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A short grammar of Urama

Jason Brown, Alex Muir,
Kimberley Craig and Karika Anea
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Urama is a Papuan language spoken primarily on Urama Island in Papua New Guinea. It is spoken in the Gulf Province, in the vicinity of Deception Bay, in the Era River Delta. Urama is part of the Kiwai language family, which is distributed along the south coast of Papua New Guinea, and is a family with relatively sparse documentation. This work attempts a short grammar of Urama, and in doing so, it aims to be accessible to linguists by aiming for a rich description of a highly under-documented language. This book outlines the geographic, social, and anthropological background of Urama, and is comprised of chapters laying out the phonology, morphology, and syntax of the language. While many Urama language structures are also highly characteristic of neighbouring Papuan languages, the language also exhibits patterns that are in many ways exceptional. The more notable features include the use of a productive vowel harmony, the existence of a binary counting system, the presence of a definite article, an unusual organization of agreement morphology, and an extremely intricate tense system. Also included in this book are a set of representative narratives, as well as a lexicon of the language accompanied by an English finder-list.
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Jason Brown, Alex Muir, Kimberley Craig and Karika Anea
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# Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction ................................................................. 1  
1. Introduction ........................................................................... 1  
2. Geography, history, and environment of Urama Island ............... 1  
3. Urama and neighbouring languages ....................................... 4  
4. Language use, literacy, and education .................................... 4  
5. Research on the language ..................................................... 6  

Chapter 2: Phonology ................................................................. 8  
1. Introduction ........................................................................... 8  
2. Consonants .......................................................................... 8  
3. Vowels ................................................................................ 10  
   3.1 Vowel harmony ................................................................ 12  
4. Suprasegmental phonology .................................................... 14  
   4.1 Tonal accents .................................................................. 14  
   4.2 Intonation ...................................................................... 15  
5. Prosodic structure ................................................................ 16  
   5.1 Syllable structure ............................................................ 16  
   5.2 Reduplication .................................................................. 17  
   5.3 Verbal templates ............................................................. 19  

Chapter 3: Morphology ............................................................... 20  
1. Introduction ........................................................................... 20  
2. Pronouns ............................................................................ 20  
   2.1 Personal pronouns .......................................................... 20  
   2.2 Reflexive pronouns ......................................................... 21  
3. Articles ................................................................................ 21  
4. Demonstratives .................................................................... 23  
5. Nouns .................................................................................. 23  
   5.1 Case .............................................................................. 24  
   5.2 Number ......................................................................... 24  
   5.3 Compounds ..................................................................... 25  
6. Verbs .................................................................................... 25  
   6.1 Subject and object agreement ......................................... 25  
      6.1.1 Number agreement .................................................. 26  
      6.1.2 Person agreement ................................................... 27  
   6.2 Tense .............................................................................. 29
6.2.1 Tense in affirmative and interrogative clauses .......... 30
   6.2.1.1 Present ......................................................... 30
   6.2.1.2 Near Future .................................................. 31
   6.2.1.3 Distant Future ................................................ 32
   6.2.1.4 Near Past ..................................................... 33
   6.2.1.5 Intermediate Past .......................................... 33
   6.2.1.6 Distant Past .................................................. 34

6.2.2 Tenses in negative clauses .................................. 35

6.3 Aspect ............................................................... 37

6.4 Modality ............................................................. 38

6.5 Valency-adjusting morphology .................................. 40
   6.5.1 Causative ....................................................... 40
   6.5.2 Applicative ..................................................... 40
   6.5.3 Middle ............................................................ 41

6.6 Verbal derivation and compounding ......................... 42

7. Adjectives ............................................................. 43

8. Adverbs ................................................................. 45

9. Numerals ............................................................... 46

10. Postpositions ......................................................... 47

11. Complementizers .................................................... 49

12. Conjunctions .......................................................... 49

13. Question words ...................................................... 50

Chapter 4: Syntax ..................................................... 51

1. Introduction ........................................................... 51

2. The clause .............................................................. 51
   2.1 Non-verbal clauses ............................................... 51
   2.2 Intransitive clauses ................................................. 52
   2.3 Transitive clauses .................................................. 53
   2.4 Ditransitive clauses ............................................... 53
   2.5 Oblique arguments ................................................ 54
   2.6 Non-canonical constituent orders ................................ 54
      2.6.1 Topicalisation ............................................... 55
      2.6.2 Focus ............................................................ 56
   2.7 Valency-adjusting operations ................................... 56
   2.8 Clause types ........................................................ 58
      2.8.1 Declaratives .................................................... 58
      2.8.2 Interrogatives .................................................. 58
      2.8.3 Imperatives ..................................................... 59
      2.8.4 Conditionals ................................................... 60
      2.8.5 Negatives ....................................................... 61
      2.8.6 Illocutionary force .......................................... 61

3. Subordination ........................................................ 62
## List of abbreviations

1 = first person  
2 = second person  
3 = third person  
ASS = assertive  
BEN = benefactive  
CFACT = counterfactual  
DEF = definite article  
DFUT = distant future  
DPST = distant past  
DU = dual  
EMPH = emphatic  
FUT = future  
HAB = habitual  
INT = interrogative  
ITER = iterative  
MID = middle  
MOD = modal  
N1 = non-first person  
NDECL = non-declarative  
NEG = negation  
NFUT = near future  
NOM = nominative  
NPST = near past  
OBJ = object  
PL = plural  
PROH = prohibitive  
PST = past  
PUNCT = punctiliar  
PURP = purposive  
SG = singular  
SUBJ = subject  
TR = trial  
TRAN = transitive  
Q = question
1 Introduction

Urama (ISO: 639-3 kiw) is a language spoken primarily on Urama Island in Papua New Guinea. It is spoken in the Gulf Province, in the vicinity of Deception Bay, in the Era River Delta. Urama is part of the Kiwai language family, which is distributed along the south coast of Papua New Guinea. The Kiwai family in turn belongs to the larger Trans New Guinea stock.\(^1\) Within the Kiwai family, Urama belongs to the North-Eastern group, along with Arigibi, Gibaio, and Kope (also referred to as Gope) (Wurm 1973). The name ‘Urama’ is used to refer to the language, the ethnic group, and the island. A native Urama individual is termed *Urama mere* ‘Urama person’.

Urama Island is in the Kikori district. Preliminary numbers for the 2011 census indicate the entire district has a population of 41,232. Official numbers of inhabitants on Urama Island are more difficult to obtain; however, Wurm (1971:139) has estimated the population of Urama speakers at around 1500. Foley (1986:233) estimated the population of North-Eastern Kiwai (presumably including Gibaio, Kope, and Urama, but not Arigibi, which Wurm & Hattori 1981 classify as a separate language\(^2\)) at 3700 speakers, as has Wurm & Hattori (1981), and according to Ethnologue (Lewis et al. 2014, based on Foley’s 2011 estimates), there are 6000 speakers of North-East Kiwai (which includes Gibaio and Urama-Kope\(^3\) together). The adjacent areas speak various Kiwaian languages, and there is some mutual intelligibility between them. As Tok Pisin is one of the lingue franche of Papua New Guinea and is an official language, it is often the language of communication between those from other areas.

2 Geography, history, and environment of Urama Island

Urama is spoken by the inhabitants of Urama Island and a fairly large area consisting of around 10 villages which are spread throughout the smaller islands. Urama Island is

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\(^1\) While Wurm (1971) considers the Kiwai family to be a sub-group of the larger Trans-Fly group, it is likely that the evidence for this relationship is not convincing (cf. Evans 2012). Furthermore, Ross (2005) has demonstrated that in his study of pronouns, no such group can be inferred, but that there is still good evidence for the smaller Kiwai group to constitute a family within the Trans-New Guinea stock.

\(^2\) Wurm (1973) considers the North-Eastern group to be made up of Urama, Kope, Gibaio, (which Wurm terms *Baravi*) and Maipu’a. Both Wurm (1973) and Wurm & Hattori (1981) consider Arigibi to be separate from this immediate grouping.

\(^3\) Wurm (1971) notes that the Kiwaian languages are structurally quite close, and considers Urama and Gope to be dialects of a single language, separate from the others in the North-Eastern group.
located at coordinates Latitude: 7° 36' 00" S, Longitude: 144° 37' 00" E. The only way to gain access to the other villages is by boat, primarily across the main rivers; however, when the weather is bad inhabitants are unable to cross the main river and instead travel through the smaller rivers on a longer, but much safer route. Nearby villages are spread around the area within the island; these include the villages of Gauri, Kinomere, Kivaumai, Larimia, Mirimailau, Oumaumere, Tovei, and Veraibari. The villages of Mairivepea and Avamu/Morovamu are also Urama-speaking villages, but are located on the other side of the mouth of the Era river, on other delta islands. Our primary consultant (and fourth author) estimates the population of the largest village, Kivaumai (alternatively spelled Kiwaumai), at around 3000, with around 1000 in each of the other larger villages. There are roughly 40 - 50 dwellings in Kivaumai, two churches, a primary school, and a “sub-health centre” (which is larger than an "aid-post") with 1 nurse and 3 community health workers. It also has a “long-house”, a customary magistrate and a chief.

Historically speaking, the Kiwai people migrated from the Fly River region to the Fly estuary (around Kiwai Island), then dispersed outward, including along the southern coast (Lawrence n.d.). Those more southern coastal Kiwai peoples were taught hunting and fishing by Torres Strait Islanders, and they inherited the exchange system.

Oral narratives concerning the settling of the area involve two brothers, Ninigi and Ainau, who came from the west approximately 7 or 8 generations ago and settled on Urama Island at the village site of modern-day Kinomere (Frankel & Vanderwal 1981:90-91). Frankel & Vanderwal (1981) have provided basal radiocarbon dating that puts the initial occupation of Kinomere at 410 +/- 80 BP, which is somewhat consistent with the oral narratives. The present village of Kivaumai was established before World War I, though it was situated further inland. After the wars, the village was moved closer to the coast, most likely due to it being a better location with better soil as there were many mangrove swamps inland. Another possible reason for the move was to
move away from cannibalism, a practice which has since ended in the area. Kivaumai and the nearby village of Kinomere (made up from people originally from Kivaumai) have been in existence the longest out of all of the villages on Urama Island. The other surrounding villages were made up of people who migrated from these original two villages. The villages of Aibigahe, Larimia, Mrirmailau, Morovamu, and Veraibari broke away from Kivaumai, while Gauri, Mairevepea Omaiernere, and Tovei came from Kinomere. The reason for the creation of new villages was likely due to there being better fishing or just being a better location, or possibly population expansion.

The delta’s regional geography is characterized by saltwater mangroves, tidal mudflats and swamplands; a setting that is not conducive to agriculture (Barker et al. 2012) nor for gardens, so fishing is the preferred method of subsistence. Because of these reasons, the local economy has historically relied on sago processing, fishing, and collecting mudcrabs (Frankel & Vanderwal 1981). Frankel & Vanderwal (1981:88) report that in the past, the cash-based economy was based on the sale of materials to the government; this included artefacts to the Ministry of Commerce, and fish to the Department of Primary Industry. Dutton (1992) reports that the Urama people traded with Motuans indirectly; this trade route, however, did not develop until after European contact, when Motuans went to Urama Island (thus, Motu influence is relatively recent in the area) (cf. also Barker et al. 2012 on this point). The primary trade dynamic in this relationship involved Motuans trading clay pots for sago.

The main industry in the area is logging. Large logging ships often come through the area and many people are able to be employed by logging companies. The village of Gauri is where the logging campsite was historically located and where ships used to come and load the logs. The nearest main town with an airport and shops, Kikori, is a three hour boat ride away from Urama and is where people like teachers and other government employees make a fortnightly trip in order to collect their wages.

The Urama people work in many different jobs. Many people work as teachers, health care workers, church pastors and evangelists, or logging company workers doing clerical work, labour, or the women can work there as cooks. People typically don’t work much in fisheries, but do fish for their own subsistence.

People who grow up in a particular village generally stay in the village with their families, moving away only to study, work, or if they marry someone outside of the village. Newcomers to the villages are rare and people typically only move into the village if they marry someone from Urama. The land in the village is split into blocks according to families, and one only builds within their family land boundaries. Houses are built from materials from the forest and bush and some houses are semi-permanent and include iron sheet roofing and gutters to collect water into tanks.

Travel out of the island is fairly regular, with people travelling to Kikori or Baimuru a couple of times a week; they are both government stations. They are smaller than towns and have some shops, markets, schools, health care and an air strip. They also have government services such as a small sub-branch of the Bank South Pacific where salaries can be collected. There is also transportation available to take people to other main centres around Papua New Guinea, and ships often come to the towns bringing commercial goods.
3. Urama and neighboring languages

Over the years, Urama has come into contact with many other languages, all of which have had some influence. Speakers of neighbouring dialects of North-Eastern Kiwai come into contact with each other through trade. There is also the influence of the national, and most commonly spoken, languages of Papua New Guinea: Motu, Tok Pisin, and English. These languages have all had some effect on the Urama language and are the primary source of the loanwords which are now used.

Of the younger generation of Urama speakers, almost all speak Tok Pisin, which is used in social contexts and is spoken in towns and cities and also in some schools. Due to children learning English in school, individuals report Tok Pisin is relatively easy to learn because of the lexical similarities. The older generation however, do not speak English. They typically speak Hiri Motu, which was once the lingua franca of Papua – the southern region of Papua New Guinea. Hiri Motu is mainly spoken along the Papuan coast from the tip of Milne Bay to Port Moresby. The language originated in the Central Province in Port Moresby, and spread from there through trade, administration, and missionaries. The Kikori district is still a strong area for speaking Hiri Motu – more so than the rest of the Gulf Province. However, the use of Hiri Motu as a lingua franca is fading now that learning it as a second language is less common, and parents who speak it as a second language are not transmitting it to the younger generation.

As mentioned above, Urama and Kope are structurally very close, and are considered by some (i.e. Wurm) to be dialects of a single language. There is some mutual intelligibility between the varieties, and some of the words are very similar, such as Kope na'ura ‘what’ and Urama na'uro ‘what’. Other words have drifted apart semantically, such as Kope topi ‘stomach’ and Urama dopi ‘pregnant’, but overall the changes between the two languages have not been great. The nearest language which cannot be understood by the Urama people is Porome, which is spoken in Kikori and Guaribari, and also the languages spoken in and around Baimuru.

4. Language use, literacy, and education

Although Urama is the common language spoken in the home and village, Tok Pisin is the lingua franca for most of Papua New Guinea and the second language spoken by most people from an early age. Tok Pisin is used when people from different villages and language backgrounds interact. Hiri Motu is also spoken by a wide range of people and is considered the older lingua franca, while English is becoming more common now that it is the language of education and of the government. Tok Pisin is spoken especially by the younger generation who typically start learning it once they start school, where they acquire the language from their peers, or from older people in the villages who may be speaking it. Urama children begin learning English once they start attending primary school in grade 3. English is generally the only language allowed to be spoken within the school grounds and all literature is in English. Classes are taught in English from teachers who also learned English themselves at school in the same way. As already mentioned, Hiri Motu is the other widely spoken language in Papua New Guinea, and is a national language. In village life on Urama Island, however, it is only ever spoken when there is a visitor present who does not speak Urama. The one context where Hiri Motu is still in strong use is through the church. Although there is
no Bible in the Urama language yet, the church pastors in the villages are Urama and Gope/Kope speakers. Church services are given in the Urama language but the Bible is read in either English or Hiri Motu and is then translated into Urama.

Although there is only a relatively small population of Urama speakers, they see their language as being in a healthy state due to the strong emphasis placed on speaking the language in the villages. In higher grades at school children are not allowed to speak Urama, while in the village and at home they are encouraged to speak Urama, with the view that English can only be spoken at school. Although they are strict about not speaking English at home, they do think that English is important for communication with others.

Culturally, people would take offence if an individual knew the Urama language but chose to speak other languages instead. If all participants in a conversation can speak Urama and Tok Pisin, the attitude is that Urama should be spoken. An alternative language is only spoken when speaking to someone who is unable to speak Urama, and a language that all participants can understand is then used. That being said, the younger generation is showing a preference for speaking Tok Pisin within the peer group instead of the language their parents and older generations speak and understand.

Although schooling is available from elementary school right through to the university level, not all people can afford to be educated or to send their children to school. Education in Papua New Guinea is not compulsory, therefore it is up to parents whether or not they will choose to send their children to school. Unfortunately, those who are unable to afford the fees are unable to gain an education. For those who do not attend school, they typically stay home and help their parents with caring for their siblings, going fishing, crabbing, or hunting etc.

Children begin elementary school when they are around six years old and continue schooling for two years. Elementary school is held in the village and is taught in their mother tongue, so children in Urama are taught in Urama for the first two years of their education. After elementary school, children go on to study at a primary school. Primary school is for children aged approximately 8-14 years old, taking students from grade 3 to grade 8. From primary school onwards English is the language used for teaching, meaning that children do not become fully literate in Urama. The primary school in Kivaumai (Urama Primary School) was the first school on the island and was opened in the 1970s and is government operated. Kivaumai and Kinomere are the only villages on Urama Island that have primary schools. Most children from the other villages come to school for the week and go home on weekends. During the school week they either board with relatives or their parents build homes for the children near the school where the children take care of themselves, doing their own cooking - though sometimes the mothers might take turns staying for a week at a time.

Following primary school, children may attend a high school (grades 9-10) and then secondary school (grades 11-12). These are located outside of the island and students typically board or stay in a dormitory, coming home only during school holidays. However, it is only the students who receive good grades and who pass their exams who may be selected to attend high school after the completion of grade 8. This occurs again at the end of grade 10 for entry into secondary school. After grade 12, students may apply for university. Students are then selected for university depending on their proposed field of study and the grades they have achieved.
A major factor which determines whether or not children will attend school, and for how long, is whether the parents and family can afford it. The fees for school from grades 1-12 are fully paid by the parents and relatives of the student. With the financial limitations of families and the limited spaces and opportunities available in high school and secondary school, many children drop out after grade 8, 10 or finish after grade 12 without attending a university. This is one of the primary reasons for low literacy rates on Urama Island. By the time students reach university level, and choose to attend a university, fees are subsidized by the government and parents pay only partial fees.

Aside from the first two years of school, reading is not taught in the villages, and is not taught in Urama at all, as there are no written materials in the language. There is some literacy for those who are literate in English and have advanced schooling; for instance, some individuals do translation work (including the fourth author). Although children have the opportunity to gain literacy skills through schooling, there are no forms of adult education or literacy projects in or near the village. The older generation of Urama people are not literate in Urama and have not learned English. They did, however, grow up speaking Hiri Motu, and many older people are literate in Hiri Motu as they were taught in Hiri Motu at mission schools by early missionaries of the area. Although there are currently no literacy projects, the church holds events especially for women where they learn skills such as cooking and sewing. They also have Bible study lessons where they learn to read the Bible in English or Hiri Motu and where they translate those scriptures into Urama during devotion times.

5. Research on the language
Aside from MA theses by Brown (2009) and Craig (2014), an article by Brown et al. (2016), and the data collected in Wurm (1951), Urama has been largely undocumented. Ray (1923) provides an early comparative description of the languages of southern New Guinea, including the Kiwai languages, and Wurm (1973) conducted a comparative lexical study of all of the Kiwai languages. There are also works that provide documentation of related languages. Within North-East Kiwai, Clifton (1990, 1995) provides analyses of different aspects of Kope grammar. The most notable reference work in the Southern Kiwai languages is Ray’s (1933) grammar of Island Kiwai.

The Urama data cited in this grammar was collected by postgraduate students and staff at the University of Auckland over a period of two years. The data was collected mainly through elicitation sessions with a native Urama speaker. The data has also been checked by other Urama speakers in Papua New Guinea. The data includes elicited words and sentences, as well as a series of narratives.

This work attempts a short grammar of Urama. In doing so, it aims to be accessible to linguists by aiming for a description of an under-documented language. Thus, the overview of the grammar of the language is descriptive, and does not rely heavily on any given theoretical assumptions. The book contains the main components of

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4 See Clifton (1987) for a discussion of the role of orthography in language planning in Kope.

5 There exists a collection of narratives in Brown (2009); however, these narratives are not recognized as being in the Urama language by our language consultant and teacher (and the fourth author), despite some of the speakers of the narratives being closely related to her, and inhabitants of Urama Island.
grammar, including phonology (chapter 2), morphology (chapter 3), and syntax (chapter 4). In addition, there are representative narratives (chapter 5), and a lexicon (chapter 6) contained at the end of the book.
2 Phonology

1. Introduction
The segmental phonology of Urama is characteristic of many Papuan languages: it has a relatively simple consonant inventory and a canonical five-vowel system. Also characteristic of Papuan languages is the simple syllable structure of the language, which includes a (C)V template. In addition, Urama makes use of tonal patterns resembling pitch accents, and a set of prosodic morphological phenomena (including verbal templates and reduplication).

2. Consonants
The broad consonantal inventory of Urama is presented in Table 1. The consonant phonemes are all common, and resemble many other Papuan inventories (Foley 1986). Phonetically, glides [w] and [j] exist, as does a glottal stop [ʔ]. The glide [j] is not underlying in the phonological inventory, and the underlying status of the glottal stop and the glide [w] is questionable. These issues will be outlined below. The orthographic forms for all sounds are equivalent to their IPA values, except for the glottal stop, which is represented with the apostrophe < ’ >, and the flap, which is represented with < r >.

Table 1: Urama consonant inventory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bilabial</th>
<th>Labiodental</th>
<th>Dental</th>
<th>Alveolar</th>
<th>Velar</th>
<th>Glottal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stops</td>
<td>p b</td>
<td></td>
<td>t d</td>
<td></td>
<td>k g</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricatives</td>
<td></td>
<td>v</td>
<td>(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasals</td>
<td></td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liquids</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glides</td>
<td>w</td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As illustrated in Table 1, there is a contrast between voiced and voiceless stops, two fricatives, a set of nasals, and a flap. /s/ is marginal, and found primarily in loans. There is only a single occurrence of a lateral in the lexicon, in the word [lohi] ‘chief’, in free variation with [rohia]. The form is a loan; cf. lohia ‘leader’ in Hiri Motu (cf. the apparently unrelated [buraigo] ‘chief’ in Island Kiwai). The flap is listed here as a liquid, although this is an arbitrary choice, as there are currently no patterns that it participates in to the exclusion of other consonants. Example (1) illustrates the consonantal contrasts in Urama. Each consonant is found in word- or morpheme-initial position in this set, followed by a low vowel:
Very few allophonic patterns exist in the language; there are, however, some distributions worth noting. Wurm (1977) reports a lack of [v] in the phonemic inventory of Island Kiwai. Others, notably Ray (1933), have noted free variation between [w] and [v] in the Southern Kiwai languages (in contrast to Wurm, Ray posits [v] for Island Kiwai, alongside [w]). [v] is undoubtedly present in Urama, however there is a restriction on this sound in word-initial position, where the consonant only occurs before [i, e, a], and not before [o, u]. In all likelihood, a situation of free variation is being supplanted by an allophonic relationship, with [v] now showing up in previously unexpected positions, but not before rounded vowels (which appears to be a labial-labial co-occurrence restriction). An interesting exception to this involves the non-first person agreement marker [v-], which is free to occur on verbs such as *odau* ‘to go’ and *o’u* ‘to come’: [vodau], [voʔu]. This indicates that the restriction only holds of lexical roots, and not of productive morphemes (as these do not give rise to overt alternations).

Also noteworthy is a free variation of [t] and [k] in some words; cf. *itiva* ‘a tool for husking coconuts’, which has the variant *ikiva*.

The glottal stop [ʔ] does seem to be contrastive in the language, though it only appears in intervocalic environments. The primary function of the glottal stop appears to be to break up disallowed sequences of vowels and to prevent hiatus. For instance, there are no vowel-length contrasts in the language, and thus instances of identical vowels that would normally be adjacent, lexically or through morpheme concatenation, are broken up by a glottal stop (2), as well as vowel sequences that are prohibited from forming illicit diphthongs such as *ne’ahu* ‘constipation’ and *pi’u* ‘star’.

(1) Consonantal contrasts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bata</td>
<td>‘scale (N)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dado</td>
<td>‘jellyfish’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gabo</td>
<td>‘path, road’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hato</td>
<td>‘only’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kava</td>
<td>‘kava’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mabo</td>
<td>‘armband’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nata</td>
<td>‘something’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pata</td>
<td>‘swamp’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rautu</td>
<td>‘with’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saku</td>
<td>‘bald’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-tato</td>
<td>‘less’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vadu</td>
<td>‘bamboo’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) uta’a | ‘to sleep’ |
| ia ho’oti | ‘to count’ |
| uu’uai | ‘to cut’ |
| o’o | ‘carve, make, shape’ |
| abe’emai | ‘open’ |
| hi’i | ‘underwear’ |
Glottal stops fail to surface when identical vowels are concatenated across a compound boundary; cf. *hivioi-iørøi* ‘sunrise’.

Wurm (1977) notes that there is a greater occurrence of [ʔ] intervocally in words that have other consonants in cognates within the Kiwaiian family. The implication is that other consonants (most prominently, [k]) have diachronically debuccalized. Wurm also links this historical change to the development of the tonal system of the language (to be discussed below). The change from [k] > [ʔ] has likely resulted in many forms that do not fit the pattern; i.e. exhibit a glottal stop between vowels that are normally allowed to form a diphthong (cf. *ge’i* ‘happy’ vs. *baratei* ‘wall’). The results of these diachronic changes have presumably created a system whereby the glottal stop appears phonemic. The examples below include pairs contrasting in sequences of vowels; those in (3) have the sequence interrupted by the glottal stop, those in (4) do not.

(3)  

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hi’a</td>
<td>‘very, a lot’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gana’u</td>
<td>‘walking stick’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gi’epu</td>
<td>‘heart’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hi’o</td>
<td>‘meat, flesh’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4)  

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hiabau</td>
<td>‘type, kind’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ginau</td>
<td>name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>giepu</td>
<td>‘sad’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hio</td>
<td>‘run, race’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final two pairs of words in (3) and (4) constitute true minimal pairs, which argues in favor of an analysis of glottal stop as a contrastive phoneme, in addition to its role in hiatus resolution.

### 3. Vowels

The vowel inventory is also relatively simple, and resembles the canonical 5-vowel system characteristic of many languages of the world (Maddieson 1984), and also of Papuan languages generally (Foley 1986).

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e [ɛ]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o [ɔ]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The vowels have roughly their expected phonetic manifestations, with the mid vowels, which are orthographically <e> and <o>, being phonetically [ɛ] and [ɔ]. The back mid vowel <o> in many instances tends to be realized higher than its normal range, sometimes approximating [u].
The following illustrates the contrastive status of each of the vowels. Each of the vowels is shown occurring in word- or morpheme-initial position, followed by the sequence [...mo…].

(5) Vowel contrasts

imo’a       ‘spit (v)’
emo          ‘elbow’
amo          ‘breast’
omo          ‘river’
=umo         ‘PL’

In addition, the language also makes use of several diphthongs, illustrated in (6).

(6) Diphthongs

[oi] didimoi  ‘back’
[ai] adede.ai ‘to bite’
[au] kaupabai ‘few’
[ei] keihi    ‘little, small’

The diphthongs that occur in normal and fast speech are underlying sequences of vowels, evident from their separation in careful speech. As an example, what is syllabified as [o.dau] ‘go’ in fast speech is syllabified as [o.da.u] in careful speech. If it can be assumed that since there is no vowel length contrast, and each vowel is represented with a single mora, then this implies that syllable structure is not relevant for the monophthong/diphthong distinction, as syllable breaks can occur between these sequences of vowels, and change under conditions of speech rate.

At first blush there appear to be no underlying consonantal glides in the language, though glides are sometimes derived from underlying vowels in some sequences. In these contexts, glides and vowels are in free variation. For instance, it is not uncommon for sequences such as /oa/ and /ua/ to surface as [owa] and [uwa], respectively. As an example, the form /tauo/ ‘old’ can surface as [tau.wo] or [tau.o]. By extension, there do not seem to be contrasts between forms like [wato] and [uato] ‘dry (ADJ)’, which would be expected if the glides were underlying in the language. There are, however, forms such as wadu ‘bamboo’ and wodi ‘nose’, which seem to be fairly clearly articulated with a [w], and not a [u]. Because of this, these forms have been entered into the lexicon as [w]-initial, though the underlying status of these sounds still remains to be fully worked out. Further support for the phonemic status of /w/, however, comes in the free variation between initial [w] and [v] that certain forms exhibit: wadu [wadu] ‘ship (N)’ has the variant [vadu]. The fact that [w] alternates with a consonant [v] argues strongly for an underlying, consonantal glide /w/. 
3.1. Vowel harmony

Given the strict (C)V syllable template (to be elaborated on in section 5.1 below), there are relatively few allophonic phenomena that are observed. However, one case of allophony, perhaps the most robust, is vowel harmony. Vowel harmony in the language is triggered by certain prefixes. One example involves the first person agreement prefix [n-], which induces epenthesis when preceding another consonantal prefix. The quality of this epenthetic vowel takes on the quality of the initial vowel of the root:

(7)  \textit{No-m-ovou.}

1-BEN-bring

‘Bring it to me.’

The past tense prefix [p-] exhibits similar behaviors. In cases where this prefix is stacked preceding other prefixes, and only consonantal material is present in the following prefix (as in 8), the epenthetic vowel takes on the quality of the initial vowel of the root. However, if the plural prefix [i-] intervenes, then epenthesis is blocked, as is vowel harmony (9):

(8)  \textit{Mo ro bomo=i pa-naro ra.}

1SG NOM pig=DEF PST-1-shot PST

‘I shot the pig.’

(9)  \textit{Mo ro netua bomo=ti p-i-naro ra.}

1SG NOM two pigs=DU PST-PL-1-shot PST

‘I shot both pigs.’

This alternation is illustrated by more forms below, where the epenthetic vowel surfaces due to prefixation. The argument for epenthesis, rather than deletion, is the fact that vowel+[i] sequences are generally tolerated in the language, while on the other hand, consonant clusters are never tolerated. If the vowel is underlying, then there is no motivation for deletion before vowel-initial stems. Thus, the vowel that surfaces is epenthetic, the purpose of which is to break up an underlying consonant cluster. This vowel is present in plural forms, but alternates based on the following vowel in non-plural forms:

(10)  \textit{Nu Kara ha’o=i p-i-midai.}

3SG Kara bag=DEF PST-PL-borrow

‘She borrowed Kara’s bags.’

(11)  \textit{Nu go’ota ga’u=i po-do’ai.}

3SG coconut one=DEF PST-pick

‘She picked one coconut.’
(12)  
Nu  go’ota=i  p-i-do’o.  
3SG  coconut=DEF  PST-PL-pick  
‘She picked coconuts.’

(13)  
Nu  ro  mo  ha’o=i  pe-ne-ma’ai.  
3SG  NOM  1SG  bag=DEF  PST-BEN-give  
‘She gave me a bag.’

(14)  
Nu  ro  mo  ha’o=i  p-i-ni-ma’a=ti.  
3SG  NOM  1SG  bag=DEF  PST-PL-BEN-give=PL  
‘She gave me bags.’

The behavior of the past tense and the first person agreement prefix stands in contrast to other bound forms which do not undergo vowel harmony. A prime example is the purposive clitic ma=. As illustrated in the examples below, the prefix is consistently realized with a low vowel [a] when the stem-initial vowel is a high vowel or a mid vowel, arguing strongly that the prefix vowel is underlying:

(15)  
Teriki  ata  ma=n-ovai  ro.  
trick  certain  PURP-1-make  2SG.  
‘I’ll try and play a trick on you.’

While not vowel harmony per se, there is also a phenomenon worth mentioning in this context, where a prefix vowel entirely replaces the initial vowel of the stem (especially as the pattern relates to vowel harmony in other Kiwaian languages). There is a small minority of forms where the plural agreement morpheme concatenates with and precedes the stem, as expected: abe’emai / i-abe’emai ‘to open’; obobo / i-obobo ‘to dig’. However, this is not the normal state of affairs. While the plural prefix surfaces as a separate vowel when preceding consonantal forms, in other cases there are examples of verbs beginning with vowels where the prefix vowel replaces the initial vowel of the verb; for instance uho ‘eat, bite’ derives the plural form iho; another example is n-obodidio ‘chase’ vs. the plural form n-ibodidio. This is not consistent, however: some root forms remain unchanged. These patterns differ from Island Kiwai, where vowel harmony and replacement are both options for plural person agreement, but where fusion of the plural and root vowels is also a possibility (sometimes resulting in a completely different surface vowel). This phenomenon is discussed in more detail in section 6.1.1 of Chapter 3.

