turning transitive verbs into intransitive verbs, plus the causative prefix, which adds a causer as an argument. By and large, these prefixes occupy a single voice/valence slot in the morphology, although there are a few verbs where the causative and passive prefixes co-occur.

Transitivity Marking

Transitive verbs are unmarked. There are two prefixes marking intransitive verbs. These prefixes can derive intransitive verbs from transitive verbs, but they also show up on almost all intransitive verbs, even when they don't have transitive counterparts.

The prefix **e-** marks intransitive verbs with agent-like subjects, and is glossed APV for 'antipassive'.² Before vowels, an epenthetic /j/ is inserted. For example, **|e-in|** 'APV-sleep' becomes **ejin**. The antipassive is used with intransitive verbs with subjects that perform or initiate an action, or have some sort of control, which usually would have the role of the agent in a transitive verb. It's often used to derive atelic intransitive verbs from transitive verbs, such as in sentence 4.1, but it can also derive other telic intransitive verbs. The prefix **e-** isn't strictly an antipassive though: it's also used on verbs that don't have a clear patient which was removed as well as on intransitive verbs that aren't clearly derived from transitive verbs.

²In other sources, you'll sometimes see this glossed as INTRA for 'agent intransitive'. I chose to use APV here for concision.

(4.1) **Ekwuḡalakwuḡ ke ɲi xi gimwewe gwa.**

e - kwu - ɸalakwu - ɸ = ke ɲi xi gimwe = we gwa
 APV - VEN - *steal* -NFP = 3 two *be.at* farm = LNK some

“The two of them went off stealing at someone’s farm.”

(5MOYD #1356)

(4.2) **Eṣameɲwe le delo!**

e - ṣame - ɲwe = le delo
 APV - *be.best* -FTP = 2 *be.possible*

“You might win!”

(5MOYD #1363b)

(4.3) **Esili lo teɲafo de ga!**

e - sili = lo ta - e - ɲafo = de ga
 APV - *never.do* = DP CMP - APV - *laugh* = 1 *again*

“I will never laugh again!”

Intransitive motion verbs always get marked with the antipassive, even if the subject lacks agency or control.

(4.4) **Ekwuḡadeɸ anam ki lep.**

e - kwu - ɲade - ɸ anam ki lep
 APV - VEN - *float* -NFP duck ORG surface

“The duck floated up to the surface.”

(5MOYD #1263)

(4.5) **Tatimwuḡ de fawe bwulubwulu edol.**

ta - timwu - ɸ = de = fawe bwulubwulu e - dol
 PSV - *put.colder* -NFP = 1 = *suddenly* ID:*going.underwater* APV - *fall*

“I suddenly fell into the cold water.”

(WHELK: A.1)

In some Northern dialects, prefix use with motion verbs is reversed—motion verbs are always marked with the passive, even when the subjects *do* have agency and control.

Minor verbs in SVCs can receive transitivity marking. They don’t have to have the same transitivity as the clause’s major verb, but they do have to share their subject with the major verb’s subject or agent.

(4.6) **Pana xitiḷ lot eḡale?**

Pana xiti -ḷ =lot e-ḡale
 NAME *be.in*-NFP = *what* APV-*give.birth*

“Where did Pana give birth?”

(5MOYD #1286)

(4.7) **Mwana xalo tetesi exeḡi ekwulife.**

Mwana xalo ta- e-tesi e-xeḡi e-kwu-life
 NAME *fear* CMP-APV-*exceed* APV-*be.below* APV-VEN-*arrive*

“Mwana is afraid she arrived too late.”

(5MOYD #1270)

Experiencers are usually treated as agent-like in Mwaneḡe, so single-position emotion verbs are marked with the antipassive.

(4.8) **Esotulo de xedefa, be ṣoḡe elamalo ṣaṡe.**

e-sotu -lo =de xedefa be ṣoḡe e-lama -lo ṣaṡe
 APV-*be.angry*-NFI = 1 *be.above* SS *rather* APV-*mourn*-NFI *only*

“At first I was angry, but then I was just sad.”

The prefix **ta-** marks intransitive verbs with patient-like subjects, and is glossed *psv* for ‘*passive*’.³ Before /a/, the prefix is shortened to **t-** and before other vowels, an epenthetic /j/ is added. For example, |**ta-alawo**| becomes **talawo** ‘*to wake up*’ and |**ta-in**| becomes **tajin** ‘*to fall asleep*.’ The passive is commonly used to derive intransitive verbs from transitive verbs by demoting the agent and retaining the patient as the sole subject. The agent can be added back as an oblique, introduced with the particle **e**.

(4.9) **Gwu tajim wu widu ḡwe?**

gwu ta-im =wu widu ḡwe
 Q *psv-eat* = *yet* *plantain* *done*

“Have the plantains all been eaten yet?”

(4.10) **Tapasubeḷ kot e feḡ je.**

ta-pasube -ḷ kot e feḡ =je
psv-sink -NFP *boat* *ERG* *man* = *PROX*

“The boat was sunk by the man.”

³Like **e-**, you’ll sometimes see some other glosses for **ta-**, such as *INTR.P* for ‘*patient intransitive*’ or other variant abbreviations of ‘*passive voice*.’

(4.11) **Pi loṭon...pitaṇugeto ke xe ṅweḷe.**

pi loṭon pi- ta- ṅugeto = ke = xe ṅweḷe
 NEG HES NEG- PSV- *sicken* = 3 = DP *totally*

“It’s not, well...they’re not completely sick.”

(5MOYD #1324)

Mwaneḷe often uses the passive voice in impersonal constructions. These often involve a modal verb, an attitude verb, or a verb of perception as the matrix clause verb taking a nominalized clause as its subject. Mwaneḷe doesn’t allow raising out of complement clauses, so impersonal constructions are preferred for sentences like 4.13.

(4.12) **Tadelolo taji ke i nisi.**

ta- delo -lo ta- i = ke i nisi
 PSV- *be.possible* -NFI CMP- COP = 3 COP *rabbit*

“It could have been a rabbit.”

Or: “It was possible that it was a rabbit.”

(5MOYD #1360)

(4.13) **Taṭeṣelo taḷejowe Kalo.**

ta- ṭeṣe -lo ta- ḷejo = we Kalo
 PSV- *see* -NFI CMP- *tire* = LNK NAME

“Kalo seemed to be tired.”

Or: “It seemed like Kalo was tired.”

Impersonal constructions can also sometimes be used to imply first- or second-person agents. It’s more common for them to be understood as first-person in statements and second-person in questions, but both ways do happen.

(4.14) **Tote tekwokwe oleme le.**

ta- ote ta- e- kwok = we oleme = le
 PSV- *hope* CMP- APV- *change* = LNK *path* = 2

“[I] hope your fortunes shift.”

(4.15) **Gwu taxelo teḷi ḍit ke?**

gwu ta- xelo = teḷi ḍit = ke
 Q PSV- *trust* = DP *lies* = 3

“Do [you] really believe his lies?”

Polite Speech

In polite or deferential speech, first-person pronouns are avoided in favor of impersonal constructions. Second-person subjects on the other hand are explicitly stated, so sentences like 4.15 could be seen as impolite!

Certain syntactic operations, such as relativization, are only available to subjects and agents, but not to patients. To relativize a patient, you can put the verb in the passive, which promotes the patient to subject and makes it available. See section 7.4 for more information about relativization.

(4.16) **Maneḷ kwun lot ki sunep li- ta- ṭeṣe min e Sowaṅ?**

Maneḷ kwun -n =lot ki sunep li- ta- ṭeṣe min e Sowaṅ
 NAME VEN -give = what ORG girl REL- PSV- see know ERG NAME

“What did Maneḷ give to the girl that Sowaṅ knows?” (5MOYD #1342)

The passive voice is also sometime used in impersonal expressions with verbs that have no argument. These are rare as standalone verbs but possible as echo responses to questions or with subordinate clauses.

(4.17) **Tawewu ṅitalawo le.**

ta- wewu ṅi- ta- alawo =le
 PSV- call PRP- PSV- awaken = 2

“[They’re] calling to wake you up.”

There are a fair number of verbs which always take an intransitivizing prefix, but can take either the passive or the antipassive depending on properties of the subject. Generally, the more agency the subject has, the more likely it is for the verb to take the antipassive and the less it has, the more likely it is to take the passive. Here are some common examples.

(4.18)

Antipassive	Passive
ejin ‘to go to sleep’	tajin ‘to fall asleep’
eḷoḷ ‘to fly (of birds)’	taḷoḷ ‘to fly (of thrown things)’

Transitive Idioms with Intransitive Verbs

Sometimes verbs that are typically only intransitive will be used without transitivity marking as transitive verbs in idioms. This is relatively common with cognate object expressions, such as **meñi meñ** ‘to take a step’ lit. ‘to step a step’ and **in inepe** ‘to take a nap’ lit. ‘to sleep a little sleep.’

(i) **Ke ino inepe ñek ekwulifeḷ de.**

ke in -lo in -pe ñek e-kwu-life -ḷ =de
 3 sleep-NFI sleep-DIM be.at.time APV- VEN- arrive-NFI =1

“They were taking a nap when I arrived.”

There are also some idiomatic expressions where intransitive verbs are used transitively, such as **sodo xagep** ‘to give saving advice (to someone)’ lit. ‘to jump a trap (for someone)’ and **menek kasa** ‘to travel’ lit. ‘to wander house.’

(ii) **Di ðule ḷasodo le xagep kwolu de.**

di ðule ḷak-sodo =le xagep kwolu =de
 1.COP grateful RSN-jump=2 trap help =1

“Thanks for giving such good advice.”

lit. “I am thankful because you jumped a trap for me.”

Reflexive/Reciprocal Voice

When the agent and patient of a verb are the same, Mwaneḷe uses the Reflexive/Reciprocal voice. This is marked by the prefix **ḷe-** and glossed as R/R. The /e/ in **ḷe-** is dropped before another /e/ and an epenthetic /j/ is inserted before other vowels.

The reflexive/reciprocal voice is used when a singular subject acts on itself, when plural subjects each individually act on themselves, and when plural subjects act on or among each other. It’s not used when the patient is only part of the agent or when some expression in another non-patient role refers back to the agent.

(4.19) **Talawo de, be ñeke ḷebeṇa.**

t-alawo =de be ñeke ḷe-beṇa
 PSV-wake.up =1 SS right.away R/R-tidy

“I woke up and cleaned myself up right away.”

(4.20) **De gwonl, 'Lo n̄ewo, l̄egwonok meken̄i de n̄i.'**

de gwon -l̄ lo n̄ewo l̄e-gwon -k meken̄i de n̄i
 1 say -NFP DP good R/R- say -FTI tomorrow 1 two

"I said, 'Well good, the two of us will talk tomorrow.'"

(5MOYD #1291)

(4.21) **l̄exabwolo siwu fekep lon.**

l̄e-xabwo -lo =siwu fekep lon
 R/R- hit -NFP =DP boy four

"The four boys were hitting each other."

Or: "The four boys were fighting."

Sentence 4.21 most naturally describes a situation where each of the four boys is fighting with the three other boys. Reciprocals with *l̄e-* don't have to be strongly distributed, though: the sentence could also refer to a situation where each of the four boys is fighting with some but not all of the other boys. Since reciprocals and plural reflexives are expressed in the same way, sentence 4.21 could also mean "The four boys were [each] hitting themselves."

Speakers mark some verbs of motion as reflexive when the subject is initiating motion and moving on its own.

(4.22) **l̄emij̄ul de, be ekwuṇomel**

l̄e-mij̄u -l̄ =de be e-kwu-ṇome -l̄
 R/R- turn -NFP =1 SS APV- VEN- wade -NFP

"I turned around and waded towards it."

(WHELK: A.1)

Reflexive/reciprocal marking is used on result complements where the agent of the verb denoting the cause makes something happen to itself.

(4.23) **Edoloḷ de l̄exeḷe.**

e-dol -l̄ =de l̄e-xeḷe
 APV- fall -NFP =1 R/R- peel

"I fell and scraped myself."

(4.24) **De imiḷ ij̄oṅ l̄egelap!**

de im -l̄ ij̄oṅ l̄e-gelap
 1 eat -NFP noodle R/R- burst

"I ate noodles until I was stuffed!"

In Mwanele, it's common to use the reciprocal/reflexive construction for actions where multiple people take part. The direct translation of 'I spoke with Sowaŋ' comes across as fairly one-sided—either I spoke while in his presence or I spoke to/at him. A more natural translation would be **ḷegwon de xo Sowaŋ** 'Sowaŋ and I spoke (with each other).' Many other mutual actions are framed as reciprocals, such as **ḷetegu** 'to meet, to run into (each other),' **ḷepwekeme** 'to sleep with (each other),' and **ḷekuna** 'to argue with (each other).'

(4.25) **ḷeteguŋwe gijo ke xo em.**

ḷe- tegu -ŋwe gijo ke xo em
R/R- meet -FTP there 3 and friend

"She and her friends will meet each other there."

(5MOYD #1035)

Idiomatic Usage of Reflexives/Reciprocals

The reflexive/reciprocal forms of some verbs have idiomatic uses. Here are a couple common ones.

Verb	Literal	Figurative
ḷekese	'to accompany o.s.'	'to be alone'
ḷenu	'to close o.s.'	'to be quiet'
ḷe(xe)ḷak	'to lose o.s. (away)'	'to go crazy'
ḷepwekeme	'to wrap around e.o.'	'to sleep with e.o.'
ḷewamwu	'to drink o.s.'	'to give in'

Causative Voice

Mwanele's one valency-increasing affix is **pa-** which marks the causative voice and is glossed CAUS. It is used to add a new argument which causes an action taken by an agent or a change undergone by a patient. The prefix **pa-** follows the same elision and epenthesis rules as the passive voice prefix **ta-**.

The causative voice can be applied freely to transitive or intransitive verbs, but it can also be used to derive verbs from adjectives meaning 'to cause to become that adjective.' It usually carries a fairly basic meaning of causing something to be done, but can also describe situations where the subject allowed something to happen. Unlike in some languages, there's no implication of force or coercion with the causative.

With verbs in the causative voice, the causer added goes in the A position. Here, S is the subject of an intransitive verb, A is the more agent-like argument of a transitive verb, and P is the more patient-like argument. S, A, and P refer to syntactic positions in the sentence, as opposed to semantic roles. For monotransitive causatives, it's possible for the patient to stay as P like in sentence 4.27 or for the agent to replace the patient in the P position like in sentence 4.28.

(4.26) **Kopwu lesale paŋwoɭudu ke ɭo**

kopwu li- e- sale pa- ŋwoɭudu = ke = ɭo
leg REL- APV- be.left CAUS- limp = 3 = anymore

“His left leg makes him limp nowadays.”

(5MOYD #1288)

(4.27) **Ke pajim mu gop ole!**

ke pa- im = mu gop = ole
 3 CAUS- eat = DP piece = all

“He really made every piece get eaten!”

(4.28) **ŋin leme pajim memekil fejala.**

ŋin leme pa- im memekil fejala
person herd CAUS- eat every.day goats

“The goatherd feeds their goats every day.”

When the causer, agent, and patient all appear in a sentence, the patient stays in the P position and the agent is reintroduced with the particle *e*.

(4.29) **De papamaɭ e Koṭak takwemekwe bwuŋam**

de pa- pam -ɭ e Koṭak ta- kwu- eme -k = we bwuŋam
 1 CAUS- believe -NFP ERG NAME CMP- VEN- go -FTI = LNK guest

“I made Koṭak believe that guests will come.”

(5MOYD #1365)

4.3 Tense and Aspect

Mwaneɭe verbs can take suffixes marking tense and aspect.

There are four common suffixes which distinguish between future and non-future and between perfective and imperfective. There are also two less common suffixes in the same suffix slot.

	NFUT	FUT
PFV	-l̩	-ejwe
IMPV	-lo	-k
CON		-ikwi
HAB		-eme

Table 4.2: Tense, aspect and mood suffixes

Tense and aspect are marked on the first verb in a finite clause. Subsequent verbs in SVCs are never marked. The nonfuture perfective and future imperfective suffixes both take echo vowels after consonant-final stems and the nonfuture imperfective suffix loses its /l/ and velarizes the last consonant of consonant-final stems.⁴

Tense

Verbs may be unmarked for tense, marked for future tense, or marked for non-future tense.

Unmarked verbs in independent clauses often refer to habitual or generic events or states.

(4.30) **Ịelupikaŋ de memekil tadejo.**

l̩e- lu- pikaŋ =de memekil ta- dejo
 R/R- RVS- *be.home* =1 *every.day* PSV- *tire*
 “I go home tired every day.”

(4.31) **Ekwumekwu megwa emeḷe, be exesin etile.**

e- kwu- mekwu megwa e- meḷe
 APV- VEN- *appear sun* APV- *be.east*
 be e- xe- sin e- tile
 SS APV- AND- *disappear* APV- *be.west*
 “The sun rises in the east and sets in the west.”

They can also describe present states.

(4.32) **Mwana xalo tetesi exenji ekwulife.**

Mwana xalo ta- e- tesi e- xenji e- kwu- life
 NAME *fear* CMP- APV- *exceed* APV- *be.below* APV- VEN- *arrive*
 “Mwana is afraid she arrived too late.”

(5MOYD #1270)

⁴See section 1.3 on echo vowels and ‘darkening suffixes.’

Verbs in embedded clauses are often unmarked for tense, especially when the tense of the embedded clause is the same as the matrix clause.

(4.33) **Ṭaḷoḷ gwoneṅwe taḍejo.**

Ṭaḷoḷ gwon -eṅwe ta -ḍejo
NAME say -FTP CMP -tire

“Ṭaḷoḷ will say that she’s tired.”

(5MOYD #1283)

In storytelling, it’s common to leave out tense marking.

(4.34) **Talawo de, be ṅeke ḷebeṅa.**

t - alawo = de be ṅeke ḷe - beṅa
PSV - wake.up = 1 SS right.away R/R - tidy

“I woke up and cleaned myself up right away.”

Nonfuture tense is used to talk about events that were true at or before the time of speech. Non-future events marked as perfective must have happened before the time of speech, but non-future events marked as imperfective may refer to present or past events.

(4.35) **ḷexabwolo gijo ṅinalade.**

ḷe - xabwo - lo gijo ṅinala - de
R/R - strike - NFI there crowd - AUG

“Big mobs of people are fighting each other there.”

Or: “Big mobs of people were fighting each other there.”

(5MOYD #1383)

(4.36) **Tajiṅo emen xeni xala, be edol tadale.**

ta - in - lo emen xeni xala be e - dol ta - dale
PSV - sleep - NFI cat be.on.top tower SS APV - fall PSV - kill

“The cat was sleeping on top of the tower, but it fell to its death.”

(5MOYD #1387)

The future tense is used to talk about events that are expected to happen after the time of speech. In embedded clauses, it can also refer to things that were meant to happen after the time of the matrix clause.

(4.37) **Tagapoṅwe wame mwe.**

ta - gapo - ṅwe = wame mwe
PSV - cook - FTP = soon rice

“The rice is about to get cooked.”

(5MOYD #1381)

(4.38) **Ke kwoluṅwe de pakwakwu ke, ɲe ɭelamak egwon.**

ke kwolu -ɲwe =de pa -kwu -akwu =ke
 3 *help* -FTP =1 CAUS- VEN- *stick.together* =3
 ɲe ɭe-lam -k e-gwon
 DS R/R- *hear* -NFI APV- *speak*

“She’ll stick it on for us, and then we’ll hear each other talking.” (5MOYD #1384)

(4.39) **De papamaɭ e Koṭak takwemekwe bwuṅam**

de pa-pam -ɭ e Koṭak ta-kwu-eme-k =we bwuṅam
 1 CAUS- *believe* -NFP ERG NAME CMP- VEN- *go* -FTI =LNK *guest*

“I made Koṭak believe that guests will come.” (5MOYD #1365)

Counterfactual conditionals or complement clauses are usually marked as future, even if they refer to past possibilities or beliefs.

(4.40) **De mwateṅwe meḍefa takweme ki Fila ɽeṣe em.**

de mwat -ɲwe meḍefa ta-kwu-eme ki Fila ɽeṣe em
 1 *depend.on* -FTP *yesterday* CMP- VEN- *go* ORG NAME *see* *friend*

“If I had gone to Fila yesterday, I would have seen my friend.” (5MOYD #1375)

Perfective and Imperfective

All verbs marked for future or non-future tense must also be marked for either perfective or imperfective aspect. Perfective verbs mark events seen as whole, or completed. Actions marked as perfective can have duration, but their entire duration falls within the span of time being discussed.

(4.41) **Edoloɭ de ɭexele.**

e-dol -ɭ =de ɭe-xele
 APV- *fall* -NFP =1 R/R- *peel*

“I fell and scraped myself.”

(4.42) **ɭeteguṅwe gijo ke xo em.**

ɭe-tegu -ɲwe gijo ke xo em
 R/R- *meet* -FTP *there* 3 *and* *friend*

“She and her friends will meet each other there.” (5MOYD #1035)

Imperfective verbs are used for events seen as having duration extending outside of the time span being discussed. It's common for imperfective verbs to be used for habitual events, events or states that give background information for something else, or events that are ongoing at the time of speech.

(4.43) **Tajiño emen xeñi xala, be edol tadale.**

ta-in -lo emen xeñi xala be e-dol ta-dale
 PSV-*sleep*-NFI cat *be.on.top* tower SS APV-*fall* PSV-*kill*

“The cat was sleeping on top of the tower, but it fell to its death.” (5MOYD #1387)

(4.44) **Ḷexabwolo gijo ɲinalade.**

Ḷe-xabwo-lo gijo ɲinala-de
 R/R-*strike*-NFI there crowd -AUG

“Big mobs of people are fighting each other there.” (5MOYD #1383)

The imperfective can also be used to talk about a series of events that by themselves don't have duration, but are repeated over a period of time.

(4.45) **Exwako de meṭi ole.**

e-xwak -lo =de meṭi =ole
 APV-*sneeze*-NFI = 1 today = all

“I've been sneezing all day.”

Resultative complements (see section 6.5) are only possible with verbs marked as perfective.

(4.46) a. **TapaleḶ şuko ɲwe.**

ta-pale -Ḷ şuko ɲwe
 PSV-*finish*-NFP fire end

“The fire burnt out.” (5MOYD #1292)

b. ***Tapalelo şuko ɲwe.**

ta-pale -lo şuko ɲwe
 PSV-*finish*-NFI fire end

Intended: “The fire was burning out.”

Conative

The suffix **-(i)kwi** marks actions that someone wanted or tried to complete. It's mostly used with past events.

(4.47) **De pameņikwi pitakwi keseke e ke.**

de pa- meņi -ikwi pitakwi keseke e ke
1 CAUS- *step* -CON *pest* ID:*crushing* ERG 3

“I tried to make him step on the pest.”

(5MOYD #1069)

(4.48) **De kwugwonikwi ki le tabeņak ole.**

de kwu- gwon -ikwi ki le ta- beņa -k =ole
1 VEN- *say* -CON ORG 2 CMP- *arrange* -NFI = *all*

“I wanted to tell you everything was going to be okay.”

Since it competes with the non-future perfective, which entails that the event was completed, the conative implies that the attempt was not successful. This is just an implicature though, not an entailment: it's acceptable to say the following.

(4.49) **De palekwi kot, be eloto!**

de pale- ikwi kot be e- lot -!
1 *stop* -CON *boat* SS APV- *catch* -NFP

“I tried to stop the boat, and I succeeded.”

Habitual

The habitual suffix **-eme** is used to mark actions that something or someone tends to do. In Standard Mwanele, it's no longer used in matrix clauses. It's only used in relative clauses to derive modifiers. Since the suffix is used productively, has to do with aspect, and goes in the same morphological slot as the other tense/aspect markers, I think of it as part of the same paradigm, in spite of its restricted distribution.

(4.50) **Gwu kwemeņwe em le liwamwume ęolu?**

gwu kwu- eme -ęwe em =le li- wamwu -eme ęolu
Q VEN- *go* -FTP *friend* =2 REL- *drink* -HAB *tea*

“Is your friend who always drinks tea coming?”

4.4 Directional Prefixes

Mwanele has a set of six prefixes that mark some sort of motion associated with the verb relative to a deictic center. The deictic center can be understood from context, like in sentence 4.51, or stated directly, in which case it's marked with the particle **ki** (glossed **ORG** for 'origin' or 'origo'), like in sentences 4.53 and 4.52.

Prefix	Direction
kwu-	to, towards
xe-	from, away
je-	past, through
lu-	back to
no-	out to sea
beg-	ashore, inland

Table 4.3: Directional prefixes (roughly in order of frequency)

The two most common directional prefixes are the venitive prefix **kwu-**, which marks motion towards the deictic center and the andative prefix **xe-**, which marks motion away from the deictic center. Both drop their vowel before other vowels.

(4.51) **Kwemele jin xamik lakwu tanuge.**

kwu-eme -l jin xamik lakwu tanuge
 VEN-go -NFP person heal check sick.person

“The doctor came and examined the patient.”

(5MOYD #1231)

(4.52) **Gwu kwemeŋwe le xe mekil ki de?**

gwu kwu-eme -ŋwe = le = xe mekil ki de
 Q VEN-go -FTP = 2 = DP today ORG 1

“Then won't you come visit us today?”

(5MOYD #1325)

(4.53) **Ekwuñadele anam ki lep.**

e-kwu-ñade -l anam ki lep
 APV- VEN-float -NFP duck ORG edge

“The duck floated up to the surface.”

(5MOYD #1263)

(4.54) **Xemenṅwe de ṅe piḍaṅwolo Sowaṅ.**

xe-eme-ṅwe =de ṅe pi-ḍaṅwo -lo Sowaṅ
 AND-gO -NFP =1 DS NEG-*be.happy*-NFI NAME

“I’m going to leave and Sowaṅ is not happy [about it].” (5MOYD #1337)

The venitive is often used to mark giving and placement verbs or to mark speech at or to someone. The recipient or target is marked with **ki**.

(4.55) **Takwumejo! kema gegobi ki Ḍijak.**

ta-kwu-mejo -! kema ge=gobi ki Ḍijak
 PSV- VEN- *give.as.gift*-NFP *table* ORN= *wood* ORG NAME

“Ḍijak was given a wooden table as a gift.” (5MOYD #1244)

The venitive can also be used to make verb forms indicating the beginning or onset of an action, especially to turn activity verbs into inchoative achievement verbs. Inchoative verbs with the venitive are usually also marked as perfective.

(4.56) **Ekwufalakwu! ke ṅi xi gimwewe gwa.**

e-kwu-ḥalakwu -! =ke ṅi xi gimwe =we gwa
 APV- VEN- *steal* -NFP =3 *two* *be.at* *farm* =LNK *some*

“The two of them went off stealing at someone’s farm.” (5MOYD #1356)

The prefix **je-** marks continuation to the other side of the deictic center. When I started Mwaneḷe, I wasn’t sure what to call this prefix. I decided to gloss it as PRL and figured I could pick perrelative, prorelative or something else later on. That was 2018. Still not settled. I’m calling it perrelative here, but you might see it as prorelative, continuative or something else in other documentation. It can be motion through, across, around or past.

(4.57) **Aḷin jekisi de lepe emelap.**

aḷin je-kisi =de lepe e-melap
mouse PRL- *pass* =1 *closely* APV- *run*

“The mouse ran right past me.”

(4.58) **Gwu ejesodo le piḷe ki pwek?**

gwu e- je-sodo =le piḷe ki pwek
 Q APV- PRL- *jump* =2 *be.able* ORG *ring*

“Can you jump through the hoop?”

The perlicative can also convey a sense of duration to verbs.

(4.59) **Talot xe pilot lakejewewuwe gebe!**

ta-lot =xe pi-lot lak- e- je-wewu =we gebe
 PSV- catch =DP NEG- catch RSN- APV- PRL- cry =LNK child

“I don’t know what to do, the kid just keeps on crying!”

The prefix **lu-** marks returning to a previous location, giving or moving something back to a previous location, or return to a former state.

(4.60) **Lelepikaŋ de memakil tadejo.**

le- lu-pikaŋ =de memakil ta-dejo
 R/R- RVS- be.home =1 every.day PSV- tire

“I go back home tired every day.”

(4.61) **De lun siwu ole litakwumejo e ke.**

de lu-n =siwu ole li- ta-kwu-n e ke
 1 RVS- give =DP all REL- PSV- VEN -give.gift ERG 3

“I return everything that he gives me.”

The last two directional prefixes are **beg-** for motion inland or towards the shore, and **no-** for motion out to sea. These are relatively rare, especially in inland areas.

(4.62) **Begemeŋ de, be lekwubwuŋ ki leŋa meŋok.**

beg-eme-ŋ =de be le-kwu-bwu-ŋ ki leŋa meŋok
 ASHORE- go -NFP =1 SS R/R- VEN- sit -NFP ORG cover tide

“I went back to shore and sat down on the jetty.”

(WHELK: A.1)

(4.63) **Megwa gapolo de, ŋe eŋaŋomeŋ nitateguwe bwo xwego.**

megwa gapo-lo =de ŋe e- no-ŋome-ŋ
 sun burn -NFI =1 DS APV- ASEA- wade -NFP

ni- ta-tegu =we bwo xwego
 PRP- PSV- find =LNK fish shellfish

“The sun was scorching us and we waded out to search for seafood.”

(WHELK: A.1)

Death Idioms

Mwaneḷe has several idioms for death involving directional prefixes. It's traditional for Mwane people to be cremated after death. Ashes are sometimes metaphorically referred to as **ṭa** 'sand' returning to the soil.

(i) **leme ki ṭa te**

lu-eme ki ṭa te
 RVS- go ORG sand big
 "to die, to pass away"

One less polite expression for death hinges on the distinction between the verb **eme**, a motion verb for animate subjects, and **eḷo**, a motion verb for inanimate subjects. In sentence (ii), you're saying that someone doesn't count as an animate subject anymore, so they must have died.

(ii) **xeme ki xeme, be kweḷo ki kweḷo**

xe-eme ki xe-eme be kwu-eḷo ki kwu-eḷo
 AND- go.ANIM ORG AND- go.ANIM SS VEN- go.INAN ORG VEN- go.INAN
 "to die, to croak"

4.5 Subordinators

There are four affixes that mark subordinate forms: **li-** marks relative clauses, **ta-** marks complement clauses, **ni-** marks purpose adverbial clauses and **lak-** marks reason adverbial clauses. When a verb heads a subordinate clause, the affix marking subordination is always the leftmost on the verb. The verbs marked with **ta-**, **ni-** and **lak-** are all nominalized. Their subject follows them, linked with the clitic =**we**, similar to a possessor. The syntax of subordinate clauses is discussed further in sections 7.4 and 7.5.

Relativizer li-

The main verb of a relative clause is marked with the prefix **li-**, glossed as REL. This prefix contracts with the antipassive prefix **e-** to give **le-**, so for example |**li-e-in**| becomes **lejin** 'who goes to sleep'. Otherwise, if a verb begins with a vowel, an epenthetic /j/ is inserted after between the suffix and the root, so |**li-owu**| becomes **lijowu** 'who washes (something).'

(4.64) **De ʧeʃeḷ kasa litaʃukoḷ ika.**

de ʧeʃe -ḷ kasa li- ta- ʃuko -ḷ =ika
 1 see -NFP house REL- PSV- burn -NFP = already

“I saw a house that had burnt down.”

(5MOYD #1277)

Relative clauses come after the noun they modify. The head noun has the role of the subject of the relative clause, which is gapped. For more information about the syntax of relative clauses, see section 7.4.

Reason and Purpose Clauses

There are two types of adverbial clauses in Mwaneḷe. Clauses introduced with **ni-** mark the goal or purpose of the action described by the matrix clause. Usually, if **ni-** is followed by a vowel, it takes an epenthetic /j/, so from |**ni-im**| you get **nijim** ‘in order to eat (something)’. The sole exception is that the purpose clause form of the copula **i** is **ni** [nʲi] rather than the predicted ***niji**.

(4.65) **De pilemeḅwe ke niḷipikunawe Sowaḅ Mwana.**

de pilem -ḷwe =ke ni- pi- kuna =we Sowaḅ Mwana
 1 separate -FTP =3 PRP- NEG- yell =LNK NAME NAME

“I’ll separate them so Sowaḅ doesn’t yell at Mwana.”

(4.66) **Kwu dexi niḷipada je ka.**

kwu dexi ni- pa- da =je ka
 OPT mix PRP- CAUS- sweet =PROX DP

“Stir in order to sweeten it.”

(5MOYD #1265)

The event in a purpose clause describes an intended goal or purpose, but it does not have to culminate for the sentence to be true. Sentence 4.67 is still true if the goatherd never succeeded at feeding the goat. This is unlike resultative serial verb constructions, which do entail that the goal occurred.

(4.67) **Ḷin leme panomelo feja ḷime niḷipajim.**

ḷin leme pa- nome -lo feja ḷime ni- pa- im
 herder CAUS- cross -NFI goat pull PRP- CAUS- eat

“The herder was pulling the goat across to feed it.”

(5MOYD #1208)

Clauses introduced with **lak-** mark reasons that lead to the event described in the matrix clause. The /k/ in the prefix becomes /k^w/ before /w/ and deletes a following /j/, so **|lak-wewu|** becomes **lakwewu** ‘because (they) call’ and **|lak-jeŋ|** becomes **lakenŋ** ‘because (they) drink.’ The /k/ is dropped before other consonants, so **|lak-xe-eme|** gives **laxeme** ‘because (they) go away.’

(4.68) **Egiselo fune lebeđi lataşukwuwe gobida.**

e- gise -lo fune li- e-beđi lak- ta- şukwu =we gobida
 APV- spread -NFI smoke REL- APV- smell RSN- PSV- burn =LNK sandalwood

“The fragrant smoke was spreading because sandalwood was being burnt.”

(5MOYD #1205)

Reason clauses can also express causes of feelings or experiences in places where other languages might use complement clauses.

(4.69) **Di đule laxe le.**

di đule lak- xe =le
 1.COP grateful RSN- read =2

“Thanks for reading!”

lit. “I am grateful because of your reading.”

(4.70) **Ke paxeje mwaxwoł lakesiniłe xwulo.**

ke pa- xe- je mwaxwoł lak- e- sin -ł =we xwulo
 3 CAUS- AND- put ear RSN- APV- disappear -NFP =LNK donkey

“He complains that the donkey disappeared.”

lit. “He puts ears (complains) because of the donkey’s having disappeared.”

(5MOYD #1556)

When the subject or object of an adverbial clause is the same as that of the matrix clause, it can freely be dropped. In sentence 4.71, the subject of the purpose clause **nitadaka** ‘so that [she] gets healed’ refers to the same person as the matrix subject **ke** ‘she,’ so it can be dropped.

(4.71) **Kwemel ke ki Ta Łuwi nitadaka.**

kwu- eme -ł =ke ki Ta Łuwi ni- ta- đaka
 VEN- go -NFP =3 ORG PLACE PRP- PSV- heal

“She went to Ta Łuwi to get healed.”

(5MOYD #1340)

(4.72) **Egwodu olen Şabilo İatabweso.**

e- gwodu = olen Şabilo İak- ta- bweso
 APV- *play* = *always* NAME RSN- PSV- *slump*

“Şabilo always plays around because he’s lazy.”

(5MOYD #1254)

Complementizer ta-

The prefix **ta-** marks nominalized verbs that head complement clauses that are the object of the matrix clause’s main verb. It blends with the antipassive prefix to give **te-**, for example |**ta-e-in**| becomes **tejin** ‘that (they) go to sleep.’ Otherwise, an epenthetic /j/ is inserted before vowels. Unlike with the homophonous passive voice prefix **ta-**, this happens even when the following vowel is another /a/. Contrast the passive voice |**ta-alawo**| **talawo** ‘(they) are woken up’ with the subordinate |**ta-alawo**| **tajalawo** ‘that (they) wake up.’

Verbs marked with **ta-** are always intransitive. They are passive by default and can’t also take the passive voice prefix **ta-**.

Ta-complements are most often the objects of verbs of speech or cognition or of impersonal constructions expressing modality, but they can also occur as the complements of coverbs that were fronted to main verb position. Complements of coverbs that *aren’t* fronted, however, can’t be marked with **ta-**.

(4.73) **Bwa gwon taşem tapiwamwuwe xi lu.**

bwa gwon ta-şem ta- pi- wamwu = we xi = lu
 dad say CMP- *must* CMP- NEG- *drink* = LNK *thing* = *such*

“Dad says you shouldn’t believe things like that.”

(5MOYD #1366)

(4.74) **Tadelo tak tagwon je ete mikwada.**

ta- delo = tak ta- gwon = je e- te mikwa- da
 PSV- *be.possible* = DP CMP- *say* = PROX APV- *surpass* *simple* - WRT

“Of course it’s possible to say this more simply.”

(5MOYD #1388)

(4.75) **De ņekek taşekese de eđanwo.**

de ņek -k ta- İe- kese = de e- đanwo
 1 *be.at.time* - NFI CMP- R/R- *accompany* = 1 APV- *be.happy*

“As long as we’re together, I’ll be happy.”

(5MOYD #1400)

Verbs with **ta-** can also take the antipassive to promote the agent to subject, but there is no way to reintroduce the object.

(4.76) **De pamwelo tejimwe gebe.**

de pamwe -lo ta- e- im =we gebe
 1 deny -NFI CMP- APV- eat = LNK child

“I am forbidding the child from eating.”

(5MOYD #1256)

For more information about the syntax of complement clauses, see section 7.5.

4.6 Irregular Verbs

Stem-final Glides

TODO

Several verbs have stems ending in the glides /j w/. In Modern Mwanele, there are no syllable-final glides, but with suffixes that add echo vowels for consonant-final stems, the glides resurface. This is a result of recent sound changes

$$\begin{aligned} \text{ew, aw} &\rightarrow \text{o} / _ \$ \\ \text{ej, aj} &\rightarrow \text{e} / _ \$ \end{aligned}$$

These got rid of diphthongs present at an earlier time in the language, but in a few places the glides got resyllabified and preserved. There are four common patterns: stems ending in **-aw**, ending in **-aj**, ending in **-ew** and ending in **-ej**. The ones ending in **-w** occur most often because of the common verbalizing suffix **-u**. Here are examples of verbs given in their citation form and their non-future perfective form.

- (4.77) a. **panalo panalawal**
stretch stretch.NFP
- b. **enopwe enopwajal**
descend descend.NFP
- c. **sineto sinetewel**
take.off take.off.NFP
- d. **te tajal**
surpass surpass.NFP

It's unpredictable whether a verb whose unmarked form ends in **-o** or **-e** has a stem-final glide, and if it does, it's unpredictable whether the underlying stem has **-a-** or **-e-**. Irregular verbs have their non-future perfective forms marked in the dictionary.

Motion Verbs

Mwanele has two basic motion verbs, **eme** and **eļo**. The verb **eme** is used with animate subjects, sometimes including natural forces that move of their own accord, such as waves and wind, while **eļo** is used with inanimate subjects. Both verbs are always intransitive, but do not take transitivity marking.

(4.78) a. **Kwemel ȳin xamik lakwu taȳuge.**

kwu-eme-ļ ȳin xamik lakwu taȳuge
VEN-go -NFP person heal check sick.person

b. ***Ekwemel ȳin xamik lakwu taȳuge.**

e-kwu-eme-ļ ȳin xamik lakwu taȳuge
APV- VEN-go -NFP person heal check sick.person

Intended: “The doctor came and examined the patient.” (5MOYD #1231)

The subordinating prefixes **ta-** and **li-** contract with the antipassive marker to give **te-** and **le-**. In informal speech, especially in Southern Mwanele, people sometimes use the forms **te-** and **le-** with the two basic motion verbs, even though the antipassive never appears with these verbs on its own.

(i) **Le piȳe em min lekwemeȳwe ki kasa de.**

le pi-ȳe em min li- e-kwu-eme-ȳwe ki kasa =de
2 NEG-see friend know REL-APV- VEN-go -FTP ORG house =2

“You don’t recognize the friend who will come to our house.” (5MOYD #1330)

Basic Position Verbs

Similar to motion verbs, basic position verbs have a two-way animacy distinction: **xiti** is used with animate subjects and **joti** is used for inanimate subjects.

When used as the minor verb in an SVC to express location, **xiti** and **joti** can both be shortened to **xi**. If they’re moved to the major verb position, then the distinction reappears.

	ANIM	INAN
POS	xiti	joti
NEG	piti	poti

Table 4.4: Positional verb paradigm

(4.79) a. **Ejimo de xi gijim.**

e - im - lo = de xi gijim
 APV - eat - NFI = 1 be.in main.room

“I’m eating in the main room.”

b. **Taṭijoḷ gobi xi gobila.**

ta - ṭijo - ḷ gobi xi gobila
 PSV - topple - NFP tree be.in orchard

“A tree fell in the orchard.”

c. **Le xitik lot ejim?**

le xiti - k = lot e - im
 2 be.in.ANIM - FTI = WH APV - eat

“Where will you be eating?”

d. **Gobi jotiḷ lot taṭijo?**

gobi joti - ḷ = lot ta - ṭijo
 tree be.in.INAN - NFP = WH PSV - topple

“Where did the tree fall?”

The positional verbs also have irregular negative forms. Rather than being negated by the prefix **pi-**, they take negative stems **piti** ‘to not be in’ for animate subjects and **poti** ‘to not be in’ for inanimate subjects.

(4.80) a. ***De pixiti ṅwede.**

de *pi - xiti ṅwede
 1 NEG - be.in.ANIM city

b. **De piti ɲwede.**

de piti ɲwede
 1 NEG.be.in.ANIM city

Intended: “I’m not in the city.”

Unstressed Roots with Obligatory Directionals

There are six verbs whose roots are unstressed. All but one of these verbs have a fossilized causative (see next section), and all but one have a root that’s just a single consonant. The putting/taking verbs are originally causatives of the positional verbs and the sending/ordering verbs are originally causatives of the motion verbs. That’s why these ones are sensitive to the animacy of the object when the others were sensitive to the animacy of the subject.

Root	Meaning
pa-x	‘to put, to take (someone)’
pa-je	‘to put, to take (something)’
pa-m	‘to send, to order (someone)’
pa-ɭ	‘to send, to order (something)’
pa-gwap	‘to lend, to borrow’
-n	‘to give, to take, to return’

Table 4.5: The six atonic verbs requiring directional prefixes

These verbs have to take directional prefixes immediately before the roots, and the directional prefixes are stressed as if they were the first syllable of the root of a regular verb.

One consequence of this is that the echo vowel that the verbs with single-consonant roots take is determined by the directional prefix.

(4.81) **Ke pakwuxwuɭ kolepe, be paxexɭ ga.**

ke pa-kwu-x -ɭ kole -pe be pa-xe-x -ɭ =ga
 3 CAUS- VEN- *put* -NFP kitten -DIM SS CAUS- AND- *put* -NFP = *again*

“She picked up the kitten and took it out again.”

Fossilized Causatives

In some verbs, such as the putting/taking and sending/ordering verbs from above, the causative is fossilized as part of the stem. These aren't entirely new stems because directional prefixes can still freely come between **pa-** and the rest of the stem. Some of them have stems that don't exist as regular verbs without the prefix. Since the causative and passive voice prefixes usually occupy the same morphological slot, regular causatives cannot be passivized, but verbs with fossilized causatives can be. The verb **pa-!o!** means 'to throw' but it's also the causative form of **e!o!** 'to fly.' When it's passivized, the only possible meaning is 'to be thrown,' and never *'to be made to fly.' TODO

(4.82) **Ke paxe!o! subelak.**

ke pa- xe-!o! subelak
3 CAUS- AND- fly seagull

"He makes the seagull fly away."
Or: "He throws the seagull away."

(4.83) **Tapaxe!o! subelak e ke.**

ta- pa- xe-!o! subelak e ke
PSV- CAUS- AND- fly seagull ERG 3

"The seagull is thrown away by him."
Not: "The seagull is made to fly away by him."

Verbs with fossilized causatives will be noted in the lexicon with the prefix **pa-** attached before their stem with a hyphen.

4.7 Postverbal Clitics

Mwanele has a series of clitics that can follow the verb. These clitics usually follow the verb directly, but when a nominalized verb is linked to its subject with the possessive construction, these clitics follow the subject.

Immediately after the verb are unstressed absolutive personal pronouns like **de**, **le**, and **ke**, the question word **lot** when it's used as a pronoun, and quantifiers like **ole** 'all', **gwa** 'any' and **epi** 'PL' when they are used as pronouns. Next are **lo** 'so' and **sa** 'very' when used to mark information structure. Next are clitics with proper adverbial meaning, like **njeke** 'suddenly' or **ika** 'already'. Last are adverbs that refer to the discourse, either by relating the clause to other clauses or by expressing the speaker's thoughts about the clause.

Many of these can occur together in one clause, in which case they all constitute a single prosodic word.

(4.84) **ḶelupikaṅaḶ ke lo ga kwo te.**

Ḷe- lu- pikaṅ -Ḷ =ke =lo =ga =kwo =te
 R/R- RVS- *be.home* -NFP =3 =so =again =in.the.end =you.know

“So he did end up coming back home again you know.”

Several of these clitics can also attach to clausal coordinators **be** and **ḡe**.

(4.85) **Talawo de, be ḡeke Ḷebeṅa.**

t- alawo =de be ḡeke Ḷe- beṅa
 PSV- *wake.up* =1 SS *right.away* R/R- *tidy*

“I woke up and cleaned myself up right away.”

Discourse Particles

Discourse particles relate a sentence to its larger discourse-level context or show a speaker’s attitude towards a sentence in that context. In MwaneḶe, many discourse particles are postverbal clitics.⁵ These clitics tend to come at the end of the chain of postverbal clitics.

The clitic **tak** marks that the speaker thinks something is saying something that they think is clear or obvious. **Tak** is also used alone or in **tak lo** as backchanneling for things the speaker thinks are clearly correct.

(4.86) **Ebasi ke tak gapo ḡolu.**

e- basi =ke =tak gapo ḡolu
 APV- *do.poorly* =3 =of.course cook tea

“He’s clearly bad at making tea.”

(4.87) **Tadelo tak tagwon je ete mikwada.**

ta- delo =tak ta- gwon =je e- te mikwa- da
 PSV- *be.possible* =of.course CMP- say =PROX APV- *surpass* simple -WRT

“Of course it’s possible to say this more simply.” (5MOYD #1388)

The clitic **mu** emphasizes that something is true when the speaker expects the listener does not believe it. It can imply that the speaker has some sort of knowledge or experience that the listener does not. Sentence 4.88 could be said in a context where the listener has never had tea brewed by Olu, but the speaker has had many a cup of bitter, overbrewed tea. **Mu** is also used with echo verbs to positively answer negative questions.

⁵Many of these examples first appeared in the post *Discourse Markers in MwaneḶe* on r/conlangs.

(4.88) **Ebasi ke mu gapo nolu.**

e - basi = ke = mu gapo nolu
 APV - *do.poorly* = 3 = *actually* cook tea

“He is actually bad at making tea.”

(4.89) **Context: Gwu le pipakwux de min? ‘Do you not understand me?’****Pakwux mu!**

pa - kwu - x = mu
 CAUS - VEN - *put* = *actually*

“No, I do!”

The clitic **xe** is used in a clause that the speaker is conceding as true in spite of something. This can be something that the speaker wishes weren’t true but is admitting that it is or a single positive aspect of an otherwise negative situation. It can also mark clauses that give the background information that some other clause contrasts against. I usually gloss it as CONC for ‘concessive.’

(4.90) **Esiniḷ megwa, ɲe lo ejin de xe tatem.**

e - sin -ḷ megwa ɲe = lo e - in = de = xe ta - tem
 APV - *move.out.of.sight* - NFP sun DS = so APV - *sleep* = 1 = *conc* PSV - *need*

“The sun’s gone down, so [I guess] I should go to sleep.”

(4.91) **Pi loṭon...pitanugeto ke xe ɲweḷe.**

pi loṭon pi - ta - ɲugeto = ke = xe ɲweḷe
 NEG HES NEG - PSV - *sicken* = 3 = DP *totally*

“It’s not, well...they’re not completely sick.”

(5MOYD #1324)

(4.92) **Je ṣame xe miṇeda ole litagwon e le, ɲe ɲije le oṇe kiḷe.**

je ṣame xe miṇe -da ole li - ta - gwon e le
 PROX *be.best* CONC *understandable* - WRT all REL - PSV - *say* ERG 2

ɲe = ɲije le oṇe kiḷe
 DS = *still* 2 *starve* *knowledge*

“This may be the most coherent thing you’ve ever said, but you’re still wrong.”

Xe can also be used in questions that the speaker expects will be answered negatively. The question below could be asked in a context where the speaker has just learned that something is probably going to prevent the listener from visiting.

(4.93) **Gwu kwemenḡwe le xe mekiḡ ki de?**

gwu kw-eme-ḡwe =le =xe mekiḡ ki de
 Q VEN-go -FTP =2 =CONC today ORG 1

“Won’t you come visit us today?”

(5MOYD #1325)

The clitic **ḡole** marks a statement that revises or presents an alternative to a previous statement or corrects something understood between the speaker and the listener. Unlike in many languages, Mwaneḡe coordinating conjunctions do not mark contrast between the clauses being coordinated. Instead, adverb clitics like **ḡole** are often cliticized to the conjunction.

(4.94) **De imiḡwe ḡole nomek kwi.**

de im-ḡwe =ḡole nomek kwi
 1 eat-FTP =rather congee want

“Actually, I’d like to have congee.”

(4.95) **Ke gwonoḡ takwune ḡoseḡa, be ḡole kwunuḡ pweḡe.**

ke gwon-ḡ ta-kwu-n =e ḡoseḡa be =ḡole kwu-n -ḡ pweḡe
 3 say -NFP CMP- VEN-give =LNK tapestry SS =rather VEN-give-NFP money

“They said they would give a tapestry, but they gave money instead.”

The clitic **ḡije** marks that a statement is true in spite of some context. Unlike **xe**, which marks a phrase giving the background against which some new clause contrast, **ḡije** marks the new clause with the contrasting information. It’s possible to use both of them in their respective clauses, but it’s more common to use either one or the other.

(4.96) **De ḡijo taxwakwe lam, be ḡije pigwon Kuḡaḡe piḡe.**

de ḡijo ta-xwak =we lam be =ḡije pi-gwon Kuḡaḡe piḡe
 1 do.with.skill CMP-learn =LNK language SS =still NEG-speak Qitec be.able

“I’m good at learning languages, but I [still] can’t speak Qitec.”

The clitic **siwu** marks that the speaker is sad or disappointed that a statement is true. It can also be used alone or with **lo** as backchanneling during a sad story.

(4.97) **De pikiḡe siwu gi ke luḡu...**

de pi-kile =siwu gi =ke luḡu
 1 NEG-know =DP place =3 be.same

“I don’t know where he is either..”

A few discourse marking clitics are only used in questions. The clitic **tedi** is used in questions where the speaker is confirming information that either they doubt is true or are surprised is true. For example, the following question could be asked if the speaker either doesn't believe that the listener's boyfriend actually shared a story or as a response to show they're surprised that he shared it.

(4.98) **Gwu isem le kwugwon! je tedi ki em le ole?**

gwu isem =le kwu-gwon-! =je =tedi ki em =le=ole
 Q partner =2 VEN-say -NFP =PROX =DP ORG friend =2 =all

“Did your partner really tell that to all your friends?”

The clitic **galu** also only occurs in questions. It's used when the speaker is hesitant to commit to some presupposition that the question makes. For example, in sentence 4.99, the speaker is asking about someone they believe has left already, but they are open to being contradicted.

(4.99) **Ke nke! lot galu !elupikan?**

ke nke -e! =lot =galu !e- lu-pikan
 3 be.at.time -NFP =what =DP R/R-RVS-be.home

“When (if at all) did he go home?”

Galu can also be used to soften potentially impolite questions about sensitive or offensive subjects.

(4.100) **Le gapo! galu kajin basi !aki lot?**

le gapo-! =galu kajin basi !ak-i lot
 2 cook -NFP =DP food do.poorly RSN-COP what

“What made you make such bad food?”

5 Verbal Constructions

I haven't really worked on this chapter, but there's a lot of information that's going to be laid out in it that I think will be important for the activity, so here are a few notes and examples that I hope will help. Sorry it's so sparse!

5.1 The Copula

The verb **i** serves as a copula, linking subjects to noun complements or adjective complements. **I** contracts with the pronouns **de**, **le** and **ke** to give **di**, **li** and **ki**. It can optionally also contract with **je** and **jo** to give **jeji** and **joji**.

(5.1) **Xwejo i mek xo gama.**

xwejo i mek xo gama
constellation COP *bright and beautiful*

“The constellation is bright and beautiful.”

(5.2) **Li ɬaɬoɬ, ɲe lo eɬeɬe de ɬime.**

li ɬaɬoɬ ɲe lo e-ɬeɬe = de ɬime
2.COP *hero* DS *so* APV-*see* =1 *pull*

“You're a hero, so I'm jealous.”

(5MOYD #1533)

Unlike other verbs, the copula can be repeated to mark conjunction before multiple complements, replacing the conjunction **xo** between adjectives or nouns. If the verb is repeated, then any inflectional affixes appear only on the first instance of the verb.

(5.3) a. **Xwejo ilo mek xo gama.**

xwejo i -lo mek xo gama
constellation COP-NFI *bright and beautiful*

b. **Xwejo ilo mek i gama.**

xwejo i -lo mek i gama
constellation COP-NFI *bright* COP *beautiful*

“The constellation was bright and beautiful.”

The verb **i** can't take all of the inflections that a typical Mwanele verb can. It can't take directional prefixes, perfective aspect markers, or valence-reducing voice markers. Rather than taking the negative prefix, it has a negative form **pi**. In the case of the valence-reducing or perfective aspect markers, this restriction might just be due to semantic incompatibility. The directional prefixes, however, are disallowed even when they have idiomatic uses with meanings that could be used with the copula.

(5.4) a. ***Gwu le jejilo onat?**

gwu le je-i -lo onat
 Q 2 PRL-COP-NFI *harmonious*

Intended: “Are you still getting along?”

b. ***Lak li ga mipo xalixala.**

lak lu-i =ga mipo xalixala
sky RVS-COP = *again* *temperate* ID:*nice.weather*

Intended: “It's nice out again.”

The copula can take the causative prefix **pa-**. The verb **paji** can mean ‘to make st. be st.’ but it can also mean ‘to cause st., to give rise to st., to make st. happen.’ Unlike **i**, the verb **paji** can take valence-reducing prefixes and perfective aspect markers.

(5.5) **Lepajil ke lo i kepwek.**

le- pa-i -l =ke =lo i kepwek
 R/R-CAUS-COP-NFP = 3 =so COP *python*

“Then they turned into pythons.”

(5MOYD #1373)

In cases like **ta-** clauses or causatives where agents/subjects would typically be introduced with the particle **e**, they're introduced with **i** when the main verb is the copula.

(5.6) **Tadelolo taji ke i nisi.**

ta-delo -lo ta-i =ke i nisi
 PSV-*be.possible*-NFI CMP-COP = 3 COP *rabbit*

“It was possible that he was a rabbit.”

(5MOYD #1360)

(5.7) **Ḷepaji de i geno kwolu isem.**

Ḷe- pa-i =de i geno kwolu isem.
R/R- CAUS- COP =1 COP *wide help partner*

“I’m making myself fat for my partner.”

(5MOYD #1160)

The copula can also be used as a coverb, marking a temporary state, with a meaning similar to the preposition ‘as.’ When **i** is used as a coverb, it indicates a state of the verb’s subject, not object.

Sentence 5.8 comes from a story involving shapeshifters, where the speaker and listener can take different forms. Even though **i ɬaɬoɬ** has no pronouns, it refers unambiguously to the speaker, as the subject of the verb of the clause it’s contained in. Sentence 5.8 refers to a scenario where the speaker is in the form of an osprey, not the listener. On the other hand, in sentence 5.9, the subject is the listener, so the phrase **i ɬaɬoɬ** unambiguously refers to a scenario where the listener is in the form of an osprey.

(5.8) **Le imenɣwe de mwat talotɣwe de i ɬaɬoɬ e le.**

le im -ɣwe =de mwat ta-lot -ɣwe =de i ɬaɬoɬ e le
 2 eat -FTP =1 depend.on PSV-catch -FTP =1 COP k.o.bird ERG 2

“You would have eaten me if you had caught me as an osprey.” (5MOYD #1376)

(5.9) **Le lotɣwe de i ɬaɬoɬ.**

le lot -ɣwe =de i ɬaɬoɬ
 2 catch -FTP =1 COP k.o.bird

“You would have caught me while you were an osprey.”

Not: “You could have caught me while I was an osprey.”

The copula is also used with the purpose and reason subordinators to express goals or causes that are nouns rather than verbs or full clauses.

(5.10) **Exemenɣi de ɭaki boɬosa.**

e- xe- meɣi -ɭ =de ɭak-i boɬosa
 APV- AND- run -NFP =1 RSN- COP spider

“I ran away because of the spider.”

In addition to the copula **i**, Mwaneɭe has a verb **oli**, which can introduce non-restrictive modifiers or incidental information. It can work with the same syntax as the copula **i**, linking nouns with noun or adjective complements.

(5.11) **De loli fejala gapo kaso.**

de li-oli fejala gapo kaso
 1 REL-COP goatherd cook bread

“We goatherds cook bread.” (5MOYD #1620)

It can also be used in adverbial SVCs to mark that something is additional or incidental information.

(5.12) **De piṭeṣe ke ɭo ŋek je oli.**

de pi- ṭeṣe =ke =ɭo ŋek =je oli
 1 NEG- see =3 =anymore be.at.time =PROX by.the.way

“Now I can’t see him, by the way.”

5.2 Existential Verbs

Mwaneḷe has a set of four existential verbs, which are used to express location, possession, and existence. The subject of these verbs is the thing that exists and the object is the location that the subject is in. Possession is expressed as the possessee being located in the possessor.

	ANIM	INAN
POS	xiti	joti
NEG	piti	poti

Table 5.1: Positional verb paradigm

As transitive verbs, they usually mean ‘to be in.’ They’re commonly used as coverbs.

The locative construction is also used to express possession. The possessee is said to be in the possessor, so the possessee is the subject and the possessor is the object.

(5.13) **Pweṇe poti de.**

pweṇe poti =de
 money not.be.in =1

“I don’t have any money.”

As intransitive verbs with the antipassive, they can be used in existential clauses, sort of like English’s ‘there is/are...’

(5.14) **Epitilo gobi lexwejok ṇiḷewe de ṇipitaṣukwu.**

e-piti -lo gobi li- e-xwejo-k ṇi-ḷewe =de ṇi- pi- ta-ṣukwu
 APV- not.be.in-NFI tree REL-APV- shade-FTI PRP-cover =1 PRP-NEG-PSV-burn

“There was no tree which would cast shade to protect me so I wouldn’t burn.”

(5MOYD #1611)

Used as a transitive verb with **je** or **jo** as an object, it's used to present something new.

(5.15) **Sunepe xiti je likaxwoḷ kalo gome.**

sunepe xiti =je li-kaxwo-ḷ kalo gome
girl be.in = PROX REL- sketch -NFP lion start

“Here’s a girl who started to draw a lion.”

(5MOYD #1406)

(5.16) **Emen xiti je lipijim xem ke.**

emen xiti =je li-pi-im xem =ke
cat be.in = PROX REL- NEG- eat food = 3

“Here’s a cat that doesn’t eat its food.”

(5MOYD #1405)

5.3 Comparative, Superlative, and Related Constructions

TODO

Mwaneḷe has a suffix **-(a)da** used in a variety of constructions where adjectives are not used attributively or predicatively, including comparatives and superlatives. Most speakers extend this use to adverbs as well. I usually gloss this suffix as WRT for ‘with respect to,’ since many of its uses could be understood as specifying that something is true in terms of a certain quality.

The suffix is **-da** on words that end in vowels and **-ada** on words that end in consonants. Adjectives derived from ornative modifiers lose their initial **ge-**, even when they’re synchronically monomorphemic. The WRT form of **geno** ‘wide’ is **noda**, even though the word **no** isn’t used. Similarly, adverbs ending in the manner adverb suffix **-ḷe** lose that suffix when they take **-da**, so the WRT form of **ḷweḷe** ‘completely’ is **ḷweda**. This sometimes gives words that look like verbs or nouns with the suffix **-da**, but since it’s only used with adverbs or adjectives, those cases are not ambiguous.

Here are descriptions of the constructions where the suffix **-da** is used.

Comparatives

Comparisons are expressed using the verb **te** ‘to surpass’ plus the WRT form of an adjective or adverb. The WRT form of the modifier comes after the verb in the same place as an adverb. The object or standard of comparison is the object of the verb if there is one. For free comparisons, **te** is put in the antipassive. For predicative comparisons with adjectives, **te** is usually the main verb, as in sentence 5.17. For comparisons with adverbs, **te** can be used as the main verb, but it can also be used to head an adverbial SVC, like in sentence 5.18. The WRT form of the adjective or adverb comes after **te**, even when it is not the main verb. This is one of the few instances where adverbs can appear with minor verbs in an SVC.

(5.17) **Befa je te dada bemwat jo.**

befa =je te da -da bemwat =jo
 lychee =PROX surpass sweet -WRT apple =DIST

“These lychees are sweeter than those apples.”

(5.18) **Tadelo tak tagwon je ete mikwada.**

ta- delo =tak ta- gwon =je e- te mikwa -da
 PSV- *be.possible* =DP CMP- *say* =PROX APV- *surpass* *simple* -WRT

“Of course it’s possible to say this more simply.” (5MOYD #1388)

For attributive comparatives, you can make a relative clause from the predicative construction. For a free comparative where the subject is *less* rather than more, you can passivize **te** in the relative clause.

(5.19) **Ṭaḷoḷ lete lapada lotoḷ xi litate lapada.**

ṭaḷoḷ li- e- te lap -da lot -ḷ xi li- ta- te lap -da
bird REL- APV- *surpass* *fast* -WRT *catch* -NFP *thing* REL- PSV- *surpass* *fast* -WRT

“The faster bird caught the slower one.”

When used by itself, without any adjective or adverb, the verb **te** can mean ‘to be better, bigger, or more.’

(5.20) **Takwi tete ke ekwole.**

ta- kwi ta- e- te =ke e- kwole
 PSV- *want* CMP- APV- *surpass* =3 APV- *work*

“We want them to do the work better.” (5MOYD #1546)

Superlatives

Superlatives are expressed using the verb **ṣame** ‘to come first’ in a similar manner to comparatives. **Ṣame** can be used as the main verb of a sentence or in adverbial SVCs for predicative superlatives and as the verb of a relative clause for attributive superlatives.

With superlatives, the subject is being selected as the best member of a set rather than just being compared to a single other point of reference. There are two ways to express the group of things the subject is the best of. One way is to use the transitive form of the verb, where the set is the object of the verb. The other way is to use the intransitive form of the verb with the andative prefix **xe-** and have the set introduced with the particle **ki**. Here are two sentences with the same meaning, framed in each of these two ways.

(5.21) a. **En je şame ole te mikwada liṭaṭeşe e ke.**

eṅ =je şame =ole =te mikwa -da li- ta-ṭeşe e ke
thing = PROX *be.most* = *all* = DP *bland* -WRT REL-PSV-*see* ERG 3

“It is simply the blandest thing she has ever seen.”

b. **Exeşame je te mikwada ki ole liṭaṭeşe e ke.**

e- xe-şame =je =te mikwa -da ki ole li- ta-ṭeşe e ke
 APV-AND-*be.most* = PROX = DP *bland* -WRT ORG *all* REL-PSV-*see* ERG 3

“It is simply the blandest thing she has ever seen.” (5MOYD #1551)

Mwaneḷe has two other verbs that work similarly to **şame**: **ṅime** ‘to be second,’ which is used for the second best or second most out of a group and **ṅode** ‘to be last,’ which is used for the worst or the least out of a group. Like **şame** but unlike **te**, these can be used with the two constructions above.

Other Constructions with -da

There are several constructions other than the comparative and superlative that express degree and use the suffix **-da**. The verb **nelo** ‘to satisfy’ is used with a modifier with **-da** to express that something has enough of a quality and the verb **teso** ‘to overflow’ is used to express that something has too much of a quality. Both of these verbs can optionally take a direct object that is a person or thing which judges the subject to be enough/too much, a standard by which the subject is enough/too much or a nominalized clause expressing an event for which the subject is enough/too much.

(5.22) **Tapam tanelokwe ṭoga teda beṭalu ole.**

ta-pam ta-nelo -k =we ṭoga te -da beṭalu =ole
 PSV-*believe* CMP-*satisfy*-FTI = LNK *basket* *big* -WRT *sapote* = *all*

“I think this basket should be big enough for all the sapotes.”

(5.23) **Ṭa litakwun teso peda tapalalewe kasa.**

ṭa li- ta-kwu-n teso pe -da ta- pa-lale =we kasa
land REL-PSV-*VEN-give* *overflow* *small* -WRT CMP-CAUS-*stand* = LNK *house*

“The land they gave me is too small to build a house.” (5MOYD #1593)

Forms with the suffix **-da** are also used with the verb **ṭeşe** ‘to see’ to express that something seems a certain way to someone. If there’s a specific experiencer then they are coded as the subject of **ṭeşe**, otherwise the passive voice is used with the thing being observed as the subject.

(5.24) **De owu! eni kwolu Sowan, ɲe ta-ṭeṣe lo xenuk-da.**

de owu -l eni kwolu Sowan ɲe ta-ṭeṣe-lo xenuk-da
 1 wash-NFP foot help NAME DS PSV-see -NFI dirty -WRT

“I washed Sowaj’s feet, since they seemed dirty.”

(5MOYD #1065)

6 Serial Verb Constructions

Serial verb constructions (SVCs) are constructions that contain a predicate consisting of multiple verbs without any marker of subordination or coordination. SVCs are widely used in Mwaneḷe to describe complex events, show aspect and modality, express results, and add arguments to a predicate. Since Mwaneḷe does not have adpositions or adverbial/locative cases and has a relatively small class of adverbs, many meanings that would be expressed with those constructions in other languages are expressed with SVCs in Mwaneḷe.

This chapter opens with a discussion of the structure of SVCs in Mwaneḷe, followed by descriptions of common types of SVC.

6.1 Structure of an SVC

All sentences in Mwaneḷe contain at least one verb, either at the beginning of the sentence or right after the subject. That verb takes negation, tense, and aspect marking and hosts any clitic adverbs or discourse particles with scope over the whole sentence. It's possible to have other verbs that follow that verb, which can have their own objects, but usually can't take TAM marking or host postverbal clitics. I'll call the first group the 'main' verb or 'major verb' and the other ones 'minor verbs.'

SVCs in Mwaneḷe can be identified with the following four criteria:

(6.1) SVC Criteria

1. All verbs in the construction can be used as the sole verb of a clause.
2. All of the minor verbs share a subject with the main verb.
3. Negation and TAM are marked at most once per SVC, on the first verb.
4. No markers of coordination (**be**, **ḡe**, **xo**) or subordination (**ta-**, **ḡi-**, **ḷa-**) come between the verbs.

Criterion 1 tells us that all parts of an SVC have to be verbs in their own right. This is mostly straightforward—if it’s not constructed by serializing verbs, then it’s not a serial verb construction.

One place where Criterion 1 comes in handy is distinguishing verbs from adverbs. Mwanele has a lot of verbs that lexicalize manner as their primary sense and tend to be used most commonly to modify other verbs.

It’s usually possible to distinguish between true adverbs and adverbial SVCs by testing whether or not the verb’s modifier can occur as the main predicate of a sentence. One way to do that is to try and focus it. In example 6.3, by asking how the horse approached, you can focus the manner. Sentence 6.3a shows that **ḍimwu** can be a sentence’s main predicate, so it’s a verb and 6.2a is a bona fide SVC. On the other hand sentence 6.3b shows that **ḍime** can’t be a sentence’s main predicate, so it’s not a verb and sentence 6.2b definitely isn’t an SVC.

(6.2) Question: **Ekanawaḷ ade?** ‘What did the horse do?’

a. **Ekwumeṅi ke eḍimwu.**

e- kwu- meṅi = ke e- ḍimwu
APV- VEN- walk = 3 APV- do.bit.by.bit

‘It approached me bit by bit.’

b. **Ekwumeṅi ke ḍime.**

e- kwu- meṅi = ke ḍime
APV- VEN- walk = 3 bit.by.bit

‘It approached me bit by bit.’

(6.3) Question: **Ekanawaḷ ade ekwumeṅi?** ‘How did the horse approach you?’

a. **Eḍimwu ke ekwumeṅi.**

e- ḍimwu = ke e- kwu- meṅi
APV- do.bit.by.bit = 3 APV- VEN- walk

‘It approached me bit by bit.’

b. ***ḍime ke ekwumeṅi.**

ḍime = ke e- kwu- meṅi
bit.by.bit = 3 APV- VEN- walk

Intended: ‘It approached me bit by bit.’

Criterion 2 says that all minor verbs have to share their subject with the main verb. Mwanele doesn't allow switch-subject (or switch-function) SVCs.

Criterion 3 says that negation, tense, and aspect are only ever marked on the main verb, never on the minor verbs. SVCs get marked for TAM and negation as a whole. You can't negate part of an SVC, you have to negate the entire thing. (See section 6.5 for the only exception to this I've found so far.)

Criterion 4 says that SVCs have to be monoclausal. Sometimes you can express the same information by coordinating two clauses using **be** or **ne** that you can by serializing, but these aren't SVCs: they consist of separate clauses, which can take separate subjects, separate TAM marking, separate negation and so on. You can also use nominalizing prefixes to embed one clause in another, but again the embedded clause can have a separate subject, separate TAM marking and separate negation. It's not that these things don't coexist. You can coordinate and subordinate SVC clauses with other SVC clauses. But SVCs are strictly within one clause, so coordinators like **be** and **ne** or subordinators like **ta-** and **ni-** can't come between verbs in an SVC.

TODO

6.2 Manner or Adverbial SVCs

Mwanele lexicalizes many manner concepts as verbs. By themselves these verbs can mean 'to act in a certain manner' when intransitive and 'to treat something in a certain manner' or 'to do something in a certain manner' when transitive.