There are several other similar morphophonological properties associated with individual morphemes; these will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3.
4. Suprasegmental phonology

There are two noteworthy phenomena that fall within the scope of suprasegmental phonology in Urama: tonal accents, and intonation. These will be dealt with in turn, but it will be noted that they may interact in interesting ways.

4.1. Tonal accents

Urama makes use of a sophisticated system of tonal accents. There are few minimal pairs that contrast tonally, though the nature of the contrasts is indicative of the larger effect that tone has in the language. The few minimal pairs\(^6\) that contrast with respect to tone are given in (16):

(16) Surface contrasts in pitch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urama</th>
<th>Arigibi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[nimo] 'us' LH</td>
<td>[nimo] 'lice' LL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Given the sparse number of minimal tone pairs, and given that they are all disyllabic, this suggests that the tonal patterns in the language are not contrastive, but rather constitute a tonal accent. This analysis is along the lines of that proposed by Donohue (1997) for the related Northeastern Kiwaian language Arigibi. Donohue claims that the constraints on tonal melodies consist of the following restrictions: (i) every word must have a L tone, and (ii) every word may have a H tone. The Arigibi and Urama cognates are listed below (where there is no cognate, a phonologically similar word is used):

(17) Attested tonal melodies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arigibi</th>
<th>Urama</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>naː 'fish'</td>
<td>na 'something'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tutuː 'long'</td>
<td>tutu 'long'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>umú 'dog'</td>
<td>umú 'dog'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nimo 'louse'</td>
<td>nimo 'louse'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vovoʔo 'bird'</td>
<td>kikio 'bird'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mudebe 'claw'</td>
<td>mudebé 'claw'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ivío 'sun'</td>
<td>hivío 'sun'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ĕgiʔep 'heart'</td>
<td>giʔepu 'heart'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elaila 'hot'</td>
<td>erara 'hot'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>olaʔolá 'red'</td>
<td>oraʔará 'red'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tuniʔaʔ 'all'</td>
<td>tuníha 'all'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>idóma.i 'eye'</td>
<td>idóma.i 'eye'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>núʔ tama 'bark'</td>
<td>núʔatama 'bark'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^6\) There are also a few other minimal pairs that seem to be based on vowel length. If this is the case, this is problematic, as there appears to be no true vowel length contrast in the language, which would relegate these forms to a small class of idiosyncratic exceptions.
Note that words can only have a single H tone, but that a H tone is not necessary (cf. monosyllabic words, where the condition cannot apply, as per condition (i) above). Therefore, words must have at least one L tone, but can have a single H accent (on any syllable).

The presence of the tonal accent in Urama has been argued by Wurm (1951) to be the result of diachronic processes that have eliminated consonants. Further detailed investigation of the neighboring Northeastern Kiwai languages will likely shed more light on this issue.

4.2. Intonation

Intonation in the language is still very under-explored; however, some preliminary generalizations have been reported by Mandal (2012). For example, while falling intonation is characteristic of declarative clauses, as in Figure 2, there appears to be a nuclear accent on the predicate in yes/no questions, as in Figure 3.

![Figure 2: Intonation profile of Uhoi Mevia ro puho ‘Mevia ate the fish.’](image-url)
5. **Prosodic structure**

This section presents the prosodic aspects of Urama, including syllable structure and prosodic morphological operations.

### 5.1. Syllable structure

Syllables in Urama consist of a vocalic nucleus, with an optional simple consonantal onset; e.g. (C)V. Examples are below:

(18) Urama syllables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CV</th>
<th>音</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.bu</td>
<td>‘to cross’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o.ho</td>
<td>‘to look for’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o</td>
<td>‘yes’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a.tu</td>
<td>‘catfish’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ni</td>
<td>‘needle’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wa.po</td>
<td>‘tail, last’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The syllable template is enforced with loanwords, even for those that have entered the language fairly recently, such as [beredi] ‘bread’ or [basikoroi] ‘bicycle’ (both from English).

As mentioned in section 2.3 above, there are constraints on vowels that interact with, but are not necessarily the result of, syllable structure. This includes /u/ and /i/ surfacing as [w] and [j] when they can form an onset to a syllable in fast speech, and the process of diphthong formation, which yields variation in the syllabification of a sequence of two vowels (i.e. as V.V in slow speech, or ‘dipthongal’ VV in fast speech).
5.2. Reduplication

In many languages, the reduplication of morphemes is used to mark number. Ray (1931:10) explains how in Island Kiwai, reduplication can sometimes be found with either the noun or the verb, and goes on to explain that the reduplicated words in Island Kiwai are most often adjectives, though we can see in the following examples that reduplication often occurs with nouns in Urama. Reduplication seems to primarily mark number in the language – though it can often be used as a derivational device: e.g. *ora* ‘blood’ can be reduplicated to form the semantically related *ora*~*ora* ‘red’. Below are a number of examples where the reduplication process has occurred, expressing a plural meaning:

(19)  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Reduplication</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kere</td>
<td>‘piece’</td>
<td>kere~kere</td>
<td>‘pieces’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vati</td>
<td>‘place’</td>
<td>vati~vati</td>
<td>‘places’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>na</td>
<td>‘thing’</td>
<td>na~na</td>
<td>‘things’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hivi</td>
<td>‘root, vein’</td>
<td>hivi~hivi</td>
<td>‘roots’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oro</td>
<td>‘thorn’</td>
<td>oro~oro</td>
<td>‘thorns’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pahe</td>
<td>‘leaf’</td>
<td>pahe~pahe</td>
<td>‘leaves’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The term *ubu* ‘swelling’ or ‘bump (as on a head, etc.)’ reduplicates to yield the adjective *ubu*~*ubu* ‘bumpy’ or ‘lots of bumps’. Although *giri* ‘tooth’ can be reduplicated as *giri*~*giri*, the change in meaning is not a dedicated plural; it also expresses the meaning ‘lots of sharp teeth’ such as a shark's teeth, or the sharp teeth on a saw (‘a thing with teeth’):

(20)  
giri~giri-na=i  
teeth-thing=DEF  
‘the saw’

Reduplication affects *vade* ‘word’ to yield the meaning of a ‘discussion’ or ‘meeting’, or more literally ‘lots of words/talking’. The reduplication of *hivio* ‘day’ or ‘sun’ yields the meaning ‘each day’:

(21)  
*Tuniha*  
hivio~hivioi  
himinha  
aibo  
ka.  
all  
self  
like  
PRS  
‘Every day is the same.’

There are several cases of monomorphemic reduplication, where there is no identifiable free-standing base. These forms include color terms:

(22)  
*Monomorphemic reduplication*  
idi idi  
‘black’  
guagua  
‘frog, green’  
bogobogo  
‘white’
This can be contrasted with the productive forms of reduplication in the language, as in (23).

(23)  Productive reduplication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Reduplication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>horo</td>
<td>‘bone’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horo~horo</td>
<td>‘skinny, bony’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kere</td>
<td>‘piece’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kere~kere</td>
<td>‘pieces’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>giri</td>
<td>‘tooth’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>giri~giri</td>
<td>‘lots of sharp teeth’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>komu</td>
<td>‘short, old’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>komu~komu</td>
<td>‘short, old (PL)’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For derived forms with affixes, it is obvious that reduplication copies only the material in the root, and not in the affix. This is illustrated below with the form horo~horo ‘white’. In this case, reduplication is fully copying the word, except for the definite article enclitic =i, which is not reduplicated:

(24)  Hi’o beha=i ha horo~horo=i ikedui ri.

meat only=DEF EMP bones=DEF OBJ.PL\throw.away COMP
‘Just the meat only – throw away the bones.’

In contrast, some affixes readily undergo reduplication. This is true for prefixes like the middle voice marker or-. Verbs such as u’uai ‘cut’ can form middles such as or-u’uai, or alternatively or~or-u’uai ‘cut oneself, be cut’. Occasionally the adjective that is formed through reduplication takes on a slightly different (pejorative, in the example below) sense when in prenominal vs. postnominal position (cf. horo-ku-ku ‘skinny, thin, wasted’):

(25)  bomo horo~horo

pig skinny
‘thin/skinny pig’

(26)  horo~horo bomo

skinny pig
‘rubbish/worthless pig’

Nearly all reduplicative forms in the language are cases of full reduplication. The only potential cases of partial reduplication come in the following forms:

(27)  Possible partial reduplications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Reduplication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mere</td>
<td>kihi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mere</td>
<td>kekei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>irihi</td>
<td>‘hit’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>irihi</td>
<td>‘hit (PL)’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At least one other case seems to be an incomplete copy, with a relation between an initial [k] and a medial glottal stop: kiva’iva ‘curvy, bent’. These examples aside, reduplication in Urama makes use exclusively of a full copying strategy.
5.3. Verbal templates

Verbal roots are all vowel-initial (Brown 2009). The evidence for them being vowel-initial, rather than glottal-stop initial (as glottal stop does not contrast with zero in initial position) comes in diphthong formation: when the combination of a prefix vowel and verbal root-initial vowel is a licit diphthong, then a diphthong, rather than a VʔV sequence will surface. Cf. [viʔa] ‘porridge’ vs. [viʔai] ‘the porridge’ (vi’a=i porridge=DEF).

Examples of verbal roots are in (28):

(28)  
abu ‘to cross’
aro ‘to shoot’
ekedu ‘to throw’
edai ‘to get, obtain something’
ibo ‘to grow something’
imau ‘to walk’
oda ‘to go’
omoti ‘to wait’
who ‘to eat’
u’u ‘to cut’

In contrast to Island Kiwai (as reported by Ray 1931), there do not appear to be any sub-divisions of the verbal class into smaller sub-classes based on prosodic shape.
3 Morphology

1. Introduction
The nominal morphology of Urama is relatively sparse, comprising a few clitics, while the verbal morphology is much richer, including affixes, clitics, and particles, both inflectional and derivational. The morphological profile of the language approximates polysynthesis, with heavy argument indexing within the verbal complex, a characteristic typical of the Kiwaian languages.

2. Pronouns
Urama makes use of a series of personal pronouns, as well as a reflexive pronoun.

2.1. Personal pronouns
Pronouns are invariant across all grammatical roles. They do not encode gender. There is a full paradigm for all three persons with distinct forms for singular, dual, trial and plural numbers. Dual and trial forms are clearly derived from a pronominal base with the clitics =ti and =bi, respectively, though they are represented here without any internal morphological segmentation.

Table 3: Urama pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>singular</th>
<th>dual</th>
<th>trial</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>mo</td>
<td>nimoiti</td>
<td>nimoibi</td>
<td>nimo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ro</td>
<td>rioiti</td>
<td>rioibi</td>
<td>rio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>nu</td>
<td>niti</td>
<td>nibi</td>
<td>ni</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following examples illustrate the singular pronominal forms (for ease of exposition) in subject position:

(29) *Ata* hivio mo *iraromo=i* *modobo=i* haka.
    some day 1SG remember=NMLZ can=NMLZ NEG
    ‘I can’t remember which day it was.’

(30) *Ro* gimo *ka...*
    2SG sick PRS
    ‘You are sick…’
The following examples illustrate the use of the singular pronouns in object position:

(32) *Mere ata oho=i ka mo ma=ovaba=i ri.*
     person some find=NMLZ PRS 1SG PURP=help=NMLZ COMP
     ‘I’ll find another person to help me.’

(33) *Ro hini tabo eve’a-i n-o’u ka!*
     2SG here at see-NOM 1-DFUT PRS
     ‘That’s when I’ll see you here!’

(34) *Mo ro nu odu’ai modobo=i haka.*
     1SG NOM 3SG ask can=NMLZ NEG
     ‘I can’t ask her.’

2.2. Reflexive pronouns

There is one reflexive pronoun in Urama, *himiha*, which is used to form reflexives with an argument of any person or number:

(35) *Ginau ro himiha er-eve’a.*
     Ginau NOM SELF MID-see
     ‘Ginau saw himself.’

(36) *...mo himiha ito n-aradu’uti ka...*
     1SG self ALL 1-talk PRS
     ‘…I talked to myself…’

The reflexive pronoun cannot precede the antecedent it is coindexed with.

3. Articles

There are no indefinite articles in the language; however, *ata* ‘some, other’ can function as an indefinite and its meaning changes depending on whether it precedes or follows the head noun. For instance, *na ata* (lit. ‘some thing’) yields an indefinite reading, i.e. ‘something’, while *ata na* means ‘another thing’. Urama is uncharacteristic of many other Papuan languages in that it makes use of a true article (cf. Foley 1986, 2000). The definite article in Urama is the clitic *=i*. The article is found enclitic to noun phrases, and is also used with demonstratives. The clitic status of this morpheme is inferred from the fact that it forms phonetic diphthongs with preceding words, it attaches to an entire phrase, and it is not pronounced separately in isolation. The
following conversational example illustrates how =i is used with nominals when reference is established in the discourse.

(37) Na’u  v-oho  ra?
what  N1-look  NDECL
‘What are you looking for?’

(38) Mo  nu’a  n-oho  ka.
1SG  tree  1-seek  PRS
‘I’m looking for a tree.’

(39) Ro  haiboi  nu’a  v-oho  ra?
2SG  what  tree  N1-look  NDECL
‘What kind of tree are you looking for?’

(40) Mo  nu’a  n-oho  ka  pe  huna  ma=ededeai  ri.
1SG  tree  1-seek  PRS  canoe  big  PURP=make  COMP
‘I’m looking for a tree to make a big canoe.’

(41) Nu’a  huna  ata  Iroroma  vati  kekai  ta;
tree  big  some  Iroroma  place  near  LOC
aro’o  nu’a=й  modobo  ka  pe  ededeai  ri.
that  tree=DEF  can  PRS  canoe  make  COMP
‘There’s a big tree near Iroroma’s place; that tree could make a canoe.’

(42) Ro  iraromoi  Iroroma  ro  nu’a=й  mo  ito  ehe’ua=й
2SG  believe  Iroroma  NOM  tree=DEF  1SG  ALL  sell=NMLZ
a-v-a’ai  ra?
Q-N1-do  NDECL
‘Do you think Iroroma will sell me the tree?’

The definite article is even available for proper names when the intended reference is an individual picked out of a set (e.g. the set of individuals named Ginau, in this example):

(43) Mo  umuo  Ginau=й  tutu  mere  ka.
1SG  know  Ginau=DEF  tall  person  PRS
‘The Ginau I know is tall.’

Evidence that the article is a clitic to the noun phrase, rather than a nominal suffix, comes in the fact that it attaches to postnominal modifiers, such as adjectives:
Morphology

(44) \( Umu \ gema=i \ mo \ umu=i \ ka. \)
    dog    big=DEF    1SG    dog=DEF    PRS
    ‘The big dog is mine.’

While it is enclitic to noun phrases, the article never appears cliticized to the nominative case particle \( ro \):

(45) \( Kikio=i \ ro \ uho=i \ ohiai \ ka. \)
    bird=DEF    NOM    fish=DEF    catch    PRS
    ‘The bird caught the fish.’

4. Demonstratives

There are four demonstratives in the language. These include a proximal \textit{this} (\( na \)), a distal \textit{that} with anaphoric reference (\( aro’o \)), and two demonstratives that also encode visual reference (\( i’a \) and \( ire \)), where the referent is within sight of the speaker.

(46) \( na \)    ‘this’
    \( aro’o \) ‘that’
    \( i’a \) ‘that; there’ (within sight)
    \( ire \) ‘that’ (within sight)

These demonstratives can only occur initially in the noun phrase:

(47) \( Na \ kika=i… \)
    this    story=DEF
    ‘This story…’

(48) \( Inai \ aro’o \ obo \ nahia=i \ ...
    but    that    woman    old=DEF
    ‘But that elderly lady…”

(49) \( i’a \ hiba \ gema=i \)
    that    crocodile    big=DEF
    ‘that big crocodile’

When used with full noun phrases, demonstratives nearly always co-occur with the definite article \( =i \), as evidenced by the examples above.

5. Nouns

Nominal morphology in Urama is relatively sparse. There are no grammatical genders or nominal classifiers; nouns are only marked for number. There exists no derivational morphology to create verbal nouns or other nouns, aside from compounding. The
equivalent of forms such as hunt-er or runn-er in English are created through relativization in Urama; cf. Chapter 4, section 3.5 for relative clauses.

5.1. Case
There is only one case marker for core arguments, the nominative particle ro. Its status as a particle is evidenced by the fact that it appears outside of the noun phrase, it appears outside of the definite article clitic, and it can be pronounced separately in speech. Also, while the definite clitic can appear inside of number clitics, the nominative particle cannot.

The particle is optional (see Brown 2009), and occurs with both transitive subjects (50) and intransitive, non-agentive subjects (51), indicating that it marks nominative, and not ergative case.

(50) Mo ro moto=i ididi modobo ka.
    1SG NOM house=DEF build can PRS
    ‘I can build houses.’

(51) Vihai kehii ro orurudio ka.
    rain small NOM cover PRS
    ‘A light rain is falling.’

5.2. Number
In terms of number, plural forms of nouns are usually unmarked on the nominal itself, and are more consistently marked as agreement on the verb. However, some nominals have unpredictable plural forms: e.g. singular porisi ‘police’ has the plural form porisioi ‘policemen’. These irregular plural forms generally refer to human agents and especially to kinship relations, as illustrated in (52).

(52) Singular Plural
    mamu mamio ‘mother’
    namu namio ‘big brother’
    mabia mabiamo ‘big sister’
    niavapo niamio ‘little sibling’
    dubu dububai ‘man’

These plural forms exhibit a certain degree of similarity to their singular counterparts, but it is unclear how they are derived. In addition to the unpredictably derived plurals, there also exist some suppletive plural forms, such as mere ‘person’ and ubi ‘people’. As discussed in Chapter 2, section 5.2.1, some inanimate nouns have plurals derived by reduplication: kere ‘piece’, kere–kere ‘pieces’. This includes the demonstrative na ‘thing’, which when reduplicated yields na–na ‘things’.

Clitics are optionally used for number marking on any noun phrase. The morpheme =ti marks dual number, and the evidence for its status as a clitic is apparent from the
fact that it attaches to the final element in the noun phrase, and not simply the head noun:

\begin{align*}
(53) \quad \text{bomo} & \quad \text{‘pig’} \\
\text{bomo}=\text{ti} & \quad \text{‘both pigs’} \\
\text{bomo huna}=\text{ti} & \quad \text{‘both big pigs’}
\end{align*}

The clitic =obi optionally marks trial number on noun phrases, and exhibits behaviors similar to the dual marker:

\begin{align*}
(54) \quad \text{Umi}=\text{obi} & \quad \text{ro} \quad \text{pusi} \quad \text{p-obodidio} & \quad \text{bi}=\text{mo}. \\
\text{dog}=\text{TR} & \quad \text{NOM} \quad \text{cat} & \quad \text{DPST-chase} & \quad \text{TR}=\text{PL} \\
& \quad \text{‘Three dogs chased the cat.’}
\end{align*}

Within the noun phrase, the trial clitic =obi appears outside of the definite article clitic. (54) represents an associative trial:

\begin{align*}
(55) \quad \text{Karika}=\text{i}=\text{obi} & \quad \text{asio} \quad \text{p-a’ai} & \quad \text{bi}=\text{mo}. \\
\text{Karika}=\text{DEF}=\text{TR} & \quad \text{sneeze} & \quad \text{DPST-do} & \quad \text{TR}=\text{PL} \\
& \quad \text{‘Karika and two others sneezed.’}
\end{align*}

### 5.3. Compounds

Nominal compounding is a relatively productive word-formation strategy in the language. In compounds the order is always modifier-head, consistent with the general head-final tendencies in the language. Nouns can form compounds with other nouns, as in: urio-abea (spirit-father, ‘God’), muramura-dubu (medicine-man, ‘doctor’), hepu-vipa (earth-snake, ‘worm’), bui-dubu (bush-man, ‘bushman’). Nominal compounds can also result from nouns combining with adjectives: gimo-moto (sick-house, ‘hospital’), tana-moto (sacred-house, ‘church’).

### 6. Verbs

In contrast to the nominal morphology of the language, the verbal morphology is rich in affixes, clitics, particles and auxiliaries expressing contrasts in tense, aspect, modality, number, and person. All main verbs must begin with a vowel (cf. section 5.2.2. of Chapter 2), and the verbal stem serves as the base for all further inflection, and is identifiable as a unit based on morphological changes that affect segments of the stem.

#### 6.1. Subject and object agreement

Subjects and objects are indexed on the verb by means of agreement prefixes; however, there are no dedicated morphemes for marking subjects and objects as grammatical roles. Instead, there is a system that marks number agreement for objects, a separate system for marking number agreement for subjects, and a system that marks for first
person and non-first person agreement (see Brown 2009 for an earlier analysis of agreement).

6.1.1. Number agreement

Agreement with plural objects is marked on the verbal stem with the prefix *i*-. This prefix can either be directly attached to the stem (as in *aho’o* → *i-aho’o* ‘to ask’) or the first vowel of the stem is replaced by [i] (as in *obodidio* → *ibodidio* ‘chase’). This modification of the stem often depends on the quality of the stem-initial vowel, where the low vowel tends to resist replacement. When one of the valency-changing prefixes is attached to the verb, the plural object agreement prefix generally appears outside of this prefix, or changes the first vowel of the prefix, and not the verb root:

(56) Aro’o umu gema=i ro p-i-v-oroho vadio
    that dog big=DEF NOM DPST-PL.OBJ-CAUS-go.around HAB
    umu keke=i.
    dog little=DEF
    ‘That big dog used to lead the little dogs around.’

In some instances plural agreement which triggers vowel replacement in the verb stem will have the effect of determining the quality of epenthetic vowels through the process of vowel harmony outlined in chapter 2 (section 3.1). Epenthetic vowels produced by the concatenation of person agreement and tense prefixes (in particular, the sequence of the prefixes *p*- and *n*) will undergo vowel harmony to match the derived [i] of the stem; e.g. *uho* ‘eat one thing’ vs. *iho* ‘eat more than one thing’ vs. *p-i-n-ihō* ‘I/we ate more than one thing’.

(57) Mo taitui ai-pi-n-ihō vadio ra.
    1SG yams ASS-PST-1-PL.OBJ\eat HAB PST
    ‘I used to eat yams.’

(58) Umia epu=i i-v-ihēbo.
    leaf head=DEF PL.OBJ-N1-PL.OBJ\break.off
    ‘Break the tips off the green leaves.’

Unlike the other agreement affixes, the plural object marker still appears in subordinate clauses and in negative utterances (cf. the singular form of the verb *evea*):

(59) Mo ro pusi=oti ivea=i haka.
    1SG NOM cat=DL PL.OBJ\see=NMLZ NEG
    ‘I didn’t see both cats.’

Subject number agreement markers are enclitics that attach to the verb or verbal predicate. Singular forms are unmarked. The form for trials and plurals is identical,
trials are optionally marked with the morpheme \( bi = \) which is proclitic to postverbal particles, and which is identical to the suffix found on trial pronouns.

**Table 4: Subject number agreement clitics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Trial</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>=Ø</td>
<td>(i)do</td>
<td>(bi)(=\ldots=(u)mo)</td>
<td>(u)mo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The bracketed vowels indicate that they appear in some contexts but not in others. They do not surface when directly following the verb root in some tenses. Subject number agreement affixes appear in all tenses of verbs in affirmative clauses. They normally do not appear at all in negative or subordinate clauses.

The following illustrates the different number agreement forms:

(60) \( Nu \ nauhai \ abodo \ ka. \)

3SG song sing PRS

‘S/he is singing a song.’

(61) \( Niti \ nauhai \ abodo \ ka=ido. \)

3DL song sing PRS=DL

‘They both are singing a song.’

(62) \( Nibi \ nauhai \ abodo \ bi=ka=umo. \)

3TR song sing TR=PRS=PL

‘Those three are singing a song.’

(63) \( Ni \ nauhai \ abodo \ ka=umo. \)

3PL song sing PRS=PL

‘They are singing a song.’

**6.1.2. Person agreement**

There are only two overt person markers in Urama. One of them marks the first person of all numbers. The other one marks the second and third person of all numbers and as such is a “non-speaker” form. Both have a limited distribution, but the non-speaker form is much more rarely used than the first person marker.

The first person agreement morpheme occurs in the relevant contexts in all affirmative declarative and interrogative utterances with main or auxiliary verbs, but not with modals, predicate adjectives, or predicate nominals. It is a prefix and takes the following form: \( n- \). This morpheme marks the first person of any argument, whether it is a subject, direct object or indirect object. First person agreement appears in all tenses in affirmative clauses, and precedes the valency-changing prefixes. First person agreement is triggered by first person arguments regardless of number:
Brown, Muir, Craig & Anea

(64)  Mo nahuə=i n-abodo ka.
    1SG  song=DEF  l-sing   PRS
    ‘I am singing the song.’

(65)  Nimoiti nahuə=i n-abodo ka=ido.
    1DL  song=DEF  l-sing   PRS=PL
    ‘We both are singing the song.’

(66)  Nimoibi nahuə=i n-abodo ka=umo.
    1TR  song=DEF  l-sing   PRS=PL
    ‘The three of us are singing the song.’

(67)  Nimo nahuə=i n-abodo ka=umo.
    1PL  song=DEF  l-sing   PRS=PL
    ‘We are singing the song.’

There is no first person marking in modal expressions with the modals modobo or niro, despite a lexical verb being present.

(68)  Mo ro moto=i ididi modobo ka.
    1SG  NOM  house=DEF build  can   PRS
    ‘I can build houses.’

First person agreement is likewise lacking in negative expressions:

(69)  Mo ova’ati haka.
    1SG  work   NEG
    ‘I didn’t work.’

Second and third person subject agreement occurs in interrogative clauses only. This agreement comes in the form of a prefix: v-.

(70)  Río hatitoi v-odau du=mo?
    2PL  whither  N1-go  TENSE=PL
    ‘Where are you all going?’

In yes/no interrogatives the prefix is preceded by the interrogative prefix a-:

(71)  Ríoiti kava obo=i a-v-idio ra=ido?
    2DL  kava  water=DEF  Q-N1-drink  NDECL=DL
    ‘Did you both drink the kava?’

This marker also appears on auxiliaries if the interrogative is in the future tense:
The only other environment that the prefix occurs is in conditional clauses. The link between conditionals and interrogatives (as non-assertive clause types) is discussed further in Chapter 4, Section 2.7.

(73)  
\[ Ro \text{ ro merekeke}=i \text{ ai-a-v-i-aro} \text{dio ra...} \]  
2S NOM children=DEF ASS-Q-N1-PL.OBJ-care for NDECL  
‘If you look after the children…’

The distribution of this marker is further delimited by tense. It can be used in future and present tense interrogatives and also in the near past, but not in the other (remote) past tenses.

6.2. Tense

Taking affirmative declarative main clauses as the unmarked clause and examining them for tense distinctions, six simple tenses can be observed in Urama. Five of these tenses express degrees of remoteness from the time of utterance. Since the time of utterance serves as the reference point for these tenses, they are all absolute tenses. The cut-off points between the tenses can best be described in terms of “days” from now. How strictly the boundaries of each tense are observed is not entirely certain, but tenses with non-matching temporal adverbials are judged as ungrammatical or only marginally acceptable by native speakers.

The six tenses include present, near future (i.e. ‘up to tomorrow’), distant future (i.e. ‘from tomorrow onwards’), near past (i.e. ‘extending back to yesterday’), intermediate past (i.e. ‘yesterday’) and distant past (i.e. ‘extending back from the day before yesterday’). The near tenses, the intermediate past and the distant future mirror each other in terms of their temporal distance from the present moment; however, there does not exist a future tense that mirrors the distant past. The result is an asymmetrical system beyond the near tenses, with more tenses in the past than in the future. The entire system is illustrated in Figure 4:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distant Past</th>
<th>Intermediate Past</th>
<th>Near Past</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Near Future</th>
<th>Distant Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;Yesterday</td>
<td>Yesterday</td>
<td>Last night/AM</td>
<td>Today</td>
<td>Later Today</td>
<td>≥Tomorrow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4: Schematic of tense distinctions in Urama

Several different types of morphemes play a part in the tense marking system, where the form of the tense is determined by how these morphemes combine. These

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7 As some support for this position, the word for ‘today’, *do’ou*, also means ‘now’.
morphemes include dedicated tense markers and also person markers which can appear or be omitted from the verb phrase to create tense distinctions. There are particles involved in tense formation which also function to indicate illocutionary status (forming interrogative, imperative or declarative utterances). The illocutionary particles in question are *ka* and *ra*. *Ra* is most frequently used to mark utterances as interrogatives, but can also be used when the speaker is less committed to or is seeking confirmation of the truth of a statement by the addressee, or in imperatives. *Ka* marks utterances as declarative but also marks the tense as present, or having some reference to the time of utterance (so can often be interpreted as present perfect). Craig (2014) provides an in-depth overview of the different functions and distributions of these particles. A similar particle *du* is a bound morph appearing only with dual, trial and plural number markers =*do*, =*bi* and =*mo* respectively, so it has the most restricted range. Apart from playing a role in distinguishing tenses it is unclear whether it has any other function. Periphrastic future tenses are formed with verbal auxiliaries *a’ai* and *o’u*.

The same tenses are available for interrogative utterances, but they are often formed with different combinations of the morphemes appearing in declaratives. Therefore interrogatives and declaratives will be treated together. As far as negative clauses are concerned, Urama has a much simpler bipartite system consisting only of a future and non-future tense. Thus, negative sentences will be treated separately. Imperative clauses do not exhibit any tense marking, so their present tense status is a pragmatic inference. They will not be considered in the following sections on tense.

What follows is a discussion of tenses in main clauses. In most subordinate clauses verb forms do not usually mark person, number or tense. The main exception is some (but not all) clauses introduced by bridge verbs (e.g. *say*, *think*, *see*) in which case the verbal morphology is not obviously different from that of main clauses. See Chapter 4, section 3.1 for discussion.

### 6.2.1. Tense in affirmative and interrogative clauses

#### 6.2.1.1. Present

The particle *ka*, which is used to mark the majority of declarative clauses (Brown 2009), is in part the marker of present tense (although it also has other illocutionary functions; cf. Craig 2014, Brown et al. 2016). It appears finally in the verb phrase, unless subject number markers are cliticized to it. A typical example is as follows:

(74)  
\begin{tabular}{l}
Mo keihibo uho no-hiai ka.
\end{tabular}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
1SG small fish 1-catch PRS
\end{tabular}

‘I am catching a little fish.’

A point to make about utterances with the particle *ka* is that they can often be interpreted as present perfect. In (74) above the translation could also be ‘I have caught a little fish.’ Although the time of an event may not be contiguous with the point of the utterance time, the reference point is the present, a state of affairs similar to other languages (cf. German *Ich bin seit zwei Stunden hier*, lit. ‘I am for two hours here’). Thus, *ka* marks present tense, but can have perfect or past implicatures. Furthermore, forms with *ka* are rejected as ungrammatical with time adverbials like *detu* ‘yesterday’.
or diata ‘more than two days ago to a week ago’, further support for the analysis of ka as marking present. Apart from ka the present tense has no distinctive marking.

In present tense questions asked of a singular addressee the most common particle marking the utterance as an interrogative is ra. Example (75) illustrates a typical second person singular question, which along with ra is marked with the subject agreement morpheme for second and third person, v-:

(75) Ro hobou a-v-a’o ra?
2SG lie Q-N1-say NDECL
‘Are you telling lies? (Are you talking nonsense?)

This form is not limited to interrogatives in the present tense; it can also be used for perfect and near past tense interrogatives. In this way, the particle ra cannot then be considered to have intrinsic tense on its own. Rather, the tense of an utterance with ra is induced from context and in combination with the other affixes in the verb stem, in this case the person markers:

(76) Ro ro nika=i tuniha a-v-imidai ra?
2SG NOM papaya all Q-N1-pick NDECL
‘Have you picked all the papayas?’

When interrogatives have subjects that are non-singular (i.e. second and third person dual, trial and plural) the particle ra is replaced by the bound morpheme du:

(77) Rioibi maketi to a-v-odau bi=du=mo?
2TL market ALL Q-N1-go TL=TENSE=PL
‘Are you three going to the market?’

Thus, ra is used in present tense interrogatives for singulats.

6.2.1.2. Near Future

The near future is formed with the auxiliary a’ai, which also exists as a main verb meaning ‘make’ or ‘do’. This auxiliary is fully inflected for person, number and illocutionary status (i.e. it is followed by the declarative particle ka).

(78) Mo wapoi ta emeha=i n-a’ai ka.
1SG after LOC leave=NMLZ 1-do PRS
‘I’m going to leave later today.’

The boundary point for this usage is the day after the point of utterance, at which time its use becomes marginally acceptable with temporal adverbs such as doutu ‘tomorrow’.
Near future in interrogatives is formed in the same way as the interrogative present, except that the morphology is positioned in relation to the future auxiliary verb *a'ai*, which is finite, instead of the non-finite main verb. In addition to the auxiliary, singulars are formed with the particle *ra*, while duals, trials, and plurals are not marked with *ra*, and instead are marked with clause-final number agreement.

6.2.1.3. Distant Future

The interpretation of the distant future tense begins the day after the utterance time and is formed with the auxiliary verb *o’u*, which when used as a main verb means ‘to come’.

Apart from the auxiliary verb, the morphemes in the distant future are the same as those for the near future. Distant future interrogatives have the same forms in non-singular as the near future tense interrogative forms, except for the auxiliary verb, and where singulars are marked with *ra*.
6.2.1.4. Near Past

The near past tense begins from prior to the utterance time and extends back to the day before. The cut-off point is not rigid, and near past interpretations appear to be marginally acceptable with detu ‘yesterday’, though these interpretations are definitely not grammatical with diata ‘from the day before yesterday to about a week ago’ or with any other time adverbial for more distant points in the past. The near past tense is formed with the particle vaka, which follows the verb. This morpheme appears to be composed of a morpheme va with the declarative particle ka; however, there is no independent evidence for va existing as a free morpheme or attaching to any other word-forms. An example is:

(84) Du=i tauohi’a itai ri ovaharo bi=vaka=umo!
    food=DEF early cook COMP begin TR=RPST=PL
    ‘You three started cooking a long time ago (and you’re still cooking)!

Near past singulars are formed with the particle ra, and so these forms are identical to those used for present tense interrogatives; however ra is also used with the non-singular number agreement clitics and this clearly distinguishes this tense from the present interrogative. As noted above, tense is determined by the combination of affixes, including the person agreement marker and the particle.

(85) Rioiti do’ou duoduo=i maketi to a-v-odau ra=ido?
    2DU today morning=DEF market ALL Q-N1-go PST=DU
    ‘Did you both go to the market this morning?’

6.2.1.5. Intermediate Past

The intermediate past tense is used for events that took place on the day before the utterance time. Unlike the present, the particle ka is not used to mark the intermediate past. In third person singular forms there is no particle at all, which could mean the bare stem has intrinsic past tense. In first or second person singular forms the final particle is ra while the bound tense morpheme du appears in the non-singular numbers. Example (86) below illustrates this with the first person singular form of the verb, with the first
person prefix \textit{n}-. Examples (87) and (88) illustrate second person singular and third person plural forms, respectively, which despite the appearance of the particle \textit{ra}, do not employ the non-speaker (second and third person) agreement prefix \textit{v}-. This is in contrast to interrogative forms typically ending in \textit{ra}. Finally, example (89) shows the third person singular intermediate past form, which consists of a bare verb.

\begin{Verbatim}(86) Mo \textit{detu} \textit{n-erede’a} \textit{ra}. \end{Verbatim}
\begin{tabular}{llll}
1SG & yesterday & 1-arrive & PST \\
‘I arrived yesterday.’
\end{tabular}

\begin{Verbatim}(87) Ro \textit{detu} \textit{ha’ima} \textit{ere’a} \textit{ra}. \end{Verbatim}
\begin{tabular}{llllll}
2SG & yesterday & tired & feel & PST \\
‘You were feeling tired yesterday.’
\end{tabular}

\begin{Verbatim}(88) Mo \textit{turana=i} \textit{detu} \textit{erede’a} \textit{du=mo}. \end{Verbatim}
\begin{tabular}{llllll}
1SG & friend=DEF & yesterday & arrive & TENSE=PL \\
‘My friends arrived yesterday.’
\end{tabular}

\begin{Verbatim}(89) Nu \textit{detu} \textit{erede’a}. \end{Verbatim}
\begin{tabular}{llllll}
3SG & yesterday & arrived \\
‘S/he arrived yesterday.’
\end{tabular}

The interrogative forms of this tense differ in form from the present and near past interrogatives in that the second and third person forms lack the distinctive non-first person agreement prefix \textit{v}:-

\begin{Verbatim}(90) Ro \textit{detu} \textit{hatitoi} \textit{odau} \textit{ra}? \end{Verbatim}
\begin{tabular}{llllll}
2SG & yesterday & whither & go & PST \\
‘Where did you go yesterday?’
\end{tabular}

Like the present tense interrogatives, the particle \textit{du} appears in non-singular forms. In this case the absence of an affix (the agreement prefix \textit{v}-) rather than the combination of affixes makes the tense morphologically distinctive in non-first person forms. First person forms are identical with the present tense interrogatives, as the first person agreement prefix \textit{n}- is obligatory throughout the paradigm in affirmative utterances.

\subsection*{6.2.1.6. Distant Past}

The interpretation of the distant past tense begins from the day before ‘yesterday’ (if the utterance time is ‘today’) and is used for all temporal reference from that point back. It is formed with the past tense prefix \textit{p}- which is ordered before all other verbal prefixes (except the assertive prefix \textit{ai}-).

In first and second person forms the verb is followed by the particle \textit{ra}, which is redundant in terms of determining tense:
Morphology

(91)  
\[ \text{Mo hiba tau pe-n-eve’a ra.} \]
1SG crocodile ever DPST-1-see PST
‘I have seen a crocodile.’

(92)  
\[ \text{Rio ha’o p-imidai ra=umo.} \]
2PL bag DPST-borrow.PL PST=PL
‘You borrowed bags.’

In third person forms there is no particle (\(\text{ra}\) or \(\text{du}\)), either on its own or in combination with number agreement markers.

(93)  
\[ \text{Nu ioropoio purai ta maketi to p-odau.} \]
3SG last week LOC market ALL DPST-go
‘He went to the market last week.’

Utterances with a time adverbial such as \(\text{detu} ‘\text{yesterday}’\) appear to be marginally acceptable (94); however, this is the only acceptable construction for other time adverbials such as \(\text{diata ‘from the day before yesterday to about a week ago’}\).

(94)  
\[ \text{? Mo detu ha’ima pe-n-ere’a ra.} \]
1SG yesterday tired DPST-1-feel PST
‘I was feeling tired yesterday.’

Interrogatives marked for the distant past differ from declaratives in that the first person agreement prefix \(p\)- is absent and there is no final particle such as \(\text{ra}\) or \(\text{du}\) anywhere in the paradigm, which distinguishes this tense from the other tenses found in interrogatives. This reinforces the point that the absence of a morpheme is as important as the presence of one, or the combination of affixes and particles, in creating tense distinctions.

(95)  
\[ \text{Ro hiba a-v-e’a ioropoio pura=i ta?} \]
2SG crocodile INT-N1-see last week=DEF LOC
‘Did you see a crocodile last week?’

(96)  
\[ \text{Diata rioti hattitoi odau=ido?} \]
days.ago 2DU whither go=DU
‘Where did you two go a couple of days ago?’

6.2.2. Tenses in negative clauses

The tense system in negative utterances is radically different from affirmative utterances, and for that reason they warrant separate treatment. The most common morphemes of negation also appear to be inflected for tense. There are just two such morphemes: \(\text{haka}\), used in non-future contexts and \(\text{taho’o aika}\), used in future tense contexts.
Haka appears as the final element of the verb phrase and does not host any subject agreement affixes. The verb itself is never inflected with the first person agreement prefix n- or the non-first person agreement prefix v-. If the location in time of the event described has to be more accurately defined than simply “non-future”, then it must be inferred from the context with the help of a time-adverbial. Two examples follow:

(97)  
(\text{Rioiti} \text{ ro} \text{ obo=}i \text{idio=}i \text{ haka})
2DU NOM water=DEF drink=NMLZ NEG
‘Neither of you drank / are drinking the water.’

(98)  
(\text{Kikio=}i \text{ imumuio=}i \text{ haka.})
bird=DEF fly=NMLZ NEG
‘No birds are / were flying.’

While there is no person or number agreement on the verbs or any other tense morphemes in these clauses, aspectral morphemes can still form part of the verb phrase. In (99) the habitual marker appears before the negative particle, which without a time adverbial is likely to produce the inference that the situation described holds at the utterance time:

(99)  
(\text{Mo} \text{ taitu=}i \text{ iho} \text{ vadio=}i \text{ haka.})
1SG yam=DEF PL.OBJ\text{ eat} HAB=NMLZ NEG
‘I don’t eat yams.’

Negative non-future interrogatives are formed with the final particle hara or more emphatically with haka ha.

(100)  
(\text{Ro} \text{ na’u} \text{ iho} \text{ vadio=}i \text{ hara?})
2SG what PL.OBJ\text{ eat} HAB=NMLZ NEG.INT
‘What don’t you eat?’

The future negative tense is formed with taho’o aika. Aika may be a form of the near future auxiliary a’ai ka, but counter-evidence comes in the fact that it takes no person agreement prefixes. It also has a variant form aike, which is used on its own to form negative imperatives. Unlike haka, subject number agreement morphemes can be cliticized to taho’o aika as in (102), but this appears to be optional, and somewhat rare.

(101)  
(\text{Mo} \text{ raisi} \text{ itai} \text{ taho’o} \text{ aika})
1SG rice cook NEG.FUT NEG.FUT
‘I won’t cook rice.’

(102)  
(\text{Nimoiti} \text{ warupi} \text{ itai} \text{ taho’o} \text{ aika=}umo)
1DU sweet.potato cook NEG.FUT NEG.FUT=PL
‘Neither of us will cook the sweet potatoes.’
The reason for keeping the two negative future markers (taho’o and aika) separate in the discussion up to this point is that it is possible to form a negative interrogative with the distant future auxiliary o’u directly following taho’o:

(103) Rio taitu=i iho=i taho’o v-o’u du=mo?
2PL yam=DEF PL.OBJ|eat=NMLZ NEG.FUT N1-come TENSE=PL
‘Won’t you eat the yams?’

An alternative future negative is formed by suffixing -tato to the verb which is then followed by the distant future auxiliary o’u ‘come’. The auxiliary is inflected for person and is followed by the particle ka and any number markers if the subject is non-singular. This form of the negative then aligns with the distant future in affirmatives. It does not appear to be as common as the future negative form taho’o aika. Two examples of its usage follow:

(104) Nimo taitu=i iho-tato n-o’u ka=umo.
1PL yam=DEF PL.OBJ|eat-NEG I-DFUT PRS-PL
‘None of us will eat the yams.’

(105) Ro na’u iho-tato v-o’u ra?
2SG what PL.OBJ|eat-NEG N1-DFUT NDECL
‘What won’t you eat?’

6.3. Aspect

The final vowel of the verb stem in part determines the aspect of the predicate, though it is not clear that alternations in the final vowel constitutes a morpheme. The use of mid and high vowels (i.e. [-low] vowels) give a durative aspectual reading to the verb; these are opposed to stems with the [+low] vowel or the diphthong /ai/, which makes the verb punctiliar, encoding a single, brief action or event (cf. Brown 2009:17-18). Aspectual pairs of verbs can be formed on this basis:

(106) Verb forms ending in low vowels

durative
durative
imumuio ‘flying’
imumuai ‘fly, fly past’
iadede ‘biting (many things)’
adedeai ‘bite’
iahio ‘cutting (many things)’
ahiai ‘cut’
idimo ‘removing (many things)’
idimai ‘remove’
odomo ‘cleaning / fixing’
odomoiai ‘clean, fix’

Note that most verbs end in [-low] vowels and not all of them have a corresponding partner with the punctiliar ending. Such verbs include verbs of motion like odau ‘go’ and o’u ‘come’. Transitive verbs in this category include oho ‘seek’ and a’o ‘say, speak’. There are also some verbs for which the opposite is true – they have punctiliar forms but no corresponding durative form; for instance, adai ‘set alight’ does not have a corresponding durative form. This type of behavior, where the segmental
(specifically, vocalic) content of a verbal root determines roughly which aspectual class the verb belongs to, is also characteristic, though in different ways, to Island Kiwai (Ray 1932).

Habitual aspect is marked with the particle vadio which can be used with tensed verbs. In the present tense vadio gives the verb a gnomic reading, a reading which the verb phrase ending in ka without vadio lacks. In other words, present tense in Urama has a different range of meanings than it does in English.

There is a restriction on using the habitual marker vadio with the perfective or punctiliar forms of aspectual pairs of verbs.

In order to encode perfectives or inchoatives, Urama uses full verbs in matrix clauses such as oropoio ‘finish’ and ovaharo ‘begin’. The verbs they govern are in subordinate clauses, so these aspects fall under the syntactic, not the morphological system of the language. Examples are:

(107) Tuia=i p-oroho vadio who=i i-oho=i ri.
      sea=DEF DPST-visit HAB fish=DEF PL.OBJ-seek=NMLZ COMP
     ‘He always went around in the sea to look for fish.’

6.4. Modality

Modality in Urama is expressed by different types of morphology, including prefixes, clitics, and lexical words.

Deontic modality is expressed lexically rather than morphologically. The two most important of these modals express ability and volition. They are modobo ‘can’ and niro ‘want’. Modobo can be used in polite requests, and niro can take the intensifying adjectival suffix -hia to express strong desire.

(108) Ni du=i ihoiai ovaharo ka=umo.
      3PL food=DEF eating begin PRS=PL
     ‘They have all started eating.’

(109) Ro du=i itai hatihivio oropoioi v-a’ai ra?
      2SG food=DEF cook when finish N1-do NDECL
     ‘When will you finish cooking?’

(110) Nu ro modobo ka moto=i ididi.
      3SG NOM can PRS house=DEF build
     ‘He can build the house.’

(111) Ni niro-hia ka ni himiha moto=i
      3PL want-very PRS 3PL self house=DEF ma=ididi ri.
      PURP =build COMP
     ‘They all really want to build their own house.’
Note that the subordinate clause has the subordinator *ri* and the verbal clitic *ma=*, which expresses purpose. These are not obligatory:

(112)  
\[Mo \ niro \ ka \ obo \ oru’o=i.\]  
\[1SG \ want \ PRS \ water \ bathe=NMLZ\]  
‘I want to swim.’

In these cases, the main predicate appears postposed, following the modal and the postverbal particle *ka*. (Note that *obo oru’oi* is an example of a verb compounded with a modifying noun – a common form of verbal derivation; cf. section 6.6 below.)

To express obligation adverbs are generally used: *aiha* and *ita*. The latter has a stronger sense of obligation and the pair may be used together to re-inforce this:

(113)  
\[ Nu \ do’u \ aiha \ ita \ o’u \ nimo \ moto=i \ oito.\]  
\[3SG \ today \ must \ must \ come \ 1PL \ house=DEF \ ALL\]  
‘S/he (really) must come to our house today.’

Various forms of epistemic modality are expressed by the auxiliary *a’ai* and a subordinate clause, as in (114). In some contexts the auxiliary *a’ai* can have the modal force of “try” (in terms of Foley’s [1986:152] definition of modality extending beyond an actor’s intention or attitude to her manner of performance of an action).

(114)  
\[ Ro \ moto=i \ ididi \ ri \ a’ai \ vaka.\]  
\[2SG \ house=DEF \ build \ COMP \ do \ RPST\]  
‘You were trying to build a new house.’

There appears to be a prefix *ap-* which can be used to express doubt or possibility and counterfactuality. Examples include:

(115)  
\[Mo \ dubu=i \ dohoi \ du=i \ epu=i \ ta \]  
\[1SG \ husband=DEF \ evening \ food=DEF \ before=DEF \ LOC\]  
\[o’ou \ ap-a’ai \ ka.\]  
\[come \ MOD-do \ PRS\]  
‘My husband may come before dinner.’

(116)  
\[Nupa \ bomo=i \ diata \ nu \ ro \ ap-aro.\]  
\[maybe \ pig=DEF \ days.ago \ 3SG \ NOM \ MOD-shoot\]  
‘He might have been the one who shot the pig a couple of days ago.’

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8 This sentence can also be interpreted as expressing future-in-the-past tense: ‘You were going to build a house’. The event (what the addressee was intending) is in the near past, hence the use of *vaka*, but the reference point (building the house) is posterior to that event, which would explain the use of the auxiliary normally used for expressing future tense.
One possible explanation for the diachronic source of this prefix, though speculative, is that the combination of the interrogative prefix $a$- and the distant past prefix $p$- were compounded to form a new modal prefix.

One modal prefix, the assertive $ai$-, precedes all other prefixes in the finite verb stem. It is used when the speaker wants to assert that an event has indeed occurred, and may be evidential if not modal in force:

\[(117) \quad M o \quad r o \quad b o m o=i \quad a i-n-a p e h e m a i \quad k a.\]

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
1SG & NOM & pig=DEF & ASS-1-miss & PRS \\
\end{array}
\]

‘I’ve missed the pig.’

Other elements that have modal force, such as $aiha$ and $ita$ ‘must’ are proclitics or adverbs that appear before all the preverbal morphemes mentioned above. In the case of non-finite verbs in subordinate clauses the proclitic $ma=$ can often be found, where it appears to mark purpose:

\[(118) \quad M o \quad e r a i \quad n-i v a h o t i \quad k a \quad m u k o i \quad m a=a d i a i \quad r i.\]

\[
\begin{array}{ccccccc}
1SG & firewood & 1-PL.OBJ-chop & PRS & fire & PURP=light & COMP \\
\end{array}
\]

‘I chopped firewood to make a fire.’

6.5. Valency-adjusting morphology

Those affixes that change the argument structure or valency of the verb are most closely bound to the verbal root. These include prefixes that increase the valency of the verb, making intransitive verbs transitive or causative (e.g. changing the semantics from ‘go’ to ‘make go’) or that make transitive verbs ditransitive; or prefixes that decrease valency, making transitive verbs reflexives or middles.

6.5.1. Causative

The causative prefix in Urama is $Vv$-, with the quality of the vowel determined by the vowel of the verb stem (cf. chapter 2, section 3.1). Examples of verb stems with the causative prefix include the following:

\[(119) \quad o d a u \quad \text{‘to go’} \quad o v-o d a u \quad \text{‘to make go, to take’}\]

\[
\begin{array}{llll}
iodau & \text{‘to climb’} & iv-ioro & \text{‘to take up’} \\
o’u & \text{‘to come’} & ov-o’u & \text{‘to bring’} \\
\end{array}
\]

The causative prefix is $iw$ in Island Kiwai (Ray 1932). Given the shift of some instances of $[w]$ to $[v]$ in Urama, a correspondence between these morphemes would be unsurprising.

6.5.2. Applicative

There is one applicative prefix in the language, which marks benefactives. This prefix takes the form $em$- when prefixed to verbs beginning with front vowels, for example
ado’a ‘to water’ → em-ado’a ‘to water (plants) for (someone).’ When prefixed to verbs beginning with [o] or [u], vowel harmony takes place, for example: ov-odau ‘to take’ → om-ov-odau ‘to take for (someone).

(120) Nu kokoro kere om-u’uai!
      3SG chicken piece BEN-cut
‘Cut a piece of chicken for him.’

If the verb is also a derived causative, the benefactive prefix precedes the causative prefix as in ov-ou ‘bring’ vs. om-ov-ou ‘bring x for y’, illustrated in (121).

(121) ...nu du amia ma=om-ov-ou=i ri.
      3SG food some BEN-CAUS-bring=NMLZ COMP
‘…to bring her some food.’

Some verbs appear to be lexicalized from forms prefixed with this morpheme. For example, the verb ema’ai ‘to give’ is transparently related to the verb a’ai ‘to do’.

6.5.3. Middle

The middle voice prefix is Vr-, with vowel harmony determining the quality of the vowel. (122) illustrates some active/middle alternations:

(122) aditi ‘to rub’       ar-aditi       ‘to wipe, dry oneself’
      ematuhia ‘to trick’    er-ematuhia ‘to lie’
      otoho ‘to break s.t.’  or-otoho ‘to break, be broken’

Middle forms are illustrated in the sentences below:

(123) Hoho=i ar-aditi.
      face=DEF MID-wipe
‘Wipe your face.’

(124) Mo hura=i or-otoho ka.
      1SG egg=DEF MID-break PRS
‘My eggs smashed.’

With verbs beginning with /u/ the prefix takes a slightly different shape whereby the vowel is [o] (suggesting the form is underlyingly /or-/): ur-ai ‘to cover, close’ → or-urudio ‘to be closed’. In still other contexts, the prefix is reduplicated: u’uai ‘to cut’ → or~or-ua’uai ‘to be cut, cut oneself.’ There are currently too few examples of verbs beginning with /u/ and which have middle voice forms to be certain about the underlying shape of the prefix in this case.

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9 This may be a suppletive form but is likely from a durative stem of urai with a suffix -dio attached making the verb stative in this case.
6.6. Verbal derivation and compounding

In order to derive new verbs from borrowed words or native nouns and adjectives, various strategies are employed. One of these is to delete the initial consonant (\textit{totomu} ‘advice’ yields \textit{otomu} ‘to advise’), or by reduplicating the vowel of the nucleus of the first syllable and prefixing it to the consonantal onset of a noun or adjective (e.g. \textit{umumu} ‘to fan’ from \textit{mumu}, ‘fan’; \textit{obobo} ‘to dig’ from \textit{bobo} ‘ditch’). This is because there is a restriction on verbs that stipulates they must begin with a vowel. That this is a case of vowel insertion rather than vowel deletion in order to create nouns is supported by the quality of the epenthetic vowel, which is identical to the following vowel. This method of deriving verbs, however, appears to be of limited productivity.

Another means of deriving verbs is by compounding nouns with disyllabic “light” verbs. The most frequent one is \textit{a’ai} ‘do’, but \textit{a’o} ‘say’ and \textit{i’i} ‘to become’ also appear in compounds.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{sikuru a’ai} ‘to study’
\item \textit{piro a’ai} ‘laugh’
\item \textit{vari a’ai} ‘to joke, to laugh’
\item \textit{sikuru a’o} ‘to learn’
\item \textit{dodo i’i} ‘to forget’
\item \textit{hoa i’i} ‘to be surprised’
\end{itemize}

The example in (126) illustrates this type of synthetic compounding in context.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{Mo vari n-a’ai ka!}
\item 1SG laugh 1-do PRS
\item ‘I’m joking!’
\end{itemize}

Noteworthy is the position of the modifier \textit{pupuo} ‘hard’ and postposition \textit{ito} in the following example, both of which occur between the auxiliary and the nominal:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{Ohiobai (hiro) sikuru=i pupuo ito a’o ka=umo}.
\item boys many school=DEF hard ALL say PRS=PL
\item ‘(Many) boys study hard.’
\end{itemize}

Compounded verbs are also able to take objects, which show up in the expected preverbal position:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{Umu=i ro mo du=i piro a’ai ka}.
\item dog=DEF NOM 1SG food=DEF theft do PRS
\item ‘The dog is stealing my food.’
\end{itemize}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{Ni bogo~bogo-vade sikuru a’o ka=umo}.
\item 3PL white-speech school say PRS=PL
\item ‘They’re learning English.’
\end{itemize}
Deriving new verbs does not exhaust the productive uses of nominal-verb compounding. More complex (non-light) verbs can also form compounds with nouns, as in obo-oru’o water-wash, ‘wash in water’ or hete-oma dance (N)-dance, ‘shake/dance a dance’. More examples illustrate:

(130) Ginau tuniha hivio=i obo oru’o vadio=i ka.
    Ginau every day=DEF water wash HAB=NMLZ PRS
    ‘Ginau bathes every day.’

(131) Ade ro hete oma ka.
    Ade NOM dance shake PRS
    ‘Ade is dancing.’

7. Adjectives
Adjectives can be structurally distinguished from nouns by their position modifying the head of the noun phrase, as well as by taking adjectival morphology such as suffixes. In the case of multiple adjectival modifiers, the adjectives can appear both preceding and following the noun:

(132) Ade ro Ginau ora’ara uho gema=i ema’ai.
    Ade NOM Ginau red fish big=DEF give
    ‘Ade gave Ginau the big red fish.’

(133) idi~idi umu nahia=i
    black dog old=DEF
    ‘the old black dog’

(134) ge’i umu kehi(bo)
    happy dog little
    ‘a happy little dog’

The ordering of some adjectives is fixed. In the case of ha’o nahia gema=i ‘the big old bag’, the adjectives gema ‘big’ and nahia ‘old’ can only appear after the head they are modifying; cf. *Nahia ha’o gema=i. The following further exemplifies this pattern, where two postnominal adjectives modify a noun:

(135) Ora’ora ha’o orio gema=i mea-hia ka.
    red bag new big=DEF good-very PRS
    ‘The big new red bag is very good.’

There is a lexical class of underived adjectives in the language, and there are also strategies for deriving adjectives from nouns. These include reduplication and suffixes that are attached to adjectives. These will each be discussed in turn.
Some adjectives appear to be derived from nouns by reduplication: *ibi* ‘shell-less crab’ vs. *ibi-ibi* ‘weak’. Some apparently reduplicated adjectives have variants without the reduplication: *kiva-kiva* ‘curved’ has the variant form *kiva*, with the same meaning. Another variation found with sound changes in the reduplicated consonants is the replacement of a [k] with a glottal stop: *kivakiva* ~ *kiva’iva*. Reduplication on at least one adjective produces a plural reading: *komu* ‘small, old, worn-out’ has a plural form *komukomu*, as in *hipura komukomu* ‘old clothes’.

Adjectives can also be derived from nouns, as with the derivational suffix *-tato* ‘without’ (roughly equivalent to the English suffix *-less*). For example, suffixation of the noun *idomai*, ‘eye’ yields *idomaitato* ‘blind’ (lit. ‘eyeless’).

(136) Adjectives derived with *-tato*

- *pupuo-tato* ‘without strength, weak, helpless’
- *moto-tato* ‘homeless’
- *ovabai-tato* ‘not helpful, selfish’
- *wapo-tato* ‘tail-less’
- *urio-tato* ‘shocked’ (literally ‘spirit-less’)

Finally, adjectives can be derived from nouns through a simple process of conversion. An example of this may be the compound of *horo* ‘bone’ and *kuku* ‘stick’ producing the adjective *horo-kuku* ‘very thin’.

There are several adjectival suffixes in the language. Intensive forms are derived with the suffix *-hi’a* (cf. *mea* ‘good’; *mea-hi’a* ‘very good’) or its variants *-ha* (ahu ‘strong’; ahu-*ha* ‘very strong’) and *-hi’aha* (tira~tira ‘rough’; tira~tira-hiaha ‘very rough’). The use of *hia* as a particle is often employed in superlatives:

(137) *Nu ibi~ibi hia ka.*

3SG weak very PRS

‘She is the weakest.’

Another intensifying suffix is *-ri*, but this suffix has a more limited distribution than the suffixes *-hi’a* and its variants. It is commonly used with the adjective *mea* ‘good’; the derived form *mea-ri* means ‘quite good’.

Some adjectival particles can modify the meanings of lexical adjectives. For instance, *aibo* is an adjective meaning ‘similar’ or ‘like’, and can be used to qualify adjectives to give the sense of ‘rather’ or ‘-ish’. Examples include *tutu* ‘tall, tutu aibo ‘rather tall’; *awo* ‘distant’, *awo aibo* ‘quite distant’ (cf. *awo aibo vati* ‘quite a distant place’). It is also noteworthy that *aibo* can be used in degrees of comparison; for example:

(138) *I’a dubu=i mo tutu=i aibo ka.*

that man=DEF 1SG tall=DEF like PRS

‘That’s the man who I am taller than.’
(139)  *Kuto mupa kapusi hiro aibo obo idio vaka.*
Kuto maybe cup lots like water drink RPST
‘Kuto drank more than one glass of water.’

This usage may be the source of variant forms of adjectives ending in -bo that do not appear to modify the meaning of lexical adjectives so clearly; e.g. *komubo* from *komu* ‘short’, *keihibo* from *keihi* ‘little’, and *ga’ubo*, another form of *ga’u* ‘one’. (140) illustrates this usage, while the lack of -bo in (140) does not seem to alter the semantics. It should be noted that the form with -bo in this case is pre-nominal, while the form without it is post-nominal, the only significant syntactic difference between the two forms.

(140)  *Ro keihi-bo uho ohiai ka.*
2SG small fish catch PRS
‘You have caught a little fish.’

(141)  *Ro uho keihi ohiai ka.*
2SG fish little catch PRS
‘You have caught a little fish.’

Finally, there is a suffix -ha, which occurs with adjectives (and possibly other categories, such as verbs): *tutu* ‘tall’ vs. *tutu-ha* ‘a tall type of thing.’

(142)  *Mo ro tutu-ha mere pe-n-eve’a ra.*
1SG NOM tall-type person DPST-1-see PST
‘I saw a tall type of person.’

8. Adverbs

There are underived lexical adverbs in the language. These include forms such as *do’u* ‘today’ and *doutu* ‘tomorrow’. They can be used to form compound adverbs, such as *do’u duoduo* ‘this morning’ (lit. ‘today morning’). Discourse markers are often adverbial, such as *inamo*, ‘like, you know’.

(143)  *Mo ai-po-n-o’u ra, inamo, tureni ta ma=oroi ri moto=i tabo.*
1SG ASS-DPST-1-come PST like
train LOC PURP=board COMP house=DEF LOC
‘I came, like, you know, to get on the train from home.’

(144)  *Ka mo ro… inamo… tureni*
and 1SG NOM like train
Some markers of epistemic modality such as nupa ‘maybe’ and ita ‘must’ are adverbials in Urama (similar to English).

(145) Nupa uho aibo vi’a=i niroi ta itai ri.
maybe fish like porridge=DEF inside LOC cook COMP

‘Maybe something like fish to put into the porridge to cook.’

Apart from lexical adverbs of time, manner, etc., some adverbs can be formed by combining adjectives with the postposition to; for instance: imini to ‘slowly’ (cf. imini ‘slow’), keihibo to ‘quietly’ (cf. keihibo ‘little’). (146) further illustrates:

(146) Du=i itai pauo ka, nuri ro imini
sago=DEF cook labour PRS that’s why 2SG slow

to itai ka.
ALL cook PRS

‘Cooking sago is hard work, so you have to cook it slowly.’

The behavior and distribution of the adverbs in Urama is prime material for further study.

9. Numerals
There are only two basic numerals in the language: ga’u ‘one’ and netua ‘two’. They behave like adjectives and can follow or precede the head word. The numerals can also take suffixes (e.g. ga’u-bo and netua-ti; the first suffix (-bo) has no meaning; the second is the dual number clitic used in noun phrases). Numbers higher than 2 are expressed by combining the two base numerals, resulting in a 2-cycle system (Lean 1991). Used together, they can express higher numbers like three (ga’u netua), four (netua netua), etc.

(147) 1 ga’ubo
2 netua
3 netua ga’u
4 netua netua
5 netua netua ga’u
6 netua netua netua ti ata
7 netua netua netua ti ata ire ka ga’u
8 netua netua netua netu ata
9 netua netua netua netua ire ka ga’u
10 netua netua netua netua netua ta
Numerals above 5 often have an optional periphrastic expression; the forms listed here were offered during an elicitation of the numerals. Use of the dual clitic with *ata* ‘again’ (lit. ‘both again’) is used in some numerals, while *ire ka ga’u* is used after other numerals to mean ‘and with one’. The form for 10 ends in *ta* ‘with’. It is likely that there exists stylistic variation in the forms of the numerals above 5.

Lean (1991:13-14) notes that while Urama is a 2-cycle system, it is unusual in that it does not have a “hand” morpheme that is lexicalized to express the numeral 5. As is common with other Papuan languages (Lean 1991), however, Urama makes use of a body-part counting system that complements the numerals. The word *tu* means ‘both arms/hands’ and the phrase *hapuo tu* means ‘half of both hands’, and both can be used to express five, e.g. *hapu tu umo* ‘five dogs’. The hand-counting system begins at the number five:

(148)  
5   *hapuota*     Lit. ‘one hand’  
6   *hapuota ga’u ire ka ga’u* ‘one hand and one finger’  
7   *hapuota ga’u ire ka netua* ‘one hand and two fingers’  
8   *hapuota ga’u ire ka netua ga’u* ‘one hand and three fingers’  
9   *hapuota ga’u ire ka netua netua* ‘one hand and four fingers’  
10  *tuoti*       ‘two hands’  
11  *tuoti ire ka ga’u* ‘two hands and 1 finger’

Higher numerals are not usually articulated, for the reason given that nothing typically needs to be counted that high. Instead, plurals are typically used for larger quantities (cf. section 2.2.2).