Some verbs have their manner or adverbial meanings as their only or primary sense, for example **basi** 'to do poorly' and **dimwu** 'to do bit by bit'. Others have actions as their primary sense and manners as secondary or idiomatic senses, such as **menek**, which generally means 'to wander, to travel,' but can also mean 'to do at random' when used adverbially.

These verbs are frequently used as the minor verb in SVCs to express manner.

(6.4) Takeman sap egiše.

ta- keman sap e- giše
PSV- open door APV- glide

"The door opens easily."

(5MOYD #1395)

(6.5) Ełajin sa Ałin ebasi.

e- ļajin =sa Ałin e- basi
APV- consider =ITSF NAME APV- do.poorly

"Ałin has bad opinions."

(5MOYD #1371)

(6.6) **Ke paxejelo bes emenek.**

ke pa- xe-je -lo bes e- menek
 3 CAUS- AND- *put* -NFI *fruit* APV- *wander*

“He’s picking fruit at random.”

(5MOYD #1447)

Adverbial minor verbs can be fronted to main verb either when they’re focused or when the speaker judges the manner to be the most important information in the sentence.

(6.7) **Ebasi ke kwu lekeŋ.**

e- basi =ke kwu lekeŋ
 APV- *do.poorly* =3 *use* *knife*

“He’s useless with knives.”

(5MOYD #1236)

Transitivity Agreement

Many speakers of Northern Mwanele require verbs in adverbial SVCs to agree in transitivity with the main verb. If the main verb is intransitive, then the adverbial minor verb will take **e-** or **ta-**, but if it’s transitive, it won’t take any detransitivizing morphology. Take a look at the contrast below, where **basi** takes the antipassive when the main verb is intransitive but not when it’s transitive.

(i) **Emwelo Mwana ebasi.**

e- mwelo Mwana e- basi
 APV- *sing* NAME APV- *do.poorly*

“Mwana is bad at singing.”

(ii) **Mwana gapo bwo basi.**

Mwana gapo bwo basi
 NAME *cook* *fish* *do.poorly*

“Mwana is bad at cooking fish.”

There are some verbs that express an aspect-like meaning when used as minor verbs in adverbial constructions. A few common ones include **gome** ‘to begin,’ ETC.

(6.8) **Sunepe xiti je likaxwoḷ kalo gome.**

sunepe xiti =je li-kaxwo-ḷ kalo gome
girl be.in = PROX REL- sketch -NFP lion start

“Here’s a girl who started to draw a lion.”

(5MOYD #1406)

6.3 Modal SVCs

Modality can be expressed by serializing modal verbs, most commonly **delo** ‘to be able’, **pile** ‘to be able to’, **ṭem** ‘to need’ and **kwi** ‘to want’, with verbs describing an event. The syntax is more or less the same as that of adverbial SVCs. For more information about modal verbs and modality in Mwaneḷe, see section ??.

(6.9) **...ṇe pijexenopwe piḷe ki baxo taṭeṣe.**

ṇe pi- e- xe-nopwe piḷe ki baxo ta-ṭeṣe
DS NEG- APV- AND- descend be.able ORG mountain PSV- see

“...so they can’t get down from the mountain [it seems].”

(5MOYD #1393)

(6.10) **Gwu min, de kwole ṣalo kwi, ṇe epoti xem.**

gwu min de kwole ṣalo kwi ṇe e-poti xem
Q know 1 work task want DS APV- not.be.in food

“You see, I want to work but there’s no food!”

(5MOYD #1077)

Modal verbs are almost always minor verbs rather than major verbs. One exception is when the modal verbs are focused, like in the sentence below where the speaker contrasts epistemic possibility (they know lobsters are present in the water) with circumstantial possibility (something prevented them that day from catching any). Since this is possible, I consider modal SVCs to be asymmetrical but unordered, even though almost all naturally produced examples of this construction have the modal verb as the minor verb.

(6.11) **Edelo de gije lot ṭake, be ṣoḷe pijepiḷeḷ.**

e-delō =de gije lot ṭake be ṣoḷe pi- e-piḷe-ḷ
APV- be.possible = 1 here catch lobster SS instead NEG- APV- be.able -NFP

“It’s possible for me to catch lobsters here, I just wasn’t able to.”

Evidentiality Marking

In informal registers, many speakers have innovated a construction marking evidentiality with serialized verbs. In this construction, speakers use passive-marked verbs of knowledge or perception as adverbial minor verbs to show the source of information. The most common verbs for this construction are **teşe** ‘to see’ for firsthand knowledge, **gwon** ‘to speak’ or **lamo** ‘hearing’ for hearsay, **pam** ‘to believe’ for inferences, beliefs or assumptions, and **kile** ‘to know’ for general knowledge.

(6.12) **Taşuko! kasa xet taşe.**

ta-şuko-! kasa xet ta-şeşe
 PSV- burn -NFP house away PSV- see

“A house burnt down [I saw].”

(5MOYD #1277)

(6.13) **...ŋe pijexenopwe piŋe ki baxo taşe.**

ŋe pi- e- xe-nopwe piŋe ki baxo ta-şeşe
 DS NEG-APV-AND- descend be.able ORG mountain PSV- see

“...so they can’t get down from the mountain [it seems]”

(5MOYD #1393)

These verbs can be used with assertions to provide the source of information like above, but they can also be used to show uncertainty on the part of the speaker. In that case they can still be said if the speaker is unsure and can later be denied. Speakers who don’t have the grammaticalized evidentiality construction usually interpret these sentences in the latter sense.

(6.14) **E!oto! ke tapam ŋe pitakiŋe xe boto.**

e-!ot -! =ke ta-pam ŋe pi- ta-kile =xe boto
 APV- catch -NFP =3 PSV- believe DS NEG- PSV- know =DP master.skill

“She won [I figure], but I’m not sure.”

(5MOYD #1267)

6.4 Multi-Part Event SVCs

Events that consist of several distinct parts can be expressed with serial verb constructions. In these SVCs, the whole event is broken up into subevents, each of which are expressed using its own verb. The verbs make up a single predicate for the purposes of things like negation, tense,

and nominalization and are thought of as describing something as a single event rather than a series of multiple events. The minor verbs in a multi-part event SVC can have their own objects like with other SVCs, but can also have result complements and phrases marked with **ki** and **e**.

(6.15) **Ke kwumeŋ kwemo epweŋo.**

ke kwu- meŋ kwemo e- pweŋo
3 VEN- walk street APV- buy

“He walked down the street and bought things.”

(5MOYD #1382)

(6.16) **Ke paxexel̩ gebe palage exel̩l̩.**

ke pa- xe- x -l̩ gebe pa- lage e- xe- l̩l̩
3 CAUS- AND- put -NFP child CAUS- go.up APV- AND- fly

“They picked the child up and flew away.”

With multipart event SVCs where the subevents are ordered, the ordering of the verb is iconic. Verbs have to go in the order that the subevents they describe occurred. It’s not possible to front a verb that expresses a later event while maintaining the sequential reading.

For example, suppose you’re at a community kitchen with Mwana and Olu, and Olu just moved the knife. Mwana asks you where Olu put the knife. Normally, you’d want to move the knife’s new location **ki ili** to the postverbal focus position, which would bring the verb **paxeje** with it. In the examples below, that isn’t possible, because the two subevents described in the SVC are ordered: first Olu picked the knife up, then he put it on the cucumber. Since you can’t change the order of verbs in an SVC like this, you can’t front **ki ili**.

(6.17) a. **Ke paxejeŋ lekeŋ pakwuje ki ili.**

ke pa- xe- je -l̩ lekeŋ pa- kwu- je ki ili
3 CAUS- AND- put -NFP knife CAUS- VEN- put ORG cucumber

“He took the knife and put it on the cucumber.”

(5MOYD #1294)

b. **#Ke pakwujel̩ ki ili lekeŋ paxeje.**

ke pa- xe- kwu- l̩ ki ili lekeŋ pa- xe- je
3 CAUS- VEN- put -NFP ORG cucumber knife CAUS- AND- put

Intended: “He took the knife and put it on the cucumber.”

6.5 Resultative SVCs

Resultative serial verb constructions use multiple verbs to depict a causing event and its result. The order of verbs is iconic: the first verb in the SVC describes the action leading to the state change and the second verb in the SVC describes the state change itself.

In English, many verbs entail the obtention of some resulting state. If you cut a log, that entails that it ends up in two pieces. In Mwanele, on the other hand, relatively few verbs do this. For example the verb **bifu** ‘to cut across’ entails that the subject has made a cut across an object, but does not entail that the object is separated. Resultatives are often used to express that some resulting state was achieved.

(6.18) **Sowaŋ bifuḽ waxe paŋifa.**

Sowaŋ bifu-ḽ waxe pa-ŋifa
 NAME cut -NFP trunk CAUS- halve

“Sowaŋ cut the log in half.”

The events described by resultative SVCs are always completed, culminated events. Since they are always bounded in this way, they do not occur with imperfective verb forms, but only with perfective or unmarked forms.

The agent and patient roles of the main verb and the result complement have to match. It’s common for two transitive verbs to be used together that both share agent and patient. It’s also common, however, for a transitive main verb to have an intransitive verb as its result complement, you have to use the causative prefix **pa-** to transitivize the result complement. For example, in the sentences below, the causing event is **ke xabwoḽ bewowu** ‘he hit the banana’ and the caused event is **taŋugwu bewowu** ‘the banana spoiled.’ However, since there’s a transitivity mismatch, you have to causativize **taŋugwu** to get **paŋugwu** ‘to make something spoil.’ Now you have two parallel expressions, ‘to hit’ and ‘to make spoil,’ which share both their agent ‘he’ and their patient ‘the banana.’

(6.19) a. **Ke xabwoḽ bewowu paŋugwu.**

ke xabwo-ḽ bewowu pa-ŋugwu
 3 hit -NFP banana CAUS- spoil

“He hit the banana and spoiled it.”

(5MOYD #1331)

b. ***Ke xabwoḽ bewowu taŋugwu.**

ke xabwo-ḽ bewowu ta-ŋugwu
 3 hit -NFP banana PSV- spoil

Intended: “He hit the banana and spoiled it.”

Resultatives are possible with intransitive verbs. For example, in sentence 6.20 the intransitive verb **ejone** ‘to be hungry, to crave’ has another intransitive verb, **talodu** ‘to die,’ as its result. It’s never grammatical for an intransitive verb to have a transitive verb as the result complement for an intransitive verb. It always has to take intransitive marking.

(6.20) **Le pikwole şalo, be lo ejone talodu.**

le pi-kwole şalo be lo e-onje ta-lodu
2 NEG- work task SS so APV- crave PSV- die

“If you don’t work, you starve.”

(5MOYD #1421)

The subject of an intransitive verb with a result complement almost always has a patient-like role rather than an agent-like one. Even though **ejone** above has the prefix **e-**, usually associated with agent-like subjects, the role of the subject is an experiencer rather than a more typical agent.

Resultative SVCs differ from constructions with purpose clauses in two ways. Resultative SVCs entail that a result was obtained, but purpose clauses don’t. So while both 6.21a and 6.21b are true if you successfully knock a bit of rock out of a rock wall, only 6.21b is true if you try to knock the rock out but aren’t able to dislodge it. Additionally, unlike purpose clauses, resultative SVCs can describe results whether they’re intentional or not. Sentence 6.21b is only true if you were trying to knock the rock out of the wall, but sentence 6.21a can be true if you bump into the wall and accidentally knock a bit out.

(6.21) a. **De xabwoḷ kwole pilem.**

de xabwo-ḷ kwole pilem
1 hit -NFP part separate

“I knocked the part off.”

b. **De xabwoḷ kwole ḡpilem.**

de xabwo-ḷ kwole ḡpilem
1 hit -NFP part PRP- separate

“I hit the part to knock it off.”

Fossilized Result Complements

The words **ḡwe**, **xet**, **piḡe**, and **min** can be used as result complements in SVCs but not the main verb of a sentence. Unlike other result complements, they can be used with transitive or intransitive main verbs without taking valency-changing morphology. These can be thought of

as particles or as defective verbs. Since they can't be used as full verbs, I usually don't gloss them as verbs, but instead as adjectives or adverbs describing the resulting state.

The word **ɲwe** is used when an action is performed to the greatest possible extent or to completion.

(6.22) **Tapaleɭ ʃuko ɲwe.**

ta-pale -ɭ ʃuko ɲwe
PSV-*finish*-NFP *fire* *done*

“The fire burnt out.”

(5MOYD #1292)

Xet is used when the object of the causing action is destroyed or otherwise gotten rid of as a result.

(6.23) **Lusi lot subelak xet likwi taxefalakwuwe bwo ge= tok.**

lusi lot subelak xet li-kwi ta-xe-ɤalakwu = we bwo ge= tok
dog hunt seagull away REL-*want* CMP-AND-*steal* =LNK *fish* ORN= *salt*

“The dog chased away seagulls that wanted to steal the tasty fish.”

(DOG: A.3)

(6.24) **Taʃukoɭ kasa xet taɤeʃe.**

ta-ʃuko -ɭ kasa xet ta-ɤeʃe
PSV-*burn*-NFP *house* *away* PSV-*see*

“A house burnt down, I saw.”

(5MOYD #1277)

The complement **piɤe** is used when the object is lost.

(6.25) **De ɤakaɭ ɭedefa piɤe, be teguɭ.**

de ɤak -ɭ ɭedefa piɤe be tegu -ɭ
1 *lose*-NFP *hat* *lost* SS *find*-NFP

“I lost my hat, but I found it.”

(5MOYD #1262)

The complement **min** is used with expressions involving knowledge and information.

(6.26) **Gebe paxejeɭ min taɲadewe lusi piɤe.**

gebe pa-xe-je -ɭ min ta-ɲade = we lusi piɤe
child CAUS-AND-*put*-NFP *know* CMP-*swim* =LNK *dog* *be.able*

“The child learned that dogs can swim.”

(5MOYD #1247)

(6.27) **Le piṭeṣe em min lekwemenṭwe ki kasa de.**

le pi-ṭeṣe em min li- e-kwu-eme-ṭwe ki kasa =de
 2 NEG-see friend know REL-APV-VEN-go -FTP ORG house=2

“You don’t recognize the friend who will come to our house.” (5MOYD #1330)

Some people say that the reason **min** stopped being used as a major verb and got fossilized as a result complement is that its relative form **limin** is a homonym with the word for cannibal, which has become an offensive insult! For more about swearing in Mwaneḷe check out section XX.

Ideophone Result Complements

Ideophones can depict the resulting state of an action. When they do, they occur after the postverbal argument but before any minor verbs, in the same position as a resultative verb complement would. These constructions have the same semantics as resultative SVCs. For example if sentence 6.28 did not have the ideophone **gwudada**, then the unmarked verb **taṅugwu** could refer to an ongoing process of spoiling, but the presence of an ideophone as a result complement forces the perfective, culminated accomplishment reading associated with resultatives.

(6.28) **Takeseke waxe, ṅe taṅugwu biluka gwudada.**

ta-keseke waxe ṅe ta-ṅugwu biluka gwudada
 PSV-crush stem DS PSV-spoil greens ID:gross

“It crushed the stems and fouled the greens.” (FARMER: A.4)

(6.29) **...ekwukwosu ki lep tak je xabwo ṣeke tikitik.**

e-kwu-kwosu ki lep tak je xabwo ṣeke tikitik
 APV-VEN-crash ORG surface exact PROX hit jellyfish ID:burning

“...[I] crashed through the surface right into a jellyfish, and got stung.” (JUMP: A.2)

Irresultatives

As mentioned above, most verbs in Mwaneḷe don’t entail the obtention of the resulting state (even though they can imply it). This means that you can cancel the implication without contradicting yourself.

The most common way to construct an irresultative, or frustrative, is to repeat the main verb as a result complement, but negated. This construction is used when an action is performed but something prevents it from having its intended consequence. So sentence 6.30 could describe a situation where the speaker slaps at a fly with their sandal to kill it, but a moment later hears the fly still buzzing and knows that it somehow escaped.

(6.30) **De dale! kilep pidale kwu tamwuṭa.**

de dale -! kilep pi-dale kwu tamwuṭa
1 kill -NFP fly NEG-kill use sandal

“I killed the fly with my sandal (but it didn’t die).”

Sometimes speakers will use other negated verb complements to express irresultatives. This is most common when the main verb expresses something specific and the speaker chooses a broader result complement, which could cover any event described by the first verb. For example if the first verb is **kwumejo** ‘to give as a gift’ then the speaker could use the complement **kwun** ‘to give.’ Any event described by **kwumejo** could also more broadly be described by **kwun**, so if the subject didn’t successfully **kwun**, then they also did not successfully **kwumejo**.

(6.31) **Olu kwumejo! mefu da ki isem pikwun.**

Olu kwu-mejo -! mefu da ki isem pi-kwu-n
NAME VEN-give.gift -NFP sweets ORG partner NEG- VEN-give

“Olu gave his partner sweets (but she didn’t get them).” (5MOYD #1285)

6.6 Coverbs or Argument-Adding SVCs

When something has a role other than subject or object, it is common for it to be introduced with the minor verb in an SVC. This kind of verb is called a coverb and works somewhat like an applicative, adding an argument to the predicate. Coverbs can also be used as main verbs, for example **kwu** ‘to use’ is used as a coverb for instruments and **xiti** ‘to be in’ is used as a coverb for locations.

(6.32) **De kese ke xiti kasape.**

de kese =ke xiti kasa -pe
1 accompany =3 be.in house -DIM

“I was with them in a little house.” (JUMP: A.2)

(6.33) **Ke imiḷ xem tem ejeḷ.**

ke im -ḷ xem tem e-jeḷ
 3 eat -NFP food need APV -drink

“She ate the food without drinking.”

(5MOYD #1258)

Verb	Meaning	Meaning as a Coverb
kwu	‘to use’	with (instrumental), by
xiti	‘to be in’	in, on, at, marking location
joti	‘to need, to lack’	without
kese	‘to accompany’	with (comitative)
kwolu	‘to help’	for, to, marking a benefactor
buleḷ	‘to hinder’	against, marking a malefactor
xedefa	‘to be above’	on, on top of, above, before
xeni	‘to be below’	under, below, beneath, after
i	‘to be’	as, while being, in a capacity
ḡek	‘to be simultaneous’	during, while, at (a time)
life	‘to arrive’	until, to, up to
laḷo	‘to leave’	away from, out of
niḷo	‘to approach’	to, towards, approaching
laḷin	‘to consider’	about, marking themes or topics
naka	‘to be distant’	far, away from
nome	‘to cross’	through, past, across

Table 6.1: Common coverbs and their meanings

Sometimes the object of a coverb can be dropped if it’s clear from context or if it corefers with a noun phrase earlier in the sentence. For example in sentence 6.34, the verb **bulen** ‘to hinder, to prevent’ introduces a malefactor. Here, the person being harmed by the event is Sowaḷ, but since he’s already been named in the sentence, it’s possible to drop the pronoun that refers back to him. This is common, even in cases like this where the object of the coverb is different from that of the main verb.

(6.34) **Taḷukoḷ kasawe Sowaḷ bulen.**

ta-ḷuko -ḷ kasa =we Sowaḷ bulen
 PSV -burn -NFP house =LNK NAME hinder

“Sowaḷ’s house burnt down on him!”

(5MOYD #1396)

When a verb has a particular meaning when used as a coverb, it's noted in its entry in the lexicon. Table 6.1 shows common coverbs and their meanings. Many of the coverb meanings are translated to English as prepositions which introduce nouns with similar sorts of roles.

6.7 Complementizing SVCs

Several verbs can introduce complement clauses when they're not the main verb. These clauses begin with a nominalized verb, but don't take any overt nominalizing morphology.

In sentence 6.35, the verb **ɲek** 'to be at the same time' introduces a complement clause. Its subject **bwade** is linked to it with the linking clitic =we, and followed by the direct object.

(6.35) Tajiniḷ gebepe ɲek kwugwoṅowe bwade mwoḷula.

ta- in	-ḷ	gebepe	ɲek		kwu- gwon	-lo	= we	bwade
PSV- sleep	-NFP	baby	be.at.same.time		VEN- say	-NFI	= LNK	grandfather
		mwoḷula						
		story						

"The baby fell asleep while the grandfather told a story." (5MOYD #1248)

These verbs are always unmarked for tense, aspect, voice, and polarity. Like in some other kinds of SVC constructions, the verb introducing the complement clause can become the major verb if something in the clause it introduces gets focused or questioned.

(6.36) Le gwonoḷ tapaji lot e Mwana jekeṅ isas?

le	gwon-ḷ	ta-	pa-i	=lot	e	Mwana	je-keṅ	isas
2	say	-NFP	CMP-CAUS-	be = what	ERG	NAME	PRL- carry	news

"What did you spread a rumor that Mwana did?"

The English translation is a little off, but the Mwaneḷe version is perfectly fine. The fact that **gwon** can move up to the major verb position and take TAM marking shows that it really does still work like a verb, rather than as a complementizing particle that happens to be a homophone of a verb.

Unlike with other SVCs, you can get prosodic breaks before verbs introducing complement clauses. I'm not entirely sure that this construction has the same mechanics as other sorts of SVCs, but it's possible that it's just that the minor verb and its object tend to be pretty prosodically heavy, so you can get phrase breaks and they tend to be at the far right of the clause.

The most common type of complementizing SVCs are adverbial clauses, often ones like in sentence 6.35 that situate an event in time using **ɲek** 'to be at the same time as,' **xɛŋi** 'to be after,'

or **xedefa** ‘to be before.’ There are two other complementizing verbs that I want to talk about separately.

The Complementizer **gwon**

The verb **gwon** ‘to speak’ can be used to introduce a content clause when it’s not possible to use a **ta-** clause. Usually this is because the main verb takes a direct object.

(6.37) **Sowaŋ kwu-keŋ isas ki de gwon etesi le exeŋi enaka.**

Sowaŋ kwu-keŋ isas ki de gwon etesi =le exeŋi enaka
 NAME VEN-*carry* news ORG 1 say exceed =2 be.after be.away

“Sowaŋ told me a rumor you were out too late.”

It’s possible to use **gwon** this way even when the main verb is also **gwon**.

(6.38) **De kwugwon xemen ki le gwon pitaji je ga.**

de kwu-gwon xemen ki le gwon pi- ta-i =je =ga
 1 VEN-*say* promise ORG 2 say NEG-PSV-*be* = this = again

“I promise you it won’t happen again.”

The Complementizer **mwat**

The verb **mwat** ‘to depend on’ can be used to introduce the condition in a conditional clause.

(6.39) **De xeloteŋwe daboŋa mwat piṭeṣe le dijo.**

de xe-lot -ŋwe daboŋa mwat pi- ṭeṣe =le dijo
 1 AND-*search*-FTP honey depend.on NEG-*see* =2 animal

“We’ll go look for honey if you don’t see any animals.” (5MOYD #1235)

Like other minor verbs, it can commonly be promoted to main verb, where it can take TAM marking. Counterfactuals always take future tense marking.

(6.40) **Gwu ŋwoḍa mwatak ete tetekwe ṇoḷak eka?**

gwu ŋwoḍa mwat -k e-te t- e-te -k =we ṇoḷak
 Q yam depend-FTI APV-grow CMP-APV-pass-FTI =LNK rain

e-ka
 APV-*do.weather*

“Would the yams have grown if it had rained more?”

See section 7.7 for more information about conditionals.

7 Clause Structure

7.1 Basic Clause Structure

The basic Mwanele declarative clause consists of a verb and its arguments. If the verb is intransitive, then the single argument follows the verb. Intransitive verbs are usually marked with the passive **ta-**, the antipassive **e-** or the reciprocal/reflexive **le-**.

(7.1) **Tatimwuḷ de fawe bwulubwulu edol.**

ta-timwu -l̩ =de=fawe bwulubwulu e-dol
PSV-*put.colder*-NFP=1 =*suddenly* ID:*going.underwater* APV-*fall*

“I suddenly fell into the cold water.”

(WHELK: A.1)

(7.2) **Ekwuṇadeḷ anam ki lep.**

e-kwu-ṇade-l̩ anam ki lep
APV-*VEN-float*-NFP *duck* ORG *surface*

“The duck floated up to the surface.”

(5MOYD #1263)

(7.3) **Ḷetegunwe gijo ke xo em.**

Ḷe-tegu-ṇwe gijo ke xo em
R/R-*meet*-FTP *there* 3 *and* *friend*

“She and her friends will meet each other there.”

(5MOYD #1035)

When a verb is transitive, the agent comes before the verb and the patient comes after. Transitive verbs usually don't have any voice marking. Causative verbs marked with **pa-** pattern as transitive, with the causer before the verb.

(7.4) **Fek lijo sijak lo gobi pilem ṇiṣukwu.**

fek lijo sijak=lo gobi pilem ṇi-ṣukwu
man old cut =*so wood split* PRP-*burn*

“The old man then chopped firewood.”

(DOG: A.3)

(7.5) **Kopwu lesaḷe paṅwoḷudu ke ḷo**

kopwu li- e- saḷe pa- ṅwoḷudu = ke = ḷo
leg REL- APV- be.left CAUS- limp = 3 = anymore

“His left leg makes him limp nowadays.”

(5MOYD #1288)

Rather than descriptors like SVO or VSO, you can think of basic Mwaneḷe declarative clauses as having ergative-verb-absolutive word order. First is the agent of a transitive verb, if there is one, then is the verb, then is the patient of a transitive verb or subject of an intransitive verb.

The particle e

When a verb is in the passive voice, its agent can be optionally included, preceded by the particle **e**. With causative verbs, if the causer, original agent, and patient are all mentioned in the sentence, then the causer comes before the verb, the patient comes immediately after (in the typical patient position), and the original agent comes after the patient marked with the particle **e**.

(7.6) **Tapaxeḷoḷoḷ selo e Kalo.**

ta- pa- xe- ḷoḷ -ḷ selo e Kalo
 PSV- CAUS- AND- *fly*-NFP *clamshell* ERG NAME

“The clamshell got thrown away by Kalo.”

(7.7) **De pameṅikwi pitakwi keseke e ke.**

de pa- meṅi- ikwi pitakwi keseke e ke
 1 CAUS- *step* -CON *pest* ID:*crushing* ERG 3

“I tried to make him step on the pest.”

(5MOYD #1069)

(7.8) **Lijona pakwun lekeṅ ki fekep e Olu.**

lijona pa- kwu- n lekeṅ ki fekep e Olu
old.person CAUS- VEN- *give* *blade* ORG *boy* ERG NAME

“The old man made Olu give the knife to the boy.”

(5MOYD #1397)

Since whenever **e** occurs, it marks the agent of a transitive verb, I gloss it as ERG. It’s probably not really an ergative case marker though. If you think of **ki** and **xi** as reduced forms of the verbs **kisi** ‘to pass’ and **xiti** ‘to be in’ then **e** might be Mwaneḷe’s only preposition.

Adverbs and Verbal Clitics

Other words can come after the main verb to add additional adverbial information to the clause. Standalone adverbs tend to come after the clause's first verb, before any subjects or patients.

(7.9) **Leṭeṣeṅwe mwon le xo de.**

le- ṭeṣe-ṅwe mwon le xo de
R/R- see -FTP tomorrow 2 and 1

“You and I will see each other tomorrow.”

(5MOYD #1253)

In addition to full adverbs, a number of clitics may follow the verb. These clitics follow the verb immediately, before any standalone adverbs or direct objects. They form a single prosodic word with the verb (there's a single tonic syllable and pausing isn't possible between the verb and any of the clitics) but unlike other words, vowel-vowel and consonant-consonant sequences may be possible.

The clitics can be divided into several groups. Closest to the verb are pronominal clitics, used when the a pronoun is the absolutive argument of the verb. These include atonic forms of the personal pronouns **de**, **le**, and **ke**, the question word **lot** ‘*what*’, and quantifiers like **ole** ‘*all*’ and **epi** ‘*PL*’ that can be used as pronouns by themselves or in addition to the other clitic pronouns. Next are **lo** ‘*so*’ when used to mark verum focus and **sa** ‘*very*’ when used to mark focus on a preverbal subject. After that are adverbial clitics that modify the time or manner of the verb, like **ika** ‘*already*’ or **wam** ‘*early*’ but also the other uses of **lo** and **sa**. Last in the clitic cluster are discourse-oriented adverbs like **mu** ‘*really*’ and **te** ‘*as you know*’, which have meanings that relate the sentence to the context of the discourse or to the knowledge of the speaker and listener.

It's possible for all of these to occur on one verb, leading to a fairly long verb complex. Sentence 7.10 forms a single prosodic word.

(7.10) **Leḷupikaṅaḷ ke lo ga kwo te.**

le- lu- pikaṅ -ḷ =ke =lo =ga =kwo =te
R/R- RVS- be.home -NFP =3 =so =again =in.the.end =you.know

“So he did end up coming back home again you know.”

For information about the meanings of particular clitic adverbs, see section 4.7.

Serial Verb Constructions

It is common for a single predicate to consist of multiple verbs. In this case, the first verb gets marked for negation, tense, and aspect, and the other verbs are unmarked. When there are multiple verbs in a clause, I'll call the first one, which received marking for clausal information, the

‘main verb.’ The other verbs follow the argument after the main verb. Even though there are multiple verbs, these serial verb constructions function as single clauses.

(7.11) **Gebe kwuxabwo! nok kwosu luk.**

gebe kwu-xabwo-l nok kwosu luk
child VEN-hit -NFP water splash do.unexpectedly

“The child splashed into the water.”

(5MOYD #1534)

(7.12) **Ke paxejelo bes emenek.**

ke pa-xe-je-lo bes e-menek
 3 CAUS-AND-put-NFI fruit APV-wander

“He’s picking fruit at random.”

(5MOYD #1447)

Serial verb constructions are described more thoroughly in chapter 6.

7.2 Commands

Commands are expressed with the optative particle **kwu** followed by the command. Second-person commands can drop their subject. Usually the verb in a command does not take any tense or aspect marking.

(7.13) **Kwu dexi ñipada je ka.**

kwu dexi ñi-pa-da =je ka
 OPT mix PRP-CAUS-sweet =PROX DP

“Stir in order to sweeten it.”

(5MOYD #1265)

Even when the second-person subject is dropped from a command, the verb is treated as though the subject is the listener. This means that it can be coordinated to another clause with a second-person subject using the same-subject marker **be**, for example.

(7.14) **Le ñeşe seba, be kwu exemelap!**

le ñeşe seba be kwu e-xe-melap
 2 see tiger SS OPT APV-AND-run

“If you see a tiger, run!”

Negative commands are made with the prohibitive particle **mwe**.

(7.15) **Mwe kwuṭeṣe de!**

mwe kwu-ṭeṣe = de

PRB VEN-see = 1

“Don’t look at me!”

Hortatives like sentence 7.16 and indirect commands like sentences 7.17 and 7.18 can be expressed with **kwu** or **mwe** without dropping the subject of the verb. When the verb has an overt subject, sometimes it’s marked with the future tense.

(7.16) **Tatem tejimwe ṅin, ṅe kwu eṣameṅwe de im!**

ta-tem ta- e-im =we ṅin ṅe kwu e-ṣame -ṅwe =de im
 PSV-need CMP-APV-eat =LNK people DS OPT APV-be.first-FTP =1 eat

“People need to eat, so let’s eat first!”

(5MOYD #1181)

(7.17) **Kwu ke ole pakwuje ɭeṭa ɭefa ka!**

kwu ke =ole pa-kwu-je ɭeṭa ɭe-fa ka
 OPT 3 =all CAUS- VEN-put shoe R/R-change DP

“Have them all put on shoes!”

(7.18) **Mwe kweme boṅaṭa ki kaṣa ka!**

mwe kwu-eme boṅaṭa ki kaṣa ka
 PRB VEN-come insect ORG house DP

“Don’t let the bugs come into the house!”

Wishes, blessings, and curses are also constructed with **kwu**, such as the common blessing **kwu ɖaka** ‘*may you heal.*’ However, **mwe** is not used with wishes, blessings, or curses. Instead, **kwu** is used with regular verbal negation. Compare the following:

(7.19) a. **Kwu pileme ke!**

kwu pi- lu-eme =ke

OPT NEG-RVS-come =3

“May he never come back!”

b. **Mwe leme ke!**

mwe lu-eme =ke

PRB RVS-come =3

“Don’t let him come back!”

7.3 Questions

Polar Questions

A statement can be made a polar question by adding the question particle **gwu** at the beginning. For a broad question, there's a higher pitch than usual on the tonic syllable of the main verb and following high tones are slightly lower.

(7.20) **Gwu kwemeṅwe le xe mekiḷ ki de?**

gwu kw-eme-ṅwe = le = xe mekiḷ ki de
Q VEN-go -FTP = 2 = CONC today ORG 1

“Won't you come visit us today?”

(5MOYD #1325)

(7.21) **Gwu egwon lo luṣe gebe olisu?**

gwu e-gwon = lo luṣe gebe olisu
Q APV-speak = so same child boast

“Does the child also talk like that, boasting?”

(5MOYD #1226)

A specific element of the sentence can be questioned by moving it into focus position. If a focused element is questioned, then there's a higher pitch than normal on its tonic element, and all following high tones are slightly lower.

(7.22) **Le kedoṅwe ṣoḷe xawam ṅek meki?**

le kedo -ṅwe = ṣoḷe xawam ṅek meki
2 prepare-NFP = but noodle be.at.time today

“But will you make *noodles* today?”

(7.23) **Le ṅekeṅwe ṣoḷe meki kedo xawam?**

le ṅek -ṅwe = ṣoḷe meki kedo xawam
2 be.at.time-NFP = but today prepare noodle

“But will you make *noodles* today?”

The phrase **gwu lo** can be used as a tag question, to ask the listener for confirmation.

(7.24) **Kwemeḷ le ṅitaṭime de ḷewe, gwu lo?**

kwu-eme -l = le ṅi- ta-ṭime = de ḷewe gwu lo
VEN -come-NFP = 2 PRP-PSV-pull = 1 protect Q so

“You're here to save me, right?”

Content Questions

Mwaneḷe has three question words: **lot** ‘*what*’ is used to question a noun phrase, **kano** ‘*to do what*’ to question a verb phrase, and **loti** ‘*what is*’ to ask for the identity of something.

The question word **lot** can be used to question any noun phrase, whether it is a person, place, or thing. When it’s the subject of an intransitive verb or the patient of a transitive verb, it cliticizes onto the verb.

(7.25) **Lot ṭeṣe de piḷe?**

lot ṭeṣe =de piḷe
what see =1 can

“Who can see me?”

(7.26) **Gebe le xegwoṅo lot?**

gebe =le xe-gwon-lo =lot
child =2 AND-speak-NFP = what

“What is your child saying?”

Lot can also cliticize onto a noun phrase to mean ‘*which*.’ This means when it’s used to question a possessor, the linking clitic =**we** is used, unlike with other pronouns. Compare **lale lot?** ‘*which bed?*’ with **lalewe lot?** ‘*whose bed?*’

The verb **kano** can be used with the antipassive to broadly question what someone or something is doing, with the passive to question what’s happening to something, or transitively to ask what an agent is doing to a patient. It can also be used in adverbial SVCs to question the manner of an action, in which case it is usually fronted to the main verb.

(7.27) **Takanawak de lo?**

ta-kano -k =de =lo
PSV-do.what-NFI =1 =so

“Then what will become of me?”

(7.28) **Le kanolo ṣaluk je?**

le kano -lo ṣaluk =je
2 do.what-NFI coconut =PROX

“What are you doing to that coconut?”

(7.29) **Ekano le takwusapwu delo?**

e - kano =le ta - kwu - sapwu delo
 APV - *do.what* = 2 PSV - VEN - *allow.entry* may

“How can you get let in?”

Whenever possible, Mwaneḷ speakers prefer to move question words into focus position, usually by fronting coverbs introducing the questioned constituent to main verb. This is especially common when questioning place and time.

(7.30) **Pane xitiḷ lot eḡale?**

pane xiti -ḷ =lot e - ḡale
 NAME *be.in* - NFP = *what* APV - *give.birth*

“Where did Pane give birth?”

(5MOYD #1286)

(7.31) **Le ḡekelḷ lot galu kweme ki Sile Saḡo?**

le ḡek -ḷ =lot =galu kwu - eme ki Sile Saḡo
 2 *be.at.time* - NFP = *what* = DP VEN - *go* ORG PLACE

“When did you go to Sile Saḡo?”

When something within a subordinate clause is questioned, it’s not possible to move the question word out to the matrix clause. The question word will still move as far to the left as possible in the subordinate clause.

(7.32) **Le ḡwonḷ tapam taxiti lot e Olu tabwu?**

le ḡwon -ḷ ta - pam ta - xiti =lot e Olu ta - bwu
 2 *say* - NFP CMP - *believe* CMP - *be.in* = *what* ERG NAME PSV - *sit*

“Where did you say you thought Olu was sitting?”

(7.33) **Le ṭeṣe sunep min lekanawaḷ ika exelḷoḷ?**

le ṭeṣe sunep min li - e - kano -ḷ =ika e - xe - ḷoḷ
 2 *see* *girl* *know* REL - APV - *do.what* - NFP = *already* APV - AND - *flee*

“You knew the girl who escaped *how*?”

There are also two somewhat fixed expressions using **lot**: **ḡi lot** to ask what the goal or purpose of an action is and **ḷaki lot** to ask what the cause or reason for an event is. Since these are adverbial clauses, they can’t be focused in the standard language, although in informal speech some speakers will front them to the adverbial position immediately after the main verb.

(7.34) **Elama le ŋek kweme de ɭaki lot?**

e-lama =le ŋek kw-eme =de ɭak -i =lot
 APV - mourn = 2 be.at.time VEN - go = 1 RSN - be = what

“Why are you sad when I come?”

(5MOYD #1260)

Some people, especially speakers of Northern dialects will use forms of **kano** instead of **i lot**, with **ɲikano** to ask about goals and **ɭakano** to ask about causes. They behave the same as the expressions with **i lot**.

(7.35) **Le kwugwonoɭ takano ke kwolu em le?**

le kwu- gwon -ɭ ta- kano =ke kwolu em =le
 2 VEN say NFP CMP do.what 2 help friend 2

“What did you say they helped your friend to do?”

7.4 Relative Clauses

Relative clauses follow the nouns they modify. The main verb of the relative clause is marked with the prefix **li-**. Relative clauses have gaps in their subject or agent position corresponding to the noun they are modifying.

Only the subject of an intransitive verb and the agent of a transitive verb are available to be relativized. To relativize a patient, the main verb of the relative clause has to be passivized to promote the patient to subject.

Relative clauses always come after their heads, but sometimes they can move to the right so that other things separate them from their heads. In the examples in this section, the head of the relative clause is underlined and the relative clause is surrounded by [square brackets.]

(7.36) **Ejim ɲin likwole ɣalo.**

e-im ɲin [li-kwole ɣalo]
 APV - eat person REL - work tasks

“The person who works eats.”

(7.37) **Sunepe xiti je likaxwoɭ kalo gome.**

sunepe xiti =je [li-kaxwo -ɭ kalo gome]
 girl be.in =PROX REL - sketch -NFP lion start

“Here’s a girl who started to draw a lion.”

(5MOYD #1406)

(7.38) **De lun siwu ole litakwumejo e ke.**

de lu-n =siwu ole [li- ta-kwu-mejo e ke]
 1 RVS- give = DP all REL- PSV- VEN -give.gift ERG 3

“I return everything that he gives me.”

To relativize an oblique noun phrase that’s introduced with a coverb, you can front the coverb and passivize it to get a clause where the oblique noun is accessible for relativization. For example to get the relative clause in sentence 7.39, you can restructure **le leme nok jen kwu xejok** ‘you gather and drink water using pots’ to **takwu xejok leme nok jen** ‘pots are used to gather and drink water.’ Then, with **xejok** in the subject position, you can relativize it to get the clause below.

(7.39) **Tabulen ɲugeta owu xejok litakwu leme nok jen.**

ta-bulen ɲugeta owu xejok [li- ta-kwu leme nok jen]
 PSV- hinder disease wash pot REL- PSV- use gather water drink

“You can prevent disease by washing the pots you gather and drink water with.”

(5MOYD #1261)

Mwanele has no distinct construction for relativizing manner, location, or time. Instead, these are treated the same way as other obliques, by framing the sentence to introduce them using **kwu** ‘to use’, **xiti** ‘to be in’/ **joti** ‘to be in’, or **ɲek** ‘to be at the same time’ respectively as coverbs, and fronting and passivizing them.

(7.40) **De lajin da litakwu time leta.**

de lajin da [li- ta-kwu time leta]
 1 consider way REL- APV- use pull shoe

“I thought about the way I would sew the shoes.”

(5MOYD #1293)

(7.41) **Kwemel de ki gi litaxiti e Keleto tanije tanugeto.**

kw-eme-l =de ki gi [li- ta-xiti e Keleto
 VEN- go -NFP =1 ORG place REL- PSV- be.in ERG Keleto

ta-ɲije ta-ɲugeto]
 PSV- lie.down PSV- sicken

“We went to the place where Keleto was lying down sick.”

(5MOYD #1249)

(7.42) **De lome mekil min litaṅek e le taṅale.**

de lome mekil min [li- ta-ṅek e le ta-ṅale
 1 hold day know REL-PSV-be.at.time ERG 2 PSV-give.birth]

“I remember the day when you were born.”

This strategy is used even when the thing being relativized wouldn't be introduced with a coverb in a typical declarative sentence. For example, the relative clause in sentence 7.40 might correspond to a declarative clause like **De ṭime tijaḷe ḷeṭa.** ‘I sewed the shoes skillfully.’ Since you can't relativize an adverb, you have to frame the sentence to use a coverb, so you could get something like **De ṭime ḷeṭa kwu ḍa tija.** ‘I sewed the shoes using a skillful manner.’ Then, front the coverb to get **De kwu ḍa tija ṭime ḷeṭa.** ‘I used a skillful manner to sew the shoes.’ Last, passivize the verb, dropping the agent unless it's necessary in context: **Takwu ḍa tija ṭime ḷeṭa (e de)** ‘A skillful manner was used (by me) to sew the shoes.’ Now that the manner is the subject of the main verb, it's accessible for relativization.

Nominalized Relative Clauses

Some speakers of Southern Mwaneḷe dialects, especially ones with close contact with Anroo, have another strategy for forming relative clauses. In these dialects, you can nominalize a relative clause and link it to its head using the linking clitic =we. Unlike with the strategy with -li, the head of a nominalized clause is free to be any element of the clause.

(i) **em dewe kuna**

em =de =we [kuna]
 friend = 1 =LNK yell.at

“The friend who I yelled at.”

Or: “The friend who yelled at me.”

(ii) **giwe elotobwowe Sowaj**

gi =we [e-lotobwo =we Sowaj]
 place =LNK APV-go.fishing =LNK NAME

“the place where Sowaj went fishing”

Some positions get a resumptive pronoun when they're relativized. This pronoun is usually **ke**, but can also be **je** or **jo**. So far I've found that possessors as well as agents of transitive verbs need a resumptive pronoun when relativized this way.

(iii) **fek jowe iwam de em ke xerji**

fek =jo = we [iwam = de em = ke xerji]
man = DIST = LNK *tie* = 1 *friend* = 3 *follow*

“that man whose friend I went out with”

(iv) **emene im ke noso**

emen = we [im = ke noso]
cat = LNK *eat* = 3 *roast.meat*

“the cat who ate the roast meat”

In free choice relatives, rather than referring to a particular entity that satisfies the relative clause, the expression can refer to any one of the head noun that satisfies the relative clause. In Mwanele, these are expressed by marking the head of the relative clause with **lot je** ‘=*what=PROX*’ or **lot jo** ‘=*what=DIST*’ like in sentence 7.43. It’s also possible to head the relative clause with **lot je** or **lot jo** alone, like in sentence 7.44, similar to an English free relative with *-ever*. When it heads a free choice relative, **lot** is tonic. It’s common for the main verb of the relative clause to be marked as future.

(7.43) **De kwunuṅwe je ki ṅin lot je likaxwok ḍa piḷe litakwu kwu je.**

de kwu -n -ṅwe =je ki ṅin =lot =je
 1 VEN -give -FTP =PROX ORG *person = what = PROX*
 [li -kaxwo -k ḍa piḷe li - ta -kwu kwu =je]
 REL - *explain* -FTI *way can* REL - PSV - *use use = PROX*

“I will give this to whoever can explain the way it is used.” (5MOYD #1595)

(7.44) **De gwok lot je lijotik lot je tapate.**

de gwo -k lot =je [li -joti -k lot =je ta -pate]
 1 *like* -FTP *what = PROX* REL - *be.in* -FTI *what = PROX* PSV - *show*

“I’ll like whatever is shown to me wherever.” (5MOYD #1336)

7.5 Nominalized Clauses

Mwanele has several constructions in which clauses are headed by nominalized verbs. When a verb is nominalized, it behaves in some ways like a noun. It can appear in positions usually occupied by nouns, most commonly as the direct object of a verb or coverb. The subject of a

nominalized verb is linked as if it were the verbs possessor: pronominal subjects cliticizes onto the verb, and other subjects are linked with the linking clitic =**we**.

When a nominalized verb is used as the object of a coverb, it doesn't take any overt nominalizing morphology. This can be as simple as a single verb like **ejeŋ** 'drinking' in sentence 7.45, a verb linked to its subject (as a possessor) like **kweme de** 'my coming' in sentence 7.46, or an entire clause complete with TAM marking, a direct object, and potentially adverbs, coverbs, and other extra components, like **kwugwoŋowe bwade mwoŋula** 'grandfather's telling a story.'

(7.45) **Ke imiŋ xem tem ejeŋ.**

ke im -l̩ xem tem e-jeŋ
3 eat -NFP food need APV -drink

"She ate the food without drinking."

(5MOYD #1258)

(7.46) **Elama le ŋek kweme de laŋi lot?**

e-lama =le ŋek kw-eme =de laŋ -i =lot
APV -mourn =2 be.at.time VEN -go =1 RSN -be =what

"Why are you sad when I come?"

(5MOYD #1260)

(7.47) **Tajiniŋ gebepe ŋek kwugwoŋowe bwade mwoŋula.**

ta-in -l̩ gebepe ŋek kwu-gwon -lo =we bwade
PSV -sleep -NFP baby be.at.same.time VEN -say -NFI =LNK grandfather
mwoŋula
story

"The baby fell asleep while the grandfather told a story."

(5MOYD #1248)

Although they have adverbial meaning and don't have nounlike distributions, I treat purpose clauses with **ni-** and reason clauses with **laŋ-** as nominalizations. They have the same clause structure as other nominalizations. They are transparently derived from nominalized clauses plus the morphemes **ni** and **laŋ**, which are no longer productive, but can be seen as prefixes deriving adverbs such as **nifa** and **laŋemen** from nouns **fa** and **emen**.

Since their subjects immediately follow their verbs as possessors, nominalized clauses have slightly different word order than basic matrix clauses. They begin with the verb, followed by its subject. Adverbs come after the verb's subject, with any clitic adverbs present cliticizing directly to the subject. Speakers avoid using unstressed pronouns when they don't follow the verb, so unlike adverbs, pronominal direct objects won't cliticize to the subject. No other words can come between a nominalized verb and its possessor subject. The rest of the clause follows the same order as a matrix clause, with a direct object, verb complements, coverb phrases, and subordinate clauses following in that order.

(7.48) **De pilemeṅwe ke ṅipikunawe Sowaṅ ga noḷe Mwana.**

de pilem -ṅwe =ke ṅi- pi- kuna =we Sowaṅ =ga noḷe Mwana
 1 separate -FTP =3 PRP-NEG- yell =LNK NAME =again loudly NAME

“I’ll separate them so Sowaṅ doesn’t yell at Mwana so loudly again.”

(7.49) **Di ḍule ḷasodo le lo xagep kwolu de.**

di ḍule ḷak- sodo =le =lo xagep kwolu =de
 1.COP grateful RSN- jump =2 =so trap help =1

“Thanks for giving such good advice.”

lit. “I am thankful because you jumped a trap for me.”

(7.50) **Kwu elakwu xedefa ṣame, be kwu elage ṅek ṭime le gobi.**

kwu e-lakwu xedefa ṣame be kwu e-lage ṅek ṭime le
 OPT APV- check be.above be.most SS OPT APV- ascend be.at.time climb 2
 gobi
 tree

“Check first, then ascend when you are climbing trees.”

(5MOYD #1101)

Nominal Complements

Many speakers of Southern Mwaneḷe, especially dialects in close contact with Anroo or Mekale, allow nominalized verbs to act as complements of nouns where speakers of other dialects would use **gwon** to introduce the complement. These nominalized clauses are linked to their head nouns with the linking clitic =**we**.

(i) **Tagise kope isase ḷepot le.**

ta- gise kope isas =we ḷe- pot =le
 PSV- spread quickly news =LNK R/R- separate =2

“The news you broke up is spreading fast.”

Ta- Complements

When a nominalized clause is the direct object of the main verb of a clause, it is marked with the prefix **ta-**. Unlike other nominalized clauses, **ta-**clauses are always intransitive. If a verb is

intransitive, then its valence is not changed, but if a verb is transitive, then its patient is made its subject and its agent is optionally reintroduced with the particle *e*, like with the passive voice.

(7.51) **Enaka tapijeximiḷe gebe je wo.**

e-naka ta-pi- e- xe-im -l̩ =we gebe =je =wo
 APV- *be.far* CMP- NEG- APV- AND- *sleep*-NFP =LNK *child* =PROX = *yet*

“It’s odd that the child still hasn’t gone to sleep.” (5MOYD #1245)

(7.52) **De gwonoḷ tapamo e le tejine dijo meḍefa.**

de gwon-l̩ ta-pam -lo e le ta- e-in =we dijo meḍefa
 1 *say* -NFP CMP- *think*-NFI ERG 2 CMP- APV- *sleep* =LNK *livestock* *yesterday*

“I said you thought the livestock slept yesterday.” (5MOYD #1269)

Verbs marked with the nominalizer **ta-** can’t also be marked with the voice prefix **ta-**. In many cases this looks like haplology: the intransitive verb **tajin** ‘*to fall asleep*’ has the nominalized form **tajin** rather than ***tatajin**. With negated verbs, it’s clear that it’s not simple haplology though. The nominalizer **ta-** comes before the negator **pi-**, and the voice prefix **ta-** comes after it. The **ta-**-complement form of the verb **pitajin** ‘*to not fall asleep*’ is **tapijin** rather than ***tapitajin**. The voice prefix **ta-** is lost even when not immediately adjacent to the nominalizer.

Ta-clauses can be put in the antipassive to make their agent the subject. However, if this construction is used, there’s no way to overtly mention the patient.

(7.53) **De pamwelo tejimwe gebe.**

de pa-mwe-lo ta- e-im =we gebe
 1 CAUS- *deny*-NFI CMP- APV- *eat* =LNK *child*

“I am forbidding the child from eating.” (5MOYD #1256)

This type of clause is most commonly used with speech/thought verbs and with attitude verbs, but it is also used with coverbs fronted to the main verb position.

(7.54) **Gwu ḡwoḍa mwatak ete tetekwe ḡoḷak eka?**

gwu ḡwoḍa mwat -k e-te t- e-te -k =we ḡoḷak
 Q *yam* *depend*-FTI APV- *grow* CMP- APV- *pass*-FTI =LNK *rain*

e-ka
 APV- *do.weather*

“Would the yams have grown if it had rained more?”

When the subject of a nominalized verb is itself a nominalized verb marked with **ta-**, the linking clitic =**we** is not used.

(7.55) **Tapam xe tesili tanomek ke nelo taṭeṣe je.**

ta- pam =xe ta- e- sili ta- nome -k =ke nelo
 PSV - *believe* = CONC CMP - APV - *never.do* CMP - *pass* -FTI = 3 *be.enough*
 ta- ṭeṣe =je
 CMP - *see* = PROX

“I never thought he’d live to see this.” (5MOYD #1333)

7.6 Extraposition of Heavy Clauses

When a subordinate clause is prosodically heavy, it can get separated from its head and moved to the right. This usually happens with subordinate clauses that contain more than one prosodic word. Single-word clauses or clauses that consist of a verb and its clitics don’t tend to move. This movement is most visible with relative clauses modifying subjects, relative clauses modifying objects that come before minor verbs in an SVC, and **ta-** complement clauses in sentences where the main verb is followed by more than just the complement clause. The place that the subordinate clause is moved from in each example sentence below is marked with a *t* and the extraposed clause is surrounded with [square brackets.]

(7.56) **Emen xiti je lipijim xem ke.**

emen *t* xiti =je [li- pi- im xem =ke]
cat be.in = PROX REL - NEG - *eat* *food* = 3

“Here’s a cat that doesn’t eat its food.” (5MOYD #1405)

(7.57) **De pikwun mwolu min litagwon e le.**

de pi- kwu- n mwolu *t* min [li- ta- gwon e le]
 1 NEG - VEN - *take* *word* *know* REL - PSV - *say* ERG 2

“I didn’t understand what you said.” (5MOYD #1204)

(7.58) **De papamaḷ e Koṭak takwemekwe bwuṇam**

de pa- pam -ḷ *t* e Koṭak [ta- kwu- eme -k =we bwuṇam]
 1 CAUS - *believe* - NFP ERG NAME CMP - VEN - *go* -FTI = LNK *guest*

“I made Koṭak believe that guests will come.” (5MOYD #1365)

Extrapolated clauses will move to the right until they reach the end of their matrix clause. They can't move out from inside another subordinate clause. In the examples below, sentence (a) is ungrammatical because **takwi tajime iwanj** constitutes its own subordinate clause, so **tajime iwanj** can't move out of it. On the other hand, sentence (b) is fine, since the entire subordinate clause moves together.

(7.59) a. ***De kwugwon xe takwilo ki Olu tajimwe iwanj.**

de kwu- gwon = xe ta- kwi -lo t ki Olu [ta- im = we
1 VEN- say = CONC CMP- want -NFI ORG NAME CMP- eat = LNK
iwanj]
noodle

b. **De kwugwon xe ki Olu takwilo tajimwe iwanj.**

de kwu- gwon = xe t ki Olu [ta- kwi -lo ta- im = we
1 VEN- say = CONC ORG NAME NFI- CMP - want CMP- eat = LNK
iwanj]
noodle

“I did tell Olu I wanted to eat noodles.”

Extrapolated clauses won't move past other subordinate clauses. Sentence (a) below is ungrammatical, since the relative clause **lipitagwon e de** crosses over the adverbial subordinate clause **nikile tapile takweme de**.

(7.60) a. ***Ŋin mwale de nikile tapile tekweme de lipitagwon e de.**

ŋin t mwale = de ŋi- kile ta- pīle ta- e- kwu- eme = de
person ask = 1 PRP- know CMP- be.able CMP- APV- VEN- come = 1
[li- pi- ta- gwon e de]
REL- NEG- PSV- speak ERG 1

b. **Ŋin mwale de lipitagwon e de nikile tapile tekweme de.**

ŋin t mwale = de [li- pi- ta- gwon e de]
person ask = 1 REL- NEG- PSV- speak ERG 1
ŋi- kile ta- pīle ta- e- kwu- eme = de
PRP- know CMP- be.able CMP- APV- VEN- come = 1

“People who I don't talk to to are asking me if I'll be able to come.”

An alternate way of thinking about it is that after putting together a sentence, you go through and find all clauses that would be candidates for extraposition, including both the relative clause and the purpose clause in the sentences above. Then moving from left to right, each subordinate clause undergoes right-extraposition and is separated from the rest of the clause with a prosodic break. That process would start with a sentence like **nin [lipitagwon e de]₁ mwale de [nikile tapile tekweme de]₂**. It would first move the relative clause to get sentence (a) as an intermediate form, and then move the purpose clause to get the final form in sentence (b).

There is further evidence that this might be the case in the fact that prosodic breaks are found before prosodically heavy subordinate clauses but not light ones, even when they don't seem to have moved from their original position. Since prosodic breaks are only inserted before clauses that are heavy enough to undergo extraposition, it's consistent with the data to say that these clauses *do* get extraposed, it's just less visible if they start out at the right edge of the clause. In sentence 7.61, there's a prosodic break before the word **nitalawo**, which would be expected if the whole clause **nitalawowe Sowaj xwu Mwana** underwent extraposition. On the other hand in sentence 7.62, **nitalawo ke** is a single prosodic word, too light for extraposition, and there is no prosodic break separating it from the rest of the clause.

(7.61) **Ewewu de ekuna nitalawowe Sowaj xwu Mwana.**

e-wewu =de e-kuna t | [ni- ta-alawo =we Sowaj xwu Mwana]
 APV- call =1 APV- shout PRP- PSV- wake.up = LNK NAME and NAME

“I call out shouting to wake up Sowaj and Mwana.”

(7.62) **De wewu Sowaj xwu Mwana nitalawo ke.**

de wewu Sowaj xwu Mwana ni- ta-alawo =ke
 1 call NAME and NAME PRP- PSV- wake.up = 3

“I call Sowaj and Mwana to wake them up.”

This rule also correctly predicts that you can have a prosodic break before coverbs that introduce subordinate clauses, but not before other types of coverb (see section 6.7).

Both of these things could also be explained with a separate rule that inserts prosodic breaks before heavy adverbial subordinate clauses, but I like the unified rule because it's more parsimonious. Deeper analyses of prosody and clause structure will test it.

7.7 Conditionals

Mwanele uses two common constructions to express conditionals. The first is a coordination construction consisting of two independent clauses linked by **be** or **ne**, and the second is a subordi-

nation construction using the verb **mwat** ‘to depend on.’ In the first construction, the antecedent¹ (a.k.a. the premise a.k.a. the protasis a.k.a. the hypothesis) comes first, then an SR-marked coordinating conjunction, then the consequent (a.k.a. the apodosis), usually marked with **lo** ‘so, then.’

(7.63) **Ekwulife Taxelo, ɲe lo de gapoŋwe kajim de.**

e - kwu - life Taxelo ɲe = lo de gapo - ɲwe kajim de
APV - VEN - arrive NAME DS = so 1 cook - FTP cuisine big

“We’ll have a feast if Taxelo comes.”

(5MOYD #1234)

(7.64) **Le kiɓe weŋwe Xiɓa, be ɕeɕe ke lo min delo.**

le kiɓe weŋ = we Xiɓa be ɕeɕe = ke = lo min delo.
2 know name = LNK NAME SS see = 3 = so know may

“If you know Xiɓa’s name, then maybe you’ll recognize her.”

(7.65) **Egapoɓ le wol taxi, be ejim de piɓe.**

e - gapo - ɓ = le = wol taxi be e - im = de piɓe
APV - cook - NFP = 2 = already tonight SS APV - eat = 1 be.able

“If you’ve already cooked something tonight, then we can eat.”

In the second construction, the antecedent is embedded in the consequent as a complement of the verb **mwat** ‘to depend on’.

(7.66) **De xeloteŋwe daboŋa mwat piɕe le dijo.**

de xe - lot - ɲwe daboŋa mwat pi - ɕeɕe = le dijo
1 AND - search - FTP honey depend.on NEG - see = 2 animal

“We’ll go look for honey if you don’t see any animals.”

(5MOYD #1235)

In sentences 7.63-7.66, whether or not the antecedent is true is still an open question. In sentences like this, the antecedent can be marked nonpast or future, or remain unmarked. It’s also possible to have conditionals where you already know that the antecedent is not true, but you’re making a statement in the consequent about what *would* have been true if the antecedent *had been* true. Conditionals like this are always marked with future morphology, even if they refer to events in the past. The antecedent is sometimes marked with the adverb **ika** ‘already,’ especially in the coordination construction.

¹I always get ‘protasis’ and ‘apodosis’ confused, so even though I know they’re the ‘proper’ terms, for my own sanity I’m going to call the protasis the ‘antecedent’ and the apodosis the ‘consequent.’

(7.67) **Koṭak potik ika tuṅ, ɲe lo de piṭeṣeṅwe.**

Koṭak poti -k =ika tuṅ ɲe =lo de pi-ṭeṣe-ɲwe.
 NAME *not.be.in* -FTI = *already* party DS = so 1 NEG-see -FTP

“If Koṭak hadn’t been at the party, I wouldn’t have seen them.”

(7.68) **Gwu ɲwoḍa mwatak ete tetekwe ɲoḷak eka?**

gwu ɲwoḍa mwat -k e-te t- e-te -k =we ɲoḷak
 Q *yam* *depend* -FTI APV-*grow* CMP-APV-*pass* -FTI = LNK *rain*

e-ka
 APV-*do.weather*

“Would the yams have grown if it had rained more?”

(7.69) **Le imeṅwe de mwat talotiṅwe de i ṭaḷol e le.**

le im-ɲwe =de mwat ta-lot -ɲwe =de i ṭaḷol e le
 2 *eat* -FTP = 1 *depend.on* PSV-*catch* -FTP = 1 COP *bird.of.prey* ERG 2

“You would have eaten me if you had caught me as an osprey.” (5MOYD #1376)

If a conditional reflects a general statement about the world at large rather than a statement about the world at a specific point in time, verbs in both the antecedent and the consequent can be unmarked for TAM.

(7.70) **Le pikwole ṣalo, be lo ejoṅe talodu.**

le pi-kwole ṣalo be lo e-oṅe ta-lodu
 2 NEG-*work* task SS so APV-*crave* PSV-*die*

“If you don’t work, you starve.” (5MOYD #1421)

Like other expressions with verb complements, the complement of **mwat** can be focused.

(7.71) **De mwateṅwe meḍefa takweme ki Fila ṭeṣe em.**

de mwat -ɲwe meḍefa ta-kwu-eme ki Fila ṭeṣe em
 1 *depend.on* -FTP *yesterday* CMP-*VEN-go* ORG NAME *see* *friend*

“If I had gone to Fila yesterday, I would have seen my friend.” (5MOYD #1375)

(7.72) **Naṅwa mwatak ṣaṭe talomek ṭime elot.**

naṅwa mwat -k ṣaṭe ta-lome-k ṭime e-lot
institution *depend.on* -FTI *only* CMP-*hold* -FTI *pull* APV-*catch*

“The institution will only succeed if people support it.”

Conditional imperatives, where the consequent is a command, only use the coordination construction.

(7.73) **Le ʔeʂe seba, be kwu exemelap!**

le ʔeʂe seba be kwu e- xe-melap
2 see tiger SS OPT APV-AND-run

“If you see a tiger, run!”

A Samples of Spoken Mwaneḷe

A.1 Narrative: Whelks

In-world, this is a story told to me by an informant in Gawo Meka. Out-of-world, this is something real that actually happened to me when I was a kid.

Elotobwolo de elotoxwego kese ḡwepe ḡek mek.

e-lotobwo -lo =de e-lotoxwego kese ḡwe -pe ḡek mek
APV-*catch.fish*-NFI=1 APV-*catch.shellfish* accompany town-DIM *be.at.time* light

“When I was young I used to go catch fish and shellfish with the village.”

Koḷa aḡa xiti gawo, be elotobwolo de ole gijo eḡome.

koḷa aḡa xiti gawo be e-lotobwo -lo =de =ole gijo e-ḡome.
aunt/uncle *cousin* *be.in* *island* SS APV-*catch.fish*-NFI=1 =*all* *there* APV-*wade*

“My family lives on an island, and we would all wade in the water and catch fish.”

Megwa gapolo de, ḡe eḡaḡomeḷ ḡitateguwe bwo xwego.

megwa gapo -lo =de ḡe e- ḡo-ḡome-ḷ ḡi- ta-tegu =we bwo xwego
sun *burn* -NFI=1 DS APV-*ASEA-wade* -NFP PRP-*PSV-find* =LNK *fish* *shellfish*

“The sun was scorching us and we waded out to search for seafood.”

De ḷaḡin takedo de ika ḡipitakese lot.

de ḷaḡin ta-kedo =de =ika ḡi- pi- ta-kese lot
1 *consider* CMP-*prepare* =1 =*already* PRP-NEG-*PSV-accompany* *search*

“I thought I was ready to search alone.”

Ŋewo loṭo bwo xwego ejogo, ɲe de loṭo kwi kwu ulu, be loṭo kwi ekwugigon.

Ŋewo loṭ -lo bwo xwego e-jogo ɲe de loṭ -lo kwi kwu ulu
other search-NFI fish shellfish APV-seine DS 1 search-NFI want use hand.net
 be loṭ -lo kwi e-kwu-gigon
 SS *search-NFI want APV- VEN-dig*

“The others were looking for seafood by seining, but I wanted to use a handnet or go digging.”

Xemeḷ de ɭekese, be kwuḷ ulu sekasek gome.

xe-eme-ḷ =de ɭe-kese be kwu-lo ulu sekasek gome
 AND-go -NFP=1 R/R-*accompany* SS *use -NFP hand.net ID:swishing begin*

“I went out alone and started to use a hand net, sweeping back and forth.”

Jo! De ɥeṣeḷ xwegopwekedede.

jo de ɥeṣe-ḷ xwegopwek-de -de
there 1 see -NFP whelk -AUG-AUG

“There! I saw a *huge* whelk.”

Da i tak u ɲode.

da i =tak u ɲode
sweet be =certainly the ocean

“The ocean is so sweet.”

ḷemiṇuḷ de, be ekwuṇomeḷ

ḷe-miṇu-ḷ =de be e-kwu-ṇome-ḷ
 R/R-*turn -NFP=1* SS *APV- VEN-wade -NFP*

“I turned around and waded towards it.”

Tatimwuḷ de fawe bwulubwulu edol.

ta-timwu -ḷ =de =fawe bwulubwulu e-dol
 PSV-*put.colder -NFP=1* =*suddenly* ID:*going.underwater* APV-*fall*

“I suddenly fell into the cold water.”

De jeŋeŋ ɲode, ɲe ɲode wamwu-ɪ de.

de jeŋ -ɪ ɲode ɲe ɲode wamwu-ɪ =de
 1 drink -NFP ocean DS ocean drink -NFP = 1

“I drank the ocean and the ocean drank me.”

Eloŋikwi de, be lo elageŋ amwo

e-ɪoŋ -ikwi =de be lo e-lage-ɪ amwo
 APV-fly -CON = 1 SS SO APV-rise -NFP breathe

“I paddled frantically and I came up breathing.”

Te tak sa!

te =tak =sa
 large = *certainly* = ITSF

“It was so deep!”

Begemeŋ de, be lekwubwuŋ ki leŋa meŋok.

beg-eme-ɪ =de be le-kwu-bwu-ɪ ki leŋa meŋok
 ASHORE-go -NFP = 1 SS R/R- VEN- sit -NFP ORG cover tide

“I went back to shore and sat down on the jetty.”

Mwa teŋeŋ de, ɲe kwugwonŋ jiŋ litajil, be paŋeŋeŋ teŋe jo e ke xwu aŋa de.

mwa teŋe-ɪ =de ɲe kwu-gwon-ɪ jiŋ li-ta-ji -ɪ
 mother see -NFP = 1 DS VEN-speak -NFP event REL-PSV-happen -NFP

be pa-teŋe-ɪ teŋe =jo e ke xwu aŋa =de
 SS CAUS-see -NFP hole =DIST ERG 3 and cousin = 1

“My mother saw me, and I told her about what had happened, then showed the hole to her and my cousin.”

Kwemeŋ aŋa ki teŋe ɲitalote xwegopwek, ɲe tateguŋ ɲeke!

kwu-eme-ɪ aŋa ki teŋe ɲi-ta-lot =we xwegopwek
 VEN-go -NFP cousin ORG hole PRP-PSV-search = LNK whelk

ηe ta-tegu-! ηeke
 DS PSV-*find* -NFP *right.away*

“My cousin went to the hole to look for the whelk and he found it right away!”

Edol ke, ηe elage ke.

e-dol =ke ηe e-lage =ke
 APV-*fall* =3 DS APV-*rise* =3

“These fall and those rise.”

Or: “What goes around comes around.”

A.2 Narrative: Jump!

Another story from our informant in Gawo Meka (a.k.a. something that happened to me...except it wasn't in Sile Saŋo, it was in a town that inspired the Mwane setting!)

Kwemeļ de ki Sile Saŋo ŋek te de peda.

kwu-eme-ļ =de ki Sile Saŋo ŋek te =de pe -da
 VEN-go -NFP=1 ORG PLACE *be.at.same.time* exceed=1 *small*-WRT

“When I was younger I went to Sile Saŋo.”

De ʔeše kwi ole litagiše gije.

de ʔeše kwi ole li- ta-giše gije
 1 see want all REL-PSV-spread there

“I wanted to see everything there was there.”

Eŋolifeļ de ki kasa ŋitateguwe ʔa lexexeli.

e- ŋo-life -ļ =de ki kasa ŋi- ta-tegu =we ʔa li- e- xe-
 APV-ASEA-cross.threshold-NFP=1 ORG house PRP-PSV-find=LNK land REL-APV-AND-
 xeli
 face

“I set out from home to find distant shores.”

Ekwulifeļ de, be fawe teguļ em.

e-kwu-life -ļ =de be fawe tegu-ļ em
 APV-VEN-cross.threshold-NFP=1 SS immediately find-NFP friends

“I got there and somehow I made friends right away.”

De kese ke xiti kasape lexedefa eleja ŋek epi.

de kese =ke xiti kasa -pe li- e-xedefa eleja ŋek =epi
 1 accompany=3 *be.in* house-DIM REL-APV-*be.above* tidal.cove *be.at.same.time*=some

“Together, we rented a little house over a cove for a bit.”

Tanjelo nok, ɲe taɲalek tesodo de ole esube.

ta-ɲije -lo nok ɲe ta-ɲalek ta- e-sodo =de =ole e-sube
 APV-*lie.down*-NFI *water* DS PSV-*choose* CMP-APV-*jump*=1 =*all* APV-*swim*

“The water was calm, so we decided to all jump in the water to go swimming.”

De gwo nok sa, be xalo defaɖa, be lo esodo pisodo ɭatesi xalo.

de gwo nok sa be xalo defaɖa be lo e-sodo pi-sodo ɭa-tesi
 1 *like water very* SS *fear distance.above* SS *so* APV-*jump* NEG-*jump* RSN-*overflow*
 xalo
fear

“I love the water, but I’m afraid of heights, so I just couldn’t jump, I was too afraid.”