10. Postpositions

Apart from the optional nominative particle *ro*, the only case marking morphemes in the language are postpositions, which in addition to their normal locative function, also mark oblique arguments. Postpositions can also appear with nouns in some constructions to yield a relational nominal structure. Simple pospositional uses will be outlined first, followed by the relational nominal uses.

The postposition *ta* (optionally pronounced [da]) marks locatives and instrumentals. The instrumental use is illustrated in (149), and the locative use in (150-151):

(149)  
Mo maketi oito wapea=i ta n-odau vaka.  
1SG market ALL boat=DEF LOC 1-go RPST  
‘I went to the market by boat.’

(150)  
Pe=i obo=i ta ovadidio ka.  
canoe=DEF water=DEF LOC float PRS  
‘The canoe is floating on the water.’

(151)  
Nu ha’o=i ta ibiti.  
3SG bag=DEF LOC pack\ ITER  
‘He packed them into his bag.’
The postposition *to* (with variants *ito*, *oito*, *ido*) marks oblique arguments as allative, or can mark beneficiaries:

(152) \[ \text{Neduah} = \text{ti} \quad \text{moto} = \text{i} \quad \text{to} \quad \text{odau} \quad \text{ka} = \text{ido}. \]
\[ \text{twin} = \text{DU} \quad \text{house} = \text{DEF} \quad \text{ALL} \quad \text{go} \quad \text{PRS} = \text{DU} \]

‘The twins are going to the house.’

(153) \[ \text{Aro}'o \quad \text{dubu} = \text{i} \quad \text{to} \quad \text{n-ema’ai} \quad \text{ra} \quad \text{titi}. \]
\[ \text{that man} = \text{DEF} \quad \text{ALL} \quad \text{1-give} \quad \text{PST} \quad \text{letter} \]

‘That’s the man who I gave the letter to.’

(154) \[ \text{Mo} \quad \text{merebehe} = \text{i} \quad \text{sikuru} \quad \text{oito} \quad \text{odau} \quad \text{ka}. \]
\[ 1 \text{SG} \quad \text{daughter} = \text{DEF} \quad \text{school} \quad \text{ALL} \quad \text{go} \quad \text{PRS} \]

‘My daughter goes to school.’

These two postpositions are by far the most frequent; however, there are also other postpositions available that express other meanings. One such postposition is *rautu* ‘with’.

(155) \[ \text{Umu} \quad \text{to’o} = \text{i} \quad \text{rautu} \quad \text{p-emidio} \quad \text{vadio}. \]
\[ \text{Dogs} \quad \text{lots} = \text{DEF} \quad \text{with} \quad \text{DPST-live} \quad \text{HAB} \]

‘He lived with lots of dogs.’

In addition to the simple postpositions, there are compound postpositions, which are formed with a noun and the simple postposition *ta*. The combination of the postposition with a noun forms a relational noun, where the semantics is not necessarily compositional. This includes (156) *didimoi* ta (lit. ‘at back of’) ‘behind, after’; (157) *epui* ta (lit. ‘at the head of’) ‘before’; (158) *goroi* ta ‘below, underneath’; (159) *ohui* ta ‘on, on top of’; and (160) *vapoi* ta (lit. ‘at the tail’), ‘after’.

(156) \[ \text{ioropoio} \quad \text{pura} = \text{ti} \quad \text{didimoi} \quad \text{tabo} \]
\[ \text{last week} = \text{DU} \quad \text{back} \quad \text{at} \]

‘A couple of weeks back’

(157) \[ \text{Ro} \quad \text{mo} \quad \text{epu} = \text{i} \quad \text{ta} \quad \text{emehai} \quad \text{vaka}. \]
\[ 2 \text{SG} \quad 1 \text{SG} \quad \text{head} = \text{DEF} \quad \text{LOC} \quad \text{leave} \quad \text{RPST} \]

‘You left before me.’

(158) \[ \text{Nimoiti} \quad \text{bu’i} \quad \text{goro} = \text{i} \quad \text{ta} \quad \text{n-emidio} \quad \text{ka} = \text{ido}. \]
\[ 2 \text{DU} \quad \text{bush} \quad \text{under} = \text{DEF} \quad \text{LOC} \quad \text{1-stay} \quad \text{PRS} = \text{DU} \]

‘We are both hiding in the bush.’

(159) \[ \text{Merekehi} \quad \text{keta} = \text{i} \quad \text{ohu} = \text{i} \quad \text{ta} \quad \text{p-emê’ei}. \]
\[ \text{child} \quad \text{mat} = \text{DEF} \quad \text{top} = \text{DEF} \quad \text{LOC} \quad \text{DPST-sit} \]

‘A child sat on the mat.’
(160)  *Ro mo vapo=i ta emehai ka.*
   2SG 1SG tail=DEF LOC leave PRS
   ‘You left after me.’

*Ne’ei ta* ‘from’ appears to be a compound postposition, but *ne’eme* does not have a transparent ablative meaning (in one of its meanings it appears to signify the end of a sago tree that is not used to make sago meal).

(161)  *Nu turana=i ne’e=i da buka amia*
   2SG friend=DEF end=DEF LOC book some

   *imidai vaka.*
   PL.OBJ\get RPST
   ‘She borrowed some books from a friend.’

**11. Complementizers**

Complementizers appear clause-finally. The primary complementizer in the language is *ri*. Like the other complementizers, *ri* plays the dual function of postposition and also introducing subordinate clauses.

(162)  *Ka pani i-v-ed’e’ao erera ovai ri.*
   and pot PL.OBJ-N1-place hot make COMP
   ‘And you place the pot to warm it up.’

Subordination can also involve complementizers that are identical with the simple and complex postpositional heads and which have temporal as well as locative meanings.

(163)  *Mo ro Ginau arato didimo=i ta nu*
   1SG NOM Ginau ask.about back=DEF LOC 3SG

   *n-eve’a ka.*
   1-see PRS
   ‘Just after I was asking about Ginau I saw him.’

Subordination is discussed at length in Chapter 4, section 3.

**12. Conjunctions**

The conjunctions that coordinate noun phrases are *ra*, *ka*, and less commonly, *ire*. Noun phrases are infrequently coordinated with *rautu* ‘with’. Clauses can be coordinated with *ina* ‘but’, *mabu* ‘because’, and *ita* ‘and then’. Noun phrases are coordinated with the conjunction morpheme appearing as an enclitic to the noun phrase, while clausal coordinators appear as particles. The distribution of these conjunctions and their syntax will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4, section 4.
13. Question words

Question words in Urama are for the most part morphologically simplex, and are as follows: wotu ‘who’, na’u ‘what’, hati ‘which’, meda ‘how many’, and haibo‘how, what’. Some phrases that might be translated as ‘why’ are morphologically complex involving the form for ‘what’ followed by the particle iri: na’u iri ‘why’. Much the same is holds for hatitoi ‘whither’, and hatihivio ‘when’, which is transparently derived from hati ‘which’ and hivio ‘day’.
1. Introduction
Many of the syntactic structures of Urama are characteristic of Papuan languages generally. For instance, a fairly strict head-final order and the existence of postpositions are characteristic of Papuan languages (cf. Foley 1986, 2000). The basic syntactic structures of Urama will be outlined here. This includes the word-order patterns, the discourse-pragmatic conditions that can influence non-canonical word-orders, the internal syntax of nominal, verbal, and adpositional phrases, and other properties of the clause. This is followed by a brief section on the syntax of compound verbs. This overview of the clausal phenomena will lead to a discussion of complex clausal structures, including coordinated and subordinate clauses.

2. The clause
Word order at the level of the unmarked clause, whether main or subordinate, is the same for declaratives, interrogatives and negatives: SOV (i.e. head-final). While SOV is the neutral basic word order, other orders are possible, and driven by pragmatics. These will be discussed in section 3.5.

2.1. Non-verbal clauses
Both nominal and adjectival predicate structures are available in Urama. There is no special marking, and no overt copula in these constructions, though the tense marker *ka* appears in its normal, clause-final position. A nominal predicate is exemplified in (164), and an adjectival predicate in (165).

(164)  
\[ I\'a \quad merehio=i \quad mo \quad namu=i \quad ka. \]
\[
\text{that} \quad \text{boy}=\text{DEF} \quad \text{ISG} \quad \text{older.brother}=\text{DEF} \quad \text{PRS}
\]
\[ \text{‘That boy is my older brother.’} \]

(165)  
\[ Na \quad mere \quad komubo \quad ka. \]
\[
\text{this} \quad \text{person} \quad \text{short} \quad \text{PRS}
\]
\[ \text{‘This person is short.’} \]

The fact that these nominals and adjectives do not take regular verbal morphology (including person and number agreement) indicates that they are not verbs.

Existential constructions are formed with a non-verbal predicate; there is no overt copula in the language, as illustrated in (166-167):
Negation in non-verbal clauses involves the clause-final negator haka, which is discussed in detail in Chapter 3, section 6.2.2.

(168) Tuniha hivio=i mea haka.
      every day=DEF good NEG
      ‘Not every day is sunny.’

### 2.2. Intransitive clauses

The canonical order for intransitive clauses is Subject-Verb. This is the same for unaccusatives and for unergatives, and there is no special morphological marking that distinguishes these forms. Examples (169) and (170) exemplify intransitive structures.

(169) Bomo=i ai-aruruti ka.
      pig=DEF ASS-run PRS
      ‘The pig is running.’

(170) Nimoiti suga=i a-v-oropoio ra?
      1DL sugar=DEF Q-N1-finish NDECL
      ‘Has our sugar run out?’

Since posture verbs are canonically intransitive states, these are provided to further illustrate intransitive clauses. This includes uta’a ‘lie down’, eme’ei ‘sit’, and oti ‘stand’:

(171) Nu oro uta’a ka.
      3SG asleep lie PRS
      ‘She is asleep.’

(172) Merekehi keta=i ohu=i ta p-eme’ei.
      child mat=DEF top=DEF LOC sit
      ‘A child sat on the mat.’

(173) I’a nu’a paipai ro oti ka=umo
      there tree big NOM stand PRS=PL
      ‘There are some big trees standing over there.’
Controlled and non-controlled events are syntactically formally similar. A predicate expressing an uncontrolled state like asio ‘sneeze’ is illustrated in (174).

(174) Mo asio n-a’ai ka.
    1SG sneeze 1-do PRS
    ‘I am sneezing.’

2.3. Transitive clauses

The canonical order for transitive clauses with two core arguments is Subject-Object-Verb. This is illustrated in (175), where the predicate-final nature of Urama clausal syntax is apparent.

(175) Rio ro baba’o i-ohiai ka=umo.
    2PL NOM butterfly PL.OBJ-catch PRS=PL
    ‘You all are catching butterflies.’

Subject arguments can be omitted if they are recoverable from discourse:

(176) Nika=i tuniha n-ime’ede ka.
    papaya=DEF all 1-pick PRS
    ‘I’ve picked all the papayas.’

Transitive verbs must generally have an overt object, though objects can also be omitted if they are recoverable from the preceding discourse. This is especially likely if the referents are third person and inanimate:

(177) Ni ro kava obo=i idio vaka=umo;
    3PL NOM kava water=DEF drink NPST=PL
    inai nimoiti ro idio=i haka.
    but 1DL NOM drink=NMLZ NFUT.NEG
    ‘They drank the kava but we two didn’t drink it.’

2.4. Ditransitive clauses

Transitive clauses with three core arguments including an unmarked beneficiary or indirect object have the word order S-IO-DO-V. In these cases the indirect object is indexed on the verb with the benefactive prefix em-, as discussed in Chapter 3. The indirect object generally precedes the direct object:

(178) Mo ro merebehe=i o’apo n-em-a’ai ra.
    1SG NOM girl=DEF flower 1-BEN.give PST
    ‘I gave a flower to the girl.’
Indirect objects that are not indexed on the verb become oblique arguments marked with a postpositional phrase and are then treated as adjuncts. See below for their position within the clause (NB: the following sentence is imperative but has the same form as a yes/no question):

(179) Buka a-v-ovo’u mo ido!
    book Q-N1-bring 1SG to
    ‘Bring me a book!’ (lit. ‘Can you bring me a book?’)

2.5. Oblique arguments

Oblique arguments in Urama can either precede the verb phrase or follow it. Obliques usually follow core arguments and are marked by postpositional phrases. In many types of oblique argument, such as instrumentals, locatives and sometimes ablative, this postpositional phrase consists of ta.

(180) Mo ro pe=i konau=i ta
    1SG NOM canoe=DEF rope=DEF LOC
    n-otohaii ka nu’a=i ta.
    1-tie PRS tree=DEF LOC
    ‘I’ve tied the canoe with the rope to the tree.’

(181) Nika=i tuniha n-ime’ede ka
    papaya=DEF all 1-PL.OBJ.pick PRS
    nika nu’a to’o=i ta.
    papaya tree lots=DEF LOC
    ‘I picked all the papayas from all the papaya trees.’

If the sense of motion towards something is highlighted then the postposition will either be to or one of its variants (ato, ido, ito, oito), or a phrase headed by to.

(182) Mo maketi oito waapea=i ta n-odau vaka.
    1SG market ALL boat=DEF LOC 1-go NPST
    ‘I went to the market by boat.’

2.6. Non-canonical constituent orders

While the neutral word order in Urama is SOV, there are several factors that can yield a non-canonical order. These factors are pragmatic in nature, and include topicalization and focus.
2.6.1. Topicalisation

Topicalisation may yield an OSV word order in the Urama equivalent of an English passive. In Urama there is no true passive construction marked by morphology. The patient can be raised to topic or subject clause-initial position and is followed by the agent, which cannot be deleted and is marked (perhaps obligatorily) with the nominative clitic ro. The verb remains in its transitive form.  

(183) Mo goario=i ro n-uho vaka.  
1SG wasps=DEF NOM 1-bite RPST  
‘I was stung by wasps.’

(184) Mo kekai ita obo nahia ata ro p-eme’ei.  
1SG close LOC woman elderly some NOM DPST-sit  
‘An elderly woman sat down close to me.’

(185) Bomo=i bare ne’e=i mo ro ovaredioi n-a’ai ka.  
pig=DEF bottom end=DEF 1SG NOM carry 1-will PRS  
‘I’ll carry the bottom end of the pig.’

Urama appears to conform to the cross-linguistic observation that old information precedes new. If a new referent is introduced into the discourse then word order can reflect this by placing the new referent clause-finally:

(186) Mo radio=i i-n-orovidio ra itabo o’u vaka Karika.  
1SG radio=DEF PL.OBJ-1-listen PST when come RPST Karika  
‘I was listening to the radio when in came Karika.’

If the new referent is a grammatical subject, it can be introduced in the normal subject position but an adverbial (e.g. nuato ‘that’s when’, ‘on condition’) highlights the fact that something new or additional has happened:

(187) Mo radio=i i-n-orovidio ra ita  
1SG radio=DEF OBJ.PL-1-listen PST when

Karika nuato o’u vaka.  
Karika that’s when come PST  
‘I was listening to the radio (and that’s) when Karika came in.’

---

10 There is a middle voice verb form that can have reflexive or reciprocal interpretations. It also makes the verb intransitive, so that any external agent involved in the action can only be implied; the agent is not realized by an oblique argument.
Nuri bomo=i nuato p-i’i pakarai.

that’s why pig=DEF that’s when DPST-become light

‘That’s why the pig was becoming lighter.’

2.6.2. Focus

Focused constituents exhibit somewhat different patterns, appearing in preverbal position. The following examples illustrate this with both subject and object focus, where each would be an appropriate response to a wh-interrogative.

Subject focus

(189) Mevia uho=i Ginau ro ema’ai ka.

Mevia fish=DEF Ginau NOM give PRS

‘It was Ginau who gave the fish to Mevia.’

Object focus

(190) Ginau ro uho=i Mevia ema’ai ka.

Ginau NOM fish=DEF Mevia give PRS

‘It was Mevia who Ginau gave the fish to.’

This same pattern is exemplified in (191) with the use of beha, the equivalent of English ‘only,’ a focus-associated particle, which provides additional evidence that the movement is for the purposes of focus. In (191), beha associates with the focused subject John, in pre-verbal position, and the focused noun phrase marked with beha is illicit in its (canonical) non-preverbal position.

(191) Go’ota=i John beha ro iho ka.

coconut=DEF John only NOM eat PRS

‘Only JOHN is eating the coconuts.’

2.7. Valency-adjusting operations

Causative constructions can be formed morphologically or lexically. The causative prefix only appears on stems of intransitive verbs of motion and makes them transitive. The prefixed verb can then introduce a single direct object. For example, causativization of the intransitive verb root odau ‘go’ illustrates this dynamic:

(192) Ginau ro na wapea=i ov-odau=i o’u ka.

Ginau NOM this boat=DEF CAUS-go=NMLZ come PRS

‘Ginau will take this boat’

The prefix is causative in that the original motion verb is still interpretable in the derived form, which has the sense of making something move in the direction indicated by the verb stem (‘to go’ becomes ‘to make something go’; ovo’u ‘to bring’ is derived from the verb root o’u ‘to come’). There have been no cases found of already transitive
verbs being prefixed with $Vv$- to create causatives in the ditransitive sense of “making x do y”.

There is also a lexical strategy of causativization in the language. To express making or having someone or something do something, Urama uses the verb *oduai* ‘to tell’ with an animate direct object and a subordinate clause of purpose:

(193) $Mo \quad ro \quad mu \quad n\text{-}oduai \quad vaka \quad mo \quad epumohoi$

\begin{align}
1SG & \quad NOM \\
3SG & \quad 1\text{-}tell \\
\text{RPST} & \quad 1SG & \quad \text{hair}
\end{align}

$ma=ahiai \quad ri.$

PURP=cut \quad COMPOpen

‘I had him cut my hair.’

There is also a syntactic strategy for forming ditransitive clauses. If no benefactive morphology is marked on the verb, then beneficiaries appear as oblique arguments marked with a postposition:

(194) $Buka \quad a\text{-}v\text{-}ovo\text{'u} \quad mo \quad ido!$

\begin{align}
\text{book} & \quad Q\text{-N1\text{-}bring} \\
1SG & \quad \text{ALL}
\end{align}

‘Can you bring me a book?!’

This is in contrast to morphologically-formed benefactives, where beneficiaries are unmarked:

(195) $\ldots ka \quad nuato \quad ubi \quad disi \quad i\text{-}v\text{-}im\text{-}e\text{'ede}.$

and \quad that’s\text{\ when} \quad \text{people} \quad \text{dish} \quad \text{PL}\text{-N1\text{-}BEN\text{-}collect}

‘…and that’s when you get dishes for the people.’

The middle prefix $Vr$- makes a transitive verb intransitive, such as when an event affects the subject and the subject has the semantic role of patient. In this case there is no overt agent, and as such, this construction does not express a true passive voice and so is better described as a middle voice. An example can be observed with the verb *otoho* ‘to break (TRAN)’, from which is derived *or-otoho*’break (itself), be broken’:

(196) $Mo \quad hura=i \quad ai\text{-}n\text{-}(i\text{-})toho \quad ka.$

\begin{align}
1SG & \quad \text{egg}\text{=}\text{DEF} \\
\text{ASS-N1\text{-}OBJ\text{-}break} & \quad \text{PRS}
\end{align}

‘I have smashed the eggs.’

(197) $Mo \quad hura=i \quad or\text{-}otoho \quad ka.$

\begin{align}
1SG & \quad \text{egg}\text{=}\text{DEF} \\
\text{MID\text{-}break} & \quad \text{PRS}
\end{align}

‘My egg has smashed.’

Middles often express a reflexive or a reciprocal action. In these cases it is often associated with the reflexive pronoun *himiga*, which might be considered to be an overt object; however, as seen below this can be followed by the nominative marker $ro$,
excluding this possibility. An example of this prefix used to express a reciprocal meaning is derived from the verb *opui’a* ‘to hit, beat up’:

(198) \[ Ni \quad himiha \quad ro \quad or-opui’a \quad ka=umo. \]
\[ 3\text{PL} \quad \text{self} \quad \text{NOM} \quad \text{MID-hit} \quad \text{PRS=PL} \]
‘They’re all hitting each other.’

An example of pure reflexive meaning is also possible:

(199) \[ Mo \quad himiha \quad n-ar-apui \quad ka! \]
\[ 1\text{SG} \quad \text{self} \quad 1\text{-MID-point.to} \quad \text{PRS} \]
‘I select myself/volunteer!’

### 2.8. Clause types

Different clause types are outlined here. Declaratives are formally marked differently from imperatives, interrogatives, and conditionals. Thus, the use of *ra*, while an important component of the tense-marking system (cf. Chapter 3, section 6.2), also appears to play a clause-typing function, appearing on illocutionary utterances (and not strictly propositions). This includes interrogatives, conditionals, directives, and imperatives. A discussion of negative clauses is also included in this section.

#### 2.8.1. Declaratives

The vast majority of declarative clauses are marked with the tense marker *ka* (Brown 2009), though as discussed in Chapter 3, this particle is used to express both present tense and illocutionary force. Declarative clauses encode assertion, which sets them apart from interrogatives, imperatives, and conditionals, which are morphologically marked with the particle *ra*.

#### 2.8.2. Interrogatives

In question word interrogatives, wh- phrases tend to appear in preverbal position. This is illustrated with subject (200), object (201), and indirect object (202) wh-phrases:

(200) \[ Mevia \quad uho=i \quad hotu \quad ro \quad v-ema’ai \quad ra? \]
\[ Mevia \quad \text{fish=DEF} \quad \text{who} \quad \text{NOM} \quad \text{N1-give} \quad \text{NDECL} \]
‘Who gave the fish to Mevia?’

(201) \[ Ginau \quad ro \quad Mevia \quad na’u \quad v-ema’ai \quad ra? \]
\[ Ginau \quad \text{NOM} \quad Mevia \quad \text{what} \quad \text{N1-give} \quad \text{NDECL} \]
‘What did Ginau give to Mevia?’
Yes/No questions have the same word order as declarative clauses and are distinguished from declaratives both by intonation and morphology. Yes/No questions are generally marked with the non-speaker verbal prefix $v$- and the interrogative prefix $a$- (which is often deleted, particularly in future tense questions).

Tag questions are marked with the emphatic particle $ha$, which appears at the end of the clause. The use of this morpheme does not affect word order.

2.8.3. Imperatives

Imperative clauses conform to the SOV word order of declaratives, except that the subject is usually omitted. Adjuncts and/or adverbs can follow the verb:

Although the verb form is often bare, the particle $ra$ can appear clause-finally in imperative utterances, as can subject number markers if the subject is non-singular:
First person imperatives can also be formed with first person pronouns, person and number agreement markers, and a finite verb. In this textual example, the hunter in the story calls his dogs so they can go hunting together with him:

(211)  
\[
O'\text{u}=\text{mo}, \ \text{nimo} \ \text{n-odau}=\text{mo}.
\]
\[
\text{come}=\text{PL} \quad \text{1PL} \quad \text{1-go}=\text{PL}
\]
\`
Come, let’s go.’

Negative imperatives are formed with the negative particle \textit{aike}, which appears clause-finally:

(212)  
\[
\text{Hobou} \ \text{a'o}=\text{i} \ \text{aike}!
\]
\[
\text{lie} \quad \text{say}=\text{NMLZ} \quad \text{NEG}
\]
\`
Don’t tell lies!’

Directives exhibit the same form as imperatives, making use of the clause-final nondeclarative particle \textit{ra}.

(213)  
\[
\text{Na} \ \text{orio}=\text{i} \ \text{emahibai} \ \text{ra}.
\]
\[
\text{this} \ \text{game}=\text{DEF} \ \text{try} \quad \text{NDECL}
\]
\`
You should try out this game.’

### 2.8.4. Conditionals

Conditional clauses are marked with \textit{ra}, further evidence that \textit{ra} functions to mark non-assertive clauses. The fact that \textit{ra} also marks imperatives and interrogatives supports this view.

(214)  
\[
\text{Ro} \ \text{ro} \ \text{pa'eia} \ \text{ai-v-iho} \ \text{ra},
\]
\[
2\text{SG} \ \text{NOM} \ \text{garden} \ \text{ASS-N1-eat} \quad \text{NDECL}
\]
\[
\text{ro} \ \text{gimo} \ \text{ro} \ \text{ohiai} \ \text{taho'o} \ \text{aike}.
\]
\[
2\text{SG} \ \text{sickness} \ \text{NOM} \ \text{catch} \quad \text{FUT.NEG} \quad \text{FUT.NEG}
\]
\`
If you eat your vegetables, you will not get sick.’
(215)  $Ro$  $ro$  $merekeke=i$  $a-v-i-arodio$  $ra,$  
    2SG  NOM  children=DEF  Q-N1-PL.OBJ-look.after  NDECL

$mo$  $ro$  $du=i$  $itai$  $n-a’ai$  $ka$
1SG  NOM  food=DEF  cook  I-do  PRS
‘If you look after the children, I will cook the meal.’

2.8.5.  Negatives
Clausal negation is marked with the morpheme $haka$. Negation exists only at the clausal level – there are no negative pronouns (e.g. ‘none’ or ‘nobody’) or adjectives (‘no’) that can negate constituents such as noun phrases. Clauses like the English ‘he saw snakes but no crocodiles; would have to be rephrased in Urama as ‘he saw snakes but he didn’t see crocodiles’. Negative clauses are usually formed with clause-final particles as outlined in Chapter 3, and these particles take scope over the entire clause:

(216)  $Ata$  $na$  $aratu’a=i$  $haka.$
    some  thing  disappear=NMLZ  NEG.NFUT
    ‘Nothing disappeared.’

As evidenced from the nominalizing suffix on the verb in (216), negation serves as an intransitive matrix predicate. The role of nominalization in subordinate structures will be discussed in section 3.

2.8.6.  Illocutionary force
As mentioned in above and in Chapter 3, section 6.2, the particles $ka$ and $ra$ play a role in the tense paradigm and also function in part to mark clause types. There are, however, other illocutionary uses attributed to these particles by Craig (2014) and Brown et al. (2016). Craig (2014) opts for classifying these particles as evidentials, and cites minimal pair contexts as evidence. For example, given the context: While Mevia was out of the room, Ginau slipped on something and fell over. When Mevia returned, Ginau is already back to work and Mevia is not aware that anything happened. Ginau could conceivable say to Mevia the sentence in (217):

(217)  $Mo$  $ai-n-omoa$  $ka.$
    1SG  ASS-1-fall  PRS
    ‘I fell.’

In contrast, given the context: While Mevia was out of the room, Ginau slipped on something and fell over. Mevia returns in time to see Ginau getting back up on his feet. Ginau could conceivably utter (218) to Mevia:
While both (217) and (218) have the same propositional content, they express a difference in illocutionary force. Brown et al. (2016) claim that the particle *ka* functions in conversation to mark the knowledge of the speaker in addition to what the speaker assumes the addressee already knows. In this way the use of *ka* helps to track information that is in the common ground of discourse.

### 3. Subordination

Subordinate clauses are typically nominalized with the clitic =*i*. This clitic does not seem to be used when the verb is fully finite and inflected (including with the particles *ka* or *ra*). If the verb is negated or has an imperative marker like *aike*, or is the complement of a postposition, modal, or another verb, then the subordinate clause will be nominalized with =*i*.

In subordinate structures, the verb phrase of the subordinate clause typically surfaces without subject number or person agreement, nor tense or aspect morphology. The clause is also marked with the nominalizing enclitic =*i*:

(219) *Umu=i obo=i imapedu=i modobo=i haka.*

*dog=DEF water=DEF float=NMLZ can=DEF NEG.NFUT*

‘The dog can’t swim.’

When temporal complementizers are used to introduce subordinate clauses, the clauses tend to precede the matrix verb:

(220) *Mo hora=i eida=i ta hiba=i n-eve’a ka.*

*1SG breath=DEF get=NMLZ LOC crocodile=DEF 1-see PRS*

‘When I was having a rest I saw a crocodile.’

Subordinate clauses with null complementizers also appear in the core argument position of verbal complements, which along with the null TAM and agreement marking indicates the clause has been nominalized. Apart from nominalizing clitic =*i*, there is no morpheme which marks the verb as a gerund or infinitival form. As with constituent order in main clauses, the position of the subordinate clause canonically appears preceding the matrix verb, but this is by no means obligatory.

(221) *Umu=i obo=i imapedu=i modobo=i haka.*

*dog=DEF water=DEF swim=NMLZ can=NMLZ NEG*

‘The dog cannot swim.’
Another strategy for subordination is simple juxtaposition of the subordinate clause next to the matrix clause, especially in clauses of reported speech. In this type of subordination the verb of the subordinate clause is fully inflected for TAM and subject agreement.

(223)  
\[ \text{Nu ro a’o ka nu moto=i to odau ka.} \]  
3SG NOM say PRS 3SG house=DEF ALL go PRS  
‘He says he is going to the house.’

The selection of the type of subordination strategy appears to depend on the degree of semantic dependence of the subordinate clause on the matrix clause. A verb unmarked for TAM or person agreement indicates a high degree of dependence while a fully inflected verb indicates a low degree of dependence.

3.1. Complement clauses

This section deals with what are traditionally defined as complement clauses, which behave in the same manner as core arguments of matrix verbs. The subordinate verb is highly dependent on the matrix verb for the interpretation of tense, aspect, and the interpretation of null arguments. There are several types of complement clause, each discussed in turn.

With sensory predicates such as ‘see’, ‘hear’, and ‘feel’, Urama has several clause linkage strategies, such as subordination without a complementizer (224), relativization (225), and subordination with a complementizer (226).

(224)  
\[ \text{Turana=i ro eve’a ka hiba=i} \]  
friend=DEF NOM see PRS crocodile=DEF  
\[ \text{mo obodidio=i.} \]  
1SG chase=NMLZ  
‘A friend saw a crocodile chasing me.’

(225)  
\[ \text{ Moto=i ubu=i orou pusí a-v-eve’a ra?} \]  
house=DEF top=DEF lie.on cat Q-N1-see NDECL  
‘Do you see the cat lying on the roof?’
In the first example a clause with an uninflected verb that has been nominalized becomes the object of the matrix verb. If the subordinate clause were independent, the verb would have the first person prefix and the present tense marker ka following it (i.e. Hiba mo n-obodidio ka). In the second example the strategy used is to relativize the object noun pusi, rather than to create a complement clause. The final example illustrates a different strategy altogether, whereby an adverbial clause is used and the translation might be: ‘Kaio’o saw Ginau and Mevia when they were running scared of a crocodile’.

The next subtype of complement taking predicates are phasals such as ‘start’, ‘continue’ and ‘finish’. They are closely integrated with the semantics of their complements in that the state or event of the main clause is part of the action of the subordinate clause. The syntax is the same as for modobo:

(227) Ni du=i ihoa=i ovaharo ka=umo.
3PL food=NOM eat=NMLZ start PRS=PL
‘They all started eating food.’

(228) Ni du=i ihoa=i oropoio.\textsuperscript{11}
3PL food=DEF eat=NMLZ finish
‘They all finished eating.’

Another complement clause construction is the causative. As noted above in section 2.6, Urama makes use of a lexical causative. The verb oduai ‘tell’ can be used both in the sense of instructing someone to do something and of making someone do something:

(229) Mere ro o’u=i ri n-oduai.
person NOM come=NMLZ COMP 1-tell
‘A person told me to / made me come.’

In causatives the complementizer ri appears to be obligatory, which suggests a slightly lower level of semantic integration than in the previous predicate types. The verb is uninflected and occurs with the clitic =i, and so is nominalized.

\textsuperscript{11} Note that the verb “finish” is in the middle voice and has no following particle ka, so it is in the intermediate past tense form and the complement clause is in fact the subject, so the literal translation would be “their eating food (was) finished.”
A different strategy is used with psych predicates and verbs of utterance. Psych predicates, including verbs such as ‘think’ and ‘doubt’ and predicates such as ‘say’ induce complementation whereby the semantic integration between the matrix and dependent clauses is low. In these cases the complement clause is simply juxtaposed without a complementizer and the verb of the complement is fully inflected and could be used in an independent declarative clause:

(230) \[\text{Niti ro p-ororai=do rioibi meari reke} \]
\[3DL \text{ NOM DPST-} \text{hear=}DL \text{ 2TL very.} \text{good net} \]
\[\text{ivadidio vadio ka=umo.} \]
\[\text{PL. OBJ\make HAB PRS=}PL \]
‘They both heard that you three make excellent nets.’

Verbs of utterance that exhibit these behaviours include reported statements (231), indirect wh-questions (232), and reported yes/no questions (233):

(231) \[\text{Kaio’o ro p-a’o Ginau ra Mevia ra,} \]
\[\text{Kaio’o NOM DPST-say Ginau CONJ Mevia CONJ} \]
\[\text{Moresby ato sikuru a’ai ka=ido.} \]
\[\text{Moresby ALL school do PRS=}DL \]
‘Kaio’o said Ginau and Mevia were studying in Moresby.’