Esodo ke ole bwulubwulu ɲe lo talalelo de ʂaɖe xi bwoka.

e-sodo =ke ole bwulubwulu ɲe lo ta-lale -lo =de ʂaɖe xi
 APV-*jump* =3 *all* ID:*going.underwater* DS *so* PSV-*stand* -NFI =1 *only* *be.in*
 bwoka
rock.formation

“They all jumped into the water, and I was left standing alone on the rocks.”

Ṭaɭoɭ ɲalek bwo liɭe-kese.

Ṭaɭoɭ ɲalek bwo li- ɭe-kese
bird.of.prey *choose* *fish* REL- R/R- *accompany*

“A hunting bird chooses the fish that’s all by itself.”

Eɲosodoɭ de be ekwukwosu ki lep tak je xabwo ʂeke tikitik.

e- ɲo-sodo -ɭ =de be e-kwu-kwosu ki lep tak je
 APV-ASEA-*jump*-NFP =1 SS APV-VEN-*crash* ORG *surface* *exact* PROX
 xabwo ʂeke tikitik
hit *jellyfish* ID:*burning*

“I jumped into the water and I crashed through the surface right into a jellyfish, and got stung.”

De xwakwaḷ ṣaṭe ḷaki je taxalo ṇiḷ defaḍa!

de xwak-ḷ ṣaṭe ḷak -i =je ta-xalo ṇi-ḷe defaḍa
 1 learn -NFP only RSN -be =PROX CMP-fear two-ADV distance.above

“All I learned from that is to be twice as afraid of heights!”

A.3 Narrative: Dog

Adapted from a story by u/Lysimachiakis, which was itself adapted from a story by David Peterson. Submitted as part of Issue #4 of *Segments*.

Fek lijo keselo lusi xiti gawope gepwago.

fek lijo kese -lo lusi xiti gawo -pe ge = pwago
man old accompany -NFI dog be.in island -DIM ORN = rock

“An old man lived along with his dog on a small rocky island.”

Ke xiti kasape gegobi litalewe e lumo.

ke xiti kasa -pe ge = gobi li- ta- lewe e lumo
 3 *be.in house -DIM ORN = wood REL- PSV- cover ERG moss*

“They lived in a wooden hut covered in moss.”

Eka oley fune, ɲe eka dol ɲolak.

e- ka = oley fune ɲe e- ka = dol ɲolak
APV- do.weather = always clouds DS APV- do.weather = often rain

“The sky was always gray and it rained often.”

Bidewe fek lijo i gwoļu, ɲe jok i şaşo xo sat.

bide = we fek lijo i gwoļu ɲe jok i şaşo xo sat
hair = LNK man old COP gray DS beard COP dense and wiry

“The old man had gray hair and a thick, wiry beard.”

Bidelawe lusi te i owowu xo goba.

bidela = we lusi te i owowu xo goba
coat = LNK dog big COP long and brown

“The big dog’s coat was long and brown.”

Fek lijo wamwu ɲaɲamek ɲolu geno, be kwun ɲete ɲili ki lusi.

fek lijo wamwu ɲaɲamek ɲolu geno
man old drink every.morning tea wide

be kwu- n ɲete ɲili ki lusi
 SS VEN- give leftover cold ORG dog

“Each morning, the old man drank a bitter tea and shared cold leftovers with his dog.”

Eṅomenji ke xasija ṅijelotobwo.

e- ṅo- meṅi =ke xasija ṅi- e- lotobwo
 APV- ASEA- walk =3 afternoon PRP- APV- catch.fish

“In the afternoon, he walked to the shore to catch some fish.”

Lusi lot subelak xet likwi taxefalakwuwe bwo geṭok.

lusi lot subelak xet li- kwi ta- xe- falakwu =we bwo ge = ṭok
 dog hunt seagull away REL- want CMP- AND- steal = LNK fish ORN = salt

“The dog chased away seagulls that wanted to steal the tasty fish.”

Fek lijo sijak lo gobi pilem ṅiṣukwu.

fek lijo sijak =lo gobi pilem ṅi- ṣukwu
 man old cut =so wood split PRP- burn

“The old man then chopped firewood.”

Lusi lepwu ke lewe bwo.

lusi lepwu =ke lewe bwo
 dog be.next.to =3 protect fish

“The dog sat by his side, guarding the fish.”

Fek kwu doleṅ ṭok gapo bebwo, be kese lusi im jo.

fek kwu doleṅ ṭok gapo bebwo be kese lusi im =jo
 man use evening salt cook fish ss accompany dog eat =DIST

“In the evening, the man salted and cooked the fish, and ate it with the dog.”

Ejin ke lepwu ṣuko ola ṅitaxepote ṭiliḍa xiki.

e- in =ke lepwu ṣuko ola ṅi- ta- xe- pot =we ṭiliḍa xiki
 APV- sleep =3 be.next.to fire warm PRP- PSV- AND- remove = LNK coldness sharp

“They slept by the warm fire to keep away the bitter cold.”

Enopwe xe fek i mikwa, be mwat takesewe lusi eḍaṅwo.

e- nopwe =xe fek i mikwa
 APV- progress =CONC man COP simple

be mwat ta- kese =we lusi e- ḍaṅwo
 ss depend.on CMP- accompany = LNK dog APV- be.happy

“His life was simple, but so long as he had his dog, the man was happy.”

A.4 Narrative: Farmer

Ŋin leme kwilo xi litesi balowe pwemek defa.

ŋin leme kwi -lo xi li-tesi balo =we pwemek defa
farmer want -NFI thing REL-exceed batch =LNK year before

“The farmer wanted more than last year’s harvest.”

Eļanin ke gwon, ‘kwole sam kwun bili ŋwo, ŋe lo de pade balo delo mwat tapakwujewe kwole sam.’

e-ļanin =ke gwon kwole sam kwu-n bili ŋwo
APV-consider =3 say element three VEN-give greens tubers

ŋe =lo de pa-de balo delo
DS =so 1 CAUS-grow batch be.possible

mwat ta- pa-kwu-je =we kwole sam
depend.on PSV-CAUS- VEN-put =LNK element three

“He thought, ‘plants come from the three elements, so if I add more of the three elements, it will increase my harvest.’”

Takwu wetu ŋwefa ɥawe gibili, be lo tapakwuje ɳile.

ta-kwu wetu ŋwefa ɥa =we gibili be =lo ta- pa-kwu-je ɳile
PSV-use dung make.whole earth =LNK fields SS =so PSV-CAUS- VEN-put twice

“Dung supplements the earth in the fields, so he added twice as much dung.”

Takeseke waxe, ŋe taŋugwu biluka gwudada.

ta-keseke waxe ŋe ta-ŋugwu biluka gwudada
PSV-crush stem DS PSV-spoil greens ID:gross

“It crushed the stems and fouled the greens.”

Eļoļ ɣaɥe widuŋe mikemik.

e-ļoļ =ɣaɥe widuŋe mikemik
APV-escape =only plantain.tree ID:safe and sound

“Only the plantain trees escaped unscathed.”

Pwemek je kwun lepe kwobawe balo.

pwemek =je kwu-n lepe kwobwa =we balo
year =PROX VEN-give barely half =LNK batch

“He only had half of a harvest that year.”

Takwu sefak ηwefa nokwe noḷak.

ta-kwu sefak ηwefa nok =we noḷak
 PSV-use irrigation make.whole water =LNK rain

“Irrigation supplements the water from the rain.”

Ŋin leme nek pwemek eḅi gigon agat nitakwukenḅe nok ṣame.

ŋin leme nek pwemek eḅi gigon agat
 farmer be.at.time year after dig irrigation.ditch

ni- ta-kwu-kenḅ =we nok ṣame
 PRP-PSV-VEN-carry =LNK water thrice

“The next year, the farmer dug an irrigation ditch to bring three times as much water.”

Gibili nek taḅoḷak leṣame eḅome bwulubwulu.

gibili nek taḅoḷak li- e-ṣame e-ḅome bwulubwulu
 fields be.at.time rain REL-APV-be.first APV-be.on.bottom ID:underwater

“At the first rain, the fields were flooded.”

Eḷoḷ ṣate ḅawos mikemik.

e-ḷoḷ =ṣate ḅawos mikemik
 APV-escape =only taro ID:safe and sound

“Only the taro escaped unscathed.”

Pwemek je kwun lepe kwo samwe balo.

pwemek =je kwun lepe kwo sam =we balo
 year =PROX VEN-give barely part three =LNK batch

“He only had a third of a harvest that year.”

Ŋejala ηwefa ṣukowe baxenḅi.

ŋejala ηwefa ṣuko =we baxenḅi
 wildfire make.whole fire =LNK volcanic.soil

“Natural burns supplement the fire in the volcanic soil.”

Ŋin leme nek pwemek eḅi paṣukwu gibili ole.

ŋin leme nek pwemek eḅi pa-ṣukwu gibili =ole
 farmer be.at.time year after CAUS-burn field =all

“The next year, the farmer set fire to all of his fields.”

Tataşu bili ŋwo pitade.

ta-taşu bili ŋwo pi- ta- de
 PSV- char greens tubers NEG- PSV- grow

“The crops were charred and did not grow.”

Eloḷ şate pwago mikemik.

e- loḷ = şate pwago mikemik
 APV- escape = only rock ID: safe and sound

“Only the rocks escaped unscathed.”

Pwemek je pikwun peje balo gwa.

pwemek = je pi- kwu- n = peje balo = gwa
 year = PROX NEG- VEN- give = at.all batch = any

“He had no harvest that year.”

Epoti pweŋe ejoti xilen i ŋe, ŋin leme padol ge.

e- poti pweŋe e- joti xilen i ŋe ŋin leme pa- dol ge
 APV- not.be.in money APV- be.in exhaustion COP DS farmer CAUS- fall hand

“Poor and exhausted, the farmer gave up.”

Ke ŋek pwemek eŋi pakwuje biwe, be pipabekep.

ke ŋek pwemek eŋi pa- kwu- je biwe be pi- pa- bekep
 3 be.at.time year after CAUS- VEN- put seed SS NEG- CAUS- disturb

“The next year, he planted his crops and left them alone.”

Tade ke kwu ʔawe gibili kwu ʔokwe ʔoḷak kwu ʔukowe baxeŋi.

ta- de = ke kwu ʔa = we gibili kwu ʔok = we ʔoḷak
 PSV- grow = 3 use earth = LNK field use water = LNK rain

kwu ʔuko = we baxeŋi
 use fire = LNK volcanic.soil

“They grew with the field’s earth, the rain’s water, and the volcanic soil’s fire.”

Balo je tesi olewe eŋwe pwekeŋ sam defa.

balo = je tesi ole = we eŋ = we pwekeŋ sam defa
 batch = PROX exceed all = LNK think = LNK year three before

“His harvest exceeded the last three years combined.”

Ke pakwuje xi min litakile ika.

ke pa-kwu-je xi min li- ta- kile =ika
 3 CAUS- VEN- put thing know REL- PSV- know = already

“He learned what he had already known.”

Tabikwo xi mipo mwat pitabekebwe pulana.

ta-bikwo xi mipo mwat pi- ta- bekep =we pulana
 PSV- grow.thick thing balanced depend.on NEG- PSV- disturb =LNK nature

“Balanced things flourish unless you go against their nature.”

B Mwane Script

Mwaneḷe is written with an abugida, natively called **tatasi mwane** ህህልፍጎሌ, which means ‘Mwane writing.’ Here is a table with the script’s glyphs.

	∅	a	e	i	o	u	dim					bifaḷ		gep		
							∅	a	e	i	o	u	e	i	∅	
∅	ሀ		ሀ	ሀ	ሀ	ሀ										
j		ጋ	ጋ	ጋ	ጋ	ጋ		ጋ					ጋ	ጋ		
p	ቀ	ቀ	ቀ	ቀ	ቀ	ቀ							ቀ	ቀ		ቀ
b	ቃ	ቃ	ቃ	ቃ	ቃ	ቃ							ቃ	ቃ		ቃ
m	ፍ	ፍ	ፍ	ፍ	ፍ	ፍ							ፍ	ፍ		ፍ
f	ፍ		ፍ	ፍ	ፍ	ፍ							ፍ	ፍ		ፍ
t	ህ		ህ	ህ	ህ	ህ							ህ	ህ		ህ
d	ድ		ድ	ድ	ድ	ድ							ድ	ድ		ድ
n	ህ		ህ	ህ	ህ	ህ							ህ	ህ		ህ
s	ህ		ህ	ህ	ህ	ህ							ህ	ህ		ህ
l	ህ		ህ	ህ	ህ	ህ							ህ	ህ		ህ
k	ግ	ግ	ግ	ግ	ግ	ግ							ግ	ግ		ግ
g	ግ	ግ	ግ	ግ	ግ	ግ							ግ	ግ		ግ
ŋ	ግ	ግ	ግ	ግ	ግ	ግ							ግ	ግ		ግ
x	ግ	ግ	ግ	ግ	ግ	ግ							ግ	ግ		ግ

Table B.1: The glyphs used to write Standard Southern Mwaneḷe

To show how the script works, it’s helpful to know a bit about the current phonology and recent phonological evolution of the language. Southern Mwaneḷe has the five vowels /a e i o u/ along with the following consonants:

	Labial		Coronal		Dorsal	
	Vel.	Lab.	Plain	Vel.	Plain	Lab.
Stop	p ^y b ^y	p ^w b ^w	t d	t ^y d ^y	k g	k ^w g ^w
Nasal	m ^y	m ^w	n	n ^y	ŋ	ŋ ^w
Fricative	f ^y	ɸ	ʃ	s ^y	x	x ^w
Approx.			l	l ^y	j	w

Consonants and vowels always alternate: the first syllable of a word can be just V and the last syllable can be CVC, but otherwise syllables are strictly CV. Word-finally, voicing and secondary articulation are neutralized, except for /l l^y/, and glides are disallowed.

Looking back at the consonants, as long as you group /j w/ together, you get neat pairs distinguished by secondary articulation. Mwane people traditionally divide these into **mek** **ϕ** **ᵱ** ‘light’ and **tax** **ʋ** **ᶑ** ‘dark’ groups. Labialized consonants and plain coronals are considered light and velarized consonants and plain dorsals are considered dark.

Historically, labialization occurred when a labial or velar consonant came before a rounded vowel. Until recently there were two low vowels, /æ α/ but they merged to /a/ in almost all dialects, creating some minimal pairs distinguished by rounding. Velarization occurred mostly as a result of cluster simplification, first with /Cl Cr/ clusters merging to /Cɹ^y/, and then /ɹ^y/ being lost and leaving velarization behind. If there was another consonant between a velar and a rounded vowel, it blocked labialization, even with velar consonants that couldn’t be velarized. This merger plus the loss of consonant clusters led to phonemic secondary articulation characteristic of modern Mwanele.

Some of this history is reflected in the way that the Mwane script works. The modern script is an abugida with fourteen consonant series, plus a series for word-initial vowels. It dates back to when there were 6 vowels and from before there was contrastive secondary articulation, so the vowels and the consonants don’t quite match up.

Bare consonant letters are pronounced with an inherent vowel /a/. Each consonant has a form for each of the other vowels /e i o u/ and some have an additional written form for /a/. If a consonant is not followed by a vowel, then it gets marked with a vertical line above, called the **gep** **ᵱ** **ᶑ**, to mark that there is no inherent /a/. There’s also a special character for word-final /l^y/. You can see all of the glyphs in table B.1.

Each consonant series is unspecified for secondary articulation. So the same letter base **ᵱ** is used for /b^y/ and /b^w/ or **ᵱ** for /f/ and /s^y/. There’s also a single glide letter **ᵱ** for both /w/ and /j/. Each consonant’s secondary articulation is marked by the following vowel in combination with a few diacritics. In general, the vowel signs for back vowels /o/ and /u/ as well as the overt /a/ labialize consonants, whereas the signs for the front vowels /e/ and /i/ as well as the inherent /a/ don’t. There are two diacritics that mark secondary articulation: a vertical line below the

letter, the **dim** ᄃᆫ, marks consonants as velarized or non-labialized, and a curved stroke above the letter, the **bifaŋ** ᄃᆫᄃᆫ, marks consonants as labialized before front vowels. Here's how it works out for each group of consonants:

For most non-coronal consonant letters (the ⟨p b m k g ŋ x⟩ series) the base letter is pronounced non-labialized plus /a/ and remains non-labialized when combined with the vowel signs for /e i/. The consonants are labialized before the vowel signs for /a o u/. Non-labialized consonants before /o u/ are written with the vowel signs plus the **dim**. Labialized consonants before /e i/ are written with the vowel sign plus the **bifaŋ**.

The glide letter mostly works the same way as non-coronal consonants, treating /w/ as the labialized form of /j/. The one exception is that /ja/ is written with the overt /a/ vowel sign plus the **dim**.

For other consonant letters (the ⟨f t d n s l⟩ series), consonants are plain before all vowel letters. Velarized consonants are marked with a **dim** before all vowels.

If you look at the table B.1, you'll see a few holes. There are gaps in the columns with the overt /a/ sign and the **bifaŋ**, since coronal consonants don't use those and with the **dim** before non-back vowels since non-coronal consonants don't need that. The glide letter and voiced stops don't take the **gep** since they don't occur word-finally. Since secondary articulation distinctions are mostly neutralized at the ends of words, letters with the **gep** can't also have a **dim** or **bifaŋ**. The one exception is the character for /l^y/ ⟨ᄃᆫᄃᆫ⟩, which has a special character.

There are also a few gaps that result from the syllable they represent not actually showing up in the language. Before /i/, /ʃ s^x/ merge to [ç] and /x x^w/ merge to [ç̣]. Before /u/, /x/ merges to /x^w/. These are written with the glyphs for ⟨si xi xwu⟩ respectively, so the glyphs that would write ⟨ʃi xwi xu⟩ aren't used. Historically, labialized consonants didn't occur before /i/, but thanks to ideophones and to loanwords from nearby languages like Anroo, Lam Proj and Ṭalenjele, most labialized consonants can occur before /i/, if rarely. However, [fi] was loaned as /fⁱ/ rather than /fi/, so the glyph that would write ⟨fi⟩ is not used.

Independent words are written with spaces between them, but clitics are written without a space between them and their host. Ends of independent clauses or sentences are marked with a vertical line | and ends of paragraphs or sections of text are marked with a double vertical line ||. I'm sure there's other punctuation, I just haven't created it (and/or learned about it) yet.

C Wordlist

This is a wordlist of the Mwanele language. It's a work in progress in at least two ways: first, I'm constantly discovering and adding new words to this list, so I don't think it will ever be definitive. Second, I'm still figuring out the formatting, although with help from Akam and Asti, I've got something I'm starting to like.

The entries are alphabetized as **A B D D E F F G I J K L L M N N Ñ O P S S T T U W X.** TODO

(You could think about the Cw digraphs as constituting their own letters after the base letter if you want, but it doesn't affect the collation order, since there are never Cx clusters.)

The entries are structured as follows.

headword [IPA transcription] *p.o.s.* *NFP* **irregular forms**

1 first sense (*usage note*)

2 **prefix~** second sense

Mwanele example or expression *'English free translation'*

In senses with affixes or other words, a swung dash ~ represents the headword. The parts of speech abbreviations are verb, noun, adjective, adverb, ideophone, particle, and numeral.

Several verbs require a directional prefix to which tone gets assigned. This is marked in the entry with a dash - and in the phonetic transcription with ['] where the directional prefix goes. TODO

A

abi [áb^yi] *n.*

- 1 mushroom, especially an edible mushroom

aḍas [áḍ^yaf] *n.*

- 1 the act of observation or examination
2 the scholarly study of something, a field

ade [áde] *n.*

- 1 horse

afan [áfān] *n.*

- 1 trunk (of an elephant)
2 penis

afeli [áfeli] *n.*

- 1 ideas, inspiration, insight

afu [áfu] *adj.*

- 1 bitter, astringent, tannic
2 unpleasantly strong (of a flavor)

daḍa afu ‘puckering sweetness’

agat [ágat] *n.*

- 1 ditch, canal, irrigation ditch

akwu [ák^wu] *v.*

- 1 **ta~** to stick or fit together imperfectly
2 **ta~** to be off, to be slightly wrong
3 **pa~** to stick together imperfectly

alawo [álawo] *v.*

- 1 to awaken someone, to wake someone up
2 **ta~** to be woken up, to wake up

alewelo [álewelo] *n.*

- 1 sense of taste, sense of flavor

alima [álim^ya] *n.*

- 1 sweet basil, lemon basil

alīn [ál^yin] *n.*

- 1 mouse or rat
2 a small mischievous child

alo [álo] *v.* NFP **alewe!**

- 1 to lick, to touch with the tongue
2 to taste, to try a flavor

amo [ám^yo] *n.*

- 1 a salted and fermented soybean paste used in flavoring food

amamwo [ám^yam^wo] *adv.*

- 1 constantly, every time you breathe

amwo [ám^wo] *n.*

- 1 breath
2 breathing, the process of inhalation and exhalation
pale wamwo ‘to hold one’s breath’
3 air exhaled by a person

amwu [ám^wu] *v.*

- 1 to breathe, to draw breath

anam [ánam] *n.*

- 1 duck

aṅa [áṅa] *n.*

- 1 sibling or cousin
2 any relative of the same generation as oneself
3 friend, informal gender-neutral term of address

we aṅa, ki lot? ‘hey bro, what’s up?’

apala [ápala] *n.*

- 1 pun, play on words

asolaso [afolafo] *ideo.*

- 1 sound of rushing or turbulent water, rapids
2 feeling of rushed or stressful situations

aşuŋo [ás^yuŋo] *adj.*

- 1 (*vulgar*) sickened, weakened by illness
2 (*vulgar*) shoddy, of low quality, shitty

aşuŋu [ás^yuŋu] *v.*

- 1 for illness to sicken or weaken
2 (*vulgar*) to fuck up, to botch

aşus [ás^yuʃ] *n.*

- 1 deterioration, wear and tear, use damage
2 erosion

aşusu [ás^yuʃu] *v.*

- 1 **ta~** to be eroded, to crumble, to wear down

atił [átıl^y] *n.*

- 1 a ceramic or glass vessel with a tightly fitting, flat, often greased lid used to seal things airtight
2 a watertight hold in a ship
3 a well-protected or sealed-off area

axi [áçi] *n.*

- 1 ice, frozen water
2 glass

B

badudu [b^yadudu] *ideo.*

- 1 ideophone for farting, especially audible or

loud farting

baka [b^yáka] *v.*

- 1 to try, to attempt
2 to take an exam, to sit an exam
3 ~ **paŋe** to pretend

balo [b^yálo] *v.*

- 1 batch, group of items all made at once
2 harvest, the food harvested from one particular crop
3 litter, group of offspring
4 group of people the same age

basi [b^yáci] *v.*

- 1 to do something poorly, to botch
2 to be bad at something
3 (*adv. SVC*) poorly, badly, unskillfully

baxeŋi [b^yáçeŋi] *n.*

- 1 volcanic soil

baxo [b^yáxo] *n.*

- 1 mountain, high terrain
2 terrain or region characterized by steep slopes

be [b^ye] *prt.*

- 1 and, but (*same subject*)

bebepe [b^yéb^yep^ye] *n.*

- 1 berry, any small fruit that is edible in one bite

bebwo [b^yéb^wo] *n.*

- 1 raw fish, uncooked fish meat

beđi [b^yéd^yi] *v.*

- 1 to smell something, especially something bad
- befa** [b^yéɸa] *n.*
1 lychee fruit
- befaŋ** [b^yéɸaŋ] *n.*
1 lychee tree
- bege** [b^yége] *n.*
1 wing of a flying animal
2 palm fronds
3 fan made of paper or palms
- begiŋe** [b^yégiŋe] *n.*
1 palm tree
- bekep** [b^yékep] *v.* NFP **bekebeɓ**
1 e~ to flip over, to roll over
2 pa~ to flip something over, to turn something over
3 pa~ to disrupt, to disturb
- bekiɓ** [b^yékiɓ^ye] *n.*
1 book, work of writing
- beŋa** [b^yéŋ^ya] *v.*
1 to fix, to repair
2 to tidy up, to arrange
3 ta~ to turn out well, to work out
- beɓalu** [b^yéɓ^yalu] *n.*
1 sapote fruit, mamey fruit, abiu fruit
- bibi** [b^yíbi^yi] *n.*
1 songbird, passerine
2 nickname for a romantic partner
- bibi** [b^yíbi^yi] *v.*
- 1 e~ to sing, hum, or whistle an improvised tune
- bide** [b^yíde] *n.*
1 hair, human hair
2 fiber that can't be used for cloth or rope
- bifaŋ** [b^yíɸaŋ] *n.*
1 a gash, a deep scratch
2 a slash across the neck to kill an animal
3 the labializing diacritic in Mwane script
- bifo** [b^yíɸ^yo] *n.*
1 scissors, shears, any two-part cutting implement
- bifu** [b^yíɸ^yu] *v.*
1 to cut across something
- bikwe** [b^yík^we] *n.*
1 plants, land plants generally
2 densely vegetated or overgrown area
- bikwo** [b^yík^wo] *v.* NFP **bikwewɓ**
1 ta~ to grow densely
2 ta~ to be abandoned
3 taje~ to get overgrown, to get covered in vegetation
- bilanila** [b^yílanila] *n.*
1 holy basil, Thai basil, a basil cultivar with an anise-like taste and darker leaves
- bili** [b^yíli] *n.*
1 vegetables, especially leafy vegetables
- bilowu** [b^yílowu] *n.*
1 cilantro, coriander leaves

...befa...

- biluka** [b^yíluka] *n.*
 1 leafy greens
- bisaŋ** [b^yífaŋ] *n.*
 1 traditional knotwork used to make bags, ornaments, and jewelry
 2 an object made in the traditional knotwork style
- bişu** [b^yís^yu] *v.*
 1 to be used to, to be accustomed to
 2 to fit together with
 3 **ta~** to be lodged in somewhere, to fit snugly somewhere
 4 **pa~** to lodge in, to fit something in
 5 **le~** to get used to, to accustom oneself to
- biwe** [b^yíwe] *n.*
 1 seed
 2 small seeds used as food
 3 spat or seed oysters
- biwet** [b^yíwet] *n.*
 1 egg
- boŋa** [b^yóŋa] *n.*
 1 shrimp, prawn
- boŋaŋa** [b^yonat^ya] *n.*
 1 insect, any land arthropod
- boşa** [b^yós^ya] *n.*
 1 bee, esp. honeybee
 2 a Mwane table game played with hexagonal tiles resembling honeycomb
- boto** [b^yóto] *v.*
 1 to master a skill, to learn thoroughly, to be an expert at something
- 2 (*adv. SVC*) **e~** skillfully, masterfully, well done
- buleŋ** [b^yúlen^y] *v.*
 1 to obstruct, to hinder
 2 to prevent, to keep from happening (*with a complement clause*)
 3 **le~** to self-destruct, to self-sabotage, to engage in self-destructive behavior
 4 (*cvb.*) against, negatively impacting, a coverb to introduce a malefactor
- buleŋeŋ** [b^yúlen^yeŋ] *n.*
 1 an obstacle, especially a physical one
- buxo** [b^yúxo] *n.*
 1 a musical instrument which makes noise by rattling beads (like a maraca, caxixi, or rattle)
- bwa** [b^wâ] *n.*
 1 father, dad
- bwabwa** [b^wáb^wa] *n.*
 1 dad, father (childish)
 2 term used to address one's father
- bwada** [b^wáda] *adj.*
 1 filled, stuffed, full of material
 2 crowded, bustling, busy
 3 full of food, either bloated or well-sated
- bwanuwa** [b^wánuwa] *n.*
 1 tea steeped with spices, sweetened, and with coconut milk, mwane chai
- bweka** [b^wéka] *adj.*

- 1 dry, not wet
2 bland, not seasoned or spiced (of food)
3 devoid of inspiration
tasi i bweka ‘to have writer’s block’
- bwel** [b^wêl] *n.*
1 flour, especially ground rice or wheat
2 any fine powder
3 ash, char (but for human remains use **lixé** ‘ashes’)
- bwema** [b^wém^ya] *n.*
1 coat to keep warm
- bweṅoḷak** [b^wén^yol^yak] *n.*
1 jacket, raincoat, coat to keep dry
- bweṣo** [b^wés^yo] *v.*
1 **ta~** to flop over, to sit, to lie (of things without defined shape)
- bweṣome** [b^wés^yom^ye] *n.*
1 a dish consisting of noodles with a sauce made of beaten egg, fermented bean paste, and fermented chilies, often with crispy toppings
- bwo** [b^wô] *n.*
1 fish (live animal)
- bwoga** [b^wóga] *n.*
1 piece, part, component, currently integrated into a whole
- bwogom** [b^wógom] *n.*
1 cloud
- bwoka** [b^wóka] *n.*
1 karst hill, mesa
- bwonon** [b^wonon] *ideo.*
1 ideophone for dull throbbing pain
- bwu** [b^wû] *pvt.*
1 half of a group, **bwuwe em de** ‘half of my friends’
2 half of an individual, patterns like a numeral as in **bemwat bwu** ‘half an apple’
- bwu** [b^wû] *v.*
1 **ta~** to sit down
2 **pa~** to set down
- bwulubwulu** [b^wulub^wulu] *ideo.*
1 ideophone for going underwater
- bwuno** [b^wúno] *n.*
1 weight, heaviness
2 scariness, degree to which something is frightening
- bwuṅam** [b^wúṅam] *n.*
1 guest
- D**
- da** [dâ] *adj.*
1 sweet, sugary
2 fresh, potable (of water)
3 ~ **moṣe** ripe, sweet (of fruit)
- dabaṅ** [dáb^yaṅ] *n.*
1 passenger of a vehicle
2 jockey, rider of an animal
- dabwu** [dáb^wu] *n.*
1 good manners, politeness, fairness, saving

face

dabwukwu [dáb^wuk^wu] *v.*

- 1 to be polite, to act politely, to act fairly
- 2 (*adv. SVC*) politely, fairly

dale [dále] *v.*

- 1 to kill unexpectedly
- 2 **ta~** to die unexpectedly, to die after being killed

de [de] *prn.*

- 1 I, we (first-person pronoun)

defa [défa] *n.*

- 1 head
- 2 top, upper portion
- 3 beginning, early part of an event

defada [défad^a] *n.*

- 1 vertical distance, height, depth, **gwu le xalo defada?** ‘are you afraid of heights?’
- 2 duration of time stretching into the past

delo [délo] *v.*

- 1 to be able to, can (used for things that are epistemically possible)

dena [déna] *n.*

- 1 leaves, blades within a palm frond
- 2 feathers

refers to foliage of plumage in general, use **dena sat** to initially refer to a single leaf or feather

deŋ [dêŋ] *n.*

- 1 majority, most, larger part of something, **deŋwe ŋin** ‘most of the people’

deŋep [déŋep] *n.*

- 1 sprout, shoot, seedling
- 2 garlic germ, sprouts inside peppers, potato eyes

dewi [déwi] *n.*

- 1 spoon (for eating or cooking)

dexi [déçi] *v.*

- 1 to mix together (of pastes)

di dule [di d^ɣúle] *int.*

- 1 thank you, thanks, used to express gratitude

dilo [dílo] *adj.*

- 1 negligible, minimal, almost gone, scarce
- 2 a few crayons short of a box, a few monkeys short of a circus
- 3 exhausted, tired, spent, used up

dim [dîm] *n.*

- 1 small amount, a bit
- 2 a dot or spot on something
- 3 a pimple or blemish
- 4 the velarizing diacritic in Mwane script

diŋu [dín^ɣu] *v.*

- 1 to kill an aquatic animal by taking it out of the water
- 2 **ta~** to die by getting stuck out of the water, to die by getting beached, to die by drying out
- 3 **ta~** to die of thirst

diŋwaje [dín^waje] *n.*

- 1 mammal

...dabwukwu...

dis [dîf] *n.*

1 teeth, set of teeth

refers to a whole set of teeth by default, use **dis şat** for a single tooth

diş [dis^y] *v.*

- 1 to be among or between things
- 2 to be between two parts of a whole
- 3 (*cvb.*) between, among

dol [dôl] *v.*

- 1 **e~** to fall involuntarily
 - 2 **e~** to pass (of time)
 - 3 **pa~** to drop, to let go of
- padol ge** ‘to give up’
- 4 **le~** to bow, to bend over

doleŋ [dóleŋ] *n.*

- 1 fall, descent
- 2 passage of time
- 3 the **lonok** from 8pm to 10pm
- 4 dinner, evening meal

doşu [dós^yu] *n.*

1 calamansi lime

doşu bwada [dós^yu b^wáda] *n.*

1 calamansi lime stuffed with aged tea

doşu kulija [dós^yu kulija] *n.*

1 makrut lime, *lit.* ‘wrinkled calamansi’

dula [dúla] *n.*

1 a strummed string instrument in your lab, a zither

dulis [dúlif] *n.*

1 hammock, usually made of mesh

duwi [dúwi] *v.*

1 to try something but not succeed, to try unsuccessfully

duwo [dúwo] *v.*

- 1 to prepare a gravesite or columbarium site
- 2 to kill someone, especially covertly

D

da [d^yâ] *n.*

1 way, state, manner

ḍaba [d^yáb^ya] *v.*

- 1 to ride and animal or vehicle
- 2 to travel by vehicle
- 3 (*cvb.*) on (a vehicle), with (a vehicle)

ḍagwa [d^yág^wa] *n.*

1 a group of young people, a gang

we ḍagwa ‘hey, guys’

ḍak [d^yák] *v.*

- 1 to lose something
- 2 **le~** to get lost, to lose your way
- 3 **le~** or **lexe~** or **leño~** to go mad, to go crazy

ḍaka [d^yáka] *v.*

- 1 to treat medicinally
- 2 ~ **ŋwe** to heal (someone)
- 3 **ta~** to heal (yourself), to get better, to feel better
- 4 **kwu** ~ blessing used for the traditional new year as well as to wish health to people who

are ill

ḍalo [dʲálo] *n.*

- 1 great uncle, any male relative of your grandparent's generation
- 2 term of address for elderly men

ḍalak [dʲálʲak] *n.*

- 1 weather, environment

ḍan [dʲân] *n.*

- 1 chicken, both meat and bird

ḍanwo [dʲánʷo] *adj.*

- 1 happy, joyous

ḍanwo [dʲánʷo] *v.*

- 1 to celebrate
- 2 to be happy about, to enjoy
- 3 e~ to be happy, to be joyful

ḍede [dʲédʲe] *n.*

- 1 grandfather, mother's father or father's father

ḍejo [dʲéjo] *v.*

- 1 to tire (someone), to make tired
- 2 ta~ to tire, to get tired

ḍep [dʲêp] *n.*

- 1 bean, legume
- 2 coffee bean
- 3 clitoris

ḍibiso [dʲíbiʃo] *n.*

- 1 pig

ḍige [dʲíge] *v.*

- 1 to greet, to hail

2 ~ **ḍedol** to bow to someone

ḍijak [dʲíjak] *n.*

- 1 deer

ḍijo [dʲíjo] *n.*

- 1 any animal living on land
- 2 ~ **legabwak** livestock, land animals kept for their products

ḍimwu [dʲímʷu] *v.*

- 1 e~ to do something little by little
- 2 e~ (*adv. SVC*) little by little, bit by bit

ḍit [dʲít] *n.*

- 1 deceit, lies, trickery
- 2 ga~ deceitful, lying

ḍu [dʲû] *n.*

- 1 loud noise

ḍu [dʲu] *ideo.*

- 1 ideophone for loud noises

ḍule [dʲúle] *adj.*

- 1 grateful, thankful, appreciative

E

e [e] *prep.*

- 1 particle to mark the agent when it is not a core argument of the verb

ebwol [ébʷol] *n.*

- 1 breastmilk

edan [édan] *adj.*

- 1 quiet

...ḍalo...

- 2 thin, narrow
3 weak, faint (of a smell or taste)
- ejim** [éjim] *n.*
1 mouth
- ekwu** [ék^wu] *v.*
1 to read, esp. out loud
2 to pronounce a word or phrase
ekano je tajekwu? ‘how do you pronounce this?’
3 to say (of text)
- tajekwu xwaxe gwon pipile njeke tegwon**
‘the paper says we can’t talk right now’
4 to play or perform music from a written source
- elam** [élam] *n.*
1 small fish, fry
2 bycatch, byproducts
3 servants
- eleja** [éleja] *n.*
1 cove, especially a cove with sides too steep to climb
2 secret, something concealed
- eleja** [éleja] *adj.*
1 secret, hidden
- eļo** [él^yo] *v.*
1 **e~** to come, to go, to return (*usually with a directional prefix*)
eļo is only used with inanimate subjects, for animate subjects use **eme**
- em** [êm] *n.*
- 1 friend, good friend
- eme** [ém^ye] *v.*
1 **e~** to come, to go, to return (*usually with a directional prefix*)
eme is only used with animate subjects, for inanimate subjects use **eļo**
- emen** [ém^yen] *n.*
1 cat
- emola** [ém^yola] *n.*
1 leopard
- eŋ** [êŋ] *n.*
1 thing, used as a dummy noun with possessors and adjectives
eŋwe Sowaŋ ‘Sowaŋ’s stuff’
eŋ ŋwuŋ le ‘your red things’
- eŋabi** [éŋab^yi] *n.*
1 sweet onion or red onion, any bulb onion
- eŋi** [éŋi] *n.*
1 foot, feet
refers to both feet by default, for one foot use **eŋi ŋat**
- eŋikwu** [éŋik^wu] *n.*
1 pedal
2 kickwheel, foot-control
- epi** [ep^yi] *prt.*
1 particle to quantify noun phrases as plural
- F**
- fa** [fâ] *n.*

- 1 body
2 flesh, meat
- fa** [fâ] *v.*
1 **ta~** to change (expectedly)
2 **le~** to act on oneself, to do something to oneself, to do something for oneself
pakwuje leṭa lefa ‘to put on shoes’
- fale** [fálʷe] *n.*
1 crisped animal skin, usually fish skin, eaten as a snack or used to add texture to porridge
- famin** [fámʷin] *n.*
1 brain
2 skull, cranium
- famwe** [fámʷe] *n.*
1 beef, cattle meat
- faso** [fáfɔ] *v.* NFP **fasawaḷ**
1 to fart, to break wind
- fawe** [fáwe] *adv.*
1 (*cl. adv.*) suddenly, immediately after and unexpected
- feja** [féja] *n.*
1 goat
- fejala** [féjala] *n.*
1 goatherd
- fejota** [féjotʷa] *n.*
1 a floodplain, a low-lying area prone to flooding, especially near a river estuary
2 shanties, temporary built-up areas
- fel** [fêl] *n.*
1 rope, strong cord
- feleṅ** [féleṅ] *n.*
1 axle, lever, horizontal support or beam
2 important route connecting a region
- felut** [félut] *n.*
1 fiber that can be turned into rope
- fexe** [féçe] *v.*
1 to explain away
2 **e~** to give excuses, to be a revisionist
- fune** [fúne] *n.*
1 cloud, steam, smoke
- F**
- falak** [fʷálak] *n.*
1 theft, stealing
- falakwu** [fʷálakʷu] *v.*
1 to steal something (*often with xe-*)
- fek** [fʷêk] *n.*
1 man
- fil** [fʷíl] *n.*
1 tiller, rudder control
- filu** [fʷílu] *v.*
1 to steer, to work a boat’s rudder, to control a vehicle
- fusita** [fʷúçita] *n.*
1 soup dumpling

G

ga [ga] *adv.*

1 (*cl. adv.*) again, more times

gabwak [gáb^wak] *v.* NFP **gabwakwał**

1 to wait for something

2 to last (an amount of time)

doleŋ de gabwakwał loŋok 'our dinner lasted two hours'

3 to do something for a long time

4 e~ to stay, to wait

5 e~ to last a long time

6 (*adv. SVC*) still, for a long time, continuously

gabwada [gáb^wad^ya] *n.*

1 inaction, inertia, tendency to stay at rest

gabwemwe [gáb^wem^we] *v.*

1 e~ to be lazy, to lounge around to do nothing, to do the bare minimum

2 e~ to be rich, to be fortunate

gal [gâl] *v.*

1 ta~ to be confused by language, to misunderstand, to not understand language

galam [gálam] *v.*

1 e~ to echo, to resound

2 e~ to be widely accepted (of an idea)

galo [gálo] *n.*

1 fist, closed hand

2 handful, amount carried in a hand

galu [galu] *adv.*

1 (*cl. adv.*) particle used in questions when the speaker is hesitant to confirm something or thinks presuppositions of question might be false

gama [gám^ya] *adj.*

1 beautiful in a striking or stunning way

gamuł [gám^yul^y] *n.*

1 beat, tempo, rhythm, pace

gamwo [gám^wo] *adj.*

1 with breath, spiritually, with spirits

gap [gap] *adj.*

1 each

gapo [gáp^yo] *v.*

1 to move somewhere hot

2 to cook (of food)

gawo [gáwo] *n.*

1 island

gawoło [gáwol^yo] *n.*

1 archipelago

2 group of friends or acquaintances

ge [gê] *n.*

1 hand, hands

2 control

şol ge 'to take over, to take control of'

3 side (left or right)

gebe [géb^ye] *n.*

1 child

gebeđa [géb^yed^ya] *n.*

1 childhood

...ga...

gebwuno [geb^wúno] *adj.*

- 1 heavy, large
- 2 monstrous, frightening

geḍu [ged^yû] *adj.*

- 1 loud, immediate or prominent (of a sensation)

gejamwo [gejam^wo] *adj.*

- 1 made of air, gaseous
- 2 unsubstantiated, nebulous, apocryphal

gekwo [gék^wu] *n.*

- 1 handle of a pan or tool
- 2 ability to grip

gela lukala [gélalukala] *n.*

- 1 fives-and-sixes, used to denote the population/citizenry as large groups of families

gelap [gélap] *v.*

- 1 to make something explode, burst, bust, shatter
- 2 **ta~** to explode, to burst, to shatter
- 3 **ta~** to ejaculate

geli [géli] *n.*

- 1 fox

geḷo [gél^yo] *v.*

- 1 to translate, to interpret, to mediate
- 2 **e~** to move sideways, to move side-to-side
- 3 **ta~** to stagnate, to not progress, to be paused, to be on hold
- 4 **pa~** to set something aside, to put something on hold

gelok [géllok] *n.*

1 fingers, toes

Defaults to many, for an individual finger or toe use **gelok ṣat**

2 teeth of a gear

gemwoḷup [gem^wól^yup] *adj.*

1 with few words, laconic

geno [genô] *adj.*

- 1 wide across, fat, with width
- 2 loud (of a sound), strong (of a smell or taste)

geno [géno] *n.*

1 lizard

gep [gêp] *n.*

1 a diacritic in the Mwaneḷe script used to mark coda consonants

gepwu [gép^wu] *v.*

1 to stop or end something without completing it

gesi [géçi] *v.*

1 to create, to make

geṭagwule [get^yág^wule] *adj.*

- 1 made of mud, muddy
- 2 murky, turbid

geṭok [get^yok] *adj.*

1 delicious, savory

gewelo [gévewelo] *n.*

1 touch, sense of touch including pressure, texture, and temperature of specific objects

gewole [gewóle] *adj.*

1 complete, entire, whole

gi [gî] *n.*

1 place, location

gibiḷi [gib^yil^yi] *n.*

1 garden, agricultural field

gigon [gigon] *v.*

1 to dig

ekwugigon ke ki baxo ‘they dug into the mountain’

gigwejo [gig^wéjo] *n.*

1 port of call, layover, stop along a journey

gije [gije] *pron.*

1 here, this place

gijim [gijim] *n.*

1 the central room in a Mwane house with a low table used for eating and gathering

gijo [gijo] *pron.*

1 there, that place

gikeṣe [gikés^ye] *n.*

1 meeting place, square

gilo [gilo] *n.*

1 trail, path, road on land

gima [gím^ya] *n.*

1 offering left to deceased family or friend

gimo [gím^yo] *v.* NFP **gimawaḷ**

1 to leave an offering, to pay respects

2 to throw shade, to cleverly insult someone

gimwe [gim^wê] *n.*

1 farm, especially a farm growing staple

foods

gisejo [gi^féjo] *n.*

1 pitch, field, court for playing sports

giṣe [gís^ye] *v.*

1 to spread something out

2 **e~** to slide, to glide, to soar

3 **pa~** to slide something across a surface

4 **e~** (*adv. SVC*) freely, smoothly, without obstruction

kwu giṣe ‘take it easy’

git [gît] *n.* LNK **gide**

1 cheese

giwa [gíwa] *n.*

1 oil, especially liquid oil for cooking

giwo [gíwo] *v.* NFP **giwawaḷ**

1 to fry something, to cook by frying

2 to blister

go [gô] *v.* NFP **geweḷ**

1 to touch, to feel a surface

goba [gób^ya] *adj.*

1 brown

gobi [gób^yi] *n.*

1 tree

2 wood, as a material

gome [góm^ye] *v.*

1 to start something, to begin something

2 euphemism for **sakweja** ‘to impregnate’

3 **ta~** to start, to begin

gop [gôp] *n.*

- 1 piece, part, not part of a larger whole
- gowañ** [gówaŋ] *n.*
- 1 meeting place, council hall, government building
- gwa** [g^wa] *pron.*
- 1 someone, anyone, anything
- gwu le ɕeɕelo gwa?** ‘do you see anyone?’
- 2 any
- tajoti gimwe gwa** ‘any farm would have it’
- gwabwe** [g^wáb^we] *n.*
- 1 breasts
- Defaults to dual, to refer to just one, use **gwabwe ɕat.**
- gwala** [g^wála] *n.*
- 1 dull pain, ache
- xiko gwala** ‘to feel an ache’
- gwalawe geli** [g^wálawe geli] *n.*
- 1 Lyme Disease, *lit.* ‘the 3eyri ache’
- gwato** [g^wáto] *n.*
- 1 a tunic, often with a v neck and a split hem
- gwejo** [g^wéjo] *v.*
- 1 to pause something
- 2 **e~** to rest during a journey, to have a stopover
- gwel** [g^wêl] *adj.*
- 1 dull (of an edge or point)
- 2 calm (of weather, water, or a person), relaxed (of a situation), safe
- gwele** [g^wéle] *n.*
- 1 throat
- gwele ŋwuŋ** [g^wéle ŋ^wûŋ] *n.*
- 1 frigatebirds, *lit.* ‘red throat’
- gwelepe** [g^wélep^ye] *n.*
- 1 great-niece, great-nephew, great-nibling
- 2 term of address by older people to small children
- gwelo** [g^wélo] *n.*
- 1 niece, nephew, nibling
- 2 used as a term of address by older people to non-related people younger than them
- gwelu** [g^wélu] *n.*
- 1 **ta~** to go dull, to get flattened
- 2 **pa~** to dull something, to smooth or flatten something
- 3 **pa~** to misuse a tool
- 4 **pa~** to diffuse a stressful situation
- gwiłak** [g^wíl^yak] *n.*
- 1 licorice, licorice root
- 2 an herbal tea made with anise-like ingredients including licorice, star anise, and holy basil, depending on what’s at hand
- gwo** [g^wô] *v.*
- 1 to like, to love
- gwodu** [g^wódu] *v.*
- 1 **e~** to play around, especially with no objective
- gwołu** [g^wól^yu] *adj.*
- 1 gray, grey

...gowañ...

gwomwoḷu [g^wóm^wol^yu] *v.*

- 1 to storytell, to tell stories

gwon [g^wôn] *v.*

- 1 to speak, to talk

ekwugwonoḷ Mwana ki Olu ‘*Mwana talked to Olu*’

- 2 to tell, to say something to someone

- 3 to speak a language

- 4 **ḷe~** to have a conversation

ḷegwonoḷ Mwana xo Olu ‘*Mwana and Olu had a conversation*’

- 5 (*cvb.*) introduces a complement clause

gwon lamo [g^won lám^yo] *n.*

- 1 close friendship, relationship

gwonep [g^wónep] *n.*

- 1 a frown

ḷime gwonep ‘*to frown*’

- 2 an instinctual recoil from stimulus

gwoḷe [g^wót^ye] *v.*

- 1 to peer at, to squint, to examine closely

gwu [g^wû] *n.*

- 1 problem

im gwu ‘*overcome a problem*’

gwu [g^wu] *prt.*

- 1 polar question particle

gwu le gwon mwaneḷe? ‘*Do you speak Mwaneḷe?*’

gwu mek [g^wum^yek, g^wum^wek] *prt.*

- 1 linker or filler word, used like ‘you know’

gwudada [g^wudada] *ideo.*

- 1 ideophone for gross, rotten, unappealing

gwuḷe [g^wúd^ye] *v.*

- 1 to rub, to rub against

- 2 **kwu~** to rub something in, *e.g.* an ointment

- 3 **ḷe~** to masturbate

gwugwu [g^wúg^wu] *n.*

- 1 poop, feces, especially in child talk

gwule [g^wúle] *n.*

- 1 a mash, a paste

gwuxe [g^wúxe] *n.*

- 1 letter (written correspondence)

I

i [i] *v.* NEG **pi**

- 1 to be, used to link nouns with nominal or adjectival predicates

- 2 **pa~** to make happen, to give rise to

- 3 (*cvb.*) as, while being

iḷis [íd^yiç] *n.*

- 1 texture, roughness

- 2 feeling, sense, vibes (of a situation)

ijonḷ [íjonḷ] *n.*

- 1 wide cut noodles

ika [ika] *adv.*

- 1 (*cl. adv.*) already, before another event in the same clause, used for the past-in-past, but not the present

ile [íle] *n.*

- 1 plan, design
- ili** [íli] *n.*
- 1 cucumber
- ile** [í^ve] *v.*
- 1 to be worth (an amount or consequence)
- 2 to be *n* many, to number a certain amount
- de ile lon** ‘*there are four of us*’
- 3 **e~** to be numerous, for there to be many of something
- im** [ím] *v.*
- 1 to eat (solids)
- 2 to overcome **im gwu** ‘*to overcome a problem*’
- imede** [ím^vede] *n.*
- 1 feast, large meal
- 2 one of twelve major holidays aligned with the Mwane zodiac
- imepe** [ím^vep^ve] *n.*
- 1 a nap
- in** [ín] *v.*
- 1 used as a transitive light verb with **imepe** ‘*nap*’ and **inoje** ‘*dream*’
- 2 **e~** to go to sleep, to go to bed
- 3 **ta~** to fall asleep
- ijete** [íjete] *n.*
- 1 leftovers, leftover food
- inoje** [ínoje] *n.*
- 1 a dream
- isas** [í[af]] *n.*
- 1 news, especially informal community-based news, rumors (but implying the news is true)
- isem** [í[em]] *n.*
- 1 romantic partner
- iseña** [í[en^va]] *n.*
- 1 romantic relationship, partnership
- iwam** [íwam] *v.*
- 1 to be tied to something
- 2 to be bound to a duty, to be responsible for something
- 3 to be family with someone
- 4 **le~** to be family with each other
- 5 **le~ xenji** to date each other, to be in a relationship with each other
- iwamwanj** [íwam^wanj] *n.*
- 1 members of a couple, a couple
- 2 a partner, either used with **şat** or with a possessive of one of the members to refer to the other
- ixiñ** [íçiñ] *n.*
- 1 sadness in response to a specific thing or event, grief

J

jakwu [ják^wu] *adj.*

1 new

jal [jâl] *n.*

1 fat, grease, coconut oil, any cooking fat that’s solid at room temperature

...ili...

- 2 salve, ointment
- je** [je] *det.*
1 this, these (proximal demonstrative)
- jekwolot** [jék^wolot] *adj.*
1 androphilic, attracted to men
- jemek** [jém^yek] *adj.*
1 transparent, clear
- jenome** [jénom^ye] *adj.*
1 translucent, permeable, see-through, hear-through
2 youthful, young-looking
- jeŋ** [jêŋ] *v.*
1 to drink cold things
- jeŋwo** [jén^wo] *n.*
1 trader, vendor, salesman, only used in compounds (otherwise use pweŋoŋ)
- jeŋwo bili** [jén^wo b^yil^yi] *n.*
1 grocer, vegetable seller
- jeŋwo opwo** [jén^wo op^wo] *n.*
1 spice salesman, masalawallah
- jeŋwo paŋeŋ** [jén^wo p^yat^yeŋ] *n.*
1 book salesman, paper goods salesman
- jeŋwo ta** [jén^wo ta] *n.*
1 tea salesman, chaiwallah
- jeŋwo xamik** [jén^wo xam^yik] *n.*
1 pharmacy, pharmacist, remedy seller
- jeŋwo xawam** [jén^wo xáwam] *n.*
1 street vendor, food hawker
- jeŋwo xejo** [jén^wo çejo] *n.*
1 knick-knack seller, junk seller, flea market salesman
- jeteteŋ** [jéteteŋ] *n.*
1 daily life, repetition, with a sense of dullness or boredom
- jewu** [jéwu] *n.*
1 spark, fleck, mote
- jiŋiŋ** [jíiŋiŋ] *adv.*
1 every time, once per event
- jiŋ** [jîŋ] *n.*
1 event, occurrence
- jiwe** [jíwe] *n.*
1 sharp pain
xiko jiwe 'to feel sharp pain'
- jo** [jo] *det.*
1 that, those (distal demonstrative)
- joga** [jóga] *n.*
1 seine net
- jogo** [jógo] *v.* NFP **jogawał**
1 to seine for something
2 e~ to go seine fishing
- jok** [jôk] *n.*
1 beard
2 vines
- jokala** [jókala] *n.*
1 group of vines, jungle
- jokwu** [jók^wu] *v.*

1 e~ to hang from, to be hanging below

2 pa~ to hang something up

jonin [jónin] *n.*

1 dude, bloke, some guy

joti [jóti] *v.* NEG **poti**

1 to be in (a location)

2 e~ to exist, for there to be

joti is only used with inanimate subjects, use **xiti** for animate subjects

jule [júle] *n.*

1 brother, male sibling regardless of age

juni [júni] *n.*

1 horn (of an animal), tusk

2 spire, spire, tower

K

ka [ka] *prt.*

1 discourse particle used with requests

kwu kweme ka! ‘come here!’

nopak ka! ‘the hot sauce, please’

ka [kâ] *n.*

1 to fall on, to affect, to be visible over (of weather)

nołak kalo Gawo Meka ‘it’s raining in Gawo Meka’

2 e~ to fall, to be visible, to be out (of weather or astronomical phenomena)

ekalo texi taxwa ‘the moon is out tonight’

kabi [káb^yi] *n.*

1 green onions, scallions, leeks

kadede [kádede] *ideo.*

1 zig-zag, scalloping pattern

kajim [kájim] *n.*

1 food (for flavor, enjoyment, cultural value, cuisine)

takwi kajim, tațem xem ‘beggars can’t be choosers’

kajimin [kájim^yin] *n.*

1 cannibalism

kajimwe meșole [kájim^we m^yes^yol^ye] *n.*

1 a diet characterized by avoidance of raw foods

kala [kála] *n.*

1 snow

kakajim [kákajim] *adv.*

1 every time you eat, at every meal

kalo [kálo] *n.*

1 lion

kalos [káloʃ] *n.*

1 sword, especially Maruvian-style short-swords

kames [kám^yef] *n.*

1 bear

kanak [kának] *n.*

1 cinnamon, cassia

kanakiņe [kánakiņe] *n.*

1 cinnamon tree

...jonin...

- kanan** [kánan] *n.*
 1 lungs
 refers to both lungs by default, for a single lung use **kanan şat**
 2 chest, upper abdomen
 3 seat of relaxation
tem kanan ‘to feel anxious, to need space, to need to relax’
- kanis** [kániç] *n.*
 1 nut, especially tree nuts
- kano** [káno] *v.* NFP **kanawaļ**
 1 to do what
 2 (*adv. SVC*) to do in what manner
- kap** [kâp] *v.*
 1 to break something
 2 **ta~** to break, to stop working
- kaso** [káfo] *n.*
 1 flat bread, griddle bread, griddle cake
- kaşa** [kás^ʷa] *n.*
 1 house
- katele** [kátele] *n.*
 1 randomness, chaos, disorder
- katin** [kátin] *n.*
 1 Mwane minute (75 seconds)
- kaxwa** [kâx^wa] *n.*
 1 explanation, description
 2 sketch
 3 model, outline
- kaxwo** [kâx^wo] *v.* NFP **kaxwawaļ**
 1 to draw, to sketch
 2 to make a plan for something
 3 to explain something
- ke** [kê] *n.*
 1 art, artwork
- ke** [ke] *prn.*
 1 he, she, they (third-person pronoun)
- kebiļi** [kêb^ʷil^ʷi] *n.*
 1 shrubbery, topiary
- kedakeda** [kedakeda kerakera] *ideo.*
 1 ideophone for galloping
- kedo** [kêdo] *v.*
 1 to prepare something
 2 to butcher meat
kedo kete ‘to make do, to be crafty’
 3 **le~** to prepare oneself, to get ready
lekedo im taxwa ‘to starve oneself’
- kema** [kém^ʷa] *n.*
 1 table, platform
- keman** [kém^ʷan] *v.*
 1 to open something
 2 to improve, to get better
keman tamedek ‘for things to start getting better’
teşel litakemaneme joti ‘to be a cheerful person, to have a cheerful disposition’
 3 to begin a project, to start a process
- kemaņe** [kém^ʷaņe] *n.*
 1 dawn, daybreak

- 2 opening one's hands
3 counting
- kemaŋo** [kém^yaŋo] *v.* NFP **kemaŋewel**
1 to count
2 to undertake a project
3 **e~** to open one's hands
- keŋ** [kêŋ] *v.*
1 to carry, to bring (*with directional prefixes*)
keŋ isas 'to spread rumors, to bring gossip'
2 to wear
keŋ dena 'to camouflage oneself, to blend in, to do sneakily'
- kep** [kêp] *n.*
1 reptile, amphibian, 'herp'
- kepuŋede** [kêp^yuŋede] *n.*
1 komodo dragon
- kepwek** [kêp^wek] *n.*
1 python, constrictor snake
- kes** [kêʃ] *n.*
1 sugar
- kese** [kêʃe] *v.*
1 to accompany, to be with
2 (*cvb.*) with, alongside
3 **le~** to be alone
4 ~ **xiti** to live with, to cohabit
- keşedabaŋ** [kêş^yedab^yaŋ] *n.*
1 copassenger, someone in the same caravan or traveling with someone
- keseke** [kêʃeke] *v.*
1 to crush, to smash
- kesekeş** [keʃekeʃ] *ideo.*
1 ideophone for crushing, smashing into bits
- keseŋ** [kêʃeŋ] *v.*
1 to do something quickly and haltingly
2 **e~** to move suddenly, to move haltingly
3 **e~** haltingly, without preparation, jumping the gun
- kete** [kête] *n.*
1 rest, remainder, leftover
- ki** [ki] *prt.*
1 particle marking the origin of motion relevant to the directional prefixes
- ki lot** [kílot] *int.*
1 conventional Mwane greeting, equivalent to 'how are you,' *lit.* 'to/from where'
- ki ʔa** [kit^yâ] *int.*
1 conventional response to the greeting **ki lot**, *lit.* 'to/from the sand'
- kidela** [kídela] *v.*
1 **e~** to fall (of small pieces or droplets), to sprinkle
2 **e~** to be defeated
3 **pa~** to defeat, to rout
- kifeŋ** [kíʃeŋ] *n.*
1 game
- kika** [kíka] *n.*
1 chips, crisps, crackers
- kile** [kíle] *n.*

...kemaŋo...

- 1 gentle sloping hill
- kile** [kíle] *v.*
- 1 **e~** to slope, to change gradually
- kiluwa** [kíluwa] *adj.*
- 1 half-orphaned, one parent alive
- 2 in a sorry state, shabby, shoddy
- kile** [kíl^ye] *v.*
- 1 to know something, to be able to because you know how, to know how to do something
- 2 ~ **boto** know for sure, be certain that
- 3 **ta~(adv. SVC)** as is known, used to mark statements as coming from general knowledge rather than experience
- kileḍa** [kíl^yed^ya] *n.*
- 1 wisdom
- kiṅoje** [kíṅoje] *n.*
- 1 upper garment directly on the body, including shirts, blouses, tank tops
- kipwa** [kíp^wa] *n.*
- 1 sinew, tendon
- 2 line, rope used on a boat
- kisi** [kíçi] *v.*
- 1 to pass, to go past
- kisi nome** ‘to go clear past, to completely miss’
- 2 to transgress, to go against, to disobey
- kisi tatasi** ‘to break the law’
- 3 to move relative to, used as the main verb when relativizing objects of **ki**
- kixije** [kíçije] *n.*
- 1 pants, shorts
- kodada** [kodada korara] *ideo.*
- 1 ideophone for satisfaction, being sated, being full
- koḷa** [kól^ya] *n.*
- 1 aunt, uncle, relative of parent’s generation
- kole** [kóle] *n.*
- 1 kitten
- kolo** [kólo] *adj.*
- 1 short (of a person)
- 2 shallow (of water)
- 3 high-pitched (of a sound)
- kololo** [kólolo] *ideo.*
- 1 ideophone for something too tight, for struggling against knots
- koloset** [kólofet] *n.*
- 1 a short person with big personality or large energy
- kolu** [kólu] *v.*
- 1 **ta~** to decrease in length or height
- 2 **e~** to age, to become visibly elderly
- 3 **ta~** to increase in pitch
- 4 **pa~** to make something decrease in length or height
- kop** [kôp] *n.*
- 1 speed
- kope** [kóp^ye] *adv.*
- 1 fast, quickly, rapidly

kopwełoł [kóp^wel^ɣol^ɣ] *n.*

1 petrel

kopwu [kóp^wu] *n.*

1 legs

Defaults to dual, for one leg use **kopwu šat****kos** [kôʃ] *adj.*

1 impostor, ersatz, sham, fake

kot [kôt] *n.*

1 ship, boat

kota [kóta] *n.*

1 a tea made with intoxicating, euphoriant and sometimes hallucinogenic herbs

xiko kota 'to feel high'**kořak** [kót^ɣak] *n.*

1 meteor, comet, asteroid

kuli [kúli] *v.*

1 to mock, to ridicule, laugh at, to tease

2 e~ to laugh

kulija [kúlija] *n.*

1 wrinkles, folds, pleats, creases

kulijo [kúlijo] *v.* NFP **kulijawał**

1 to fold, to crease

2 to scar

kuna [kúna] *v.*

1 to yell at, to scold

2 e~ to shout, to yell

3 **le~** to argue, to fight verbally, to yell at each other**kuřaše** [kút^ɣas^ɣe] *n.*

1 Qitec language

kwaju [k^waju] *v.*1 to shear, to cut **lole** 'wool'**kwajwe** [k^wáj^we] *v.*

1 to deny that something is true, to deny a story, to reject a story

kwajwe menji 'to completely reject, to flat-out deny'**kwajweŋ** [k^wáj^weŋ] *n.*

1 denial (of facts/information), rejection (of a person or thing), declining (of an offer)

kwase [k^wáʃe] *n.*

1 spine, backbone, vertebra

2 back of the torso

kwekwelam [k^wék^welam] *adv.*

1 every evening after sundown

kwelam [k^wélam] *n.*

1 period of time after nightfall but before midnight and before going to sleep, part of night when you're still awake

2 senility, old age

kwemo [k^wém^ɣo] *n.*

1 street (in a city)

2 blood vessel

kwepe [k^wép^ɣe] *n.*

1 alley (in a city)

2 capillary

kwi [k^wi] *v.*

...kopwu...

- 1 to want
2 to try, to attempt
- kwo** [k^wo] *adv.*
1 (*cl. adv.*) finally, in the end, after all, after a long period of time
- kwo** [k^wo] *pvt.*
1 particle to make fractions
- kwobwa** [k^wób^wa] *n.*
1 half, half of all of something, half of a group
- kwok** [k^wôk] *v.*
1 to change, to shift (of weather, fate, moods, seasons, other wide environmental forces)
- kwole** [k^wóle] *v.*
1 to shape, to work into a shape, to mold, to design, to carve wood, to smith metal
kwole şalo ‘to run errands’ **kwole pweño** ‘to hustle and bustle, to flourish’
- kwole** [k^wóle] *n.*
1 piece, part, ingredient, component, part of a larger whole (but separated)
2 any of the traditional elements
- kwolo** [k^wólo] *n.*
1 leafy brassica greens, gai lan, broccoli rabe
- kwolu** [k^wólu] *v.*
1 to help
2 (*cvb.*) for someone, benefiting someone
- kwos** [k^woʃ] *ideo.*
1 sound of waves crashing
- kwosu** [k^wóʃu] *v.*
1 **e~** to crash to shore
2 **e~** to rush around aimlessly
- kwu** [k^wû] *v.*
1 to use, to make use of
2 to do something in a certain way
pitagwo ða litakwu e ke gwon ‘I don’t like the way he talks’
3 (*cvb.*) with, using
- kwu** [k^wu] *pvt.*
1 particle used to form commands, wishes, and blessings
- kwuño** [k^wúño] *int.*
1 hello, welcome
- kwuŋe** [k^wút^ye] *intj.*
1 lookit, look at, interjection used to call attention to something

L

- lađuwa** [lád^yuwa] *n.*
1 pandanus, pandanus leaves
- lafel** [láʃel] *n.*
1 intestines, gut, bowels
xiko lafel ‘to need to defecate’
- lage** [láge] *v.*
1 **e~** to go up, to climb
- lagwun** [lág^wun] *v.*
1 to mix together (of fluids)
2 **pa~** to steep, to brew

- palagwun gwa** 'to make tea,' lit. 'to make something steep'
- lakwak** [lák^wak] *n.*
1 test, exam, quiz
- lakwu** [lák^wu] *v.*
1 to check on, examine
- lale** [lále] *n.*
1 bed, sleeping mat
2 dock, quay
- lale** [lále] *v.*
1 **ta~** to be standing up
2 **pa~** to stand up, to set up
- lalenj** [láleŋ] *n.*
1 vertical support, pole, post, mast
2 trade between regions
- lalesak** [láleʃak] *n.*
1 a standalone single-family house, especially common in inland rural areas
- lalo** [láló] *v.* NFP **lalewe!**
1 to dock, to arrive at the dock, to leave the dock
2 to embark, to disembark
- lam** [lâm] *v.*
1 to listen, to hear
- lam** [lâm] *n.*
1 tongue
2 language, dialect, lect
- lama** [lám^ya] *v.*
1 to mourn, to be sad about
- 2 **e~** to cry, to weep
3 **e~** to be sad
- lamo** [lám^yo] *n.*
1 hearing, sense of hearing
2 area within one's hearing
3 field or specialty of a person's knowledge
- lamwe ge** [lám^we ge] *n.*
1 sign language, esp. Mwane sign language
- lan** [lân] *v.*
1 to sing
- lanila** [lánila] *n.*
1 star anise
- lap** [lâp] *adj.*
1 fast, quick
- las** [lâʃ] *adj.*
1 blue
- lasi** [láci] *n.*
1 sweetened citrus drink, lemonade, limeade, orangeade
- le** [lê] *n.*
1 soy beans
- le** [le] *prn.*
1 you, y'all (second-person pronoun)
- lekala** [lékala] *n.*
1 pressed fermented soy, similar to tempeh
- lekenj** [lékeŋ] *n.*
1 knife, blade
- leku** [léku] *v.*

...lakwak...