(232) \[\text{Mevia ai-arato ka nimo ova’ati hatihivio} \]
\[\text{Mevia ASS-ask PRS 1PL work when} \]
\[\text{ovaharo=i n-a’ai du=mo.} \]
\[\text{begin 1-do TENSE=}PL \]
‘Mevia asked me when we would begin work.’

(233) \[\text{Ginau ro ro arato ka maketi oito v-a’ai ra.} \]
\[\text{Ginau NOM 2SG ask PRS market ALL N1-do PST} \]
‘Ginau is asking if you will go to the market’

Verbs of utterance can also take complement clauses headed by the postposition *ri* acting as a complementizer, as seen in the following examples:

(234) \[\text{Nu ro o’u=i ri a’o vaka.} \]
\[3SG \text{ NOM come=}NMLZ \text{ COMP say RPST} \]
‘He said he would come.’
3.2. Adverbial clauses

Adverbial clauses are unlike complement clauses in that they are not core arguments of the matrix predicate. Nevertheless, in Urama, verbs of adverbial clauses are typically devoid of tense and agreement marking, consistent with other subordinate clauses. Some of the main types of adverbial clause are listed below (see also Brown 2009:33-36).

A subset of adverbial clauses involves temporal clauses, including ‘when’, ‘before’, and ‘after’. Simple temporal clauses which are contemporaneous with the matrix clause are typically headed by the locative postposition ta. This is replaced by complex postpositions (e.g. epui ta ‘before’ or wapoi ta ‘after’) when the time reference of the subordinate clause differs from that of the matrix clause:

(236) Mo na hinita erediai ta ro tau emehai vaka.
    1SG this here arrive LOC 2SG already leave NPST

‘When I arrived you had already left.’

While verbs heading subordinate clauses are typically devoid of tense/aspect/mood marking, as can be seen from the examples below, they can sometimes take agreement marking:
The verbs of these subordinate clauses are not necessarily simple nominalized forms. These verbs can take agreement morphology; however, subordinate verb phrases are still marked with the nominalizing clitic =i. The forms in the examples above are rare, and appear to be participles, exhibiting both nominal and verbal properties.

Reason clauses make use of the complementizer mabu, which appears to have been grammaticalized from a noun meaning ‘root’ or ‘origin’. These clauses are an oddity in the language because mabu appears to be clause-initial, rather than clause-final, as would be expected in an SOV language, and which is consistent with the distribution of the other complementizers. However, the clauses headed by mabu cannot be the first in the utterance:

(239) Mevia o’u=i haka mabu nu Karika ovabai ka.
Mevia come=NMLZ NEG because 3SG Karika help PRS
‘Mevia didn’t come because she was helping Karika.’

The subordinate verb is inflected for TAM and person and subject number agreement. Alternatively, clauses headed by the complementizer ri can express cause, in which case it can be the first clause in the utterance.

(240) Obo=i aru=i ri dububai ro pe=i
water=DEF high=DEF COMP men NOM boat=DEF

i-otomai ka=umo.
PL.OBJ-pull.up PRS=PL
‘Because the tide is high the men are pulling up the canoes.’

Purpose clauses can be regarded as the goal of the main clause action, and exhibit optional marking of the purposive clitic ma= on the subordinate verb:
The proclitic *ma* is not restricted to appearing only in subordinate clauses, but is relatively rare in main clauses.

The only adverbial clause-type where the dependent clause cannot be construed as an object is the conditional clause. The subordinate clause of a conditional is cognitively construed as an event independent of the matrix clause rather than as an object, and so unsurprisingly the verb is fully inflected:

(242)  
Ro ro merekekei a-v iarodio ra,  
2SG NOM kids Q-N1-watch NDECL  
mo ro du=i itai n-a’ai ka.  
1SG NOM food=DEF cook 1-do PRS  
‘If you looked after the kids, I would cook the meal.’

(243)  
Ro ro merekekei detu i-arodio ato,  
2SG NOM kids yesterday OBJ.PL-watch if  
mo maketi oito he’e n-odau ka.  
1SG market ALL CFACT 1-go PRS  
‘If you had looked after the kids yesterday, I would have gone to the market.’

The protasis in (242) is indistinguishable from a yes/no question, and is simply juxtaposed like the clauses in complements of verbs of utterance. In the example in (243) the word *ato* appears to be a complementizer meaning ‘if’. A variant *rato* has also been found with the same function. In past tense counterfactuals the adverb *he’e* appears in the main clause to express counterfactuality, as there is no indication from the tense of the verb that the event it describes is unreal.

### 3.3. Relative clauses

The last type of subordinate clause to be discussed is the relative clause. Relative clauses are simply positioned before the head of the noun phrase; there is no overt relativizer. The verb appears to have different inflections for tense compared with finite verbs in main clauses.

For relatives in the present tense, *ka*, the normal particle used for marking present tense in matrix clauses, is lacking.
The people who live on the island are very friendly.

The paradigm for present tense in relative clauses thus involves no explicit marking for present. Subject number agreement clitics appear to be optional in non-first person duals and trials, and also first person plurals, and are absent in non-first person plurals. There are also no person markers:

The verb in the example above is a suppletive form of the verb eve’a ‘see’. The use of eve’a in (245) would change the interpretation of the expression to ‘have just seen’. With other verbs the present tense forms can also be used with near past tense meanings.

While there are near and distant future tenses formed with the same auxiliaries as in main clauses, ka still does not appear in relative clauses with future reference. Furthermore, there is no number or person agreement in these forms.

Verbs in the near future in relative clauses are nominalized and appear with the auxiliary a’ai ‘do’; those in the distant future are nominalized and appear with the auxiliary o’u ‘come’.

Urama can use the same forms as the present tense for relative clauses when the temporal reference is the near past. An example of the usage of present tense forms with near past temporal reference in a relative clause is in (247):

The cup I broke this morning is Karika’s cup.

There is another set of forms that also encodes near past temporal reference, whose main distinguishing feature is person agreement markers (n- for first person and v- for
non-first person) throughout the paradigm and a prefixed \( i- \) which appears to be a tense marker, not a plural object marker in this case. Example (248) presents an example of a near past tense form for relative clauses:

(248) \( \text{Do’ou } duduo=i \ du=i \ i-v-itai \ ra \ obo=i \)

\[ \text{this morning=DEF food=DEF PST-N1-cook PST woman=DEF} \]

\[ \text{mo } mamu=i \ ka. \]

\[ \text{1SG mother=DEF PRS} \]

‘The woman who was cooking food this morning is my mother.’

It is unclear what, if any, semantic difference there is between the two near past tense structures.

As noted above, the \( i- \) prefixed to verbs in relative clauses appears to be a tense marker for intermediate and distant past tenses as well as for the near past (i.e. in this sense the intermediate and distant past are syncretic). Intermediate and distant past tense forms are largely identical apart from the absence of the particle \( ra \) in first and second person singular of the distant past. They differ from the near past tense forms in the absence of the non-first person agreement prefix and some of the forms of the number agreement clitics. Examples of relative clauses with intermediate and distant past tense forms include the following:

(249) \( \text{Mo ro Iroroma ro i-evea merebehe=i} \)

\[ \text{1SG NOM Iroroma NOM PST-see girl=DEF} \]

\( \text{oapo n-ema’ai ra.} \)

\[ \text{flower 1-give PST} \]

‘I gave a flower to the girl Iroroma saw.’

(250) \( \text{Ro i-n-oduai ra dubu=i ka i’a.} \)

\[ \text{2S PST-1-tell PST man=DEF PST there} \]

‘There’s the man who I was telling you about.’

(251) \( \text{Nu (ro) detu i-eve’a dubu=i Kikori ato} \)

\[ \text{3SG NOM yesterday PST-see man=DEF Kikori ALL} \]

\( \text{emidio vadio ka.} \)

\[ \text{stay HAB PRS} \]

‘The man he saw yesterday lives in Kikori.’
Unrestricted relative clauses are identical in form with restricted relative clauses:

(253)  
\[ \text{Detu } \text{i-n-evea } \text{du}=\text{mo } \text{Sam } \text{mea-hia } \text{ka.} \]
\[ \text{yesterday PST-1-see PST-PL Sam good-very PRS} \]

‘Sam, whom we met yesterday is very nice.’

Finally, since the nominal head is always final in the relative clause, the nominative marker \text{ro} helps to disambiguate the subject of the clause, as in (254) and (255).

(254)  
\[ \text{Mo } \text{ro } \text{detu } \text{i-n-obodidio } \text{ra } \text{bomo}=\text{i } \text{huna-hia } \text{ka.} \]
\[ \text{1SG NOM yesterday PST-1-chase PST pig=DEF big-very PRS} \]

‘The pig I chased yesterday is very big.’

(255)  
\[ \text{Mo } \text{detu } \text{i-n-obodidio } \text{ra } \text{bomo}=\text{i } \text{huna-hia } \text{ka.} \]
\[ \text{1SG PST-1-chase PST pig=DEF big-very PRS} \]

‘The pig who chased me yesterday is very big.’

4. Coordination

Noun phrases can be coordinated with the conjunctions \text{ka} and \text{ra}, and less commonly, \text{ire}:

(256)  
\[ \ldots \text{go’ota, umia } \text{ka } \text{napu...} \]
\[ \text{coconut green.leaf and protein} \]

‘…coconut, green leaves and protein…’

(257)  
\[ \ldots \text{i-v-ovia } \text{umia } \text{ra } \text{du...} \]
\[ \text{PL.OBJ-N1-put green.leaf CONJ sago} \]

‘…together with the leaves and the sago…’

(258)  
\[ \ldots \text{go’ota}=\text{i } \text{ire}=\text{i } \text{uho}=\text{i...} \]
\[ \text{coconut=DEF and=DEF fish=DEF} \]

‘…the coconut and the fish…’

It is noteworthy that in example (258) both conjuncts are marked with the definite article, and the conjunction is also marked in a similar fashion.
The conjunctions *ka* and *ra* tend to surface as enclitic to the noun phrase; as such, they are represented here either as particles, or as clitics. When enclitic, the conjunctions precede the definite article clitic *=i*:

(259)  
\[
\text{Mo pe=ra aibi=ra=}=i \quad \text{ta} \quad \text{n-odau} \quad \text{ka}.
\]

\[\begin{array}{llllllll}
1SG & \text{canoe=CONJ} & \text{paddle=CONJ=DEF} & \text{LOC} & \text{1-go} & \text{PRS}
\end{array}\]

‘I’m going with a canoe and a paddle.’

In some cases, particularly with proper nouns, the conjunction clitics can appear on each coordinated noun phrase:

(260)  
\[
\text{Ginau=ra Karika=ra taitui iho ka=ido}.
\]

\[\begin{array}{llllllllll}
\text{Ginau=CONJ} & \text{Karika=CONJ} & \text{yam} & \text{PL.OBJ.eat} & \text{PRS=DL}
\end{array}\]

‘Ginau and Karika are eating yams.’

Infrequently, *rautu* ‘with’ can be used to coordinate noun phrases:

(261)  
\[
\text{Mo rautu nimoiti nu araduo}.
\]

\[\begin{array}{llllllllll}
1SG & \text{with} & 1DU & 3SG & \text{talk}
\end{array}\]

‘She and I, we both were talking.’

Clauses can also be coordinated with the particles *ka* and *ra*:

(262)  
\[
\text{Idomai imodo’ia ka uro=}=i \quad \text{uta’ai}.
\]

\[\begin{array}{llllllllll}
\text{eye} & \text{PL.OBJ.shut} & \text{and asleep=NMNZ} & \text{fall}
\end{array}\]

‘He closed his eyes and he went fast asleep.’

The clausal coordinator *ka* is homophonous with the present tense or declarative marker *ka* (see Chapter 3, section 6.2). The tense morpheme *ka* is also very frequently used in narratives along with the distant past tense. As this *ka* is often clause-final, it is sometimes difficult to tell whether it is marking the present tense of the preceding verb or coordinating the entire preceding clause with the following one, as sometimes it appears that one or the other is deleted if they are adjacent. A following complementizer *ita* makes it clear, however, that a new clause has been introduced:
The fact that *ka* is serving as a clausal coordinator, and not simply encoding an illocutionary meaning (as explained in section 2.5.6) is evidenced by the fact that both clauses are interpreted in the same tense, but there is not marking of *ka* on the final clause.

The conjunction *ka* sometimes appears clause-initially, in which case it may function stylistically as a discourse marker:

(265) ...

Clauses can be coordinated with various other conjunctions. These include *inai* ‘but’ (267), *mabu* ‘because’ (268) and *ita* ‘and then’ (269):
\(\text{(267)}\) \[\text{...inai aro’o obo nahia=i nu niro=i haka.}\]
\[\text{but that woman old=DEF 3SG want=NMLZ NEG}\]
\[\text{‘...but that elderly lady didn’t want...’}\]

\(\text{(268)}\) \[\text{Bihai p-a’ai ivoubudioi ri mabu...}\]
\[\text{difficult DPST-do get.up COMP because}\]
\[\text{‘It was a struggle trying to get up because...’}\]

\(\text{(269)}\) \[\text{Ita umu kekei ro...}\]
\[\text{and.then dog little NOM}\]
\[\text{‘And then the little dogs...’}\]

Two separate clauses can be contrasted with the form inai ‘but’, or they can simply be juxtaposed:

\(\text{(270)}\) \[\text{Mo Urama ato n-emidio ka inai Mosubi ato}\]
\[\text{1SG Urama ALL 1-stay PRS but Moresby ALL}\]
\[\text{n-ova’ati ka.}\]
\[\text{1-work PRS}\]
\[\text{‘I live in Urama but I work in Moresby.’}\]

Contrasted clauses are used for comparison, as Urama adjectives have no comparative forms. The concept that “X is more/less Y than Z” is expressed as “X is Y (but) Z is not Y / but Z is W”:

\(\text{(271)}\) \[\text{Nu moto=i mea-hia ka mo moto=i}\]
\[\text{3SG house=DEF good-very PRS 1SG house=DEF}\]
\[\text{mea haka.}\]
\[\text{good NFUT.NEG}\]
\[\text{‘Her house is better than mine.’}\]

\(\text{(272)}\) \[\text{Mo abia=i taulo mere ka inai nu mamu=i}\]
\[\text{1SG father=DEF old person PRS but 3SG mother=DEF}\]
\[\text{orio mere ka.}\]
\[\text{young person PRS}\]
\[\text{‘Her father is older than her mother.’}\]
5. **Possession**

Possessive phrases are formed without any special morphology, and there are no possessive pronouns. Possessors precede the possessum, consistent with the head-final order exhibited by the language:

(273) *Riu niro ra riu mamu=i?*

2PL love NDECL 2PL mother=DEF

‘Do you (all) love your mother?’

(274) *Ro ro modobo ra nu ha’o=ti om-ovaredio=i.*

2SG NOM can NDECL 3SG bag=DL BEN-carry=NMLZ

‘Please bring him both his bags’

(275) *Nimo ro modobo ra nimo turana=i*

1PL NOM can NDECL 1PL friend=DEF

*titi om-otiodai=umo.*

letter BEN-send=PL

‘We will send a letter to our friend if we can.’

(276) *Rohoho=i umuo dohobo ka.*

2SG face=DEF know familiar PRS

‘Your face looks familiar’

Predicative possessives are formed similar to existential constructions, such that “That dog is mine” would have the form “That dog is my dog” with the possessed noun occurring in both the argument and the predicate position.

(277) *I’a umu=i mo umu=i ka*

that dog=DEF 1SG dog=DEF PRS

‘That dog is mine.’ (lit. ‘That dog is my dog’)
5 Narratives

1. Green leaf porridge recipe
This narrative was selected because of its procedural nature. The narrative is a telling of a recipe for green leaf porridge, a dish prepared on Urama Island that uses umia, the green leaves from a tree species. The narrative relies heavily on second person forms of address, which involves non-speaker person agreement in the verbal morphology.

(1) Umia vi’a=i itai hapuoi araduoi n-a’ai ka,
leaf porridge=DEF cook way tell 1-NFUT PRS

ro ro umia vi’a=i haiboi itai ra.
2SG NOM leaf porridge=DEF how cook NDECL
‘I’ll be telling you how to cook green leaf porridge, how you cook green leaf porridge.’

(2) Epu=i to ro ro umia=i i-heboi ka.
first=DEF ALL 2SG NOM leaf=DEF PL.OBJ-break PRS.
‘First you pick the green leaves.’

(3) Umia epu=i i-v-ihebo ka na-na=i
leaf head=DEF PL.OBJ-N1-break-off PRS things=DEF

i-me’edei ka vi’a=i itai.
PL.OBJ-collect PRS porridge=DEF cook
‘Once you have broken off the tips of the green leaves, then you collect other things to cook the porridge.’

(4) Na-na=i du=i ire du=i i-v-eidai ra
things=DEF sago=DEF and sago=DEF PL.OBJ-N1-get NDECL

go’ota umia ka... napu.
coconut leaf and... protein
‘Things like sago, and once you’ve got the sago, coconut, green leaves and… protein.’

(5) Nupa uho aibo vi’a=i niro=i ta itai ri.
maybe fish like porridge=DEF inside=DEF LOC cook COMP
‘Maybe something like fish to put into the porridge to cook.’
(6) Ka na-na=i idedeai ka ro obo=i
and things=DEF PL.OBJ\prepare and 2SG water=DEF

\textit{i-v-ahuodio} pan=i niro=i tabo muko=i adoroi ka.
PL.OBJ-N1-pour pan=DEF inside=DEF LOC fire=DEF build PRS.
‘And prepare things, and you pour water into the pot and you build the fire.’

(7) Ka muko=i ohu=i ta pan=i \textit{i-v-ede’a}
and fire=DEF top=DEF LOC pan=DEF PL.OBJ-N1-put

\textit{obo=i} rautu.
water=DEF with
‘And on the fire you place the pan with the water.’

(8) \textit{Obo=i} huna ovai aike. Nupa kaupu aibo.
water=DEF big make FUT.NEG maybe little like
‘Don’t put in too much water. Maybe like a little.’

(9) Ka \textit{obo=i} ogohuti ta, ogohuti ri omoti ta
and water=DEF boiling LOC boiling COMP waiting LOC

umia=i \textit{i-v-ihu’uti} ra disi komu niro ato
leaf=DEF PL.OBJ-N1-strip NDECL dish old inside ALL

\textit{ka go’ota=i} ive’iti.
and coconut=DEF PL.OBJ\scrape
‘And when the water is boiling, and while waiting for it to boil, remove the leaves from the stalk into an old dish, and scrape the coconuts.’

(10) \textit{obo=i} ahu’odidio go’ota=i era ka
water=DEF pour.out coconut=DEF dry PRS
‘The coconut whose water you pour out is dry.’

(11) Go’ota era=i \textit{i-v-irihati} ra ka ika=i
coconut dry=DEF PL.OBJ-N1-break NDECL and shell=DEF

ta ive’iti ka mabu ro ro oriori ta
LOC PL.OBJ\scrape PRS because 2SG NOM scraper LOC

\textit{(at)-a-v-iveiti} ra ka go’ota=i
ASS-Q-N1-PL.OBJ\scrape NDECL and coconut=DEF
‘You break the dry coconut and you scrape it with a shell because if you scrape it with a scraper the coconut juice will splash away.’

‘When you scrape with a shell the juice will stay well inside.’

‘And when the water is boiling, you put the leaves into the pot and you boil the leaves.’

‘Don’t boil for long, maybe for a little time.’

‘And with the fish you put it in and when the fish is cooked you scoop it out into another dish to prepare it.’

‘Just the meat only – throw away the bones.’
(19) Ka vi’a=i ogohuti ta umia epu=i ohu=i tabo du=i ihi’ei ka.
and porridge=DEF boiling LOC leaf tips=DEF top=DEF

LOCo sago=DEF PL.OBJ-throw PRS.
‘And when the porridge is boiled onto the leaf tips you throw in the sago.’

(20) Ka ga’ima=i ta ige huti ka ige huto
and scoop=DEF LOC stir and PL.OBJ-N1-stir

g’a ima=i tabo.
scoop=DEF LOC
‘And with the scoop you stir, keep stirring with the scoop.’

(21) ige huti ta du=i itai ro ro
PL.OBJ-N1-stirring LOC sago=DEF cook 2SG NOM

a-v-eve’a ra du=i ururo=i tabo
Q-N1-see NDECL sago=DEF be.cooked= NMLZ LOC
‘While stirring the cooking sago, see whether the sago is cooked.’

(22) ka pani erehe=i ta ede’ai ka.
and pan side=DEF LOC place PRS.
‘Then you put the pot to the side.’

(23) Go’ota=i ire=i uho=i ire disi ga’u ato
coconut=DEF and=DEF fish=DEF and dish one ALL

i-v-i-o via ka i-atu’uti ka.
PL.OBJ-N1 - PL.OBJ-put and PL.OBJ-mash PRS
‘You put the coconut and the fish into one dish and you mash them.’

(24) Ihi ka pani ni roi ta i-v-i-o via umia
juice PRS pan inside LOC PL.OBJ-N1-PL.OBJ-put leaf

ra du ra=i ni roi=i tabo ka
and sago and=DEF inside=DEF LOC and

i-v-i’eduti ka go’ota ihi.
PL.OBJ-N1-PL.OBJ-mix and coconut juice
‘When it’s juicy you put it into the pot together with the leaves and the sago and mix it all up in the pot with the coconut juice.’
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(25) *I*momohi 'iti ka *vi’a=i* obo~obo dohobo toti~toti
PL.OBJsqueeze PRS porridge=DEF watery like sticky

*hi’a mo’a.*
very not
‘You squeeze it to make the porridge watery and not very sticky.’

(26) *Ubi* ro *vi’a=i* idio=i *tabo*
people NOM porridge=DEF drink= NMLZ when

*ma’ata=i* ta arate=i aike ri.
mouth= DEF LOC stick= NMLZ FUT.NEG COMP
‘So when people drink the porridge it doesn’t stick to their mouth.’

(27) *Ka* *vi’a=i* i’eduti ta muko=i duhomo
and porridge=DEF PL.OBJ-stir LOC fire=DEF embers

*i’i* tabo ka pani ivede’ao erera ovai ri.
become LOC and pot place hot make COMP
‘And when you’re stirring the porridge, when the fire dies down to make embers you put the pot on to warm it up.’

(28) *Ka* hinitabo mea-ha a-v-e’eduti ra ka
And here.at good-EMPH Q-N1-mix NDECL and

*nuato ubi disi i-v-im-e’ede ka*
that’s.when people dish PL.OBJ-N1-BEN-collect and

*ubi i-m-ovuti ka i-ma’ati ri,*
people PL.OBJ-BEN-serve PRS PL.OBJ-give COMP,

*vi’a=i ka.*
porridge=DEF PRS.
‘And here if you have mixed the porridge well, that’s when you get dishes for the people to serve it to them and give them the porridge.’

(30) *Ka kika=i hinita oropoio.*
and story=DEF here.at finish
‘And here’s the end of the story.’
2. Train narrative

This narrative was selected for inclusion because it is a personal re-telling of an incident that happened to the narrator while on a train. The result is heavy use of first and third person forms, as the story is told from the first person point of view.

(1) *Mo kika ata aradoui n-a’ai ka; mo ro obo*

ISG story certain tell 1-NFUT PRS; ISG NOM woman

*nahia ata i-n-eve’a kika=i.*
old some PST-1-see story=DEF.
‘I’m going to tell a certain story; it’s a story about an elderly lady.’

(2) *Orohi po-n-odau ra nupa ioropoio pura=tí didimoi*

tour DPST-1-go PST maybe last week=DU behind

tabo.
at.
‘I was going in to look around maybe a couple of weeks back.’

(3) *Ata hivio mo iraromo=i modobo=i haka.*
certain day ISG remember=NMLZ can=NMLZ NEG
‘I can’t remember which day it was.’

(4) *Hivio ata ka, mo at-po-n-o’u ra, inamoi,*

day certain PRS ISG ASS-DPST-1-come PST, like,

*tureni ta ma=oroi ri moto=i tabo.*
train LOC PURP=board COMP house=DEF LOC
‘One day, I came, like, you know, to get on the train from home.’

(5) *I-n-o’ui ta oroi ka mo niro tauni ito*
PST-1-come at board PRS ISG want town ALL

*oroho=i ma=o’ui ri.*
tour=NMLZ PURP=come COMP
‘When I came I boarded as I wanted to come to town to have a look around.’

(6) *Ka mo ro... inamoi... tureni ta i-n-oroi ta*

and ISG NOM... like... train LOC PST-1-board LOC

*o’u ka eme’ei ka mo se’a ata to.*
come PRS sit PRS ISG chair certain ALL.
‘And I ... like, got on the train, came and sat down in my seat.’
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(7) Hinita ar-pe-n-emidio ra ita mo kekai ita
here.at ASS-DPST-1-stay PST and.then 1SG close LOC
obo nahia ato ro p-emei ka mo eve’ai ka.
woman old certain NOM DPST-sit and 1SG see PRS
‘And there was close to me an elderly lady who sat down and saw me.’

(8) Ka nu ro mo i-n-arodia.
And 3SG NOM 1SG PST-1-watch
“She was looking at me.’

(9) nu ro a’oi ka mo na-mere nupa ...i...
3SG NOM say\PUNCT PRS 1SG thing-person maybe umm
Papua New Guinea mere ata ka;
Papua New Guinea person some PRS;
‘And said to herself that I’m someone maybe … umm … from Papua New
Guinea, some person.’

(10) nu ro a’oi ka.... Inai aro’o obo nahia=i
3SG NOM say\PUNCT PRS….. But that woman old=DEF
nu niro=i haka mo oduai.
3SG want=NMLZ NEG 1SG ask
‘She said (to herself)…But that elderly lady didn’t want to ask me.’

(11) i... imini hato p-iraromo nu ro inamo wade
umm mind only DPST-think 3SG NOM you.know word
ata a’o=i ka
certain say=NMLZ PRS
‘Umm…in her mind she was thinking whether she, you know, would say
something to me.’

(12) ...o... nu ro a’o=i ka - nupa - mo ro
…oh… 3SG NOM say=NMLZ PRS maybe 1SG NOM
nu oduai modobo=i haka... i,
3SG ask can=NMLZ NEG… umm,
‘Oh. She said - maybe - I can’t ask her… Ummm,’

(13) Teriki ata ma=n-ovai ro.
trick certain PURP=1-make 2SG.
‘I’ll try and play a trick on you.’
(14) *Ka nu ro nu inamoi eidei ka.*
and 3SG NOM 3SG like get PRS.
‘And she - she somehow she got it (an idea).’

(15) *Ka vade ata araduo=i nu ro himiha*
and word certain speaking=NMLZ 3SG NOM SELF

*p-aradu’uti himiha ido ...i... pidgin tabo kauka...*
DPST-speak\1TR self to umm pidgin LOC enough…
‘And speaking some words, she herself was speaking to herself …umm…in Pidgin, okay?’

(16) *I, nu vade=i orovai ta mo ro erehe’eai*
umm 3SG word=DEF hear LOC 1SG NOM turn

*ka nu eita ka vari ai-pe-n-ema’ai ra.*
PRS 3SG LOC and laugh ASS-DPST-1-give PST.
‘Um, when I heard her words I turned towards her and gave her a smile.’

(17) *Kauka nu ro mo eve’ai tabo nu ro*
enough 3SG NOM 1SG see LOC 3sg NOM

*a’o=i ka “are! Ro hati mere ro?*
say=NMLZ PRS “oh! 2SG which person 2SG
‘Okay, when she saw me she said “Oh! Where are you from?”

(18) *ka mo ro a’oi mo ...iii... PNG mere ka.”*
and 1SG NOM say 1SG umm PNG person PRS.”
‘And I said…umm…I’m from Papua New Guinea’

(19) “*O mo ro tau n-eve’ a vaka ro*
“Oh 1SG 2SG already 1-see NPST 2SG

*inai mo niroi haka ro ...i... oduai ...i...*
but 1SG want NEG 2SG umm ask umm
“Oh; I’ve already seen you but I didn’t want to …umm… ask you’

(20) *Imini hato n-iraromo ka itabo mo ro himiha*
mind only 1-think PRS and.then 1SG NOM self

*mo himiha ito n-aradu’uti ka mo vade komu*
1SG self ALL 1-talk PRS 1SG word short
I thought to myself then that I would start talking to myself some short phrases in my language, Pidgin.’

‘If she knows Pidgin when I speak it to her you yourself will turn to me and I’ll know for sure she’s a person from that place.’

‘And we were still talking,

‘And we were still talking when it arrived – umm – the train at its destination and the elderly lady said:

‘My people are waiting for me so I’m going; you have a really good day going around - I’ve arrived.’
Narratives 85

(25)  

Ka mo ro nu oduai ka: meaha ka ro

and 1SG NOM 3SG say PRS good PRS 2SG

‘And I said to her,’

odau.
  
go

‘And I said to her, “it’s alright – you go.”’

(26)  

Ka mo ire, ka mo himiha odaui ka

and 1SG too, and 1SG self go PRS

tauni oraho=i.

town go.around=NMLZ

‘And (she said) “me too, I’m going to have a look around town.”’

3. Traditional story of Iroroma

This narrative is a traditional story from Urama Island. This story is set in the past about a protagonist, Iroroma, and so involves storytelling in a third person narrative. Given the nature of this narrative, the interplay of tenses is also noteworthy, where many forms are set in the distant past, but where subsequent mentions are set in the present.

(1)  

Na kika=i kika ata ka go’oto ata ato.

this story=DEF story some PRS village certain ALL

‘This story it’s a story about a certain village.’

(2)  

Aro’o go’oto=i davarai ta p-o’a vadio

that village=DEF beach LOC DPST-locate HAB

go’oto ka.

village PRS

‘That village is a village that was located near the beach.’

(3)  

aro’o go’oto=i tabo p-emidio vadio dubu ata.

that village=DEF LOC DPST-live HAB man certain

‘In that village there lived a certain man.’

(4)  

dubu nahi’a ata nu pomo p-oroho vadio

man old certain 3SG hunt DPST-go.around HAB

dubu ka.

man PRS

‘A certain old man - he was a man who went hunting.’
(5) **Nu moto=i umu hiro-hia ka.**
3SG house=DEF dog many-very PRS.

‘At his home there were a lot of dogs.’

(6) **Umu to’o=i rautu p-emidio vadio.**
dog lots=DEF with DPST-live HAB

‘He lived with lots of dogs.’

(7) **Ka ata hivio-i nu aro’o umu to’o-i tuiai**
and one day=DEF 3SG those dog lots=DEF among

**ta ga’ubo umu ata nu aro’o umu-i nu**
LOC one dog certain 3SG that dog=DEF 3SG

**huna-hia gema ka.**
big-very big PRS

‘Then one day among all those dogs there was one dog who was a very big dog.’

(8) **Ka aro’o umu gema=i ro p-ivoroho vadio**
and that dog big=DEF NOM DPST-PL.OBJ\lead HAB

**umu keke=i ka nu davarai ivodau=i**
dog small=DEF and 3SG beach PL.OBJ\take=NMLZ

‘And that big dog used to lead the smaller ones and take them to the beach.’

(9) **Ka ivodauo ka ita, ivodoroi ka bu’i**
and PL.OBJ\take PRS then PL.OBJ\take.into PRS bush

**bomo o bu’i oroho na=i p-ivoto vadio.**
pig or bush living thing=DEF OBJ.PL.OBJ\kill HAB.

‘And he took them along the beach and then into the bush to hunt pigs or other wild animals.’

(10) **Ok, hivio ga’u ata ato aro’o umu gema=i**
Ok, day one certain LOC that dog big=DEF

**gimo ro ohi’ai ka.**
sickness NOM catch PRS.

‘Ok, one day the big dog fell sick.’

(11) **Ka aro’o hivio=i aro’o dubu=i, aro’o dubu=i,**
and that day=DEF that man=DEF that man=DEF,
paena=i ka Iroroma; nu paena=i ka Iroroma.  
name=DEF PRS Iroroma 3SG name=DEF PRS Iroroma.

‘And that day that man, that man’s name was Iroroma–that was his name…Iroroma.’

(12) Ka aro’o dubu=i ro aro’o hivio=i tabo umu  
and that man=DEF NOM that day=DEF LOC dog

gema=i oduai ka ro, ro gimo ka, emidio ra,  
big=DEF tell PRS 2SG 2SG sick PRS, stay NDECL,
moto=i tabo.  
house=DEF LOC.

‘So that man on that day told the big dog, “you’re sick, stay in the house.”’