- 1 to cut hair
 2 **e~** to move in a straight line
 3 **e~**(*adv. SVC*) directly, without wavering
- leme** [léme] *v.*
 1 to collect, to harvest
- len** [lên] *n.*
 1 twenty
- lep** [lêp] *n.*
 1 side, surface, top of water, edge
- lep** [lêp] *n.*
 1 clay, clay soil
- lepam** [lép^yam] *n.*
 1 triangle
- lepe** [lép^ye] *adv.*
 1 just barely, closely
- lepin** [lép^yin] *n.*
 1 neighbor, someone nearby
- lepwu** [lép^wu] *v.*
 1 to be next to, to be near, to be close to
 2 to be normal for someone, to be typical for someone
 3 **e~** to be normal, to be typical, to be expected
- lepwu** [lép^wu] *v.*
 1 **ta~** to become sharp, to get honed
 2 **pa~** to sharpen, to form an edge, to hone
 3 **pa~** to create a stressful situation
- lese** [léfe] *num.*
 1 hundred
- leṭefa** [éet^yef^ya] *n.*
 1 ticket, pass
- lexas** [léxaʃ] *adj.*
 1 interstitial, characterized by being present in gaps between other things
 2 ambient, environmental, endemic
 3 pervasive, baseline (of feelings)
- lididi** [lididi-liriri] *ideo.*
 1 ideophone for twinkling, flickering, intermittent shining
- life** [lífe] *v.*
 1 to arrive, to get to, to reach
 2 **xe~** to depart, to leave
 3 (*cvb.*) to, up to
- liga** [líga] *n.*
 1 ant
- ligamek** [lígam^yek] *n.*
 1 termites
- ligu** [lígu] *v.*
 1 to lean against something
 2 **pa~** to lean something up, to set something up against
- ligusak** [líguʃak] *n.*
 1 a single dwelling with multiple entrances and sets of living quarters, sometimes connected inside sometimes not, each of which is usually occupied by a different branch of the same family, two-flat, four-flat
- lijeḍa** [líjeḍa] *n.*
 1 crab

lijo [líjo] *adj.*

- 1 old (of a person)

lijojo [líjojo] *v.*

- 1 to get old, to age
2 **pa~** to bore

limin [lím^yin] *adj.*

- 1 cannibalistic, self-destructive
2 (*vulgar*) rude or unpleasant (of a person)

liŋ [lîŋ] *n.*

- 1 tutelary spirit, guardian, patron

litapulen [litap^yúlen] *adj.*

- 1 pushed by the waves, swaying in the waves
2 sleepdrunk, slaphappy

lixé [líçé] *n.*

- 1 ashes, human remains

lixela [líçela] *n.*

- 1 columbarium

lo [lo] *adv.*

- 1 (*cl. adv.*) thus, so, in that way
2 (*cl. adv.*) then, next, so
3 (*cl. adv.*) used to show verum focus

lođu [lóđu] *v.*

- 1 to kill (*expected*)
2 **ta~** to die (*expected*)

lodume [lóđum^ye] *v.*

- 1 to patrol an area
2 **e~** to prowl, to move stealthily (of predators)
3 **e~** to pace

lokeme [lókem^ye] *v.*

- 1 to cross paths with someone, into someone
2 **le~** to cross paths with each other, to run into each other

lome [lóm^ye] *v.*

- 1 to keep, to hang on to
2 to hold in your hands
3 to take care of
4 ~ **min** to remember
5 ~ **time** to support an effort, to provide support

lomi [lóm^yi] *v.*

- 1 to drip, to be dripping with something
2 to excrete fluids
3 **e~** to sweat
4 **e~** to give off drippings (of meat)
5 **ta~** to drip (of a liquid)

lomwe [lóm^we] *n.*

- 1 grass

loŋok [lón^yok] *n.*

- 1 two-hour period, Mwane double hour

loŋep [lónŋep] *n.*

- 1 a quarter of a **loŋok**, half an hour, 30 minutes

lot [lôt] *v.*

- 1 to look for, to search

lot gawo ɬaleŋe ‘to strive for something you already have’

- 2 to find (*usually perfective*)
3 to hunt, to hunt for

- 4 to catch, to succeed, to win (*sometimes with η we*)
- 5 to have an idea, to think of something
- lot luk** ‘to have something occur to you’ **lot pwago** ‘to have bad ideas’
- lot** [lot] *prn.*
- 1 what, who, when, where (generic question word)
- loti** [lótí] *prt.*
- 1 what is
- loti bwo je?** ‘what’s this fish?’
- lotobwo** [lótob^wo] *v.*
- 1 e~ to go fishing, to go out on a fishing expedition
- nolotobwo alife** ‘to brainstorm’
- lotomwa** [lótóm^wa] *n.*
- 1 supervision, watching over
- lotomwo** [lótóm^wo] *v.* NFP **lotomwawal**
- 1 to supervise, to watch over
- lotoxwego** [lótóx^wego] *v.*
- 1 e~ to go fishing for shellfish, to go catch **xwego**
- loṭa** [lót^ya] *n.*
- 1 a second
- loṣe** [lós^ye] *n.*
- 1 coffee
- luk** [lúk] *v.*
- 1 ta~ to change (unexpectedly)
- 2 (*adv. SVC*) unexpectedly, surprisingly
- luka** [lúka] *adj.*
- 1 green
- lukaṇa** [lúkaṇa] *n.*
- 1 embroidery, cording, or other embellishments around the hems of garments
- 2 marginalia in manuscripts, doodles
- 3 friezes or other decorations on the tops of walls
- luṣe** [lus^ye] *adv.*
- 1 (*cl. adv.*) also, too, as well
- lusi** [lúci] *n.*
- 1 dog
- lusulusu** [lusulusu] *ideo.*
- 1 ideophone for being extremely tired, physically exhausted
- luṣu** [lús^xu] *adj.*
- 1 same
- luṣu** [lús^xu] *v.*
- 1 to resemble, to be the same
- 2 to have a quality to the same degree as something else, to be as X as Y
- de luṣu le owowuda** ‘I’m as tall as you’
- luṣulot** [lús^yulot] *adj.*
- 1 gay, having mostly attraction to people of one’s own gender
- lux** [lúx] *n.*
- 1 avocado fruit or flesh used as food
- 2 gay man, **fek gelux** ‘gay man’

L**ɭafa** [lʷaɸâ] *adv.*

1 happily, gladly, with pleasure

ɭak [lʷâk] *n.*

1 sky

ɭakasa [lʷakáfa] *adv.*

1 out of custom, out of habit

ɭakemen [lʷakémʷen] *adv.*

1 out of the blue, for no apparent reason

ɭakwu [lʷákʷu] *v.*

1 to be out of, to be outside of

2 (*cvb.*) outside, out of**ɭalo** [lʷálʷo] *v.*

1 to move from, to leave

2 (*cvb.*) away from, out of, leaving**ɭanjin** [lʷánjin] *v.*

1 to consider something, to think about something

2 (*cvb.*) about, concerning a topic**ɭamin** [lʷamʷín] *adv.*

1 on purpose, intentionally

ɭedefa [lʷédeɸa] *n.*

1 hat

ɭefa [lʷéɸa] *n.*

1 skin, of a person or animal

2 hide, leather

ɭegobi [lʷégobʷi] *n.*

1 tree bark

ɭekopwu [lʷékopʷu] *n.*

1 lower garment covering the legs together, skirt, dress, robe, kilt

ɭelome [lʷélomʷe] *n.*

1 handcuffs, restraints

ɭemegwa [lʷémegʷa] *n.*

1 solar eclipse

2 events leading to someone growing up too soon

ɭeɲlak [lʷénʷolʷak] *n.*

1 umbrella

2 shade, shadow

3 dry, dryness protected from rain, rain shadow

ɭejale [lʷéɲale] *n.*

1 family group, extended family

ɭejulu [lʷeɲulu] *n.*

1 underwear

ɭeta [lʷéta] *n.*

1 sister

ɭeta [lʷétʷa] *n.*

1 shoes

ɭeta menok [lʷétʷa mʷénʷok] *n.*

1 a row of beach grasses and other sand plants intentionally planted along the shore to slow erosion especially near towns

ɭetagwo [lʷétagʷo] *n.*

1 lunar eclipse

ɭetagwo ka gwa *'for someone to leave, to go*

...ɭafa...

away, to disappear'

leṭeṣel [lʲétʲesʲel] *n.*

- 1 goggles, protective eyewear, eye shield, protective glasses

lewe [lʲéwe] *v.*

- 1 to cover, to coat
2 to protect, to shield

lewe nipitaṣukwu 'to protect from getting burnt'

lexek [lʲéxek] *n.*

- 1 luggage, trunk, case

lo [lʲo] *adv.*

- 1 (*cl. adv.*) positive anymore, from now on, nowadays
2 (*cl. adv.*) not anymore (*with negation*)

lomek [lʲómʲek] *n.*

- 1 lighthouse

loḷ [lʲólʲ] *v.*

- 1 **e~** to fly, to move through the air
2 **pa~** to throw
3 **pa~ wol** to point at, to indicate

loḷe [lʲolʲe] *n.*

- 1 hair, wool, fiber that can be used for cloth

losaju [lʲófaju] *v.*

- 1 to weave

lose [lʲófe] *n.*

- 1 cloth, especially woven cloth
2 braids, tresses (of hair)

loseṭa [lʲófetʲa] *n.*

1 carpet, rug

losewe amwa [lʲófewe ámʷa] *n.*

- 1 a sari-like wrapped garment worn by women, especially associated with motherhood

loṭa [lʲótʲa] *n.*

- 1 socks

loṭon [lóṭon] *int.*

- 1 hesitation word, like 'um' or 'you know'

ludo [lʲúdo] *n.*

- 1 ball

lumo [lʲúmʲo] *n.*

- 1 moss, lichen
2 taste buds, tongue covering

luwi [lʲúwi] *n.*

- 1 frog

M

malen [mʲálen] *n.*

- 1 foraged food, especially foraged mushrooms
2 used as a modifier for heirloom or local varieties of common plants
3 mutt, mixed-breed pet or livestock
4 a dish assembled with leftovers from other things in the kitchen

malu [mʲálu] *v.*

- 1 to remove part from a whole (unexpected)

mebi [mʲébʲi] *v.*

leṭeṣel – mebi

- 1 to be energetic, to feel energetic
2 (*adv. SVC*) energetically, quickly
- mebi** [m^yéb^yi] *n.*
1 the feeling of being energetic, awake
- medefa** [m^yéd^yeφa] *adv.*
1 yesterday
- medoleŋ** [m^yédoleŋ] *n.*
1 dusk, nightfall, sunset
2 retirement, period in old age where you take on more of a consulting role in your fields rather than an active one
3 last part or conclusion of a story
- mefu** [m^yéf^yu] *n.*
1 filled dough, including pastry, dumplings, buns
- megwa** [m^yég^wa] *n.*
1 sun
- meja** [m^yéja] *n.*
1 gifts, presents
- mejo** [m^yéjo] *v.* NFP **mejawa!**
1 to give as a gift
- mek** [m^yék] *n.*
1 light, brightness
- mek** [m^yék] *adj.*
1 light, bright, luminous
2 young, youthful
- mekeŋi** [m^yékeŋi] *adv.*
1 tomorrow
- mekil** [m^yékil] *n.*
- 1 day, daytime
- mekwu** [m^yék^wu] *v.*
1 e~ to appear, to come into sight
2 e~ to rise (of the sun or moon)
3 le~ to show up, to arrive
- kwute lo ŋin lilemekwu!**... ‘look who showed up...’
- 4 pa~ to take something out, to show something
- mela** [m^yéla] *v.*
1 to tell apart, to distinguish, to know which of a group did something
2 ~ **pilem** to separate out, to do triage, to sort
- melap** [m^yélap] *v.*
1 e~ to run
- melep** [m^yélep] *n.*
1 hull, leading edge
2 a boat when counting a fleet
- me!a** [m^yél^ya] *adj.*
1 white
2 light-colored, shiny or metallic shade
- melagen** [m^yélagen] *n.*
1 dawn, sunrise, early morning
- me!e** [m^yél^ye] *v.*
1 to be east (of something)
2 to be in front
3 (*cvb.*) east of, to the east of
4 (*cvb.*) in front of, forward from
- melin** [m^yélin] *n.*
1 rim, tire

...mebi...

- 2 perimeter
- 3 peripheral cities on the edge of a sphere of influence
- memeṅok** [m^ʸém^ʸen^ʸok] *adv.*
- 1 every six hours in areas with semidiurnal tides
- 2 every twelve hours in areas with diurnal tides
- menek** [m^ʸének] *v.*
- 1 e~ to wander, to stray
- 2 e~ (*adv. SVC*) randomly, at random
- 3 ~ **kaša** to travel, to go overseas
- meṅok** [m^ʸén^ʸok] *n.*
- 1 tide
- meṅ** [m^ʸêṅ] *v.*
- 1 e~ to step, to take a step
- 2 e~ to step on (*with directional prefix*)
- meṅale** [m^ʸéṅale] *n.*
- 1 birthday
- meṅi** [m^ʸéṅi] *v.*
- 1 e~ to walk
- meṣo** [m^ʸés^ʸo] *n.*
- 1 middle, center, inside
- meṭi** [met^ʸi] *adv.*
- 1 today
- mewak** [m^ʸéwak] *v.*
- 1 to ferment, to pickle, to cure by fermentation
- 2 to mull over something for too long, to hold a grudge or resentment
- 3 **le~** to bottle up feelings
- mikemik** [m^ʸikem^ʸik] *ideo.*
- 1 ideophone for being safe and sound, unscathed
- mikwa** [m^ʸík^wa] *adj.*
- 1 short (of a mountain), low (of geography)
- 2 of short duration
- 3 flat
- 4 simple or unadorned
- min** [m^ʸin] *v.*
- 1 to understand or know
- Min** is used almost exclusively as a result complement in expressions like **lome min** ‘to understand’ or **pakwuje min** ‘to learn.’
- miṅu** [m^ʸiṅu] *v.*
- 1 to turn something, to spin something
- 2 to dare, defy, challenge someone to do something
- de miṅu takwumwale le** ‘I dare you to ask him.’
- mipekwu** [m^ʸipek^wu] *v.*
- 1 to nurse back to health, to heal someone slowly
- 2 to balance out, to bring back to equilibrium
- 3 **le~** to balance (each other) out
- mipo** [m^ʸíp^ʸo] *adj.*
- 1 balanced, pleasant, temperate (of weather)
- mipopo** [m^ʸíp^ʸop^ʸp] *v.*
- 1 to become pleasant, to become temperate (of weather), to balance out

- mitala** [m^yitala] *n.*
1 butterfly
- mogwu** [m^yóg^wu] *v.*
1 to sneak around, to move stealthily
2 *e~(adv. SVC)* sneakily, stealthily
- mokete** [m^yókete] *n.*
1 tin (metal)
- moḷe** [m^yól^ye] *n.*
1 bag
- moŋ** [m^yôŋ] *n.*
1 metal
- moṣe** [m^yós^ye] *adj.*
1 yellow
- mu** [m^yu] *adv.*
1 (*cl. adv.*) actually, truly, really
- mwa** [m^wâ] *n.*
1 mother
- mwa ṅode** [m^wá n^yod^ye] *n.*
1 sea turtles
- mwale** [m^wále] *v.*
1 to request, to ask for
Koṭak kwumwaleḷ ga weŋ ki de *Koṭak asked me for my name again.*
De mwalek takweme le *I'll ask you to come.*
- mwane** [m^wáne] *adj.*
1 Mwane, of or relating to Mwane culture
- mwaneḷe** [m^wánel^ye] *n.*
1 the Mwaneḷe language
- mwaŋ** [m^wâŋ] *v.*
1 to follow a person
2 to take a path or route
3 to take sequential actions, to carry out a plan
4 to perform a ritual or celebrate a holiday
- mwat** [m^wât] *v.*
1 to depend on, to be contingent on
2 (*cvb.*) if, used to introduce a conditional clause
- mwaxala** [m^wáxala] *n.*
1 noises, sounds
- mwaxwol** [m^wáx^wol] *n.*
1 ears
This word defaults to referring to both ears, for a single ear use **mwaxwol ṣat paxeje mwaxwol** *'to complain, to whine'*
- mwe** [m^we] *prt.*
1 prohibitive marker, used for negative commands
- mwe** [m^wê] *n.*
1 rice, most often a dark red or purple medium-grain variety
- mwebiḷi** [m^wéb^yil^yi] *n.*
1 plants planted to separate or delineate properties
- mwede** [m^wéde] *n.*
1 wall
- mwelaŋ** [m^wélaŋ] *n.*

...mogwu...

- 1 song
- mwelo** [m^wélo] *v.* NFP **mwelawa!**
- 1 e~ to sing, especially rehearsed music
- mwepwago** [m^wép^wago] *n.*
- 1 long earthen or rocky wall
- mwoḷu** [m^wól^yu] *n.*
- 1 word, fixed phrase or term
- 2 prosodic word, a word and any attached clitics
- mwoḷula** [m^wól^yula] *n.*
- 1 story, tale
- mwusile** [m^wúçile] *adj.*
- 1 abnormal, unusual, atypical, uncommon
- mwuṭa** [m^wút^ya] *n.*
- 1 to uncover
- 2 to open a window or door
- N**
- n** [ˈn] *v.*
- 1 to give, to take, to return
- naka** [naka] *v.*
- 1 to be far from something, to be distant
- 2 to not understand
- 3 e~ to be unusual, to be strange
- 4 (*cvb.*) far, far from
- nakamine** [nákam^yine] *adj.*
- 1 unintelligible
- nakaša** [nákaša] *adj.*
- 1 far away, distant
- naṅwa** [náṅ^wa] *n.*
- 1 a social institution, a city government, monastery, or established center, widespread cultural practices, economic/trade systems
- nelo** [nélo] *v.*
- 1 to be enough for, to satisfy
- 2 e~ to be enough
- enelo ke ṅewoda** ‘*it’s good enough*’
- nisi** [níçi] *n.*
- 1 rabbit, bunny, hare
- noḍa** [nód^ya] *n.*
- 1 width, weight
- nome** [nóm^ye] *v.*
- 1 to cross, to go across, to transverse, to pass through
- 2 (*cvb.*) across, past, through
- nomek** [nóm^yek] *n.*
- 1 congee, gruel, porridge
- nopak** [nóp^yak] *n.*
- 1 hot sauce, esp fermented chili peppers
- nopwe** [nóp^we] *v.* NFP **nopwaja!**
- 1 e~ to go down (*intentionally unlike dol*)
- 2 e~ to proceed, to progress
- noso** [nófo] *n.*
- 1 a dish made of finely shaved roast meat usually served on a wrap in the south or a bun in the north

nu [nû] *v.*

- 1 to close something
- 2 **le~** to be quiet, to stop talking
- 3 **ta~** to be disappointed
- 4 **pa~** to disappoint someone

nuṭokwu [núṭ^yok^{wu}] *n.*

- 1 key
- 2 shibboleth, password, way to distinguish the in group

nuṭol [núṭ^yol^y] *n.*

- 1 lock, seal

N

nade [n^yáde] *v.*

- 1 **e~** to swim on the surface of the water (*with directional prefix*)
- 2 **e~** to float, to be on the surface of a liquid
- 3 **pa~** to make something float, to put something on the surface of a liquid

nelak [n^yél^yak] *v.*

- 1 to feel something external

nelak teṭime ‘to have something on the tip of the tongue, to not-quite-remember something’

nibetolo [n^yib^yétolo] *adv.*

- 1 smellable, in such a way that can be smelled
- 2 until fragrant, until a result can be smelled

nidu [n^yídu] *n.*

- 1 star

nifa [n^yiφâ] *adv.*

- 1 sadly, ruefully, regretfully

Subject-oriented. See **siwu** ‘*unfortunately*’ for a speaker-oriented adverb.

- 2 unwillingly, without wanting to

nije [n^yije] *adv.*

- 1 (*cl. adv.*) anyway, still, in spite of that

nilamo [n^yilám^yo] *adv.*

- 1 audibly
- 2 until audible, until a result is heard

nilo [n^yíl^yo] *v.*

- 1 to approach, to move towards
- 2 **ekwu~ ki** to get familiar with, to get used to
- 3 (*cvb.*) towards, to

nime [n^yím^ye] *v.*

- 1 to come second, to be the second best, to be the second most

eṇime ke peda ‘*he’s the second smallest*’

nimu [n^yim^yû] *adv.*

- 1 for nothing, in vain, to no avail

nita [n^yit^yâ] *adv.*

- 1 forever, endlessly, on and on, indefinitely

niteṣelo [n^yit^yés^yelo] *adv.*

- 1 visibly, in a way that can be seen
- 2 until visible, until a change or result is seen

node [n^yód^ye] *n.*

- 1 ocean

nofule [n^yóφule] *n.*

- 1 reef

- 2 difficulties, problems, a rough patch
- ṅok** [n^yôk] *n.*
- 1 water, liquid
2 ~ **bes** juice
3 ~ **le** soy sauce
- ṅokal** [n^yókal] *n.*
- 1 brewed alcohol such as wine and rice beer
xiko ṅokal ‘to feel drunk’
- ṅoke dep** [n^yóke dep] *n.*
- 1 coffee
- ṅokweŋ** [n^yók^weŋ] *n.*
- 1 seaweed, algae
2 sessile sea creatures like corals and sponges
3 lazy person
- ṅoḷak** [n^yól^yak] *n.*
- 1 rain
2 droplet, drop of rain
- ṅome** [n^yóm^ye] *v.*
- 1 **e~** to wade, to walk in the water, to move through the water as a bottom-dweller
2 **e~** to sit on the bottom of the water
3 **pa~** to sink something, to put something on the bottom of a liquid
- ṅope** [n^yóp^ye] *n.*
- 1 pond, lake
2 bowl, bowl of food
- ṅ**
- ṅafa** [ṅáfa] *n.*
- 1 laughter
- ṅafo** [ṅáfo] *v.* NFP **ṅafawaḷ**
- 1 **e~** to laugh
2 **e~** to thaw, to melt
- ṅakaḷoḷ** [ṅákal^yol^y] *n.*
- 1 cormorant
- ṅale** [ṅále] *v.*
- 1 to give birth
2 **ta~** to be born
- ṅalek** [ṅálek] *v.*
- 1 to choose, to select
2 to prefer
xenṅalek ki balo ‘to prefer something out of a group’
- ṅama** [ṅáma] *v.*
- 1 to repeat in an annoying way
2 **e~** to nag, to bug
3 **e~** (*adv. SVC*) annoyingly, repetitively
- ṅamaṅama** [ṅamaṅama] *ideo.*
- 1 bugging, repeating
- ṅawos** [ṅáwoŋ] *n.*
- 1 taro
- ṅawu** [ṅáwu] *adj.*
- 1 different, other, else
- ṅawulot** [ṅáwulot] *adj.*
- 1 heterosexual, straight
- ṅe** [ṅe] *n.*
- 1 flower

...ṅok...

- ɲe** [ɲe] *conj.*
 1 and, but, used to link independent clauses with different subjects
- ɲedo** [ɲédo] *n.*
 1 paddle, oar
 2 shovel
- ɲejala** [ɲéjala] *n.*
 1 wildfires, natural burns
 2 an Anroo spirit of wildfires
- ɲek** [ɲêk] *v.*
 1 to be at the same time, to be simultaneous
 2 to act at the same time as someone
 3 (*cvb.*) while, during
 ɲek je ‘now’
- ɲeke** [ɲeke] *adv.*
 1 (*cl. adv.*) suddenly, immediately after (expected)
- ɲeke** [ɲéke] *adj.*
 1 sudden, sharp (of a hit), firm (of a motion)
- ɲelek** [ɲélek] *n.*
 1 the time period from 12am-2am
 2 midnight
 3 a midnight snack
- ɲelo** [ɲélo] *n.*
 1 gem, gemstone, treasure
- ɲelɔɲelo** [ɲelɔɲelo] *ideo.*
 1 ideophone for boring speech, talking on at length
- ɲeɲe** [ɲéɲe] *n.*
 1 grandmother, mother’s mother or father’s mother
- ɲewo** [ɲéwo] *adj.*
 1 good
- ɲewoɖa** [ɲéwodʷa] *n.*
 1 virtue, goodness, quality, good health
- ɲewowo** [ɲéwowo] *v.*
 1 to improve, to make better
- ɲije** [ɲíje] *v.*
 1 **ta~** to be lying down
 2 **pa~** to lay something down
- ɲin** [ɲîn] *n.*
 1 person
- ɲin sɔge** [ɲin sʷáge] *n.*
 1 a Deaf person, someone in the Deaf community
 2 a sign language user even if not deaf
- ɲinala** [ɲínala] *n.*
 1 nation, country
- ɲiɲeʂo** [ɲínʷesʷo] *n.*
 1 non-binary person, someone who is neither male nor female
- ɲinilot** [ɲínilot] *n.*
 1 hunter, searcher, detective
- ɲiɲe** [ɲíɲe] *n.*
 1 leader, chief, mayor
- ɲode** [ɲóde] *v.*
 1 to be last, to come last, to be worst, to be least

- eṅode le ɲewoda** ‘you’re the worst’
- ɲoḍil** [ɲódʷil] *n.*
- 1 tail
 - 2 list, line, sequence
 - 3 ~e **kot** wake, consequences
- ɲokaṭa** [ɲókatʷa] *n.*
- 1 tea, any herbal infusion
- ɲolu** [ɲólu] *n.*
- 1 tea, often green tea
- ɲugeto** [ɲúgeto] *v.*
- 1 to sicken someone
 - 2 **ta~** to be sick
- ɲugwu** [ɲúgʷu] *adj.*
- 1 spoiled, rotten
- ɲugwusiḍa** [ɲugʷucidʷa] *n.*
- 1 diabetes
- ɲuke** [ɲúke] *n.*
- 1 snout, animal nose
 - 2 opposite, part of something facing another part
- pamwu ɲuke** ‘opposite riverbank’
- ɲukwol** [ɲúkʷol] *n.*
- 1 nostrils
- Refers to both nostrils by default, for a single nostril use **ɲukwol ʂat**
- 2 human nose
- ɲulu** [ɲúlu] *n.*
- 1 buttocks, rear
- ɲwa** [ɲʷâ] *n.*
- 1 pork
- ɲwa** [ɲwa] *prt.*
- 1 many, a lot
- ɲwaje** [ɲʷáje] *n.*
- 1 milk from an animal other than humans
- ɲwalem** [ɲʷálem] *adj.*
- 1 wild, feral
 - 2 a mutt (of dogs)
 - 3 healthy, strong
- ɲwamwen** [ɲʷámʷen] *v.*
- 1 to push (on something), to press (on something)
- xenɲwamwen paxel** ‘to push something away’
- 2 to mash (of food)
- ɲwe** [ɲʷê] *v.*
- 1 to complete something
- Almost entirely used as a result complement for a completed action—rarely used as a main verb
- ɲwede** [ɲʷéde] *n.*
- 1 large city
- ɲwefa** [ɲʷéfa] *v.*
- 1 to complete, to make whole
 - 2 to cover (to address all of something)
- ɲwegwo** [ɲʷégʷo] *n.*
- 1 snot
 - 2 egg whites
 - 3 semen

...ɲoḍil...

ɲwele [ɲ^wél^ye] *adv.*

1 completely, totally

ɲwelok [ɲ^wélok] *v.*

1 to fall with force, to fall (of a heavy thing),
to fall through something

2 to continue strong, to burgeon

ɲwemo [ɲ^wém^yo] *n.*

1 great aunt, any female relative of your
grandparent's generation

2 term of address for elderly women

ɲweŋ [ɲ^wêŋ] *n.*

1 hands, open arms (when holding things)

ɲwepe [ɲ^wép^ye] *n.*

1 town, village, small settlement

ɲwo [ɲ^wô] *n.*

1 any tuberous, non-allium root vegetable

ɲwobeto [ɲ^wób^yeto] *n.*

1 galangal

ɲwode [ɲ^wóde] *n.*

1 potato

ɲwoɖa [ɲ^wód^ya] *n.*

1 yam, sweet potato

ɲwoɭut [ɲ^wól^yut] *n.* LNK **ɲwoɭude**

1 a limp, broadly any irregularity in gait or
joint motion

ɲwoɭudu [ɲ^wól^yudu] *v.*

1 e~ to limp, to walk with a limp

ɲwoma [ɲ^wóm^ya] *n.*

1 mango

ɲwomiŋe [ɲ^wóm^yiŋe] *n.*

1 mango tree

ɲwoŋwuŋ [ɲ^wóŋ^wuŋ] *n.*

1 carrot

ɲwuŋ [ɲ^wûŋ] *n.*

1 red

ɲwuwoŋ [ɲ^wúwoŋ] *n.*

1 e~ to rotate

2 pa~ to make rotate

3 pa~ to influence politically

ɲwuwot [ɲ^wúwot] *n.*

1 wheel, including cart wheels and potters
wheels

2 a round piece of furniture people sit
around, a round low table

3 sphere of influence

O

ola [óla] *adj.*

1 hot, warm

olaɖa [ólad^ya] *n.*

1 warmth, heat

olaŋwaŋ [ólaŋ^waŋ] *n.*

1 molten metal, red-hot metal

ole [ole] *prn.*

1 everyone, everything

2 all

olelot [ólelot] *adj.*

- 1 bisexual, pansexual, attracted regardless of gender

oleme [ólem^ye] *n.*

- 1 current
2 route or path across water

oleŋ [oleŋ] *adv.*

- 1 (*cl. adv.*) always, every time, whenever

oli [óli] *v.*

- 1 to be by the way, to be incidentally
2 (*adv. SVC*) by the way, incidentally

olome [ólom^ye] *n.*

- 1 harbor, port

olu [ólu] *n.*

- 1 waves, rough sea
2 an individual ocean wave

oluna [óluna] *n.*

- 1 dolphin

oḷis [ól^yiç] *n.*

- 1 winds, storm

oḷisala [ól^yiʃala] *n.*

- 1 rainy season

oḷiset [ól^yiʃet] *n.*

- 1 major storm

oḷisu [ól^yiʃu] *v.*

- 1 to blow (on or at something)
2 to boast, to brag (to someone)
3 **e~** to blow, to be windy

onat [ónat] *adj.*

- 1 well-behaved (of children)
2 respectful, harmonious
3 lawful, within cultural or legal norms

oŋe [óŋe] *v.*

- 1 to crave, to hunger for, to thirst for
2 **e~** to be hungry, to be thirsty

ejoŋe talodu 'to starve to death'

ejoŋe diŋu 'to die of thirst'

opwo [óp^wo] *n.*

- 1 a mixture of ground spices and pulverized aromatics used as a base for a dish, traditionally prepared in large batches in community kitchens and kept under oil

ote [óte] *v.*

- 1 to hope for
ote ŋeŋi 'to look forward to'
2 **ta~**(*adv. SVC*) hopefully, with luck

oṭa [ót^ya] *n.*

- 1 heart
2 pace, beat, tempo

owowu [ówowu] *adj.*

- 1 long (physically), tall (of a person)

owu [ówu] *n.*

- 1 river, running water

owu [ówu] *v.*

- 1 to wash, to rinse
2 to flow
3 **pa~** to spill, to make flow

...oleme...

owula [ówula] *n.*

- 1 blood
- 2 sap
- 3 close bond with someone, not necessarily related

pakwux owula ‘to adopt, lit to place blood’

P

pagwal [pʰágʷal] *adj.*

- 1 sorry, shameful, embarrassed

pa-gwap [pʰá:gʷap] *v.* NFP **pa-gwabwał**

- 1 to lend, to borrow
- 2 to send as an emissary or envoy

pa-je [pʰá:je] *v.*

- 1 to place, to add, to put
- 2 to remove, to subtract, to take
- 3 to return, to put back
- 4 **kwu~ biwe** to plant seeds, to sow seeds

Only used with inanimate objects

pak [pʰâk] *n.*

- 1 pepper, spicy things

pak ŋe [pʰak ŋê] *n.*

- 1 pink peppercorns

pak taşu [pʰak táşu] *n.*

- 1 black peppercorn

pakapak [pʰakapʰak] *ideo.*

- 1 ideophone for spitting

pale [pʰále] *v.*

- 1 to stop something, to end something, to finish something, to complete something

pa-ł [pʰá:lʰ] *v.*

- 1 to send
- 2 to make go, to make move

Only used with inanimate objects.

pa-łoł [pʰá:lʰolʰ] *v.*

- 1 to throw

pam [pʰâm] *v.*

- 1 to believe, to think (that...)

pa-m [pʰá:m] *v.*

- 1 to send
- 2 to make go, to make move

Only used with animate objects.

pamwe [pamwê] *v.*

- 1 to forbid, to disallow

pamwu [pʰámwu] *n.*

- 1 riverbanks

Refers to both by default, for one riverbank use **pamwu şat**

panala [pʰánala] *n.*

- 1 field, plains, flat expanses
- 2 the flat surface of a table or counter

panalo [pʰánalo] *v.* NFP **panalawał**

- 1 e~ to stretch out (of plains), to be vast, to be expansive

paşujo [pʰásʰujo] *v.*

- 1 to roast, to cook over a flame, to char
- 2 to smelt ore

- paṭe** [pʰátʰe~pʰatʰê] *v.*
 1 to show, to make someone see, to make clear
- paṭeŋ** [pʰátʰeŋ] *n.*
 1 map, chart
- pa-x** [pʰaːx] *v.*
 1 to place, to add, to put
 2 to remove, to subtract, to take
 3 to return, to put back
 Only used with animate objects
 4 ~ **sapwu** to forgive
- pe** [pʰê] *v.* NFP **pajaḷ**
 1 to shrink something
- peje** [pʰéje] *adv.*
 1 (*cl. adv.*) not much (*negative polarity item*)
- pelam** [pʰélam] *n.*
 1 a deaf person, someone who can't hear
- peŋwuŋ** [pʰéŋʷuŋ] *n.*
 1 venereal disease
- pepe** [pʰépʰe] *n.*
 1 sleep (*child's talk*)
- pesese** [pʰeʃeʃe] *ideo.*
 1 ideophone for farting, especially quietly
- pešo** [pʰésʰo] *n.*
 1 a pause or break, a ceasefire, a gap, interstitial space
- pešo** [pʰésʰo] *adj.*
 1 sparse, not dense, spread out
- 2 new, shallow (of friends or relationships)
- pewaŋ** [pʰéwaŋ] *v.*
 1 to dice, to grind, to mill, to shred, broadly: to make smaller (of food or craft ingredients)
 2 to mull over an idea, to analyze something
- pi** [pʰi] *v.*
 1 to not be (suppletive negative form of **i** 'to be')
- pik** [pʰik] *v.*
 1 to undergo something
- pikaŋ** [pʰikaŋ] *v.*
 1 to be at home
 2 **ḷe**~to go home
 3 **ḷelu**~ to go back home, to be back in town, to return to the beginning of an idea or story, to circle back
- pilem** [pʰilem] *v.*
 1 to disperse, to separate
- pile** [pʰilʰe] *v.*
 1 **e**~ to have the ability to do something, to have permission to do something
- pimiŋe** [pʰimʰinʰe] *adj.*
 1 ineffable, not able to be understood
- pimiŋiŋ** [pʰimʰinʰiŋ] *n.*
 1 something ineffable, a mystery
- pitakiḷeŋ** [pʰitakilʰeŋ] *n.*
 1 something unknown (but knowable)
- pitakwi** [pʰitakʷi] *n.*

- 1 weeds, pests, vermin
2 plague, illness, epidemic
- piṭe** [p^ʰit^ʰe] *v.*
1 to lose, to get lost
Almost entirely used as a result complement for a completed action—rarely used as a main verb
- poji** [p^ʰóji] *adj.*
1 of or relating to speakers of Lam Proj
- pot** [p^ʰót] *v.*
1 to remove, to take off, to get rid of (expected)
- poxet** [p^ʰóçet] *n.*
1 war, armed conflict
kwuŋamwen poxet ki gwa ‘to wage war on someone’
2 a battle, a skirmish
- poxetu** [p^ʰóçetu] *v.*
1 to be at war with, to wage war on
2 to achieve through war or fighting
3 **le~** to be at war (with each other)
- pul** [p^ʰúl] *v.*
1 to push, to sway (of waves)
- pulana** [p^ʰúlana] *n.*
1 momentum, inertia, élan
2 nature, natural tendencies
- pwago** [p^wágo] *n.*
1 stone, rock
- pwak** [p^wák] *n.*
1 (*vulgar*) shit, vulgar word for feces
gepwak ‘low-quality’
- pwala** [p^wála] *v.*
1 to kiss
2 to touch with the mouth
3 to bless a **gima** offering
- pwek** [p^wék] *n.*
1 cycle, circle
- pwekelo** [p^wékel^ʰo] *v.*
1 to wrap around, to encircle, to go around
- pwekeme** [p^wékem^ʰe] *v.*
1 **le~** to sleep together, to have sex
- pwekep** [p^wékep] *n.*
1 nuclear family (in contrast to **leŋjale**, the normal word for family, which includes aunts, uncles, and cousins)
2 a crew or group associated with a particular place, a crowd of regulars
- pwekweŋ** [p^wék^weŋ] *n.*
1 hub
2 joint, of an animal or mechanism
3 capital city, city with centralized power
- pwekwok** [p^wék^wok] *n.*
1 the changing of the seasons
- pwemek** [p^wém^ʰek] *n.*
1 year
- pweŋamwen** [p^wéŋam^wen] *n.*
1 personal space
2 one height difference that Mesole people

...piṭe...

keep from outsiders

pweŋe [p^wéŋe] *n.*

- 1 money
- 2 small bivalve shell

pweŋo [p^wéŋo] *v.* NFP **pweŋewel**

- 1 to buy, to sell

pweŋoŋ [p^wéŋoŋ] *n.*

- 1 salesman, vendor, trader

pweŋwon [p^wéŋ^won] *n.*

- 1 bribe

pwetax [p^wétax] *n.*

- 1 month

pwexabwo [p^wéxab^wo] *n.*

- 1 bracelet, armband

pwolek [p^wólek] *n.*

- 1 the intertidal zone, tidal flats or tidal pools
- 2 grey area, ambiguous zone, compromise

tasi pwolek ‘to strike a compromise’

S

sa [ʃa] *adv.*

- 1 (*cl. adv.*) very, very much
- 2 very, a lot
- 3 (*cl. adv.*) used to mark focus on preverbal subjects

sakweja [ʃák^weja] *v.*

- 1 to impregnate, to get someone pregnant
- 2 **ta~** to get pregnant, to be pregnant

3 **le~** to be expecting (of a couple), to get pregnant (polite)

sale [ʃál^ve] *v.*

- 1 to be south of
- 2 to be to the left of
- 3 (*cvb.*) south of
- 4 (*cvb.*) left of

sap [ʃâp] *n.*

- 1 door, gate, entry

sapi [ʃáp^yi] *v.*

- 1 to waste, to make poor use of, to let go bad
- 2 **e~** to make bad choices, to make wasteful choices

sapwu [ʃáp^wu] *v.*

- 1 to allow, to permit, to let enter

sat [ʃât] *n.*

- 1 coarse, wiry (of hair or fur)

seba [ʃéb^ya] *n.*

- 1 tiger

sefax [ʃéf^yax] *n.*

- 1 irrigation

kwowu sefax ki gwa ‘to irrigate something, to grow a relationship’

sefu [ʃéφu] *v.*

- 1 to whisper (something)
- 2 to spread a rumor

sefu paŋe ‘to snitch on, to tattle on, to report’

sekasek [ʃekafek] *v.*

- 1** to sweep
- seko** [ʃéko] *n.*
- 1** turd, a piece of poop
- 2** animal droppings that retain their shape, such as rabbit droppings
- seli** [ʃéli] *n.*
- 1** lilting melodic accent
- selo** [ʃélo] *n.*
- 1** clam, clamshell
- sesi** [ʃéçi] *n.*
- 1** liquor, distilled alcohol
- xiko sesi** ‘to feel drunk’
- sido** [çído] *v.* NFP **sidawal**
- 1** to have sex (with), to mate (with) (of animals)
- 2 pa~** to breed animals
- 3 le~** to have sex (together), to mate (with each other)
- sijak** [çijak] *v.*
- 1** to cut, to cut into
- sijak pilem** ‘to cut apart’
- sijak pot** ‘to cut off’
- sijak pañifa** ‘to cut in two’
- sijakisija** [çijakiçija~çakiça] *ideo.*
- 1** ideophone for cutting, slicing
- sijaņasijaņa** [çijaņaçijaņa çañaçaņa] *ideo.*
- 1** ideophone for boring speech, talking on at length
- sikap** [çikap] *n.*
- 1** a houseboat, a fixed-location house as part of a floating village
- 2** a member of a guild or professional group
- sile** [çíle] *n.*
- 1** market, shop
- sile** [çíle] *adj.*
- 1** normal, common
- sili** [çíli] *v.*
- 1 e~** to never happen
- esili taxen le xet** ‘I’ll never get rid of you’
- 2 e~ (adv. SVC)** to never do
- ekweme de esili ki gije** ‘I never come here’
- sin** [çîn] *v.*
- 1 e~** to pass out of sight, to disappear
- 2 e~** to set (of the sun or moon)
- 3 le~** to leave, to make oneself scarce
- 4 pa~** to get rid of
- sinete** [çínete] *n.*
- 1** time off, vacation, holidays
- sineto** [çíneto] *v.* NFP **sinetewel**
- 1 e~** to take time off, to go on vacation
- 2 e~** to not pay attention
- siņa** [çíņa] *n.*
- 1** liver
- sis** [çîç] *n.*
- 1** urine, pee
- sita** [çíta] *n.*
- 1** soup

...seko...

siteletele [citeletele] *ideo.*

- 1 ideophone for clumsy or uncoordinated action

siwek [ciwek] *n.*

- 1 a hair braid

siweku [ciweku] *v.*

- 1 to braid someone's hair

siwu [ciwu] *adv.*

- 1 (*cl. adv.*) unfortunately, sadly

Speaker-oriented. See **nifa** 'regretfully' for a subject-oriented adverb.

sodo [fódo] *v.*

- 1 e~ to jump

sotu [fótu] *v.*

- 1 to be angry at something

- 2 e~ to be angry

sowa [fówa] *adj.*

- 1 rushing (of rapids), turbulent, hurried, energetic

sube [fúb^{ve}e] *v.*

- 1 e~ to dive, to swim underwater, to swim (of fish)

- 2 e~ to float underwater

subelak [fúb^{ve}elak] *n.*

- 1 seagull, often any sea bird

sun [fûn] *n.*

- 1 woman

sunep [fúnep] *n.*

- 1 girl

sunolot [fúnolot] *adj.*

- 1 gynophilic (attracted to women)

Ş

şa [s^yá] *num.*

- 1 one

şako [s^yáko] *v.*

- 1 to be memorable to someone, to be important to someone

- 2 to act in someone's honor

- 3 e~ to be important

şalagaṭ [s^yálagat^y] *n.*

- 1 cemetery, graveyard, tomb

şalo [s^yálo] *n.*

- 1 work, tasks, errands

şaluk [s^yáluk] *n.*

- 1 coconut

şame [s^yám^{ve}e] *v.*

- 1 to come first, to be the most, to be the best

şamek [s^yám^{ve}ek] *n.*

- 1 noon, midday

şametax [s^yám^{ve}etax] *n.*

- 1 midnight

şami [s^yámi] *n.*

- 1 slippers, house shoes

- 2 comfort, one's comfort zone

şamin [s^yám^{ve}in] *adj.*

- 1 unanimous, in agreement, certain

şamıne [sʰámʰinʰe] *adj.*

- 1 by all means, for sure, certainly

şaşo [sʰásʰo] *adj.*

- 1 tightly woven, dense, thick (of brush or jungle)
2 close or storied (of relationships), complicated (of issues)

şat [sʰât] *adj.*

- 1 alone, single

şate [sʰatʰe] *adv.*

- 1 (*cl. adv.*) only, just

şeke [sʰéke] *n.*

- 1 jellyfish

şexeşexe [sʰeçesʰeçe] *ideo.*

- 1 ideophone speaking a foreign language, especially Maruvian

şol [sʰôl] *v.*

- 1 to replace
2 to exchange
3 (*cvb.*) for, in exchange for, in return for

şoļe [sʰolʰe] *adv.*

- 1 (*cl. adv.*) however, but

şuko [sʰúko] *n.*

- 1 fire, burning

şukwu [sʰúkwu] *n.*

- 1 to burn

şulu [sʰúlu] *n.*

- 1 Anroo tidal spirit

takwok şulu ‘things are changing’
ketewe şulu ‘a rich fishing spot’

T

tadela [tádela] *n.*

- 1 lacto-fermented brassica vegetables, usually cabbage leaves

tagesıñ [tágeçıñ] *n.*

- 1 origin, source

tagimo [tágimʰo] *n.*

- 1 things left at a final resting spot to honor the dead including the inscription in their name and epitaph
2 legacy, a person’s impact over their life

tajañ [tájañ] *n.*

- 1 benefits, improvement, increase

tak [tâk] *n.*

- 1 card

tak [tak] *adv.*

- 1 (*cl. adv.*) definitely, certainly, for sure

tak lo! ‘for sure!’

takal [tákal] *adj.*

- 1 fitting, matching, appropriate, inoffensive, passable

takeñ [tákeñ] *n.*

- 1 tradition, received or inherited knowledge or beliefs

takiļeñ [tákilʰeñ] *n.*

- 1 something known, information, givens

takok [tákok] *n.*

- 1 end or extremity of an object
- 2 extremities of a body
- 3 outer corner or vertex

takwan [ták^wan] *n.*

- 1 ambiguity, unsureness, confusion, unclearness

takwul [ták^wul] *v.*

- 1 to have negative feelings about something, to feel uneasy about something, to do something uneasily or tentatively

talala [tálala] *n.*

- 1 tens, groups of ten

tali [táli] *v.*

- 1 to stain, to color something accidentally
- 2 to influence, especially illicitly
- 3 to bruise (someone)
- 4 **ta~** to be bruised, to get bruised

taliŋe mwane [taliŋe m^wáne] *n.*

- 1 the Mwane diaspora

talome [tálo^me] *n.*

- 1 reality, the real world
- 2 the truth

taluka [táluka] *n.*

- 1 green tea or light oolongs

tała [tál^va] *adj.*

- 1 black
- 2 dark-colored
- 3 matte sheen

tamiŋ [tám^yin^y] *n.*

- 1 thoughts, ideas, concepts

tamwuța [tám^wúta] *n.*

- 1 sandals, open-toed shoes with cords around the feet and ankles keeping them on

tane [táne] *n.*

- 1 a communal sleeping surface, a group of mats pushed together to sleep
- 2 a local haunt, somewhere people meet to gossip

taŋwuŋ [táŋ^wuŋ] *n.*

- 1 roasted tea

tapașujo [táp^yas^yujo] *n.*

- 1 any roasted dish, commonly marinated and roasted skewers of meat or shrimp

tas [tâf] *adj.*

- 1 expensive
- 2 tiring (of an activity), requiring exertion
- 3 thorough

tasi [táçi] *v.*

- 1 to write
- 2 to scratch
- 3 to declare, to formalize, to make official

tașu [tás^yu] *n.*

- 1 coal, charcoal

tatasi [tátaçi] *n.*

- 1 formal written standard, edict, law

tatașu [tátas^yu] *n.*

- 1 black tea or dark oolongs
- tataxi** [tátaçi] *adv.*
- 1 nightly, every night, nocturnally
- tawu** [táwu] *n.*
- 1 tea cup, tea bowl
- 2 small amount
- tax** [tâx] *n.*
- 1 darkness
- tax** [tâx] *adj.*
- 1 dark, dim
- taxelo** [tâxelo] *n.*
- 1 orca, killer whale
- taxi** [táçi] *adv.*
- 1 tonight
- taxil** [tâçil] *n.*
- 1 night, nighttime
- taxo** [tâxo] *n.*
- 1 wide and deep drum, bass drum
- taxwa** [tâx^wa] *n.*
- 1 moon
- taxwu** [tâx^wu] *v.*
- 1 **ta~** to darken
- 2 **ta~** to go out (of a flame)
- 3 **ta~** to age, to get older
- letaxweme** ‘*curmudgeonly*’
- te** [tê] *v.* NFP **tajał**
- 1 to surpass, to be more than
- 2 **e~** to increase, to grow
- te** [tê] *adj.*
- 1 big, large, great, grand, huge
- te** [te] *adv.*
- 1 (*cl. adv.*) as you know, you see, marking information the speaker expects the listener to know
- teđi** [ted^yi] *adv.*
- 1 (*cl. adv.*) expresses speaker is doubtful or apprehensive about a question
- tegu** [tégu] *v.*
- 1 to find something, to encounter something
- 2 to bump into something, to hit something accidentally
- 3 **le~** to meet up
- teka** [téka] *v.*
- 1 (*vulgar*) to excrete, to ejaculate
- 2 (*vulgar*) to throw, to put, to place
- 3 **e~** (*vulgar*) to move, to go, to come
- teke** [téke] *n.*
- 1 bone
- 2 inedible pit or stone of a fruit
- teketek** [teketek] *ideo.*
- 1 ideophone for falling pieces
- 2 ideophone for repeated hitting or tapping
- paji teketek** ‘*to have sex*’
- temimin** [t^yémimin] *v.*
- 1 to empty out, to clear out
- 2 to depopulate
- temin** [tém^yin] *adj.*

...tataxi...

- 1 empty of people, not crowded, not having people
- tesì** [téçi] *v.*
- 1 to overwhelm, to be too much for
- ke tesì de egwon** ‘he talks too much for me’
- 2 **e~** to overflow
- 3 **e~** to be too much, to be excessive
- teṣe** [tés^ye] *v.*
- 1 **e~** to dance, especially an improvised rather than choreographed dance
- tete** [téte] *v.*
- 1 **e~** to do something repeatedly
- tewo** [téwo] *adj.*
- 1 porous, allowing things to move through easily
- 2 torn (of a net or of cloth)
- 3 lax, poorly enforced (of a law or of a government/authority)
- tija** [tíja] *adj.*
- 1 skillful, knowledgeable
- tijaja** [tíjaja] *v.*
- 1 to become skillful, to gain skill, to practice
- tikitik** [tíkitik] *ideo.*
- 1 ideophone for stinging, getting stung, getting burnt
- tiḷe** [tíl^ye] *v.*
- 1 to be west of something
- 2 to be behind something
- 3 (*cvb.*) west of
- 4 (*cvb.*) behind, in back of
- 5 **e~(adv. SVC)** moving backwards, in reverse
- tileke** [tíleke] *n.*
- 1 hereditary ruler of an area
- 2 foreign conquering ruler
- tilitili** [tilitili] *ideo.*
- 1 ideophone for precise, careful, or concentrated action
- timwu** [tím^wu] *v.*
- 1 to move somewhere cold
- toki** [tóki] *n.*
- 1 monkey
- tola** [tóla] *n.*
- 1 cup
- 2 conch shell, other spiral mollusc shells
- toṣemi** [tós^yem^yi] *n.*
- 1 food poisoning, foodborne illness especially from incorrectly prepared food
- 2 euphemism for venereal disease
- toxwa** [tóx^wa] *n.*
- 1 jaguar, mountain lion, cougar
- tunaṅ** [túnaṅ] *n.*
- 1 a cold dish consisting of veggies, roasted peanuts and coconut, lime, and fermented chili sauce wrapped up most often in fragrant edible leaves (in the south) or in seasoned flatbread (in the north)
- tuṅ** [túṅ] *n.*
- 1 party, gathering
- tusutusu** [tufutufu] *ideo.*

1 ideophone for exhaustion

T

ta [tʰâ] *n.*

- 1 sand, sandy soil
- 2 land, earth

ta lak ‘everything, the world’

taɖe [tʰáde] *n.*

- 1 brine, pickling solution

taɖwule [tʰáɣʷule] *n.*

- 1 wet beach sand, mud

take [tʰáke] *n.*

- 1 lobster, langoustine

tajedol [tʰájedol] *n.*

- 1 daily life, everyday things, with a sense of stability, peace, or normalcy

taku [tʰáku] *v.*

- 1 to hate something

tale [tʰále] *n.*

- 1 earth, land, soil

taleme [tʰálemʰe] *n.*

- 1 the harvest, as an event
- 2 the time of year that a certain field or crop is harvested
- 3 the culmination of an event

talene [tʰálene] *adj.*

- 1 on land, inland

talol [tʰálʰolʰ] *n.*

1 bird of prey

talot [tʰálot] *n.*

- 1 a hunting outing, an excursion
- 2 an invasion, a colonial expedition, incursion, or invasion

tamek [tʰámʰek] *n.*

- 1 day (period of time)
- 2 breakfast
- 3 period of time from 6am-8am

taɖa [tʰánʰa] *n.*

- 1 an area of water between the mainland and one or more islands
- 2 an isogloss or dividing line between communities with some distinct feature

taɖo [tʰánʰo] *n.*

- 1 pontoon, raft, floating platform for a floating village

taɖola [tʰánʰola] *n.*

- 1 group of pontoons as part of a floating village

taɖ [tʰân] *n.*

- 1 claw, talon
- 2 arrowhead, spearhead

tatax [tʰátʰax] *n.*

- 1 night (period of time), night (spent in a location)

teɖe [tʰédʰe] *v.*

- 1 to measure, to weigh, to count out, to enumerate

teɖe balowe gwa ‘to wrap something up, to

finish something'

2 to analyze to try, to test out (a thing, not an action)

3 to consider (an option)

4 **ta~** to be numerous, to be many

5 **taje~ ki** to be as long as, to weigh as much as

6 **ta~ nelo** to satisfy, to be enough

tejem [t^yéjɛm] *adj.*

1 alone, friendless, lonely

tejinu [t^yéjinu] *v.*

1 to pull an all nighter, to go without sleep

teloṭa [t^yélot^xa] *adj.*

1 very busy, packed, with a lot to do

tem [t^yêɛm] *v.*

1 to need something

tem oṅe 'to badly need'

2 to lack something

3 **ta~** (*adv. SVC*) used adverbially as a necessity modal

4 (*cvb.*) without, not having

temin [t^yém^yin] *v.*

1 to have not rested for an amount of time

2 **e~** to tire, to get tired

teṅe [t^yéṅe] *n.*

1 gap, hole

teṅenu [t^yéṅenu] *n.*

1 spear, arrow

tepwene [t^yép^weṅe] *adj.*

1 poor, destitute, lacking money

teto [t^yéto] *v. NFP* **tetawal**

1 to rough it, to do without basic provisions

teto [t^yéto] *v. NFP* **tetewel**

1 **ta~** to lie fallow, to wait for use

2 **ta~** to have a dry spell

teṭok [t^yét^yok] *adj.*

1 flavorless, bland, unseasoned

2 boring, dull, uninteresting

teṣe [t^yés^ye] *v.*

1 to see, to look at

teṣe time 'to envy, to be jealous of'

2 ~ **min** to recognize

3 **ta~** to seem, to appear as, to be seen as

tateṣe ke lijoda 'he seems old'

teṣel [t^yés^yel] *n.*

1 eyes

defaults to referring to both eyes, use **teṣel**

ṣat to refer to a single eye

2 window

teṣelo [t^yés^yelo] *n.*

1 sight, sense of sight

2 area within one's sight

teṣeli [t^yéṣeli] *v.*

1 to expect

tijame [t^yíjam^ye] *n.*

1 ingot, unworked metal

2 apprentice

tijameṅ [t^yíjam^yeṅ] *n.*

1 smith, metal worker

ṭije [tʰije] *adj.*

1 unconscious, passed out

ṭijo [tʰijo] *v.* NFP **ṭijewel**

1 **ta~** to pass out, to fall unconscious, to faint

2 **ta~** to fall over (of a tree)

ṭili [tʰili] *adj.*

1 cold

ṭime [tʰimʰe] *v.*

1 to pull on

ṭime lewe ‘to save, to rescue’

2 to force someone to do something

Olu ṭimel tagwon de. ‘Olu forced me to talk.’

3 to climb something

4 to reel in a catch

ṭime pilot ‘to forget something, to lose an idea’

5 to sew, to repair something by sewing

ṭina [tʰina] *n.*

1 coin

2 clothing button

ṭine [tʰine] *num.*

1 thousand

ṭinela [tʰinela] *n.*

1 thousands

2 myriad, countless

ṭise [tʰise] *n.*

1 the head of a community kitchen, often a respected community member who previously served on a community board, also

often a matriarch of a local family

ṭoge [tʰóge] *n.*

1 basket, bin

2 market stalls, collectively

xeteṣe ṭoge ‘to go out shopping’

ṭok [tʰôk] *n.*

1 salt

ṭok [tʰôk] *n.*

1 an event, a session

ṭokin [tʰókin] *n.*

1 a night of sleep, a period of sleep

ṭojenek [tʰójenek] *n.*

1 voyage, travel, trip

ṭoxwak [tʰóxʰwak] *n.*

1 class

U

ulu [úlu] *n.*

1 hand net for catching fish

uwaṅ [úwaṅ] *n.*

1 colors, pigments, paints

uwaṅ [úwaṅ] *v.* NFP **uwaṅwal**

1 to color, to paint, to dye

uwet [úwet] *n.*

1 bladder

2 need to urinate

xiko uwet ‘to need to urinate’

ṇelak uwete gwa ‘to feel rushed or pressed’

by someone'

3 seat of impulsive decisions and feelings

W

wak [wâk] *n.*

1 to stare at, to fixate on

ekwuwako ke ki de 'he's staring at me'

walo [wálo] *n.*

1 belly, front, stomach

wam [wâm] *adj.*

1 early

wame [wam^ye] *adv.*

1 (*cl. adv.*) early, soon

wamwu [wám^wu] *v.*

1 to drink hot things

waxe [wáxe] *n.*

1 neck

2 stem, trunk

3 log, piece of timber

weliŋe [wéliŋe] *v.*

1 to do something good, to do the right thing

wenaŋ [wénaŋ] *n.*

1 a deep plate or a shallow bowl

wenŋ [wêŋ] *n.*

1 name of a person, place, or thing

wetu [wétu] *n.*

1 animal dung, fertilizer, manure

wewu [wéwu] *v.*

1 to call for someone, to summon someone

widu [wídu] *n.*

1 plantain

widiŋe [wídiŋe] *n.*

1 plantain tree

widupe [wídup^ye] *n.*

1 banana, sweet banana

wijo [wíjo] *v.*

1 to assemble, to put things in the same place, to put together

2 to arrange with a focus on something

3 **le~** to concentrate, to focus

wok [wôk] *n.*

1 thumbs, pointing finger

paŋoŋ wok 'to point'

wol [wol] *adv.*

1 (*cl. adv.*) already (*positive polarity item*)

wonowolo [wonowolo] *ideo.*

1 ideophone for announcements or official speech

woxos [wóxoŋ] *adj.*

1 mischievous, disobedient

2 having a mind of its own, unpredictable, fickle

wu [wu] *adv.*

1 (*cl. adv.*) still

2 (*cl. adv.*) not yet (*negative polarity item*)

wuŋe [wúŋe] *n.*

1 key, trick, tip

lakwu wuŋe ‘to tell the future’

X

xabwo [xáb^wo] *v.*

1 to hit, to strike, to beat

xabwo pilem ‘to hit hard’

2 **le~** to fight with each other physically

xabwo [xáb^wo] *n.*

1 arm, bar, support

xabwonu [xáb^wonu] *n.*

1 hammer, club

xabwoŋ [xáb^yoŋ] *n.*

1 enemy, adversary, opponent

xafa [xáφa] *n.*

1 a dent, breach, or hole in a ship or vehicle

2 a fatal flaw

xagep [xágep] *n.*

1 trap, snare

xagwa [xág^wa] *n.*

1 a dish where ingredients are simmered in an aromatic broth, usually with a coconut base

2 ~ **talenele** stew made with either just broth or with ground peanuts to thicken

xajetek [xájetek] *n.*

1 brothel

2 inn that rents out by time rather than overnight

xajex [xájex] *adj.*

1 overpowering, unpleasant, too strong, unbalanced, overbearing

xak [xâk] *v.*

1 **e~** to sneeze

xala [xála] *n.*

1 tower, pinnacle

xali [xáli] *v.*

1 to mix together (of pieces)

2 **ta~(adv. SVC)** together, working together, as one

xalixala [xalixala] *ideo.*

1 clear weather, nice weather, open skies

xalo [xálo] *v.*

1 to be afraid, to fear something

2 to avoid something

3 (*cvb.*) for fear of, because of

xamik [xám^yik] *n.*

1 medicine

xamo [xám^yo] *adj.*

1 strong, powerful

xanas [xánaŋ] *v.*

1 to threaten, to warn

2 to portend ill, to give a bad omen of something

3 **e~** to be a bad omen

xanıdu [xán^yid^yu] *n.*

1 vulture

xaje [xáje] *adj.*

- 1** quick to learn, quick to adapt to a situation, quick-witted
- xape** [xáp^ve] *n.*
- 1** louse
2 parasite, urchin
- xas** [xâ] *n.*
- 1** high, tall, deep
2 low-pitched (of a sound)
- xasaða** [xáfad^va] *n.*
- 1** height, low pitch, depth
- pakwuje xasaða** ‘to respect, to be respectful’
paxeje xasaða ‘to disrespect, to be disrespectful’
- xasewesewe** [xafewefewe] *ideo.*
- 1** ideophone for the swaying of trees in the wind
- xasija** [xácija] *n.*
- 1** time from 12pm-2pm
2 lunchtime
3 midday
- xasu** [xáfu] *v.*
- 1 ta~** to increase in height or depth
2 ta~ to lower in pitch
3 pa~ to increase something’s height or depth
- xawam** [xáwam] *n.*
- 1** noodles, especially pulled noodles as opposed to cut noodles
- xe** [xê] *v.*
- 1** to read
- xe** [çé] *adv.*
- 1** (*cl. adv.*) used for admitting, conceding
- xedefa** [çédeða] *v.*
- 1** to be above something
2 to be before something, to precede
3 (*cvb.*) above, over
4 (*cvb.*) before
- xeje-xejo** [çéjeçejo] *n.*
- 1** crap, stuff, shit, ruffraff, junk
- xekajim** [çékajim] *n.*
- 1** community kitchen
- xela** [çéla] *n.*
- 1** lemongrass, commonly used as an herb or in medicinal tea
2 incense burned as offerings to graves
- xele** [çél^ve] *v.*
- 1** to peel something, scrape something, skin something
2 le~ to regret
- lexele de lalepilem de** ‘I regret that we broke up’
- xelegwon** [çél^veg^won] *n.*
- 1** conversation, discussion, especially open-ended
- xeli** [çéli] *v.*
- 1 ekwu~** to face towards
2 exe~ to face away from
- xelo** [xélo] *v.*
- 1** to trust

xem [çêṁ] *n.*

1 food (as nourishment), provisions

xemeda [çém^ɤeda] *n.*

1 sweets, candy

xemen [xém^ɤen] *n.*

1 promise

kwugwon xemen ki gwa ‘to promise someone, to give your word’

xemene wemen ‘a false promise’

xenut [çénut] *adj.*

1 forbidden, disallowed, especially disallowed by Meṣole practices

2 bad, unacceptable (*informal*)

xenjak [çéjak] *v.*

1 to study

xenji [çéñi] *v.*

1 to be below

2 to be after something

3 (*cvb.*) below, under

4 (*cvb.*) after

xenjida [xéñid^ɤa] *n.*

1 distance below

2 time to the future

xenjak [çéñjak] *n.*

1 pot, cauldron

2 water bottle, flask

xenjuk [çéñjuk] *n.*

1 garbage, rubbish, waste

xenjuke [çéñjuke] *v.*

1 to be in front of something

2 to face something, to be facing something

3 to expect something to happen

4 (*cvb.*) across from, in front of, facing

xet [çet] *v.*

1 to do away, to get rid of

Almost entirely used as a result complement for a completed action—rarely used as a main verb

xetagwon [çétag^won] *n.*

1 conversation, debate, discussion

xi [çî] *n.*

1 thing, stuff, something

xija [çíja] *v.*

1 to let someone down, to disappoint

2 to fail an exam or task

xijeme [çíjem^ɤe] *v.*

1 to annoy

2 e~ to fly (of a bug), to buzz

xiki [çíki] *n.*

1 thorn

2 nail

xiko [çíko] *v.*

1 to feel something internal

xikolo [çíkolo] *n.*

1 sense of feelings or awareness of one’s own body, including senses of hunger/thirst, proprioception, need to urinate, tiredness, and body temperature/ambient temperature

...xemeda...

xiku [çíku] *v.*

- 1 **ta~** to stick out from something, to be pierced, poked, stabbed into something
- 2 **pa~** to stick something into something else, to stick something through something else

xikwu [p^yaçík^wu] *v.*

- 1 **ta~** to become sharp
- 2 **pa~** to sharpen, to form a point

xilen [çílen] *n.*

- 1 exhaustion from physical work

xilep [çílep] *n.*

- 1 smile, grin
- ɲwamwen xilep** ‘to smile, to show a smile’
- 2 hint about something positive

xilak [çíl^yak] *n.*

- 1 temple

ximel [çím^yel] *v.*

- 1 **e~** to speak truthfully, to tell the truth

ximepe [çím^yep^ye] *n.*

- 1 snack, small food items

ximik [çím^yik] *adj.*

- 1 healthy
- 2 appropriate
- 3 grammatical, well-formed

ximimik [çím^yim^yik] *v.*

- 1 to become healthy, to improve in spirits

xiju [çíju] *v.*

- 1 to be in the back of something, but still inside it

xiti [çíti] *v.* NEG **piti**

- 1 to be in (a location)
- 2 **e~** to exist, for there to be

xiti is only used with animate subjects, use **joti** for inanimate subjects

xo [xo] *prt.*

- 1 and (used to coordinate nouns and adjectives)

xoba [xób^ya] *adj.*

- 1 bad

xobagwon [xób^yagwon] *v.*

- 1 to deceive by speech, to trick, to convince by lying

xoða [xód^ya] *adj.*

- 1 melancholy, general sadness

xodi [xódi] *n.*

- 1 bite
- 2 example

xoðu [xód^yu] *v.*

- 1 to bite something
- 2 to hurt, to cause pain

xola [xóla] *n.*

- 1 amount, quantity

xole [xól^ye] *v.*

- 1 to be north of something
- 2 to be to the right of something
- 3 (*cvb.*) to the north of
- 4 (*cvb.*) to the right of

xomo [xómo] *n.*

- 1 to do together, to do socially, to do as an activity
- xoŋa** [xón^ɣa] *n.*
- 1 an upright strummed or plucked string instrument, a bass
- xonana** [xonana] *ideo.*
- 1 ideophone for mumbling, speaking softly, speaking unclearly
- xoŋek** [xót^ɣek] *adj.*
- 1 criminal, devious, scamming
2 clever, smart, wry
- xowu** [xówu] *n.*
- 1 to bleed, to lose blood
2 ~ **ŋwe** to bleed out, to die of blood loss
- xwagobi** [x^wágob^ɣi] *n.*
- 1 wood as a material
- xwaje** [x^wáje] *v.*
- 1 to suck, to suck on
2 **le~** euphemism for oral sex
- xwak** [x^wâk] *v.*
- 1 to learn
2 **pa~** to teach
- xwaxe** [x^wáxe] *n.*
- 1 text, written words
2 any reading material, often books or pamphlets
- xwego** [x^wégo] *n.*
- 1 invertebrate seafood
- xwegopwek** [x^wégo^wek] *n.*
- 1 whelk
- xwejo** [x^wéjo] *n.*
- 1 constellation
2 zodiac sign
3 sketch or outline
- xweju** [x^wéju] *v.*
- 1 to outline, to trace around
2 **e~** to cast a shadow
- ekwuxweju ki gwa** ‘to cast a shadow on something’
- xwobwo** [x^wób^wo] *n.*
- 1 fish-shaped cards used during the New Year’s cleansing ritual
- pakwułoł ga xwobwo lełuşu** ‘to have the same issues year after year, to not work through issues’
- xwoje** [x^wóje] *n.*
- 1 picture, image
- xwoŋidu** [x^wón^ɣidu] *n.*
- 1 star chart, navigational chart
2 instructions, directions
- xwoŋidu meŋi** ‘to-do list, daily tasks’
- xwu** [x^wu] *conj.*
- 1 and, variant of **xo**
- xwulo** [x^wúlo] *n.*
- 1 donkey
- xwulaxwula** [x^wulax^wula] *ideo.*
- 1 ideophone for panting, being out of breath
- xwune** [x^wúne] *n.*

...xoŋa...

1 sloth (the animal)

xwuno [x^wúno] *n.* NFP **xwunewel**

1 to lounge around especially in a hammock

xwuset [x^wúfet] *n.*

1 poison, venom, toxin

xwuseto [x^wúfeto] *v.*

1 to sicken with poison, to poison someone
(of a food or animal)

2 **pa~** to try to kill someone with poison

3 **pa~ ηwe** to kill with poison

Index

- Allophony, 2
- Alphabet, 132
- Andative, see Directional Prefixes
- Antipassive, 43
- Asea prefix, see Directional Prefixes
- Ashore prefix, see Directional Prefixes
- Aspect, 54
 - Conative, 56
 - Habitual, 56
 - Imperfective, 54
 - Perfective, 54
- Augmentative suffix, 31
- Causative voice, 50
- Clitics
 - Cluster reduction, 6
- Commands, 101
- Complement Clauses, 95
- Complementizers, 95
- Compounds, 27
 - Coordinate Compounds, 27
 - Verb Compounds, see Serial Verb Constructions
- Conditionals, 96, 115
- Consonants, 1
- Darkening Suffixes, 6
- Diminutive suffix, 31
- Directional Prefixes, 57
- Dissimilation of labialized consonants, 7
- Echo vowels, 5
- Ergative particle, 45, 51, 99, 112
- Evidential SVCs, 87
- Idioms
 - about death, 60
 - with intransitive verbs, 48
 - with reflexive verbs, 50
 - with the definite article, 35
- Imperative, 118
- Imperatives, 101
- Inherent Number, 36
- Inland Mwaneḷe, 2
- Linking Clitic, 27
- Northern Mwaneḷe
 - Echo Vowels, 5
 - Pronouns, 32
 - Voice agreement, 85
- Noun Morphology, 26
- Nouns, 26
- Number, 36
- Origin/origo, 57
- Ornate clitic, 29
- Particles
 - e*, 51
 - ki*, 57
- Passive, 45

Perlative, see Directional Prefixes

Phonotactics, 3

Possession, 27

Prohibitives, 101

Pronouns, 31

Quantification, 38

Reciprocals, see Reflexive & Reciprocal
Voice

Reflexive & Reciprocal Voice, 48

Reflexives, see Reflexive & Reciprocal Voice

Relative clauses, 106

Reversative, see Directional Prefixes

Script, 132

Serial Verb Constructions, 82

Southern Mwanele

Epenthetic Vowels, 7

Pronouns, 32

Stress, 4

Tense, 52

Transitivity, 43

Velarization spreading, 9

Venitive, see Directional Prefixes

Verbs, 42

Major & Minor, 44

Morphology, 42

Voice & Valence, 43

Vowels, 2

Writing, 132

5MOYD Sentences

1000, 3	1252, 34, 100	1293, 107	1384, 54
1035, 50, 54, 98	1254, 63	1294, 88	1387, 53, 55
1065, 81	1256, 64, 112	1324, 46, 70	1388, 24, 63, 69, 79
1069, 56, 99	1258, 94, 110	1325, 57, 71, 103	1393, 86, 87
1077, 86	1260, 106, 110	1330, 65, 92	1395, 84
1101, 111	1261, 107	1331, 89	1396, 28, 94
1160, 75	1262, 91	1333, 113	1397, 99
1181, 102	1263, 44, 57, 98	1336, 109	1400, 63
1204, 113	1265, 61, 101	1337, 58	1403, 36
1205, 62	1267, 87	1340, 62	1405, 78, 113
1208, 61	1269, 112	1342, 47	1406, 78, 86, 106
1218, 28	1270, 45, 52	1356, 28, 44, 58	1421, 90, 117
1226, 103	1271, 38	1360, 46, 74	1447, 85, 101
1231, 57, 65	1274, 40	1363, 28, 44	1533, 73
1234, 116	1277, 61, 87, 91	1365, 51, 54, 113	1537, 101
1235, 96, 116	1283, 53	1366, 63	1546, 79
1236, 85	1285, 93	1371, 84	1551, 80
1239, 35	1286, 105	1373, 74	1556, 62
1244, 29, 58	1288, 51, 99	1375, 29, 54, 117	1593, 80
1245, 34, 112	1289, 39	1376, 76, 117	1595, 109
1247, 91	1290, 41	1381, 53	1611, 77
1248, 95, 110	1291, 34, 49	1382, 88	1629, 76
1249, 107	1292, 55, 91	1383, 53, 55	