(13) Ka nu ro moto=i tuniha goho=i iruruti ka  
and 3SG NOM house=DEF all hole=DEF close PRS

umu keke=i i-atohotai ka  
dog small=DEF PL.OBJ-call PRS

‘And he shut up all the holes in the house and called the little dogs,’

(14) “O’u=mo, nimo n-odau=mo, pomo ora’oiai.”  
come=PL 1PL 1-go=PL hunting go.around.

“Come, let’s go hunting.”

(15) I, umu gema=i emeheidioi ka.  
umm dog big=DEF stay PRS.

‘Umm, the big dog stayed home.’

(16) Ka aro’o umu keke=i rautu davarai p-o ‘u,  
And that dog small=DEF with beach DPST-come,
p-odau i-odau.  
DPST-go PST-go

‘So that man with the little dogs came to the beach and they went along.’

(17) Kiaukia umoi ka bu’i, bu’i tabo.  
enough go.in PRS bush, bush LOC

‘And then they went in the bush, into the bush.’

(18) pomo-i p-oroho ita umu keke=i ro  
hunting=DEF DPST-go.around then dog small=DEF NOM
And while he was hunting the little dogs saw a big pig.

And then they without hesitation started chasing that big pig to catch him.

And then the big pig turned around and chased the little dogs.

And then the little dogs, when the pig turned to chase them, their strength left them.

So the little dogs felt tired and turned off to the side and sat and just watched the big pig.

And then when Iroroma came the big pig started chasing him.

The big pig chased Iroroma.
(25) *Iroroma imagauriai nu’a ata ioroi ka.*

Iroroma jumped up and climbed into a tree.

(26) *Go’ota; aro’o go’ota=i p-ioro.*

‘It was a coconut tree; he climbed up that coconut tree.

(27) *Ioro ohu=i tabo kiaukiia bomo gema=i ro*

‘He climbed to the top, and then the big pig started cutting the coconut tree down.’

(28) *Go’ota=i p-ahiai ita aro’o go’ota=i omo’ai*

‘Then the big pig turned and he started chopping down that coconut, too.’

(29) *Bomo gema=i va ierehe’edioi ta aro’o go’ota=i*

‘He kept chopping and when that coconut was about to fall, he flew to another coconut.’

(30) *I-ahiai ka aro’o go’ota=i omoai ri a’ai*

‘He kept chopping and when that coconut was about to fall, he flew to another coconut.’
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(31) *Hininbuaха* p-oɗau i-oɗau kauka ka go’otai
in this manner DPST-go PST-go enough and coconut

*ipoioi* ka.
PL.OBJ/finish PRS

‘He went on in that manner until he finished the coconut trees.’

(32) *Ka* ianai nu imagauriai ka nu’a huna
and finally 3SG jump PRS tree big

gema=i oito.
big=DEF ALL

‘And finally he jumped onto a very big tree.’

(33) *Kaukuа* hini tabo iana nu’a=i ka, ata nu’a
ok, here LOC final tree=DEF PRS, other tree

**ata otidioi haka kekai.**
other standing NEG side

‘And then, from there that’s the last tree; there’s no other tree standing beside it.’

(34) *Kiauka* aro’o bomo gema=i rautu nu emeheai haka.
enough that pig big=DEF with 3SG leave NEG

‘But then that big pig didn’t leave him, either.’

(35) *Aro’o* nu’a gema=i ahiai ri ovaharoi ka.
that tree big=DEF cut for begin PRS

‘He started chopping down that big tree’

(36) *I-ahiai, i-ahiai itabo Iroroma ro nu’a=i*
PST-chop PST-chop and then Iroroma NOM tree=DEF

**i-eve’ai ta taitai ka nu’a=i omoai ai ka,**
PST-see LOC near PRS tree=DEF fall NFUT PRS,

‘He chopped and chopped and when Iroroma saw the tree was about to fall.’

(37) *kiaukia Iroroma ro nahua=i abodoi ka.*
enough Iroroma NOM song=DEF sing PRS

‘Okay, Iroroma started singing a song.’

(38) *Nahua-i p-abodo ita nu nahua=i tuiai tabo,*
song=DEF DPST-sing then 3SG song=DEF middle LOC
‘When he was singing in the middle of the song he called his big dog’s name.’

‘That big dog’s name was Iroroma.’

‘With his own name he named that big dog.’

‘And when he was singing he was calling the dog’s name.’

‘The dog heard the song.’

‘The wind carried the song to the village, to his house.’

‘And that big dog, when he heard the song and heard his name in the song, that big dog said,'
92 Brown, Muir, Craig & Anea

(45) Are, nupa mo abea=i kerere ata (ro)
oh, maybe 1SG father=DEF trouble some NOM

ap-o’a ka.
MOD-be.in PRS
‘Oh, perhaps my father must have got into some kind of trouble.’

(46) Mo paena=i n-aho’o ka.
1SG name=DEF 1-call PRS
‘He’s calling my name.’

(47) Mere ata=i haka - mo abea=i ro n-aho’o
person some=DEF NEG 1SG father=DEF NOM 1-call

ka mo paena=i.
PRS 1SG name=DEF
‘It isn’t another person – it’s my father calling my name.’

(48) Kiauka aro’o umu gema=i erehe’edioi tabo
enough that dog big=DEF turn LOC

ohuodidio vati p-oho moto=i niro=i.
get.out place DPST-look house=DEF inside=DEF
‘And when that big dog turned, he looked for a place to escape from inside the house.’

(49) I-orohoi ta ata vati ata eve’ai haka.
PST-go.around LOC some place some see NEG
‘Going around he couldn’t find another place at all.’

(50) Nu ro odaui ka ana’apu=i muko=i inamo
3SG NOM go PRS stove=DEF fire=DEF you.know

vadio vati hini tabo obodoi ka goho=i p-obodo
usual place here LOC dig PRS hole=DEF DPST-dig

hin(i)tabo imagauriai ka moto-i goro-i.
here.at jump\PUNCT PRS house=DEF under=DEF
‘He went around to the place where the cooking fire is usually made and there he started digging, and dug out a hole and jumped out under the house.’
‘And then he quickly ran following the song along the beach.’

‘His father was sitting on top of the tree and still singing the song and the pig too was still chopping down the tree and wouldn’t leave it.’

‘And when he cast his eyes about he saw the big pig.’
And then when he ran, when that big dog went running, he cut the pig right through the middle of his belly.

And then that big pig let go of the tree and they both the dog and the pig started fighting.

And then the dog knocked the pig down dead and he kept killing him.

And then the little dogs too turned and helped - they helped the big dog.
Ni umu keke=i ro tuniha bomo gema=i
3PL dog little=DEF NOM all pig big=DEF

ai’iai ka, i-ai’iai=umo nituo.
kill PRS PST-kill=PL dead
‘The little dogs all killed the big pig, they fought him to death.’

Kiaukia hinitabo umu=i abea=i, ire dubu-i nu’a-i
enough here.at dog=DEF father=DEF, that man=DEF tree=DEF

ohu-i tabo oruoì ka
top=DEF LOC climb.down PRS
‘Hereupon the dog’s father, that man on top of the tree climbed down.’

I-oruo hepu=i odaui ka nu umu gema=i
PST-come.down ground=DEF went PRS 3SG dog big=DEF

omomai ka ita nu ro p-a’o
hug PRS and 3SG NOM DPST-say
‘He came down to the ground and went and hugged his big dog and he said:

‘are mere=i ro tuaha ra’ato kiaukia do’ou mo
oh person= DEF 2SG bare if enough today 1SG

nu ihiai ka’.
EMPH dead PRS.
‘Oh my child – if you hadn’t been here today I would have been dead.’

Ita umu gema=i ro nu hete vapo=i ha
then dog big=DEF NOM 3SG dance tail=DEF EMPH

p-ema’ai.
DPST-give
‘And then the big dog gave him a big wag of his tail.’
1. Introduction

This lexicon of Urama constitutes the current set of all lexical items encountered in texts and elicitation sessions, in total around 1060 entries. For each entry, the headword is in bold, followed by the word class and any relevant linguistic information, including pronunciation for any forms with idiosyncratic phonological properties, the existence of variant forms, and related derived forms. The definition is followed by example sentences from elicitations and texts, and occasionally by example phrases. Example material is followed by any cross-referenced words, and then by any notes, which may include etymological information, special meanings associated with derived forms, or notes of cultural significance. While third person pronouns in Urama are not marked for gender, the English translations are at times expressed with a feminine or masculine pronoun; this is an artefact of the context in which the sentence was originally elicited.

In addition to the Urama-English lexicon, there is also an English-Urama finderlist provided in section 3. This finderlist only contains the relevant Urama headwords, and for ease of searching, only lexical words have been included. Where there is some ambiguity with respect to word class in the English form, nouns have been left as is, verbs have been indicated with the English infinitive form (cf. itai ‘to cook’), and those that are derivationally related (i.e. listed as both noun and verb) have been left with the bare form (cf. ‘smell’ for the noun nibo and the verb ibedio). Thus, some forms which are semantically related, but different word forms altogether, have been listed separately (cf. hete ‘dance’, aramauti or oma ‘to dance’).

Abbreviations used only in the lexicon include the following: adj. = adjective, adv. = adverb, aux. = auxiliary, conj. = conjunction, dem. = demonstrative, det. = determiner, inter. = interrogative, interj. = interjection, n. = noun, num. = numeral, pref. = prefix, post. = postposition, pref. = prefix, pron. = pronoun, quant. = quantifier, suf. = suffix, v. = verb.

2. Urama-English lexicon

A - a

a’ai, v., (iter. a’aituti), 1. do. aux., 2. nutter
a’apuai, v., (iter. iaputi, pl. iapuai), touch. Nu ro mo aina’apuai ka. She’s touching me. See: o’apuai
a’atai, v., (pl. iatai), pick, lift up (onto shoulder)

abea, n., (var. abia, pl. abiamio), father
abeda, n., flounder
abe’ea, v., (mid. arabe’ea), break open. Mo ha’oi aiarabe’ea ka! My bag has broken open!
abe’emai, v., (pl. iabe’emai), 1. open.
2. break into. Piro ubi ro situai abe’emai vakaumo detu duoii.
Thieves broke into the store last night.

**abia, n., sago bag.** [Note: a basket into which sago pulp is placed and squeezed to get the remaining juice out.]

**abidio, v., paddle.** Mo ro pei aibī ta nabidio ka. I’m paddling the canoe with a paddle.

**abo, n., house post**

**abodo, v., (iter. iabotuti, pl. iabodo), sing.** Ro atu iabotuti nahu’ai oropoio ra! Stop singing the same songs over and over!

**abu, v., (iter. iabuti, pl. iabu), cross.** Ubi ro omoi iabu kaumo. People are crossing a river.

**adedeai, v., (iter. iadedetuti, mid. aradedeai, pl. iadede), bite.** Umui ro bomoi iadede ka(umo). The dog is biting the pigs. Mo toto’obei ainaradedeai ka!

**adimoi, n., evening**

**aditi, v., (mid. araditi), rub, wipe.** Mo ro oboi naraditi ka. I’m drying myself.

**ado’a, v., (pl. iado’a), water.** Nu’amate imado’a! Water the plants (for her/him)!

**adoroi, v. build.** Mukoi adoroi! Build a fire!

**a’erai, v. (var. a’arai, ia’raidio, mid. ara’erai, iter. a’eraituti, pl. ia’erai), open.** Duara’ himiha (ai)ara’erai ka. The door has opened (itself). Ro ro modobo ra mo duara’ ema’erai? Could you please open the door for me? [Note: ia’eraidio is also used for plural objects]

**aha’o, v., (iter. iaha’otuti, pl. iaha’o), get angry and swear.** Nu ro ni iaha’o ka. He’s getting angry and swearing at them.

**ahau, v., (pl. iahau), come out

**ahiai, v., (iter. iahiotuti, mid. arahiai, pl. iahio), cut.** Mo ro nu’ai niahio ka. I’m cutting up the logs. Nu’ai arahiai ka. The tree broke/was blown over (lit. The tree was cut).

**ahi’oi, v., (iter. ahi’outi, pl. ahi’oi), bail out.** Mo ro pei oboi pinahi’o ka detu. I bailed out the canoe yesterday.

**ahoai, v., (iter. aho’outi, mid. arahoi, stick.** Pei arahoi. The canoe is stuck. Mo ro kateni pinahi’outi ra. I stacked the boxes.

**aho’o, v., (pl. iaho’o), ask.** Nu aho’o! Ask him!

**ahu, adj., tough, strong.** Aho ova’ati ka. It is hard work.

**ahuha, adv., strongly**

**ahu’odioi, v., (mid. arahu’odidioi), pour.** Nu ro obo erarai ahu’odio ka. She poured out the hot water. Are! Obo erarai aiarahu’odidio ka! Oh! The hot water has spilled!

**ahurai, v., (pl. iahurai), adopt. ogagami mereti iahurai adopt a pair of orphans.

**ahuta, n., smoke, steam**

**ahu’utu, v., refuse.** Nu ro du emahu’uti ka. He is refusing my food. [Note: The benefactive form implies a rejection of something given by someone.]

**ai, vpref., ass**

**ai’a, v., see.** Mo koimo ai’a? Have you seen my cup?

**aiaradi, v., shine.** Pi’ui aiaradi kaumo. The stars are shining.

**aiaro, v., be admired, admirable.** Nu aiparo. He was admired.

**aiau, n., cockatoo**

**aibi, n., paddle**

**aibo 1. adv. about, almost. post, 2. like**

**Lexicon 97**
aicha\(^1\), adv., must. Mo ro motoi to aicha nodau ka. I must go home. [Note: Aicha is used for present or future obligation. Use of the intermediate past tense can also mean past obligation.]
aicha\(^2\), adv., continue, really. Viha aicha a'o ka. It's still/ really raining.
aichaia, n., death
a'ia, v., heal. Umai a'ia ka. The wound is healing.
a'iai, v., (mid. arai'iai), kill, hurt. Mo ro himiha narai'ia ka irai ta. I hurt myself with an axe. Nu himiha oroiioi himiha arai'ia ka. He took his own life (lit. He hurt his own life).
aike, part., don't. See: aika
aike, part., neg.fut. See: aika
aimidai, v., win, gain
aipau, n., seagull
amo, n., breast. Bomo kekei amo idio kaumo. The piglets are suckling at the breast.
amoho'o, v., shake. Gorai amoho'o ra! Shake the rattle!
amoihi, n., breast milk, milk
amotoba, n., (var. amotoboa), centipede
ana'apu, n., cooking place, stove
anegai, n., anchor
a'o, v., speak. Ni bogobogovade a'o kaumo. They’re speaking English.
a'oia, v., choke. Nu uhoroi ro a'oia ka. He is choking on a fish bone.
aoidio, v., leave open. Na hini kavaia ka; durai aia avaidio ra? It’s windy in here; has the door been left open?
apahemai, v., miss. Mo ro bomo aipahemai ka. I’ve missed the pig.
apui, v., (ben. emapui, mid. arapui, pl. iapui), select, point to. Mo himiha narapui ka! I volunteer! (lit. I select myself). Ro abiai urioi nemapui! Show me a picture of your father! (lit. Point to a picture of your father).
aradi, v., burn. O, mukoi aiaradi ka! Yes, the fire is (still) burning!
araduo, v., (iter. (i)aradu'uti), tell. Mo kika ata araduo na'ai ka. I’m going to tell a certain story.
arahue, v., call. Nu iamoi arahue ka. He is screaming in pain (lit. He is calling out a howl).
arai'iai\(^1\), n., accident. [Note: Specifically, an event where one is hurt.]
arai'iai\(^2\), v., fight. Nu ni rautu arai’ia kaumo. He is fighting with them (i.e. they are fighting each other). See: hiavo
aramauti, v., dance. Nimo hete naramauti kaumo. We are all dancing (a dance/dances). See: omai
aramu, n., (pl. aramio), grandparent
arateai, v., (var. arate, dur. aratei), stick. Tuai nu'ai ta arate kaumo. The lizards are stuck to the tree.
arato, v., (var. ara'o, pl. iarato), ask, inquire. Nu mo motoi ri ara'o arato ka. He is inquiring about my house.
are, interj., oh!
aredio, v., crawl. Nu mere bamoi aiaredio ka. Her baby is crawling. [Note: Also used for snakes.]
aro\(^1\), v., (pl. iaro), shoot
aro\(^2\), v., (pl. iaro), plant
Lexicon 99

aroďio, v., (pl. iarodio), look after, watch, look at
aroipi, n., log
aromo, n., sky
aroʻo, dem., that
aru, adj., high. Oboi arui ri dububai ro pei itomai kaumo. Because the tide is high the men are pulling up the canoes.
aruruti, v., run
aso, n., sneeze.
aromo, n., sky
aroʻo, dem., that
aru, adj., high.

Oboi arui ri dububai ro pei iotomai kaumo. Because the tide is high the men are pulling up the canoes.
aruruti, v., run
aso, n., sneeze.

Mo asio naʻai ka. I’m sneezing.

ata, adj., other, again. Ro ata avoʻu ra? Are you coming again?
atana, n., something, another thing.

Mo atana rautu ka. I have something.

ate, v., fill. Pani ta oboi ate! Fill the pan with water! See: emate
atimai, v., (iter. iatimuti, mid. aratimai, npunct. iatimo, pl. iatimai), cover. Mo hipurai ta naratimai ka. I’m covering myself with a sheet. [Note: Nonpunctiliar form used mainly for garden work, e.g. filling in holes. For covering many things one at a time, it implies many sheets, i.e. a distributive reading.]
ato, conj., if. See: rato
atohotai, v., (pl. iatohotai), call
atu, n., catfish
atuha, adj., together. Niti kimai atuha podau ido. They both went fishing together.
atuhivio, conj., simultaneously, at the same time
atuʻuti, v., (ben. ematuʻuti, mid. aratuʻuti, pl. iatuʻuti), mash up. Ro niro ra mo ro ro dubai ematuʻuti? Do you want me to mash up a banana for you? [Note: The middle form can mean ‘step on oneself’].
aʻubai, v., (iter. iaʻubuti), pull out, remove. [Note: iterative form means ‘to pull out many things many times’, e.g. weeds.]
aubo, n., wave.
auboigahe, n., foam (lit. ‘wave spit’)
aʻumo, v., (mid. aʻumo), drown. Auboi ro pei aiaʻumo. The waves swamped the canoe (lit. The waves drowned the canoe). Pei aiaraʻumo ka. The canoe has sunk (lit. drowned).
aupai, v., 1. swell. Mo tui aiaupai ka. My arm is swelling up. n., 2. a swelling.
avavo, adj., stupid, naughty. Nu avavo na ovaʻati vadio ka. S/he is always doing silly things.
awo, adj., far. omoti awoi the distance between two rivers.

B - b

babameʻe, n., (var. babao), butterfly. Rio ro babaʻo iohiai kaumo. You all are catching butterflies.
babao, n., tree fungus
baibuʻu, n., gecko
baketa, n., bucket
bamu, adj., newborn, soft. kikio bamu baby bird, hatchling. Ro bamu mere aibo ra! You’re acting like a baby! (i.e. being immature). [Note: Used for things that are tender or fragile.]
bana, n., mangrove
banckai, n., (savings) bank
bara, n., 1. riverbank. 2. side. peibara side of a canoe.
baratei, n., wall
bare, n., bottom. Bomoi bare neʻei mo ro ovaredio naʻai ka. I’ll carry the bottom end of the pig.
baribari, n., (var. bari), shoots, young leaves
basikoroi, n., bicycle
bata, n., scale (of a fish)
bedea, n., healing. *Nu gimoit bedeai ta mea ovai*. His sickness was cured by healing.

bedeamere, n., witch doctor, healer. [Note: Traditional healer has positive connotations.]

beha, adv., only
behe, adj., female
bena, n., shoulder
berebere, n., lightning
beredi, n., bread
beru, n., liver
beru pa pa, n., lungs (lit. ‘slack liver’)
bi=, vclitic. tr
bidibidi, n., belt. [Note: Traditional belt with shells attached, worn around the waist, arms or neck.]

bihaito, n., (var. bihai), difficulty. *Mo omoi abui ri bihaito na’ai vaka mabu oboi pupuo hia ka*. It was too difficult for me to cross the river because the current was very strong.

biko, n., crabbing stick. [Note: A hook on the end of a stick to pull crabs out of their holes.]

bikobiko, n., uvula

biri, n., (pro. [biri:]), 1. door (of house). 2. wall
bito, n., possum, cuscus

bobo, n., dry ditch
bodomo, n., (var. bodo, pl. bodobodo), welt, bruise

bogobogo, adj., (var. bogo), white
bogobogowade, n., English (lit. ‘white language’). See: **bogobogo**

bomo, n., pig, pork
bomohu’a, n., boar’s tusk

boromokau, n., cow
bua’ea, n., sweat
bubu, n., rule, custom, law

buburo, n., sandfly sp. [Note: A large species of sandfly with a painful bite.]

buhebai, n., girls. See: **mere behe**.

bu’i, n., bush. [Note: Can be used for wild animals, e.g. bu’ibomo ‘wild pig’.]
do’ou duoduo, adv., this morning

do’ou duoi, n., tonight

dopi, adj., pregnant. [Note: Only used pre-nominally.]

dopiobo, n., pregnant woman

doutu, adv., tomorrow

du, n., 1. sago. 2. food. [Note: Sago is the staple food of Urama. Starch is extracted from it to make a form of bread or porridge. Du is the generic term for food.]

dubi, adj., someone else’s. [Note: can be used with sticks or bread, but not glass.]

du’i, adj., 1. dark. du’i ri i’i. to get dark (clouds, night). n., 2. shade. Nu nu’ai du’i ta emidio ka. He is sitting in the shade of a car.

dumotoi, n., kitchen

duniro, adj., hungry. Mo duniro ka. I’m hungry.

duo, n., night

duoduo, n., morning

E - e

e’a, v., see. Na’u ve’a ra? What are you seeing? See: eve’a. [Note: Used in present continuous senses as a suppletive form of eve’a.]

Ebebeai, n., 1. river passage. 2. shortcut

Ebiha, n., black magic, sorcery. Nu ro nu niromama’e mere ebihia ovai / ema’ai. He used sorcery on the person he was upset with (i.e. the one he hated, his enemy).

Ebo, n., 1. heel. 2. elbow

Ebugama, adj., muscular, strong. Nu ebugama ka. He’s a muscular, strong person.

Edé’a, v., (pl. ide’a), put down, place. Uburoi i’a hinita ide’a. Put the baskets down over there.

Ededeai, v., (mid. erededeai, pl. idedeai), make, fix. Mo rekei ededeai ri na’ai ka. I’m trying to mend the net.

E’ebo, v., (iter. i’ebuti, pl. i’ebo), fell. Mo ro nu’ai ni’ebuti ka. I felled the trees.

E’edai, v., mix, stir, twist. Mo sipuni ta vi’ai ne’edai ka. I am stirring the porridge with a spoon.

Ehe, n., crew. Mamio ehei ro o’u kaumo. The crew of women are coming (by canoe). [Note: In this usage it is more usual to refer to people in canoes than on land.]

Ehebia, v., (iter. ihebuti), break. Mo urei nehebia ka. I am breaking a sugar cane. See: otoho. [Note: can be used with sticks or bread, but not glass.]

Ehe’uti, v., (pl. ihe’uti), rip off, remove. Umiai ihe’uti pani niro ita. Remove the green leaves and put them into the pot.

Eheu’a, v., (ben. emeheu’a, pl. iheu’a), spend, throw away, waste. Boroi eheu’a mo ido! Throw a ball to me!

Eke’eke, n., twigs. See: ete’ete
ema’ai, v., (iter. ima’ati, pl. ima’ai),
give. Rohiai ro do’ou duodoui ubi ketai ima’ai vaka. The chief gave
the people mats this morning (all at once). See: a’ai. [Note: iterative
form means ‘give many things to
many people’.
]
emabaei, v., (iter. imabe’uti, pl.
imabei), gut, clean. Mo ro uhoi
nimabe’uti ka. I’m gutting the fish.
emaduo, v., (iter. emaduti, pl.
imaduo), tell about. Nimo kikai
nimaduo! Tell us a story!
emahibai, v., (pl. imahibai), try, taste.
Mo itai dui emahibai. Try the sago
I’m cooking.
emavuti, v., (pl. imaivuti), pull in.
Mo ro uhoi kimai ta nemaivuti ka.
I’m pulling in a fish with a hook.
ema’o, v., (pl. ima’o), be angry and
swear. Nu ema’o ka. He is angry
and swearing. Nu ro ni ima’o. He
got angry with them.
emapua, n., son-in-law. See: emapua
abea. [Note: May be any male in-
law]
emapua-abea, n., son-in-law. See:
damauabea.
emarahue, v., (pl. imarahue), praise.
Kaio’o ro Karika emarahue titi
vadio ka nu du mia itoi ri. Kaio’o
always praises Karika for her good
cooking. See: arahue.
emaruti, v., (pl. imaruti), beat up.
nu’atama emaruti beat a tree to
remove the bark.
emate, v., (iter. imatuti, pl. imate), fill.
Iridini oboi emate! Fill the engine
with fuel! See: ate.
emati’a, v., (pl. imati’a), spear. Mo ro
debre nemati’a ka. I’m spearing an
eel.
ematomudio, v., (pl. imatomudio),
teach, show
emathihia, v., (mid. eremathihia), trick.
Mo ro nu nemathihia ka mo go’u
odaut ri inai mo animidio ka. I
tricked him that I was going
crabbing but I stayed behind. [Note: middle form means ‘lie’.
]
emek, n., skirt. See: wapa
emebidio, v., (mid. eremebidio, pl.
imebidio), warm up. Mo muko ita
neremebidio ka. I warmed (myself)
up by the fire.
emederiai, v., (mid. eremederiai, pl.
imederiai), start. Iridini eremederiai
ra! Start the engine!
em’ei, v., (iter. emiauti), sit. [Note: iterative form means ‘many people
sitting down.’
]
emehai, v., leave
emheai, v., (pl. imeheai), let go
emehu, v., (pl. imehu), sharpen. Mo
kai’ai nemehu! Sharpen my knife!
em’ivuti, v., straighten out. Kivakivai
neme’ivuti ka. I am straightening out
the kinks.
emidi, v., (pl. imidi), build for. Nu ro
ni motoi imidi vaka. He built them a
house (today). See: ididi
emidio, v., stay. Nimoiti bu’i goroi ta
nemidio kaido. Both of us are hiding
in the bush.
emoi, n., 1. elbow. 2. heel. See: ebo
emume, adj., deaf
enedo, n., firefly
enevaro, n., trading. Mo uho enevaro
nodau ka. I’m going to trade fish. See: diva
epek, n., (pro. [e:pe]), broom. Mo ro epe
ta horohoroi nimohu’uti ka. I swept
up the rubbish with a broom.
epe’e, v., (pl. ipe’e), be full. Ni avipe’e
ra? Are they satisfied? (lit. Are they
full?) [Note: Only of people, not
containers.]
epu, 1. n. head. adv., 2. first. Nu epu
o’u ka. He’s coming first.
epui ta, post., before
epuitt’inoi, n., brain(s)
era, n., firewood
erara, adj., hot
ere, interj., ouch!
ere’a, v., 1. feel. *Nu otoi ta temetemei ere’a ka.* She’s feeling pain in her foot. 2. see oneself. *Ro himiha ere’a ra otoroi ta.* You see yourself in the mirror.


erehai, v., give way, yield. *Ro gaboi ta erehai!* Get off the road! (lit. You yield the road!)


erehai, v., give way, yield. *Ro gaboi ta erehai!* Get off the road! (lit. You yield the road!)

erehe’e, v., (iter. erehe’uti), comb. *Rio epui ituai ta erehe’e umo!* Comb your hair with a comb!

erehe’eai, v., turn. *Mo ido erehe’eai ra!* Turn to me!

erehei ta, post., beside. *Tarakai gaboi erehei ta oduodie ka.* The truck is parked beside the road.

erema’ai, v., (iter. erema’ati), share. *Ro ro modobo ra ro dui nimo ubi rau tu erema’ati?* Please can you share your food with our guests? [*Note: iterative form means ‘share generally, frequently’.*]


erehe’eai, v., turn. *Mo ido erehe’eai ra!* Turn to me!

erepeduai, v., fall (from tripping). *See: omo’a*

ete’ete, n., twigs

etera, n., (pl. eteraioi), daughter-in-law

etune, n., (pro. [etu:ne]), sago pulp. Used as compost for growing mushrooms.

evea, v., (pl. ivea), 1. see. 2. find


2. turn over. *Pei evehe’eai ra!* Turn over the canoe!

eve’iti, v., (mid. ereve’iti, pl. iveri’iti), scratch

everai, v., look like. *I’a odau mere mo nivapoi evera ka.* That person walking over there looks like my little sister.

everaito, adv., 1. quietly. *everaito a’o speak quietly, whisper. 2. slowly. everaito odau go slowly.*

G - g

gabidi, n., ghost, spirit

gabidivati, n., cemetery

gabo, n., 1. path, road. 2. stairs

gaboipi, adv., halfway

gabora, n., swordfish

g’a, 1. n. bow. 2. gun.

gaga’o, n., 1. dry leaves. 2. torch. [*Note: dry coconut or sago leaves are used to make torches.*]

gagi, n., fat

gahe, n., spit. *Mo ma’atai miari ereai haka, nuri gahe nimoa ka.* I had a bad taste in my mouth so I spat (it out).

ghahu, adj., unripe, young, immature.

gohota gahuru young, unripe coconut.

gahuru, adj., fish trap. [*Note: Cone-shaped, made of sago fronds and cane.*]

ghai, n., handsome

gaho, n., fish trap. [*Note: Cone-shaped, made of sago fronds and cane.*]

G - g
gauga’u, n., prawn
ga’uga’u, adj., each one, every one
ga’uha, adv., together. Niti ga’uha podau ido. They both went together.
gebe, n., flotsam. [Note: A brown debris like tea leaves that washes up on beaches often after storms, made up of broken down vegetable matter, and which is used as good compost for kasava.]

gebe hipi, n., tea
gega, adj., big
gé’i, adj., happy
gema¹, adj., big
gema², n., hip
gen’o, n., rat, mouse
geregere, n., festive flowers. [Note: From one plant species; traditionally used for singsings, dances.]
gidobu, n., barramundi [Lates calcarifer]
giepū, adj., 1. sad. 2. sorry
gi’epu, n., heart
gihi, n., string. [Note: Used in cat’s cradle games]
gima, n., spot, pustule
gimini, n., back
giminihoro, n., backbone
gimo, adj., sick
gino, n., coconut plantation
giri, n., tooth
girigiri, n., teeth. [Note: Crocodile or swordfish teeth; teeth on a saw.]
girigirinai, n., saw
giritemeteme, n., toothache
gitora, n., bed, sleeping place
go’ario, n., wasp sp.

go, n., betel nut
gogora, n., pelican
go’ho, n., hole
gomo, n., chest
gomohobobo, n., bubble
gonogono, n., nostrils
go’ota, n., coconut
go’oto, n., (pl. go’otoioi), village
go’otohi’a, n., mainland
go’ototo, n., water snake
gope, n., carving, statue
gora, n., rattle. [Note: Used in traditional dances.]
goro, post., under. Karika bu’i goroi ta emido ka. Karika is hiding in the bush. [Note: can also be used in the sense of ‘hidden’.

goroeme, n., underskirt
goro, adj., next. goroi purai next week.
goropiripo, n., underwear
gu, n., ribcage
guagua, n., frog
guagua tama, adj., green (lit. ‘frog skin’)

Āuhi, n., glue. [Note: Made from residue of aphids’, etc., deposits on plants. Used to glue or patch kundu drums.]
guho, n., rib
gu’o’bo, adj., cold
gu’obogimo, n., malaria (lit. ‘cold sickness’)
gura, n., blowfly
guri, n., ditch, dry hole, empty well

guriguri, n., prayer, church service
gurigurihivio, n., Sunday (lit. ‘church time’)
guru, n., thunder
guruo, n., green slime. [Note: The slime that grows on the bottom of boats.]
gu’u, adj., empty

H - h

ha, part., isn’t it? [Note: tag particle.]
ahahu’a, n., yellow catfish
haibo, inter., how
ha’ima, adj., tired, bored with. Mo ha’ima nerea ka. I’m feeling tired.
ahaira, n., emperor red snapper [Lutjanus sebae]
hairo, n., 1. heel. 2. ankle
haita, inter., where. Haita ro? Where is it? See: hatitoi
haka, part., not. [Note: used in non-future tense.]
hama, n., stingray
ha’o, n., bag
hapuo, adj., half. hapuo tu umu five dogs (lit. ‘half hands dog’).
hapuoï, post., about, concerning
hapuoi, adv., to one side
haro’o₁, n., roof post. [Note: There are three per traditional house. The other type of post (abo) supports the floor only.]
haro’o₂, n., clan
hasi, n., hat
hati, inter., which. Ro ro hati mere rautu vo’u ra? Which person are you coming with?
hatihivio, inter., when.
hatitoi, inter., where to. See: haita.
hato, adv., only. Motoi hato emidio titi vadio ka. S/he always stays (only) at home.
hau’i, n., 1. field, clear space.
   2. outside. Merekeke odau mo hau’i ta orioi? Children, go outside and play!
hauto, n., barracuda [Sphyraena sp.]
havai, n., sago plantation
havia, n., heron
hede, n., ant
he’e, inter., where. Ro he’e? Where are you?
hege n., scabies
hegebuitu, n., tinea
hehe, n., light. Hivioi hehe mea ka do’u. The sunlight is good today.
hepato, n., ear
hepu, n., 1. earth, soil, ground. 2. world
hepukere, n., island (lit. ‘piece of land’)
hepuvipa, n., worm (lit. ‘earth snake’)
heve, n., dance
hia, adv., very, a lot
hiabau, n., type, kind. I’a hiabau mere ro ro iraramoi aike. You can’t trust that kind of person.
hia’e, n., space. Nimoiti tuiai hia’e huna ka. The space between us is big.
hiamo, n., engagement gift. [Note: The gift, for example Kina shells, is given to the parents of the bride.]
hiavo, v., fight
hiavoara’iai, n., war (lit. ‘fighting and killing’)
hiba, n., crocodile
hi’i, n., underwear
himihia, adj., own, self. Nu himihia motoi ididi ka. He has to build his own house.
hini, dem., here; there. Na hini oito o’u! Come over here!
hinibauha, adv., (var. himbauha), in that manner. [Note: In rapid speech the form becomes himbauha.]
hio, n., run, race
hi’o, n., meat, flesh
hioi to!, interj., hurry up!
hipai, n., flying fox
hipi, n., (pl. hipihipi), 1. root. See: hivi. [Note: Roots of big plants like trees.] 2. bark.
hipo, v., ashamed, shy. Mere kekei hipo a’ai kaumo. The children are shy.
hipura, n., clothing, covering. Mo irio hipurai do’ou duodouo nivoru’o vaka. I washed my dirty clothes this morning. [Note: Can be used for clothes, sheets, etc.]
hipura nira, n., (sewing) needle
hiri, n., sago trade. Epuito hivioi ta nimo naniaioi hiri divai podau vadio umo. In times gone by our ancestors used to go on sago trade journeys. [Note: The Urama people used to go to the Moresby area to trade sago for clay cooking pots.]
hiro, adj., lots, plenty, more
hito, n., shoulder bag. [Note: Made of sago leaves.]
hiva, adj., (pro. [hi:va]), beautiful
hivatua, n., gecko. See: hiva, tua, baibu’u. [Note: Considered a smart, beautiful lizard.]

hivi, n., (pl. hivihivi), 1. vein. See: tamahivi. 2. root. See: hipi. [Note: Roots of small plants like grass and bamboo.]

hivio, (pl. hiviohivioi), 1. n., sun. 2. day. [Note: Used with days of the week, e.g. Mondi hivioi ‘Monday’.

hivioioroi, n., sunrise

hivioioruoi, n., sunset

hiviotuiai, n., midday

hivio, n., dream. Mo duoi ta hivo norou vaka. I had a dream last night.

hivio’a, n., message. Mo hivo’a notiodai ka. I’m sending a message.

hivio’amere, n., messenger

hoa, adj., surprised. Ro ro mo hoa novai ka! You’ve surprised me!

hobo, n., raincoat. [Note: A traditional coat made of pandanus leaves.]

hobobo, adj., soft. du hobobo soft sago [Note: Food for the elderly.]

hobou, n., lie. adj. 2. false, weak. Hobou na’o ka. I didn’t mean it (it’s just words) (lit. I said lies).

hoboutui, n., left hand. See: hobou, kerakera. [Note: Hobou is the root because the left hand is viewed as the weaker, or “false” hand.]

hoboututu, n., middle finger of left hand. See: hobou.

hoho, n., 1. face. 2. lid

hoa, n., python, long snake

hora, n., 1. breath. 2. rest. adj., 3. tired, out of breath. Mo hora ka. I’m tired.

horo, n., bone

horohoro, adj., rubbish, waste

horoipi, n., shin bone

horokuku, adj., skinny, wasted (lit. ‘bone stick’)

hotu, inter., who. See: votu

hovihovi, adv., rushing. Ro hatitoi hovihovi vodau ra? Where are you rushing off to?

hu’a, n., tusk. See: bomohu’a

huhuia, n., rainbow

huhune, n., fly

huna, adj., big, wide

hunu, n., chin

hu’ono, n., crab hole

hura, n., egg. kokoro hura chicken’s egg. Mo hurai orotoho ka. My eggs smashed. wa’ema hura turtle eggs. See: kimaihura

I - i

=i, nclitic., the, def
i-, vpref., pl.obj [Note: Agreement marker for plural objects.]
i’a, dem., that, there

iaho’outi, v., (mid. iarahou’outi), count

iamo, n., howl in agony. Nu temetemei ri iamo a’ai ka. He’s howling in pain.

iamoho’o, v., shiver. Mo gu’obo niamoho’o ka. I’m shivering with cold.

ianai, adv., finally

iapo, v., read

iavi, n., oyster

ibane, n., leech

ibi¹, n., moulting crab. See: ibiibi. [Note: Moulting crabs are defenceless; this is the source of ibiibi ‘weak’.

ibi², v., (pro. [i:bi], iter. ibiti), pack. Ro do’ou odaui a’ai ka ri ro ha’oi ibi ra. You are going to go today so pack your bag.

ibiibi, adj., weak, soft [Note: used for people.

ibo, v., plant. Mo pa’aiia ta taitui nibo ka. I’m planting yams in the garden.

ibodio, v., (var. ibomai), smell. Mo o’apoi nibodio ka. I can smell a flower. Mo dui ibomai ra! Take a sniff of my cooking!

idabuai, v., 1. put together. 2. engage. Ni ro niti atidabuai kaumo. They are
engaged (which was witnessed by others).

idabuaidu, n., wedding
idebi, v., 1. weep, cry. 2. mourn, grieve. Idebi emidio kaumo. They are at a funeral. [Note: Used to describe a funeral; i.e. ‘a mourning’.]

idia, v., put, place
idiiai, v., walk up. [Note: from a river bank or beach.]

ididi, v., (freq. iditi), build. Ni niro ka moto ididi ri. They want to build (a number of) houses. [Note: The frequentative form can be used for plural objects.]

idiidi, adj., (var. idi), black

idimai, v., (pl. idiom), take out. Mo ro umiai pani niroi ta nidimo ka. I’m taking the leaves out of the pot.

idio, v., drink
=ido, vclitic., dl, dual

idomai, n., (dl. idomaioiti), eye
idomai garasi, n., eyeglasses

idomaiobo, n., tear (lit. ‘eye water’)

idomo, v., (punct. idomai), arrange, fix, tidy. Nanai idomai ra! Tidy up (a couple of things)!

ihiai, v., die. See: ahihiai

ihiei, v., sell. Mo ro uhoi nihiei ka maketi ta. I’m selling fish at the market.

iho, v., eat. See: uho

i'i, aux., become. Mo ro umuo ni'i ka I know for sure Ro umuo vi'i ra. You knew it for sure.


ika, n., shellfish
ikahoro, n., shell (lit. ‘shellfish bone’) 

ikoko, n., nail. [Note: for building.]


imaro, v., (var. ima'o, iter. imaru), shout. Mo iamo nima'o ka mabu irat ta ainoru'uai ka. I screamed out because I chopped myself with an axe.

imaubo, v., walk. Mo ainimaubo ka motoi to. I’m walking home.
im, n., crab

ime’edai, v., (var. eme’edei), win, get. Ro orioi avime’edei ra? Are you winning the game?

ime’ede, v., collect, choose. [Note: Also to gather fruit from the ground rather than to pick from the tree.]


imehebui, v., (iter. imhebuti, mid. aieremehebui), 1. kiss. Niti aimehebuti kaido. 2. sniff. Nu o'apoi imehebuti ka. She’s sniffing a flower.
imin', adj., slow. Dui itai pauo ka, nuru ro imini to itai ka. Cooking sago is hard work, so you have to cook it slowly.
imin', n., mind, thought. Imi hato piraromo nu ro inamo wade ata a'oi ka. In her mind, she was thinking whether she, you know, would say something to me.
imini to, interj., slow down!

imo'a, v., spit. Nu gahe imo'a vadio ka. He often spits.
imodo'iai, v., pray. Nimo tanamotio ta nimehebuti kaumo imodo'iai ri. We’re kneeling in church to pray.
imumuio, v., (punct. imumui), fly

ina, conj., but

inamo, interj., (var. inamoi), like, you know. See: dohobo

io'a, n., leave. [Note: To leave something somewhere.]
ioi, v., squeeze. Mo ro dui noio ka. I’m squeezing the sago.

ioro, v., climb. Iroroma imagauriai nu’a ata iorio ka. Iroroma jumped up and climbed into a tree.

ioropoio, adj., last. Ioropoio purai last week. See: oropoio

ioto, n., boil

ipi, n., back. [Note: back of body]

ipo, n., grouper

ira, n., axe

irahio’uti, v., be full, overflow. [Note: For example, in reference to the container for juice when sago is being processed (i.e. iri).]

iraromai, v., remember

iraromo, v., think. Mo ainiraromo ka ro hobou a’o ka. I think you’re talking nonsense.

iraromoi, n., belief, faith

ire¹, conj., too, with, and. Go’otai irei uhoi ire disi ga’u ato iviovia ka iatu’uti ka. You put the coconut and the fish into one dish and you mash them.

ire², det., that. ire na that thing.

iri, n., sago container. [Note: Used to collect sago juice.]

iridine, n., motor

irihati, v., (pl. iririhati), hit. Tarakai ro bomoi iririhati ka. The truck has hit the pigs.

irio, adj., dirty. Irio mere kekei dirty children.

ita, adv., must, have to. Nu ro Gino du ita ema’ai ra. S/he must give Gino some food.

itai, v., (ben. emitai), cook. [Note: Includes various methods such as frying, grilling, etc.]

itiva, n., (var. ikiva), coconut husker

itu’a, n., comb

ivi, n., string. [Note: Can also be a clothesline.]

iviero, v., (ben. emevio), take up. Nu go’otai iviero ka. He’s taking up the coconuts. See: ioro

ivobudioi, v., leap up. Nu uro vati ta aiha ivobudio ka nu vade orovai ta. He got up at once when he heard her voice. See: obua

ivohi’idio, v., (ben. omovhi’idio, imovhi’idio), gather together. Nimo ro go’otai nivohi’idio kaumo. We’re gathering the coconuts together in one place.

ivoto, v., (ben. imovoto), hunt down. Pomo mere ro bomoi o bu’i nai ivotoi ka. The hunter hunts down pigs or wild animals.

K - k

ka¹, part., prs

ka², conj., and

kai’a, n., knife

kaka, n., bailer

kaka’api, n., spider

kaka’api moto, n., spider web (lit. ‘spider house’)

karahudi, n., spear

kateni, n., box, carton

kaupu, quant., few, some

kaupubai, quant., very few. [Note: Fewer than kaupu.]

kava obo, n., kava

kavaia, n., wind

keihi, adj., (var. keihibo), little, small. See: merekeihi

keihibo, adj., narrow, small

keihibito, adv., quietly

keito, interj., thank you

keitoka, adv., thanks a lot

kekai, adj., close

kema, n., necklace

ke’o, n., spear. [Note: A small spear with three points that can be shot from a bow.]

ke’ohura, n., spearhead (lit. ‘spear egg’)

kerakera, adj., (var. kera), left (hand)

kere, n., (pl. kerekere), piece
kerere, n., trouble. Nupa mo abeai kerere ata ro apo’a ka. Maybe my father is in some kind of trouble.

keresini, n., kerosene

keta, n., sleeping mat

keveke, n., mask. [Note: Traditional mask worn in ceremonies, woven from cane and very tall.]

kiauka, interj., (var. kauka), enough!, stop it!

kika, n., story. Mo kika nemaduo! Tell me a story!

kikio, n., bird

kimai, n., fishing tackle

kimaihura, n., hook (lit. ‘fishing egg’).

See: hura

kiva’iva, adj., (var. kivakiva, kiva), curvy, bent

koikoi, n., lie

koimo, n., cup

koinohotu, n., coconut shell (lit. ‘cup shell’)

kokoleti, n., chocolate

kokoro, n., chicken

kokoro bamu, n., chick (newborn chicken)

komo, n., camp

komu, adj., (pl. komukomu), short, old. Gema hia igohuti aike, nupa komu aibo. Don’t boil for long, maybe a little while.

komubo, adj., short, very short

konau, n., rope

kopara, n., copra

kopi, n., coffee

koro, n., grasshopper

kotini, n., cotton thread

kuku, n., stick

kurukuru, n., grass

kurukuru, n., smoke, cigarette. Nu kutui emadia! Light a cigarette for him!

M - m

ma= vclitic. purp, in order to. [Note: Used to express intention in purpose clauses.]

ma’ata, n., mouth

mabe, n., medicinal creeper. [Note: The leaves are used in a poultice to draw out pus.]

mabia, n., (mabiamio), big sister

mabo, n., armband. [Note: Traditionally a form of money of less value than the kina. Armbands were part of the bride price.]

mabu¹, n., root, origin. [Note: Also in the sense of family origins.]

mabu², conj., because. [Note: mabu, like nuri (‘so, therefore’) is clause initial, but may not be sentence initial.]

magani, n., wallaby

mai’a, n., mullet sp. [Note: A small species caught for bait.]

makedi, n., market

mama, pron., both. Ubi ro niti aipidabuai mama umo. The people both arranged their marriage.


mamio, n., women. See: obo

mamui, n., sheep. See: obo

mamu, n., (pl. mamio), mother.

mamui, n., sheep. [Note: Probably a loanword from Motu, with biblical reference.]

maniota, n., cassava [Manihot esculenta]. See: rapia

mareta, n., pandanus

masisi, n., match(es). [Note: for starting fires]

mate, n., seedlings, shoots

maua, n., suitcase

mauai, n., (pl. mauamio), brother. [Note: This is the “special” brother who leads traditional events; can be older or younger.]
mea, adj., (var. mia), 1. good. 2. well, healthy. Mo mea ka. I am well.
memiho, adj., 1. bad. 2. hurt. Mo memiho nere’a ka. I feel hurt, upset, offended.
mere, n., (pl. ubi), person
mere behe, n., (pl. buhebai), girl
merehio, n., (pl. ohiobai), boy
merekehi, n., (pl. merekeke), child
merekeke, n., (var. merekeikei), children
mereki, n., plate
mereotoi, n., childbirth
minimini, n., bees, honey bee
miri⁴, n., kina. [Note: traditional shell money, worth more than mabo.]
miri², n., mopping cloth. [Note: cloth for mopping up water in a canoe.]
mo, pron., 1s, I, me
mo’a, adv., not. Obo ate baketai ta huna hia mo’a kehibo aibo. Do not overfill the bucket; just put a little water in.
modobo, mod., can
modobo, adj., enough. Ro iho dui modobo ka? Have you had enough to eat?
moho, n., coconut husk
moni, n., money
moto, n., house
motoi ubu, n., roof (lit. ‘house roof’)
motoiohui, n., roof (lit. ‘house top’)
mudebe, n., nail. [Note: Fingernail or toenail]
muduabia, n., mother’s brother. [Anth: Maternal uncles have a special status in Urama society. They give the firstborn child their first haircut in a ceremony and are then feasted with.]
mudumamu, n., mother’s sister-in-law
mudumere, n., sister’s child
muho, n., hair
muko, n., fire
mukohu’opi, n., ember
mukuru, n., pufferfish
mumu, n., fan. See: umumu
mumuo, n., shaking, earthquake. Hepui mumuo ka. The earth is shaking.
mupuru, n., red berries
mura, n., seam. [Note: edge of clothing, threads at end.]
muramura, n., medicine

N - n

n-, vpref., 1, first person agreement
na¹, n., (pl. nana), thing
na², dem., this, here. [Note: Never occurs after the noun.]
na’ata, n., (var. nata), something. Mo na’ata ma a’oi ri. I want to say something. See: ata. [Note: Compare with ata na ‘another thing’.]
kahia³, adj., elderly
nahia², adj., ready. Nupa turei nahia ka. Maybe the taro is ready.
nahini, adv., here
nahi’o, n., bait. Nimo gaugaui piniohi raumo nahi’oi ri. We caught prawns for bait.
nahua, n., song
na’i, n., tiger prawn [Penaeus monodon]
naia, n., earring. [Note: Traditional earrings made of a dog’s teeth.]
nakomu, n., (pl. nanakomukomu), container (lit. ‘little/old thing’). [Note: e.g. bucket.]
nama, adv., 1. when. 2. at this point. Mo nama na! I’m here!
namu, n., (pl. namio), big brother
nanepa, n., lantern
nania, n., (pl. naniaioi), 1. great-grandparent. 2. ancestor
natato, n., (var. na ata tato) nothing. I’a mere na ata tato umuoi haka. That person knows nothing at all. Mo na ata tato ka. I have nothing.
Lexicon 111

nato, n., (pl. natonato), footprint, trace, track. Mo imei natoi ponobodo ra ita aiha peneve’a ra. I followed the crab’s tracks until I found it.

na’u, inter., what. Ro na’u va’o ra? What did you say?

na’uri, inter., why. Ro na’uri vo’u ra? Why did you come?

ne, n., excrement
ne ahu, n., constipation (lit. ‘hard excrement’)
ne oboobo, n., diarrhoea (lit. ‘soft excrement’)

neduahe, n., (dl. neduaheti), twins
ne’e, n., end. [Note: The leftover end of a sago tree trunk that isn’t processed, or the end of the coconut shoot that is still in the shell.]
ne’eida, post., (var. ne’eita), from nemoto, n., toilet (lit. ‘excrement house’).
Nemotoi haita ro? Where is the toilet?

netoa, num., (var. netua), two
ni, pron., 3p, they, them
niavapo, n., (pl. niamio), little sibling. [Note: can be for younger brothers or sisters.]

nibi, pron., 3tr, them three
nibo¹, adj., (pro. [ni:bo]), heavy
nibo², 1. n., smell. nibo mea a good smell. adj., 2. smelly. uho nibo a smelly, rotten fish. See: ibomai.
nika, n., papaya, pawpaw
nimo¹, pron., 1p, we (all)
nimo², n., louse

nimo vati hunai, n., village chief. [Note: Can be used for Prime Minister.]
nimohoro, n., nit (lit. ‘louse bone’)
nimoibi, pron., 1tr, we three
nimoiti, pron., 1dl, we both
nipa, n., nipa palm [Nypa fruticans]
nira, n., (hypodermic) needle
niro¹, n., stomach
niro², n., love
niro, mod., want
niromama’e, adj., angry

niti, pron., 3dl, they both
nitu, adj., dead

no’a, n. 1. rock. 2. mountain. [Note: As there are no hills or mountains on Urrama or nearby, there are no proper names for them.]

nu, pron., 3s, he, she, it

nu’a¹, n., 1. tree. 2. stick. 3. wood
nu’a², n., (pro. [nu:?a]), room

nu’aete, n., (pl. nu’aecte), branch

nu’ahura, n., seed (lit. ‘tree egg’)
nu’atama, n., tree bark (lit. ‘tree skin’)
uauto, adv., on condition, while. Mo o’ui ta nuauto odaui na’ai kaido orohoi. I’ll come on condition that we both go for a spin.

nuha, adv., at that time
nupa, adv., maybe

nupu, n., corner, edge

nupui ta, post., bottom. Mo dui pani nupui ta nemedea’a! I’ll leave my dinner at the bottom of the pan (for later)!
nuri, adv., so, therefore. Nu gimo ka nuri odau vaka gimo motoi to. He is sick so he went to the clinic.

O - o

o, interj., yes

o’a, v., (pl. i’a), be located. Nai meaha o’a vati ta eidai ka! You’ve knocked over something that was put in a really good place!
o’apo, n., flower

o’apuai, v., (mid. oro’apuai, pl. i’apuai), touch, hold. Nimoiti ro o’apo ni’apuai kaido. We’re both holding flowers. Ro eme oro’apuai ra! Straighten your skirt!
obai, v., carry. mere obai carry a child. [Note: ‘carry a child’ can sometimes mean to give birth]
obo¹, n., 1. water. 2. fuel. iridini obo engine fuel.
obo², n., (pro. [o:bo]), 1. woman.
2. wife. I’a nu obo ka. That’s his wife.
obo oru’oi, v., wash, swim (lit. ‘water wash’. [Note: One can also wash in the rain: vihai ta oru’oi.]
obobo, v., (ben. omobobo, iter. iobobotuti, pl. iobobo), dig. Oboguri iobobotuti! Dig lots of wells! See: bobo
obodidio, v., (pl. ibodidio), chase. Hiba ro nimoiti nibodidio ka. The crocodile chased us both.
obodidio, v., (pl. ibodidio), chase. Hiba ro nimoiti nibodidio ka. The crocodile chased us both.
obodiro, n., water bottle
obodo, v., (mid. orobodo, pl. ibodo), follow. Mo ro ubi nibodo ka. I’m following the people. Mo ro ni didimoi ta norobodo ka. I was following right behind them.
oboguri, n., water well (lit. ‘water ditch’)
oboguri, n., water well (lit. ‘water ditch’)
oboihi, n., low tide. Oboihi i’i ka. The tide has gone out. See: ihi
oboniho, adj., thirsty
obono’a, n., reef (lit. ‘water stone’)
obono’a, n., reef (lit. ‘water stone’)
obono’a, n., reef (lit. ‘water stone’)
oboobo, adj., watery
odau, v., go
odaudio, v., flee. Merekeikei odaudio mo! Go away, kids!
ododeai, v., prepare. Mo du ma ododeai ri na’ai ka. I’m trying to prepare the food.
ododei, v., beat. gamai ododei beat the drums, have a singsing. [Note: In a traditional festival, small drums are held and played.]
odoi, adv., down. Mo ro davarai oito odoi nodau ka. I’m going down to the beach.
odoaia, v., turn off
odomo, v., (pl. idomo, punct. odomoiai), clean, fix, tidy up. Mo ro iridinioti nidomo ka. I’m fixing both engines.
odopo, v., pick, collect. See: ime’ede. [Note: Picking fruit from the tree, not up off the ground.]
odoro, v., (pl. idoro, ido), go in. Niti motoi niroi to idoro / odoro kaido. Both of us have gone into the house.
oduai, v., (pl. iduai), tell, order, ask. Mo ro nu noduai vaka mo epumuhoi ma ahiai ri. I told him to cut my hair.
odudio, v., anchor, park. Tarakai hinita oduio ka. The truck is parked over there. Pei kimai oduio ka. The canoe is tied up for fishing. [Note: Also used for something under water staying still.]
ogogami, n., orphan
ogohuti¹, v., be boiling, hot. Raisi avogohuti ra? Is the rice boiling?
ogohuti², v., (pl. igohuti), dig. Bomoi ro baratei ta gohoi igohuti ka. The pigs are digging holes in the wall.
ohi, v., (pl. iohi), hang. Go’otai aviohi? Does the coconut tree have any fruit hanging on it?
ohiai, v., (dur. iohi, pl. iohiai), catch. Ro uho aviohi? Are you catching any fish? [Note: Also for taking photographs: Mo ro urio iohi ka. I’m taking pictures.]
ohiauti, v., paint. Pei oio ohiauti ra! Paint the new canoe!
ohi’ai, v., approach. Ro nu tai’ai ito ohi’ai ra. Please move a little closer to him.
ohibai, n., boys. See: merchio
ohi’odidio, v., (pl. ihi’odidio), push. Mo ro nu eve’ai haka ita nohi’odidio ka. I didn’t see him and bumped into him (I bumped into him accidentally).
oho, v., (ben. omoho, pl. ioho), look for. Mo bukai nomoho ra! Look for my book!
omotidio, v., wait. Mo ro Karika nomotidio ka. I’m (standing around) waiting for Karika. [Note: Has a sense of standing and waiting.]
omuduhi, v., (pl. imuduhi), bark at. Umui mo nomuduhi ka. The dog’s barking at me. Umui aimuduhi kaumo. The dogs are barking.
omurai₁, v., take off, remove. hibatamai omurai skin a crocodile. hipurai omurai take off your clothes.
omurai², v., (pl. imurai), cover. hipura imurai fold up the bed sheets.
one, n., sago grub [Rhynchophorus ferrugineus]. [Note: Sago trunks are left out so that these grubs will grow in them. They are then harvested and eaten.]
onioni, n., onion
ono, n., urine
o'ō¹, v., (iter. io'uti, pl. io'o), carve, make, shave. Nu gopei io'uti vadio ka. He often carves statues. [Note: Has a sense of standing and waiting.]
o'ō², interj., no
opihia'i, v., burn. Raisi aiopihia'i ka. The rice is burnt.
opio, v., (pl. ipio), hide. Nimoiti bu'i goroi ta nipio kaido. We’re both hiding in the bush. [Note: Can also be used transitively.]
opiova, v., (pl. ipiova), hide. Mo moni pirai goroi ta nipiova ka. I’m hiding my money under the pillow.
opoiopoa, v., (pl. ino) finish. Mo bukai iapoi do'ou duoduoi inopio vaka. I finished reading the book this morning. See: ioroiopoa
opuir'a, v., (mid. orupu'a), beat up. Ni himihina ro orupi'a kaumo. They’re all beating each other.
ora, n., blood
oraora, adj., (var. ora'ara), red. See: verevere
ori, n., cloud
oriō, adj., 1. young, new. 2. raw. uho oriō raw fish.
orio, v., (pro. [orio:]), play. Mere keikei orioi aiorio kaumo. The children are playing a game.
orioi, n., game
oriona, n., (pro. [orio:na]), plaything, toy (lit. ‘new thing’)
oroha, adj., right, true. Oroha gaboi odau ka. You’re going the right way. Mo ro oroha kika araduo na’ai ka. I’m going to tell a true story.
oroho, v., go around, visit. Mo tauni orohoi nodau ka. I’m going for a spin around town.
oroi’, v., drag, slide. Pei himiha oroi’i ka. The canoe is sliding along (i.e. on mud). [Note: Also to describe how a snake moves.]
oroirioi, n., life
oromouti, v., overflow, vomit. [Note: Used of containers for sago juice.]
oro, n., thorn
oroha, adj., right, true. Oroha gaboi odau ka. You’re going the right way. Mo ro oroha kika araduo na’ai ka. I’m going to tell a true story.
oroko, v., (pl. iroko), sleep, lie down. Motoi ubui oroko pusi aveve’a ra? Did you see the cat lying on the roof?
orokai, v., hear, believe
orovidio, v., listen. Mo ro radi oroidio ka. I’m listening to the radio.
ororo, v., wash. [Note: Only used for imperatives]
oruro, v., burn oneself. Mo mukoi ta himiha noruro ka. I burnt myself on the fire. See: ururo
orurudio, v., (iter. irurudio), be closed. Durair aiorurudio ka. The door is closed. See: urai
ota’auti, v., damage, ruin
oti, v., (var. otdio), stand. Ro ro i’a merei hinita oti ta aveve’a ra? Do you see the man that is standing there?
ottidai, v., (ben. omotidai, pl. ittidai), send. Mo ro diata titi ponotidai ra Mosbi ito. I sent a letter to Port Moresby some days ago.
otto, n., (pro. [o:to]), sago pounder
oto ra tu ra ti, num., twenty (lit. ‘feet and hands both’)
ottia, v., (pl. ittia), stand up. Rio ittia uno! You guys stand up!
otohiti, v., bandage. Mo ro nu umai hipura kere ta notohiti ka. I’m bandaging his wound with a piece of cloth.
otohivioi, n., birthday
otoho, v., (mid. orotoho), break. See: chebiai
otomai, v., (mid. orotomai, pl. iotomai), pull out of the water. Oboi arui ri dububai ro pei iotomai kaumo. Because the tide is high the men are pulling up the canoes.
otomu, v., (pl. itomu), teach, guide. Mamui ro merekekei itonu ka. The mother is teaching her children See: totomu
otomudebe, n., toenail
otoo, n., (dl. oototi), leg(s). 2. foot
otoro, n., mirror
otoo, v., pound. Mo ro otoi ta duia nototo ka. I’m pounding the sago with a sago pounder.
o’u, v., 1. come. aux., 2. dfut
oubua, v., (punct. oubuai, pl. ioubua), get up. Mo mereikekei uro vati ta
ioubuai kaumo. My children have got up out of bed.

O'uai, adj., coming. O'uai purai, bunoi the coming week, year. See: o'u

Ovati, v., work. Nimoiti ahuha nova'ati kaido. We’re both working hard.

Ovabai, v., (ben. omovabai, pl. ivabai), help. Mo nomovabai! Help me!

Ovadudio, v., 1. drift. Pei omoi ta povadaudio. A canoe was drifting on the river. 2. take, go away.

Ovadomoai, v., (var. ovadomai, mid. orovadomai, pl. ivadomo), to stab, stick, poke. Nu geno’oi ovadomo ka. He’s poking at the rat (with something sharp).

Ovaduoi, v., (pl. ivaduoi), talk, gossip about. Nu ro mo novaduo vaka duoduo hiai. He was talking about me early this morning. See: araduoi

Ovaha'uti, v., (pl. ivadu'uti, iva'aduti), talk about. Ubi ro ni turanaiotu iva'aduti vakaumo tanamotioi didimoioi ta. People were talking about their friends after church. I’iro mere ai ovedu'uti kaumo. They are talking about him as if he were alive.


Ovaharoi, n., start, origin. Aro’o nu’a gemai ahi’ai ri ovaharoi ka. He started chopping down that big tree.

Ovaha'uti, v., (pl. ivaha'uti), chop. Mo erai nivaha'uti ka mukoi ma adiai ri. I chopped wood to make a fire.

Ovahe’a, v., (iter. ivahe’uti, pl. ivahe), split. Go’ota ivahe’uti kopara idedeai ri splitting coconuts to make copra.

Ovai, v., (pl. ivai), try, make. Dui erara ovai ri na’ai ka. I’m trying to heat up the food.

Ovaidioi, v., make, cause. Ni ro nu niromama’e ovaidio vadio kaumo. They often make him angry.


Ovame’ede, v., take away

Ovaredio, v., (ben. omovaredio, pl. ivaredio), carry. Nimo Karika ha’oi nimovaredio kaumo. We’re carrying Karika’s bags for her.

Ovateai, v., (pl. ivate), stick on. Mo pepai nivate ka biri ta. I’m sticking papers on the wall.

Ove, n., moon

Oveiobo, n., dew (lit. ‘moon water’)

Ovia, v., (iter. iovuti, pl.ivia, iovia, iovo), fill. Mo ro nanakomukumoi nivia/niovia ka. I’m filling the containers. Nu nanai pei i ovo ka. He’s filling the canoe with his things.

Ovidiai, v., (pl. ividiai), take up. Rekei motoi to ividiai! Take the nets up to the house! See: idiai

Ovi'i, v., (ben. emevi'i, pl. ivi'i), pull, launch. Mo pei nemevi'i ra! Pull my canoe into the water!

Ovodaui, v., take, make go

Ovodi, v., (pl. ivodi), lead in

Ovodoroi, v., (ben. omovodoroi, iter. ivodorotui, pl. ivorodi), take in

Ovohu’o, v., (mid. orovohu’o, pl. ivohu’o), bring out. Hiavoi diamoi orovai ta, ubi motoi ta orovohu’o kaumo. Hearing the sound of fighting, the people rushed out of the house.

ovoroho, v., (pl. ivoroho), lead. Aro’o umu gemai ro pivoroho vadio umu kekei. That big dog used to lead the smaller ones around.

ovoruo, v., (pl. ivoruo), pull down. Monanai nomovoruo! Take down my things for me! [Note: The plural form is used for e.g. bringing something down for more than one person.]

ovoru'o, v., (pl. ivoru'o), wash. Mo mere bamui detu obo novoru'o ra. I washed the baby yesterday. See: oru'o


ovutu, v., (iter. ivotuti, pl. ivotui), weave

ovo'u, v., (ben. omovo'u, iter. ivo'uttu, pl. ivo'u), bring

ovoubuai, v., (pl. ivoubuai), lift. [Note: Used to express getting or helping someone to their feet. Not as high as a'atai.]

ovumo, v., (mid. orovumo, pl. ivumo), take into. Mo ro umui bu'i to nivumo ka. I’m taking the dogs into the bush. See: umo

P - p

p-, vpref., dpst, distant past.

pa’eai, n., garden

pahe¹, adj., male

pahe², n., (pl. pahepahe), leaf

pai, adj., famous

paimere, n., 1. famous person. 2. lord, god

paina, n., name

painaiai, n., namesake. Nu mo painaiai ka. She’s my namesake.

painapu, n., (pl. panepai), pineapple

paipai, adj., big. I’a nu’a paipai ro oti kaumo. There are big trees standing over there.

pakara, adj., light (in weight)

pakosi, n., scissors

pamo¹, adj., rotten. du pamo rotten sago. nu’a pamo rotten tree.

pamo², adj., ripe

pamopamo, adj., wet

pani, n., pot

papa, adj., slack, flat. Tarakai taiai papa ka. The truck tyre is flat.

pasoro, n., gift

pata, n., swamp

pauo, n., labour, hard work. Ro ro nu pauo ova’ati ema’ai ka. You’re giving him a hard job to do.

pa’uri, adj., thin, old. dubu pa’uri an old man. [Note: Elderly people are typically thin.]

pe, n., canoe

pepa, n., paper

pereini, n., plane. Pereini ro aiomo’a ka. The plane has just landed.

pidu, n., dugong (sea cow) [Dugong dugon]

pinati, n., peanut

pira, n., pillow

piripo, n., pants

piro, n., cheat, theft

piro a’ai, v., steal

piroha, interj., silence!

pi’u, n., (pl. pi’ui), star

poho, n., fish trap. [Note: Like a net, made of fibre from sago leaf stems; stretched across a stream.]

pomo, n., hunt. Mo ro bito pomo nodau ka. I’m hunting for possums.

popu, n., knee. Nu ro popui imehebia ka. He’s kneeling.

potoi, n., upstream. Mo ro potoi to nodau ka. I’m going inland/upstream.

pu’o, n., mouth. See: ma’ata

pupuo, adj., tough, strong

pupuotato, adj., 1. weak. Mo ro pupuotato mere peneve’a. I saw a weak person. 2. helpless, about to die

pura, n., week

pusi, n., cat
R - r

ra, part., pst. [Note: Used in verb phrase to form interrogatives, imperatives and various tenses.]
ragani, n., (var. lagani), year. [Note: Loan word from Motu.]
raisi, n., rice. [Note: Also called hura 'ants’ eggs'.]
rapia, n., cassava. See: maniota
rato, conj., (var. ato, ra ato), if
rautu, post., with
reke, n., net
resa, n., razor
ri, post., about, concerning, for
rio, pron., 2p, you all
rioibi, pron., 2tr, you three
rioiti, pron., 2dl, you both
ro', pron., 2s, you
ro^2, part., nom, nominative case marker
robu, n., mullet
rohia, n., (var. lohia), chief. [Note: Motu loan word.]
rubirubi, adj., noisy

S - s

saku, n., bald
satauro, n., cross. [Note: The Christian cross; from Motu]
se’a, n., chair
sikuru, n., school, education. Mo sikuru na’ai ka. I’m studying.
siporo, n., lemon, lime
situa, n., store
sopu, n., soap
suga, n., sugar. See: topona

T - t

ta, post., at, by, with
taboro, n., spade
taho’o, part., fut.neg
ta’i, n., price. Nu oboi ta’i pima’ai. He paid his wife’s bride price. [Note: Originally meant ‘bride price’.]
tainamu, n., mosquito net. [Note: May be a Motu word.]
taitai, adj., 1. near. 2. soon. Nu taitai to ohi ‘ai aike! Don’t bother him!
taitu, n., yam
tama, n., skin. [Note: Used to express a personal relationship with someone or something.]
tama bomo, n., domestic pig
tama erara gimo, n., fever (lit. ‘skin hot sickness’)
tamahivi, n., vein (lit. ‘skin root’). See: hivihivi
tamaka, n., shoe
tamamere, n., relation (lit. ‘skin person’). [Anth: tama is used to indicate that something belongs or is related to you, e.g. tama bomo a tame pig.]
tamatua, n., waist, middle
tamu^1, n., feather
tamu^2, n., 1. fin. 2. wing
tana, adj., sacred
tanamoto, n., church (lit. ‘sacred house’)
taneka, n., tank
ta’ota’o, n., cutty grass
taraka, n., vehicle
taravatu, n., law, rules
taro, n., (pro. [ta:ro]), drying rack. [Note: Used to dry or smoke something over a fire.]
-tato, vsuf., neg, not.
-tato, suf., without, “-less”
tau, adv., already, ever. Nimoiti ro Gino tau peneve’a raido. We have seen Gino (already).
tauni, n., town
tauo, adj., old
tauoha, adj., early
tava, n., mud skipper
tavahoro, n., jaw
tawa, n., (var. tava), cheek
teliboro, n., table
temeteme, adj., 1. painful, sore. Mo gi’epu temeteme. I have a sore throat. [Note: gi’epu means heart,
but it is used in this context as well. ]
n., 2. pain. Temeteme memihohia ka. 
The pain is really bad.
tepai, n., basket. [Note: A temporary 
basket woven from Nipa palm leaves.]
tere, n., 1. black palm. 2. flooring. 
[Note: Black palm wood is used for 
flooring.]
-ti, suf., (var. oti), both
tiai ta, post., (var. tiai da, tuiai da), 
between. See: tuiai
ti’ino, adj., mucous
ti’inogimo, n., cold (illness)
ti’inobo, n., snot. Mo ti’inobo ka.
I have a runny nose (lit. I am snotty).
tinitini, adj., naked
tiratira, adj., rough. Tuiai oboi tiratira 
hiaha o’a ka. The sea is very rough 
(with breaking waves).
tiro, n., mat. [Note: Floor mat made of 
pandanus leaves.]
titi 1, adv., always, often. Mo maketi to 
nodau titi vadio ka. I always go to 
the market.
titi 2, n., design. Pei titi edidiai. I 
painted designs on the canoe.
titima, n., ship. See: vapea
to, post., (var. ato, hato), to. See: oito
toe, adj., afraid, frightened, fearing. Nu 
toehi’a ka tuniha nanaito. He’s afraid of everything.
toia, n., dry season
tomo, n., button
to’o, adj., 1. lots. 2. full. Nu ma’atai du 
to’oi rau tu vadei a’o ka. He’s 
talking with his mouth full.
topi, n., lump. [Note: sago lumps (du 
topi) are used in cooking.]
topo, adj., sweet
topona, n., sugar (lit. ‘sweet thing’)
toti, adj., (var. totitoti), sticky. Du toti 
e’ediai ra! Mix up some sticky 
sago! [Note: Variant totitoti means 
‘very sticky’.]
toto, n., balcony, platform
totomu, n., advice. Abiai ro merei 
totomu ovaidio ka. The father gave 
the child advice. See: otomu
toto’obe, n., tongue
tu, n., 1. arm. 2. hand
tua, n., lizard
tuhaha, adj., (var. tuaha), empty, bare. 
I’a merei kimai vati ta tuhaha o’u 
ka. That person is coming back from 
fishing empty-handed.
tuhi’a, n., right hand. [Note: hi’a has 
the sense of ‘real’, so this means the 
‘real hand’.]
tu’i niroi, n., palm, inside of hand.
tuia, n., sea, ocean
tuiai, n., (var. tiai), middle. Mo motoi 
mutotiu aia tiai da oitidio ka. My 
house is (standing) in between two 
others. [Note: tiai da is used as a 
postposition.]
tumunu, adj., untamed. tumunu bomo 
wild pig. [Note: Prenominal only. 
Of people it can mean unruly and 
disobedient.]
tunuha, quant., all
tu’o, n., ashes, dust
tu’otu’o, n., mist, haze
turana, n., (pl. turanaioi), friend
ture, n., taro
turomo, n., storm, hurricane
tuto’o, adj., handful
tutu, adj., long, tall

U - u

uame, n., spoon, ladle
uamu, n., (pl. uamioi), husband
ubau, n., noni tree [Morinda citrifolia]. 
[Note: The fruit is used in traditional 
remedies.]
ubu, n., people
ubu, n., swelling, bump
uburo, n., basket, bag
ubuubu, adj., bumpy
udumo, adj., blunt
uho1, n., fish
uho2, v., (iter. ihotuti, pl. iho), eat
uiia, n., (pl. uiiaio), cassowary
[Casuarius casuarius]
uma, n., wound, sore
umabu’omo, n., scar
umo1, v., go into. bu’i to umo go into the bush.
=umo2, vclitic., tr, pl
umu, n., dog
umumu, v., fan. Mo ro mumui ta mukoi umumu ka. I’m fanning the fire with a fan.
umunimo, n., flea (lit. ‘dog louse’)
umuo, v., know. Mo ro nu umuo ka. I know him. Mo umuo Ginai tutu mere ka. The Giana I know is a tall man. [Note: defective verb which does not take first person agreement or tense markers.]
uodi, v., (pl. iruodi), pour. Obo ererai koimoi ta uodi! Pour hot water into the cup!
upi, n., shoot
urai, v., close, cover. Situai aiurai ka. The store is closing. Situai aiorurudio ka. The store is closed.
See: orurudio
ure1, n., sugar cane
ure2, n., cough. Nu ure a’aituti vadio ka. He’s always coughing.
urehipi, n., phlegm (lit. ‘cough spit’)
urioabea, n., god (lit. ‘spirit father’)
uriotato, adj., shocked. Mo uriotato novai ka hivai eve’ai ta. I was shocked when I saw the crocodile.
urita, n., octopus
uro, adj., asleep. Nu uro ka. He’s asleep.
ururo, v., be cooked. Raisi tau ururo vaka. The rice is ready / already cooked.
uta’a, v., lie down. Nu oro uta’a ka. She is asleep.
utumo, n., neck
u’umai, v., (pl. iiumoi), bury. Nimo turanai gabidi vati ta u’umai na’ai kaumo. We will bury our friend in the cemetery.

V - v

v-, vpref., n1, non-first person agreement
vade, n., (var. wade), 1. word. 2. language. See: bogobogovade. [Note: Also used for conversation and news.]
vadewade, n., (var. wadewade), discussion, meeting
vadio, 1. part., hab. adj., 2. usual. vadio ubi the usual people. vadio vati the normal place.
vaivai, n., mango
vari, n., (var. wari), 1. laugh. 2. joke. Mo vari na’ai ka! I’m joking!
varupi, n., potato, sweet potato
vati, n., place
vativati, n., anywhere
vato, adj., (var. wato), dry. Patai vato ka. The mangroves are dry.
veiraveira, adj., orange. [Note: The colour of immature coconuts.]
vene, n., meeting house. [Note: Originally the men’s longhouse; now open to all.]
vera, n., method, steps
vere, n., red paint. [Note: Made from a nut (not betel).]
vi’a, n., porridge. [Note: made of sago.]
vibu, n., charcoal. Vibui itai. The charcoal is burning (cooking).
viha, n., rain. Vihai keihi ro orurudio ka. A light rain is falling.

vihai, conj., while. Niti ro bomoi ovaredio vihai... while they were both carrying the pig...

vihaihivioi, n., rainy season

vio, n., sand, sandbank

vio, n., shout. Vio a’ai ka. He’s shouting.

vipa, n., snake

voiomo’o, n., whistling. Nu nahuai voiomo’o ta abodo ka. He’s whistling a song.

vovo, n., stand. [Note: A stand for processing sago when harvested.]

3. English-Urama finderlist

A - a
about, almost aibo
about, concerning hapuoi
about, concerning, for ri
accident arai’iai
admirable, be admired aiaro
adopt ahurai
advice totomu
adze dape, dapera
afraid, frightened, fearing toe
after didimoi ta
afternoon, evening dohoi
all tuniha
already, ever tau
always, often titi
ancestor nania
anchor anegai
anchor, park odudio
and ka
angry niromama’e
be angry and swear ema’o
ankle hairo

W - w
wadu, n., (var. vadu), bamboo
wa’ema, n., turtle. See: wa’ema hura
wahumo, n., arrow
waia, n., cooking plate
wana, n., bandicoot
wapa, n., skirt. [Note: traditional grass skirt]
wapai, n., (var. vapai), bridge
wapea, n., (va’pe’a), ship
wapo, n., 1. tail. 2. last. Nu wapo o’u ka. He came last.
wapo ta, adv., later
wara, n., fence
winidai, n., window
wodi, n., nose
wodigoho, n., nostril
wotu, inter., (var. votu), who. See: hotu.

ant hede
anywhere vativati
approach ohi’iai
arm tu
armband mabo
arrange, fix, tidy idomo
arrive eredea
arrow wahumo
ashamed, shy hipo
ashes, dust tu’o
ask aho’o
ask, inquire arato
asleep uro
at, by, with ta
at that time nuha
at this point nama
axe ira

B - b
back (body part) didimoi; gimini; ipi
backbone giminihoro
bad memiho
bag ha’o
bail out ahi’oi
bailer kaka
bait nahi’o
balcony, platform toto
bald saku
bamboo wadu
banana(s) dubai
to bandage otohiti
bandicoot wana
bank (savings) banekai
bare tuhaha
bark (of a tree) hipi
bark (of a tree) nu’atama
bark at omuduhi
barracuda hauto
barramundi gidobu
basket tepai
basket, bag uburo
beach davara'i
beat ododoi
beat up emaruti; opui’a
beautiful hiva
because mabu
become i’i
bed, sleeping place gitora
bees, honey bee minimini
before epui ta
begin ovaharo
behind didimo'i ta
belief, faith iraromo'i
belt bidibidi
beside erehei ta
betel nut goe
between tiai ta
bicycle basikoroi
big gega; gema; paipai
big, wide huna
bird kikio
birthday otohivioi
to bite adedeai
black ididi
black magic, sorcery ebiha
black palm tere
blind idomaitato
blood ora
blow ohudidio; ohuduti; omoduhuti
blowfly gura
blunt udumo
boar’s tusk bomohu’a
boil ioto
boiling, hot ogohuti
bone horo
book buka
both mama
bottom bare; nupui ta
bow ga’e
box, carton kateni
boy merchio
boys ohio'bai
brain(s) epui'i'inoi
branch nu'aete
bread beredi
break ehebia; otoho
break into abe’emai
break open abe’ea
breast amo
breast milk, milk amo'hi
breath hora
bridge wapai
bring ovo’u
bring out ovohu’o
broom epe
brother mauai
brother (older) namu
bubble gomohobobo
bucket baketa
build adori; ididi
build for emidi
bumpy ubuubu
burn aradi; opihi’iai
burn oneself oruro
bury u’umai
bush bu’i
but inai
butcher ohuti
butterfly babame’e; babao
button tomo
buy, obtain imidai

C - c

call arahue; atohotai
camp komo
can (modal) modobo
canoe pe
capsize omuhoubiai
carry obai; ovaredio
carve, make, shave o’o
carving, statue gope
cassava maniota; rapia
cassowary uia
cat pusi
catch ohiai
catfish atu
cemetery gabidivati
centipede amotoba
chair se’a
change evehe’eai
charcoal vibu
chase obodidio
cheat, steal, theft piro
cheek tawa
chest gomo
chick kokoro bamu
chicken kokoro
chief rohia
child merekehi
childbirth mereotoi
children merekeke
chin hunu
chocolate kokoleti
choke a’oia
chop ovaha’uti
church tanamoto
clan haro’o
clean, fix, tidy up odomo
climb ioro
close kekai; omodo’ia
close, cover urai
closed orurudio
clothing, covering hipura
cloud ori
cockatoo aiau
coconut go’ota
coconut husk moho
coconut plantation gino
coconut shell koimohotu
coconut husker itiva
coffee kopi
cold gu’obo
cold (illness) ti’ino
collect, choose ime’ede
comb itu’a
to comb erehe’e
come o’u
come out ahau; ohu’o
coming o’uiai
constipation ne abu
container diro; nakomu
continue, really aiha
to cook itai
be cooked ururo
cooking place, stove ana’apu
cooking plate waia
copra kopara
corner, edge nupu
cotton thread kotini
cough ure
count iaho’outi
to cover atimai; omurai; omuruti
cow boromokau
crab ime
crabbingstick biko
crabhole hu’ono
crawl aredio
crew che
crocodile hiba
cross satauro
to cross abu
cup koimo
curvy, bent kiva’iva
cut ahiai; u’uai
cutty grass ta’ota’o

D - d
damage, ruin ota’auti
dance hete
to dance aramauti; oma
dark du’i
daughter-in-law etera
day hivio
day before yesterday diata
dead nituo
defeat emume
death aihiai
design titi
dew _ovei boi_
diarrhoea _ne oboobo_
die _ihiai_
difficulty _bihaito_
dig _oboobo; ogohuti_
dirty _irio_
discussion, meeting _vadevade_
dish, bowl _disi_
ditch (dry) _bobo_
ditch, dry hole, empty well _guri_
do _a’ai_
dog _umu_
domestic pig _tama bomo_
don’t _aike_
door _duara_
door (of house) _biri_
down _odoi_

drag, slide _oroi’i_
dream _hivo_
drift _ovadaudio_
to drink _idio_
drown _a’umo_
dry _vato; amai_
dry season _toia_
drying rack _taro_
dry leaves _gaga’o_
dugong (sea cow) _pidu_
n- e

each one, every one _ga’uga’u_
ear _hepato_
early _tauoha; dohaito_
earring _naia_
ext, soil, ground _hepu_
eat _iho; uho_
eel _debe_
egg _hura_
elbow _ebo; emo_
elderly _nahia_
ember _duhomo; mukohu’opi_
empty _gu’u_
end _ne’e_
engage _idabuai_
engagement present _hiamo_
English _bogobogowade_

enough _modobo_
enough! stop it! _kiauka_
evening _adimoi_
excrement _ne_
ey _idomai_

F - f

face _hoho_
fall _erepeduai_
fall over _omo’a_
false, weak _hobou_
familiar, like _dohobo_
famous _pai_
famous person _paimere_
fan _mumu_
to fan _umumuu_
far _awo_
fast _dohaito_
fat _gagi_
father _abea_
father-in-law _damuabea_
feather _tamu_
feed, nurture _ovoto_
feel _ere’a_
fell _e’ebo_
female _behe_
fence _wara_
festive flowers _geregere_
fever _tama erara gimo_
few, some _kaupu_
field, clearing _hau’i_
to fight _arai’iai; hiavo_
fill _ate; emate; ovia_
fin _tamu_
finally _ianai_
find _evea_
fingernail _tumudebe_
finish _opoio_
fire _muko_
firefly _enedu_
firewood _era_
first _epu_
fish _uho_
fishing tackle _gaho; pohoo_
to flash _eremabe_
flea _umunimo_
flee odaudio
float ovadidio
flooring tere
flotsam gebe
flounder abeda
flower o’apo
fly huhune
to fly immuio
flying fox hipai
foam auboigahe
follow obodo
food du
foot otoo
footprint, trace nato
forgetting dodo
friend turana
frog guagua
from ne’eida
fuel obo
full to’o, epe’e

G - g

game orioi
garden pa’eai
gather aidabuai
gather together ivohi’idio
gecko baibu’u; hivatua
get eidai
get angry and swear aha’o
get up oubua
gift pasoro
girl mere behe
girls buhebai
give ema’ai
give birth otoi
give way erhai

glasses idomai garasi
glue guhi
go odau
go around, visit oroho
go in odoro
go into umo
god urioabea
go down oruo
good mea
grandparent aramu

H - h

hair muho
half hapuuo
handful tuto’o
handsome gahi
hang ohì
happy ge’i
hat hasi
he, she, it nu
head epu
heal ai’i
healing bedea
hear, believe orovai
heart gi’epu
heavy nibo
heel ebo; emo; hairo
help ovabai
helpless, about to die pupuotato
here na; nahini
here; there hini
heron havia
to hide opio; opiova
high aru; ohu
hip gema
hit irihiati
hold (in hand) ohidio
hole goho
hook kimaihura
hot erara
house moto
how haiboi
howl iamo
to hug omomai
hungry duniro
hunt pomo
hunt down ivoto
hurry up! hioi to!
hurt memiho
husband uamu

I - i

I mo
if ato; rato
in the past aia
inflate omohuduti
in that manner hinibauha
island hepukere
isn’t it? ha

J - j

jail dibura
jaw dua; tavahoro
jellyfish dado
to joke vari
juicy ihi
jump imagauri

K - k
kava kava obo
kerosene keresini
kill, hurt ai’iai
kina miri
to kiss imehebuai
kitchen dumotoi
knee popu
kneel imehebu
knife kai’a
know umuo

L - l

labour, hard work pauo
language vade
lantern nanepa
last ioropoio; wapo
later wapoi ta
to laugh vari
law, rules taravatu
lay otoi
to lead ovoroho
lead in ovodoi

leaf pahe
leap up ivobudioi
learn a’o
leave io’a; emchai; inato
leave open aoidio
leech ibane
left (hand) kerakera
left hand hoboutui
leg(s) otoo
lemon, lime siporo
let go emhehai
lick ohome
lid hoho
lie hobou; koikoi
lie down uta’a
life oroiioi
lift ovoubuai
light (in weight) pakara
light hehe
light (a fire) adiai
lightning berebere
like aibo
like, you know inamo
lime, white paint amia
limp imehebu
listen orovidio
little, small keihi
live i’iro
liver beru
lizard tua
located o’a
log aroipi
long, tall tutu
look after, watch, look at arodio
look for oho
look back eremeteai
look like everai
lord, god paimere
lose atu’ai
lots to’o
lots, plenty, more hiro
louse nimo
love niro
low tide oboihi
lump topi
lungs beru papa
M - m

mainland go’otohi’a
make, cause ovaidioi
make, fix ededeai
malaria gu’obogimo
male pahe
man, male dubu
mango vaivai
mangrove bana
market maketi
mash up atu’uti
mask keveke
mat tiro
match(es) masisi
maybe nupa
meat, flesh hi’o
medicinal creeper mabe
medicine muramura
meeting house vene
message hivo’a
messenger hivo’amere
method, steps vera
midday hiviotuai
middle tuiai
middle finger left hand hoboututu
might eika
mind, thought imini
mirror otoro
miss apahemai
mist, haze tu’otu’o
mix, stir, twist e’ediai
money moni
moon ove
mopping cloth miri
morning duoduo
mosquito na’ati
mosquito net tainamu
most amia
mother mamu
mother-in-law damumamu
mother’s brother muduabia
mother’s sister-in-law mudumamu
motor iridini
moulting crab ibi
mountain no’a
mourn, grieve idebi
mouth ma’ata; pu’o
mucous ti’ino
mudskipper tava
mullet mai’a; robu
muscular, strong ebugama
mushroom tumi
must aiha
must, have to ita

N - n

nail ikoko; mudebe
naked tinitini
name paina
namesake painaii
narrow, small keihibo
nauseous mamau
near taitai
neck utumo
necklace kema
needle hipura nira; nira
net reke
new oio
newborn, soft bamu
next goroi
night duo
nipa palm nipa
nit nimohoro
no o’o
noisy rubirubi
noni tree ubau
nose wodi
nostril wodigoho
nostrils gonogono
not mo’a; haka; -tato
nothing atanatato; natato
now do’ou

O - o

octopus urita
often vadio
oh! are
old tauo
on condition, while nuato
one ga’u; ga’ubo
onion onioni
only beha; hato
on top of ohui ta
open abe’emai; a’erai
orange veiraveira
orphan ogogami
other, again ata
other, some amia
ouch! ere
outside hau’i
overflow, be full irahio’uti
overflow, vomit oromouti
own, self himiha
oyster iaivi

P - p

to pack ibi
paddle aibi
to paddle abidio
pain, painful, sore temeteme
painful, sore temeteme
to paint ohiauti
palm (of hand) tu’i niroi
pandanus mareta
pants piripo
papaya, pawpaw nika
paper pepa
parents-in-law damio
pass to each other eremehe’e
past p-
path, road gabo
peanut pinati
pelican gogora
people ubi
person mere
phlegm urehipi
pick, collect odo’o
pick, lift up a’atai
picture, painting urio
piece kere
pig, pork bomo
pig snout ganopa
pillow pira
pineapple painapu
pineapples panepai
place vati
plane pereini

plant aro; ibo
plate mereki
play orio
plaything, toy oriona
pool damo
porridge vi’a
possum, cuscus bito
post abo
pot pani
potato varupi
to pound ototo
pour ahu’odioi; uodi
to praise emarahue
prawn gauga’u
pray imodo’iai; omodo’ia
prayer, church service guriguri
pregnant dopi
pregnant woman dopiobo
prepare ododeai
price ta’i
protein naepu
puddle, pool dapoi
pufferfish mukuru
pull down ovoruo
pull in emaivuti
pull, launch ovi’i
pull out of the water otomai
pull out, remove a’ubai
pus duho
push ohi’odidio
put, place idia
put together idabuai
put down, place ede’a
python, long snake hoia

Q - q
quietly everaito; keihiboito

R - r
rain viha
rainbow huhuia
raincoat hobo
rainy season vihaahivioi
rat, mouse geno’o
rattle gora
raw orio
razor resa
read iapo
ready nahia
red oroa; ora’ora
red berries mupuru
red paint vere
red emperor snapper haira
reed dudu
reef obono’a
to refuse ahu’uti
relation tamamere
remember iraromai
rest hora
return amaivai; ovaivai
rib guhoro
ribcage gu
rice raisi
right, true oroha
righthand tuhi’a
rip off, remove ehe’uti
ripe pamo
river, pool omo
riverbank bara
river passage ebebeai
rock no’a
to rock eremehe’uti
roof motoi ubu; motoiohui
roof post haro’o
room nu’a
root hipi; hivi
root, origin mabu
rope konau
rotten pamo
rough tiratira
rub, wipe aditi
rubbish, waste horohoro
rule, custom, law bubu
run aruruti
run, race hio
rushing hovihovi

S - s
sacred tana
sad giepu
sago du
sago grub one
sago bag abia
sago container iri
sago plantation havai
sago pounder oto
sago pulp etune
sago stick duamo
sago trade hiri
sales trip diva
salt damera
sand, sandbank vio
sandfly buburo; buni’i
saw girigirinai
saw up ohuti
scabies hege
scale (of fish) bata
scar bu’omo; umabu’omo
school, education sikuru
scissors pakosi
scoop, ladle ga’ima
to scratch eve’iti
sea davarai
sea, ocean tuia
seagull aipau; damura
seam mura
see ai’a; evea; e’a
see oneself ere’a
seed nu’ahura
seedlings, shoots mate
select, point to apui
sell ihiei
send otiodai
sew ovadidio
shade du’i
shadow urio
shake amoh’o; omauti; ovomauti
shaking, earthquake mumuo
share erema’ai
shark, whale ome
sharp hihua
sharpen emehu
sheep mamui
shell ikahoro
shellfish ika
shinbone horoipi
shine aradi
ship titima; wapea
shiver iamoho’o
shocked uriotato
shoe tamaka
shoot upi; aro
shoots, young leaves baribari
short komubo
short, old komu
shortcut ebebeai
shoulder bena
shoulder bag hito
shout vio; imaro
show, drum gama
sibling (younger) niavapo
sick gimo
side bara
silence! piroha
simultaneously atuhivio
sing abodo
sister (older) mabia
sister’s child mudumere
sit eme’ei
skin tama
skinny, wasted horokuku
skirt eme; wapa
sky aromo
slack, flat papa
sleep, lie down orou
sleeping mat keta
slime (green) guruo
slow imini
slow down! imini to
slowly everaito
smell nibo; ibodio; ibomai
smelly nibo
smoke, cigarette kutu
smoke, steam ahuta
snail gaima’u
snake vipa
sneeze asio
sniff imehebuai
snot ti’inoobo
snout ganogano
so, therefore nuri
soap sopu
soft hobobo
someone else’s dubi
something na’ata
something, another thing atana
song nahua
son-in-law emapua; emapua-abea
soon taitai
sorry giepu
sound, noise diamo
space hia’e
spade taboro
speak a’o
spear karahudi; ke’o
to spear emati’a
spear, poke amuai
spearhead ke’ohura
spear shaft dudu
spend, throw away, waste eheu’a
spider kaka’api
spiderweb kaka’api moto
spirit urio
spit gahe
to spit imo’a
split ovahe’a
spoon, ladle uame
spot, pustule gima
sputum gahehipi
squeeze ioi; omomohi’iti
stab ovadomoai
stairs gabo
stand vovo; oti; otidio
standup oto’a
star pi’u
start emederiai
start, origin ovaharoi
stay emidio
steal piro a’ai
stick kuku; nu’a
to stick ahoiai; arateai
stick on ovateai
sticky toti
stingray hama
stomach niro
store situa
storm, hurricane turomo
story kika
straight gamo’o
straighten out eme’ivuti
string gigiho; ivi
strongly ahuha
stupid, naughty avavo
sugar suga; topona
sugar cane ure
suitcase maua
sun hivio
Sunday gurigurihivio
sunrise hivioiioroi
sunset hivioioruoi
surprised hoa
swamp pata
sweet bua’ea
sweet topo
swell aupai
swelling aupai
swelling, bump ubu
swim imapeduo
swordfish gabora

T - t

table teiboro
tail wapo
take away ovame’ede
take, go away ovadaudio
take into ovumo
take, make go ovodeau
take off, remove omurai
take up ivoro; ovidiai
take in ovodoroi
take off, remove ahu’eta
take out idimai
talk about ovadu’uti
talk, gossip about ovaduo
Tank taneka
taro ture
tea gebe hipi
teach, guide otomu
teach, show ematomudio
tear idomaiobo
teeth girigiri
tell araduo
tell about emaduo
tell, order, ask oduai
thank you keito
thanks a lot keitoka
that aro’o; ire; i’a
the =i

there i’a
they all ni
they both niti
thin, old pa’uri
thing na
think iraromo
thirsty oboniro
this na
this morning do’ou duoduo
thorn oro
thorny, thorns orooro
those three nibi
throw ekedua
thunder guru
tie, weave otohiai
tiger prawn na’i
tinea hegebitu
tired, bored with ha’ima
tired, out of breath hora
to to
to one side hapuio
to, towards oito
today do’ou
toenail otomudebe
together atuha; ga’uha
toilet nemoto
tomorrow doutu
tongs dubitu
tongue toto’obe
tonight do’ou duo
too, with, and ire
tooth giri
toothache giritemeteme
top ohu
torch gaga’o
touch a’apuai
touch, hold o’apuai
tough, strong ahu; pupuo
town tauni
trading enevaro
tree nu’a
tree fungus babao
to trick ematuhia
trouble kerere
try, make ovai
try, taste emahibai
turn erehe’eai
turn off odoia
turn over evehe’eai
turtle wa’ema
tusk hu’a
twenty oto ra tu ra ti
twigs eke’ke; ete’ete
twins neduahe
two netoa
type, kind hiabau

U - u

under goro
underskirt goroeme
underwear goropiripo; hi’i
unripe, young, immature gahuru
untamed tumuna
upstream potoi
urine ono
usual vadio
uvula bikobiko

V - v

vehicle taraka
vein chume; hivi; tamahivi
very, a lot hia
very few kaupubai
village go’oto
village chief nimo vati hunai
vomit mamau

W - w

waist, middle tamatuia
wait omoti; motitidio
wake up oitorai
walk imaubo
walk up idiai
walking stick gana’u
wall baratei; biri
wallaby magani
want niro
war hiavoara’iai
warm up emebidio
wash ohiodio; oru’o; ororu’o
wash, swim obo oru’oi
wasp go’ario
water obo; ado’a
water bottle obodiro
water well oboguri
watersnake go’ototo
watery obooobo
wave aubo
we (all) nimo
we both nimoiti
we three nimoibi
weak pupuotato
weak, soft (used for people) ibibi
wear orovio
weave ovotu
wedding idabuaidu
week pura
weep, cry idebi
well, healthy mea
welt, bruise bodomo
wet pamopamo
what na’u
when nama; hatihivio
where haita; he’e
where to hatitoi
which hati
while vihai
whistling voiomo’o
white bogobogo
who hotu; wotu
why na’uri
wife obo
wild pig bu’ibomo
win, gain aimidai
win, get ime’edai
wind kavaia
window winidai
wing tamu
witchdoctor, healer bedeamere
with rautu
woman obo
women mamio
wood nu’a
word vade
work ova’ati
world hepu
worm hepuvipa
wound, sore uma
Y - y

yam taitu
year bunio; ragani
yellow catfish hahu’a
yes o

yesterday detu
you ro
you all rio
you both ríoiti
you three ríoibi
young, new orio
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